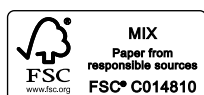



DIGITAL PASSAGES

**Moroccan-Dutch youths performing
diaspora, gender and youth cultural
identities across digital space**

Koen Leurs



 by Koen Leurs, 2012. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 3.0 Unported License. See www.koenleurs.net for contact information.

Cover design by Ready2Rumbl.nl

Printed on FSC-certified paper by Ipskamp Drukkers, Enschede, the Netherlands

ISBN: 978-94-6191-339-5

Digital Passages

**Moroccan-Dutch youths performing diaspora,
gender and youth cultural identities across
digital space**

Digitale passages

**De totstandkoming van diaspora, gender en jeugdculturele
identiteiten van Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren in digitale
ruimtes**

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit Utrecht
op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof. dr. G.J. van der Zwaan, ingevolge het besluit
van het college voor promoties in het openbaar te verdedigen
op woensdag 27 juni 2012 des middags te 12.45 uur

door

Koen Hendricus Adrianus Leurs

geboren op 27 juni 1983
te Grave

Promotoren: Prof. dr. R.L. Buikema
Prof. dr. M.J. de Haan
Co-promotoren: Dr. S. Ponzanesi
Dr. K.M. Leander

Table of contents

Acknowledgements		xi
Introduction		1
1.	Focus	5
2.	Prior scholarship on the Moroccan-Dutch community	9
	Deconstructing labels	12
3.	Transdisciplinary interventions	17
	Internationalizing new media studies:	
	Digital media and migration	17
	Balancing utopian and dystopian perspectives	20
	Embedding offline identities online	23
4.	Structure of the book	26
Chapter 1	<i>Theoretical trajectory</i>	31
1.1	Space invaders and digital unevenness	33
	Space invaders	35
	Digital spatial norms: Shedding a new light on digital divides	36
	Examples of digital power dynamics	37
1.2	Digital embodiments: Between utopian and dystopian views	40
	Utopian perspectives on (dis) embodiment and digital space	41
	Dystopian perspectives on embodiment and digital space	42
	Everyday mutual constitution of users and digital space	45
1.3	Identity	49
	Digital identity performativity	51
	Intersectionality and performativity	53
	Moroccan-Dutchness	54
1.4	Digital diasporas	58
	Roots: Transnational communicative ties	59
	Routes: Transnational diaspora aesthetics	62
	Youth culture: Conviviality or segregation?	64
1.5	Ryan's hypertextual narrative of self	66
	Hypertext as a figuration	67
	Empirically grounding hypertext: "You are what you link"	68
	Implications of hypertext	71
1.6	Conclusions	73
Chapter 2	<i>Methodological trajectory</i>	75
2.1	The Wired Up survey	78
	Constructing the survey	79
	The power of definition	82
	Survey sampling and access	83
	Conducting surveys	86
	General survey findings	88
2.2	Interviews	91
	Interview sampling	92
	Ethnographic in-depth interviewing	95
	Reflexivity and power-relations	100

	Inside and outside school: The dynamics of interview settings	104
	Selecting case studies	106
2.3	On gathering digital data	107
	Internet research ethics	109
	Accessing private spaces	111
2.4	Analyzing informant's narratives	112
	Politics of translation	113
	Coding	115
	Discursive analysis	116
2.5	Conclusions	119
Chapter 3	<i>Voices from the margins: Internet forums as counter publics</i>	121
3.1	Moroccan-Dutch youths and online forum discussions	123
	Wired Up survey findings	123
	Internet forum participation among Moroccan-Dutch youths	124
	<i>Marokko.nl</i> and <i>Chaima.nl</i>	127
3.2	Internet forums as (counter) publics	131
3.3	"Not all Moroccans are the same": Voicing ethnic identity	135
	Hush harbors	138
	Contesting Geert Wilders and the carnivalesque	139
	Networked power contradictions	142
3.4	Negotiating "hchouma" topics: Voicing gendered identity	144
	"Hchouma" online	145
	Daring to break taboos: "I just want to know what	
	'the real deal' is"	146
	In-between gender positioning and agency	149
3.5	"Halal" or "Haram": Performative Islam	149
	Digital reconfiguration of religious authority	151
	Voicing religious in-betweenness	152
3.6	Conclusions	155
Chapter 4	<i>Networked personal territory: Instant messaging</i>	157
4.1	Moroccan-Dutch youths and <i>MSN Messenger</i>	160
4.2	Understanding IM as a way of being in the world	163
4.3	Entering and analyzing a private space	167
	Gathering transcripts	168
	Analysis	169
4.4	The private backstage	171
	Conversational topics	172
	Boundary making	173
	Unstable boundaries: Risks and opportunities	176
4.5	Performing symbolic grammars of difference onstage	180
	Display pictures and consumption	180
	Display names and bricolage	182
	A funky, informal writing style	185
4.6	Conclusions	187

Chapter 5	<i>Visual representations and hypertextual selves: SNSs</i>	189
5.1	Moroccan-Dutch youths on <i>Hyves</i> and <i>Facebook</i>	192
	Self-profiling attributes	194
	Motivations	195
5.2	The politics of online social-networking sites	197
	Templates and user cultures	197
	Corporate logic	199
	Teenager logic	202
5.3	Visual representations and the gendered gaze	204
	Display picture ideals	204
	Meeting the gaze: Objectification and/or representation	208
	Victimization and cautionary measures	209
	In-betweenness	212
5.4	Hypertextual selves: Convivial fandom and networked belonging	213
	Self-profiling as fandom	215
	Cultural self-profiling	217
	Differential networking	220
	Conviviality and intercultural encounters	222
5.5	Conclusions	224
Chapter 6	<i>Affective belongings: YouTube</i>	227
6.1	Moroccan-Dutch youths using <i>YouTube</i>	230
	<i>Fitna</i>	231
6.2	Theorizing affectivity and <i>YouTube</i>	234
	Transmission of affectivity	235
	Digital circuits of affect	236
	The politics of <i>YouTube</i>	237
	Affective geographies	240
6.3	Vernacular videos and transnational affectivity	242
	The Ummah and transnational religious affectivity	242
	Nostalgia and transnational diaspora affectivity	245
6.4	Corporate music videos, geographies and affectivity	252
	<i>YouTube</i> and music videos	253
	Music videos and geographical affectivity	255
	The multiplicity of affectivity	258
6.5	Conclusions	260
Conclusions		263
1	Transdisciplinary dialogues	266
2	Methodological considerations	269
3	Digital inequality and spatial hierarchies	271
4	Space invader strategies and the conveyal of belongings	273
Bibliography		283
Appendices		313
Samenvatting (Summary in Dutch)		345
Summary		353
Biography		355



List of figures

Fig. 1	Nasrdin Dchar emphasizes multiple affiliations (Source: still <i>Acceptance speech Nasrdin Dchar for Golden Calf</i> , NFF, 2011)	1
Fig. 1.1	<i>Geweigerd.nl</i> website top banner (March 6, 2005)	31
Fig. 1.2	<i>Google.nl</i> search “Marokkanen” (October 20, 2011)	38
Fig. 1.3	Peter Steiner cartoon appearing in <i>The New Yorker</i> (1993, p. 61)	41
Fig. 1.4	<i>Hypes</i> groups 15-year-old Ryan links to on his personal profile page (October 19, 2011)	67
Fig. 2.1	Subcultural youth group self-identifications among Moroccan-Dutch youths	88
Fig. 2.2	Locations where Moroccan-Dutch youths connect to the Internet	89
Fig. 2.3	Internet application preferences among Moroccan-Dutch youths	90
Fig. 2.4	Example Internet map 13-year-old Soesie	99
Fig. 2.5	Word cloud combining the Internet maps of all the informants	107
Fig. 2.6	Four different approaches to discourse analysis (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 20)	117
Fig. 3.1	A representation contesting dominant ideas of Moroccan-Dutchness (Mocro_s, 2007b)	135
Fig. 3.2	Attention for major news events on <i>NLpolitiek</i> and <i>Marokko.nl</i> (Stekelenburg, Oegema and Klandermans, 2011, p. 263)	137
Fig. 3.3	A representation of contested gender relations (Mocro_s, 2007a)	145
Fig. 3.4	A representation of contested religiosity (Mocro_s, 2007a)	150
Fig. 3.5	Logo <i>Marokko.nl</i> (Marokko.nl, 2011b)	151
Fig. 3.6	Cartoon <i>Overvaren</i> (In English: Sailing across) (Rafje.nl, 2011)	153
Fig. 4.1	Screenshot <i>MSN Messenger</i> conversation with 12-year-old Soufian (July 22, 2011)	170
Fig. 4.2	Topics Moroccan-Dutch youths report to discuss	172
Fig. 5.1	<i>Hypes</i> groups 13-year-old Anas links to on his <i>Hypes</i> profile page (July 22, 2011)	189
Fig. 5.2	Moroccan-Dutch youths self-reporting SNS profiling attributes	195
Fig. 5.3	Moroccan-Dutch youths self-reporting reasons for profiling	196
Fig. 5.4	Compilation of <i>Facebook</i> advertisements (Oct. 16, 2011 and Jan. 11, 2012)	201
Fig. 5.5	Moroccan-Dutch youths self-reporting their visual self-presentation ideals	205
Fig. 5.6	Still <i>Bezems 2010.!!</i> by Bezemswalla on <i>YouTube</i> (February 8, 2010)	210
Fig. 5.7	<i>Hypes</i> groups Midia links to on her <i>Hypes</i> profile page (April 15, 2009)	213
Fig. 5.8	“I’m a Berber Soldier”, archived from http://imazighen.hyves.nl/ (September 19, 2009)	216
Fig. 5.9	Cultural self-profiling Moroccan-Dutch youths	217
Fig. 5.10	“Error” archived from http://trotsopmarokko.hyves.nl (October 23, 2009)	219
Fig. 5.11	“100% Marokaan” archived from http://trotsopmarokko.hyves.nl (October 23, 2009)	219
Fig. 6.1	Still <i>Marrakech, Morocco City Drive</i> uploaded to <i>YouTube</i> by eMoroccan (October 8, 2010)	245
Fig. 6.2	Geographical locations of music artists interviewees look up on <i>YouTube</i>	256
Fig. 6.3	Geographical locations of artists interviewees combine in their <i>YouTube</i> viewing practices	259

List of tables

Table 2.1 Overview interviewees	94
Table 3.1 Would Moroccan-Dutch youths miss online discussion forums if they could not use them anymore?	123
Table 4.1 Would Moroccan-Dutch youths miss IM software if they could not use it anymore?	161
Table 5.1 Would Moroccan-Dutch youths miss social networking sites if they could not use them anymore?	192
Table 5.2 Cultural self-profiling	221
Table 6.1 Would Moroccan-Dutch youths miss <i>YouTube</i> if they could not use it anymore?	230

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, with much gratitude I wish to acknowledge all informants for generously letting me in to their world. It was a great pleasure to have been able to learn more about digital practices from the 1408 Dutch youths and more specifically the 344 Moroccan-Dutch students who participated in the survey. In particular, I felt greatly privileged to get to know the individual interviewees. Thank you Abdel, Abdelsammad, Anas, Amina, Amir, Ayoub, Badr, Bibi, Carlos, Faruk, Fatiha, Ferran, Hajar, Hatim, Ilana, Ilham, Inas, Inzaf, Kamal, Kenza, Khadija, Loubna, Mehmet Ali, Meryam, Midia, Mohammed, Mustafa, Naoul, Nevra, Oussema, Rachid, Ryan, Sadik, Safe, Sahar, Salima, Senna, Soesie, Soufian, SouSou, Tariq, Yethi and Ziham. Without your participation, the following pages could not have been written.

I am immensely grateful for my PhD supervisor Sandra Ponzanesi. Always generous with time and energy, you gave me the human and intellectual support at the right moments. By welcoming me in the Gender program, inviting me into your networks and kindly offering countless opportunities, you have encouraged my development as a versatile scholar. Transdisciplinary research demands extra efforts from any supervisor, and your guidance in pushing the boundaries was truly inspirational. You made this four-year trajectory a unique and rewarding experience. Mariëtte de Haan showed me the ropes of social science approaches and gave conducive comments, while Rosemarie Buikema asked the right questions, kept track of the situation throughout and helped me highlight the red thread that weaves its way through the study.

This dissertation is the fruit of my participation in the Utrecht University High Potential project entitled *Wired Up: Digital media as innovative socialization practices for migrant youth*, jointly carried out at the Faculty of Humanities and the Faculty of Social Sciences at Utrecht University, in collaboration with Vanderbilt University, USA. I am grateful for the funding provided by Executive Board of Utrecht University in their aim to stimulate interdisciplinary research. Also I am indebted to the Research Institute for History and Culture (OGC) for their additional financial support. I felt lucky to do my fieldwork as part of *Wired Up* and it was a pleasure to work with the team: thank you Kevin Leander, Fadi Hirzalla, Fleur Prinsen, Lisa Schwartz and Asli Ünlüsoy.

Locating and motivating young people to join our questionnaires and interviews was facilitated by the following directors and members of school personnel: Izmaray Arsala, Loes Fruijt and Ruth Nusser-Triggs in Amsterdam, Jan Hogendoorn, Miriam

Piña and Sven Spruijt in Gouda; Selvi Bayram, Shirley Hulsken, Jos de Ridder, Els Pallada-van Schijndel and Monika Vogels-Herzau in 's-Hertogenbosch; Jan van der Velden in Rotterdam; and Patrick Baas, Erwin Dernison and Marlies Nafzger in Utrecht. Manja Coopmans aided with survey data gathering together with Malin Grundel, who also helped me with quantitative data analysis. I am beholden to Fayrouz Boulayounne, my research assistant, for contacting prospective informants and assisting with interviews, translation and transcription. Fieldwork would not have been the same without your help.

Writing a dissertation involves spending a lot of time in isolation, but I have never felt alone behind the screen of my computer. Exposing me to new ideas and inspiring me to pursue my interests, I have greatly benefited from different intellectual networks, including the Netherlands Research School of Gender studies (NOG), InterGender: Swedish-International Research School in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, the Utrecht University Centre for Humanities (CfH), the Postcolonial Studies Initiative (PCI) and the Postcolonial Europe Network (PEN) involving the Universities of Leeds, Munich and Utrecht. I was intellectually stimulated by various colleagues who commented on my work, for instance during the *Race, ethnicity and (new) Media Symposium* held at Texas A&M University in 2009, the Feminist Scholarship Division and the Ethnicity and Race in Communication Interest group panels of the 2010 *International Communication of Association (ICA) conference*, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology' *Media in Transition 7 conference* as well as the 2009 *NOI♀SE summer school* of the Network Of Interdisciplinary Women's Studies in Europe and the 2010 *Summer Doctoral Programme* of the Oxford Internet Institute (OII SDP).

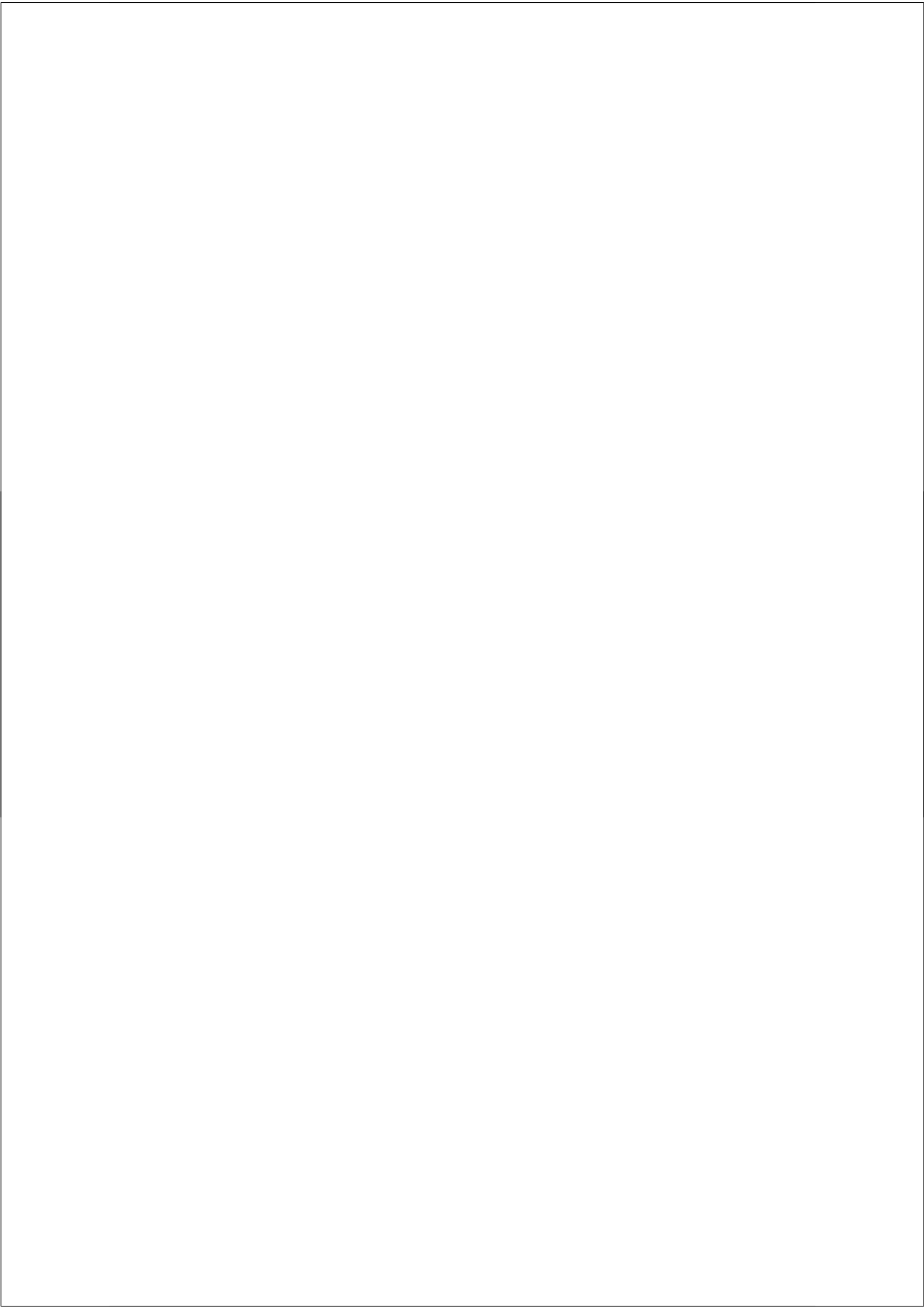
Conversations with a variety of colleagues helped me to work out methodological and theoretical puzzles I faced. The comments made by fellow participants of the Gender Studies PhD Reading/Writing seminar have greatly improved my work. Local and transnational exchanges with Marianne van Boomen, Louis Boumans, danah boyd, Rosi Braidotti, Niels van Doorn, Rebecca Eynon, Myria Georgiou, Paul Gilroy, Jay Lemke, Peter Lugtig, Henry Mainsah, Pramod Nayar, and Gloria Wekker as well as editors and anonymous reviewers who have provided feedback on prior published parts of my study have further sharpened the argument. Babs Boter, Berber Hagendoorn, Levien Nordeman and Eva Midden, thank you for inviting me to guest lecture and allowing me to discuss ideas with your students in your courses. I also thank

Lenie Brouwer, Radhika Gajjala, Frank Kessler, Lisa Nakamura and Liesbeth van Zoonen, members of my dissertation committee, for engaging with my work.

Thank you Claudia Clemente, Feike Dietz, Alison Harvey, Heather Hermant, Lars Lundgren, Geneva Murray, Valentina Rao, Tamara Shepherd and Jacco van Sterkenburg for proofreading my final manuscript and pointing out lingering traces of Dungleish. Thank you Trude Oorschot, Laura Tankink, Simone Veld and members of my intervision group for your support and advice. Jasmijn van Gorp, Dana Mustata, Martine Veldhuizen and Kim van der Wijngaard, thanks for creating a pleasant working environment at our Janskerkhof and Muntstraat offices. At our department, I also value the energizing friendships with Chiara Bonfiglioli, Teun Dubbelman and Mirko Schaefer.

Finally, a word of appreciation for my family and friends. Domhof brothers, Daan van Eek, Thijs Smit, basketball and running mates, Daniëlle, Veronique and Michiel, Wil and Hetty, Maarten and Yvette, and Jacques: thank you for putting up with me even though I was often busy with my studies. I really appreciate your compassion, especially during difficult circumstances. The biggest thank-you goes to Stephanie. Since the very beginning we have been able to share our experiences in the trenches of university life and your love, patience, inspiration and energy have not only made my journey possible but also enjoyable. Finally, honor and respect to my mother Jeannette, who went to eternal rest as I was finalizing my research.

June 2012



Introduction

Technology might claim to have made possible a clean virtual space in which categories of race, gender, and class are said to be irrelevant and in which humans can experience the freedom of total disembodiment. We know better. Because humans are half of the interaction of the real with the virtual, if our society is not changed at a fundamental level, no leaps into virtual space can bring us freedom from the inequality and injustices of the social reality.

– Jaishree K. Odin (2010, pp. 55-56)



Figure 1 Nasrdin Dchar emphasizes multiple affiliations
(Source: still *Acceptance speech Nasrdin Dchar for Golden Calf*, see NFF, 2011).

On September 30, 2011, Nasrdin Dchar held an emotional acceptance speech after being voted the “best actor” for his role in *Rabat* at the 2011 Dutch Film Festival. The road-movie *Rabat* tells the story of three Moroccan-Dutch friends driving an old taxi from Amsterdam through the European countryside to Rabat, the capital of Morocco. Born in the Netherlands from parents who migrated to the Netherlands from Morocco as guest workers, Dchar emphasized in his speech that winning the award for acting in this particular film “stands for the conquering of fears” for him. He continued by stating he feels “these days we are being injected with fear. A few months ago I read an article in which minister Maxime Verhagen said that having fear for foreigners is very understandable. Well mister Verhagen and Geert Wilders and all those people that stand behind you: I’m a Dutchman. I’m very proud of my Moroccan blood. I am a Muslim and

I have a fucking Golden Calf in my hands”. After festival organizers and other individuals uploaded copies of the TV broadcast on the video sharing platform *YouTube*, the speech went viral, accumulating nearly 250.000 views and spurring a heated debate over identity, religious tolerance and cultural difference in the comments sections of *YouTube* as well as in larger public debates of newspaper commentaries and TV talk shows.¹ Although he might not fit its norms and expectations, Dchar’s success illustrates how Moroccan-Dutch individuals have been able to enter the restricted space of the Dutch entertainment industry. Being constructed upon a particular configuration of whiteness, maleness and (secularized forms of) Christianity, the speech reveals Dchar’s perception that Muslim and Moroccan-Dutch bodies are feared and considered out of place in the Netherlands.

Nirmal Puwar argues that British institutions such as the parliament, judiciary, civil service and academia are territories that hold historically “reserved” privileged positions (2004, p. 144). Recognizing that including and excluding mechanisms operate around corporeal specificity; those who enter spaces of authoritative power are measured against the dominant template of “white male bodies of a specific habitus”. Those who do not meet the normative expectations are rendered out of place; they become “space invaders” (ibid, p. 141). Upon entering, invaders can begin to resist the status quo from within. Building on this vocabulary, Nasrdin Dchar as a successful actor can be said to have successfully manifested himself in Dutch mainstream entertainment space. Actively positioning himself as a spokesperson for the Moroccan-Dutch community in his acceptance speech, he subverts normative ideas about Moroccan-Dutchness and Islam and promotes intercultural understanding.² However, speaking from within an institution, the statement is as an example of top-down multiculturalism (Shohat & Stam, 2003, p. 6; Gilroy, 2005, p. 25). The question arises how Moroccan-Dutch youths – who have become the primary locus of fear over ethnic and religious otherness³ in the

¹ 190.000 people watched the Dutch video *Speech Nasrdin Dchar bij Gouden Kalveren*, while another 45.000 people watched the video with English subtitles *Acceptance speech Nasrdin Dchar for Golden Calf* (February 10, 2012).

² Nasrdin Dchar explicitly positions himself as a Moroccan-Dutch community spokesperson in the public debate in contrast with fellow Moroccan-Dutch artists such as Hafid Bouazza and Abdelkader Benali. The latter two are prominent authors in the field of migrant literature who touch upon issues of multiculturalism and Islam in their artistic works but they have not taken an active stance in public debates like Dchar, indicating that in the smallest of categories (popular Moroccan-Dutch artists) different strategies are recognizable.

³ After the September 11 attacks and subsequent attacks across Europe, and the political murder of controversial Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh by Moroccan-Dutch Mohammed Bouyeri, Islamophobia especially targets the Moroccan-Dutch community. Spearheaded by anti-Islamic Member of Parliament Geert Wilders and his Freedom Party (PVV), Moroccan-Dutch boys are dismissed as “street-terrorists”, while girls are constructed as backward or oppressed by Muslim culture.

Netherlands – articulate their identities in their everyday practices. Puwar developed the concept of space invaders to understand how ethnic minorities can feel out of place in institutionalized spaces. Stretching the concept, I wonder how hierarchies impact upon embodiment and identification in everyday social space to understand quotidian interaction and multiculturalism. More specifically, because Moroccan-Dutch youths have been recognized as particularly avid digital media users,⁴ the question arises how they articulate their identities across digital media spaces. Digital media practices offer unique, and in the Netherlands still rather understudied, entry points to intersecting issues of religiosity, ethnicity and gender as well as to their implications for thinking about multilayered identity construction and multiculturalism from new vantage points. Dana Diminescu argues that a focus on ICTs (information and communication technologies) is warranted and necessary to begin to rethink the paradigmatic figure of the migrant as “uprooted” to a more accurate figure of “the connected migrant”. She notes that especially today’s generations (descendants of migrants) materially and symbolically establish “networks of belonging” (2008, pp. 568, 572-573). Indeed, diasporas and the digital inform each other in the most profound and dynamic of ways: “the Internet virtually recreates all those sites which have metaphorically been eroded by living in the diaspora” (Ponzanesi, 2001, p. 396; see also Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011b).

Current debates on cultural globalization provide a broader perspective to acknowledge the implications of how issues pertaining to young people, migration and digital media intersect. Arjun Appadurai has recognized migration and digital media are chief pillars of cultural globalization (1996).⁵ Migration embeds many of the local, transnational and global paradoxes that also pertain to digital media with their time and space compression. Appadurai notes that digital media and migration “mark the world of the present” and the two propel the imagination (1996, p. 9). The imagination as a field of everyday social practices is considered in this study as co-constructed by experiences of Moroccan-Dutch youths,⁶ diaspora subjectivity and their digital mediations.

For the young people participating in this study, the work of imagination

⁴ See for instance Boumans, 2002; Brouwer, 2006a, 2006b, 2011; Borghuis et al., 2010; D’Haenens et al., 2004; Geense & Pels, 2002; Mamadouh, 2001; Serkei & Bink, 2011; Sikkema, 2008; Van den Broek and de Haan, 2006; Van Summeren, 2007.

⁵ Beyond the binary oppositions of the global circulation of capital, services, goods, people and labor causing equality or inequality, cultural homogenization or heterogenization, commoditization or resistance, mono-cultures or cultural differentiation Appadurai argues that the “global cultural economy” is a disjunctive order of global cultural flows of “ethnoscapes”, “mediascapes”, “technoscapes”, “financescapes” and “ideoscapes” (1996, p. 33).

⁶ The use of the word youths reflects a naming practice aiming to capture multiplicity. The label youths acknowledges differences among a collective of persons, while youth is a more homogeneous label that refers to young people as a particular societal group.

increasingly takes place within and across digital media applications. Therefore, the notion of space invaders is expanded as a critical spatial consciousness of digital experiences. Taking a spatial focus, I aim to intervene in the field of media and communication studies where spatial fundamentals of media hierarchies are beginning to be addressed.⁷ Politicizing digital space can open up ways to rethink key concepts in critical theory, including identity, agency, voice and affectivity (Shome, 2003; Georgiou, 2011). With the term digital passages, I refer not only to their navigation across bordered digital spaces, but also to the digitization of key identity formation processes such as coming-of-age, rites-of-passage and the negotiation of offline/online gender, diaspora, religious and youth cultural expectations and norms among Moroccan-Dutch youths.

The analysis of digital practices, such as publishing ethnic, gender, diaspora and youth cultural affiliations on one's personal profile pages on the social-networking site *Facebook* or watching *YouTube* videos that capture the everyday life in Morocco provide an entry point to understand how transnational symbolic flows of cultural globalization are grounded and embedded in the lives of ethnic minority youths on a daily basis. The micro-politics of such localized everyday life contexts are embedded in cultural, political and economic structures and ideologies of capitalism (Mohanty, 2003, p. 504). Situated digital media practices push the boundaries between local, transnational and global representations, but such "transborder flows" are also met by innovative marketing and corporate profit initiatives. As Sonia Livingstone and Kirsten Drotner note, taken together, these processes raise questions "regarding children's identity development and sense of belonging to a community" (2008, pp. 1-2).

In particular, I will focus on the articulation of identity, cultural sameness, hybridity and difference that emerge from the passages of Moroccan-Dutch youths through digital space. Judy Wajcman has expressed that "we require more nuanced research that captures the increasingly complex intertwining of gender and technoscience as an ongoing process of mutual shaping over time and across multiple sites" (2007, p. 296). This study empirically maps, describes and analyzes four different digital spaces Moroccan-Dutch youths considered most important at the time of fieldwork. My cartography of ethnic minority youths' digital identification recognizes the World Wide Web is increasingly divided into platforms that each operate as different mediums. The assertion of identity differs but also overlaps in parts across different spaces including instant messaging applications like *MSN Messenger* and *AOL IM*, social networking sites

⁷ Raka Shome for example argues, "what remains insufficiently addressed are the very real and material ways in which space constitutes a site and a medium for the enactment of cultural power" (2003, p. 40).

like *Facebook* and the Dutch favorite *Hyves* and video sharing platforms like *YouTube*. They each provide its users with specific, different radiuses of action, and users frequent them for a particular combination of communicative, social, amusement, leisure, learning and other purposes. Digital spaces each have their own techno-social dynamics that leave their imprint on identity construction such as medium-specific affordances and restrictions, multimedia configurations, user norms and digital cultures.

Questioning subjectivity, identity and belonging within these Internet applications is urgent because little attention is paid to the meanings young people themselves attribute to their digital practices. Although we have just passed the World Wide Web's 20th birthday and it has become an inextricable part of everyday lives of millions of young people,⁸ the Web remains "perhaps the least understood location of youth culture" among parents, educators and researchers (Woo cited in Yi, 2009, p. 102). Contributions that ethnic minority and migrant youths in particular make to digital culture have largely been left unnoticed.⁹ Important work in this area has been done for example by scholars like Lisa Nakamura (2008), Radhika Gajjala (2010), Eva Lam (2009) and Lenie Brouwer (2006a). More research on ethnic minorities' digital media use is needed, however, in order to gain important insights on empowerment versus subordination and digital perpetuations of hierarchies to promote awareness there is no uniform, singular experience of cultural globalization.

1. Focus

In this section I set out my focus by listing my questions, methodological approaches and theoretical considerations. The main goal of this study is to consider how the relations between gender, diaspora and youth culture are digitally articulated by Moroccan-Dutch youths between the age of 12 and 18 years old. I carry out a transdisciplinary analysis of a young ethnic-minority population whose contribution to digital culture is still undertheorized. Building on extensive fieldwork and an innovative theoretical framework, identification processes of these youths across digital space are mapped out, contextualized and interpreted. First I outline the questions used to unravel different layers of meaning.

⁸ The term "World Wide Web" was coined by Berners-Lee on August 6, 1991 to refer to sharing data on the Internet through the use of web pages. The term Internet was coined in 1974 by Vinton Cerf and Robert Kahn, and it refers to the infrastructure and protocol that connects computer networks globally.

⁹ This gap in the literature has been noted in the United States where Eva Lam observed a "paucity of research on immigrant adolescents' practices with digital media" (2009, p. 381) as well as in Europe, where Leen D'Haenens has for example similarly lamented the scarcity of attention for the use of ICT among ethnic minorities in the Netherlands (2003, p. 340).

I address the following main research question: how do Moroccan-Dutch youths participate in and appropriate digital spaces in order to convey their belongings across multiple axes of identification such as gender, sexuality, diaspora, religion and youth culture? In order to achieve this, I build my argumentation on the following theoretical and methodological sub-questions: in which ways do new media, gender and postcolonial theory work together to unearth the complex dynamics of digital identity performativity? Which new knowledge on digital identity construction is produced in the creative collision of methodological approaches from the humanities and social sciences?

My fieldwork consists of a combination of quantitative surveys, qualitative in-depth interviews and participant observation. From the survey and interviews I learned that Moroccan-Dutch youths consider online discussion forums, instant messaging (IM), online social networking sites (SNSs) and video sharing platforms most important. I consider these four types of digital space on a case-study basis. In order to connect the main research question to the analysis of the medium-specific characteristics of the individual platforms the following common and transversal sub-questions assisted me: what digital materials do Moroccan-Dutch youths employ to express identification and belonging? How do profit-driven technological templates that aim to monetize user labor and mainstream user preferences contribute to spatial hierarchies? Unraveling how specific gender, ethnic, religious and age-based norms shape user expectations in digital spaces I argue how offline power relations travel online and create new digital divides. These power relations are however not rigid and constant through time and space but subject to constant re-negotiation, therefore the norms of digital territories remain open to contestation, which I here further explore. The focus of my analysis is in fact on how hierarchies are subverted from below and how the medium-specificity of each of the four applications studied inform these processes differently. In other words, what space invader strategies do Moroccan-Dutch youths employ to cope with uneven digital norms? The optic of space invaders is developed to empirically trace and theorize digital spatial biases and their subversion but also to intervene in dominant thinking about digital media potentialities.

Zooming in on each digital space individually raises more questions about the distinct roles these platforms play in the lives of Moroccan-Dutch youths. Interviewees experience online discussion forums such as *Marokko.nl* as collective spaces of their own and the anonymous character of forums is felt to enable the publication of counter-voices. Researching forum use may therefore offer greater understanding of the

formation of digital publics and the extent to which they are used to reconsider dominant positions. Describing *MSN* instant messenger usage, informants state they have one-on-one conversations and communicate to a wider public of their contacts by writing creative display names. Studying their experience of IM participation therefore allows me to explore language hybridization and how the public and the private are rearticulated and renegotiated online. The publishing of gender was reported as a key self-profiling aspect on social-networking sites such as *MySpace* and *Facebook*. By scrutinizing display picture ideals I can consider how Moroccan-Dutch youths juggle varying gender expectations. Hyperlink connections with majoritarian and minoritarian loyalties were also found to be made through social-networking sites, a practice that unlocks new insights on how these young people experience participation and conviviality in their digital practices. Lastly, interviewees felt emotionally moved by watching music videos and videos shot in Morocco on *YouTube*. Their viewing strategies reveal how digital practices may structure and communicate affectivity and also convey generational specific nostalgia, imaginary homelands and transnational bondings.

The voices of young people themselves are included in order to set out how they make use of digital media to socially construct their cultural identities at the crossroads of youth cultural, gender, ethnic, religious and diaspora affiliations. The fieldwork was conducted in the context of *Wired Up*,¹⁰ a collaborative, international research project operating at the interface of the humanities and social sciences, aimed at understanding the multifarious implications of digital media use among migrant youths. A large-scale survey was developed together with other researchers in the project. A total of 1408 young people contacted through seven secondary schools in the Netherlands completed the survey. The central database of their answers is used to provide a general impression of digital media use frequencies, attachments to applications and online self-presentation practices. Furthermore, in-depth interviews were carried out with a group of 43 Moroccan-Dutch individuals, 21 girls and 22 boys, between the ages of 12 and 18 years. In my aim to provide a broad context of identity deployments a modest group of Moroccan-Dutch parents, website founders and artists were also interviewed. Through participant observation, narratives circulating in online forums, instant messaging, social networking sites and *YouTube* were gathered.

¹⁰ *Wired Up* was awarded a High Potential Programme grant by the Utrecht University executive board in 2006. The project includes interdisciplinary collaboration between Utrecht University (NL) and Vanderbilt University (U.S.) and aims to explore how new digital media practices involving the Internet (e.g., information seeking, instant messaging, chat, web logs, the production and distribution of multi-media) impact on the lives, identities, learning and socialization of migrant youth (see www.uu.nl/wiredup).

Inspired by Gayatri Spivak, I aim “to watch out for the continuing construction of the subaltern”. As a researcher, by speaking for informants, I have the power to define them – which also raises questions of authenticity – while interviewees themselves as experts of their own experiences might remain voiceless, “muted subjects” (1993a, pp. 90-91). Being aware of the risk of ventriloquising informants by appropriating their voices, I seek “to learn to speak to (rather than listen to or speak for)” Moroccan-Dutch youths (ibid, p. 91). During the research process I have spoken with informants through different channels, accounted for internal differences among the interviewees, communicated back my findings and reflected upon my positionality as a white, male, Roman-Catholic raised and university-educated researcher. In the study, I italicize statements made by informants to distinguish between their voice and my interpretations and to indicate my continued awareness of the political dimensions of translating their narratives, originally in Dutch (with some Moroccan-Arabic and Berber words) into English.

Akin to Zygmunt Bauman, who notes that identity can be taken as “a prism through which other topical aspects of contemporary life are spotted, grasped and examined”, their identifications – when attuned to medium-specific configurations of multimodality, connectivity and hypertextuality – will be deconstructed to recognize a dynamic interaction with dominant ways of being (2002, p. 469). The often taken-for-granted digital practices that form an important part of these youths’ everyday lives will be unraveled and considered as a source to show their subscription to a politics of hybridization. Similar to all young people engaging with the Internet, they use digital media to carve out their individual selves and articulate group belongings. Empirically mapping out, describing and analyzing informants’ practices will contribute to breaking down binary polarizations of social categories, by showing how Moroccan-Dutch youths negotiate between seemingly opposite gender, ethnic, diaspora and youth cultural identity positions via digital media.

Cultural identification will be most broadly interpreted here as a performative practice that takes place across online/offline spaces. Identification concerns a particular way of doing things that is co-constructed by wider social, cultural, economic, political, discursive, material and technological factors. Emphasizing its processual character, identification concerns ongoing, relational and intertextual practices through which an individual produces herself. Consider for instance the display name that Inzaf, a 15-year-old female interviewee uses to log in on *Instant Messenger* to identify herself to her friends:

“El Hoceima is the bom, that’s the place where i come from so just tell everyone thats the city number ONE”. Different affiliations come together in this display name, Inzaf signals transnational diaspora affiliations with the city of El Hoceima in Morocco where her father was born, but she symbolically mediates her affinity through the vocabulary of English-language global hip-hop youth culture. Identifications and belongings are transcoded using digital materials. Inzaf’s display name is one example of how digital practices of Moroccan-Dutch youths can be unraveled to show their attachments to different legacies stretching across local ethnic, transnational diasporic and global youth cultures.

Besides *Instant Messenger*, I focus in this study on three other digital spaces the informants reported to spend most of their times in and that they also considered most important: online discussion forums, online social networking sites (SNSs) and video sharing platforms. Each application is frequented for specific purposes and goals, and these platforms each have their own representational dynamics. Identity constructions will therefore be considered as multi-spatial processes, as performative articulations of selves that take place within and between various socially produced digital spaces (Georgiou, 2011).

The rest of this introductory chapter is divided into three parts. First, societal values of the study will be set out by discussing my I aim to contribute to a more layered view of Moroccan-Dutch youths. A situated account of their identity construction may foster greater intercultural understanding. Second, I will set out the scholarly relevance of my argument. The urgency of my transdisciplinary framework is formulated by detailing the various academic discussions I connect and engage in dialogue with. Third, the structure of the dissertation will be described.

2. Prior scholarship on the Moroccan-Dutch community

Moroccan-Dutch youths receive a lot of attention in media reporting, governmental policy-making and scholarly research. They are systematically stigmatized and made hyper visible by right-wing journalists and politicians, who frame them as anti-citizens that pose a threat to Dutch society (Harchaoui & Huinder, 2003, pp. 7-11; Poorthuis & Salemink, 2011). Prior academic research has predominantly focused on particular behavior such as juvenile delinquency, radicalization, mental health problems and early school leaving. Bringing these four themes together, Jurgens speaks of “the Moroccan drama” (2007). These issues are undeniably important and significant, but they single out

a narrow slice of their experiences. Things are going well for the majority of Moroccan-Dutch youths, but their realities remain largely invisible in contemporary debates. A fifth strand of scholarship is beginning to emerge that considers everyday experiences of Moroccan-Dutch youths. By focusing on everyday digital practices and realities, the present study can be categorized under this latter emerging scholarly field.

The first and most dominant strand concerns juvenile delinquency and the involvement of particularly boys of Moroccan-Dutch descent in nuisance and petty crimes (e.g. Van Gemert, 1998; Werdmölder, 2005; De Jong, 2007).¹¹ Islamic radicalization is a concern which grew after events in the Netherlands, such as the murder of the controversial Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh by radical Moroccan-Dutch Muslim Mohammed Bouyeri in 2004, were placed in the context of Islamic fundamentalist attacks across the U.S and Europe, including the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York (e.g. Sloodman & Tilly, 2006; Buijs, Demant & Hamdy, 2006; Van Gemert, 2007).¹² The Muslim minority population is specifically singled out, as the Dutch researchers' focus is mostly on Islam and not on other religious extremisms. The study of mental health problems is a third focus. Second-generation Moroccan-Dutch youths are found to be at risk, as they have a greater chance of developing schizophrenia in comparison with ethnic majority Dutch youth. Stress caused by stigmatization and culture/language-barriers faced in Dutch society as well as specific Moroccan cultural, religious and societal factors are taken to explain this discrepancy. Scholars add that Dutch mental health institutions have difficulties to reach Moroccan-Dutch people (e.g. Stevens, 2004; Veen et al., 2010; Liberman & Williams, 2010). The fourth theme concerns studies on uneven unemployment rates, problems in education and reliance on social security benefits (e.g. Crul & Doornik, 2003; Dagevos, 2006, Van Praag, 2006). The themes share an emphasis on specific problems that pertain to a small segment of the Moroccan-Dutch population. Playing into the hands of Dutch right-wing anti-immigration parties when taken out of their contexts, these studies may be taken to paint a negative picture of the community as a whole.¹³

¹¹ These authors note an over-representation of Moroccan-Dutch boys in criminal offence figures in comparison with ethnic majority Dutch boys.

¹² Subsequent bombings in Europe, in the streets of Istanbul in 2003, Madrid trains in 2004 and London public transport in 2005 also spurred research on Islamic radicalization among Moroccan-Dutch young Muslims. Social deprivation and exclusion have been recognized as key factors explaining the escape from reality towards Muslim extremist views. Researchers found that not all Muslims are radical, not all radical Muslims reject democracy and only a small minority is willing to resort to violence.

¹³ Additionally, these authors speak about excesses but often their arguments are based on interviews with professionals instead of actual conversations with youths themselves (Keter, 2010, p. 12).

Acknowledging everyday experiences of ethnic minority youths is important to generate much-needed nuance in discussions of national belonging, especially when considering the current climate of polarization where anti-immigrant sentiments in the Netherlands and elsewhere are growing (Ghorashi, 2010; Ponzanesi and Blaagaard, 2010). Appadurai describes how practices of enumeration constitute minority groups – people who form a small percentage of national populations – in opposition to majority groups as strangers (2006). Part of the majority feel threatened by changes in their lives brought about by the forces of globalization that include migration, computerization, neo-liberalism, increasing corporate influence, financial instability, consumerism and individualism. Ethnic strife arises when ethnic majority groups grow a “fear of small numbers” by distrusting newcomers and bestowing negative meanings upon ethnic minorities (ibid). In the words of Priya Jaikumar this process can be explained because globalization cannot be countered “but you can attack minorities” (2011, p. 235).

In the Moroccan-Dutch case, scholarly findings have for instance been appropriated to ascribe negative positions. Scholars with other results have a difficulty of being heard, for instance Frans Verhagen argues that in contrast with the dominant views of the failed integration of immigrants, the generation of descendants of migrants born in the Netherlands are rapidly advancing towards Dutch national averages in terms of education, language, employment, religion, marriage and birth figures (2010). A focus on negative depictions may not only foster feelings of unbelonging but may also further worsen the situation by installing disproportionate anxieties over the Moroccan-Dutch community.

This study can be located in the fifth strand of scholarship that aims to capture the rich textures of Moroccan-Dutch youths’ everyday life. In this strand researchers have for example examined parenting styles and socialization patterns (Pels & de Haan, 2003), coming of age (Ketner, 2010), gender relations (Buitelaar, 2007), religiosity (Nabben, Yeşilgöz & Korf, 2006), urban language accents (Nortier & Dorleijn, 2008), music and youth culture (Gazzah, 2009) and Internet use (Brouwer, 2006a). Speaking back to postcolonial, feminist and critical new media theory, I examine Moroccan-Dutch youths’ digitization of everyday life by considering how they self-identify and present themselves to the outside world in their participation in the survey, in-depth interviewing as well as in their contribution to digital cultures. Motivated to provide nuance by considering narratives informants have articulated themselves, I however remain accountable for the knowledge produced on ethnic minority youths’ digital identification

in this study. I deconstruct the label of Moroccan-Dutchness below to provide a situated account of the experiences that informants may have.

Deconstructing labels

The category Moroccan-Dutchness needs to be unpacked carefully to recognize it is not an a-historical, homogeneous, singular label. For instance the social categories of ethnicity, language, gender, social stratification, education, living conditions, generation and religion intersect differently. Moroccan-Dutch people are the second-largest minority group in the Netherlands, following those of Turkish-Dutch background. Consisting of 355.883 people, those of Moroccan-Dutch descent make up some 2.1 percent of the total Dutch population of 16.6 million (CBS, 2011a; Verweij & Bijl, 2012, p. 244).¹⁴ Of this group, 47 percent migrated to the Netherlands from the 1960s onwards as guest workers, while the other 53 per cent were born in the Netherlands, after their parents had migrated (CBS, 2011c).¹⁵

The 1960s form an important turning point in Dutch migration history, as the focus on colonial migration shifted towards guest workers the Dutch government recruited from various Mediterranean countries (Meijer et al, 2005, pp. vi-vii; Verweij & Bijl, 2012, p. 239). In the early '60s guest workers were mostly Spaniards, Italians and Greeks, while from the early 1970s, Turks and Moroccans outnumbered them.¹⁶ Estimations of the total number of Moroccans living in the diaspora range between 2,5 and 7 million (Loukili, 2007, p. 3). Both Moroccan migrants and the Dutch government expected guest workers to return to their countries of origin after working for a number of years. Having a job while the economic forecasts in their countries of origin looked bleak, getting better accustomed to Dutch life and accruing more rights, coupled with the realization they would not be able to return back to the Netherlands upon their departure, guest workers especially after the 1973 oil crisis increasingly sought to reunite with their family members in the Netherlands (Verweij & Bijl, 2012, p. 241). The number of mostly women and children that migrated to the Netherlands during the process of

¹⁴ The majority of this group holds Dutch citizenship, and 285344 people hold both Moroccan and Dutch citizenship (CBS, 2011b).

¹⁵ Collecting information on the country of birth of all inhabitants as well as the country of birth of both of their parents, "Statistics Netherlands is one of the few statistical offices in the world to employ a definition of the immigrant and indigenous population that includes information on the native-born descendants of migrants" (Beets, Bekke & Schoorl, 2008, p. 30).

¹⁶ An official recruitment deal between the Dutch and Moroccan governments was made in 1969, however informal migration had already commenced from the early 1960s.

family reunion migration exceeds the number of guest workers (Lucassen, 2005, pp. 428-433).

The majority of guest workers who arrived in the Netherlands originate from the northern Morocco Rif area. They come from places like Al Hoceima, Berkane, Nador and Oujda and their surroundings where a Berber language is spoken.¹⁷ Currently, 75% of Dutch people of Moroccan decent have ties with the Rif area. In Morocco, Berber languages hold an inferior status to the institutional Moroccan-Arabic (Darija) and French – a colonial remnant – that are dominantly used in urbanized parts of the country.¹⁸ The Moroccan-Dutch population thus consists of Moroccan Berbers and non-Berbers, speaking a combination of a Berber language and/or French and/or Moroccan-Arabic and/or Dutch. While the first language of their children, born in the Netherlands, primarily is Dutch (Cottaar & Bouras, 2009; Gazzah, 2010, p. 311).

Moroccan guest workers were mostly hired as manual labourers in factories, mines, harbours, textile industry and road construction, accepting jobs of low socio-economic status. The situation is slowly improving among their children, but Moroccan-Dutch people on average live more in small housing in relatively segregated social-economically deprived neighborhoods compared to averages in the Netherlands (Cottaar & Bouras, 2009, Gazzah, 2010, pp. 310-312; Lucassen, 2005; Van Praag & Schoorl, 2008, p. 62). Moroccan-Dutch women on average also have more children in comparison with ethnic majority Dutch women, although the generations born in the Netherlands have fewer children in comparison with those who migrated to the Netherlands (Schoorl, 2006, p. 9).¹⁹

More than 40% of second-generation youths follow higher education and it must be emphasized that this is a remarkable accomplishment; when considering a significant number of their parents were illiterate farmers who generally had received little schooling (De Valk & Crul, 2008, p. 84). The educational achievements among Moroccan-Dutch youths are lower in comparison with ethnic majority Dutch youths at this point. Dutch institutional structures, racist views as well as in-group dynamics form major obstacles to

¹⁷ Berber languages include Tarafit spoken in the northern Rif Mountains, Tasjehit in the High Atlas and Anti Atlas in southern Morocco and Tamazight in the Middle Atlas in Eastern Morocco.

¹⁸ Since the seventh century Arab invasion in Morocco that brought Sunni Islam to Morocco, Amazigh cultures and languages have been marginalized by its rulers and authorities (UNHCR, 2000). Mohamed VI, the present King of Morocco, improved Morocco's human rights record and sought to expand the boundaries to what constitutes Moroccan national identity. Recognizing Amazigh as an official state language next to Arabic, he underlined Berbers are an integral part of the Moroccan social fabric (Maddy-Weitzman, 2011, p. 157).

¹⁹ Moroccan-Dutch women on average have 3.2 children in comparison with 1.7 children among ethnic majority Dutch women (Schoorl, 2006).

the educational development of Moroccan-Dutch students. Poor second-language training, together with particular selection mechanisms consign a majority of Moroccan-Dutch students to short, mostly vocational school tracks. Unemployment is high among the group graduating from these school tracks and Moroccan-Dutch youngsters are hard hit by discrimination in the labour market (Crul & Doornik, 2003).

It has been assumed that Moroccan-Dutch girls perform better in schools in comparison with Moroccan-Dutch boys (Bouw et al., 2003; Mak, 2005, pp. 20-21; Verhagen, 2010, p. 220). In the last years, the number of Moroccan-Dutch girls graduating from educational tracks preparing for higher education and universities is growing at a faster pace in comparison with graduation rates of Moroccan-Dutch boys (CBS, 2011d). The schooling and employment dynamic gets complicated further as Moroccan-Dutch fatherhood and motherhood have been found they sometimes operate a gendered “double standard” in the socialization of their children. Daughters are encouraged to pursue an education and to enter the job market but simultaneously parents are sometimes recognized to hold on to the male breadwinner model (Pels, 2000, p. 88; Pels & De Haan, 2003). Moroccan-Dutch girls have been found to draw upon “multicultural capital” in negotiating chastity, virginity and obedience towards parents cherished within “Moroccan circles” and the peer norms of ethnic majority Dutch youth. Moroccan-Dutch youths born in the diaspora in general have been found to stake out a middle-ground between the specificities of “the Dutch individualistic society” and “the collectivistic values” which are said to characterize “Moroccan” or “Islamic culture” (D’Haenens et al, 2004, pp. 73-74, see also Buitelaar, 2002, 2007; Brouwer, 1992).

The rise of political Islam in majority Muslim countries, the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York, and the growing visibility of Islam in Europe and the Netherlands “contributed not only to the sudden realization of the Dutch that their country now hosted a substantial number of Muslims, but also the identification of these migrants in religious, rather than ethnic terms. As a result, their culture was also understood and defined as essentially Islamic” (Peters, 2006, p. 3; see also Leurs, Midden & Ponzanesi, 2012, p. 154). However, although the majority of Moroccan-Dutch people present themselves as Muslim, the way religiosity is practiced differs widely. Generational differences have been found in religious practices, as the descendants of Moroccan migrants report to attach less importance to the religious origins of their parents (Maliepaard, Lubbers & Gijsberts, 2010, p. 466-468). Islam religious practices are becoming a more private, individual experience among Moroccan-Dutch youths (Phalet

et al., 2004, p. 39). A growing number of young people do not actively practice their religiosity by carrying out religious rituals or visiting mosques but they perform being Muslim as a part of their identity. Islam is performed as a “cool” cultural imaginary (Boubekeur, 2005, p. 12), which gets united with youth cultural music styles such as rap (LeVine, 2008). Miriam Gazzah describes Islam is used as a cultural repertoire to give music, fashion, food and lifestyles “an Islamic touch” (Gazzah, 2009, p. 413). Islam is also a source of political struggle. Moroccan-Dutch girls have reported to choose to wear a headscarf in response to the politicization of Islam in the Netherlands (Gazzah, 2010, p. 312; Nabben, Yeşilgöz and Korf, 2006; Mak, 2005, pp. 86-87). In a recent survey among Muslim girls in the Netherlands, nine out of ten respondents stated to have proudly chosen to wear a headscarf, and one third for instance reported their headscarf is a “fashion statement” (Knaap, Stoepker, Wegloop, 2011, p. 40).

Two general prejudiced discourses can be said to discipline Muslim women (Peila, 2012, pp. 2-3). In the (neo-) Orientalist discourse, Muslim women, especially those wearing the hijab are represented as backward, irrational, silent and subjugated by Muslim male oppressors (Said, 1979; Afshar, 2008). In the conservative patriarchal Islamist discourse, women are also essentialized, albeit differently. This discourse foregrounds the role reserved for Western women as sex-objects and places it in contrast with the rights granted to Muslim women within their families by Islam (Peila, *ibid.*).

A focus on everyday practices brings more nuance, for example 16-year-old Naoul shares: “*I follow my own path*”. Similarly Loubna, a 14-year-old interviewee, illustrates that sweeping remarks should be treated with ambivalence. She reports a variety of experiences in her personal autonomy and radius of action:

in terms of culture, my background is Moroccan, but I do go out and visit the cinema, I go to the city and buy clothes. Those are things I also love.

In sum, it is impossible to speak of a singular and homogeneous label of Moroccan-Dutchness, as various divisional lines position individuals differently. Similarly, I recognize that the ethnic majority label of Dutchness must also be critically unpacked to reveal its constructedness around notions of Calvinism, secularized Judeo-Christian traditions, the Dutch language and whiteness.²⁰ The fierce debates spurred by a

²⁰ Halleh Ghorashi argues that “the Dutch notion of national identity is exclusive and thick”, as she argues that it is constructed on the basis of “a common understanding of Dutchness based on color, ‘roots’, and certain codes of behavior that excludes difference” (2002, p. 179). As Baukje Prins puts it “the essential

recent speech held by Dutch Princess Máxima, born in Argentina, reveal that the category of Dutchness is neither a-historical nor homogeneous. In the speech she spoke about her personal search to find “the Dutch identity”: “It has been seven years since I started my personal search for the Dutch identity. I had the help of dozens of generous and wise experts.” She notes that “*the* Dutch identity however? No, I didn’t find it”. Rather, she emphasized her multilayered identity: “I have different loyalties and I am a citizen of the world a European and a Dutchwoman” and claims “human identity and affiliation cannot be fenced off.” She concludes by stating “the Netherlands is too complex to sum up in one cliché”.²¹ Princess Maxima was strongly criticized for claiming – from an elite position – that there is no singular, bounded Dutch identity. Having the luxury to be able to define her own position, she first deconstructs Dutchness and subsequently chooses her own categories. Criticizing Maxima’s speech, right wing anti-immigration politicians expressed their fears over Muslim migrants not assimilating enough into “the Dutch national identity” and changing the traditional fabrics of Dutch society.²² Thus, labels such as “Moroccan-Dutch” and “Dutch” are inherently political. Although Maxima has pointed at their socially constructed fabrics, categories are strategically used as each others opposites. The terms are used to normalize a particular set of hierarchical power relations, for instance right-wing anti-Islam politicians define ethnic majority Dutchness by emphasizing Islam cannot be a part of it. The power of

trait of Dutch identity is assumed to be its non-identity, its fluidity, its openness to ‘others’”. However, she adds “by assuming that Dutchness is an unmarked (but actually Western, Dutch, white, etc.) category, a subject position that does not strike the eye because it does not differ from modern culture in general, it turns out to coincide with what is considered the norm or normal. Hence, everything non-Dutch gets marked as ‘other’, as different from the norm” (1997, p. 126).

²¹ These excerpts were taken from a speech Princess Máxima held on September 24, 2007 to celebrate the release of a study on Dutch national identities by the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR). In her speech, she foregrounds that people do not embody a singular Dutch identity but they rather identify with the Netherlands, a process that “leaves room for development. And for diversity”. She explains her argument by arguing her personal identification is multilayered “I do not know what it is like to be a Dutchwoman... Buenos Aires, New York, Brussels, The Hague, Wassenaar... Different places and the people who live there have become a part of my life”. Also she stresses the economic potential of an ethnic diverse society. She emphasized people in the Netherlands think too much according to divisional lines “birds of a feather flock together. But the Netherlands is not like the zoo Artis. Diversity and mixing give us strengths” (my translations from Dutch, RVD, 2007).

²² Critiques of this speech also mark the gradual demise of earlier Dutch multicultural policies oriented towards welcoming newcomers by allowing them to retain cultural heritages. Initially, different cultural affiliations were not seen as conflicting with one’s ability to integrate and participate in Dutch society. Neo-realist politicians dismissed this policy as a failure. Proponents of the earlier policies were increasingly framed as elite politicians who were unable to recognize the “the Dutch people’s” concerns and fears of “strangers”. The years between 1950 and 1970 have been recognized as a period of non-intervention. From the 1980s onwards multiculturalism policies of “integration whilst retaining one’s own culture” were oriented towards emancipation by improving the social, economic and legal positions of migrants. Policies have changed and newcomers now have to abide by strict requirements; they are increasingly forced to assimilate and relegate their ethnic/religious migrant cultural heritages to the private domain (Prins, 2002, see also Scheffer, 2007; Van der Stoep, 2009; Verweij & Bijl, 2012, pp. 240-245).

definition is used to create an opposition between Dutchness and Islam. In the next section I shift from highlighting the societal relevance of this study to charting out its academic aims.

3. Transdisciplinary interventions

Rather than moving beyond or against disciplines, transdisciplinarity has been defined in gender studies as a reflexive discussion of an interdisciplinary research endeavor (Lykke, 2011; Hornscheidt & Baer, 2011). Discussing main points of departure that were integrated from different disciplinary approaches, I reflect in this section on the interventions this study seeks to make into different disciplinary canons. I bring together and take cues from a wide body of critical theories including new media and digital culture studies, feminist technoscience and postcolonial theory. Finding a middle ground between utopian and dystopian perspectives on information and communication technologies, I refine these theories by focusing on how issues of identity, gender and ethnicity are negotiated through the circulation of discursive digital materials. My in-between standpoint situates Internet use in lived, everyday and embodied interaction where the social and the technological mutually construct each other. Gender studies and postcolonial theories are attentive to social injustices, the reproduction of unevenness as well as agency and empowerment. Together with new media studies tools, I strike a balance between celebrating digital practices either as an emancipatory participatory culture or dismissing it as commercially valuable but disempowering user behavior. Bringing these perspectives together contributes to a richer understanding of digital media in its relationship with migration issues, identity dynamics and global youth consumer culture.

Internationalizing new media studies: Digital media and migration

Digital media and migration are two chief pillars of cultural globalization (Appadurai, 1996). However, the links between the two are under theorized and are in need of more situated research. Following pleas to “de-Westernize” and “internationalize” media studies and Internet studies (Park & Curran, 2000; Thussu, 2009; Goggin & McLelland, 2009), communication and (new) media scholars have recently gained an interest in accounting for migration issues.²³ This study makes an intervention in those fields by

²³ The following anthologies and monographs signal an emerging trend: *Diasporas in the new media age* edited by Alonso and Oiarzabal (2010), *Transnational lives and the media* edited by Bailey, Georgiou and Harindranath (2007), *Digital Diasporas: Identity and transnational engagement* by Brinkerhoff (2009), *Online*

accounting for the specificity of the experiences of young people who were born in the diaspora (from the total of 43 interviewees, 39 were born in the Netherlands, while four migrated from Morocco at a young age). In earlier studies the emphasis was often on studying communication patterns among those who have migrated. The predominant focus has been on migrant people's transnational networking with friends and family members in the diaspora using Internet telephony applications such as *Skype*. Besides transnational communication, the attention in this study on the configurations of age and generation reveal that those who are born in the diaspora, remediate diaspora as a symbolic affiliation through circulating representations of transnational belonging facilitated by digital media. I thus explore how digital spaces have a specific dimension for the descendants of migrants when they are taken up to redefine and appropriate their parents' traditions in dialogue with global youth culture and cultures of immigration.

Recognizing the increasing possibility to make oneself heard through digital media technologies, Nabil Echchaibi argues that media studies' earlier focus on the representation of migrants in the host country's mainstream media must shift towards recognizing "the role of migrants as active participants and producers of alternative media outlets that help in the articulation of their diasporic experience". He recognizes the participatory character of digital culture illuminates its value "as a site where monolithic forms of cultural belonging are rejected and new hybrid ethnicities are forged" (2001, p. 295). I will argue that digital practices of Moroccan-Dutch youths raise awareness on the reconfiguration of local, transnational and global ethnic, diasporic and youth cultural belongings. They make use of digital media to symbolically and emotionally identify with their homeland Morocco, but as I will demonstrate identification incorporates a multiplicity of belonging. Therefore, transnational networking with the diaspora does not contribute to a failure of multiculturalism, as it does not preclude ethnic minorities to bond with local, national or global communities.

territories edited by Christensen, Jansson & Christensen (2011), *Digital Diaspora. A race for cyberspace* by Everett (2009), *Migration, diaspora and information technology in global societies*, edited by Fortunati, Pertierra & Vincent (2012a), *Diaspora, identity and the media* by Georgiou (2006), *Mediale migranten* by Hepp, Bozdog and Suna (2011), *Internet and migration* edited by Hunger and Kissau (2009), *Migration and new media: Transnational families and polymedia*, edited by Madianou and Miller (2012), *Media and Diaspora* (Müller and Van Gorp, 2011) and *Le migrant online* by Nedelcu (2009). An interest in migration and diaspora in relationship to (new) media has also been institutionalized, for example Sonja de Leeuw, Sandra Ponzanesi and Gloria Wekker have developed an interdisciplinary "Media and Diaspora" research line at Utrecht University. On a transnational scale conference sessions addressing the theme are organized by the "Diaspora, Migration and the Media Section" as part of The European Communication Research and Education Association (ECREA) and the "Diaspora and Media working group" as part of The International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR). The use of ICTs among migrant children and descendants of migrants however remains under-researched (Green & Kabir, 2012, p. 101).

I chose to make use of the term digital media instead of new media. The label new media is often used when generically referring to digital media such as the Internet and Internet applications, personal computers, mobile phones, portable media players, tablet computers. The prefix new however does little to capture the specificity of these media, it reveals more about how products are framed in the marketing strategy rhetoric of progress, promoting its “myths” of seductive potential that celebrate the “technological sublime” (Mosco, 2004; De Vries, 2011). Furthermore, the young people participating in this study do not know and perceive digital media as new, as they do not have a prior habitus that will interfere or make Internet applications seem new and unfamiliar.

Digitality is a fundamental characteristic of (the content circulating in) the media applications they make use of. The digital specificity of discussion forums, instant messaging applications, social networking sites and video sharing platforms is shaped by context specific social, technological and discursive configurations of multi-mediality, remediation and convergence of earlier media forms and content, a limited degree of user participation and interactivity, connectivity, networkability, intertextual and hypertext links and materiality (Bolter & Grusin, 2000; Harvey, 2011; Jenkins, 2006; Landow, 2006; Lister et al., 2009; Schäfer, 2011; Van Dijck, 2009; Verhoeff, 2012). These dynamics raise attention for the medium-specific imprint applications have on user behavior.

According to Lev Manovich, users actively “transcode” parts of their lives into a digital format. Transcoding is the result of the interplay of two “layers” of new media: the “computer” and “cultural” layer (2001, p. 46). The medium-specificities of different applications emerge at the intersection of their material characteristics, discursive contexts and the different strategies of signification users instantiate (Hayles, 2004, p. 67; Kessler, 2009, p. 194). As Lisa Nakamura specifies, scholars researching the Internet need to “meld close interface analysis with issues of identity”: the implications of medium-specificity for participatory culture need to speak back to critical theories of cultural difference to raise more awareness of the ideologies that underlie technologies (2006, p. 35). Users of digital media applications play various roles; they are differently positioned as bottom-up producers of representations, consumers of commercially generated top-down content, as well as providers of data that is commercially monetized by platform owners. In the section below I set out how I build on theoretical touchstones from feminist and postcolonial technoscience to carry out an innovative

mapping of an understudied young ethnic-minority population whose contribution to digital culture is not well understood.

Balancing utopian and dystopian perspectives

Sonia Livingstone calls for shifting away from having “great expectations” of ICTs – by avoiding the traps of either celebrating the beneficial role of the Internet in the everyday lives of young people and moral panics over their damage and harm (especially for girls) – towards acknowledging the “challenging realities” of their Internet use (2009). The categories of “youth” and “new technology”, Julian Sefton-Green argues, “are often yoked together in discussions about the nature of contemporary social change”, installing teleological assumptions about progress and development, “yet rarely are these shared notions of the future analyzed together” (1998, pp. 1-2). In parallel, “[f]eminism has long been conflicted”, Judy Wajcman notes “about the import of technology on women, torn between utopian and dystopian visions of what the future may hold” (2004, p. 3). Two key conceptual extremes – distinguished here as the utopian and the dystopian perspectives – can be identified in the new media and feminist literature on digital embodiment.

The utopian conceptualization theorizes embodiment online as a malleable signifier. Gender and also ethnicity, age, and looks can be alternatively fabricated in cyberspace. Universal, liberating and unbounded cyberspace is imagined as an oasis disconnected from the offline world. In contrast, criticizing the utopian promise of the collapse of difference, the dystopian approach emphasizes neoliberal, default white, masculine, middle-class and heteronormative structuring forces. Under the influence of corporate interests, the Internet is fragmented into separated platforms where user-generated-content (UGC) as a form of freely provided labor is restricted, channeled and monetized.

Similar to offline life, embodiment is however not singularly radical and transformative, and structures bound behavior but they can be strategically negotiated. There is always room for appropriation and subversion, but online interaction also always remains pre-structured, based to a certain extent on programmers’ decisions and value-laden algorithms: “people do not need a passport to travel in cyberspace but they certainly do need to play by the rules in order to function electronically” (Ponzanesi,

2001, p. 405). Staking out an in-between position inspired by feminist and postcolonial²⁴ studies of science and technology, my aim is to look beyond the exaggerated celebration and panic by considering digital identity construction as a situated spatial practice that is actively woven into the fabrics of everyday life.²⁵ Furthermore, although postcolonial studies “has been notoriously absent from electronic media practice, theory, and criticism” (Fernández, 1999, p. 59), the field provides critical vocabularies for an innovative mapping that is attentive to how hierarchical power relations impact upon the everyday articulation of structures.²⁶ Emile Noelle Ignacio specifies that “[b]oth computer-mediated-communication (CMC) and postcolonial scholars analyze the creation and re-creation of identity”, however these discourses have not spoken to each other “because their reasons for studying identity transformation are different” (2006, p. 184). Bringing together media scholars’ focus on the medium-specific imprint on identity construction with a commitment to social justice fostered by reading practices of feminist and postcolonial theory, I consider spatial forms of digital embodiment as a mutually constituted locus of struggle revealing processes of domination, subordination and contestation.²⁷

Assessing the politics of ethnic minority youths’ embodiment and identity formation across various Internet spaces, I ground my middle-ground perspective in the “spatial turn” that is finding resonance across the humanities and social sciences (Shome, 2003; Soja, 2009; Warf & Arias, 2009). As Barney Warf and Santa Arias argue “*where*

²⁴ People of Moroccan migrant descent have a colonial relationship with Europe, as Spanish and French colonizers divided Morocco in a Spanish and French protectorate in 1912. Morocco gained independence from France in 1956. Spanish enclaves Ceuta and Melilla, established in the 15th century, remain in place in Northern Morocco. In the Netherlands, guest workers and their descendants are re-grounded in Dutch history and its previous colonial exploitation of non-white peoples and in contemporary uneven transnational flows of capitalism. The Dutch empire consisted of colonized overseas territories such as parts of Sri-Lanka, Indonesia and Malaysia in Asia; South Africa and Ghana in Africa; and Surinam, Sint-Maarten, Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire in the Caribbean. Postcolonial studies is furthermore taken up as a critical reading practice to reflect upon contemporary neo-colonial relations of uneven globalization and domination.

²⁵ According to Liesbeth van Zoonen everyday life “has become a major concern in contemporary cultural and feminist theory” because it is “the site where the concrete articulation of structures takes place” (1994, p. 107).

²⁶ Raka Shome and Radha Hedge argue in their introduction to a special issue on postcolonial studies in *Communication Theory* that “the politics of postcoloniality is centrally imbricated in the politics of communication” and a “postcolonial move” they feel, “enables the bridging of between multiple questions, issues, places, histories and even disciplines” (2002, p. 249, 267). According to Lawrence Grossberg postcolonial studies of communication acknowledge “the complex and multiple ways in which people can be and are located within structures of identification and modes of belonging” (2002, p. 369).

²⁷ Jaishree Odin notes “[i]t is postcolonial discourse that brings out the politics of embodiment and shows us most clearly that bodies do not exist in transparent space” (2011, p. 55), and in particular I employ this perspective to remain “alert not only to the racially determined exploitative conditions of globalized ICT labor, but also to the emancipatory potential of cyber cultures” (Nayar, 2010, p. 163).

things happen is critical to knowing *how* and *why* they happen” (2010, p. 1). Space dynamically materializes and structures behavior at the interplay of how hierarchical social relations distribute bodies and how bodies position themselves (Foucault, 1980; Lefebvre, 1991; Said, 1994; Grosz, 1995; Puwar, 2004; Soja, 2010). Edward Soja specifically urges to scrutinize the spatial creation of injustices (2010), and I extend this spatial consciousness to digital practices. From the critical spatial perspective of space invaders, digital spaces are not mere mute, neutral and external backdrops of identity formation, but distinct expressive cultures filled with ideologies, hierarchies and politics.

Encouraged by unrivalled financial opportunities, the market economy expands its reach and weight across the Web. Internet applications are increasingly setup and controlled by private enterprise transforming more and more patches of digital space into “walled gardens” (Zittrain, 2008). This development can be seen as a 21st century parallel to the mid 19th century arcades or pedestrian passageways (“passages” in French) that emerged in Brussels, Bologna and Paris among other places. Historically, the term arcade refers to a pedestrian passageway that links two streets. Unlike public space, this glass, iron or brick roofed passage is open at both ends and concentrates a row of commercial establishments (shops, cafés, restaurants) in a small space. Walter Benjamin describes passages as follows:

These arcades, a recent invention of industrial luxury, are glass-roofed, marble-panelled corridors extending through whole blocks of buildings, whose owners have joined together for such enterprises. Lining both sides of the corridors, which get their light from above, are the most elegant shops, so that the arcade is a city, a world in miniature, in which customers will find everything they need.

– Walter Benjamin (1999, p. 32)

Such commercial pedestrian corridors bring together “a world in miniature”, not only is it a space where commodities are exchanged but it is also a comfortable urban environment where people find shelter from bad weather, observe others, do window-shopping, stroll around and spend their time in an enjoyable way. Internet applications like *YouTube* and *Facebook* also offer its users an enjoyable miniature world, that at times works as a shelter from undesired external circumstances and can be used to observe others and do (window) shopping. However, they too were created for purposes of profit. As digitized passageways, Internet applications offer advertisers a chance to market their products and monitor consumer preferences. Taking digital space as an explanatory focus, I explore new ways of thinking about digital identity and the politics of difference. I carry out a critical cartography of digital practices to unravel how the

local, transnational and global are lived, represented, commodified and reconfigured on a daily basis and how gender, ethnicity and diaspora continue to be reconstituted every time people articulate themselves across digital territories.

Embedding offline identities online

Recent research has indicated that migrant and ethnic minority people's national identities are not erased with the intensification and spatial-temporal changes resulting from the flows of people, media and technologies across national borders and the global commodification of culture. For instance Daniel Miller and Don Slater document that Trinidadians in the diaspora articulate national belonging online as a form of cultural identification. "Being Trini" involves showing core symbols such as the Trinidadian flag and national anthem on personal homepages and circulating Trini-style jokes, idioms and images of Trinidadian personalities as well as Caribbean carnival pictures. They sum up that "by virtue of being global the Internet can gift people back their sense of themselves as special and particular" (2000, p. 5). Neil Blair Christensen conducted fieldwork among indigenous Inuit peoples inhabiting Arctic regions. He notes their contemporary online embedding of a multi-referential negotiation of personal, local, cultural and national Inuit identities, leading him to dismiss the transcendental, disembodied potential of the web: "Inuit still embed their local identity and culture despite all the fragmentation and disembodiment reported in postmodern literature" (2003, p. 110). Typically, however, these studies lack an explicit scrutiny of how minoritarian subjects negotiate the reproduction of hierarchical offline power relations in their encounter with pre-configured settings, meanings and socially-culturally constructed ideologies across digital media spaces.

Digital media platforms are understood here as socially produced spaces that all have their own particular regulatory mechanisms. In these social spaces, situated individuals perform their personal and collective identities. Nuancing utopian and dystopian views, I extend the analytical lens of space invaders to render visible how dynamically produced economic, social, cultural and political mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion re-configure normative templates of being in digital spaces. Accounting for both negative experiences of exclusion and unbelonging and positive experiences of agency and empowerment, I disentangle digital practices as co-constructed by digital space specific user norms, application templates and interface decisions as well as their subversions.

During fieldwork for instance it became apparent that in computer game culture, the tide of anti-immigrant feelings is perpetuated online. From the experiences of interviewees Ryan and Oussema, I learned that computer game culture is structured by mainstream Dutch normative ways of being. 15-year-old Oussema shared that he often encounters racism and stigmatization in video games, underlining how these processes are not restricted to the offline world where, for instance, he witnesses how people anxiously keep a firm grip on their purses when encountering him in the supermarket.

In the first-person shooter game *Counter Strike*, players have the opportunity to talk to each other through their microphones and headsets. Sometimes, when asked to introduce himself by people in the game, after saying, *"I am a Moroccan, I am a Muslim"*, Oussema finds ethnic majority Dutch opponents cursing him out and calling him a *"terrorist"*. 15-year-old Ryan explains that he is accepted as a gamer, because he argues he does *"not look like a Moroccan"*, in the sense that he is seen as *"very different from what normal Moroccan youths in my school do, they mostly use MSN, YouTube and listen to music"*. He *"mostly only plays games on the computer"*, and he feels gaming is more *"Dutch culture"* as it is mostly *"Dutch kids who play games"*. He is accepted, as he backgrounds Moroccan affiliations during in-game interaction using voice-chat programs like *Skype* or *Teamspeak*: *"when I talk I do not appear to be Moroccan"*. On his *Hyves* profile page he also subverts the dominant image of Moroccan-Dutch youths: *"when someone sees me there, they say I do not look like a Moroccan, but obviously I am one, but I do not let it show"*. Masking his Moroccanness, Ryan passes as an ethnic majority Dutch boy.²⁸

Ryan's act of passing acts offers self-protection but also reflects his desires to be accepted by the majority group (Sánchez & Schlossberg, 2001). Nakamura notes that "racial impersonation" is a form of passing that "reveals a great deal about how people 'do' race online". However, she argues that passing does keep the foundations of dominant exclusionary, white national identities intact (2002, pp. xvi, 37). The ambivalence of passing is elaborated by postcolonial theorists like Homi Bhabha, who recognizes processes of passing as "mimicry". Mimicry offers camouflage and can become a site of resistance and transgression. The other achieves "partial presence" by passing for something one is not and "becoming a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite" (1994, pp. 122-123). Ryan does so by strategically employing

²⁸ Choosing the pseudonym Ryan also can be seen as an act of passing, as he did not chose for a Moroccan or Dutch but an English given name. Ryan is mostly used in English speaking countries, and it is derived from an Irish surname (Parentsconnect, 2012).

dominant cultural repertoires and making less visible the ways he diverts from majority norms while emphasizing resemblances.

What these examples showcase is that the terrains of digital territories are hierarchical passaways, they are uneven geographies marked by symbols and discursive borders (Christensen et al, 2011a). Young, white, masculine and middle-class bodies participating in mainstream digital spaces produce and occupy certain ideal types and mainstream reserved positions, but this study will show how ethnic minorities can begin to de-stabilize representational hierarchies by digitally manifesting themselves across different online territories. Moroccan-Dutch youths have for instance set up forum discussion sites such as *Marokko.nl* where they negotiate ethnic identities and can say what cannot be said in the mainstream public sphere. Because of the alternative voices that can be aired there, ethnic minority youths appreciate these discussion sites. This corner of the Internet is used by Moroccan-Dutch youths to discuss and reframe dominant images circulating in news media. As 16-year-old Nevra argues on *Marokko.nl*, participants “*can say what they want, and they can show it is not all bad*”. Digital spaces are thus best considered as part of everyday, real-life, uneven power relations, where offline and online spheres infuse each other with meaning. When articulating oneself digitally, the digital practice is partly inscribed by commercial interests-driven medium-specific affordances and restrictions, partly interpellated in mainstream discursive societal norms, and partly shaped by the users’ action.

In paying close attention to how various axes of differentiation impact differently upon Moroccan-Dutch youths’ digital cultural identifications across Internet applications, I diversify earlier scholarship on the roles of technologies during girlhood and boyhood. Mia Consalvo reflects on the history of feminist studies of technology summarizing that the focus “has tended to include mostly younger, technologically savvy women, and those from Western, white, middle-class backgrounds” (2003, p. 108). The situation did not change much in the last decade, large numbers of young people remain voiceless, as claims of universal girl culture are based on generalizations of middle-class, white, western girls. Furthermore, a focus on girls has left the voices of boys understudied (Lemish, 2010, p. ix). However, as Meenakshi Gigi Durham substantiates, shifting the focus is pressing to account for our diverse societies: “in an increasingly multicultural society, where racial and ethnocultural divisions are complicating the social picture, there is a great need for research that offers a contextually nuanced exploration” (2004, p. 143). A greater understanding of the multiple ways identifications vary and overlap is called

for. I use the concept of intersectionality as a theory and methodology to unravel how gender, ethnicity, diaspora, religion and youth cultures, differently color how informants come to age in digital practices.

Rather than assuming digital and offline realms are dichotomously separated worlds, the everyday embeddedness of Internet spaces in the negotiation of identity and belonging is a key perspective informing this study. The Internet, taken as an extension and reproduction of offline lived experience therefore enables me to witness how digital passages reveal how gender, ethnicity, generation, diaspora and youth cultures interact in the differential coloring and strategic deployment of selfhood. Also I explicitly address continuities and discontinuities by considering everyday crossings between online and offline practices. These passages show how Moroccan-Dutch youths' define themselves as individuals with unique identities situated within the context of global representations of youth culture and in dialogue with familial, socio-cultural and religious norms and expectations I described in the first section of this chapter.

4. Structure of the book

The rationale of this book is to present a cartography of Moroccan-Dutch youths' performative practices of identification across different social spaces on the Internet. The argument is organized around four case studies. In each of the case studies one application is singled out and grasped through a conceptual lens to account for the specificities of digital cultural identification processes in that particular digital media space. Throughout the analyses, points of overlap, convergences, as well as differences across the spaces are noted. Guided by results from questionnaires completed by 344 Moroccan-Dutch participants and Internet maps drawn by 43 informants I interviewed, four of their favorite Internet spaces were chosen for analysis: forums, instant messaging, social networking sites and video sharing platforms. In chapter three, the focus is on collective text-based identification, voice and publics in online forums like *Marokko.nl*. Chapter four details the use of instant messaging software for text-based personal and private identification. Chapter five deals with visual representations and hypertextual linking practices in social-networking sites like *Hyves*. Chapter seven considers viewing videos and listening to music on *YouTube* that spur affective belongings.

The chapters are arranged in chronological order, the use of online discussion forums originates in the early 1990s, the use of mainstream instant messaging clients began to take off in the mid 1990s, social-networking sites became increasingly popular

from the early 2000s onwards, while video sharing platforms like *YouTube* became fashionable after 2005. However the rise of each new platform did not lead to the fall of older applications, and the informants frequent these different digital territories next to one another. The four spaces analyzed are not mutually exclusive but inextricably connected. User practices travel and intertextually borrow from one another, facilitated by their digital formatings that include visual, textual and audio content and forms.

By emphasizing specificities of digital practices within and across the four digital platforms, the continuities and changes that digital articulations of selfhood undergo over time and space are laid bare. Processes of digital cultural identification are observable in each space. My multi-spatial approach to identification therefore explores the different dimensions to how Moroccan-Dutch youths become space invaders as they are positioned and interpellated but also strategically and tactically take up resources across applications to make multi-axial identity claims. Acknowledging that space invasion can be both a positive and negative experience, the case studies give more body to the middle ground perspective acknowledging digital identifications as specifically spatially hailed, situated and articulated.

In chapter one I will situate myself in feminist technoscience, postcolonial and new media studies debates. Reflecting on prior scholarship, I will make a plea to address digital divides in an alternative way. Locating a middle ground between utopian dreams and dystopian panics related to identity, participation and embodiment, I propose to view identity performativity as bound but not fully determined by everyday socio-technological, material-embodied and imagined-discursive spatial relations. Ethnic minority youths' digital cultural identity practices may not meet the mainstream normative user configurations valid in a particular digital territory. When having to assert themselves against the grain they become invaders of digital locations. Their identities are not singular, neutral, stable, fixed or naturally occurring entities but are actively constructed and colored at the intersections of axis of differentiation that include gender, age, ethnicity, diaspora, religion and generation.

In chapter two the empirical research process will be demystified. By outlining the creative collision of different methodological approaches I will locate myself within the continuum of social scientists' empiricism and humanities scholars' postmodern rejections of essentialism. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, different accounts of everyday identification through digital media use can be gathered. More specifically I introduce the decisions made and difficulties encountered in gathering and triangulating

different sorts of empirical data. I combine large-scale surveys, in-depth interviews and observations of digital practices. These different partial, situated and contingent accounts allow me to construct a nuanced study. In the chapter I will discuss my efforts to avoid the pitfalls of speaking for the young informants and explain how I study digital practices and performativity of self with them. For this purpose interviewees were for instance invited to research their own digital passages by drawing Internet maps of their favorite Internet locations. Also dynamics of interviewer-interviewee positioning, shifting power relations and trust are considered. Finally, I reflect on my discursive analytical approach to the study of gathered data.

In chapter three I will argue how message boards such as *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl* are taken up to narrate collective voices and identities. These discussion boards are used to maintain a national network of Moroccan-Dutch youths. The chapter zooms in on how informants discuss their gender, ethnic and religious positioning. First I consider the specific appeal among girls by considering how message boards are taken up to negotiate gendered issues of love, relationships, marriage and sexuality. Second, I consider what informants say about their experiences of power in reflecting and articulating their collective voice with regards to the situation of the Moroccan community in the Netherlands. Considering message boards as viable subaltern counter publics, these semi-hidden discursive safe zones display how hegemonic views are contested. Third, message boards are recognized as communicative spaces used to dynamically perform versions of Islam.

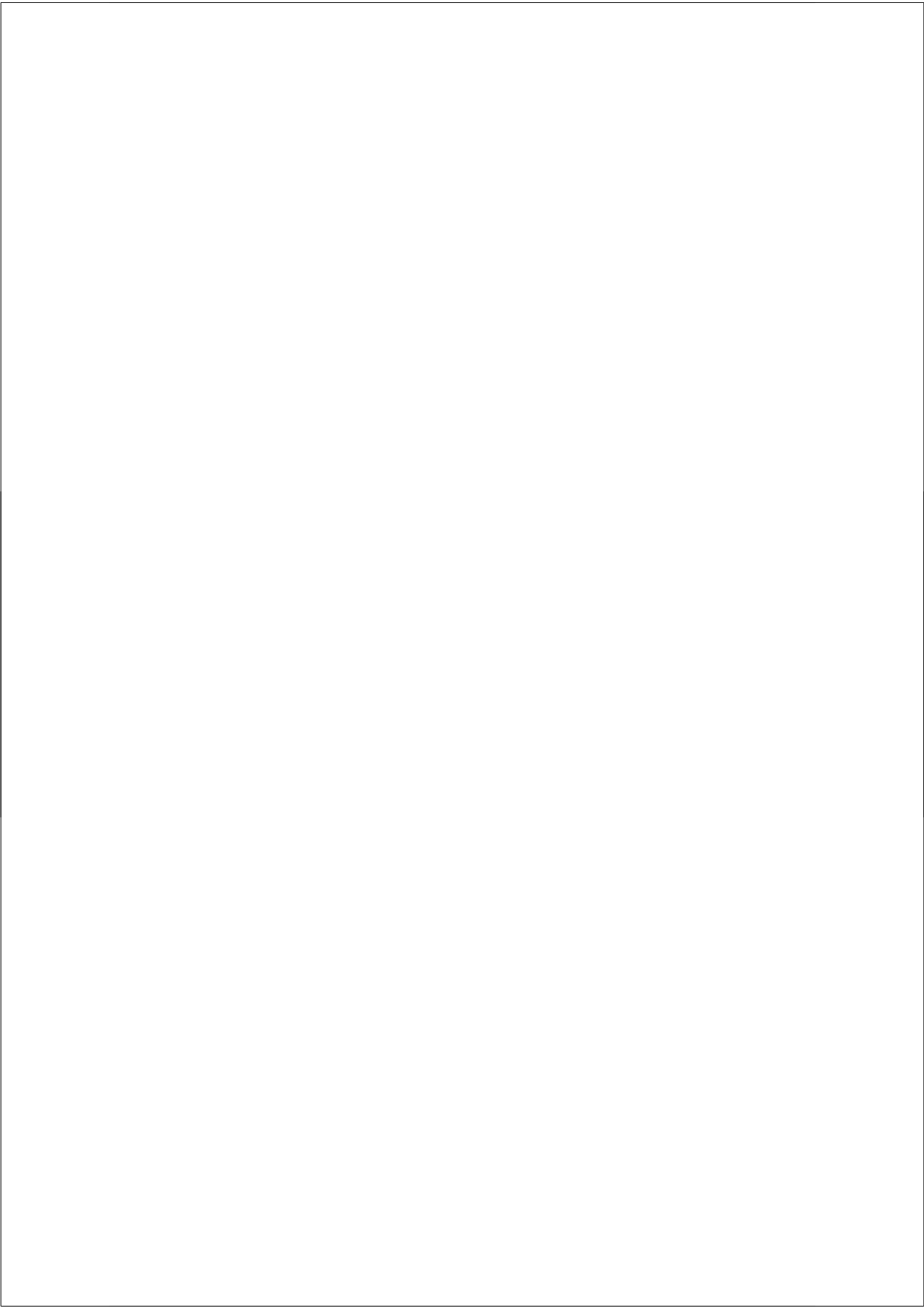
Chapter four provides a window into the private identities and personal engagements of Moroccan-Dutch teens with their peers on instant messaging (IM). Instant messaging remains a relatively understudied and under-theorized social media technology because data gathering within this private space is not straightforward. The medium-specificity of IM is recognized to structure the performativity of self both with display names in view of a full audience of contacts through which informants communicate communal ethnic, gender and youth cultural belongings to people they have added to their friend lists and as a under-the-radar activity of one-on-one chat conversations through which they articulate their individual, private and intimate identity expressions.

In chapter five the focus is on visual representations and hypertextual identifications on social networking sites. The chapter zooms in on two dimensions of visual representation. I address first how and why social-networking site profile photos

are imbued with gender and sexuality. As a way to brand the self, the particular ways of showing that get encouraged in profile photos signal specific power relations and expose forms of patriarchal subordination. Additionally I consider how hyperlinking – as a way to signal affiliations – offers the means to represent one’s multiple self and belongingness. Hypertext is taken as an optic trough which to address questions of identity differentiation and multicultural encounter. The perspective of hypertextual selves is elaborated further to innovatively map the ways in which Moroccan-Dutch youth mobilize various linked resources. Beyond institutional policies of multiculturalism, hypertextual selves exemplify how multiculturalism is a feature in young people’s daily-life conviviality of cohabitation.

In chapter six, the focus will be on affective dimensions of identification observable in interviewees’ consumption of YouTube videos. The video consumption of two genres of *YouTube* youth culture will be assessed. First, informants’ watching of Islamic and Moroccan vernacular videos of affinity is analyzed. I discern the emotional workings of these videos as a form of affective transnational networking. Subsequently, accepting that consumptive practices open up diverse subject-positions, corporate music video-clips are interpreted as resources to land global, transnational and national youth cultural flows. Affective consuming of music video geographies presents another invocation of how identities become distributed, challenging essentialist descriptions of Moroccan-Dutch youths.

In the concluding chapter I synthesize the main case-study findings, and consider broader consequences of quotidian multi-spatial digital cultural identification processes of Moroccan-Dutch youths. While navigating their selfhood between conflicting youth cultural, familial, gendered, religious and ethno-cultural motivations, digital practices expand the parameters of their social and physical worlds. By exploring whether digital forms of emancipation that I located in various corners of the Internet also crossover to the majorities in Dutch society, I consider wider implications for thinking about multiculturalism.



1. Theoretical trajectory¹



Figure 1.1 *Geweigerd.nl* website top banner (March 6, 2005).

In the year 2000, Moroccan-Dutch digital media enthusiast Abdelilah Amraoui initiated a movement in the Netherlands called *Geweigerd.nl* (in English: Denied.nl) in direct response to the discrimination among owners of club venues and discotheques who required bouncers to refuse people entrance based on their ethnicity, race or skin color. Amraoui started the website because he feels “you can now create media yourself in case you cannot find it elsewhere”. The site invited young people who felt they were wrongfully refused entry to a venue to submit their stories of being refused access. Figure 1.1 displays the logo and top banner of the *Geweigerd.nl* website, containing logos combining (in) famous Dutch clubs with stop-signs and an animation which shows the “top five of bouncer excuses” such as “this is not a multicultural event”.² Submitted personal experiences were published on the site. Collecting personal stories of mainly frustrated Dutch ethnic minority youths, Amraoui hoped to engage in dialogue with those places of entertainment that were often mentioned by site visitors in order to renegotiate their admission policies. The issue received wider attention after Amraoui collaborated with the nationally famous Moroccan-Dutch rapper Ali B. in the release of the song similarly titled *Geweigerd.nl* that also scrutinized unfair and discriminating admission policies. As a way of introducing the ways I align myself theoretically, the example of *Geweigerd.nl* can be unpacked. The example illustrates how Moroccan-Dutch youths³ become invaders of digital space. Similar to how ethnic minority youths are

¹ Parts of this chapter have been published as Leurs, K. (2012). Migrant youth invading digital spaces: Intersectional performativity of self in socio-technological networks. In R. Gajalla & Yeon, J.O. (Eds.), *Cyberfeminism 2.0*, (pp. 285-304). New York, NY: Peter Lang and Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (2011). Mediated crossroads: Youthful digital diasporas. *M/C Journal*, 14(2), np.

² The other four most frequently mentioned excuses shown can be translated into English as: “there is a dress code”, “sorry, members only”, “there are already plenty of your sort [of people] inside”, “only if you hold a member pass”.

³ The self-definitional label “Moroccan-Dutch” was deliberately chosen among the majority of the informants when asked how they would introduce their ethnic background to others. I use the hyphenated label to indicate I move away from essentialism and acknowledge the hybrid dynamic of identification. I

unwelcome at certain entertainment venues because they are not holding “a multicultural event”, they may also not fit the criteria of default user templates on Internet applications, nor the norms and expectations that have shaped Internet applications.

Nirmal Puwar looks at spaces where minoritarian bodies are considered to be “out of place”, noting they become “space invaders” of locations where they are not expected to dwell (2004). Rephrasing Puwar, I theorize what happens when Moroccan-Dutch youths “take up ‘privileged’ positions” across digital spaces “which have not been ‘reserved’ for them, for which they are not, in short, the somatic norm” (2004, p. 1). My journey through intellectual terrains is transdisciplinary. Building on gender studies⁴ and in particular feminist technoscience,⁵ postcolonial studies,⁶ and new media studies⁷ I develop in this chapter the theoretical underpinnings of spatial forms of digital identity performativity to frame my main research question: how are digital media applications used by Moroccan-Dutch youths to position themselves between cultures of origin, youth cultures and cultures of immigration and how are issues of gender, ethnicity and religion negotiated and articulated?

I bring my own expectations, frameworks and values to the ways I consider, describe and characterize human beings and the role of technologies in their lives. This chapter is central to a creative, critical, and engaged research project as I develop the theoretical toolbox to complete a critical cartography of the performativity of selves of

am aware of the two territories that are implicated with the use of the hyphen, but the label is used to signal my understanding of fragmented, hybrid, nonunitary and processual character of identification. I follow Bhabha who argues that if “the act of cultural translation (both as representation and as reproduction) denies the essentialism of a prior given originary culture, then we see that all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity. But for me the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges, rather hybridity to me is the ‘third space’ which enables other positions to emerge” (1990, p. 211). In this study I argue that belonging to Moroccan and Dutch culture are two of the multiplicity of affiliations informants express.

⁴ Gender studies is an “unorthodox” and “transformatory practice” which acknowledges the structuring principle of gender across global and local societal and cultural settings. Furthermore it seeks to carry out research differently, dismantling unequal power relations: “intersections with race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, nationality and so on are best developed in transnational and interdisciplinary dialogues which take into account both common ground and differences, and which pay thorough attention to power differentials” (Buikema, Griffin & Lykke, 2011, p. 2, 7).

⁵ Feminist technoscience approaches human-computer interactions as heterogeneous assemblages, where some subjects enjoy privilege while others are underprivileged (Leurs, 2012). It combines post-structuralist approaches with attention for materiality by arguing “discursive and material aspects of sociotechnical relations and processes of materialization are inextricably intertwined” (Åsberg and Lykke, 2010, p. 299).

⁶ Following Bart Moore-Gilbert, postcolonial studies can be seen as a “set of reading practices” that assist “analysis of cultural forms which mediate, challenge or reflect upon the relations of domination and subordination- economic, cultural and political, between (and often within) nations, races or cultures which characteristically have their roots in the history of modern European colonialism and Imperialism, and which equally characteristically continue to be apparent in the present era of neo-colonialism (1997, p. 12).

⁷ Building on fields like performance art, literary theory, film studies, new media studies is concerned with reflecting on the philosophical, political, material and societal implications of everyday use of new media and participation in digital culture (Boomen et al., 2009).

Moroccan-Dutch youths across digital spaces.⁸ I argue that identity performativity in digital space is the result of a complex process of socio-technological, material-embodied and imagined-discursive interactions. Combining insights from feminist, postcolonial and new media theory I unravel this process over the course of this chapter.

Below, I will first introduce my deployment of the notion of space invaders, plea for greater awareness of digital gaps and unequal participation in digital cultures and set out how the idea of space invaders is helpful to render visible various dimensions to the experiences of Moroccan-Dutch youths traversing digital spaces. In the following section I outline possibilities and constraints technology users experience when transcoding socio-demographic differences. Building on critical theories of space and feminist and postcolonial technoscience I carve out a middle-ground position to account for how everyday users are hailed and bound by but not fully determined by medium-specific characteristics, commercial incentives and user norms. Subsequently I underline how identities are not singular, stable, fixed or naturally occurring entities but are actively constructed and made, at the intersections of axis of differentiation that include gender, age, ethnicity, diaspora, religion and generation. I develop the idea that the Internet should not be seen as a neutral space, as users are interpellated into certain categories by various forces but there remains room for representational creativity and subversion.⁹ Identity performativity, observable in narratives of selfhood, conveys processes of belonging across multiple axes of identifications such as gender, sexuality, diaspora, religion and youth culture.¹⁰ Individuals negotiate between both citing societal norms and expectations and subverting them. These theoretical insights are grounded in the lives of young migrants and Moroccan-Dutch youths in particular from section four onwards.

1.1 Space invaders and digital unevenness

In this study I simultaneously operate the notion of space invaders on three levels. It is a starting point to theorize my spatial consciousness of online territories, a lens of empirical analysis and a political strategy to raise awareness and promote change. Here I

⁸ Following Rosi Braidotti, a “cartography is a theoretically based and politically informed reading of the present” to map situated and embodied social positions (2011, p. 5). More specifically, Myria Georgiou pleads for a “multi-spatial analysis” of current formations of diaspora “as communication networks and information exchange develop across various locations and they follow different directions with consequences for identity and community” (2011, p. 206).

⁹ Representation concerns the process of producing cultural signifiers through language across different types of analogue and digital texts (Hall, 1997c).

¹⁰ Youth culture demarcates both a life phase and it refers to a body of belief systems, norms, values, symbols and practices that young people of varying age can share (Gilroy, 1993b; Nayak & Kehily, 2008; Osgerby, 2004; Sefton-Green, 1998).

focus on defining space invaders as a theoretical concept. Cultural globalization, facilitated by mass migration and new digital communication technologies, still remains a very “uneven” event (Giddens, 1991, p. 75) as power relations are dispersed in “scattered hegemonies” (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994, p. 7). Unfair power relations are perpetuated along the lines of gender and ethnic divisions, leading Stuart Hall to recognize that “the colonial is not dead, since it lives on its “after-effects”” that are manifested in domains varying from an uneven international labor market to uneven media representations (1996a, p. 248). Ethnic minorities often find themselves on the wrong side of these divisions. However, by making use of digital media among other things, they also increasingly manifest themselves from within the former colonial centers: “the European borderline is now being redefined by voices which once were excluded or marginalized from its main body” (Ponzanesi & Merolla, 2005, p. 6). Once inside, migrants and ethnic minorities often have to struggle to acquire a desired position in society and to work against being othered.

In the early grand narratives, globalization got framed as a homogenizing, and time- and space annihilating force (Harvey, 1990; Giddens, 1990). However as critical geographers like Edward Soja (2010) and Doreen Massey (2005), along with communication/media studies scholars like Raka Shome (2003), Pramod Nayar (2009) and Miyase Christensen, André Jansson and Christian Christensen (2011b) argue, deterritorialization and the disappearance of place are roughly overestimated.¹¹ Massey rightly recognizes that “the really serious question which is raised by speed-up, by ‘the communications revolution’ and by cyberspace is not whether space will be annihilated but what kinds of multiplicities (patterning of uniqueness) and relations will be co-constructed within these new kinds of spatial configurations” (2005, p. 91). Soja argues for a spatial consciousness of power, urging for a scrutiny of how corporate privileges and political ideologies create and control unjust geographical hierarchies (2010). With the concept of space invaders, I extend the attention for the spatial (re-) creation of injustices to participation in digital spaces. The concept is developed to question what happens when users come to embody interactive spaces that were not necessarily set up for them and/or where unwelcoming norms are perpetuated.

¹¹ Christensen, Jansson and Christensen recognize that spaces “do not vanish or become less significant through the expansion of networked media and increasingly ephemeral flows of capital and information” (2011b, p. 1). Nayar notes “the ‘there’ of cyberspace is recursively linked to the ‘here’ of our material lives” (2009, p. 152) and Shome urges that “a focus on spatial relations of power enables scholars of communication and culture to understand and theorize the complex ways in which identities are being reproduced in our current moment of globalization” (2003, p. 39).

Space invaders

Nirmal Puwar explains that over the course of time specific bodies have become associated with professional positions in spaces such as institutions, companies, and governments. In the context of Britain, she notes, whiteness and maleness define the norm and standard. These spaces are neutral and unmarked for the white males themselves that occupy them. This unmarking is a political act, as bodies that enter these spaces are measured and excluded as “other” when they do not meet the expectations embedded within templates, scripts and “normative ways of being”. These others are thus considered “out of place”. Racialized and female bodies become “embodied differently” as they do not fit the scripts pertaining to these spaces. They become “space invaders” (2004, pp. 8, 116, 141). As they increasingly present themselves in spaces from which they were previously excluded, women and ethnic minorities may subvert the status quo but have to actively reposition themselves from within the spaces they invade.

Similarly, in the context of the Netherlands, Neo Realist discourse displays how ethnic minorities are embodied differently when entering Dutch space.¹² Spearheaded by anti-Islamic Member of Parliament Geert Wilders and his Freedom Party (PVV) “safety” is set against “immigration”, and the Dutch people are warned of “islamization” of Dutch culture by an invasion of “mass immigration of non-Western allochthones” (PVV, 2010). Through these othering processes, ethnic minorities are not seen to fully belong to nations like the Netherlands, yet they live inside of them. In the introductory chapter, I described how Nasrdin Dchar was voted the “best actor” for his role in *Rabat* at the 2011 Dutch Film Festival. Dchar as such successfully invaded a position among the leaders of the Dutch entertainment industry. In his speech he criticized how Dutch state officials consider ethnic minorities out of place in the Netherlands and he emphasized being proud not only of his Dutch background but also of his Moroccan and Muslim affiliations. The speech reveals how ethnic minorities are constructed as others who fall outside Dutch normative ways of being. This construction is energized by “physical”, “symbolic” and “material” default positions and borders (Ponzanesi and Blaagaard, 2011, p. 3). However, in his exposing of othering mechanisms in his acceptance speech, Dchar speaks from an elite position. The statement is as an example of top-down multiculturalism (Shohat & Stam, 2003, p. 6; Gilroy, 2005, p. 25).

¹² “New realism” discourse refers to right-wing politicians who were seen to finally have: “said what we were not allowed to say”: a formula used to refer to white ethnic majority Dutch people’s fear of foreigners “invading” the Netherlands and anger that emerged from their feeling that ruling politicians did not take their concerns seriously (Prins, 2002, p. 364).

The question arises as to how Moroccan-Dutch youths – who have become the primary locus of fear over ethnic and religious otherness in the Netherlands – position themselves from below in their everyday practices. As the *Geweigerd.nl* example indicates, digital spaces are one location where their voices can be found. Dana Diminescu argues that paradigmatic thinking about (the descendants of) migrants as “uprooted” should shift towards acknowledging their use of ICTs, as this is the “age of the connected migrant” (2008, pp. 567-568). Puwar developed her definition of space invaders to grasp the spatial positioning of institutionalized actors. I re-align the concept to explore the spatial configurations ethnic minority youths face when asserting their digital identities.¹³ As I set out below, a specific habitus and normative set of expectations of actions can be uncovered across digital space.¹⁴

Digital spatial norms: Shedding a new light on digital divides

By promoting awareness of spatial power distribution, space invaders is an optic intended to excavate dominant positions in/of digital media and their subversion. Inequality in/of the Internet has first and foremost been analyzed in terms of different digital divides. Scholarship on digital divides initially focused on making visible material divides across geographic scales and across markers of difference. An uneven geographical distribution in terms of ownership of hardware and access to the Internet was noted: the rich, overdeveloped parts of the world were shown to be highly connected, while underdeveloped third countries were shown to be disconnected. A similar distinction was found when comparing urban with rural areas within continents and countries. Ownership and access was also unequally spread across different axes of differentiation: younger and/or white and/or upper class males were found to be more connected versus older and/or non-white and/or lower-class females. The term digital divide is thus ideologically loaded, particular in its proposal that once the gap is closed, a “computer-revolution” will take place, spreading democracy, promoting equality and potentially ending poverty (Murelli & Okot-Uma, 2002).

¹³ Puwar developed the concept of space invaders to expose the asymmetrical power relations that perpetuate institutional spaces in Britain. I am aware that the term “invader” is contested, as it also has problematic negatively loaded connotations. For instance during the 2011 revolutions across North Africa, the Middle East and especially the war in Libya, people seeking refuge in Fortress Europe were sometimes literally framed as dangerous invaders. For instance right-wing politicians and mainstream new media spoke about Lampedusa, an Italian island off the coast of the North-African country of Tunisia as in need of being “rescued” from “invading migrants” (Reyes, 2011). The concept is deployed in this study as a strategic reversal of meaning to be conscious of how digital spatial structures and norms serve as exclusionary mechanisms that can be subverted by ethnic minority youths upon entering.

¹⁴ At the interplay of structural forces and human interplay, habitus refers to dispositions, behavior, tastes and actions that have been historically constructed as fitting a space (Bourdieu, 1984).

In the second wave of scholarship on the digital divide the focus shifted from access to the Internet and ownership of technology towards skills and literacies regarding the ability to find information. The gaps between “the information haves” and the “information have-nots” were again purported as operating at geographical and personal markers of difference (Selwyn, 2004). Policy makers and government institutions mobilized resources to provide the information have-nots with the skills for a more egalitarian distribution of knowledge (Fallis, 2007, p. 38).

This study can be seen as a plea to commence a third wave of scholarship on digital gaps. As social media applications allow more people to have a presence online, scholars need to start acknowledging unevenness in people’s contribution to digital culture (Graham, 2011). Recognizing this development is of great significance as so-called Web 2.0 Internet applications promise users to become active agents over their own representations. Users can publish user-generated-content (UGC) to transcode their identities online (Manovich, 2001, p. 46). Internet applications such as weblogs, social networking sites, video sharing platforms and online discussion forums signal the ongoing shift from people being represented by the media to people asserting self-presentation. Internet researchers have reached consensus in seeing the Internet as “an extension of life as it is, in all its dimensions, and all its modalities” (Castells, 2001, p. 118, see also Wellman & Haythornthwaite, 2002; Bakardjieva, 2005; Franklin, 2004). Following Nayar, digital territories augment material, fleshy and concrete offline lives (2009, p. 152). In tandem with offline locations, digital spaces should be seen as organized by a specific habitus and historically embedded hierarchical divisions (Kvasny, 2005). However, little attention is paid to the differentiating power dynamics of the different locations where digital culture is expressed. The lack of awareness of the spatial configurations of Internet applications is problematic because digital spaces are not neutral and/or innocent.

Examples of digital power dynamics

Across digital space, templates, norms and interface decisions reserve certain dominant gendered and racial positions. For example, figure 1.2 displays the dominant positions that the *Google Netherlands* search engine associates with “Marokkanen” (the Dutch word for Moroccans). The “auto-complete” search query suggestions that *Google* provides appear automatically upon typing “Marokkanen” in the search box. The auto-complete algorithm offers searches in a drop-down list, predicting behavior based on queries typed

previously by *Google* users (Google, 2012).¹⁵ The suggestions reveal some of the ways Moroccan-Dutch youths are allocated racialized positions in digital space. The first, third and ninth suggestion are “moroccan jests”, “moroccan jokes” and “moroccan problem gouda”. The *Google* auto-search complete example demonstrates how ethnic minorities are algorithmically categorized and allocated positions of negative hypervisibility.

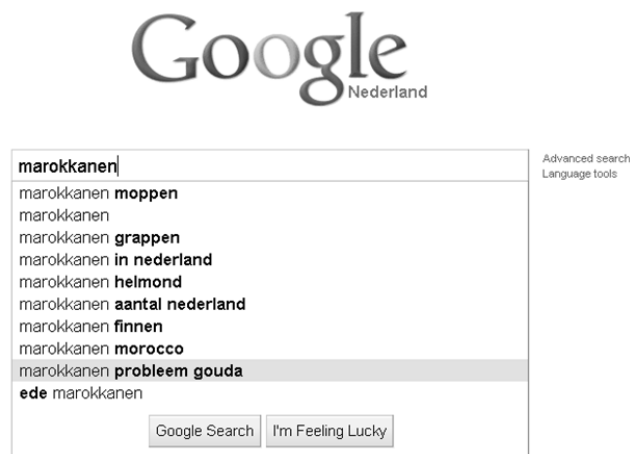


Figure 1.2 *Google.nl* search “Marokkanen” (October 20, 2011).

For example the “Moroccan problem in Gouda” suggestion refers to a small number of Moroccan-Dutch youths that were found guilty of snowballing incidents and a number of serious criminal offences (Leijendekker, 2010). Their mishaps have received a disproportional level of media exposure, and *Google* too makes this issue more visible above others. With 9.2% of the population, the city of Gouda has the largest population of Moroccan-Dutch people of any city in the Netherlands, but with the auto-complete suggestion the emphasis on negative incidents related to the Moroccan-Dutch population in Gouda is reinforced. The similar observation holds for the suggestions on “moroccan jests” and “jokes” that provide offensive racist jokes. This way, the auto-complete algorithm (which is partly based on the search-term popularity among prior users) exemplifies sedimented ideas that emphasize particular associations and stereotypes of

¹⁵ The other auto-complete suggestions include references to cities in the Netherlands, translations, and “the number of Moroccans in the Netherlands”. The search was carried out in a *Mozilla Firefox* browser, without being logged in to a *Google* account and without having searched for the topic earlier. The results do thus not present my earlier search behavior or that of my Internet contacts. Eli Pariser has argued that search engine algorithms aimed at giving results based on one’s prior and one’s friends search preferences causes users to become trapped in a “filter bubble”: they have a smaller chance of finding information that would contradict or expand their worldviews (2011).

Moroccan-Dutch people rather than others. danah boyd similarly describes that when for instance searching for the name “Mohammed” *Google* auto-complete suggestions provide suggestions related to Islamic extremism and terrorism. She defines this process as a form of “guilt through algorithmic association”, as the search suggestions for Mohammed exemplify how people can be “algorithmically associated with practices, organizations, and concepts that paint them in a problematic light” (2011, np.).

The auto-complete example reminds us that digital space is not neutral but power-ridden. A platform on the “Internet hails its audiences”, in a way that is similar to how non-digital environments are intended for particular groups of people (Nakamura & Lovink, 2005, p. 61). These ideologies may be perpetuated in commercial algorithms, but participants of digital culture also constitute them themselves. In the introductory chapter for instance, I described how Oussema, a 15-year-old informant, was labeled a terrorist when he spoke about his Moroccan and Muslim backgrounds with fellow players in the game *Call of duty: Black Ops*. Ethnic minority youths may thus be hailed as users that do not fit the template of the intended normative user, hence they become space invaders.¹⁶

Still, seemingly against all odds, ethnic minorities and migrants actively make interventions in digital space for instance by appropriating information flows. For example, on the level of the state, border technologies are becoming more and more advanced but can also be hacked and appropriated. With the help of monitoring, tracing and surveillance technologies, the borders of Fortress Europe are increasingly policed against unwanted migrants in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York. Ethnically marked others are labelled as trespassing. However, technologies of communication, travel, and surveillance including low-cost telephone, fax, and encrypted e-mail communication are used by migrants to outwit state border patrols (Verstraete, 2007, pp. 119-120). Additionally, claiming their own media space, diasporic websites have been set up to contest “misperceptions” and “mobilize external political support” (Karim, 2010, p. 165).¹⁷ Said Graiouid in his research on Internet cafés in Morocco reveals that unemployed young people search for alternative possibilities online, as “[s]tories about Moroccan young men and women who encountered their spouses in

¹⁶ Following Louis Althusser, “hailing” or “interpellation” is a calling to participate in a particular form of ideology. This calling invites the addressee to embrace an ideology. In this case it concerns users having to make do with ideologies circulating in Internet applications (Gray, 2005, np).

¹⁷ As a matter of fact, Karim H. Karim argues, “ethnic media have frequently been at the cutting edge of technology adoption owing to the particular challenges they face in reaching their audiences” (2010, p. 164).

chatrooms and who now enjoy the status of legal residents in Europe or North America constitute an important body of Moroccan youth culture” (2005, p. 72). These strategies of resistance and appropriation serve as a reminder that digital space is not a parallel, separate world disconnected from everyday concerns; rather it is re-grounded offline as an extension of everyday life. Identities, bodies, ideologies and technologies are thus entangled in distinct ways.

In this study I map out the online transgressions of Moroccan-Dutch youths across different applications by considering how they articulate their identities in response to and in dialogue with normative ways of being that may be exclusive or inclusive at different instances. In the next section, I further scrutinize the politics of digital spaces by balancing utopian and dystopian perspectives on the Internet, identity and empowerment. Feminist and postcolonial critiques of technology and critical theories of space will be shown to highlight the importance of a contextual and situated approach to digital identification across digital territories.

1.2 Digital embodiments: Between utopian and dystopian views

In this section I focus on the debates over user agency and empowerment versus domination and commercial exploitation of user behavior from the perspective of critical theories of space and feminist and postcolonial technoscience. I carve out a middle-ground position between utopian and dystopian writings on user-generated-content and the affordances and restrictions of digital media. In particular I reconcile celebratory user-centric notions of participatory culture with views that emphasize the ways a profit-oriented cultural industry exploits behavior as a form of free labor. I underline how across digital spaces medium-specific characteristics inscribe themselves upon users’ actions, but also note the potential that remains for appropriation, as users become active agents over their own representations.

The cultural roots of the Internet can be located in the freedom culture of progressive scholars, hippies and hackers who fetishized the immaterial, transcendental and disembodied potential of technology. Its roots can however also be located in the surveillance and profit-oriented military-industrial complex (Chun, 2006; Zandbergen, 2011; Schäfer, 2011; Castells, 2009, p. 125). Expectations, demands and incentives from both sides must be taken together to understand the role of the Internet in the lives of contemporary users. Three key conceptual contours can be mapped in the new media, postcolonial and feminist research landscape around identity, embodiment and digital

media: the utopian perspective which approaches online identity as a malleable signifier and celebrates participatory culture; the dystopian strand of technology as fixating structures creating new forms of inequality and commercial exploitation of user-generated labor; and the mutual constitution of identity and technology in everyday, situated contexts (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011a, p. 200).

Developing the third of these tendencies, I look beyond exaggerated hype and panicked views that see the Internet either as a “cybertopia” or “cyberghetto” (Ebo, 1998), by building on feminist technoscience and postcolonial theories on technologies to consider digital media use as a power laden, situated, everyday practice. This way, further fleshing out space invasion and abrogation, digital divides and inequalities can be assessed in terms of uneven spatial participation. In order to puncture utopian and dystopian myths of technological determinism, a number of the most important reference points are discussed first. I first address the utopian view that arose in the early 1990s and then engage with the dystopian perspective that emerged in the early 2000s.

Utopian perspectives on (dis) embodiment and digital space



"On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog."

Figure 1.3 Peter Steiner cartoon appearing in *The New Yorker* (1993, p. 61).

Strongly put, the utopian approach conceptualizes embodiment in terms of free-floating online identity construction. A Peter Steiner cartoon from the early 1990s is iconic for the utopian belief in Internet agency (figure 1.3). The cartoon depicts two dogs sitting behind a computer reassuringly saying to one another “[o]n the Internet nobody knows you’re a dog” (1993, p. 61). Illustratively, new media advocate John Perry Barlow wrote *A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace* in which he argues that Internet users shaped a

cyberspace which stood apart from the real world: “Ours is a world that is both everywhere and nowhere, but it is not where bodies live”. In cyberspace, he added “[w]e are creating a world that all may enter without privilege or prejudice accorded by race, economic power, military force, or station of birth (1996, np).

Promising alternative ways of being and the collapse of difference, postmodernism and neo-liberal progress reconciled in a Californian ideology that framed cyberspace as a disembodied, equalizing, liberating, democratizing and empowering world separated from the offline world (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011a, pp. 201, 212). Sherry Turkle described opportunities for “gender bending,” and identity experiments, the Internet would offer “new models of mind and a new medium on which to project our ideas and fantasies” (1997, pp. 10, 226). With a few keyboard strokes the fixed category of gender could be deconstructed, and also ethnicity, race, age and looks are potentially absent or can become alternatively fabricated (ibid; Reid, 1993, p. 63). In describing the “digital revolution” more broadly, women were theorized as having a “natural affinity” for technology as the non-hierarchical character of the internet resembles feminine weaving more than masculine technology mastery (Plant, 1997, pp. 60-73), while Don Tapscott anticipated that especially kids growing up digital would “find racism, sexism, and other vile remnants of bygone days both weird and unacceptable” (1998, p. 305).

More recently, Henry Jenkins has become the most well known celebrator of “participatory cultures” among teenagers using technologies. In stead of passive consumers of traditional broadcast media content, he argues digital media technologies enable users to become active producers, for instance by taking products such as songs and videos from the media industry and remixing them into something new. He notes participatory cultures pose “low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement” and its contributors establish “social connections” and “believe their contributions matter” (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. xi). This way, he notes, users as producers can take away power from the established channels of the cultural industry.¹⁸ As I set out below, approaching digital space solely as a disembodied and an enabling participatory culture silences the ways user behaviors are monetized and inequalities are inscribed on bodies.

Dystopian perspectives on embodiment digital space

On the other side of the spectrum, techno-pessimists have made sweeping dystopian remarks in response to utopian appraisal of the Internet. Most famously, Jaron Lanier

¹⁸ See also Lessig (2008) for a similar optimistic perspective. For a critical discussion of the notion of participatory culture see Van Dijck (2009) and Schäfer (2011, p. 41-54).

warns that digital technologies make us lose democracy, devalue individuality and deaden creativity (2010) and Evgeny Morozov argues Internet activism is a delusion that makes us unable to recognize technologies are used for purposes of propaganda, manipulation, censorship and surveillance (2011). Of particular interest for a spatial consciousness, dystopian perspectives stress that processes of re-embodiment take place online in ways that resonate offline exploitative neo-liberal, default whiteness, masculine and heterosexual normative ways of being. The content users generate is channeled and steered towards these uneven norms. Mirko Schäfer critiques utopian perspectives that acknowledge technologies as “enabling” and warns that the material aspects of technology often taken for granted as a “black box” do need to be further scrutinized (2011, p. 51). Inside the black box of technologies a whole array of value-laden decisions can be found.

Lisa Nakamura notes that the act of constructing one’s identity in digital space is often “menu-driven” (2002, p. 104). When designing a computer game character, or avatar, users often have to choose from a restricted set of facial and bodily features, creating a “normative virtual body”, which is “generally white, conventionally physically attractive, as well as traditionally gendered, with male and female bodies extremely different in appearance” (Nakamura, 2010, p. 338). Focusing on visibility, Ashley Donnelly insists on the ubiquity of “Western standards of beauty” and the heterosexual male gaze that persists: similar to offline space, digital space is “dominated by patriarchal, heteronormative belief, fueled by heterosexual masculine fantasy” (2011, p. 174). Upon introduction, a new technology, such as the weblog, is often discursively constructed as masculine and adult, marginalizing the activities of women and youths (Herring in Van Doorn et al., 2006), while in popular accounts of our globalized techno-cultural world, racialized bodies are still mostly absent as active agents, strengthening the myth of the technological lag of minorities (Everett, 2009, p. 133). Guillermo Gómez-Peña for example exposed how Chicanos living in the Mexican – U.S. borderlands are often perceived in mainstream discourse as somehow being “culturally handicapped”, displaying a “cultural unfitness” to handle technologies and contribute to digital cultures (2000, pp. 80-81). Pramod Nayar recognizes the “unequal (racialized, gendered) social life of information and its technologies where Euro-American ‘sites’ control the lives, labors, and identities of non-white races across the world” (2010, p. 162). Eurocentric, western and white ideologies that guide programming decisions and dominant framings are strongly guided by commercial decisions.

Incentives of the cultural industry inscribe themselves upon user behavior, as business models guide the design and medium-specificity of Internet platforms. In their balancing of being financially valuable and socially attractive – appealing to either a mass or specific niche of users – owners make value-laden decisions. Writing about the politics of communication platforms, Tarleton Gillespie argues that such decisions intervene in the radius of action permitted in digital space: “their choices about what can appear, how it is organized, how it is monetized, what can be removed and why, and what the technical architecture allows and prohibits, are all real and substantive interventions” (2010, p. 359). Christian Fuchs describes how Web 2.0 ideology blinds us from recognizing the extractive corporate powers that exploit and appropriate user participation. He underlines that corporate monopolies are leading to an increasing enclosure of users’ radius of action on the Internet (2011, p. 291). From this perspective, instead of an open environment the Internet is increasingly fenced of in “walled gardens” (Zittrain, 2008). Through exchanging user activity for access to platforms, individuals voluntarily add substantial economic value to the products the industry offers them.

As an alternative to the promising story of participatory culture, contributing user-generated-content can be seen as a form of free, affective but also commercially interesting labor. Across Internet applications, labor performed encompasses participating in message boards or clicking the like-button to show one’s affiliations on the social networking site *Facebook*. For youths, articulating their preferences on their profile pages and contributing other data might give pleasure and contribute towards their popularity among friends. The “fruit of collective cultural labor” however gets structured, channeled and rendered into “capitalist business practices” (Terranova, 2010, p. 339). The valorization of UGC, or monetary value making, is done for instance in the case of *Facebook* by mining personal social-networking preferences to be able to generate and sell marketing profiles in order to match corporations to individual users (Andrejevic, 2011).¹⁹ This transaction is often conducted unknowingly, as users “implicitly participate” in Internet applications. For instance in their viewing and rating of *YouTube* videos youths improve the value of the platform as a whole as their behavior generates valuable data (Schäfer, 2011, pp. 51-53). Most users are however unaware of how their actions generate value for platform owners.

¹⁹ In chapter five I elaborate on the idea of virtual labor (exploitation) in the context of social-networking sites.

Everyday mutual constitution of users and digital space

The utopian and dystopian perspectives both inflate the role of technology to determine positive and negative behavior respectively. However, choosing either one of the two extreme approaches does not allow me to fully consider the micro-dynamics of migrant youths' everyday identification across digital spaces. I therefore set aside both polarities, and instead accept that ideas about identities including gender, ethnicity, age, religion and diaspora continue to be constituted and re-constituted every time people go online. I carve out a middle-ground position to bridge accounts of techno-phobia and technophilia by focusing on the "mutual shaping of gender and technology, where neither gender nor technology is taken to be pre-existing, nor is the relationship between them immutable" (Wajcman, 2007, p. 287; Van Doorn & Van Zoonen, 2009, p. 260). Digital spaces are the outcome of the interaction between social and technological processes. Socio-technological dimensions mutually shape one another and co-constitute digital space dynamics. For example Frank Kessler developed the concept media "dispositif", acknowledging the dynamic medium-specific interrelation of discourses, user appropriations and technological configurations. With the concept, he traces media as the constellation of materiality, use and discourse: all media promote certain textual forms while affording and limiting certain actions, and they operate in a context of economic strategies and social discourses (2009, p. 194).

In this study the value of feminist and postcolonial theory for the study of power distribution across digital space is highlighted. Contemporary globalization, spurred by mass migration and digital mediation, is interspersed with unequal power relations and its dynamics often stem from histories of European colonialism and Imperialism (Appadurai, 1996; Irani et al, 2010). These social processes have geographically uneven effects, both online and offline. Edward Said recognized that "just as none of us is beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography", adding that the struggle "is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings" (1994, p. 7). The struggle over digital geographies clearly is a struggle over representation and imagination. Nayar notes that the "hype around the freedoms of cyberspace – including identity changes, surfing, limitlessness – recalls the tropes of the colonial period when mobility was always associated with the white man" (2010, p. 161). He stresses that the Western/white strategies of marginalizing non-white others are indicative of how neoliberal forms of globalization replay colonial endeavors. The predominantly white corporations colonize

global digital networks. For users meeting the template and normative ways of being of digital spaces, the space appears as neutral. However, those subjects that fall outside the interests of capitalist forces are relegated to the periphery of digital space.

I now turn to a theorization of the everyday formation of space. Michel Foucault, Michel de Certeau and Henri Lefebvre are key thinkers in the fields of social space, everyday life and identity. Following De Certeau, in our everyday life, “space is a practiced place” (1984, p. 117). Lefebvre similarly defined social space not as an inert, static thing as but as “a set of relations” (1991, p. 83). For Lefebvre, social space is simultaneously materialized through spatial practices (which he defined as “perceived space”), imagined through representations (defined as “conceived space”) and biographically embodied as “lived space” (1991, pp. 33-39). Space gets constructed but not fully determined through structural frameworks and norms, as Lefebvre argues the body is structurally deployed in space but also occupies space “the body, with its capacity for action... is space and has its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space” (1991, p. 170). Social space thus is the result of a set of material, imagined and embodied relations. Moreover, Foucault highlights that space is inherently political, as power is spatialized. Power emerges at the interplay of top-down forces that Foucault describes as “the great strategies of geopolitics” and everyday subversion from below which he labels as “little tactics of the habitat”²⁰ (1980, p. 149).²¹ Elizabeth Grosz asserts that it is exactly power that results in the reconfiguration of space: space “moves and changes, depending on how it is used, what is done with it and to it, and how open it is to even further changes” (Grosz, 2001, p. 7). Every social space has its own expressive culture, which slots and sets the boundaries to particular normative ways of being.

The quest for power is both guided by commercial and political incentives. Said argues that this has historically been the case: “imperialism and the culture associated with it affirm both the primacy of geography and an ideology about control of territory” (1994, p. 93). According to Soja, corporate and governmental ideologies of control over territory are still dominant. He emphasizes that land is strategically valued, demarcated and stratified: “every square inch of space in every market-based economy has been commodified and commercialized into parcels of valued land that are owned by individuals, corporations or by the state” (2010, p. 44). The ideologies and norms that

²⁰ Foucault concerned himself with the spatial effects of power “[a] whole history remains to be written of spaces - which would at the same time be the history of power – from the great strategies of geopolitics to the little tactics of the habitat” (1980, p. 149).

²¹ Elsewhere, Foucault famously noted that there is a potential for subversion in every system of domination: “where there is power, there is resistance” (1978, p. 95).

find their shape within a given space can be understood with Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the "habitus" (1984). With each space having a particular habitus (or shared set of dispositions, tastes, actions and preferences), it has its own inclusionary and exclusionary mechanisms.

In the introduction I drew an analogy between mid 19th century arcades or pedestrian passageways in Bologna, Brussels and Paris and early 21st century Internet applications like *YouTube* and *Facebook*. In the words of Walter Benjamin, arcades are "the most important architecture of the nineteenth century" (1999, p. 834). I would not go as far as saying they are the most important but it can similarly be argued that Internet applications nowadays play an increasingly fundamental role in the daily lives of millions of people. Benjamin recognized that commercial corridors have an ambivalent meaning, as objects of history they simultaneously contain a "dream- and wish-image of the collective". On the one hand, the arcades offered pleasure and excitement, and Benjamin quotes Marx to argue they embodied "the imaginative expression of a new world". On the other hand, passages also fostered a consumption ideology and commodity fetishism (ibid., p. 637, 939, 943). Their role is double-faced, and Benjamin gives an example: "[d]uring sudden rainshowers, the arcades are a place of refuge for the unprepared, to whom they offer a secure, if restricted, promenade – one from which the merchants also benefit" (ibid., p. 31). Neither skepticism nor evangelism captures the dynamics passages completely, and Benjamin argues for a consideration of its "constellation saturated of tensions" (ibid, p. 475).

Translating critical theories of space to the socio-technological Internet, I recognize that digital spaces are more than a box of wires. Similar to arcades, digital passageways are part of the experience. This constellation emerges at the interface of connecting and interacting human acts and material, embodied and imagined power relations (Verhoeff, 2012, p. 14, 133-137). The *Google* auto-search complete example shows how algorithm programming decisions materialize a certain radius of action. They show a struggle over the embodiment, racializing bodies by making hypervisible negative incidents in Gouda and promoting users to look up ethnic jokes that further stereotype Moroccan-Dutch people. Next to socio-technological features, digital space is thus material-embodied. However, auto-search complete suggestions are also representations that communicate certain imaginations.

The socio-technical, material-embodied and imagined-discursive relations of digital space can "be teased open to show the sticky economic, technical, political,

organic, historical, mythic, and textual threads that make up its tissues” (Haraway, 1997, p. 68). The *Google* auto-search complete example indicates specifically located subjectivities and modes of speaking are materialized allowing for particular significations and normative ways of being. Applications are uneven assemblages where some users enjoy privileges while others are underprivileged. However, resistance is also visible, for instance in contributing to the website *Geweigerd.nl* to expose the discriminatory practices of nightclub bouncers. Sharing such stories shows the workings of the subtle tactics of the habitat to contest normalized and taken-for-granted ways of being. The analytic lens of space invaders I develop is attentive to the perpetuation, but also to the contestation from below, of spatial hierarchies.

In particular, feminist and postcolonial critiques of technologies are taken up to consider a better situated account of the digitized spatial dynamics.²² By focusing on everyday use of technology these micro-dynamics of identification and resistance can be located, as Jaishree Odin explains: “recognizing the site of the personal, the social, and the political as the locus of struggle, postcolonial discourse acknowledges the necessity of locating the embodied body in a web of power relations, even as postmodern discourse wants to disperse it in the virtual domain” (2010, p. 56). I want to point out two studies to illustrate this argument. Marianne Franklin conducted an ethnographic study of Internet use among people in the Polynesian Diaspora, and found that in their personal, everyday rearticulation of Tongan and Soman identity online, they engage in a spatially situated “postcolonial politics of representation” (2003, 2004). In her study of video games like *Age of Empire* and *Civilizations*, Sybille Lammes found that players explore in-game territories. This exploration may evoke nostalgic feelings of empirical colonial mastery, however in their charting of these terrains users also scrutinize and transform world histories of colonization into personal postcolonial stories (2010, p. 4).

Rather than being seen in opposition to it, digital technologies have become a part of everyday real life. Offline and online spaces infuse each other with meaning. Taking cues from a feminist “politics of location” as introduced by Adrienne Rich, the meaningful is situated in the everyday where important similarities and differences are constructed within global power hierarchies (Rich, 1985; see also Van Zoonen, 1994, p. 107). The perspective stimulates an exploration of “how these hierarchies shape all

²² Adele Clark and colleagues argue that a consideration of these perspectives for the study of digital space is urgent: “we need studies that specify and examine the sinews or networks along which products, services, knowledge, information and new forms of labor are traveling. These need to include the social, cultural, gender/racial, economic and other formations extant at the sites of both uploading and downloading” (Clark et al. cited in Anderson, 2002, p. 644).

encounters, both locally and globally” (Davis, 2006, p. 478). Digitally transcoded parts of life are woven into the fabric of offline life and vice versa. In a similar way to how for instance gender, ethnicity and religion reflect, produce and sometimes subvert culture, technologies produce gender, ethnicity, and religious relations.

In sum, feminist and postcolonial critiques of technology stimulate me to think differently by making visible the power relations that organize but do not fully determine migrant youths’ everyday passages through digital space. These theories promote a scrutiny of how applications are mutually constituted socially and technologically. Furthermore material-embodied relations and imagined-discursive practices – that together constitute spatial privileges and normative ways of being – shape online territories. The optic of space invaders aims to be attentive to the agency of the informants to (re-) negotiate their digital identities on their own individual terms. In order to conceptually recognize this room for interaction and contestation, I theorize digital identity performativity from an intersectional perspective in the following section.

1.3 Identity

I’m Muslim and all things considered I have decided to wear a headscarf. No one has directed or obliged me to do so, believe it or not, it’s out of free will... I am an adult woman who has tasted from all facets of life, and this is the direction I want to take... I do not force anything upon anyone, I function properly, I adapt myself and participate in Dutch society, but based on the fact that I wear a headscarf, people think they have the right to treat me as a second rank citizen... And believe me I do not have to be saved...

What one considers as freedom is not the same for everyone. However, how I define it for myself is up to me, and myself only... The next time when you see a girl, who covers her hair, please consider the other side of the story... Islamization does not pose a threat to our society, but the growing intolerance against Islam does.

– Dunyahenya (2011)²³

In this section I theorize agency on the side of ethnic minority youths as space invaders to become active agents in their own digital representations in terms of for instance performing religious, ethnic, and gendered selves. I included a segment from the blog-posting “Kanker Hoofddoek”²⁴ published by Tunisian-Dutch blogger Dunyahenya to introduce how minority youths turn to digital spaces to perform alternative identifications. In her posting Dunyahenya states she is a well-educated conscious woman who has personally chosen to wear a headscarf. She emphasizes she does not

²³ My translation from Dutch.

²⁴ “Cancer headscarf” in English.

need to be saved from Islamic oppression and questions people who take her veil as a pretext to treat her as a second rank citizen.

Dunyahenya publicly published her personal feelings online about the implications of wearing a headscarf in the context of Dutch society, performing her identity as a young conscious Muslim woman. Being able to author and publish narratives about herself is a significant act for Dunyahenya and other minority youths alike to constitute themselves as specific individual beings. As Linda Duits and Liesbeth van Zoonen note, in contemporary multicultural Europe social institutions including the state and public opinion seek to interpellate and “resignify” everyday practices of wearing a headscarf as “inappropriate”, relieving those wearing them “from the power to define their own actions” (2006, p. 103). miriam cooke coined the neologism “Muslimwoman” to critically reflect on the lumping together of such singular ascribed discourses that deprive female followers of Islam of their individuality, diversity and agency (2007). In the Netherlands, the headscarf is a heavily debated signifier often taken as a symbol that hails Islam as other and that subordinates the subject to the (secularized/Christian) West.²⁵ The way its perceived inappropriateness is contested by Dunyahenya lays bare everyday mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, appropriation and subversion in digital space (Leurs, Hirzalla & Van Zoonen, 2012, pp. 129-130).

In the words of Nira Yuval-Davis, the social construction of identities can be understood as those “stories that people tell themselves and others about who they are (and who they are not)” (2006, p. 202). People get to learn about themselves through processes of mediation, identification becomes an ongoing “quest of narrative” (Paul Ricoeur, cited in Frissen & De Mul, 2000, p. 20). Personal identities are communicated to the self and others by performing versions of oneself through stories that are continuously updated and retold through time and space.²⁶ Hall argues that stories of identification are “narratives of the self” expressing who people are and where they belong: “I use ‘identity’ to refer to the meeting point, the point of suture, between on the one hand the discourses and practices which attempt to ‘interpellate’, speak to us or hail us into place as the social subjects of particular discourses, and on the other hand, the processes which produce subjectivities, which construct us as subjects which can be ‘spoken’” (1996b, pp. 5-6).

²⁵ The othering of the headscarf as backward has a long history, rooted in colonial forms “Orientalism” constructing Islam as non-European (Said, 1979).

²⁶ As Paul Ricoeur sets out: “the self does not know itself immediately but only indirectly by the detour of the cultural signs of all sorts which are articulated on the symbolic mediations which always already articulate action and, among them, the narratives of everyday life” (1991, p. 198).

Identity stems from the Latin words “identitas” and “idem” that can be translated as sameness. Simply put, identification is thus an expression of being/feeling the same as someone, something or a community. Authoring self-representations, people can join other people’s narratives. Identification however operates in tandem with difference. At the crossroads of sameness and difference, people stake out their individual, fragmented identity.²⁷ Below, I first introduce my understanding of identity performativity and how it relates to digital selfhood, and subsequently I set out how underlying identity performativity, axes of differentiation such as gender, ethnicity, religion, generation and age can be forms of oppression as well as sources of inspiration.

Digital identity performativity

Focusing on the identity category of race, Nakamura and Chow-White argue that digital media are not only about how race is visible but more specifically how it can be executed: “[u]sers don’t just consume images of race when they play video games, interact with software, and program: instead, they *perform* them” (2012, p. 8, my emphasis). Participating in digital culture, race is a “way of doing things” (ibid, pp. 8-9). Seeing the construction of identity and difference as performative acts can be traced back to John Austin, who theorized that speech acts are “doing something rather than simply saying something” (cited in Nunes, 2006, p. 12). By speaking, people perform an action. Symbolic interactionists have foregrounded that the self and social interaction cannot be seen apart from one another. Rather they are part of a communicative process that operates beyond understandings of a singular self.²⁸

In this study, informed by feminist post-structuralism and its feminist technoscience material re-groundings, identities are studied as performative narratives

²⁷ Static, essentialized, unitary and singular views of identity and difference have been contested particularly by psychoanalytical, post-modernist and post-structuralist theorists such as Freud (1949), Lacan (1977), Lyotard (1984), Baudrillard (1994), Foucault (1980), Derrida (1978) and Deleuze (1994). In this study I build on feminist and postcolonial post-structuralist notions of multiple and fragmented identities as set out by De Lauretis (1987), Weedon (1997), Butler (1993, 1999), Braidotti (2011), Brah (1996), Bhabha (1994), Gilroy (2005) and Hall (1996b).

²⁸ George Mead for instance recognizes people construct multiple selves in a process of interaction and communicative exchange: “We carry on a whole series of different relationships to different people. We are one thing to one man and another thing to another. There are parts of the self that exist only for the self in relationship to itself. We divide up in all sorts of different selves with references to our acquaintances. We discuss politics with one and religion with another. There are all sorts of different selves answering to all sorts of different social reactions. It is the social process itself that is responsible for the appearance of the self; it is not there as a self apart from this type of experience” (1967, p. 142). Goffman’s *The presentation of everyday life* expands the notion of a social constructions of self. Building on dramaturgical terminology, he understood the self as constructed through context-specific, ritualized communicative processes of “impression management” (1959).

embedded in material-embodied, socio-technical and imagined-discursive settings.²⁹ Judith Butler famously deconstructed the category of gender by foregrounding that gender is to be understood as something *we do* rather than something *we are*. She argues that gendered identities are constituted through performative acts. There is no preceding or following gendered “I” that exists apart from performativity; rather, people come into existence through a matrix of gender relations. With her notion of performativity, Butler goes beyond distinctions between dichotomies of materiality and embodiment. Gender performativity is the constitutive stylized repetitious process through which one acquires a gendered subjectivity (2003, p. 392).

Gender performativity is not constituted in terms of random play, but meets the established societal “heterosexual matrix”, social configurations that value the feminine versus the masculine and vice versa: “a hegemonic discursive/epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality ” (Butler, 1990, p. 151). The emphasis on performativity underscores how identities are socially constructed and are thus open to subversion by being unsettled and denaturalized. As the example by Dunyahenya indicates, by contesting enacted gender identities in their embedded contexts of hegemonic power relations, people have the chance to re-signify themselves.

Taking performativity as a theoretical premise, identity is not about finding an essence: rather, identity – as a way of doing things – raises questions of active positioning. Rephrasing Trinh T. Minh-ha, the “reflexive question” people nowadays ask themselves “is no longer: Who am I? but When, where, how am I (so and so)?” (1992, p. 157). Therefore, I trace in this study how situated identities are dynamically consumed, produced and contested digitally. In digital space, identity performativity is socio-technical, it “is dispersed throughout the cybernetic circuit” (Hayles, 1999, p. 27). Mutually constituted, identification concerns the authoring of multi-layered narratives of self. Digital practices such as typing words, constructing avatars, abiding by Internet speak jargon, combining languages, emoticons and slang, updating display names, uploading profile images, hyperlinking icons and watching videos provide the toolkit for

²⁹ As Chris Weedon sets out “post-structuralism theorises subjectivity as a site of disunity and conflict, central to the processes of political change and to preserving the status quo”, and representations are the site of where the sense of selfhood is articulated: “language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organisation and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested. Yet it is also the place where our sense of selves, our subjectivity is constructed” (1997, p. 21).

people to construct a narrative of self (Frissen & De Mul, 2000, p. 25). These are discursive and imagined practices that may conform to and reiterate particular normative expectations of femininity and masculinity and Western ideals of boy- and girlhood and beauty; while they may also be taken up as forms of resistance and rebellion. Actively adopting or subverting normative ways of beings, people self-select the ways they perform themselves; the narratives of selves they circulate in digital space are political acts. Extending the notion of gender performativity, I underline below how gender intersects with other axes of differentiation migrant youths experience such as race, religion, ethnicity, diaspora, and age.

Intersectionality and performativity

Butler notes that various “regimes of regulatory production contour the materiality of bodies” and she for instance recognizes that besides gender, race is similarly constituted: “[t]he symbolic—that register of regulatory ideality—is also and always a racial industry, indeed, the reiterated practice of racializing interpellations” (1993, pp. 17-18). Feminist theorists analyze the distribution and inscription of identity by different axes of power with the term “intersectionality”.³⁰ The lens of intersectionality allows for a merger of anti-racist discourse with poststructuralist understanding of gender. It promotes seeing and understanding different crosscutting interests that may impact differently upon individuals. Similar to gender relations, religion, age and ethnicity intersect and impact upon power relations at the macro level of social division, but also resonate on the level of micro-politics in people’s everyday lives (Davis, 2008).

Gloria Wekker describes intersectional thinking as guided by “central insights that gender and ‘race’ or ethnicity (and other axes of signification such as class, sexuality, age, religion, and so forth) operate simultaneously as social and symbolical grammars of difference and coconstruct each other” (2009, p. 153). Symbolical grammars of difference can be limiting and oppressive, but also empowering, illustrating how “[s]ocial divisions also exist in the ways people experience subjectively their daily lives in terms of inclusion and exclusion” as Yuval-Davis argues. She asserts people are coerced into but can also contest material categorizations and divisions that “exist at the level of representation, being expressed in images and symbols, texts and ideologies” (2006, p. 198). Nayar underlines that intersectional thinking displays how identities are “embodied” digitally as material practices, “shifting, altering and realigning on a regular

³⁰ Intersectionality therefore concerns both theory and methodology; I focus on its theoretical premise here and discuss its methodological implications in chapter two.

basis, and situated within multiple discourses of gender, race, ethnicity and sexuality” (2010, p. 81). Turning back to Donyahenya’s blog entry, “Muslimness”, “Tunisian-Dutchness” and “womanness” are not social categories she possesses, but they result from the process of her (online) interaction with others and engagement with normative expectations of in/appropriateness. Focusing on intersectionality as social and symbolical grammars of difference sharpens my focus on issues of differential representation and performativity of self, acknowledging how intersectional identity performativity can be both empowering and restricting across digital space.

Moroccan-Dutchness

In this section I further set out how intersectionality is a valuable lens to consider the interconnecting identity questions Moroccan-Dutch young people might develop. Illustratively, Meenakshi Durham argues that diaspora and coming of age are two metaphorical journeys that make it more difficult for young people with a migration background to answer the question of who they are.³¹ “The psychological transition of adolescence, already charged in terms of gender and sexuality”, she argues “is then imbricated with the conundrums of the other transition—the diaspora identity that demands delicate negotiations of race/ethnicity, nation, class, language, culture and history” (2004, p. 141). When one’s cultural identity is relatively stable, it becomes neutralized and self-evident. However, when one’s identity undergoes rapid changes, as is the case during adolescence, its taken-for-grantedness is contested and reflexivity is triggered. From reflexivity new images of selfhood emerge (Frissen & De Mul, 2000, p. 18).

Erik Erikson saw the life-phase of adolescence (from roughly 10 to 18 years) as a period of “identity crisis”, a time of role experimentation and self-exploration. The threshold from childhood to adulthood is a time of vigorous (re-) consideration of ways of looking at oneself. Adolescence in his terms is a time of search for identity where “contradictory self images or aspirations, roles or opportunities” are negotiated (1975, p. 46). Struggling for autonomy and independence from their parents, teenagers’ coming-of-age is marked by physiological and socio-cultural frames of gender and sexuality

³¹ Coming of age concerns the transitional passage from childhood to adulthood of a young person. The transition is associated with multiple social processes such as self-discovery and identity exploration, rites-of-passage, sexual maturation, increasing legal and religious responsibility, and the socialization into manhood and womanhood (see Durham, 2004; Nayak & Kehily, 2008; Santrock, 2007). Following Lev Vygotsky, children’s development should not be seen as a linear trajectory; rather they have multiple trajectories as they gain experience interacting with different cultural settings, social and emotional influences (1978). With the concept of intersectionality, I seek to acknowledge and empirically capture the multiplicity of informants’ trajectories.

(Santrock, 2007). During adolescence, gender, sexuality and youth cultural identity concerns are heightened among young people in various parts of the world, and young people of migrant descent may be confronted with additional concerns such as diaspora, ethnicity and religion (Sanjardar, 2011).

Studies on acculturation show that people who have migrated themselves are primarily focused on acquiring a solid social-economic position, while identity issues play a large role for their descendants (Berry et. al, 2006). For instance, although the majority of Moroccan-Dutch people present themselves as Muslim, the way religiosity is practiced differs among the generations.³² A trend of Islamic religious practice is that it is becoming a more private individual experience among Moroccan-Dutch youths (Phalet et al., 2004, p. 39).³³ This implies a growing number of young people do not practice their religiosity by carrying out religious rituals or visiting mosques but assert being Muslim as a part of their imagined and discursive identity construction. Dunyahenya's blog posting is exemplary for girls who choose to wear a headscarf as a fashion statement in response to the politicization of Islam in the Netherlands (Gazzah, 2010, p. 312; Knaap, Stoeper, Wegloop, 2011, p. 40; Nabben, Yeşilgöz and Korf, 2006). In Moroccan-Dutch youth culture, both online and offline, Miriam Gazzah observes, "Islam is used to give music, fashion, food, style or cultural imagery in general an Islamic touch" (2009, p. 413). Islamic street-wear and the presence of Muslim rappers allows for the performance of a contemporary urban-based "cool Islam" (Boubekeur, 2005). The Islamic touch can be combined with other youth cultural forms which such as heavy metal and hardcore rap (LeVine, 2008).

Acknowledging that they actively have to negotiate between opposite motivations of continuity and change vis-à-vis their parents, family members and community norms and expectations, generational specificity draws out another dimension of in the lives of Moroccan-Dutch youths. Mariëtte de Haan discusses how Moroccan-Dutch parents may become more "protective" of their children through increased monitoring and restricting freedom upon confrontations with new environments and cultural traditions: "The 'outside' spaces of socialization" such as Dutch regimes of upbringing can be seen as frameworks against which they seek to protect their children (2012, p. 333).

³² Yeşilgöz and Harchaoui argue that a strong expression of Islamic identity among Moroccans has been linked to the anti-colonial independence struggle against French occupation. The Moroccan leaders of that struggle were predominantly religious and thus honorable people (as cited in Nabben, Yeşilgöz and Korf, 2006, p. 69).

³³ This process reveals again how Moroccan-Dutch youth meander between opposite concepts of selfhood, Sadiqi explains that "the Western concept of 'self' is based on the individual, the Moroccan concept of self is based on the Islamic notion of *jama'ah* 'community/group' and is, thus inherently plural" (2003, p. 65).

Besides the axis of generation, the category of gender impacts differentially in the lives of Moroccan-Dutch youths as they grow up. Trees Pels and Mariëtte de Haan note that Moroccan parents are said to emphasize cultural and religious dictums of modesty especially towards their daughters, as boys are traditionally allowed a “wider radius of action outside the house” at the onset of puberty. Generational specificity is thus also gendered, as Moroccan-Dutch girls are sometimes seen as gatekeepers “to maintaining the family honour”, and Pels and De Haan recognize “they still face the most restrictions, and they spend much of their leisure time with female family members and friends in domestic settings” (2003, pp. 52-61). Moroccan-Dutch parents are sometimes found to be more prohibitive about direct contact with the opposite sex than ethnic majority Dutch parents. Under supervision of their parents this contact may be monitored, for girls this may imply they have to “shame” themselves in the presence of boys, “i.e. to behave timidly and modestly and to refrain from any looseness in appearance or expression” (Pels and De Haan, 2003, p. 58). Similarly, Ton Nabben, Berfin Yeşilgöz and Dirk Korf state that in puberty, Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch girls often spend a small amount of their spare time outdoors in public space, while Moroccan-Dutch boys spend a lot of their time there (2006, p. 27).

This observation has parallels with gendered spatial practices in Morocco. Fatima Mernissi has noted that in Morocco, gender norms hierarchically govern space “space boundaries divide Muslim society into subuniverses: the universe of men, (the *umma*, the world of religion and power) and the universe of women, the domestic world of sexuality and the family” (1987, p. 138). Although the situation is changing, Fatima Sadiqi notes Mernissi’s observations still hold as gender relations dichotomously structure space in Morocco, where public space (such as the street) is reiterated as masculine, in opposite to the private space of feminine domesticity (such as the kitchen) (Sadiqi, 2003, pp. 85-86). Perhaps because they spend more time indoors, Moroccan-Dutch girls have been found to turn to the Internet more than boys (Nabben, Yeşilgöz & Korf, 2006, p. 46). Digital technologies are used among descendants of migrants to reinvent traditions while simultaneously seeking to assert their independence and circumvent family norms (Bouwer, 2006, np; De Leeuw & Rydin, 2007; Green & Kabir, 2012, pp. 100-101). Coming of age concurrently with digital media, the literature suggests that these young people in their articulation of digital identities can subvert the gendered reputation-management dichotomy of masculine public versus feminine private space (Graiouid, 2005).

Moroccan-Dutch girls sometimes lack access to outdoor informal meeting places, and scholars have observed that the Internet may offer viable alternatives. In her study on Moroccan-Dutch girls' use of online discussion boards, Lenie Brouwer argues that these "girls are more restricted in their freedom of movement than boys, and thus, the Internet widens their horizons" (2006a, np). The broadening of their horizon occurs at the crossroads between cultural and religious concerns of their parents and the gendered norms and expectations of contemporary Dutch and global youth culture. While Durham adds, "at the same time that immigrant families exercise rigid restraint over adolescent girls' sexuality, Western culture continues to hypersexualize girls and women of color" (2004, p. 145). For instance in their dress, Moroccan-Dutch girls are expected to carve out a middle-ground position in choosing from garments that dominate Dutch multicultural society such as the "headscarf" and "porno chic" clothing (Duits & Van Zoonen, 2006).

Their digital performativity of selves is layered and contradictory. Brouwer recognizes that Moroccan-Dutch girls pave a path between Western stereotypes and the constraints applied by their parents, siblings and wider community (2006a, np). Online, girls can circulate counterviews towards the two prejudiced discourses that discipline Muslim women: (neo) Orientalist representations of backwardness, oppression, and subjugation by men and conservative patriarchal Islamist discourses that criticize the role of Western women as sex objects (Piela, 2012, pp. 2-3). Moroccan-Dutch girls' gender and sexual identification becomes an arena where power struggles take place, as their bodies are being "used as a site of interaction between hegemonic and minority cultures" (Ponzanesi, 2002, p. 210).³⁴ These struggles do not only stem from intergenerational conflict, however, but they also shed light on the complex interplay of gender, sexual, ethnic, religious, lifestyle and youth cultural norms and expectations that circulate in the Netherlands and beyond. Intersectionality underlines that a great variety exists within the group of people that are often subsumed under the singular heading of Moroccan-Dutchness.

³⁴ Several parallels can be drawn from the literature on sexual and gender dynamics of diaspora families. Appadurai notes "the honor of women becomes increasingly a surrogate for the identity of embattled communities of males" (1996, p. 45). For instance Marie Gillespie noted that "family honor" among South-Asian Brits in London "ultimately depends on the chastity of daughters" (1995, p. 152), similarly studying the parenting among South-Asian-American families in New York, Sunaina Maira found "a gendered double standard that is more lenient on males than females" (2002, p. 155), while Carol Goodenow and Oliva Espin sum up the different adolescent gendered roles among families who migrated from Latin-American countries: "while males are often encouraged to Americanize rather quickly, females are more frequently expected by their families to maintain traditional roles and virtues" (1993, p. 174).

Intersectionality is attentive to how power is distributed over multiple axes. Avtar Brah argues that this perspective is helpful to problematize the binary view of minority versus majority: “a group constituted as a ‘minority’ along one dimension of differentiation may be constructed as a ‘majority’ along another” (2003, p. 189). Digital narratives of selves are representations of relations, and an intersectional and situated account of Moroccan-Dutch youths’ digital identity practices may reveal how they crossover between minority and majority groupings. Moroccan-Dutch youths might be grouped as a minority when seen from one viewpoint, and as a part of a majority group from another. Following the line of ethnicity they can be grouped as a minority signaling Moroccan-Dutchness, with specific generational and religious affiliations. In other cases they become part of the majority, when tracing the lines of gender, or youth cultural or sub-cultural alignments.

In sum, identities are not neutral, fixed, or essential entities but are actively constructed and made. In a process of both external interpellation and ascription and individual claiming, identities are performative, narrated at the crossroads of intersections of difference that include categories of gender, ethnicity, religion, age and generation. These categories coordinate the ways narratives of selves can be articulated but remain open to subversion. In digital space, identities are performed, through digital-material artifacts such as text, images, videos and hyperlinks. In the next section, I ground my understanding of digital identity performativity by exploring practices of transnational networking.

1.4 Digital diasporas

By focusing on the digital articulation of diaspora below, I ground conceptions on space and identification in the specific digital experiences of Moroccan-Dutch youth. Kim Knott observes that studies of diaspora have shifted their focus from the continuities of community to an awareness of diasporic imaginaries, multi-locality, circulation and contact zones. Therefore, scholars of diaspora, she argues, have to incorporate a multidimensional understanding of spatial movement that does not restrict diaspora “to actual physical migration but makes room also for imagined, discursive, material, cultural, virtual and socially networked places and travels” (2010, p. 79). Inspired by Knott’s observation, I argue that transnational networking, as a form of identification, operates at two different levels in the lives of my informants. First I explain how they connect with their roots by maintaining and developing ties on a transnational level. Engaging or

assisting their parents to engage in transnational communicative networking, *Skype*³⁵ is used to talk to family and friends in the diaspora and in Morocco. This form of transnationalism is the most dominant among those who have themselves migrated from Morocco. Both parents of informants belonging to the first generation as well as those interviewees who were born in Morocco were found to maintain transnational ties through *Skype* and telephone calls.

However, transnationalism is not a “one-generation phenomenon” (Mainsah, 2011, p. 203; see also De Leeuw & Rydin, 2007; Green & Kabir, 2012). I therefore secondly set out how Moroccan-Dutch youths – in generationally specific ways – engage with transnational diaspora aesthetics. Instead of physical contact, they re-imagine their diaspora affiliations, infusing digital practices with symbolic meanings. Below I turn to how social-networking sites are taken up by my informants to brand themselves as “mocro”. There, they participate in symbolic transnational communicative networking as a part of their routed, rhizomatic, hypertextual identity performativity in digital space. In contrast with dominant utopian tropes of the Internet offering an unbounded escape from everyday life and embodiment, Victoria Bernal similarly argues that people in the diaspora rather turn to the Internet to “reterritorialize” themselves and learn to assert their identities in changing contexts. She sums up the value of digital identity practices by stating that “the social construction of identity online is particularly significant for diasporas because their everyday lived social reality may be one of being assimilated into a dominant society or being rendered culturally, ethnically and religiously invisible, or possibly stigmatized” (2010, p. 167). I now turn to communicative and symbolic maintenance of diaspora ties that illustrate how digital media practices offer a distinctive window on the varieties of lived diaspora experiences.

Roots: Transnational communicative ties

Mass migration and digital mediation have led to a situation where transnational relationships can be maintained over large geographical distances, beyond national boundaries (Karim, 2010; Georgiou, 2006). The Internet can be used by migrants to communicate with fellow members of the diaspora and to connect with people from their country of origin. This way, digital media allow for “new conversations between those who move and those who stay”, leading Appadurai to observe a “growing number

³⁵ *Skype* is a software application that enables users to conduct voice, video and typed conversations over the Internet. *Skype* users can have voice and video conversations free of charge, while credit has to be paid for to call landlines or mobile phones.

of diasporic public spheres” (1996, p. 22). From the introduction of the Web, globally dispersed people went online to remain in contact with each other.

Media and communication researchers have focused most of their attention to this transnational dimension of the networking of dispersed people.³⁶ The pioneering study by Daniel Miller and Don Slater focused on the Trinidadian diaspora. They describe how “de Rumshop Lime,” a collective online chat room, is used by young people at home and abroad to “lime,” meaning to chat and hang out. Describing the users of the chat, “the webmaster (a Trini living away) proudly proclaimed them to have come from 40 different countries” (though massively dominated by North America) (2000, p. 88). Writing about transnational networking by people in the Greek diaspora, Georgiou traced how its mediation evolved from letters, word of mouth, and bulletins to satellite television, telephone, and the Internet (2006, p. 147). Anna Everett draws on the case of Naijanet, the virtual community of “Nigerians Living Abroad.” She shows how Nigerians living in the diaspora from the 1990s onwards connected in global transnational communities, forging “new black public spheres” (2009, p. 35). These studies point at how diasporic people have turned to the Internet to establish and maintain social relations, give and receive support, and share general concerns through communicative exchanges.

This theme also arose during my fieldwork. Fourteen-year-old Loubna from Rotterdam described how her whole family lives in Tetouan, in Morocco, except the people in her household and two nephews in the Netherlands. She shared the fact that, “*I cannot do without Morocco*”. “*Everyday*” she has contact with her family members in Morocco using the Internet. Together with her mother and siblings she sits in front of the computer: “*we talk to them using Skype, especially now that my grandmother is ill*”. Loubna and her household use *Skype* to sympathize with family members in the diaspora, offering a way to express transnational emotional support and care (Madianou & Miller, 2012). The majority of informants note it is especially their parents who are concerned with forms of transnational communication like *Skype*. Badr, a 14-year-old who lives in ‘s-Hertogenbosch, notes his family has spread out from Morocco across Europe, from Belgium, Germany, France, Spain to Denmark. He describes how he sometimes talks to his nephews who live in Belgium and Germany, but mostly his parents make use of *Skype* to talk to family members in the diaspora. They do not know how the program works, so

³⁶ See footnote 23.

he assists them in setting up the connection.³⁷ Maintaining communicative ties with fellow people in the diaspora across national borders presence can be seen as a form of “connected presence”, allowing migrants “to be here and there at the same time” (Diminescu, 2008, p. 572).

Transnational communicative networking among people dispersed in the Moroccan diaspora across the Netherlands, other countries in Europe and Morocco mentioned by my informants resonates a continuity of cultural identification with one’s “roots”. Paul Gilroy describes cultural identification with “roots” as affiliations with people, artifacts, representations and imaginings of where people imagine themselves to be coming from (1993a). Rootedness, as signaled in *Skype* conversations with family members in the diaspora, should not be singled out, but be considered in tandem with other cultural orientations. Gilroy argues that diasporic identification is a two-fold process, and rooted affiliations represent only one dimension to transnational cultural identification. He therefore criticizes those who are “more interested in the relationship of identity to roots and rootedness than in seeing identity as a process of movement and mediation which is more appropriately approached via the homonym routes” (1993a, p. 19). He underlines that diasporic identification goes beyond the essence of roots; it rather is a dialectic crossing between rootedness and “routes”. As two sides of the same coin, roots refer to the stable and continuing elements of identities, while routes refer to disruptions and changes. The latter covers responses to current changing environments including other ethnic communities, aspirations and future directions.

Stuart Hall similarly distinguishes between two cultural identification positions among diasporic subjects. The first position defines cultural identity in terms of a sort of cohesive collective. Sharing cultural codes of one’s roots is considered vital to maintain membership and belonging to a community: “within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect our common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as ‘one people’, with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of actual history (1990, p. 223). The use of *Skype*, making long distance phone calls or using a satellite dish to watch Moroccan TV channels (Slade, 2010; Backx, 2010) illustrate how a diaspora community sustains itself as a distinct group. Transnational diasporic networking allows those living in the Moroccan diaspora to articulate reference frames and cultural codes to continue building and demarcating a distinct digital diaspora community.

³⁷ Similar diasporic networking by parents of informants is discussed in chapter four where I describe how instant messaging is used for this purpose.

The concept of “routes” acknowledges the active process of cultural identification, moving away from an essence towards dynamic positioning and active encounter (Gilroy, 1993a). This position has also been recognized by Stuart Hall, who defines it as follows: “identity, in this second sense, is a matter of ‘becoming’ as well as of ‘being.’ It belongs to the future as much as the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture” (1990, p. 225). Hall emphasizes the transformation and discontinuities of cultural identification: “they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous ‘play’ of history, culture and power” (ibid). The second cultural identity position can be taken to explain how young migrants may engage in dialogue with their contemporary cultural environments. Building on this theoretical insight, I argue in the next section that digital diasporas can no longer be understood simply only in terms of how migrants connect to a clearly marked transnational community. Rather, as in particular the digital practices of the descendants of migrants – who are born in the diaspora – exhibit, they must also be seen as imagining affiliations through context-specific transnational representations of diaspora branding, which reshuffle traditional understandings of origin and belonging.

Routes: Transnational diaspora aesthetics

Scholars in the field of transnational studies have mostly focused on transnational forms of networking facilitated by information and communication technologies as well as cheap transportation (Fortunati, Pertierra & Vincent, 2012b, p. 6; see for example Vertovec, 2009). These studies are concerned with the rooted side of cultural identification, rather than routed dimensions. Additionally, the use of ICT’s among the descendants of migrants and young migrants remains undertheorized (Green & Kabir, 2012, p. 101). In this section I set out how descendants of migrants born in the diaspora add a routed layer to transnationalism. They do so by symbolically representing transnationalism as an identity affiliation, alongside transnational communication with family and friends in the diaspora (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011b). South-Asian Americans and Brits, Japanese-Peruvian and Moroccan-Dutch youths branding themselves as “Desi”, “Nikkei” and “Mocro” respectively signal symbolic transnational affiliations grounded in their (nationally and globally) situated contexts. These affiliations do not concern actual transnational communicative exchanges between migrants and members in the diaspora or ‘home country’ but concern symbolic representations of transnational

diaspora ties: diaspora aesthetics. In the *YouTube* video *You are not an Indian*, Pharag Khanna describes the self-branding label of Desi: “you do not know the backstreets of Karachi or Bombay. Chances are if you go over there, they treat you as an American. You like to think of yourself as an Indian, but you are not, you are Desi, you are of South-Asia not from South-Asia” (Mallapragada, 2007). Youths of South-Asian descent in America and the U.K. have been found to identify with the label Desi (Maira, 2002). Translated from Sanskrit, the word means “those from the homeland” (Mallapragada, 2006, p. 217). Instead of, or next to, having phone or *Skype* conversations with South-Asians in the diaspora, youths of South-Asian origins living outside South-Asia identify as Desi. For instance, 8092 users include the term Desi in their nicknames on the social networking sites *Hi5.com*.³⁸ Others consume Desi youth cultural products such as music by M.I.A., the Sri-Lankan Tamil urban recording artist from the U.K.

Similar to Desis, Mocros in Europe initiated a new branch in urban youth culture. Mocro refers to another expression of bi-national consciousness. After Ali B., a Moroccan-Dutch hip-hop recording artist released a music single in 2005 called *Crazy mocro flavour* that reached the higher levels of Dutch music charts, the term “mocro” rapidly became incorporated within mainstream Dutch youth culture. The term mocro originated on the streets of the Netherlands during the late 1990s and is now commonly seen as a Dutch honorary nickname for people of Moroccan-Dutch descent. Louis Boumans lists that “moker”, “maroc” and “mocro” are Moroccan-Dutch self-identification labels that are commonly used online (2002, p. 15). For instance Amir, a 16-year-old informant, is a hip-hop fanatic who listens to Moroccan-Dutch artists like Ali B., Yes-R, Ree B. and Soesi B. In his e-mail address he combines his first name with the word “mocro”. Similarly, 15-year-old Meryam includes “mocrogirl” in her e-mail address. As I further explore in chapter four, the word is also creatively used in *MSN* display names to perform diaspora affiliations.

Across digital spaces like the Dutch social-networking site *Hypes* and the discussion forum *Marokko.nl*, users go by nicknames such as “My own Mocro styly,” “Mocro-licious,” “Mocro-boy” and “Miss_MocroLady”.³⁹ A cursory glance at such nicknames displays how Mocro itself is often also already multi-layered, as the term is often combined with age, gender, sexual preference, religious, sport, music, and

³⁸ User figures were calculated on November 15, 2011.

³⁹ For instance 3738 users include the term Mocro in their nickname on the Dutch social networking site *Hypes.nl*, while 2556 people have inserted it in their nickname on the Moroccan-Dutch message board *Marokko.nl* (user figures were calculated on November 15, 2011).

generationally specific cultural affiliations.⁴⁰ Thirdly, the label Nikkei⁴¹ directs our attention to Japanese migrant youths in the diaspora. Shana Aoyama found that the social networking site *Hi5.com* is taken up in Peru by young people of Japanese descent as an avenue for identity construction using the label Nikkei. She found both group confirmation based on the performance of Nikkei-ness as well as expressions of individuality (2007).

Desi-ness, Moco-ness, and Nikkei-ness are common collective identification markers that are not just straightforward nationalisms. They refer back to different homelands, while simultaneously they also clearly mark one's situation of being routed outside of this homeland. Digital diasporas may no longer be understood simply in terms of having transnational conversations with people in the diaspora. Those born in the diaspora engage in digital practices of branding themselves by circulating diaspora aesthetics, which reshuffle traditional understandings of origin and belonging. Contemporary youthful digital diasporas are therefore far more complex in their engagement with digital media than most existing theory allows: connections are hybridized, and affiliations are turned into practices of branding diaspora consciousness. When taken up, these labels signal in-between or "liminal" positions (Bhabha, 1994).

In postcolonial theory terms in-between positions can be a source of differential and multivocal cultural production. Arjun Appadurai, Homi Bhabha and Paul Gilroy recognize that liminal positions increasingly leave their mark on the global and local flows of cultural objects, such as food, cinema, music, and fashion. The liminal positions of Desi, Moco and Nikkei captured in forms of cultural production and identity constructions innovatively constitute a differential expression of digital diasporas. Networked branding includes expressing diaspora identities that are communal and individual but also situated locally, transnationally and globally. Below I theorize how diaspora aesthetics in its multicultural encounter within the domain of youth culture exemplifies bottom-up multiculturalism, or convivial interaction.

Youth culture: Conviviality or segregation?

In this final section I argue how diaspora aesthetics are incorporated into multicultural exchanges, as an enabling source fostering creative expression. Gilroy distinguishes

⁴⁰ These nicknames capture real-life examples but have been altered to ensure anonymity.

⁴¹ The word Nikkei originally related to a particular generation of Japanese-descended person in diaspora, at least in North America, terms like Issei and Nikkei refer to specific generations. There Nikkei has a particular resonance inseparable from the experience in internment camps. However, over time and across space, the meaning of term has been extended.

between institutionalized multiculturalism and everyday multiculturalism. Beyond top-down political, governmental, scholarly and mainstream media understandings of the failure of multiculturalism, he sees multiculturalism in action from the bottom-up and refers to this as conviviality of cohabitation: the notion of “conviviality” offers a way to grasp interactional processes that render “multiculturalism an ordinary feature of social life” (2005, p. xv). This occurs in the metropolitan urban centre, “in which cultures, histories, and structures of feeling previously separated by enormous distances could be found in the same place, the same time: school, bus, café, cell, waiting room, or traffic jam” (ibid, 70). Multiculturalism is in action across digital spaces as well. People with a variety of affiliations encounter one another in their everyday lived experiences as mediated through digital practices. Taking the idea of a culture of conviviality as a starting point allows me to think about multiculturalism from below.

Ayhan Kaya for instance argues that young Turkish-Germans in Berlin use hip-hop youth culture to mingle in the mainstream cultural field. These youngsters tap into universal symbolisms such as rap, cool looks, graffiti and dance to mark a social, cultural and political space in the urban landscape. In their appropriation and re-circulation of hip-hop youth culture, these migrant youths combine their “aesthetics of diaspora” and “global transcultural capital”. Hip-hop as such is a mechanism that enables ethnic minority youths to assert themselves into global youth culture (2002, p. 45). Inzaf, a 15-year-old female informant, uses the MSN display name “*El Hocima is the bom*”, expressing a diaspora affiliation by including the name of the town in Morocco where her father was born while building on the vocabulary of hip-hop. This principle can be explained more broadly by considering the travel of the term “Mocro” from the Moroccan-Dutch community to the Dutch mainstream after Ali B.’s single reached the 2nd position in the 2005 national charts.⁴² More generally, everyday conviviality becomes apparent when studying languages spoken among urban youths of different ethnicities (including ethnic majority Dutch youths and ethnic minority youths). For instance, Jacomine Nortier and Margreet Dorleijn note the development of a general urban/‘ethnic’ accent in major cities in the Netherlands, which they label “Moroccan flavored Dutch” (MFD). They found that this accent includes characteristics of Moroccan languages (Moroccan-Arabic and Berber) and interestingly, the accent is not only used among ethnic minorities but also among white ethnic majority Dutch youths.

⁴² From there, the label traveled to the global mainstream of youth culture, as the usage of the term by the Grammy award nominated Senegalese-American rapper Akon attests. In his 2005 song *Ghetto (International Remix)*, Akon raps together with Ali B.: “this goes out to my Mocros in tha ghetto”.

As a way to mark socio-cultural style, non-Moroccan-Dutch adolescents tap into this accent to express identity affiliation and group membership. They note that young people learn the accent through interactions with others in schools, online, as well as by consuming rap music (2008, pp. 132-139).

These examples illustrate the significance of analyzing youth cultures and digital space through the lens of conviviality. Gilroy explains this is because youth cultures are political since they foster hybridity at the crossroads of local, transnational and global orientations. Also, being organized around age and generation based groupings, youth cultures may challenge “the logic of racial, national and ethnic essentialism” (1993b, p. 6). Beyond state-managed attempts at anti-racism, everyday youth cultural interactions between people of different backgrounds may offer potential for contesting racism and nationalism. I scrutinize whether informants take up Internet applications and experience positive aspects of conviviality and multiplicity, or by contrast, whether they face new forms of segregation and exclusion.

In the following final section, I take the social networking site practices of Ryan, a 15-year-old informant, as a case study to show how the different theoretical dimensions I have set out so far can be brought together. Unpacking his personal profile-page, I further ground how I innovatively combine perspectives such as feminist and postcolonial thinking, a middle-ground perspective nuancing techno-euphoria and techno-pessimism, a spatial consciousness, intersectional identity performativity, diaspora aesthetics and conviviality.

1.5 Ryan’s hypertextual narrative of self

With the notion of digital space invaders, I conceptualize a spatial consciousness of online territories, introduce a mode of empirical analysis of multi-spatial identity practices, and carry out a political intervention. As I described in the introductory chapter, Ryan (a 15-year-old interviewee) is a fan of computer games who likes to mask his Moroccanness by not speaking like a Moroccan-Dutch boy and/or by not showing himself as Moroccan while gaming. In this section, I focus on the profile page of Ryan to further conceptualize spatial identity practices and to show which dynamics of identity are empirically captured by this lens, in order to argue how it stimulates a re-thinking of migration, multiculturalism and integration processes. I propose that following hyperlinks provides a new mapping of the ways in which ethnic minority youths 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.

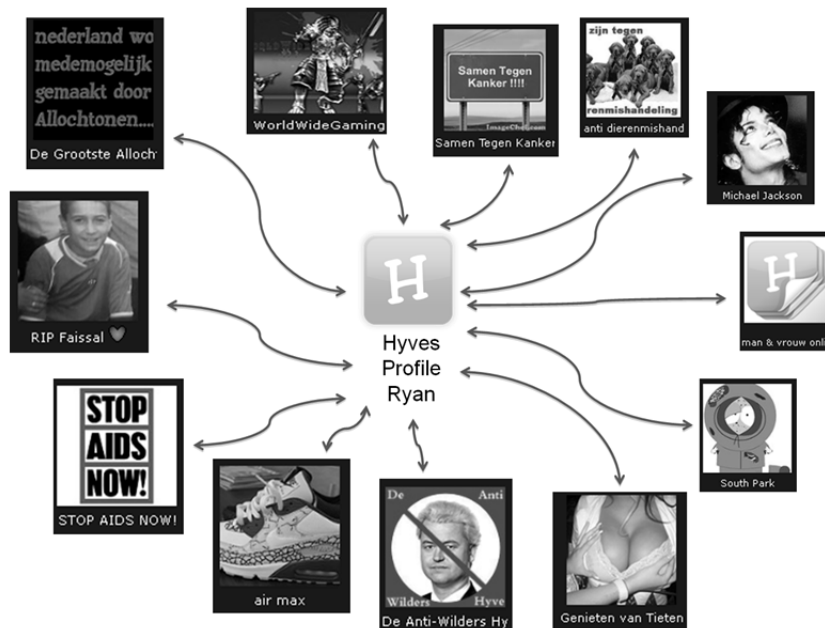


Figure 1.4 *Hyves* groups 15-year-old Ryan links to on his personal profile page (October 19, 2011).

Following Mariëtte de Haan and Kevin Leander, social spaces provide the resources for identity work. Spaces, they argue, call attention to how resources are negotiated in positioning practices: “the ongoing and mutual production of subject positions through discourse which people offer to one another, impose on one another, and choose for themselves” (2011, p. 320). Here, Ryan’s profile page, and in particular his use of hyperlinks, is scrutinized as a positioning resource. The visuals that I have compiled in figure 1.4 include the *Hyves* groups to which Ryan links on his personal profile page. On *Hyves*, upon joining a group, a clickable icon appears on one’s personal profile page. The icons Ryan shows on his personal profile page signal his positioning among various attachments. Hyperlinked icons are identificational cues that can be viewed by other *Hyves* users who visit his profile page.

Hypertext as a figuration

Internet applications increasingly allow users to add hyperlinks to their personal websites in the forms of profile pages, the publishing of preferences, and possibilities to

participate in and affiliate with interest-based communities. Online journals, social networking sites, streaming audio/video pages, and online forums are all dynamic hypertexts based on *Hypertext Markup Language* (HTML) coding. As well as being the technological protocol that connects pages on the Web, hypertext is also a metaphor with which you can think. As a way to map and theorize user practices, hypertext can be understood as decentred and non-hierarchical. Hypertext incorporates multiplicity, because users can choose how they traverse webs of hyperlinks. Different pathways are possible simultaneously; hypertext has “multiple entryways and exits” and it “connects any point to any other point” (Landow, 2006, pp. 58-61). Donna Haraway recognized the dynamic character of hypertext by stating that “the metaphor of hypertext insists on making connections as practice” and, more importantly, she adds, “the trope does not suggest which connections make sense for which purposes and which patches we might want to follow or avoid”. The value of approaching the Internet from the perspective of hypertext therefore lies in the assumption that it allows “inquiry into which connections matter, why, and for whom” (1997, p. 128-130).

Odin states that hyperlinking practices give rise to an aesthetic that meets diasporic subjects’ multiplicities: “[t]he perpetual negotiation of difference that the border subject engages in creates a new space that demands its own aesthetic”. Hypertext aesthetic, she proposes “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” (cited in Landow, 2006, pp. 356-357). As an open-ended process without a clear closure, constituting a part of digital selfhood through hypertextual practices displays how identities are always “under construction” (Frissen & De Mul, 2000, p. 36). The hypertextual connections Ryan makes on his profile page compose a narrative of self that can be traced to reveal the multiplicity and ambiguity of identification.

Empirically grounding hypertext: “You are what you link”

Clockwise from the top left, see figure 1.4, Ryan lists the group “the Netherlands was partly made possible by allochthonous people”. Nearly 20.500 *Hypes* members have joined this group, referring to the hard work carried out by non-Western guest workers in building the country of the Netherlands. The group is set up “for all allochthonous

and autochthonous who support a multicultural society”.⁴³ Although he masks Moroccan affiliations while gaming, linking to this group shows Ryan feels confident enough to be able to identify with the guest-worker history of his parents on his personal profile page. Reversing the labels allochthonous and guest worker from negative stigmas to a positive affiliation, Ryan proudly shows the icons of the group on his personal page.

His attachment to playing computer games is visible by his membership in the “World Wide Gaming” group. By joining the “Michael Jackson”, “Nike Air Max” and “South Park” groups, he connects with global youth cultural forms of popular music, sneakers and TV-series, respectively. The group “RIP Faissal” is dedicated to remembering a boy from his school that died in a local traffic accident. Also he signals his support for various causes by joining groups that range from “The Anti-Wilders Hyves”, “Stop Aids Now!”, “Unite Against Cancer”, to “anti animal cruelty”. Finally, “man & woman online” is a group where discussions take place about gender relations, while “Enjoying Boobs” is dedicated to pornography.

The icons that appear on Ryan’s *Hyves* profile page can be compared to buttons and badges printed with statements that are worn as fashion accessories. As a way to construct one’s identity by signaling affiliations, buttons and badges offer a means of identification and belonging. Taken together, the visual *Hyves* group icons add up to a visual narrative of self which *Hyves* users construct on their personal profile page by hyperlinking to various groups. All these visuals are hyperlinked to other pages across the network; I argue, therefore, that personal narratives of self operate in a hyperlinked context, and that identification becomes hypertextual. With the widely accepted adage “you are what you link” (Adamic and Adar, 2001, np), hypertextual selves can be understood as productions that reveal how diasporic youths choose to express themselves as individuals through complex sets of non-homogeneous identifications.

⁴³ 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 non-favored side is othered. In this case, the impression quickly arises that 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). See also section 2.1.

Moroccan-Dutch youths do not stand alone in underlining differential positioning by publishing hypertextual narratives of selves.

For example, on the online social networking site, <http://www.Hi5.com>, Nikkei youths in Peru, just like any other teenagers, express their individuality by decorating their personal profile page with texts, audio, photos, and videos. Aoyama found that “a starburst” of diverse affiliations is thus created, including those that signal Japanese-ness such as the *Hello Kitty*-brand, anime videos, Kanji writing, kimonos, and Japanese celebrities. Nikkei also hyperlink to elements that can be identified as “Latino” and “Chino” (Chinese) (2007, pp. 104-110). Aoyama writes 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). Thus Nikkei youth, similar to Ryan’s linking practices, publish a visual narrative of self that stretches across different affiliations and geographical locations.

Being an important part of contemporary youth culture, groups in social networking sites offer young people a platform for self-expression, cross-cultural exchange and active encounter. Users can imagine a sense of self from below in their everyday self-profiling practices. Ryan affiliates himself with causes ranging from the general: (anti-Aids and animal cruelty activism and the national group dedicated to guest-workers in the Netherlands) to the local (with an epitaph for a deceased friend), as well as with broader youth cultural affiliations ranging from Michael Jackson to *South Park*. When focusing on how spatial hierarchies impact upon digital embodiment and identification, however, three remarks need to be made to nuance the progressive potential of hypertextual narratives of selves that I have emphasized so far.

First, Ryan’s joining the *Hypes* group “Enjoying Boobs” demands attention for the digital perpetuation of Western physical body myths and the re-construction of sexualized normative ways of being. Adolescents’ media worlds, including social networking sites, remain packed with stereotypical gendered perspectives on femininity (and masculinity). On the page, women’s bodies are sexually objectified as the predominantly male users upload and comment upon photos of fragmented female body parts, such as breasts, buttocks and other eroticized images.

Secondly, the dynamics of the Anti-Wilders *Hypes* group signal the re-introduction of a spatial hierarchy. More than 70.000 *Hypes* users have joined the Anti-Wilders *Hypes* group. As a form of protest, all include the icon of the group, a crossed out photograph of Geert Wilders, on their profile page. They become space invaders

expressing they do not agree with Wilders' right wing, anti-Islam views. However, former *Hyves* owner Raymond Spanjar reported that when such groups grow large, they get marked as a security risk. Large-scale political activity is restricted within *Hyves*, and Spanjar asserts proponents and opponents set up groups and anti-groups mobilizing as many members as possible: "virtual battles become bigger and bigger, leading us to forbid all anti-groups on Hyves".⁴⁴ The policy of forbidding anti-groups was chosen because these acts of protest also flood the screens of the advertisers. Advertisers do not want their product to be associated with political struggles (2011, pp. 137-138). This way, digital political activist acts such as setting up a group page to counter a polarizing political party are restricted. Space invaders are not always successful, and upon deletion of the Anti-Wilders *Hyves* group users are made to feel out of place, being disempowered by the tools that they had manipulated in order to empower themselves. Corporate incentives are privileged over spatial justice and equality (Soja, 2010). *Hyves*'s decision to forbid political battles and anti-groups on its platform displays the influence commercial interests have on user behavior.⁴⁵

Implications of hypertext

Having argued that the optic of space invaders offers a frame to analyze hypertext practices empirically and encourages reflection on the spatial configuration of hypertext, I now focus on how it offers the means for a political intervention in debates on identity, integration and multiculturalism. Paul Scheffer, professor in urban studies, is one of the key figures in the debate on multiculturalism and immigration in the Netherlands.⁴⁶ Scheffer argues that the current era of widespread communication and information technologies alters the phenomenon of migration. In the past, upon departure, immigrants had to definitively bid farewell to their home country, while nowadays ties with their country of origin are more easily maintained. Scheffer insists that maintaining transnational contact with the diaspora results in closed off communities and processes of alienation, that in turn erode democratic culture (2007, p. 40). In this way, satellite dishes, call shops and the use of *Skype* are seen as emblematic symbols of segregation and the failure of integration.

⁴⁴ My translation from Dutch.

⁴⁵ Additionally, besides restricting behavior, other interest-driven group communities, such as the Air-Max group Ryan joined, can be made profitable by corporations who monitor behavior and send advertisements to group members as part of their niche-marketing efforts.

⁴⁶ Authoring the influential 2000 essay "Het multiculturele drama" (in English: "The multicultural drama"), Paul Scheffer was one of the first in the Netherlands to argue that multiculturalism has failed (2000).

The opportunity to retain ties through communication networks is indeed unprecedented, but the hyperlinking practices I describe above illustrate that an opportunity to maintain ties with the homeland is combined with other affiliations. Thus, transnational communicative networking among diasporic subjects “does by no means preclude them from investing their best efforts to integrate into society” (Ben-Rafael and Sternberg, 2002, p. 11). In making his argument, Scheffer accepts a singular, fixed and one-sided understanding of migrant identity. However, his claim does not account for the multiplicity of subject positions that every individual inhabits. The publishing of hypertextual narratives of selves shows how identities are not fixed and singular, but are dynamically constructed at the crossroads of different affiliations. With hypertextual narratives of selves, Moroccan-Dutch youths are therefore far more complex in their engagement with digital media than earlier theory allows: connections are hybridised, and affiliations are turned into practices of diasporic branding where, by aligning with interest-driven youth cultural groups, Moroccan-Dutch youths crossover from being part of a minority to becoming part of a majority group. They do not only take up ICTs to close off their communities. This leads to the question; in what ways do they subsequently reconfigure the majorities?

There is a generational specificity to multivocal diaspora aesthetics; this specificity lies in the ways migrant youths show communal recognition and express their individuality through hypertext which combines affiliation to their national/ethnic “roots” with a “routed” embrace of other youth subcultures, many of them transnational (Gilroy, 1993). These two axes are constantly reshuffled and re-negotiated online where, thanks to the technological possibilities of HTML hypertext, a whole range of identities and identifications may be brought to the fore at any given time. Hypertextual spaces can operate as “in-between”, “interstitial” and “diaspora media space” as set out by Bhabha and Brah.⁴⁷

Bhabha elaborates on spaces where different experiences can be articulated: “‘in-between’ spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation” (1994, p. 2). On a conceptual level, the interactive space where hypertextual

⁴⁷ Feminist and postcolonial figurations of in-betweenness aim to map embodied positions and theorize alternatives. Other such figurations include Gloria Anzaldúa’s figuration of the “mestiza” as a consciousness of being situated in the American-Mexican borderlands (1987), Donna Haraway proposes the “cyborg” to move to a posthuman understanding of the hybrid relationships between organisms and machines (1985) and the understanding of “nomadic subjects” developed by Rosi Braidotti to refer to a philosophy of becoming and itinerant multilayered subjectivity to critique the center from within (2011).

selves come together is space of digital interaction where diversity is ordinary, and heterogeneity is expressed and valued. The practice of joining groups in social networking sites offers ethnic minority and majority youths a platform for self-expression, cross-cultural exchange and active encounter. In this way, hypertextual-networked belonging is exemplary for how youth cultures can become spaces of convivial intercultural encounter. By acknowledging the multiplicity of identity, binary polarizations of social categories are broken down. Throughout the remainder of the study, I remain attentive to how digital practices such as hyperlinking offers grounds to begin contesting racism and essentialist discourses.

1.6 Conclusions

In this chapter, I revised and extended the optic of space invaders to carry out a critical cartography of Moroccan-Dutch youths performativity of selves across digital spaces. Developing a theoretical toolbox by building on gender studies, feminist technoscience, postcolonial studies, and new media studies, I proposed that spatially situated digital identity performativity is constituted by interactions between socio-technological, material-embodied and imagined-discursive factors. Having grown aware of the perpetuation of unjust hierarchies on spaces on the Internet, scholars interested in digital divides might benefit from shifting their focus beyond material access and literacies and explore further the sources of uneven user contributions to digital culture. Power relations are perpetuated in digital space, although they often remain invisible, as they are naturalized and taken for granted. Digital practices provide an extension of everyday life, and I articulated a middle-ground perspective to go beyond seeing the Internet either as utopian liberatory or dystopian imprisoning parallel universe. Rather, I acknowledged the pitfalls and potentialities by considering them as mutually shaped by social and technological processes.

Although the World Wide Web is by definition global and is often seen as disembodied and de-territorializing, a spatial consciousness uncovers how everyday digital spaces privilege certain reserved positions, behavior and norms. In the chapter I rewrote space invaders as a lens to situate informants' practices of rooted and routed identification in the two-fold articulation of digital diaspora, and the multiplicity of selves published through hypertextual linking on social networking sites. Informants display a contestation of dominant discourses online that is sometimes accepted by the majorities (in the case of convivial interaction) and sometimes repudiated in return (in the case of

restricting political *Hypes* groups). With the notion of space invaders, I will thus be able to conceptualize, empirically locate and subsequently harness these resources to confront biases and intervene in privileges and power hierarchies that are embedded and contested between online and offline spaces.

Digital space is one of the social stages where ethnic minority youths struggle to stake out their individual identities by narrating themselves in various ways. They appropriate applications and claim “the ‘right’ to signify from the periphery of authorized power” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 3). Following the lead generated by the examples discussed in this chapter, in the following four case-studies I continue my critical reading of how Moroccan-Dutch digital narratives of selves make empirically visible spatial hierarchies, their subversion and perpetuation, reveal a negotiation of incentives of the cultural industry as well as uncover convivial interaction. Digital narratives demonstrate their situated, intersectional journeys of identification at the crossroads of roots and routes of age, gender, ethnicity, race, diaspora, religion and generation affiliations.

2. Methodological trajectory

All scientific knowledge is always, in every respect, socially situated. Neither knowers nor the knowledge they produce are or could be impartial, disinterested, value-free, Archimedean. The challenge is to articulate how it is that knowledge has a socially situated character.

– Sandra Harding (1991, p. 11)

In this study, the optic of space invaders is developed because it offers the tools to: theorize identity and a digital spatial consciousness; empirically analyze identification through spatial(izing) processes; and intervene and nuance understandings of identification and digital media. In this chapter, I set out space invaders as a mode of empirical analysis by (re-) constructing my methodological framework and situating the knowledges it produces. For this purpose I reflect on my data gathering and analysis efforts. Philosophers of science and feminist theorists have laid bare that all academic paradigms have cultural dynamics, with their own epistemologies, norms, procedures, expectations and assumptions of validity (Kuhn, 1970).¹ Objects of study are constructed in specific ways by the methods used to describe them, and thus knowledge is always situated, positioned and the result of a relational process (Haraway, 1998, 1991, 1997; Harding, 1991).² Going beyond “methodological nationalism” (Buikema, Griffin & Lykke, 2011, p. 2), I have selected different approaches. By combining large-scale questionnaires with ethnographically inspired fieldwork across online/offline spaces including semi-structured, face-to-face, in-depth interviews and digital data gathering, I join differently situated, but complimentary “partial views” (Haraway, 1991, p. 183).

I locate myself within the continuum of social scientists’ empiricism and humanities scholars’ postmodern rejections of essentialism by outlining my creative collision of these different methodological approaches. When contrasting both fields, it can be noted that empiricist researchers hold positivist premises: by following a set of guidelines reality can successfully be captured in its essence. Following the key conventions of “good research”: rationality, verifiability, objectivity, falsifiability, reliability, generalization, large-scale quantification, neutrality and value-freeness of the researcher a singular truth can be found (Griffin, 2011, p. 97). Quantitative social scientists maintain strict methodological procedures to ensure their research meets these

¹ In the words of Thomas Kuhn, “the proponents of competing paradigms practice their trades in different worlds”, implying that scholars working in different fields see the world in a different way: “the two groups of scientists see different things when they look from the same point in the same direction” (1970, p. 150).

² Donna Haraway writes that scholarly stories do not equal “fictions”, rather she notes, “to use stories to tell what I think is the truth – a located, embodied, contingent and therefore real truth” (1997, p. 230).

standards. Empiricist epistemologies are dominant in scholarly knowledge production and they largely frame what constitutes valid knowledge.

Poststructuralist critical theorists in the humanities operate on the other side of the spectrum. This paradigm rejects empiricism and positivist truth claims for their essentializing tendencies. Building on critical philosophies of language, the epistemology of this tradition points to the social construction of knowledge. Scholars following its rules often do qualitative work that is attuned to theorizing the specific; they carry out in-depth critical close-readings. At the level of micro-politics, they study how subjects come into being through multiple including and excluding discourses. Some however tended to black box their methodological considerations, making it appear as if their theoretical knowledge arises from unguided interpretation. Reflecting on analytical procedures, Gabrielle Griffin recognized that scholars in the arts and humanities until very recently “have remained surprisingly silent about what it is that they do to achieve these results” (2011, p. 92).³ However, criteria such as interdisciplinarity, plausibility, reflexivity, and comprehensiveness are increasingly used to evaluate what constitutes “good research” (Griffin, 2011; see also Harding, 1991; Haraway, 1988; Buikema, 2009).

A dualism has emerged, opposing quantitative, positivist and empirical with qualitative, constructivist, theory-driven approaches (Lawson, 1995). Lorraine Code explains “quantification is still esteemed as the best method for achieving certain knowledge”: objective, value-free, rigorous and hard quantitative methods are seen as superior scientific ideals, while theory-driven qualitative research is “frequently marginalized and dismissed as ‘unscientific’” (1991, p. 160). Quantitative research is defined against qualitative research, a process through which the latter gets projected as mere opinion generating through subjective, irrational, flexible and soft interpretative methods. For instance in some quantitative oriented fields the use of ‘I’ in publications is dismissed as an inferior style that conveys subjectivity. However, post-structuralist feminist researchers, too, have perpetuated the dualism, dismissing quantitative methods as masculinist scientific rigor, which is ironic “because feminist scholarship has critiqued or broken apart many other dualisms in order to expose the process of othering that reinforces power relations” (Lawson, 1995, p. 451; see also Ramazanoğlu and Holland,

³ Note for instance the lack of attention or blackboxing of methodologies in humanities doctoral dissertations or the absence of special sections on methodology in humanities journals (Griffin, 2011, p. 92).

2002, pp. 28, 162).⁴ Quantitative and qualitative approaches to research are however not necessarily purely dichotomous, incompatible and/or mutually exclusive epistemologies.

Rather than seeing the two epistemologies as oppositional, I strategically take an in-between position and make use of tools from both, while remaining sympathetic to the politics of feminism to locate and promote the transformation of social injustices.⁵ I explicitly want to avoid giving the impression that I am able to solve the tensions between the different epistemological traditions that I tap into. Instead I give a personal account of how I navigated between them, what my resources were and why and how I made certain decisions. I chose various approaches such as large-scale surveys, semi-structured in-depth interviews and gathering digital materials. Using these multiple methods enables me to join multiple considerations of Moroccan-Dutch youths' everyday digital experiences and identification. Triangulating these different partial, situated and contingent accounts allows me to construct a multi-perspectival and thus more nuanced study.

In this chapter, the value, dynamics and implications off the various approaches used are discussed. Bojana Lobe, Sonia Livingstone, Kjartan Olafsson and José Simões note that quantitative and qualitative methods have their pros and cons: “[s]urveys are highly formal and standardized (we should be able to anticipate all pertinent questions); while fieldwork/ethnographic methods are informal and open to unexpected data (indicating little control over events)” (2008, p. 6). My combination of these approaches emphasizes the unconventional side of the study. I mix certain methods that are coming from different epistemological traditions, but as a red thread I hold on to critical and reflective principles from feminist/postcolonial post-structural traditions. Although I take several initiatives to share the power of definition and interpretation, I believe asymmetrical power relations between the researchers and the researched are impossible to be completely bridged. I depend on informants to share their voices to produce knowledge, but I have a final say in my writings. By taking a reflective stance I want to account for how power relations impacted upon the different phases of the research, and I want to show how these relations do however not always remain purely dichotomous or oppositional.

⁴ Haraway captures the dynamic of feminist researchers negotiating the duality between positivism and reliability vis-à-vis social constructivism and relativism as a “greasy pole” dilemma: it is difficult to climb a pole while grasping both ends. She overcame this duality by articulating the solution of partial visions and situated knowledge (1991, p. 188).

⁵ As such, this study is grounded within a normative framework to assess gendered, ethnic and other societal injustices. Caroline Ramazanoglu and Janet Holland argue that “if a feminist methodology has distinctive rules, a politically sympathetic man should (in theory) be able to use them)” (2002, p. 8).

In the following, I point to the power relations at play at the different stages of research. In section 2.1, I reflect on developing, conducting and analyzing the large-scale survey in context of the *Wired Up* research project. In section 2.2 the dynamics of in-depth interviewing are considered, and I discuss the collection of digital materials in section 2.3. In section 2.4, I describe the politics of translation and introduce my approach to discursive analysis. The structure of the chapter roughly follows the chronology of the research process. The first phase of the research consisted of surveys; the subsequent phase consisted of carrying out in-depth interviews while the last phase consisted of gathering digital materials. Analysis took place parallel to the various stages of data gathering.

2.1 The Wired Up survey

Donna Haraway argues that knowledge always presents a view “from somewhere” (1991, p. 195). Paraphrasing Haraway, Victoria Lawson argues that feminists and critical scholars “can count from somewhere too” (1995, p. 452). The value of quantification for this study resides in its capacity to be able to map out trends and patterns in digital media practices of Moroccan-Dutch youths. These trends and patterns provide a solid focus for my subsequent in-depth interviewing and digital data collection efforts. I see survey research as a method for systematically collecting and analyzing social data via detailed and highly structured questionnaires in order to obtain information from large numbers of respondents presumed to be representative of a specific population.⁶ From early Spring to late Fall 2010, a survey sample of 1408 secondary school students was established among seven schools in the Netherlands through a collective effort of data collection by *Wired Up* team members.⁷ After receiving instructions from one of the *Wired Up* team members, students were surveyed in a computer lab in their school. Most survey rounds took 30 to 50 minutes.

In this section I first reconstruct the development of the *Wired Up* survey and reflect on the power relations of survey research. Subsequently I describe the survey sampling procedure and reconstruct how we were able to secure access to respondents in seven secondary schools. Next, I reflect on administering the survey, before describing general personal dynamics and (digital) media use patterns among the group of Moroccan-Dutch survey participants that shaped subsequent research phases of interviewing and digital data gathering.

⁶ Survey data is commonly used for “collating descriptive information”, “making comparisons between groups of people” and “exploring relationships between variables” (Bertrand & Hughes, 2005, p. 68).

⁷ Research assistants Manja Coopmans and Malin Grundel assisted project leader Mariëtte de Haan and PhD students Asli Ünluşoy and myself in conducting surveys.

Constructing the survey

The Wired Up research project was conceptualized so that its eight group-members (three project leaders: Mariëtte de Haan, Kevin Leander and Sandra Ponzanesi; three post-doctoral researchers: Fleur Prinsen, Fadi Hirzalla and Lisa Schwartz and two doctoral students: Asli Ünluşoy and myself) would be able to make specific use of a collectively gathered central database of survey data. The survey document reached its final shape after an extensive, one-and-a-half-year-long process of negotiation, because it had to meet different research goals of that ranged across different humanities disciplines such as gender and media studies and social science disciplines such as pedagogical sciences and learning sciences. Various stakes, expectations and requirements impacted differently upon its development, complicating and slowing down its conception. The survey was developed to learn more about how three key issues: identity, networking and learning were practiced and experienced digitally among ethnic majority Dutch, Moroccan-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch young people.

The survey approach was chosen to systematically produce generalizable data about digital identity, networking and learning among Dutch majority and ethnic minority youths in the Netherlands. With the survey we aimed to make possible comparisons to find out about differences and similarities between groups, for instance in terms of ethnicity, and within groups, for instance in terms of gender. However, the three foci; identity, networking and learning, each demanded a particular emphasis in the survey. The latter two themes proposed by the social science members of Wired Up were oriented towards learning more about person-to-person interaction by focussing on how respondents relate to their contacts online through direct networking practices and exchanges. The theme of identity proposed by humanities members of the project was more geared toward capturing digitally mediated representational practices, such as self-profiling activities on social networking sites. Attention for person-to-person networking and learning with representational identity practices provide multi-sided, complimentary views. However, reconciling these foci proved difficult, especially given the tight time constraints of a survey bounded by the short attention span of young people.

While reviewing the literature and searching for prior survey constructs we learned that our intended combination had never been brought together before. In particular, quantitative studies that go beyond addressing digital divides in terms of material access among young ethnic-minorities users proved difficult to find.⁸ Earlier and more traditional survey-based research primarily focuses on material access and patterns of media use (what

⁸ Lisa Nakamura rightly noted that “[e]mpirical studies have not tended to survey users about their production of Internet content” (2008, p. 177).

applications are used and how often). In line with my plea for a third wave of scholarship of digital gaps – to become attentive to uneven contribution to digital culture – this approach was extended to capture how youths continue their offline life online including socializing, seeking out and profiling their identities, finding information, building online networks, and learning from others. The final survey document consists of six sections: the first section was designed to capture media use frequencies. The second section covers the conditions under which Internet use took place. The third section focuses on identity markers. In section four, learning and producing content is covered. In section five, a number of socio-demographic indicators are covered. The final section builds on a Social-Network Analysis (SNA) approach to study networking practices with five online contacts (see appendix 1 to review the survey document).

Trained in new media studies and gender studies, I had to translate my interests in intersectional identity performativity and multi-spatial belonging into closed, formal, standardised questions to successfully meet the norms and principles of quantitative survey research. Many of my assumptions were principally theoretically informed but not empirically sustained elsewhere. Developing pioneering survey questions proved especially difficult when having to anticipate all questions and answers beforehand, therefore pragmatic solutions were sought. As I chose to focus in my study on the articulation of identities across digital media spaces, the survey would at least have to capture where young people move online. For the purpose of being able to map out spatial practices, a survey question was included in section one that asked (using a timescale) the respondent's frequency of use of different platforms and applications. Also an open question was added to allow respondents to add other spaces they visit.

Frequency of use is taken as one indicator of the degree of importance of specific platforms. Forming an additional indicator, respondents were asked (using a three-point-scale) to what extent they would miss the different Internet applications if they were not able to visit them anymore. Section two covers the context of digital practices, eliciting information on privacy, control, autonomy and freedom. Although the study approaches the online as an extension of the offline world, I remained interested in potentially transformative dynamics of the Internet. Therefore, respondents were for instance invited to answer whether there are topics they rather talk about on the Internet than elsewhere.

The third section of the survey was designed to capture digital identification practices. I chose to focus on asking respondents what identity markers they upload on their personal profile pages. Presenting a list of items that I distilled from self-profiling

opportunities offered on *MySpace* and *Facebook* and member-checking⁹ during piloting, respondents were asked to answer what items they normally publish on their profile page.¹⁰ Also respondents were asked with what youth groups they identify. I sought for ways to empirically capture multilayered identity construction, so multiple answers were possible for all questions in this section. The specific interest in “roots” and “routes” and the two-fold character of cultural and diaspora identification (Hall, 1990; Gilroy, 1993a) was translated into questions that captured the national, diaspora/migrant/transnational and global dimensions of identification. Respondents were invited to think about whether they put up affiliations with food (Dutch food and/or migrant food and/or global food), celebrities (Dutch celebrities and/or migrant celebrities and/or global celebrities) and music (Dutch music and/or migrant background music and/or global music) on their personal profile page. Besides the ethnic specificities of internet-related activities, I intended to uncover gendered particularities. Therefore, respondents were for instance asked to choose, from a list of (gendered) self-presentational labels,¹¹ three answers to reflect upon how they would show themselves in their display photo in order to be liked by their friends.

In order to make sure our survey would be attractive to all respondents, the decision was made to develop an online survey, making use of *NetQuestionnaire* survey software.¹² Online surveys have the advantage that they generate digital data that can readily be imported in data analysis software such as SPSS, and they allow for complex routing and skipping systems, enabling the respondent to participate in an inviting, individualized questionnaire. There are also disadvantages, as the survey software demanded us to translate our ideas in specific ways. We were for instance bound to the interface structure, but the option to include HTML and CSS programming enabled for a degree of flexibility. It was a complex task to design the survey in such a way so that it successfully addressed the youngest respondents without putting off segments of our intended older audiences. We had to make sure the survey would be understandable, largely self-explanatory but also attractive for students ranging from 12 to 18 years old. Furthermore, as we experienced during our extensive piloting phase and survey taking, it is difficult to design an online questionnaire that appears identical on different screens.¹³ Although screen resolutions, Internet browser

⁹ Member checking refers to processes of incorporating informant feedback and respondent validation.

¹⁰ Items include status updates, nicknames, name, age, city, neighbourhood, gender, sexual preference, ethnicity, religion and languages.

¹¹ Labels include cool, intelligent, hard-working, sweet, rich, computer-savvy, handsome/sexy, sporty, nerd, social, trendy/fashionable, rebel, beautiful and normal.

¹² See <http://www.netq-enquete.nl/en/>.

¹³ See also Sue and Ritter (2007) and Czaja and Blair (2005, pp. 40-44) who discuss the advantages and disadvantages of online surveys more in-depth.

settings and Internet transmission speeds differ, we sought for ways to present all respondents with a similar set of questions and survey design. This meant designing an accessible survey interface, with a clearly legible font, font color and template. We also had to make sure that questions would fit on different screens, even when they would be loaded on the smaller screens of laptops or even smart phones.¹⁴

The power of definition

Asymmetrical power relations can be noted in the survey research process. The survey instrument steers respondents in a particular fixed direction and Wired Up team members held the power to define the answer categories with which respondents had to make do. However, respondents were invited to actively take part in the development of the survey. During periods of intensive piloting, the opinions of young people from the target population were gathered. An initial set of ideas, questions and multiple-choice answer categories was adjusted on the basis of feedback of a large group of young people who evaluated our questionnaire. In a first round, each survey question was discussed with 15 youths individually. They were asked whether the questions and answer categories were clear, whether they missed answer categories and whether they understood the structure of the survey. Also their impressions of the length of survey were taken into consideration. Subsequently, the questions and answer categories were refined on the basis of the first test round were checked with a group of 20 young people in a second piloting round. Respondents were involved in the realization of the survey; however, during the actual data collection, the instrument was not open to changes. Being temporarily fixed in this way, the survey forced respondents to squeeze their personal experiences and views in the offered answer categories as offered.

The following exchange I had with 15-year-old Ryan during one of the interviews reveals that respondents strategically manage the impression they want to make in giving answers:

Ryan: I thought to myself it was a bit of a boring survey ... but now all of a sudden there is an interview and I know it is taken very seriously...

Koen: ok, well because we have had a look at what kind of answers people have given

Ryan: yes, yes, I have also given very genuine answers I mean it!

Koen: because of course we can see from the results when people gave nonsense answers

Ryan: But say with the question 'how much do you use the computer per day'

Koen: yes?

¹⁴ In a small number of classes, students had to make use small screen laptops with wireless Internet instead of desktop computers with fixed cable Internet connections.

Ryan: I use the computer a lot, but in my answering I acted as if I don't use it so much. I did not want to show myself as a nerd or freak. You know, I did these kinds of things... I admit... I have lowered the time [in my answers on usage frequencies]

Although the respondents, like Ryan, seize such opportunities to negotiate their presentation of self (Goffman, 1959), in the end, together with other Wired Up team members; I exercise definitional power when analyzing their answers. Aggregating data while controlling for and/or disregarding unreliable answers, I have the privilege of the final say over their representation. Constituting particular research subjects through categorizing, defining and naming practices is an inherently political and power-ridden process, because reality is structured according to a certain set of visions of the world (Foucault, 1980a). It is our decision to choose what to represent and what to leave unnamed in the survey, and the analysis is guided by my personal decisions. Similar processes of naming occur during the interviewing and discursive analysis phases of the research as I make selections and inevitably hear and focus upon particular things, while ignoring and excluding others. In the following section, I continue my discussion of the Wired Up survey by describing the stratified sampling method and securing access to the research population.

Survey sampling and access

Given Wired Up's special research interests, the aim was to generate a sample with substantial groups of respondents stretching across ethnic majority Dutch and ethnically diverse backgrounds.¹⁵ For reasons of practicality, stratified sampling was chosen over random sampling.¹⁶ To this end, schools with ethnically diverse student populations within roughly one-and-a-half-hour of public transport travel from Utrecht were selected, creating a dataset with 31.8% ethnic majority Dutch young people and a remainder of ethnic minority Dutch youths. We diversified the sample with regard to age, gender and education level. The

¹⁵ The Centre for Financial Institutions (CFI) is a Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science organization that produces yearly overviews of student populations of all secondary education institutions in the Netherlands. The Centre also maintains overviews of ethnic compositions of schools. These figures were shared with me in an *Excel* file. Although the data allowed us to decide which schools would be of interest for our research, their listings need to be problematised. In the files CFI provided, figures are given for categorizations of people such as “%Autochth.” for ‘Autochthonous’, “%West.” for ‘Westerners’, “%Turk.” for ‘Turkish’, “%Moroc.” for ‘Moroccan’, “%Suri” for ‘Surinamese’, “%Antil.” for ‘Antillean’, “%Nw-oth” for “New others” “%Unk” for ‘Unkown’ (my translations from Dutch). These labels are value-laden and politically charged. They are problematic in the sense that they do not allow room for any cultural hybridization, and they deny groups of people their Dutch nationality and identification. Also a binary line is drawn by listing Western students on one side of the line (that do not ask for further scrutiny) and on the other side of the line those who do not fit the category of “western” are specified and separating out along national affiliations.

¹⁶ In stratified sampling a studied population is arranged into subgroups of individuals who can be considered to be relatively homogeneous on a characteristic related to the variables considered in the study (Czaja & Blair, 2005, pp. 187-191).

average age of our respondents was 14.5 years (SD=1.7) and a little over half of them (53%) were female. Some 52% of the respondents was following a lower preparatory school for secondary vocational training (VMBO: *Voorbereidend Middelbaar Beroeps Onderwijs*); 17% of the respondents was attending higher preparatory school for secondary vocational training (VMBO-T: *Voorbereidend Middelbaar Beroeps Onderwijs – Theoretisch*); 16% was attending general secondary education, preparing for vocational university (HAVO: *Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs*); and 13% of the respondents was following academic secondary school, preparing for academic learning (VWO or Gymnasium: *Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs*), which matches by and large the distribution of school tracks in the country (Wired Up, 2012, p. 9).

For this purpose, from late spring 2009 onwards, 25 schools were invited to join our study.¹⁷ Contacts were established in four phases, starting with letters and e-mails, followed up with telephone calls and school visits. Eventually, after an extensive period of conversation and negotiation, the directors of seven schools in total granted us access to conduct our survey. This number includes two schools in both Utrecht and Amsterdam and individual schools in Gouda, 's-Hertogenbosch and Rotterdam. Access to schools was hindered and delayed by a heavy dose of research fatigue voiced by school directors, management and teachers. The rejection given by one Rotterdam school principal sums up the problem well:

Many thanks for your request to participate in the Wired Up research project. However we cannot join the project. The number of requests to carry out questionnaires, research, and projects is enormous with next to no advantages for school, or students. Also it still remains an invasion in our organization time and time again. The pressure from the [education] inspection to achieve good results continues unabated, and that thus remains our highest priority. There is no room for other affairs that do not support us in carrying out our educational program.

The Wired Up team took this feedback to heart, recognizing the vital importance of establishing a strong relationship with all communities involved, and ensuring not only the research team but participants too would be able to benefit from the study. For this reason, school directors, teachers and students were all explained the relevance of our research when inviting them to participate in our study, and in return we also asked what we could mean for everyone involved. Thus we aimed to take into account not only our own goals, but also ways to acknowledge how our research could become valuable for those participating as well. The school directors and teachers of all seven schools that

¹⁷ The Utrecht University Faculty of Social Science WMO committee, that protects the rights of respondents under the Dutch Law *Medical Research with Humans*, provided pre-approval of the Wired Up fieldwork setup. With this pre-approval, the study was exempted from other medical-ethical committee approvals.

participated emphasized that researchers cause severe disruptions to school dynamics upon every entry. It turned out that a large part of the research fatigue we noticed among gatekeepers when contacting schools appeared to have grown from frustrations with prior anonymous 'hit-and-run' academics. Many researchers had entered their school communities to conveniently gather large data sets by administering questionnaires to their students, but after their departure they were never heard from again.

In dialogue with school directors and teachers, it was agreed that in return for granting the Wired Up team access to schools; we would communicate back the implications of our survey findings. For this purpose, seven school reports were written that contextualized and compared practices observed in individual schools with the other participating schools. The reports provided an overview of the state of the art of digital media practices in terms of networking, identification and learning among the students of the specific school. Also, the implications of digital practices captured in the survey for teaching purposes were sketched out. School directors, management and teachers were the intended audience for these school-specific reports. Some schools invited us to present the implications of the survey findings in a discussion meeting frequented by teachers and educators. Results were also communicated back to the students who participated in the survey themselves. Visually stimulating, over-sized posters were printed to present students with a number of key characteristics, such as school-specific gender differences in frequency and attachment to Internet applications. The Wired Up team also presented findings in different school classes, using the printed posters or digital smart boards that were present in the classrooms. During these presentations students were also triggered to participate in the subsequent in-depth interviewing phase.

We aimed to provide educators greater insight in the digital practices of their school populations. One of the unintended consequences of communicating back findings to school management became apparent when Oussema, a 15-year-old interviewee, sent me a message on *Facebook* shortly after the Wired Up team shared the report with findings with his school: *"I think that's why Facebook, Twitter, Hypes etc. have been blocked in my school xD, when they learned which sites are used the most :P"*¹⁸ One of Wired Up's key assumptions is that learning via Internet and digital media can be incorporated in a positive way in contemporary education.¹⁹ While one of the motivators of our research

¹⁸ xD and :P (also sometimes visualized as ☺ and 😜) are emoticons used on the Internet to express non verbal cues, in this case laughing very hard and playfully sticking out ones' tongue respectively.

¹⁹ See for instance the information about our project that was shared with teachers and parents in letters but also on our project website: <http://www.uu.nl/wiredup/informatiedocenten.htm>.

was therefore to provide educators with ideas to connect with students through the use of digital media, this example indicates how our findings also spurred other ideas, resulting for instance in a more stringent media policy in some schools, impacting heavily on the students' digital radius of action in school settings.

Conducting surveys

In some schools, school directors and teachers decided which classes of students would join the survey research, in others we pitched the research in front of classes, letting students decide for themselves whether they would want to skip class and join our study.²⁰ Each class was given two vouchers worth 7.50 euro, and the vouchers were given away to students in a lottery draw. In a short plenary presentation, all survey participants were briefly introduced to the aims and workings of the survey by one of the Wired Up PhD-students, Asli Ünluşoy or me. We emphasized to every class of students that we were interested in learning their views about the relevance of digital media in their lives. Also, it was explained that their anonymity would be safeguarded, and that our data would never be used to provide information to teachers, parents or government institutions about individual respondents. We also made clear that our analysis would only consist of reporting about patterns of user behavior, aggregated over groups of participants. By typing in a shortened website address that included the name of the school, students were redirected to the survey which was hosted on Utrecht University servers. During the surveys, the instructors remained present to supervise and monitor the survey process and answer any questions that arose.

The issue of trust showed to be of central concern, as was observable from remarks made by respondents. Comments and questions directed at me ranged from the content of the research "*why do you need this information*", "*I'm not giving my real name*", and "*what are you going to do with it, it will end up in the hands of the child protection board*" to the personal "*I think you like women with curly hair like the girls in this class, don't you?*". We also noticed that other students discussed the survey and gossiped about us behind our backs. Students were kindly asked to work on the survey individually, but some tried to establish a private backchannel of communication by starting up instant messaging alongside the *Internet Explorer* or *Firefox* Wired Up survey browser window. The survey takers assisted

²⁰ Meeting Dutch research standards, an opt-out mechanism was followed; the seven participating schools distributed letters of invitation to parents of participating students. In the letter, parents were informed about the workings and aims of surveys. Parents could choose to opt out their children from our research. In every school, parents of a handful of children from the study made use of this option.

by teachers and engaged students, actively sought to keep sabotage practices to a minimum and assured that the students completed the surveys individually.

Another example of such digital creativity shows how we, as outsiders and intruders to school communities, were challenged and tested in our perseverance. For example, after finishing the survey, students from a second year class were allowed to exit the classroom and enjoy their lunch break. After finishing his survey, one student pulled off a smart prank, opening a video called *Farting Sounds* on *YouTube* shortly before switching off the power of his computer screen. So when all remaining students began breaking out in laughter with fart noises coming from one side of the room, it took some time to locate the computer that was producing the sounds from a row of black computer screens. A final example shows how stressful survey data gathering can be, when during the instruction to the survey we wrote the URL of the survey with indelible ink on a smart board while we were thinking we were writing on a white board that would allow us to easily wipe away our markings. The students stared at us without blinking and without saying anything, but began laughing at us when we had finished writing.

When these discomfoting things happened, I always tried my best to be a good sport and not let those things bother me too much, and it showed that when keeping demeanor friendly, students would happily continue participating in the survey (Sultana, 2007, p. 380). There were also plenty of occasions where students were genuinely interested in learning about our project, what it is like to work in the university, and finding out which academic trajectory we had completed. It also showed that our presence countered stereotypes of the University as an elite ivory tower disconnected from the real world, as one girl for instance expressed her amazement when she noticed I was wearing the same kind of sneakers that she wore, by shouting "*I did not know people in the University wear Nike Air force ones!*". My shoes became a sign of commonality, making me someone who could be empathized with.

In sum, besides documenting the process of conducting surveys in schools, this section also shows that quantitative fieldwork methods of survey research, often seen as a hallmark of objectivity, do involve very personal experiences and power relations that operate in different ways. A good introduction and an open, positive attitude of us survey takers proved most successful in ensuring the cooperation of the participants. I continue my discussion about hierarchies and power relations in fieldwork when reflecting on in-depth interviewing and discursive analysis.

General survey findings

In this section I present a general overview of survey findings serving two purposes: they inform subsequent research phases and they introduce the reader to the group of respondents.^{21,22} I introduce general socio-demographics of the Moroccan-Dutch survey participants, describe the gendered specificities of their media use, situate their practices in the context of usage and point out the digital spaces they valued the most.

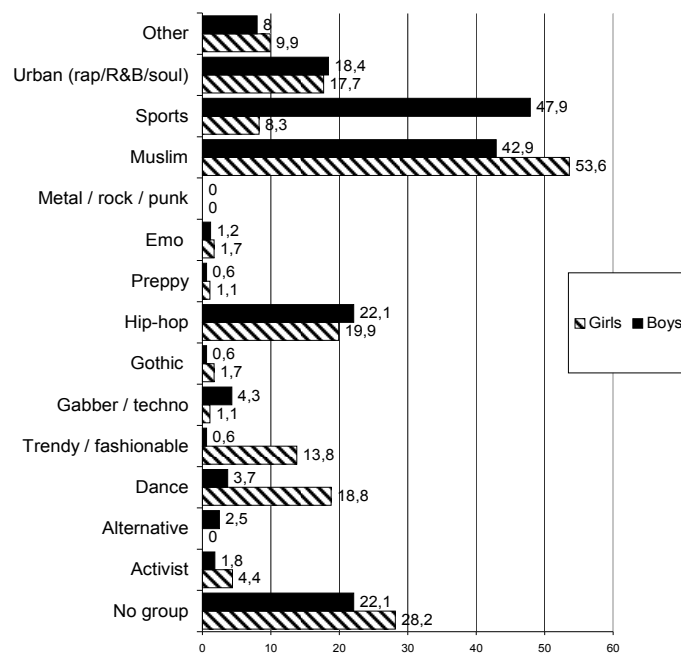


Figure 2.1 Subcultural youth group self-identifications among Moroccan-Dutch youths (percentages, multiple answers possible, n= 344).

From the total number of 1408 respondents, a group of 344 Moroccan-Dutch youths participated; this group consists of 181 girls and 163 boys. On average they are 14.5 years (SD=1.7) old, and when prompted 98.5% describe themselves as Muslim. More than three-quarters (76.2%) of young people speak Dutch at home with their parents. Two thirds do this in combination with a Berber language (66.9%) and half with Moroccan-

²¹ Extensive statistical analysis including for example significant correlations in the survey data goes beyond the descriptive account I present here. More in-depth statistical information is given in the Wired Up research report (Wired Up, 2012).

²² Survey data was studied using *SPSS 16.0 for Windows*.

Arabic (52.6%). We asked respondents which subcultural affiliations they would include on their personal SNS profile. Roughly half of the respondents reports to profile themselves as belonging to a Muslim subculture and one fifth see themselves as urban and hip-hop. Gender differences become apparent; as girls affiliate themselves more with dance music and being trendy and fashionable while boys see themselves more as sporty (see figure 2.1).

In this study, the focus is on digital media practices but these must be seen in the context of wider media consumption practices. On a daily basis, 7.9% of Moroccan-Dutch respondents read newspapers and magazines, 11.9% read books, 33.4% play computer games on consoles such as *X-Box 360* or *Play Station 3*, 57.6% use their MP3 players or *I-Pods* and 62.2% of respondents watch TV or DVD's (see appendix 2 for a more detailed overview of media practices).

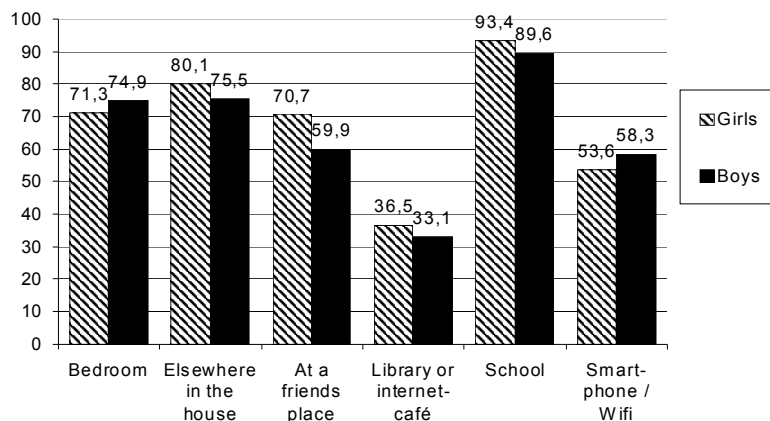


Figure 2.2 Locations where Moroccan-Dutch youths connect to the Internet (percentages, n= 344).

Computer ownership and Internet access is widespread, as 98.3% of Moroccan-Dutch girls and 96.9% of the boys report they have a computer in their homes with Internet access. These numbers are comparable to the 96% of males and 95% of females among the general Dutch population that own hardware and have Internet access in 2011 (CBS, 2012). As shown in figure 2.2, the respondents connect to the Internet from various locations. Roughly three out of every four Moroccan-Dutch youths log on to the Internet using a computer in their own bedroom. Besides their own bedrooms, Moroccan-Dutch girls connect more frequently from a computer elsewhere in their

house, at a friend's place, in the library or in an Internet café, or at school, while boys connect to the Internet via their smart phones more often. More than one in every two girls and boys use their smart phones to go online. Girls furthermore report to send more short messages using their mobile phones than boys (see appendix 3). Moroccan-Dutch girls report to consider the internet more useful to search for information and buy things that are difficult to get, while boys report to see the internet as more useful to reach organizations and to find people to help in the case of problems (see appendix 4). The majority of both Moroccan-Dutch girls and boys report to experience great autonomy and limited restrictions in pursuing their own goals in their Internet use. This holds both for deciding what they download online, whom they talk to online and what they publish on their profile page (see appendix 5). When controlled, Moroccan-Dutch youths are more monitored by their siblings, in contrast with ethnic majority Dutch youths, who are mostly monitored by their mother (Wired Up, 2012, p. 20).

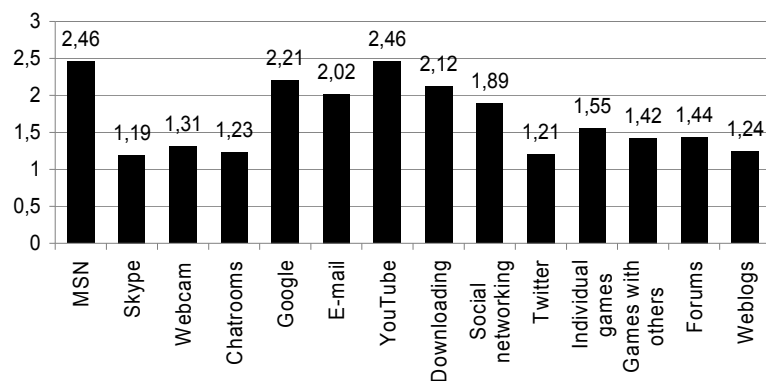


Figure 2.3 Internet application preferences among Moroccan-Dutch youths (graph shows means on a 3-point-scale n= 344).

Focusing on the frequency of use of various internet applications, survey findings show that Moroccan-Dutch students mostly turn to *MSN Messenger*, *YouTube*, *Google*, e-mail, social networking sites, downloading, *Skype*, online-solo games and discussion forums (see appendix 6). This list of applications changes when considering practices students reported they would miss most if they were not able to do them anymore (see figure 2.3). In order of decreasing importance they mention *MSN Messenger*, *YouTube*, *Google*, downloading, e-mail, social-networking sites and forums. For instance, even though they mention to frequently make use of *Skype*, the vast majority does not consider

the application of great importance for themselves personally. This difference between frequency of use and attachment can be explained by acknowledging that Moroccan-Dutch youths often set up *Skype* connections to allow their parents to communicate with their family and friends living abroad in Morocco and elsewhere in the Moroccan diaspora. As I described in chapter one, they themselves more often engage in representing their diaspora affiliations symbolically instead of maintaining personal contact with members of the diaspora. Moreover, when comparing boys and girls, it shows that girls consider forums important, while boys are more attached to playing solo games, gaming with others and using *Twitter* (see appendix 7).

In sum, from the survey a broad impression is generated, illustrating the multilayered dynamic of identification as informants report multiple subcultural affiliations besides ethnic and religious specificities. Moreover, gendered specificities of Internet activities and user contexts were found. I was also able to map out specific applications to which Moroccan-Dutch youths report being attached. These insights inform and shape the subsequent interviewing and digital content gathering phases. Qualitative in-depth methods were chosen to critically reflect on these findings to further nuance how Moroccan-Dutch youths represent their identities across different digital spaces. The survey findings provide a general but informative backdrop that assisted me in preparing questions pertaining to these digital spaces (*MSN Messenger, YouTube, Google*, downloading, e-mail, social-networking sites and forums) that respondents considered important in their lives. The survey played an additional important role in the study, as a selected number of respondents were invited to participate in the interviewing phase.

2.2 Interviews

Besides large-scale survey research, I carried out semi-structured in-depth interviews. Instead of the measurement and quantitative statistics the survey provides, the interviews were setup to do a topological mapping, to work out how informants thought about issues that they had faced across digital spaces (boyd, personal communication, June 10 – October 11, 2010). Based on the survey findings and my theoretical framework, I constructed an interview protocol and a series of topics that I wanted to get to with each interview, but then I also went where the youths wanted to go (see appendix 8 to review my interview protocol).²³ The motivation to carry out in-depth interviews stems from my assumption that interviews allow for capturing processes such as experiences, thoughts,

²³ The interview protocol was developed to ensure my research assistant Fayrouz and I would address a shared list of topics with all informants.

perceptions, feelings and the production of meaning, self positioning and attributing values that are difficult to apprehend with the survey approach. Instead of the closed yes/no questions asked in the survey, in-depth interviews namely allow asking the “wh” questions (“who/what/when/where/why”) that elicit longer, more detailed and layered responses (Lobe, Livingstone, Olafsson & Simões, 2008, p. 10). Seeing the informants as experts over their own views on their everyday lives I invited informants in the interviews to share their personal experiences of self-positioning across digital spaces with me.

Similar to the survey data gathering, power relations were also at play during interviewing. Some critical/feminist scholars over-concerned with reflexivity, positionality and the issue of representation moved away from fieldwork completely and have turned to textual analysis. Moving away from fieldwork, they aim to avoid critiques of their research perpetuating unequal gendered and Eurocentric representations and speaking for women and other minorities (Sultana, 2007, p. 375). However, I do not want to paralyze myself in fear of such criticism. Below, I set out the efforts I make to avoid the pitfalls of speaking for the interviewees and explain the ways I have attempted to research digital practices, space and identity with them (Christensen & James, 2000).

I first describe how the informants got involved in the interviewing phase of my research. Second, I reflect on the dynamics of interviewer-interviewee positioning and asymmetrical power relations. Acknowledging the relationship between digital space and offline space, I thirdly consider the implications of carrying out face-to-face interviews inside and outside school settings. Finally, I set out the rationale for focusing on four digital spaces.

Interview sampling

From those youths that participated in the survey, a selected group of young people was invited to join the interviewing phase of the study. The selection procedure consisted of the following steps: those participants who proved to have incompletely and/or unreliably filled in the surveys were filtered out from the SPSS database.²⁴ In the next step, those cases where people reported they themselves or one of their parents migrated

²⁴ Using SPSS software the reliability of the responses was weighed. Wired Up team member Asli Unlusoy developed reliability criteria for instance by assessing whether participants had finished the survey and provided personal and network data. This consisted for instance of a manual check of answers given to open-ended questions and a check of the variation in the responses participants gave; when the same response appeared throughout the data set (meaning the same box was clicked over and over again) those cases were labeled as unreliable.

from Morocco and reported to be between 12 and 18 years old were selected. Subsequently, in order to include youths who meet digital media use Wired Up survey averages, respondents who reported they do not actively participate in a minimum of digital practices such as social-networking sites, *MSN Messenger* and *YouTube* were excluded. This resulting list of people was further narrowed down on the basis of whether participants had reported willingness to take part in follow-up interviews.

School directors of two schools, one in Rotterdam and one in 's-Hertogenbosch, granted me access to re-enter their schools. From these schools, 44 Moroccan-Dutch students met my selection criteria, and they were all invited to join the interviewing phase. This was done after survey findings were presented in different school classes. Similar to the survey invitation procedure, all students were sent a letter of invitation through the school administration, allowing parents to opt out their child from the research. In total 44 students were invited, but 14 students had either moved to another school, were sick at the moment of invitation, were not allowed to join by their parents or decided themselves against participating in the interviews. The thirty students that were willing to participate in the in-depth interviews consisted of 16 students from one school in 's-Hertogenbosch (9 boys and 7 girls) and 14 students from one school in Rotterdam (6 boys and 8 girls). This group of informants was aged between 12 and 16 years.

In order to include 17 and 18-year olds and diversify the group of informants further, 13 Moroccan-Dutch youths were contacted using snowballing methods in other cities. Locating the additional group of youths in Utrecht, Venlo and Eindhoven, the process was facilitated with the assistance of various gatekeepers, including Fayrouz Boulayounne, a research-assistant of Moroccan-Dutch descent, other university students and volunteering work contacts. Having fostered trust through personal references that vouched for myself as well as the trustworthiness of the research, access to this supplementary group was granted relatively quickly. The parents of those informants invited through snowballing sampling that were younger than 18 years old at the moment of interviewing signed and posted consent forms to me.

A total of 43 Moroccan-Dutch key informants willingly participated in this qualitative phase of my research. Except for four interviewees, the majority of the informants were born in the Netherlands, from parents who migrated to the Netherlands. Mehmet Ali, Hatim, Kenza and Ziham, two boys and two girls, were born in Morocco and migrated to the Netherlands together with their parents at young age. It

was my intention to include a variety of Moroccan-Dutch youths, aiming at an even distribution in terms of gender, age and school level. The group of young people who joined the interviewing phase and shared their personal stories with me consisted of 22 girls and 21 boys. They range in age from 12 to 18 years old, the average age of the informants is 15 years (see table 2.1).

<i>Pseudonym</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Generation</i>	<i>School year</i>
Interviewees who participated in the survey					
Soesie	's-Hertogenbosch	female	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VMBO
Mohammed	's-Hertogenbosch	male	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VMBO K/T
Anas	's-Hertogenbosch	male	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VMBO K/T
Senna	's-Hertogenbosch	female	14	born in the Netherlands	2 VMBO K
Ayoub	's-Hertogenbosch	male	14	born in the Netherlands	2 VMBO K/B
Badr	's-Hertogenbosch	male	14	born in the Netherlands	2 VMBO K/B
Mehmet Ali	's-Hertogenbosch	male	14	born in Morocco	2 VMBO K/B
Loubna	's-Hertogenbosch	female	14	born in the Netherlands	3 VMBO K/B
Meryam	's-Hertogenbosch	female	15	born in the Netherlands	3 VMBO K/B
Hatim	's-Hertogenbosch	male	15	born in Morocco	3 VMBO K/T
Hajar	's-Hertogenbosch	female	15	born in the Netherlands	3 VMBO K/T
Carlos	's-Hertogenbosch	male	15	born in the Netherlands	3 VMBO K/T
Ryan	's-Hertogenbosch	male	15	born in the Netherlands	4 VMBO-T
Nevra	's-Hertogenbosch	female	16	born in the Netherlands	4 VMBO-K
Amir	's-Hertogenbosch	male	16	born in the Netherlands	4 VMBO-B
Bibi	's-Hertogenbosch	female	16	born in the Netherlands	4 VMBO-B/K
Soufian	Rotterdam	male	12	born in the Netherlands	2 HAVO
Salima	Rotterdam	female	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VWO
Tariq	Rotterdam	male	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VMBO-T
Inas	Rotterdam	female	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VWO
Amina	Rotterdam	female	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VWO
Abdel	Rotterdam	male	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VWO
Ilham	Rotterdam	female	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VWO
Sahar	Rotterdam	female	14	born in the Netherlands	3 VMBO-T
Ziham	Rotterdam	female	14	born in Morocco	2 HAVO
Kenza	Rotterdam	female	14	born in Morocco	3 HAVO
Oussema	Rotterdam	male	15	born in the Netherlands	3 HAVO
SouSou	Rotterdam	female	15	born in the Netherlands	3 VMBO-T
Abdelsammad	Rotterdam	male	15	born in the Netherlands	2 VMBO-T
Faruk	Rotterdam	male	16	born in the Netherlands	3 VMBO-T
Informants who participated in piloting the in-depth interview					
Inzaf	Eindhoven	female	15	born in the Netherlands	4 VMBO-T
Naoul	Eindhoven	female	16	born in the Netherlands	1 MBO
Yethi	Utrecht	male	15	born in the Netherlands	3 HAVO
Ferran	Venlo	male	17	born in the Netherlands	2 MBO
Ilana	Venlo	female	16	born in the Netherlands	1 MBO
Mustafa	Venlo	male	18	born in the Netherlands	2 MBO
Sadik	Venlo	male	17	born in the Netherlands	2 MBO
Safac	Venlo	female	18	born in the Netherlands	3 MBO
Informants who participated in piloting the survey and the in-depth interview					
Rachid	Utrecht	male	13	born in the Netherlands	2 VWO
Midia	Utrecht	female	13	born in the Netherlands	1 VMBO-T
Kamal	Eindhoven	male	15	born in the Netherlands	3 VMBO-T
Fatiha	Eindhoven	female	17	born in the Netherlands	4 HAVO
Khadija	Eindhoven	female	17	born in the Netherlands	4 VMBO-K

Table 2.1 Overview interviewees; names are pseudonyms (mostly suggested by informants).

In general, the interviewees live in small housing, in social-economically deprived neighborhoods and they come from above average-sized families (compared to the Dutch national average). The majority of informants mentioned that they know more about computers than their parents. In contrast with their parents, they are part of a generation that grew up with digital technologies. In my attempt to acknowledge all informants as distinct individuals, I introduce all 43 interviewees individually in appendix 9.

Acknowledging individual autonomy of the informants themselves, all informants were asked to sign a consent form themselves during the interviews too. The interviewees were all awarded a 7,50 euro voucher in return for their time investment in the study. Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 2 hours, and conversations with a number of interviewees continued via *MSN Messenger*, e-mail, and *Facebook*. This later process is further explained in section 2.3. In sum, the in-depth interviewing phase of this study builds on conversations with 43 key informants aged between 12 and 18 years old. However, I intersperse my study with comments gathered from supplementary conversations. I held additional face-to-face, telephone and online interviews with others who help shape the digital spaces informants frequent such as: Abdelilah Amraoui, founder of *Geveigerd.nl* and the discussion forum *Maghreb.nl*; Rafik, founder of the “Imazighen” *Hypes* group; eMoroccan, who I interviewed about the videos he posted to *YouTube*; and Rafje, a cartoonist publishing on the discussion forum *Marokko.nl*. Also I have held conversations with parents, teachers, and school directors who at least partially shape the informants’ experiences and perceptions of digital media practices.

Ethnographic in-depth interviewing

By carrying out ethnography-inspired interviews, I employ a method that originates from the field of anthropology. Anthropologists used ethnographic interviews to learn more about unfamiliar cultural practices. Acknowledging its troubled epistemological past, transparency about the power hierarchies in interviewing is necessary to address here.²⁵ Feminist and postcolonial theorists have criticized those studying “the native informant” for the purposes of exercising authority and governance. Edward Said and Gyatri Spivak for instance note that the discipline has traditionally been about privileged, white, male

²⁵ The history of ethnography inspired interviewing is rooted in colonial anthropology. Preoccupied with knowing the other, the discipline of anthropology was initiated during the era of European colonization (17th-20th century) to further colonial and imperial exploitation of the colonies (Harding, 1991, p. 239). The discipline’s history reveals some of the “colonialist and imperialist skeletons in Western science’s cupboard” (McNeil & Roberts, 2011, p. 31).

Western intellectuals that were keen on penetrating the mysterious ways of life of those people dominant European thinkers classified as others (Said, 1979; Spivak, 1993b, 1999). Immersing themselves in the lives of the people they study, they gain the point of view of an insider that is able to translate and represent indigenous and subaltern points of view to Western audiences. However, Spivak, Said and others have noted that this process of translation and representation is not innocent. Rather, anthropological studies were used to justify the installment and perpetuation of hierarchies: “to assign a static ethnicity to the Other”, writes Spivak, “is to foreclose” (1999, p. 110). These foreclosed ethnic, gendered and religious hierarchies were subsequently used to warrant exploitation and dominance of the West over the other.

In response, ethnographers have begun to reflect more on their complicity with power relations (Sultana, 2007). And, by beginning to see “ethnography as critical theory in action” (Madison, 2012, p. 14), critical ethnographers are carrying out research in a deconstructive mode by including polyphonic and fragmented voices, discontinuous narratives, multiple perspectives and simultaneity (Olivieri, 2012, p. 145; Marcus, 1998; Madison 2012). Postcolonial critiques have also made me attentive to the power relations of ethnography-inspired interviews (Franklin, 2004, p. 200). Therefore, instead of uncritically ventriloquizing or appropriating informants’ discourses, I reflect on the relationships between the interviewees and myself as a privileged researcher. Also I incorporated participatory research techniques and sought to incorporate a deconstructive, multilayered and multiperspectival stance in my discursive analysis of the narratives of informants (see section 2.4).

One may wonder, why use ethnographic interviews at all? I strategically make use of ethnography-inspired interviews because they have been recognized as beneficial to the study of young people’s own differential perceptions of childhood and adolescence (James, 2007; boyd, 2008, 2010).²⁶ The perspective acknowledges that youths are the experts on their own lives, agency, memories, experiences, perceptions and thoughts, and its “goal is to understand the child’s vantage point as valid and unique” (Saywitch, Camparo & Romanoff, 2010, p. 551). By eliciting explanations and elaborations from the young interviewees with open questions, instead of pressing directions with closed questions, and backgrounding one’s views as an adult researcher, the interviewees can be

²⁶ Allison James argues that just as feminism matured from the 1960’s onwards by conceptually and empirically sophisticating its tools to have women’s voices and views represented, childhood studies should understand better the politics of childhood by listening to and considering children’s own voices and experiences (2007). See the work by Kirsten Drotner who considers the promises and pitfalls of media ethnography to study everyday life in particular (1994).

encouraged to take the role of an expert. As the interviewer and informants take up these roles, the power differentials between children and adults can be decreased (Saywitch, Camparo & Romanoff, 2010).

However, as Clifford Geertz recognized, scholars have to “get round the un-get-roundable fact that all ethnographical descriptions are home-made, that they are the describer’s descriptions, not those of the described” (1988, pp. 144-145). By including participatory research techniques in my interview set-up, I promoted informants to (at least partly) study with me their digital experiences and to become active agents over their own representations in the analysis.²⁷ This was done in four ways, beginning with inviting informants to suggest a pseudonym they wanted me to use when including their voice in the study. This was also intended to demonstrate my sincere interest in incorporating their voices in the study on their own terms.²⁸

When asked how they would want to introduce themselves to others, informants narrated a multilayered self. As a second mechanism for informants to participate in their own representations, their self-introductory narrative snippets already indicate a multiplicity of self that goes beyond singular understandings of identity. For example, 14-year-old Ziham describes her individuality by noting that *“everyone is different”*, 15-year-old Carlos states that *“most say that I look Dutch, but when I talk I look more Moroccan, because I am half Dutch, half Moroccan”* and 13-year-old Ilham for example described herself stating *“I am Moroccan, Berber and Muslim, but as you can see with a Dutch nationality”*. Talking back to negative ethnic labels, 13-year old Abdel emphasized he is *“a nice Moroccan boy”*. 16-year old Amir states, *“I have my own personal style, and I don’t belong to one group in particular, it is just multiculti, I feel”*. In terms of ethnicity, the majority of informants mentioned feeling attached to Morocco, while emphasizing they also feel Dutch. I chose to use the hyphenated label “Moroccan-Dutch” throughout this study to reflect the hyphenated sense of ethnic identification that the majority of the informants narrate. This was the label that was most often mentioned among the informants. Also, when quoting their statements, I locate informants individually by providing age and gender attributions.

²⁷ I am aware a certain one-sidedness remains in every study, which also holds for my analysis as I remain in charge of (and remain accountable for) developing my arguments.

²⁸ For those informants who could not or did not want to come up with a name, I have chosen names that were somewhat popular among Moroccan-Dutch youths. For this purpose I used those that were mentioned in lively discussions taking place on the discussion forums *Marokko.nl*, *Chaima.nl* and *Maroc.nl* on the topic of popular Moroccan boys’ and girls’ names in the Netherlands. These discussions are also a lively reminder of the history of discrimination of Amazigh culture. Historically in Morocco, parents had to choose a name for their newborn from lists of officially allowed Arabic names. Names of Amazigh cultural backgrounds were not allowed. This rule also held for people in the Moroccan diaspora, who wanted their children to be able to apply for Moroccan citizenship. In 2010, the ban on Amazigh names has been lifted (HRW, 2010).

Thirdly, informants were repeatedly reminded of their roles as reliable witnesses of their own experiences. For this purpose, I emphasized wanting to learn from the informant her/his perceptions and thoughts on digital practices. For instance when I wanted to learn how 14-year-old Ayoub saw *Facebook* I asked him “of course I know a bit about the site, but imagine I do not know what *Facebook* is, can you explain to me what happens there?” The question reveals how I had to strike a delicate balance between presenting myself as ignorant and knowing everything already. Informants did not take me seriously when I pretended to be unaware of digital culture, while they sometimes shied away from asserting their opinions when they sensed I had been studying it for a long time.

Finally, I asked interviewees to research with me their practices by letting them map out the digital spaces they participate in. Richard Warshak contends “most procedures for soliciting children’s preferences do not reliably elicit information on their best interests and do not give children a meaningful voice in decision making” (2003, p. 373). Following Myria Georgiou’s plea to consider “multi-spatial” analysis of diaspora identities (2011, p. 205), at the beginning of the interviews informants were invited to draw a map of how they imagine the Internet with its various digital spaces as a way to further structure the conversation. The task is an example of “image based concept mapping”, a participatory research technique which has been recognized as a successful way to capture the conceptions of networked information and communication technologies (Somekh and Mavers, 2003, p. 414).

As an example, I showed informants a map of the Internet applications that I use regularly. I had prepared this map before the interview, writing my name in the middle of a white piece of paper. From my name outwards I drew lines to different digital spaces. I would share the fact that one of my hobbies is playing basketball. For this reason, I said, I regularly looked up the latest fixtures on basketball related weblogs and message boards, and I described how I enjoyed looking up videos with highlights of basketball matches on *YouTube*. I discussed the ways that I connected with my family and friends on the social networking sites *Facebook* and *Hyves*. Also, I included download websites such as *ThePirateBay.org* to discuss my preferences to download basketball videos, TV series, art house movies and songs by independent bands and artists.

The description of this task doubled as a bonding exercise, letting the informant into my world as well. This warming-up phase was aimed at developing a rapport. Drawing the Internet map was an aid to recall and structure digital practices (Lobe,

Linvstone, Olafsson & Simões, 2008, p. 10), I positioned myself through a formal introduction and revealed more about myself by showing my personal Internet map.²⁹ The task proved to be a good icebreaker. As they were making a cartography informants were researching digital practices with me. Interviewees were asked to map out their practices and add a short description of a few keywords. Figure 2.4 displays the Internet map of 13-year-old Soesie. She for instance includes from the top left “Watching pictures in my files”, “MSN talking to friends”, “www.Marokko.nl to look up things”, “Hyves to talk to friends”, “YouTube to watch videos”, “Moroccan music websites” and “for homework I usually use Google”.

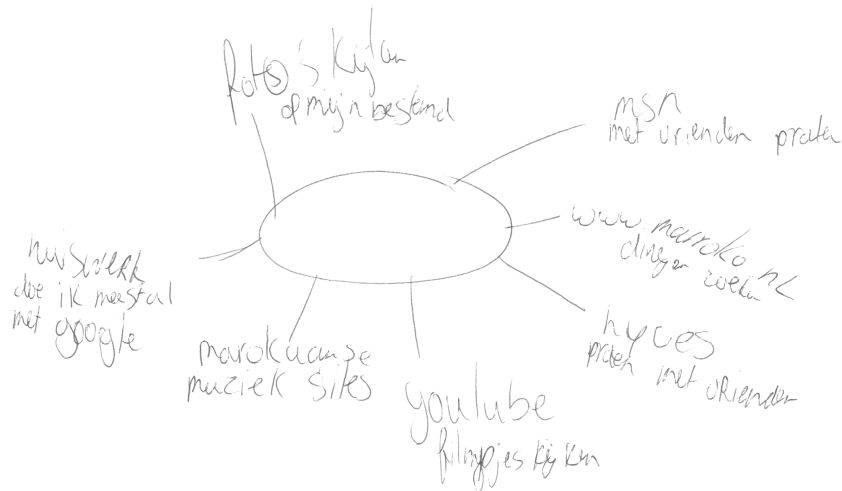


Figure 2.4 Example Internet map 13-year-old Soesie.

The Internet map was thus useful for structuring the interview and eliciting personal narratives of passages, belonging and identification across digital space, and at the same time, the map enabled the informant to seize control over the directions the conversation would take. The mapping exercise also allowed room to consider directions the survey findings had not brought forward or that I had not anticipated before otherwise. Thus, informants assisted me in defining the boundaries of my research, which is of increasing importance when considering the multiplicity of all existing Internet applications (Hine, 2008). During the mapping exercise, informants continued managing the impression they wanted to make on the researchers. While drawing the

²⁹ Fayrouz similarly showed interviewees a map of the spaces she frequented in her interviews and revealed the informant her personal world as well.

map, 15-year-old Oussema for instance said, “*Oh I have forgot one thing*”, hesitating to add another practice on his map he added, “*this may sound as if I am a nerd*”.

After informants finished drawing the Internet maps, one by one, all the different digital spaces informants listed were separately discussed in all interviews. The Internet mapping exercise was chosen after learning in the piloting phase that young informants found it difficult to think about issues that range across different applications; rather, they talked about how they made use of specific applications rather than the Internet in general.³⁰ Informants were for instance prompted to describe their frequency of use and to explain the features and usages of different applications. In my follow-up questions, I asked to what extent the individual platforms each facilitated their presentation of self in terms of youth culture, gender, ethnicity and religion. Informants were asked about the commercial messages and advertisements they encounter in these spaces. Most importantly, the values, meanings and relevance attributed to each application were discussed, by considering which practices they found empowering, restricting, inspirational, discriminatory and troubling.

Reflexivity and power relations

In this section, I articulate my awareness of the ways in which interviewer- interviewee relationships cannot be taken for granted. I critically reflect on the personal presence of Fayrouz (who assisted in the fieldwork) and myself in the in-depth interviewing phase. As a university-educated interviewer, I hold the power to produce knowledge about informants. However, informants too exercise power in every research process, because but “for the grace, patience, and interests of the people involved, there would be little research” (Wekker, 2006, p. 4). Informants personally had the opportunity to accept or decline my invitation to participate in the interview, and they were also reassured that they were free to leave some questions unanswered and they could always opt out from the research if they wanted.³¹ Thinking through the role of power hierarchies, equality

³⁰ Christine Hine rightly recognizes in her elaboration of qualitative research methods to study digital practices that “[t]he internet will often not be experienced as a single entity and will have many different social meanings” (2008, p. 5).

³¹ Linda Duits explains that in her ethnographic study among girls she found that girls liked being interviewed because “unlike in Anglo-Saxon countries, where ‘an interview’ might have a negative connotation of formality (cf. a job interview), in Dutch daily language the term ‘interview’ suggests media interviews. Being interviewed thus has a connotation of being special, like someone on television” (2008, p. 68). No one opted-out from the interviews during the process, but there were several who chose not to join the interviewing phase, as they said they were either too busy with school or their after-school jobs. One girl did not like it that no one else from her particular class was joining in the interviews, and opted out.

and difference in fieldwork, I sensed informants attributed credibility to me because I emphasized equality and displayed a sincere interest in the informants' everyday lives.

The issue of trust is again of vital importance. As I mentioned earlier, 15-year-old Oussema confronted me with being accountable for the knowledge that I produce. Having secured the trust of respondents, it turned out that the knowledge I produce could become harmful to the informants themselves. In the surveys, students enthusiastically listed their usage of various Internet applications. These findings made one school decide to block access to these digital spaces. In a sense, the trust the informant put in the research could have been damaged because of this development. However, in my interview with Oussema it showed that he did not feel betrayed by me, but by the school officials. As a matter of fact, he confided in me that he knew how to circumvent the newly imposed restrictions. This indicates that I was not seen as a teacher, because I was an interested outsider judged to be trustworthy enough to be let in on secrets that breached school policies.³² The example illustrates how as researcher I enter in a social relationship with the individuals I study. Being considered as different from teachers, and getting to hear personal stories also raises questions about the ethical implications of interviewing.

From the survey, as well as the presentation of survey findings and posters, informants had formed a general understanding of my individual research project before the interview. I am aware of the difficulties of discussing abstract notions such as identity or digital spatial inequality with young people. Floya Antias, based on her study with Greek Cypriot-British youths notes that "asking someone a question about their 'identity' often produces a blank stare, a puzzled silence or a glib and formulaic response. This is not only because research subjects have not understood the question, but also because they cannot easily provide answers" (2002, p. 492). In the interview, I therefore emphasize my interests in learning from the informant's personal experience about the role of the Internet in her/his life, and her/his views on youth culture, ethnicity, religion and gender issues across different Internet applications.

Continuously emphasizing how I would work to acknowledge the views of the informants as a serious source of knowledge, I noticed the rapport grow in my interactions with them. Informants also seemed to enjoy being at the centre of attention. Notwithstanding unequal power relations that remained in place when Fayrouz and I carried out the interviews, there were also different loci along which we as researchers

³² Similar tactics of subverting technological limitations in the context of school came up frequently in different conversations.

aligned with the shifting identifications of the informants. As Kirin Narayan recognizes in her reflection on the relationship between interviewer and interviewee “given the multiplex nature of identity, there will inevitably be certain facets of self that join us up with the people we study, other facets that emphasize our difference” (1993, p. 680). Similar to how we tried to read our informants during the interviews, informants were also trying to read us (Wekker, 2006, p. 10).³³ When assessing my personal narrative of self, some of my individual identity facets such as being adult, white, university-educated, male, secular, raised Roman-Catholic, speaking with a hint of Brabant-Dutch accent might be taken to emphasize difference from the informants. However, other affiliations might be taken to emphasize commonality that work to bridge gaps between us. Axes of similarity in some interviews included me being online since I was around 12, being a man, my knowledge of slang and urban jargon, fascination with forms of youth culture, music, video, sports, clothing brands and the anchorage of digital practice in our lives, as well as my outspoken commitment to anti-racism and social justice. Some young female informants emphasized difference when breaching the personal subjects of romance and love, while others seemed to easily speak about these topics to me because I was an outsider.

Similarly, adult and university-educated Fayrouz who speaks with traces of a Limburg-Dutch accent also secured common grounds. Informants displayed alignment with Fayrouz in terms of shared womanhood, parental migration history, Muslim religious affiliations, and speaking Arabic and Berber. For instance, 13-year-old Ilham became very curious to learn more about the migration background of Fayrouz. Ilham asked her about her descent, and Fayrouz explained her father and mother grew up as members of two particular Berber tribes in northern Morocco. Ilham became very interested because she did not know these tribes. Fayrouz also noted how interviews were more fluid as she could switch between Dutch and Arabic/Berber to clarify informants’ statements. When informants used some Darija³⁴ (Moroccan-Arabic) and Berber words they found more telling to explain certain settings or behavior, they presumed Fayrouz knew the meaning of these words, while I had to prompt interviewees for further explanation.

³³ “Fieldwork is meaningful as the encounter of two subjects who recognize each other as subjects, and therefore separate, and seek to build their equality upon their difference in order to work together” (Portelli, cited in Wekker, 2006, p. 19).

³⁴ Darija covers varieties of Arabic spoken in the Maghreb, which includes Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and the Western Sahara in North-Western Africa. Darija includes many loanwords from Maghreb’s past rulers such as Turkish, Spanish and French (Ennaji, 2005, pp. 58-60).

For instance when Fayrouz asked whether there are also non-Moroccan-Dutch participants on the discussion forum Marokko.nl, 13-year old Ilham said *“it is dot nl, not dot Morocco, so, yes it is for everyone. Everyone is marhbabikoum”*. Ilham used the Arabic word *“marhbabikoum”* to indicate everyone is welcome to join discussions on the site. While in her conversation with 15-year old SouSou, being a woman and speaking Moroccan-Arabic and Berber, Fayrouz was able to cover the difficulties of voicing taboo or *“hchouma”* topics within the context of the household,³⁵ and the opportunities to do so online. Fayrouz notes informants expressed a sense of ethnic commonality by using terms like *“hchouma”* and *“marhbabikoum”*. Having an insider position has pros and cons. On one hand, by having Fayrouz interview informants, a shared ethnic descent and gender background contributed in some instances to a more open and relaxed attitude and created an environment in which girls shared more than they would have shared with an outsider like me. On the other hand, being situated in an insider position also runs the risk of taking things for granted as questions of clarification and reflection become more difficult to emphasize. In another case, a young male informant became less talkative during an interview when he got to see Fayrouz as someone he considered to be too much of an insider.

These examples illustrate how Fayrouz and I could be simultaneously an insider as well as an outsider to the worlds of our informants, and that both dimensions triggered contradictory responses from the informants (Gilbert 1994; Mullings, 1999). Different interview set-ups were explored to make sure we understood the different implications of interviewer-interviewee positioning processes.³⁶ Fayrouz’s assistance ultimately proved valuable; as without her these complex dynamics would not have manifested themselves so evidently. And of course it would be naïve to think that the informants became my friends, and I understand they have only granted me partial access to their worlds. However, two researchers – who both bring different personal backgrounds into the research – working together in interviewing construct knowledge

³⁵ As I will elaborate in chapter three on online discussion forums, *“hchouma”* refers to the label used to discuss practices that are considered taboo and transgressive in Moroccan culture. Without the presence of Fayrouz in the research process, I would not have been able to incorporate a discussion of the intricacies of this notion in the dissertation.

³⁶ For instance, as a male interviewer I have interviewed male informants, while Fayrouz interviewed female informants. This setup was also reversed, with me interviewing female informants and Fayrouz interviewing male informants. Also, as a duo we jointly interviewed individual informants and we tried out jointly interviewing two informants as well. In the meet the informants section in appendix 9, for every interviewee I have listed who conducted the interview.

from different, partial and personal perspectives. This process also became evident when I transcribed interviews conducted by Fayrouz and vice versa.³⁷

Inside and outside school: The dynamics of interview settings

Thirty interviews were carried out in two schools, fourteen in Rotterdam and sixteen in 's-Hertogenbosch. These interviews were carried out as a follow-up to the questionnaires, and school directors, teaching coordinators, as well as teachers, teaching assistants, library personnel and janitors, supported access to these schools. They facilitated my contact with the students, as the directors allowed me to re-enter the school communities to present findings of our survey and to invite those interested for follow-up interviews. Teaching coordinators and teaching assistants offered assistance by providing me with personal class schedules of individual interviewees. In large part, interviews took part during school hours and teachers in some cases allowed students to miss parts of their class, allowing me more time to carry out my interviews. The total of 30 interviews that took place in Rotterdam and 's-Hertogenbosch were conducted on school premises, and janitors and library personnel helped me to find proper locations to carry out the interviews. Locations where interviews took place included classrooms, study halls, meeting rooms, school libraries, multimedia centers and computer labs. In most cases, these locations allowed me to talk one-on-one with interviewees, or in some cases I carried out an interview in one end of a room, while Wired Up research assistant Fayrouz carried out an interview in the other end of the room.

These are not neutral locations, and I recognize that carrying out in-depth interviews within the school settings poses both opportunities and constraints. I noticed that interviewees are accustomed to these locations. Conducting interviews in their familiar everyday spaces of socialization enables interviewees to feel secure (Saywitch, Camparo & Romanoff, 2010, p. 552). Informants knew that the school directors and teachers had provided me access to the school; they saw my presence validated by them. As a relatively unfamiliar face (interviewees only saw me once or twice before when they filled in the questionnaire and when I presented our survey findings), I was an intruder into their regular space of education. To a certain extent, the space made them feel at ease taking away a part of their nervousness, while the setting was new and unfamiliar for me, making me feel nervous myself as well.

³⁷ All audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim.

Recognizing a distinct set of norms and expectations connected to the setting of the school, I would emphasize that the interview should not be seen as a test, in the sense that I would not mark anything they would share as either a right or wrong answer. Also, I ensured informants their views would be anonymized and treated confidentially. Finally informants were informed that for the purpose of transcription and analysis, the conversation would be audio-recorded. Bringing out either a *Sony* audio recording device or my *Apple iPhone 4* to record the interview already re-focused the conversation to digital practices by prompting all kinds of discussions about mobile devices, including accessing digital spaces from a mobile device such as a *Blackberry* or *Apple* smart phone (Shepherd, personal communication, September 18, 2010).

The school institution has its particular “normative ways of being” (Puar, 2004, p. 116). This is a material and symbolic space where certain behavior is promoted and practices are dismissed through objects, gestures and bodies (Leander, 2003, pp. 212-213). During the interviews, it became apparent for instance that some schoolteachers saw everyday digital media practices as a waste of time. Investing time in digital practices was considered to be detrimental to students’ homework and assignments.³⁸ I noticed I had to subvert this way of thinking during the interviews in order to have informants open up and describe their experiences using Internet applications. 13-year-old Amina for instance voiced her surprise about the research project, stating, “*you are quite interested in what we and other youths do*” on the Internet, “*we would never even think about that adults and students could be interested in these things?*”. They had not met any adult before us that showed a similar level of sincere interest in their digital practices. After emphasizing wanting to learn more about their everyday practices from their viewpoints, I was surprised at how open informants became, sharing personal narratives on topics ranging from those connected to the context of school such as homework, to those pertaining to their life beyond school including friendships, love, family as well as romantic relationships, sexuality, religion, holidays, fights, bullying, racism, hobbies and passions.

In terms of atmosphere in the school setting, the buzzing teachers’ voices and student conversations in hallways, the humming of a photo-copy machine in the library and the typing sounds coming from computer labs not only took away uncomfortable silences, they also added to the air of familiarity for the informants. For instance, the interview with SouSou took place in a partly separated space in one end of a computer

³⁸ Seeing homework and digital practices as oppositional and competing with each other in terms of time investment, most teachers do not acknowledge the fluid relation between the two that most informants note. The majority of the informants for instance mentioned they habitually talk about homework on instant messaging.

lab. While 25 meters away, a group of students were doing computer assignments, she shared her personal feelings. She described that most people in her school “*say that I am smart*” but she added she feels “*a lack of self-confidence*” and finds it “*difficult to make friends*”. I include her voice here to illustrate she felt comfortable enough and felt a sufficient level of trust to speak about these difficult topics. The proximity of fellow students also has its drawbacks, however, making some informants cautious about sharing their personal feelings. During my interview with 14-year-old Mehmet Ali this became apparent. A teaching assistant brought Mehmet Ali and me to a study hall, a big, bright place with large windows. Through the windows one could oversee different classrooms and a computer lab. At the beginning of the interview, Mehmet Ali was speaking quietly, giving brief answers. At a certain point, he began to speak more loudly, telling enthusiastically about his digital practices. Only then I realized that a girl who had been doing her homework in peace in another corner of the room had left the study hall.

To ensure that I would be able to include those personal narratives that might be more easily shared outside the context of school, I chose to include interviews held with 13 Moroccan-Dutch youths outside their institutional education settings. I chose to also conduct these interviews outside of the home of the informant, because Trees Pels and Mariëtte de Haan noticed that Moroccan-Dutch youths do not always seem to feel more secure to speak to researchers in their home spaces as they have to deal with another normative community than their peer community there (2003, p. 83). I held additional interviews in non-threatening and permissive environments ranging from a Utrecht University cafeteria, a university office shared with a dozen other graduate students, a museum café, a lunchroom, and a hotel lobby.

Selecting case studies

Earlier I described how the Internet maps served as an icebreaker at the beginning of interviews, and how they provided a structure to map out the intensities and particularities of informants’ digital practices across different spaces. However, I have also considered them all together to narrow down my focus and make a selection of digital spaces. Wanting to visualize the importance of different digital spaces in the lives of my informants, I used the website *Worldle.net* to generate a word-cloud by combining all the Internet applications that informants included in their personal Internet maps (see figure 2.5).

perform their identities online across these spaces.³⁹ For the purpose of sharing part of the controls over my interpretations, I held follow-up conversations in different digital spaces (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002, p. 161). Upon my invitation, all informants willingly provided contact details at the end of the first round of interviews to facilitate a future follow-up. Some informants gave their e-mail addresses, others their mobile phone numbers or profile page nicknames. Besides interviews, I was interested in observing online practices and capturing digital data. Christine Hine describes that in doing “virtual ethnographies”, online observation and participation compliment face-to-face interviews as they both capture different partial identity performances of the informants (2000, p. 49).

Following Sonia Livingstone, I recognize that capturing digital practices is a troublesome enterprise for researchers as “they barely know how to track their ‘texts’ given the three-fold problems of overwhelming volume of material, temporary existence and its ‘virtuality’” or its “hypertextual” character. She adds that these are reasons why, in the field of new media studies, “few textual studies of content favoured by children been undertaken” (2003, p. 150). Aiming to address this void, I encouraged informants in follow-up conversations to allow me access to the digital spaces they traverse and to share their digital narratives and practices. In this section I discuss the different ways digital practices within the four most frequently mentioned digital spaces (online discussion forums, social networking sites, instant messaging and video-sharing sites) were captured.

Being publicly accessible, the digital materials informants engage with on online discussion forums and video-sharing sites were gathered by asking informants about their favorite topics and rubrics as well as their favorite videos. I would subsequently browse these spaces to look up conversations and videos. Below, I first set out how trust remains of vital importance in publicly accessible digital spaces like online discussion forums. Interactions taking place within instant messenger are private, and I secondly discuss how I attempted to gather the materials circulating in these spaces. I situate my argument in discussions on the ethics of Internet research methods.

³⁹ Lori Kendall wrote that “reaching understandings of participants’ sense of self and of the meanings they give to their online participation requires spending time with the participants to observe what they do online as well as what they say they do” (1999, p. 62).

Internet research ethics

My personal observations of the publicly accessible digital spaces of online discussion forums and *YouTube* were recorded by writing field notes and by saving, printing and archiving discussions and saving videos. I explore the ethics of Internet research in publicly accessible spaces further by detailing personal experiences I had on online forum discussions. After I posted a job vacancy for a research-assistant under the nickname Wired Up on *Yasmina.nl*, an online message board popular among Moroccan-Dutch girls, several people responded to the topic with questions and inquiries. However, there were also users that questioned my intentions. A mere seven minutes after I posted the job advertisement, one user shockingly wrote, “do not respond this is a lover boy who is recruiting” (Wired Up, 2010a). In the Netherlands and Belgium the term lover boy stands for pimps who coerce girls into prostitution or other forms of illegal forms of exploitation. I had a similar experience when I initiated a discussion under the same nickname on the online message board *Maroc.nl* about different language influences I encountered while studying instant messaging. While some *Maroc.nl* participants enthusiastically assisted me in translating words and phrases I did not understand, others questioned my intentions. Another user asked, “are you hustling a Moroccan girl somewhere? 😏” (Wired Up, 2010b).

Before me, there had been other students, researchers and journalists taking public message boards as a starting point to learn more about Moroccan-Dutch youths. User Rabbit (a pseudonym) shared his frustrations with again seeing outsiders coming to the message board to study the Moroccan-Dutch community he is a member of.

Ow god, those snobs are turning to us again as if we are a living laboratory.
go research yourself one time or so 😏
something like ooh we from the university are going to put something under a
microscope because we do not have anything better to do. Pff.
– Wired Up (2010b)

The frustrations Rabbit voiced may stem from the predominant scholarly focus on problems within the Moroccan-Dutch community. Studies focusing on a particular problematic segment of any community may be taken to paint a negative picture of the community as a whole. Difficulties of overcoming suspicion and gaining access to the community result from earlier scholars’ focus on issues such as juvenile delinquency, mental health problems, radicalization and Islam (see the introductory chapter). Understandably, such studies may lead Moroccan-Dutch individuals to approach scholars

with due suspicion (Bel Ghazi, 1986, p. 10). Other users continued to make efforts to make me feel welcome, typing for instance, “Rabbit, be ashamed of yourself. Let this man carry out his work”.

These experiences resonate some of the key issues in recent debates over Internet research ethics. Across various disciplines, scholars have asked ethical questions concerning ways of guaranteeing informants’ anonymity versus crediting their authorship, the blurring of boundaries between publicity and privateness, the practice of asking for informed consent, considerations of vulnerability and harm of research subjects and mechanisms for securing digital trust (Hine, 2000, 2005; Kozinets, 2010; AOIR 2011). Throughout the study, when referencing to publicly accessible digital materials of people proven to be adults, I credit the author with the nickname she/he uses. In my conversation with *YouTube* user eMoroccan, for instance, it became clear that he wanted his material and statements to be included in the study with reference to his nickname. However, with my crediting of his authorship, his nickname can be traced back to his online presence, I complicate traditional research standards aimed at ensuring anonymity. Nonetheless, although widely accessible and easily retrievable, people participating in online discussion forums may perceive or consider the content they have contributed as private and/or sensitive information. Rabbit’s remarks suggest that he participates in what he feels is his own online community, complicating the complex blurring of online boundaries between public and private. Although strictly publicly accessible, the messages posted on discussion boards I frequented have a specific intended audience.

I took Rabbit’s remark seriously, because it reveals the experienced unequal power relations when privileged outsiders such as researchers, students and journalists write about a community in particular ways and excluding the vast majority of everyday voices. I therefore took this criticism to heart and always made sure to explain my intentions to capture quotidian digital practices and position myself at the beginning of all conversations, both online and offline. Furthermore, as reading public forum discussions sometimes gave me the feeling of eavesdropping on a personal conversation, I chose to refrain from being a passive lurker, but participated and actively positioned myself across these spaces. However, Rabbit reminds me that – unlike other face-to-face methods I used, such as survey taking and interviews – by conducting Internet ethnographies, information is used that is not always confidentially given specifically to the researcher by an informant (Kozinets, 2010, p. 143). Scholars have recognized the

changing reputation mechanisms and credibility assessments young people make while using digital media (Metzger & Flanagin, 2008). I sought to foster digital trust by clearly positioning myself as a researcher and by providing hyperlinks to the Wired Up research project and my personal website. However, I should add that most of the people I interacted with online already knew me from face-to-face encounters, as I largely limited my online observation and data gathering of online forums (see chapter three) and *YouTube* (see chapter six) to those topics, threads and videos that my informants specifically spoke about with me or shared with me.

Accessing private spaces

Starting off from face-to-face contacts proved invaluable in addressing the issue of digital trust in the private digital spaces of instant messaging and social networking sites as well. These two Internet applications are largely closed off from the eyes of onlookers. The majority of the interviewees have set their profile page settings to private so that other social networking site users outside their list of friends cannot view their personal profile pages. By sending out friend requests to those informants that provided their social networking site contact details, and asking them permission to study their self-profiling practices, a number of personal profile pages were opened up to me. In instant messaging, too, users are able to maintain the boundaries to their digital space by deciding whom to include on their buddy list. Only those that are included on this list can see the display pictures and display names that individual users have chosen, while one-on-one conversations are personal and even more inaccessible. Here, I discuss how I gathered instant messaging transcripts at greater length to illustrate the intricacies of carrying out participatory forms of research in a private digital space. The data gathering process reveals additional ways I sought to have informants study their digital practices with me.

Following the example set by Gloria Jacobs (2003) and Shayla Thiel-Stern (2007), informants were invited to save instant messaging conversations to the hard drives of their computers. The interviewees Fatiha, Naoul, Midia, Kamal, Khadija and Inzaf have shared a selection of their transcripts with me. Before saving, the interviewees were requested to ask their conversation partners permission to share a transcript of their talk. This way, the informants themselves facilitated asking informed consent. Only conversations that were agreed upon by contacts to be saved and shared were included in the analysis. From their collection, I asked the young people to select five transcripts

consisting of at least ten turns that they deemed fit for me, a university researcher, to read. Being interested in everyday identity and self-positioning I stressed in my invitations that I did not mind with whom or what the conversation would be about, I welcomed everyone and all topics.

Of course I assume that informants took the opportunity to manage the impressions they wanted to make by choosing to share with me particular transcripts and not others. However, the informants' ability to self-select the material was integral to ensure that they were taken seriously as experts over their own messaging practices. In the case study on instant messaging (chapter four), I include excerpts from these instant-messaging transcripts in my argumentation. By doing so, together with using the pseudonyms and labels informants suggested themselves and by choosing to study those platforms that their internet-maps revealed to be most important, I aimed for informants to become, to some degree, active participants in this text. In the next section I account for the dynamics of representation further by describing the analytical precautions I take while scrutinizing informants' narratives through a lens that is attentive to the discursive distribution of power, a process in which I am also a part.

2.4 Analyzing informants' narratives

After the fieldwork phases of surveys, interviewing and capturing digital practices, I found myself with a large volume of empirical data. In this section I set out how I analyzed informants' narratives that were collected through interviews and the observation of digital practices. These data are not value-neutral facts and they do not speak for themselves about Moroccan-Dutch youths' identity construction and the performativity of self. Rather, these narratives are open to multiple readings and my "representations are interpretations" (McRobbie, 1982, p. 51). My focus is on unraveling how the narratives reflect informants' navigation through structural parameters that are social, gendered, ethnic, generational, youth cultural and other relations and their negotiations of agency within these structures. In this section, I introduce grounded theory and the discursive analysis approach used to generate meaningful patterns from the narratives gathered in online and offline in-depth fieldwork. In this way, I justify the interpretative knowledge claims I make and stay away from textual appropriation of informants' narratives (Ramazanoğlu and Holland, 2002, pp. 160-161). My textual analysis consists of a phase of systematic coding, exploring various themes in the data and a phase of theoretical reflection through the discursive analysis of power relations

flowing through the narratives. Before discussing the two phases, I assess the politics of translating interviewees' narratives.

Politics of translation

Throughout my argument, I include frequent direct quotes to have informants speak for themselves. However, to open up the study to a larger audience, quotations of the voices of the informants are translated into English. The process of translating informants' digital practices and interview narratives needs to be problematized. In her essay "*The politics of translation*", Gayatri Spivak argues that Western translators of subaltern discourse – next to maintaining its contents and tone with dignity – have the responsibility to make the influence on the texts they produce visible (1993b, p. 181). Transferring texts from one language to another is not neutral; rather as a process of (re) narration, translation is an analytical act. This holds true both for translating spoken interview recordings into a written language as well as translating Dutch recordings and gathered digital narratives into English.

Writing about the representation of digital practices, Annette Markham rightly argued that as Internet researchers, we "literally reconfigure these people when we edit their sentences, because for many of them, these messages are a deliberate presentation of self" and she adds that also, "when they are not deliberate, texts construct the essence and meaning of the participant, as perceived and responded to by others" (2004, p. 153). My translation process of instant messaging narratives can be taken as an example of the impact made by rewriting. IM is a social media application that allows individuals to privately exchange short messages and socialize in real time. Reading the instant messaging transcripts informants shared with me, I was confronted with a distinct genre and expressive culture consisting of multi-lingual out-of-school literacies. Consider the original (anonimized) exchange between 13-year-old Midia and her friend:

Schaakmat schatj zegt: haha heb je die foto gezien zij en yasminaaaaaa 🤔
mevrouw mocro zegt: die kus?
Schaakmat schatj zegt: wuhaha jhaa
mevrouw zegt: tfoee man die hoer
Schaakmat schatj zegt: aisha staat dr 3ed leuk op maar
yasminna
jongee man 😏
mevrouw mocro zegt: k haat yasmina egt he
wollah nii normaal 😏

Schaakmat schatj zegt: I KZAG HAAR VANDAAG

hahaha

vbijdaand

In my attempt to include the specificities of such conversations in my translations, I only translated into English the Dutch words that were used. Words and sentences typed in (Latinized) Moroccan-Arabic and Berber were not translated into English in the running text. Rather explanations are given between brackets. Leaving these words untranslated allows for a better witnessing of the original forms of multilingual IM communicative exchanges. Furthermore, what for outsiders of this new genre of writing may look like a messy writing style full of typos, abbreviations and misspellings, is a decorative and creative writing style for insiders. Such decorative, creative spellings were carried over into English, and I also included in my translations the ways sentences were usually divided over multiple turns.

Triumph sweeti says: haha did you see that picture her and yasminaaaaaa 🤔

miss mocro says: that kiss?

Triumph sweeti says: wuhaha jhaa

miss mocro says: tfoe man that whore

[tfoe: dirty]

Triumph sweeti says: aisha looks 3ed good but

[3ed: still, however]

yasminna

oh boyy

oh man 🤔

miss mocro says: i hate yasmina fo sure

wollah noot normal 🤔

[wollah: with Allah, I swear]

Triumph sweetie says: ISAW HER TODAY

hahaha

eneemy

The conversation moved from an opening greeting sequence to Midia (“Triumph sweeti”) informing whether “miss mocro” is on speaking terms with Aisha. After finding out they are still quarrelling, Midia adds fuel to the fire by gossiping about Aisha’s IM display picture. Aisha is a girl the conversationalists both know, both from outside the world of instant messaging (“*I saw her today*”) as well as from within (“*did you see that picture*”). In the picture another girl, Yasmina, is apparently kissing Aisha. While Aisha is “*looks 3ed good*” in the picture, the appearance of Yasmina irritates both girls. Miss mocro calls her names adding “*tfoe*” (“tfoe” is a word that occurs both in Berber as well as in Arabic) to dismiss her: “*man that whore*” and types she really hates her. She puts extra emphasis on her assertion by adding the Arabic/Berber term “*wollah*”, meaning with

Allah. Midia, using capitalized letters, shouts she saw their opponent their “*eneemy*” that day.

I employed a similar strategy in translating interview transcripts, incorporating non-Dutch words in the running texts. Nonetheless, the choice, explanation and contextualization of translated segments included in my argumentation reflect my personal coding decisions and interpretation. By placing in italics the quotations taken from informants’ narratives, I set aside their voices from my own reasoning in the dissertation and I emphasize my awareness of the constructedness of the translated segments.

Coding

In this section, I reflect on the way I coded interview transcripts and other forms collected empirical data. Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin distinguish between three levels of abstraction in “grounded theory” coding that are helpful to explain the procedures I followed (1998). In the first phase of open coding, all the empirical data is read extensively to develop a coding tree. The researcher inductively looks for structures, categories and themes to sort the data rather than superimposing a pre-formed framework. Secondly, categories and themes are assigned a position, gradually refining the coding tree by assessing and connecting them. This way, the data gets increasingly ordered and interconnected in a specific way. Concepts can be formulated by finding patterns, similarities and differences within categories and between themes. In the third phase, the researcher compares the different themes and takes the analysis to a more abstract theoretical level.

Using *NVivo 9.2*, a qualitative data analysis software package, I coded interview transcripts and digital practices using separate database files (Bazeley, 2007).⁴⁰ *NVivo* assisted me in my interpretative coding creativity. For example, it helped me to keep an overview of all 43 interview transcript files, allowing me to search these files at once, and to bring them all together in a coding tree. In line with how informants drew maps of their favorite Internet applications, the first phase of coding consisted of indicating the different platforms informants mentioned. In this way, the different digital spaces

⁴⁰ Duitz describes that there are opponents and proponents of using software packages for coding purposes: “[o]pponents fear computers bring positivist assumptions and a lack of creativity; whereas proponents celebrate the rigor and speed that computers add to the coding process” (2008, p. 74). I have also printed out all the interview and digital narratives I have gathered over time, but for me the benefits of using a software package to code texts are that they allow me to clearly mark, connect and keep a good overview of different levels of categories and themes across the large number of texts.

informants discussed with me shape the major branches of the coding tree. Secondly, reading through all the texts relating to the individual spaces, my theoretical touchstones guided me in specifying the various sub-branches of the coding tree, coding discussions related to the key topics of the study, such as: identity performativity; medium-specific characteristics; language use; gendered, ethnic, migration, religion and generational issues; youth culture; transnational networking, online-offline dynamics, obstacles; boundary-making; publicness and privateness; and visibility and invisibility. Thirdly, I started looking for points of convergence and divergence when comparing the practices and meanings attributed to the different spaces. Having discussed how to locate various patterns and themes in stretches of texts, I set out my use of critical discursive analysis to carry out a contextualized analysis of the specific practices in the larger context of hierarchical but unstable power relations below.

Discursive analysis

The collected narratives (interviews and digital practices) are not necessarily self-evident for my argument. As Ien Ang specifies: “[i]t is only through the interpretative framework of the researcher that understandings of the ‘empirical’ come about” (1996, p. 46). In this final subsection, I reflect on my specific engagement with the collected textual materials. I conducted a critical discursive analysis to unravel both dominant and alternative meanings of the (intersections and intertextuality of) gender, ethnicity, religion and youth culture encoded in interview transcripts and digital narratives of selves. Also, I remained attentive to the medium-specific configurations of discursive power, studying how digital spaces give rise to specific normative ways of being. This way the method is used to filter the themes that arose from the interpretative coding process through the lenses of new media, feminist and postcolonial theories. Below I introduce discourse analysis and situate my specific employment of the method by connecting it with my theoretical grounding in post-structuralism and intersectionality.

A variety of discourse analysis approaches can be distinguished. Nelson Phillips and Cynthia Harding categorize four different orientations (see figure 2.6). The vertical axis distinguishes between levels of focus; ranging from scrutinizing linguistic structures and functions of text to the contextual embedding of texts, while the horizontal axes discern the critical and constructivist approaches. Social constructivists tend to work on a micro-level, exploring how specific social realities are constructed, while critical discourse analysts focus more the discursive embedding of power dynamics, knowledge

distribution and ideological assumptions (ibid.). Moreover, approaches analyzing the internal cohesion of texts can be discerned from critical approaches that focus more on intertextual and contextual connections texts make (Buikema, 2009, p. 312).

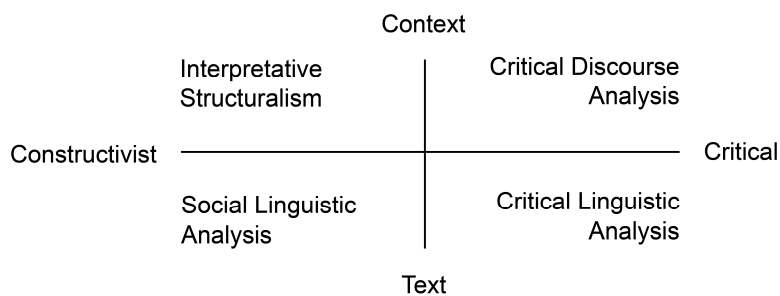


Figure 2.6 Four different approaches to discourse analysis (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 20).

In my analysis, I take cues from critical discourse analysis but operationalize it differently.⁴¹ Gabriele Griffin argues that the method of critical discourse analysis references a Foucaultian theory of language as a disciplinary form that produces subjects, a process which can simultaneously be countered to reveal agency: it “is centrally concerned with analyzing patterns in language use in order to uncover the workings of ideology or investment within/through it, and thus to be able to resist it” (2011, p. 98). I take a stance informed by post-structuralism, understanding language use as a discursive locus of power, where meaning can be imposed and contested.⁴² As Michel Foucault noted, individuals are always “simultaneously undergoing and exercising this power” (1980a, p. 98). He specifies power as a “productive network” by arguing, “what makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn’t only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network” (Foucault, 1980b, p. 119). “Power exists only when it is put into action”, Foucault writes, emphasizing its performative character (1982, p. 219). Specifically, power dynamically operates in two ways: it is normalized and “exerted” over people and it gives them the “ability to modify,

⁴¹ Carrying out an intersectional analysis of discursive power to study multiple axes of differentiation and empowerment, I operationalize discursive analysis slightly different than key critical discourse analysis scholars such as Ruth Wodak, Norman Fairclough and Teun van Dijk.

⁴² My inspiration stems most from the deconstructive approaches to language set out in the works of authors such as Derrida (1978), Foucault (1980), Butler (1993) and Weedon (1997).

use, consume or destroy” its homogeneity (ibid, p. 217).⁴³ The two-sided relationship between power and subjectivity reveals people are “subject to someone else by control and dependence” while also struggling to manifest their “own identity”. Struggles, Foucault recognizes, are often aimed “against forms of domination (ethnic, social, and religious)” (ibid, p. 212).

In chapter one, I described how Judith Butler developed a post-structuralist understanding of gender as something we do rather than an essential trait. Judith Baxter argues that the emancipatory ideals of feminism and post-structuralism can be brought together in carrying out feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis. She defines this as an approach: “to analyzing intertextualised discourses in spoken interaction and other types of text”, which builds on post-structuralist principles “of complexity, plurality, ambiguity, connection, recognition, diversity, textual playfulness, functionality and transformation” (2008, p. 245). Building on feminist theories of intersectionality, I combine post-structuralist understandings of discursive power with a focus on the convergence of multiple axes of domination and differentiation including gender, ethnicity, religion, age and generation.

Kathy Davis argues that intersectionality was developed to account for “the experiences and struggles of women of colour”, that were recognized to have fallen “between the cracks of both feminist and anti-racist discourse” (2008, p. 68). As a methodology, Davis continues, intersectionality recognizes the interaction and realignment of multiple identities such as gender, ethnicity and religion that expose processes of exclusion and subordination as well as resistance, agency and empowerment.⁴⁴ Also, she recognizes it is compatible “with Foucauldian perspectives on power that focused on dynamic processes and the deconstruction of normalizing and homogenizing categories” (2008, p. 71).

⁴³ Scholars informed by Foucault’s work take this perspective to diagnose how subjects are produced and produce themselves within discursive settings. Rosi Braidotti for instance urges that a critical mapping entails considering how discourses operate both as restrictive (“potestas”) and empowering (“potentia”) (2011, p. 4).

⁴⁴ The danger of taking up intersectionality as a “catchall phrase” resides in its ambiguity; it might gloss over the distinctive character that remains in all inequalities (Yuval-Davis, 2006, pp. 198-200). Paradoxically, as Davis argues, the potential of intersectionality also lies in its ambiguity, alerting scholars “to the fact that the world around us is always more complicated and contradictory than we ever could have anticipated” (2008, p. 79). She continues by arguing that intersectionality does not provide a “normative straitjacket” guideline for feminist inquiry, rather the approach forces scholars to be innovative, explorative and accountable in their critical and reflexive engagement with feminist analysis.

In practice, carrying out a critical discursive analysis that speaks back to critical theory begins with deconstructing gathered texts.⁴⁵ Marie Matsuda specified that an intersectional critical reading promotes scholars “to ask the other question” to consider how performed identities and relations are multiply located by different discourses: how does racism operate in tandem with patriarchy, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia and/or class-issues (1991, p. 1189).⁴⁶ Following Foucault’s theory of discursive power as productive, I not only focus on intersecting forms of domination but also take an agency-sensitive approach. This way I carry out a discursive analysis of interview transcripts and digital practices by being attentive to how the informants’ medium-specific narratives reveal their embeddedness in unequal, intersecting power relations but I also acknowledge multi-spatial micro-politics of power subversion. Thus discursive analysis is taken up to deconstruct how intersecting axes of differentiation among my informants in their process of identity performativity across digital spaces perpetuate and/or contest hierarchical power relations. This method allows me to answer the plea for a critical ethnographical stance that incorporates reflexivity and multiperspectivism to remain attentive to polyphony and fragmentation in informants’ narratives.

2.4 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have translated the theoretical framework of space invaders I developed in chapter one into an empirical methodology to analyze Moroccan-Dutch youths identity practices across digital spaces. I have de-mystified the research process of gathering and analyzing empirical data by reconstructing my unconventional but strategic journey through quantitative-empirical and qualitative-theoretical methods. Discussing the politics of gathering and analyzing data through large-scale surveys, in-depth interviews, online observation and intersectional post-structuralist discourse analysis, I specified the grounds on which to judge between and combine different epistemologies that give different accounts of reality.

⁴⁵ As Terry Eagleton writes “to ‘deconstruct’, then, is to reinscribe and resituate meanings, events and objects within broader movements and structures; it is, so to speak, to reverse the imposing tapestry in order to expose in all its unglamorously disheveled tangle the threads constituting the well heeled image it presents to the world” (1986, p. 80).

⁴⁶ Marie Matsuda describes the method of intersectionality as follows: “[t]he way I try to understand the interconnection of all forms of subordination is through a method I call ‘ask the other question.’ When I see something that looks racist, I ask, ‘Where is the patriarchy in this?’ When I see something that looks sexist, I ask, ‘Where is the heterosexism in this?’ When I see something that looks homophobic, I ask, ‘Where are the class interests in this?’” (1991, p. 1189).

Next to making the epistemological background and operational mechanics of my methods visible, I chose to reflect on how knowledge produced in one research phase was used to structure subsequent phases: survey findings shaped my focus in doing ethnography-inspired interviews, the Internet maps drawn by the interviewees in turn helped me to select the four main spaces Moroccan-Dutch youths frequent: online forums, instant messaging, online social networking sites and *YouTube*. Selecting these four spaces for in-depth case studies also directed my digital data gathering and observation efforts.

Writing in a reflexive mode, for instance by discussing the power relations at play in conducting surveys, interviewing and Internet research and by describing some personal fieldwork experiences, I illustrate the messiness of survey, interview, and digital methods to knowledge production. And although I used several participatory techniques to have informants at least partly decide over their own representations in the research, the power of definition largely remains in my hands. In sum, I accept that all forms of research embed some kind of bias and they always demonstrate a particular form of political commitment. Taking seriously the fact that knowledge is always a social construction; I accept it is impossible to attain a singular, absolute truth. Rather, different methods construct differently situated knowledges. As I continuously move between and evaluate different bodies of data throughout the remainder of the dissertation, I combine various partial perspectives on Moroccan-Dutch young people's everyday construction of identity across digital spaces.

3 Voices from the margins: Internet forums as counter publics¹

It is a sort of support. As a process of feeding [your emotions], by sort of reacting to each other. You'll have everyone who backs you up. It's like everyone is on the same side. You kind of become more sure of yourself. You just know, yes look we are not the only ones who think this way and so on. Thus you can express your opinion and just put everything up and you hear that others are similar to you.

– Ilham, 13 years old

During one interview, Ilham eloquently described the emotional support she receives from being able to secure speaking power on the online discussion forum *Marokko.nl*. Message boards, also known as Internet forums, are digital spaces where users can engage in conversations by publicly posting messages in response to each other. Ilham notes that her self-confidence grows from being able to publish her opinions and connect with other like-minded people. She has the agency to publish her own opinions, in contrast with being positioned in certain ways by others. Seizing the opportunity to speak for herself and hearing others appreciate her voice, Ilham self-consciously claims membership within a group of people of her choice. By doing so, she feels heard, she gets confirmation that she is not the only one out there who feels a certain way. Through follow-up discussions, similarity can actively be foregrounded and an alternative supportive community can be formed.

Feminist theorist Nancy Fraser recognizes that members of subordinated groups, including “women, workers, peoples of color, and gays and lesbians”, have historically valued the establishment of their own publics to construct their own identities, articulate their needs and engage with what they see as dominant and mainstream public spheres. Fraser defines these alternative publics as “subaltern counterpublics” (1990, p. 67). I theorize in this chapter that online discussion forums such as *Marokko.nl* can be seen as subaltern counterpublics that allow for the proliferation of new, oppositional and/or alternative voices in the digital public domain. More specifically, I focus on how online forums are taken up among the informants as counter publics to (re) construct their identities at the crossroads of gender, ethnicity and religion. Motivated by the perspective

¹ Adapted parts of this chapter are published as Leurs, K., Midden, E. & Ponzanesi, S. (2012). Digital multiculturalism in the Netherlands: Religious, ethnic, and gender positioning by Moroccan-Dutch youth. *Religion and Gender*, 1(2), 150-174; Leurs, K., Hirzalla, F. & Van Zoonen, L. (2012). Waar moslimjongeren hun eigen koers kunnen varen. [Where Muslim youth can follow their own course]. In C. Menting (Eds.) *ZinZoekers op het Web. Internet en verandering van geloofsbeleving*. [Searching for faith on the web. Internet and changing religious experiences], (np). Vught: Skandalo and Leurs, K., Ponzanesi, S. & Midden, E. (forthcoming). Transcoding difference and sameness. In A. De Brock (Ed.), *The intersectional Internet: Race, gender, and culture online*, (np). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

of space invaders to consider digital spatial power relations as simultaneously enabling and restricting, I also scrutinize how their practices remain embedded in disciplinary processes of regulation and control.

Although in reality, axes of differentiation operate simultaneously, for analytical purposes I separate out ethnic, gendered, and religious (counter) identity practices in my argumentation. First, I acknowledge the kind of power that informants say they experience in articulating their individual/collective voices with regards to the situation of the Moroccan community in the Netherlands. Digital subaltern publics like this one benefit from the appropriation of a semi-hidden corner of the Internet where perspectives of minorities can become normalized. As Moroccan-Dutch youths become the majority and primary audience in their digital space, hushed discussion forums allow for a normalization of alternative views. As I will show, however, being hushed does not mean these sites remain immune to negative exposure by intruding non Moroccan-Dutch outsiders.

Second, I consider gendered dimensions of message boards by analyzing how Moroccan-Dutch girls utilize them specifically to negotiate specifically gendered norms of the various communities with which they are connected. From the interviews, it becomes apparent that message boards are considered as a space where “hchouma” issues, of for instance, love, relationships, marriage and sexuality can be discussed. According to Loubna Skalli, “hchouma” refers to a gendered moral order she observed in Morocco which sets the limits of “what may or may not be said, done, looked at, or even hoped for – as well as *when* and *how* the individual should conform or not to a set of expected behavior” (2006, p. 96, her emphasis). Third, message boards are recognized as a space to negotiate between “halal” (codes of conduct allowed in Islam) and “haram” (conduct forbidden in Islam). Since forums bring different views together, at the junction of top-down and bottom-up performances of Islam, a collaborative habitus can be developed.

The chapter is structured as follows. I first ground the chapter in Wired Up survey findings and prior scholarship on Moroccan-Dutch forum use. Additionally, I introduce the discussion boards that informants most frequently visit: *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl*. In section 3.2, I provide an overview of the literature on minorities’ and migrants’ uses of message boards as counter-publics. Subsequently, I analyze three different forms of digital counter practices, focussing on ethnic (section 3.3), gendered (section 3.4), and religious (section 3.4) identifications, respectively.

3.1 Moroccan-Dutch youths and online forum discussions

Below, I situate Moroccan-Dutch youths' use of Internet forums. I ground the study by considering Wired Up survey findings and present an overview of earlier studies on their use of forums. In the final subsection I introduce *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl*, the two discussion forums that my interviewees noted to frequent mostly.

Wired Up survey findings

Wired Up survey findings indicate a distinct preference for engaging with discussion boards among ethnic minorities in the Netherlands: Moroccan-Dutch youths report to visit online discussion boards more than ethnic majority Dutch youths.² One in every five Moroccan-Dutch youths reports visiting online discussion boards for at least four days per week, while only one in every ten ethnic majority Dutch respondents report doing so. Moroccan-Dutch respondents also report being more attached to visiting online discussion boards than ethnic majority Dutch youths are. Additionally, they would miss Internet forum discussions if they were not be able to participate in them anymore, more so than Dutch majority youths reported.³ These results indicate that there seems to be a specific interest in engaging with online discussion boards among Moroccan-Dutch youths. Wired Up survey findings also show that Moroccan-Dutch girls participate more in forum discussion than Moroccan-Dutch boys (see appendix 7).⁴

<i>Attachment to IM usage</i>	<i>Completely not</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Very much</i>	<i>Total</i>
Girls	58.6 %	23.2 %	18.2 %	100 %
Boys	76.7 %	19.0 %	4.3 %	100 %

Table 3.1 Would Moroccan-Dutch youths miss online discussion forums if they could not use them anymore? (n= 344).

² Wired Up survey findings indicate that Moroccan-Dutch youth participate more in forum discussion than Dutch youth. Among the Moroccan-Dutch survey respondents, 20.9% report to visit forums four days per week or more, while 9.1% of ethnic majority Dutch respondents report to participate 4 days per week or more (Wired Up, 2012). These findings resonate with earlier studies that suggest that message boards are especially popular among Moroccan-Dutch youths (Boumans, 2002; Brouwer, 2006a, 2006b, 2011; Brouwer & Wijma, 2006; Borghuis et al., 2010; D'Haenens et al., 2004; Geense & Pels, 2002; Mamadouh, 2001).

³ Wired Up survey findings indicate that Moroccan-Dutch youth would miss forum discussions more than ethnic majority Dutch youth if they were not able to participate in them anymore. 11.6% of Moroccan-Dutch respondents state they would miss it "very much", while 4.9% of ethnic majority Dutch respondents reported they would miss it "very much" (Wired Up, 2012).

⁴ Wired Up survey findings indicate that Moroccan-Dutch girls participate more in forum discussion than boys, 29.2% of participating girls report to visit forums four days per week or more, while 11.6% of participating boys report to participate 4 days per week or more (Wired Up, 2012).

Also, Moroccan-Dutch girls reported feeling more attached to the communicative space than Moroccan-Dutch boys did (see table 3.1). The last finding was also evident from the interviewing phase; out of the total 43 informants, 17 girls and five boys included Internet forums in their Internet maps and subsequently spoke to me about their message board use.

Internet forum participation among Moroccan-Dutch youths

Message boards in the Netherlands reflect societal structures, as Dutch Muslims participate in Islamic oriented sites, including *Marokko.nl*, while they found majority Dutch people to participate on nationalistic forums such as *nl.politiek* (Stekelenburg, Dirk Oegema and Klandermans, 2011, p. 257). Lenie Brouwer and Sil Wijma argue that the variety of issues addressed in forum discussions provide more insights into the discourse of Moroccan-Dutch youths. They argue that discussion forums are not nonsense, but demand serious attention from researchers and policy-makers (2006, p. 114). Louis Boumans lists subject matters that are central to the expressive culture of Moroccan-Dutch youths on online discussions: love, relationships and sexuality, the situation of the Moroccan community in the Netherlands, world politics in relationship to Muslim communities and Islamic codes of conduct (2002, p. 12).

Brouwer argues that the publication of cultural artifacts on message boards “can be seen as a virtual way of keeping alive the image of Morocco” (2006b, p. 1153). The forums primarily display how Moroccan-Dutch youths embed themselves in a local community of young people who share ties with Morocco: “what these websites keep together is not the transnational but the national network of Dutch Moroccan youths” (ibid., p. 1167). Similarly, *Maroc.nl*, the discussion board that was the favorite before *Marokko.nl* became more popular, was described as a digital, communal “Moroccan living room”. In addition, it was noted that the site was also valuable for ethnic majority Dutch people, offering them a glimpse of Moroccan-Dutch life that would often “test and unmask their prejudices” (Stichting Maroc.nl, 2001, p. 9).

According to Martijn de Waal, Internet forums such as *Marokko.nl* foster the establishment of a distinct ethnic community and form an entry-point into the Dutch public domain. The communities showcase an emancipatory potential serving two functions. Firstly, discussions may allow for an articulation of alternative values, one where, for instance, girls could demand more rights. Secondly, the boards offer rich resources for identification processes that allow youths to attune themselves to

Moroccan affinities and Dutch everyday realities (2003). Paul Geense and Trees Pels note that discussions take place about the discrimination of Moroccan-Dutch youths, as well as around critical assessments of the problems caused by a small group of Moroccan-Dutch young men (2002, p. 10). Additionally, the availability of such communication channels offer Moroccan-Dutch youths “more autonomy and an expansion of their radius of action” (ibid., p. 11). Furthermore, as Virginie Mamadouh found, the anonymous character of message boards seems to hold specific appeal for the informants: “young Dutch Moroccans are more likely to discuss and dispute Moroccan and Dutch traditions in the safe encounter of quasi-anonymous forums than in face-to-face contacts with relatives, peers or teachers” (2001, p. 271). Valerie Frissen adds that the “self-cleaning capacity” of the online communities limits coarsening of manners (2008, p. 13). Forums can thus be taken up as a significant place for self-exploration.

This is not unique to Moroccan-Dutch youths, as similar relevant merits are recognized in Internet forum participation among other disenfranchised groups in the Netherlands. For instance, Willem de Koster in his study on sexual minorities (Dutch orthodox Protestant homosexuals) noted a comparable double function. For those “struggling with stigmatization” in offline life, Internet forums are appreciated as a “refuge”. They provide a “springboard” for those negotiating practical everyday questions “on how to faithfully live as a homosexual in an orthodox Protestant context”. Message boards can serve as springboards, de Koster argues, for users learning to improve their offline lives (2010, p. 572).

Margreet Dorleijn and Jacomine Nortier found that the language used on Moroccan-Dutch Internet forums is nearly always Dutch, but that posters do make use of Berber and Moroccan-Arabic insertions. These insertions “function as a mode to express bilingual identity”, but they are also markers of “style” (2009, pp. 137, 140). Moroccan-Dutch users of message boards like *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl* can also be expected to consciously claim membership within the community sustained there. The agency to define oneself resides at least partly on the side of users, as they may seize the opportunity to communicate their identity positioning on their own social terms.

The two-fold dynamic of “ethno-cultural positioning”, as a process of both position allocation and position acquisition (Van Heelsum, 2007), is an entry point to understand this process. On the one hand, bottom-up position acquisition refers to “the extent to which members of a given group look upon themselves primarily as members of a specific group and/or act as such”, while on the other hand, top-down position

allocation refers to “the extent to which (the bulk of) society considers them primarily as representatives of a specific group and/or treat them as such” (ibid., p. 24).⁵

Next to ethnic positioning, the dynamic of position allocation and acquisition also holds true for and is intrinsically connected with gender, sexuality, youth culture and religious positioning. In every setting, a particular configuration of physical, symbolic and material structures order the available youth cultural, religious, ethnic, sexual and gendered subject positions that are allocated to people. However, I remain aware of the room left for the stretching, negotiation and subversion of these allocated positions, through processes of bottom-up position acquisition on message boards (Leurs, Ponzanesi & Midden, 2012).

The urgency of incorporating other axes of differentiation when analyzing message boards becomes apparent from the following studies. In his media studies thesis on users of *Hababam.nl*, an online forum directed especially at Turkish-Dutch users, Florian Henning found that roughly one third of users – especially adolescents – reported engaging with the forum in order to articulate political and cultural identifications. Also, he recognized a particular gender dynamic among those who reported using the forum for this purpose: two-thirds of them were female (2006, p. 63). His observation is similar to findings by Andries van den Broek and Jos de Haan, who note that girls with a migrant background are more strongly oriented toward their own ethnic group than boys (2006, pp. 92-97). More so than boys, Dutch girls with a Muslim background seem to seize the opportunity to communicate with their friends online away from supervision and control by parents and family members (ibid, p. 97).

Geense and Pels note that the increase in autonomy and expansion of one’s range of action mainly concerns girls “who traditionally experience greater social control from their parents and their own community” (2002, p. 13). Brouwer found that Moroccan-Dutch girls in their message board participation “demonstrate counterviews towards the dominant western image of Muslim women as well as to their own communities” (2006a, np). In voicing themselves on Internet forums, Moroccan-Dutch girls seek to carve out a space for themselves, negotiate their ethnic and gendered identities and express their voices.

⁵ Leen D’Haenens builds on the notion of ethno-cultural positioning to discuss the study of ICT in the Dutch multicultural society, however she focuses on different types of identity formation and digital media consumption (religious, ethnic, national and cultural) (2003, p. 401).

Marokko.nl and Chaima.nl

*Marokko.nl is a website where especially Moroccans come so to say. You talk about all kinds of things, for example your Eid or just nonsense or politics or something like that. Those kinds of things are discussed and you see how others think about things.*⁶

– SouSou, 15 years old

During our interview, SouSou shared her view on the online message board *Marokko.nl*. For her, the board is a space to hang out with other Moroccan-Dutch teenagers away from the mainstream of Dutch society. She finds others to share in celebrating Eid, the conclusion of the fasting-month of Ramadan. Also, she comes together with other users to express her views on political issues. But most of all discussants get the chance to anonymously put forward what SouSou calls “*just nonsense*”. Just nonsense topics can in fact be of great importance in the lives of the young people, as in practice, these include personal prosaic experiences, trivial thoughts, banal ideas and everyday issues that all enable peer-verification as users learn what others feel about their personal meanderings. Through collaboratively sharing these conversations with the whole public of the site, youths establish a distinct Moroccan-Dutch community. As Naoul, a 16-year-old girl notes: *Marokko.nl* is a community, “*it is your own circle, with all those Moroccan things*” that are discussed, and “*the people there are like you, that’s nice*”. Similarly, Inas, a 13-year-old girl explains: “*you have the feeling you get nearer to each other, you feel connected. For instance, someone from Amsterdam posts something about fashion, and I like that posting. Subsequently I will start speaking with that person, with her or him*”.

Geense and Pels note that the first such message boards were established in the late 1990s by Moroccan-Dutch youths who were dissatisfied with the one-sided coverage of their demographic in Dutch media (2002, p. 13). Ranging in interests and incentives, a wide variety of boards – such as *Amazigh.nl*, *Maroc.nl*, *Maroc.nu*, *Maghreb.nl*, *Maghrebonline.nl*, *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl* – have been created and are frequented by second-generation Moroccan-Dutch youths. *Marokko.nl* has been recognized as “the most popular online discussion board among allochthonous young people” (Knijff, 2009); this also holds true for my informants.

The focus in this chapter will be on *Marokko.nl* and to a lesser extent *Chaima.nl*, because those 22 informants who spoke about their engagement with Internet forums all reported to frequent *Marokko.nl*. Five girls mentioned they also turned to *Chaima.nl*. Additionally, Oussema frequents *Steampowered.com*, a discussion board dedicated to

⁶ Eid ul Fitr: festivities to celebrate the conclusion of the dawn-to-sunset fasting month of Ramadan.

computer games. Using gender stereotypical terms, 13-year-old Amina distinguishes between *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl* as follows:

there is one site, which is called Marokko.nl, and I'm serious it's buzzing with Moroccan youths there. Also people from other cultures and origins, but Moroccan youths are the majority. They have founded the site themselves. It is very active, everyone goes there to talk to one another, and there is something for everyone there.

Chaima.nl, that is a very pleasant site as well. It's for girls. The site is made up completely in pink, with [discussions] about nails and those kinds of things. It offers you a space where only girls gather, but sometimes also boys go there to [talk about] sensitive topics and explore what girls are up to. For instance topics like fashion are discussed, and love and marriage. You'll read about girls who are about to get married. I believe a Moroccan[-Dutch] girl also founded the site. But also others are welcome, you know.

Almost 220.000 accounts have been registered on *Marokko.nl*, while more than 41.000 accounts were set up on *Chaima.nl*.⁷ The amount of lurkers⁸ is expected to be much higher. *Marokko.nl* is estimated to reach a remarkable 70 to 75 percent of Moroccan-Dutch youths in the age category between 15 and 35, while roughly one-third of the total Moroccan-Dutch population visit the site on a weekly basis (Knijff, 2009; Motivaction, 2007). Everyone with access to the Internet can read messages that are posted; however, in order to contribute one has to become a member by registering with an e-mail account and one's date of birth. To give an impression of the topics discussed on *Marokko.nl*, the following discussion rubrics are most active: "Moroccan youth and current events", "Tea lounge", "Nonsense corner", "Moroccan youths, love and relationships", "Fashion and beauty care", "Moroccan weddings in the Netherlands and Belgium", "The world of the Moroccan woman", "Islam and I", "Sports", "Moroccan pop culture" and "Story rubric".⁹ On every page on the forums of *Marokko.nl*, the slogans "virtual community" and "La maison du Maroc" (French for "The home in Morocco") appear. Upon opening the site, one of a number of different background images appear, including romantic pictures of deserts, ancient cities and beaches that appeals its visitors' image of Morocco. Initially launched in June 2006, *Chaima.nl* is a message board of more modest scale, presenting itself as a discussion board for Moroccan-Dutch girls. The main color used in its interface is pink, and other stereotypical feminine symbols appear, such as pictures of roses, high heels, nails, jewelry,

⁷ On January 20, 2012, *Marokko.nl* lists 219.163 members have joined the community while *Chaima.nl* lists 45.152 members. On *Marokko.nl* 1.073.058 discussion topics have been started, while 30.139.221 comments have been left. On *Chaima.nl* 97.511 discussion topics have been started while 2.779.376 messages have been posted.

⁸ "Lurkers" are people who read postings but do not leave comments themselves.

⁹ As of September 30, 2011, those rubrics have received more than 1 million comments.

dresses, and make-up. Showing some overlap with *Marokko.nl*, the following rubrics are most active there: “News”, “Introduce yourself”, “Chill corner”, “Fashion and clothing”, “Love and relationships”, “Marriage and engagements”, “Koran, Hadith and prayer”, “Music club”, “Poems”, and “Stories”.¹⁰

When registering on *Chaima.nl*, users have to agree “to refrain from posting obscene, rude, sexually oriented, hateful, threatening or messages that are otherwise forbidden by law”, and accept “*Chaima.nl*’s right to delete, manipulate, move or close any discussion” (Chaima.nl, 2011). Upon registration to *Marokko.nl*, users have to accept that the board owners forbid “disrespectful messages, including racism, sexism, dirty language or swearing”, “user advertisements”, “publishing personal contact details” and “pornographic materials”. Should they encounter any discrimination on the site, users have the duty to actively report it. Moreover, the site outlines its linguistic does in the statement: “the language of communication is Dutch. Messages in English, Arabic and/or Tamazight are accepted. Messages in other languages are not allowed, except for when they add to the discussion and users explain them in Dutch”. The site also forbids certain usernames: “Sharon, Bush, bin-laden, el_qaida, terrorist, or something which smells of it are not allowed”. Users also have to accept that “they transfer ownership over all messages published on *Marokko.nl* to *Marokko.nl*”. In terms of age requirements, the site requires users to guarantee that they are at least 16 years old, or that they have parental permission (Marokko.nl, 2011a).

In contrast to the volunteer-based model of *Chaima.nl*, *Marokko.nl*’s owners display an apparent commercial incentive. The forum users and the user-generated content circulating on the site are exploited as a niche market with great potential for advertisers. The site also holds a particular appeal to government agencies. The content is owned by a company called Urban Connect, which specializes in “ethnic marketing, online communication with urban youths, market research and intercultural advertisements” (Urban Connect, 2011b). The company sells advertisers access to 50.000 youths who visit *Marokko.nl* on a daily basis, selling announcements that can appear next to the 50.000 messages and 1500 topics that are left each day (Urban Connect, 2011a). In its branding, Marokko.nl presents itself as “virtual community”, which is:

is frequently visited by 75% percent of all Moroccan-Dutch youths and it has a great societal and commercial value. A virtual community offers an accessible opportunity to discuss all sorts of topics. But we offer you more. From the discussions that take place themes arise that our visitors often encounter, such as the care for their parents or questions around Islam and sexuality. We offer

¹⁰ As of September 30, 2011, more than 30.000 comments were posted to these rubrics.

online services directed on our target group, that they may be able to employ in their real life to avoid problems.

– Urban Connect (2011b, my translation)

The company strategically sets up a distinction here between the “virtual community” and the “real life” selling corporations access to a relatively untapped market of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands. Additionally, governmental institutions are invited to buy into the opportunity to manifest themselves on the forum, to be able to connect with a specific target group who might otherwise not be reached but who need governmental assistance to avoid real life problems.

On both message boards, users can perform their identities in distinct ways. Users can choose a nickname and add a signature they like (although they do have to abide by the protocols of the platforms). Nicknames include age, gender, ethnicity, diaspora, religion, race, youth cultural and sports affiliations. 14-year-old Sahar describes the Moroccan affiliations in nicknames: *“people for instance add little Moroccan, or their name, or a town in Morocco, where they are from”*. Amina, a 13-year-old girl, notes that on *Marokko.nl*, users add distinct signatures to their posts *“they add their whole life-story, or write about the people that they miss. Or people just write about what they are like”*. Individuals have the opportunity to include text-based and visual signatures to their postings, often consisting of a religious saying or a reference to contemporary events. Also, users can include an avatar, a small graphic that represents something about a user’s character. 18-year-old Safae attests that these are chosen *“to get people’s attention, to get them to react on your postings. When you add a nice photo you get more attention from the people you don’t know”*.

Finally, users can create a personal profile page on both sites using text boxes where they can write about their “biography”, “interests”, “occupation/education”. On *Marokko.nl*, “gender” and “roots” are also available categories through which users can describe themselves, while *Chaima.nl* provides a box for “city of residence”. Distinct reputation management systems are at work in these profile options. For example, the number of posts users have contributed to the sites as well as the date of registration work to indicate one’s standing in the community. Also, users can give other posters credits if they like their contributions to the site: the more credits users receive, the more green lights appear under the poster’s nickname shown next to every comment posted. On *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl*, users themselves can flag messages as inappropriate, and subsequently site moderators decide whether to remove the comment and ban the user

from accessing the site. In the next section, I argue how user contributions can lend Internet forum discussions the status of (counter) publics.

3.2 Internet forums as (counter) publics

A community will evolve only when a people control their own communication – Frantz Fanon (cited in Kahn & Kellner, 2007, p. 17).

In this section, I map the academic debate on minorities' and migrants' use of Internet forums for voicing their identity, forming publics and counter publics.¹¹ Internet forums began as digital replacements for physical bulletin boards, used to provide notices and information, announce events and advertise things for sale. Originating in the early 1990s, message boards are a web-based technological evolution of the 1970s dial-up *bulletin board system* (BBS), newsgroups and electronic mailing lists. Currently a great variety of Internet forums is used by millions of people across the globe. They are set up to cater to the different, and specific, interests of groups of users, ranging from hacking and activism, to white-supremacy, computer games and anime.¹²

Marianne van den Boomen foresaw the ways that message board communities are engrafted onto real-life communities. Specifically, she notes that communities are not necessarily only based on geographical affiliations, but also on “biographical identities: women, parents, gay’s, children, elderly, handicapped, ill, blacks” (2000, np.). In his pioneering study of forums, Byron Burkhalter noted that race is just as relevant in online interaction as it is in face-to-face interaction. Burkhalter countered the revolutionary expectations of technology by noting that in *Usenet*,¹³ in the absence of physical cues, race gets textually “achieved, maintained, questioned, and reestablished” similar to the offline world (1999, pp. 63-64). Boards dedicated to issues of migration, diaspora, race, gender, ethnicity and religion are also created to cater to specific groups of users. Jacquelin van Stekelenburg, Dirk Oegema and Bert Klandermans rightly argue, “the social structure in society tends to be reflected in the social structure of the Web forums” (2011, p. 257). In sum, as online discussion forums can be used by majority and minority subjects to define their own identities in their own space, these forums constitute “highways” and “byways”

¹¹ In Latin, the word *forum* refers to the open, public space at the centre of Roman cities. This space functioned both as a marketplace and gathering place.

¹² Famous examples of forums that also get mainstream media coverage are *4chan.org*, a site where users can post images anonymously, members of the international hacktivist group Anonymous are said to gather there; *stormfront.org*, a white-nationalist and supremacist neo-Nazi Internet forum; *steampowered.com* a online game community; and *gaia-online.com*, a forum dedicated to anime videos.

¹³ Burkhalter assessed the racial dynamics of *Usenet*. Together with BBS, *Usenet* is a predecessor to message boards. Initiated in 1980, it is one of the oldest network communication systems still in use today.

across digital territories (Franklin, 2003, p. 486). Over the course of the last decade, scholars have been beginning to notice the popularity of message boards among minorities and migrants.

In the context of the United States, Dara Byrne argues that *AsianAvenue.com*, *MiGente.com*, and *BlackPlanet.com* are online discussion boards that represent Asian-American, Mexican-American, and African-American digital “public spheres”. A shared racial identity serves as a common ground and determines who can participate in these spaces (2008, p. 18). These sites are frequented by millions of users in the U.S., where there is a great demand for such “dedicated sites”, Byrne writes, because these spaces are sources for a sense of collective identification and ethnic pride. Online discussion boards highlight how “ethnic communities construct, stabilize, modify, and challenge individual and community senses of identity over a relatively long period of time”. Besides identification, she adds, forums are used to develop and promote alternatives to mainstream, institutionalized ideologies. Also, they allow for the development of a shared insider consciousness of “racially, and often gender-, appropriate behaviors” (ibid, pp. 17, 29-31).

Madhavi Mallapragada writes about the Indian diaspora in America, noting that sites such as *Drumnation.org* display users’ middle-class, Hindu-centric “gendered nationalism”, but she also indicates how diasporians foreground “alternative ways of imagining identity, belonging and community in their current location in the US” (2006, p. 225). Studying *SAWNET*, a website for women of South Asia, Ananda Mitra has argued that forums enable dispossessed individuals “to find a voice in the public sphere” (2004, p. 492). Mitra and Wats expand on the notion of voice by discussing the potential of message boards for minorities to discuss and contest biases in the “traditional structures of speaking power”, using digital technologies to seize the option of taking a “a place at the table” (2002, p. 489).

David Parker and Miri Song studied *Britishbornchinese.org.uk* and *Barficulture.com*, forums set-up by British-born Chinese and South-Asians. They read these sites through the notion of “reflexive racialization”, highlighting the ability taken up by migrant users “to host a self-authored commentary on the issues faced by racialised minorities in a multicultural context” (2006, p. 583). In another study, the authors examined *BritishChineseonline.com*, arguing that such sites serve to pluralize senses of civic cultures. They recognize the imperative among second-generation British Chinese “to speak for themselves for the first time”, while rearticulating their cultural inheritance to British and

Chinese aspects of their backgrounds (2009, pp. 600-601). Jannis Androutsopoulos concerned himself with German-based diasporic websites, arguing these are instances of “media activism”, as people who claim membership of specific ethnic groups assume responsibility for “maintaining a public space for fellow diasporians”. He however also notes the commercialization of diasporic websites, as banners and advertisements are included to promote “products and services related to the respective ethnic group” (2007, pp. 343-344).

Those who feel excluded may appreciate the Internet for resistance and intervention in their forming of “alternative public spheres and oppositional subcultures” (Kahn & Kellner, 2007, pp. 18-19). Internet discussion forums are spaces where minorities can assert their voice, contest speaking power and assert alternative ideologies and identities.¹⁴ Their dynamics can be grasped in terms of the notion of “subaltern counterpublics” developed by Nancy Fraser. She sees how minorities form alternative publics in response to the dominant public sphere, particularly in “parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests, and needs” (1990, p. 67). Fraser develops this notion in extension of Jürgen Habermas’ ideal-type of the “bourgeois public sphere”.¹⁵ In Habermas’ view, society revolved around a singular, all-embracing public sphere. Fraser rightly noted that this conceptualization does not sufficiently capture the reality of contemporary stratified societies. Rather, she recognizes that a multiplicity of competing publics provides arenas for subordinated groups. By circulating “counter discourses”, these people can engage in “discursive

¹⁴ I see voice as the material and embodied process of “giving an account of oneself” (Butler, 2005). Voice matters, Nick Couldry argues, because it reveals a reflexive agency: although unevenly distributed and positioned by various gazes, voice remains “irreducibly plural”, allowing people to emerge as subjects and make sense of their life as it is embedded in multiple settings (2010, p. 7-10).

¹⁵ In 1962 Jürgen Habermas assessed conversations taking place among members of the bourgeoisie in Britain’s coffee houses, France’s salons and Germany’s “Tischgesellschaften” in the 18th century as the idealized conception of a “bourgeois public sphere” at the interface of society and government: “between the two spheres, as it were, stands the domain of private persons who have come together to form a public and who, as citizens of the state, mediate the state with the needs of bourgeois society” (2002, p. 95). Fraser updates this notion of the public sphere by grounding it in reality, recapturing its value as an analytical lens to assess contemporary developments. I briefly describe three assumptions Fraser reconsiders that indicate the relevance of the concept for the argument in this chapter. First, she critiques Habermas’ idea that interlocutors in the public sphere would speak “as if” they were equals. By merely bracketing difference, Fraser argues, inequalities are not eliminated, and bracketing difference mainly works to the disadvantage of subordinates (1990, p. 64). Moreover, in his conceptualization of the public sphere, he equated the public with being male. To foster participatory equality, Fraser notes, social inequalities need to be addressed in order to be dissolved. Secondly, she saw that a singular view on public deliberation obscures the view on alternative, competing publics constituted by subordinated groups. Thirdly, Habermas restricted the public sphere to discussions of “public matters”, however according to Fraser distinctions between private and public matters made by the majority do not necessarily acknowledge minorities’ interests, and only “participants themselves can decide what is and what is not of common concern to them” (ibid., p. 71).

contestation” (ibid, p. 62). I approach the public sphere as performative, which is as much about discussion as it is about voicing a cultural style through which one imagines the self and demarcates one’s own group (Tucker, 2005).

Scholars have conceptualized and empirically grounded the possibilities for using the Internet to develop a public sphere.¹⁶ In my analysis of Moroccan-Dutch youths’ use of Internet forums I further nuance the debate by considering how ethnic minority youths make use of message boards as an alternative counter public sphere. The literature suggests that message boards are taken up by migrants to articulate their voices and identities in an attempt to stake out a community on their own terms. Seizing the opportunity to speak for themselves on message boards, ethnic minority forum users self-consciously claim membership to an alternative public, while using ethnicity as a marker to determine who is entitled to participate. I intervene in the debate by exploring how norms of gender, nationalism, diaspora and religion intersect with ethnicity in users’ articulation of voice and identity on these forums (Leurs, Ponzanesi & Midden, forthcoming).

Furthermore, earlier research for the most part does not address how outsiders to the forums – who do not meet ethnic identity norms – perceive and react to digital forums frequented by minorities. As Radhika Gajjala and Anca Birzescu argue, scholarship so far has stopped at the “euphoric celebration of this emergence of voice from thus far marginalized groups” online, and has not yet considered fully the implications of this development for existing power structures (2010, p. 74). Although documenting how Moroccan-Dutch youths become space invaders – as they assert themselves in Internet forums and articulate alternative normative ways of being that subvert the digital status quo – is important, scrutinizing how their processes in turn are accepted or contested in the wider context of existing power hierarchies is essential to grasp the complexities of the situation. In the following section I first assess the ways in which Moroccan-Dutch youths seek to acquire alternative ethnic positions using Internet forums. Second, I explore how the informants report negotiating issues of relationships, love and sexuality on message boards. Thirdly, I analyze how Islam is dynamically performed in these spaces.

¹⁶ See Dahlberg & Siapera (2007) and Papachrissi (2009) for recent overviews.

3.3 “Not all Moroccans are the same”: Voicing ethnic identity

Ewa sahbi, shin shisha nigh?



Figure 3.1 A representation contesting dominant ideas of Moroccan-Dutchness (Mocro_s, 2007b).

It's all negative. But there also Dutch people who do so [commit crimes] and why aren't they mentioned in the news. It's only the Moroccans. Okay they are right in the sense that there are a number of Moroccans who do it, [breaking the law] we are no hypocrites. Allright but not all Moroccans are the same. Because you have it in every culture, there is also a part that is not [bad], there are good, nice people. There are the ones who do things like stealing and so on, but with what they say about someone, they judge a group of Moroccans. They form an opinion about the whole community, the whole Moroccan culture, seeing it only this way and they just shouldn't do that. [On Marokko.nl] you can discuss the topic like I think it's this way, or no I don't think you are right... Thus, you express your own opinion and so on. Do you get my point?

– Bibi, 16 years old

In our interview, Bibi laid bare the painful over-exposure of Moroccan-Dutch individuals who break the law in Dutch mainstream press, sharing how she feels as if the whole Moroccan community in the Netherlands gets framed as one homogeneous criminal group. One bad apple receives all the attention, ruining the whole bunch. Bibi and other informants feel bad that only this side of the story gets told since it focuses on a small minority and does not account for the fact that not all Moroccan-Dutch people are the same. They report that *Marokko.nl* is better suited than mainstream media to match their

interests of voicing other narratives. I illustrate with figure 3.1 that a great deal of discussion is about the stereotypes and counter-positioning of Moroccan-Dutch youths in the Netherlands. A boy is shown who meets the stereotype of the young Moroccan-Dutch rascal boy. A smoking, bearded young man wearing a cap and sports clothes, is depicted to extend a greeting in Moroccan-Arabic “*ewa sahbi*”. He also asks whether someone wants to smoke a “shisha” or waterpipe. In addition to not speaking Dutch, the boy can be said to signify alterity to Dutchness, as he is wearing clothes and sneakers in the colors of the red and green Moroccan national flag. However, as a symbol of peace the boy is making a V-sign hand gesture, making an attempt at conciliation.

Users appreciate discussion sites such as *Marokko.nl* because they can communicate with their own circle of people and share or hear alternative voices regarding Moroccan communities in the Netherlands. Eugenia Siapera observes that “the existence of minority media reflects the exclusion of minorities from the mainstream media, and to some extent it reflects the need for minorities to have their own mediated space” (2010, p. 94). Their corner of the Internet is often used to discuss and reframe dominant images circulating in news media. Thirteen-year-old Salima describes mainstream news media in this way: “*they speak about Moroccans very often. If it would be a Turk or someone else, than it is not immediately news or so, but when there are Moroccans involved, it is immediately like: all right, these are Moroccans, instantly on the news*”. Ideally, national news media reflect the broad dynamics of a society, including the multicultural dimension of that society, however in the Netherlands, ethnic minorities feel as though coverage is skewed (D’Haenens et al, 2004, p. 69).¹⁷ Fourteen-year-old Senna remarks that, “*on Marokko.nl you also get news, news is discussed, it is more about Moroccan news and so on. That you do not find in de Telegraaf*”.¹⁸ Sixteen-year-old Nevra finds that “*different stories*” are shared on Internet forums, where “*there is often negative talk about Moroccan youths [in the newspapers], I find that youths there can say what they want, showing it is not all bad*”.

Away from the cultural hegemony of mainstream media, *Marokko.nl* is a space that allows for the proliferation of new voices in the public domain. Users can engage in ideological struggles through discursive contestation with mainstream media by speaking for themselves, instead of having to witness being spoken for again and again. Contestation of the black-and-white depiction of Moroccan-Dutch youths is at the centre

¹⁷ Illustratively, ethnic minority youth in the Netherlands, including Moroccan- and Turkish-Dutch do not feel addressed by the Dutch public broadcast channels, spending three times as much of their time watching commercial television in stead of public TV (D’Haenens et al, 2004, p. 50).

¹⁸ *De Telegraaf* is the largest daily newspaper in the Netherlands, especially known for its populist and sensationalist reporting.

of attention here, according to Ilham, a 13-year-old girl: “everyone is not the same, yes not all as one”. Young people feel at home and thus able to disrupt stereotypes, “because yeah, you can defend yourself and say whatever you want, it is your opinion, and you can just give your view there”. Moroccan-Dutch youths are critical consumers of Dutch-language news coverage, carefully assessing the information presented on issues relating to Morocco and the Moroccan community (D’Haenens, Van Summeren, Sayes and Koeman, 2004). They are dissatisfied with the news offerings of mainstream Dutch press, as they report to feel offended by the way news items are negatively framed.¹⁹ Online forums are seen as a viable alternative to discuss issues left uncovered and also different views are acknowledged and appreciated (2004, p. 69).

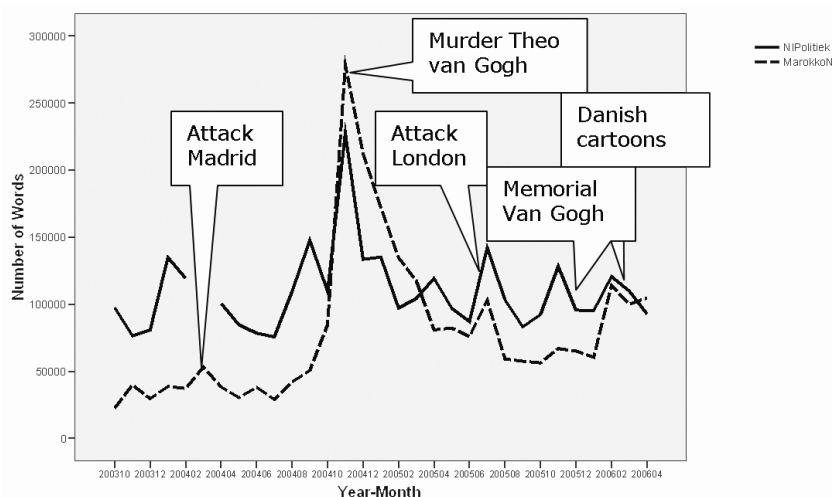


Figure 3.2 Attention for major news events on *Nl.politiek* and *Marokko.nl* (Stekelenburg, Oegema and Klandermans, 2011, p. 263).

For example, Stekelenburg, Dirk Oegema and Klandermans counted the number of words dedicated to immigration and integration issues that were published after major news events on both *Marokko.nl* and the ethnic majority Dutch oriented *nl.politiek*. Figure

¹⁹ For example in 2003, a collective of Moroccan-Dutch people unhappy with Dutch media and politics launched a manifest entitled “*Koerswijziging.nl*” (Dutch for “changing course”). In the manifest, the activists write about feeling dogged in a downward spiral by negative social stigma. Their petition aimed to make clear that the negative framing of Moroccans in Dutch society had gone too far, and they sought to catalyze Moroccan-Dutch youth to take responsibility and develop positive initiatives. In the visuals that accompany the manifest, the makers clearly also aimed to expose stereotypes, as we see illustrations of a male and female on ice-skates with a windmill in the background. The couple wears traditional Moroccan garments; the man has a beard and wears a jellaba and a red fez-cap, while the woman wears a kaftan and a headscarf (Abbos et al., 2003).

3.2 shows a graph taken from their study that captures how these forums serve as platforms to actively contribute one's voice in public debates. Events plotted include the Islamic extremist March 11, 2004 train bombings in Madrid and July 7, 2005, bombings in the public transport system in London, and the controversy over the publishing of cartoons of the Islamic prophet of Muhammad in the Danish *Jyllands-Posten* Muhammad, which all spurred substantial debate. But above all, the murder of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh sparked considerable discussion. Shortly after Van Gogh directed his polemic film about the repression of Muslim women by Muslim men, he was murdered by a young Moroccan-Dutch man and in revenge, right-wing racists burned Dutch mosques and Islamic schools. In tandem with this turmoil, the graph shows a peak of words published dedicated to integration and immigration issues on *Marokko.nl*. In the sense that young Moroccan-Dutch people were able to share their voices on the matter, *Marokko.nl* appeared as a space to air their frustration and learn to cope with these developments.

Hush harbors

Although message boards are in principle publicly accessible to all Internet users, my informants perceive *Marokko.nl* as a welcoming space to publish and read alternative voices. The site, in their view, operates under the radar. For instance 14-year-old Senna states, "*I don't know, I think that half of the [Dutch] people does not even know that it exists*". Message boards' perceived hidden character, tucked away from the mainstream, has been acknowledged as a main reason why minority groups become attracted to them. Dara Byrne describes message boards that "fly well below the mainstream radar" and are frequented by minorities, such as *AsianAvenue.com*, *MiGente.com*, and *BlackPlanet.com*, with the term "hush harbors", a notion used to describe spaces in which slaves gathered away from supervision from their white masters (2008, p. 17).

Vorris Nunley reflects on hush harbors in contemporary American society and notes that "quasi-public spaces such as beauty shops and barbershops provide safe spaces where Black folks affirm, share, and negotiate African American epistemologies and resist and subvert hegemonic Whiteness" (2004, p. 222). As a space to negotiate unequal power relations, Nunley notes that, historically, "African Americans have utilized camouflaged locations, hidden sites, and enclosed places as emancipatory cells where they can come in from the wilderness, untie their tongues, speak the unspoken, and sing their won songs to their own selves in their own communities" (2004, p. 223). The hushedness of Internet forums, Byrne writes, is valuable for developing "group

cohesion” and a shared sense of belonging. Because the right of access is based on foregrounding a shared ethnicity, forums are “relatively free of *mass* participation by ethnic outsiders” (2008, p. 17). Bibi (16-year-old) said she feels at home on the page, because there she says she can experience “*really that Moroccan atmosphere*”, as everyone uses “*those Moroccan words, you know*”.

A similar tendency can be observed in the circulation of alternative voices among peer groups on the Turkish-Dutch oriented message board *Hababam.nl*. The message board is taken up to “bypass” the mainstream Dutch public sphere “which is dominated by a negative image of immigrant minorities” (Henning, 2006, p. 69). In focusing on message boards as the digital formations of hushed counter publics, it becomes apparent that informants recognize Internet forums as safe loci for discursive contestation in response to exclusionary practices prevalent in Dutch society.

Contesting Geert Wilders and the carnivalesque

The main topic more concerns Geert Wilders and so on. He of all people can say things about Muslims. While we for instance cannot talk about the Jews, because then we are the racists. About those things, we say 'Why is he allowed to do it,' and to be honest, everyone thinks he is a retard, a dog; we do not like him at all.

– Bibi, 16 years old

Interviewees especially emphasized the heated debates over the controversial Dutch anti-Islamic Member of Parliament Geert Wilders on *Marokko.nl*. They have a sense that Wilders can say whatever he likes, while everything Moroccan-Dutch youths say is put under the microscope. On the forum, interviewees feel more secure and confident to speak out than they might feel elsewhere. The counter public is respected, and it begets a sense of freedom from the tensions in society stirred up by the PVV and other right-wing populism. Our informants argue that they cannot imagine that the white master is present on the site, as 15-year-old Oussema said: “*I don't see Wilders having a look at the site, I cannot imagine that*”. The community is experienced as being sometimes more welcoming than elsewhere, 15-year-old Meryam describes: “*there are very many youths, Moroccan youths, who go on Marokko.nl... It is about Geert Wilders for instance and then everyone joins in and you can see reactions posted by others, how they think about it*”.

Fifteen-year-old Inzaf maintains that message boards such as *Marokko.nl* help Moroccan-Dutch youths to cope with negative positions ascribed. She insists that unlike *Hypes*, on *Marokko.nl* members share a number of ideas that also bonds them together: they all refute the polarizing brought forth by Wilders and the PVV:

We speak about various Moroccan things, but we agree about one thing. For instance about Geert Wilders, all of Marokko.nl agrees that he is no good, or that he lost his mind. On Hyves it would be different; everyone would have a different opinion. You have very few people who have a totally different opinion. Everyone would think something like, 'yeah if I see him on the streets, I will shoot him dead', and then you have few people who would say something like 'No why? He is not doing anything wrong?'

Unlike the social-networking site *Hyves*, where, as I note in chapter five, views from across the socio-cultural-political spectrum are expressed in one single space, *Marokko.nl* is considered as a hush harbor where people agree upon a shared set of assumptions. Perpetuating the stereotypical frames of extremism, at first glance the statement by Inzaf demonstrates how forum contributors are complicit in perpetuating the othering of the Moroccan-Dutch community as a whole. However, the statement is only a polemic mimicry of extremism, as it is to be read in the context of cultural repertoires of street-language and hip-hop youth culture. Her way of expressing her feelings about the debate in the Netherlands can therefore be interpreted as a “diss”,²⁰ a strong carnivalesque polemic, instead of an actual death wish. For Mikhail Bakhtin, the carnivalesque refers to “peculiar folk humor that always existed and has never merged with the official culture of the ruling classes” (1984, p. 474), which may include “ridicule of officialdom, inversion of hierarchy, violations of decorum and proportion” (Brandist, 2001, np). Building on Bakhtin, Julia Kristeva states that “carnivalesque discourse breaks through the laws of a language” as a political and social protest (1986, p. 36). As such, Bakhtin and Kristeva see the carnivalesque as theatrical form of parody that can offer resistance to hegemonic forms.

The controversial song *Hirsi Ali Diss* by the Moroccan-Dutch rappers DHC from The Hague is another example of carnivalesque ridicule. In the song, the Somalian-Dutch prominent Islam critic Hirsi Ali was similarly dismissed: “We are busy preparing for your liquidation / Bomba action, against Hirsi Ali / That is my reaction for the unrest she is making / Talking on TV about *integration*” (lyrics *Hirsi Ali Dis*, 2004). Religion scholar Martijn de Koning notes that in this song coarse language of the street, assertive dissing and the demand for respect come together in a reaction on the Dutch debate on integration. Verbally threatening Hirsi Ali in the song is DHC’s way of forming a response to being mistreated (2005, np). In the global linguistic flows of hip-hop youth culture, “the-violence-as-verbal metaphor” is a significant example of a particular politics of language. As battling in reality is transferred to a verbal duel, “a substitutional

²⁰ In global hip hop linguistics, ‘to diss’ is short for dismiss, disparage and/or disrespect is a “a new word that means to reject, ignore, and embarrass” (Morgan, 2009, p. 80).

relationship between real and verbal violence” is formed: this function has a long history in rap (Newman, 2009, p. 200). Similarly, Inzaf’s statement is a part of such a verbal duel expressed as a culmination of feelings of discrimination, injustice, and subordination. Inzaf shows how deep the feeling of being disrespected by extremist right-wing Dutch people runs among Moroccan-Dutch youths. These suppressed narratives reflect on and expose their sense of the dominant power order. Symptomatic of the social injustice inflicted on the Moroccan-Dutch community, they reveal a great deal about their perception of the Dutch political and societal centers of power.²¹

Inzaf’s assertion can be seen as an “unspeakable” narrative. Moroccan-Dutch teenagers turn to message boards where they can express their – perhaps unconscious – feelings of oppression. Writing about his own sense of identity, Stuart Hall comments on the unspeakable in relation to identity by arguing: “identity is formed at that point where the unspeakable stories of subjectivity meet the narratives of history, of a culture” (1996d, p. 115). And as Hall recognizes, resisting being muted and taking the opportunity to speak the unspeakable is of major importance: “hitherto excluded from the major forms of cultural representation, unable to locate themselves except as decentered or subaltern, [they] have acquired through struggle, sometimes in very marginalized ways, the means to speak for themselves for the first time” (Hall, 1997b, p. 183).²² The problem remains that, although masked in a carnivalesque narrative, the unspeakable gets asserted in a publicly accessible space on the Internet. Since Moroccan-Dutch participants such as Inzaf see the boards as hushed from the mainstream, the line between publicness and privateness is blurred. Similar to how emotions are regulated by conventions, the carnivalesque is also bound to particular community norms and expectations.

²¹ During the interviews, the informants equated PVV perspectives with the mainstream. This view should be problematized, because extremist their anti-immigration and anti-Islam are not the same as the Dutch political norm. Although it must also be admitted that the situation is complicated, as the party received 15,5% of the votes during the 2010 Dutch general election, giving them 24 of the 150 seats in the House of Representatives. And although the PVV formally was not a part of the governing coalition, the coalition depended on a Parliamentary Support Agreement with the PVV to reach a majority in parliament. The Dutch coalition collapsed in spring 2012.

²² The site owners make use of the Dutch “*Kijkwijzer*” rating system to indicate that some site visitors might consider information on the site offensive. Developed by the Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audio-visual Media, *Kijkwijzer* is a media classification scheme that makes use of pictograms to characterize media content. Prominently on the bottom-right of the site pictograms are placed as cautionary reminders indicating discussions may include violence, fear, sex, discrimination, drug and/or alcohol abuse and coarse language.

Networked power contradictions

In articulating a self-defined ethnic identity in a self-contained space, message board participants are able to succeed “in overcoming some of the hierarchical structures of traditional broadcast media” (Karim, 2003, p. 13). Ilham thinks that ethnic majority Dutch people not mind these discussion boards as long as they are not bothered with them: “*I think they just say something like: if they don't terrorize the internet so to say, just let them happily stick to their little corner, all Moroccans and so on*”. However, acceptance and normalization of alternative views and knowledge circulating on *Marokko.nl* is far from straightforward. Gajjala and Birzescu plead for a consideration of situated subaltern digital “voicings” as shaped by existing power relations (2010, p. 75). The problem for *Marokko.nl* is that speech norms of different communities may collide, as the digital space is also accessible to non Moroccan-Dutch participants.

Nancy Fraser argues that, historically, when subaltern subjects have voiced themselves, they have been “elaborating alternative styles of political behavior and alternative norms of public speech” to the mainstream, and the mainstream “in turn, excoriated these alternatives”. Fraser observes that in this process, “unequally empowered social groups tend to develop unequally valued cultural styles”. The troubling result is that when ethnic minorities find the opportunity to voice themselves, their contributions are marginalized (1990, pp. 61, 64). Journalists and politicians seem to be replicating this process in their consideration of *Marokko.nl*. Public news media link discussion sites frequented by Moroccan-Dutch individuals such as *Marokko.nl* to extremism and radicalism, with news paper items such as: *Cut- and paste-Islam: how young Muslims in the Netherlands compose their radical worldview* (Oostveen, 2004). Additionally these sites are dismissed as the underbelly of the unknown, as segregated ghettos, and as grimy spaces disconnected from the mainstream: *Getto's on the web. On the Internet, every group creates its own truth* (Hulsman, 2005) and *Forums where verbal abuse is allowed* (Pietersen, 2008). Perhaps in order to sell their messages to larger audience – through selling fear – such news items echo widespread Islamophobic us-versus-them discursive strategies. *Marokko.nl* site co-founder Khalid Mahdaoui criticized journalists for selectively taking quotes from the site, lifted from their original contexts, in order to juice up news reporting (Labovic, 2005, p. 27).

A recent governmental decision also signals how these contradictory power relations in the media have ramifications for sites like *Marokko.nl*. Eberhard Van der Laan, dutch Minister of Housing and Integration at that time cut funding for the site, as

articulated in his statement, this decision was not related to a study his department released accusing the site of containing discriminatory statements that incited hatred (Rijksoverheid, 2009, np). Internet sociologist Albert Benschop expressed concerns about the research, wondering why only sites frequented by Moroccan-Dutch youths (*Marokko.nl*, *Islamwijzer.nl* and *Maroc.nl*) were included in the investigation, while right-wing populist sites like *GeenStijl.nl* were not included (Knijff, 2009, np). Mahdaoui states that *Marokko.nl* actively tries to discourage discrimination by deleting 20.000 comments and 150 members on a weekly basis. He admits that moderators are having difficulties assessing the daily flow of 50.000 messages, however, he adds that only around 5% of the messages cross the line of what is lawfully permitted (Pietersen, 2008, np). Benschop places this small number of deviant postings in perspective and also notes that increased monitoring and critique can be traced to the growth of extreme right-wing politics: with every demonstration, although very well organized, something offensive is shouted. These remarks used to dissolve in the masses, however, once online, they leave material traces. “Because of the PVV, they tightly monitor the site and they have their eyes set on discrediting the site” (cited in Pietersen, 2008, np).

Furthermore, as the site has no control over who subscribes and posts, right-wing users are also present on the site. Mahdaoui estimates that 20% of *Marokko.nl* visitors comes from the right-wing blog *Geenstijl.nl* or are supporters of the PVV, and Benschop notes: “those visitors sometimes setup a profile like Mohammed21 and discredit the site with extremist statements”. After which, they will complain about the site (Knijff, 2009, np). The hush harbor, where users thought they could voice their views inaudible from the white master and other like-minded people, has thus gotten compromised. Gajjala and Birzescu note that whenever subaltern subjects are able to voice themselves online, their actions are often disciplined in return: “as the individual begins to feel empowered by the ability to speak up and back in such networks - there is a quick and simultaneous appropriation occurring that swiftly *places* this voice into a slottable position” (2010, p. 77). Although my informants perceive the forums they frequent as safe zones where they can articulate alternative ways of being, their acts of invading digital space simultaneously remain subject to tight scrutiny and control. Reflecting on disciplinary mechanisms, Mahdaoui wonders whether Moroccan-Dutch youths are expected to make a greater effort than ethnic majority Dutch people. He asks why Moroccan-Dutch people have to behave better than ethnic majority Dutch people,

and adds that after Theo van Gogh was murdered, Dutch ethnic majority users were behaving very indecently on his forums:

As long as law allows it, it is allowed on our site. When someone shouts Bin Laden is his hero, we keep it online. It will spur discussion and that is valuable. The Internet does not cause radicalization, but it is an outlet.

– Cited in Labovic (2005, p. 27)

Mahdaoui notes that *Marokko.nl* moderators are trained to consciously leave insulting messages in order to spur debate: “what is incredibly insulting for one, falls under the right of free speech for the other. We provide the space for discussions. We believe in the self-cleaning capacity of the community. This is the way it has been for years: they correct one another”. This way, Wilders’ followers that flock to his site also get the chance “to shout whatever they want”, he says. Furthermore, he concludes that journalists and politicians should not forget that a lot of members are 15 or 16 years old, and he asks, “what is scary about their writings?” (cited in Pietersen, 2008). In their search to attract corporate funds, the founders further began to commercially exploit the potential of the site by selling advertisers access to a relatively untapped ethnic-marketing niche. Yet despite outsider scrutiny and this increasing commercial presence, the desire among Moroccan-Dutch youths to articulate their own position and claim speaking power persists, as the following section on the voicing gender displays.

3.4 Negotiating “hchouma” topics: Voicing gendered identity

Yes it is hchouma you know, I am shy to tell my parents about these things.

– Bibi, 16 years old

Figure 3.3 captures the theme of voicing gendered identity, showing a stylish, tidily clad girl carrying an expensive handbag in one hand and talking to her friend on her *Blackberry* smartphone with her other hand. The girl shares that she is upset to have found out her boyfriend sent a message with a heart emoticon to another girl. Looking for vengeance, she set up a date with her ex-boyfriend. In the picture she is depicted saying:

Hey Sam, It’s me! My god, I’m angry! I have had a fight with my boyfriend yesterday, he sent Amanda – you know that cheap whore – a message with a heart, idiot! Pff I almost had to cry I went crazy! yes, I know it because 24/7 I’m logged in to the Hyves of my boyfriend because I have a blackberry. In revenge I will date my ex! Nooho I won’t kiss him oh he is here I talk to you soon sweetie, loveyou kisskiss.



Figure 3.3 A representation of contested gender relations (Mocro_s, 2007a).

Discussing issues such as love, relationships and sexuality happens away from their parents' eyes, as I introduced with figure 2.2 in chapter two, the great majority of Moroccan-Dutch survey participants connect to the Internet from their bedrooms. Almost three out of four Moroccan-Dutch girls for instance log on from their own room and connect to the Internet at their friends or families' homes. These findings suggest that Moroccan-Dutch girls might be able to enjoy a significant level of privacy while engaging with the Internet. During the interviews, informants also explained they can strategically negotiate more freedom in choosing where they log in to the Internet. Thirteen-year-old Sousie explains, *"it depends on where I take my laptop, when I am in my room, nobody will enter. When I'm sitting downstairs, on the couch, and my mother sits next to me she will occasionally have a glance"* at the screen.

"Hchouma" online

Scholars have noted that online, anonymity-fuelled disinhibition arises from participants having the feeling they can safely articulate views that may violate norms without risking sanctions, repercussions or disapproval: "both because one is free of the expectations and constraints placed on us by those who know us, and because the costs and risks of social sanctions for what we say or do are greatly reduced" (Bargh et al., 2002, p. 34).

Although anonymity of course also has its downsides, disinhibition fostered through anonymity can certainly be a positive feature for digital communities: in “discussion threads, anonymity may provide a cover for more intimate and open conversations... In addition, anonymity may encourage experimentation with new ideas” (Bernstein, 2011, p. 6). From the safety of their own or their friends’ bedrooms where parents are not allowed to enter, girls note they turn to discussion forums where they find it easier to discuss “hchouma” topics.

Hchouma is a label applied to virtually everything considered transgressive, taboo, unconventional, provocative, or progressive by the cultural order in Morocco. Slightly more charged than the concept of ‘shame,’ hchouma is the master socio-cultural code into which the Moroccan individual, and women in particular have been and still are socialized.

– Loubna Skalli (2006, p. 96)

The hchouma mechanism is based on social obligations, Islamic rules of conduct and familial norms, and governs reputation, “fear of losing face in front of others” (Sadiqi, 2003, p. 67). During the interviews, it became apparent to me that online discussion forums are considered a good space to speak about gendered taboo issues that might transgress the limits of dominant community standards. Bibi (16-year-old) reports that she turned to *Marokko.nl* to discuss issues of intercourse and sexuality in the context of marriage, stating she would rather turn to the online community instead of bringing it up with her parents; “*you don’t dare to go to your parents, because you find it really embarrassing*”:

Yes, for example about the (silence) sex or something and the marriage and than they say, ‘Yes’ because with the Muslim faith when you have the first day you are not to oppose your husband and just do ‘it’. And [about] these things I’m definitely not going to my parents ‘Mom, dad, listen, is that the case’. Yes it is hchouma you know, I am shy to tell my parents about these things.

Participating in online forums, girls report to experience a greater sense of freedom to discuss the sometimes-stringent social-cultural codes of socialization of their parents and wider community. Moroccan-Dutch girls turn to message boards to engage with topics such as health, meeting new friends, intimacy, romantic relationships and sexuality (Leurs, Hirzalla & Van Zoonen, 2012).

Daring to break taboos: “I just want to know what ‘the real deal’ is”

You perhaps dare to say more on the Internet. You know, you do more; usually you are anonymous, if you want to at least, so you recount your experiences. At home you can usually not talk about these things, otherwise you would have done that long ago. Than you can tell it online. And you see what people on the Internet have to say about it. And that might help you.

– Amina, 13 years old

Amina, a 13-year-old girl, summarized the relevance of online message boards in the lives of Moroccan-Dutch girls. On Internet forums, some Moroccan-Dutch girls share to feel less restricted and because of that they dare to bring up personal experiences they struggle with and cannot share elsewhere. Having a space to discuss issues that are difficult to broach in conversations with parents is of the utmost importance. This enables Moroccan-Dutch girls to express themselves and discuss behavior that is not possible in their usual social-cultural spheres. The barriers such as sanctions and repercussions to disclosing hchouma aspects of the self are not as strongly felt on message boards. However, significant parts of Moroccan-Dutch girls' socio-cultural spheres are present in the form of fellow anonymous discussion participants.

Sixteen-year-old Nevra holds a similar opinion: *"it is nice, because at home you cannot talk about them, and now you can talk about them [online]. Also, you can learn more about the topic"*. New ideas and insights are shared that may benefit the personal development of the young persons involved. 15-year-old Sousou describes, *"you have a special rubric about sexuality and those kinds of things (laughs)... Yes these things you normally don't talk about them"*. Among the informants, message boards are used to discuss and share views on intimacy and sexuality. Sousou describes further: *"especially when something has happened or so, yes you can talk about it, just as an anonymous person, you get all kinds of reactions and so on, that is fun (laughs)"*. Issues that are difficult to discuss in face-to-face contexts are considered in the digital realm. This holds true for conversations with parents but also with peers. On the message boards, as 13-year-old Inas thinks, girls are less inhibited in their conversations in comparison with discussing their experiences with friends outside of the Internet:

If you have a problem, and you would like to talk about it with someone. I think it is easier than like [talking] with my girlfriend, because people usually give a different name... [online] they talk about these things more casually.

For instance Loubna (14-year-old) spoke about how one forum participant asked the community for help, asking support as to whether she dealt with domestic violence in the right way.

For real a girl revealed much about herself on Marokko.nl and said something like 'Yes, my husband beats me', and so on. And 'I am divorced', and everyone said 'Yes that is good', and so on. Then one girl said something like 'No, if your man was good and handsome, than you had to just stay with him', I don't know... Yes I did not really like that. Yes I really found that (silence). That was really stupid.

There is another dimension to the popularity of discussing hchouma aspects of the self on Internet forums such as *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl*, as research has shown that Moroccan-Dutch teenagers do not always feel addressed by sex education initiatives in the Netherlands. Pauline Borghuis, Christa de Graaf and Joke Hermes argue that compulsory sex education in Dutch secondary school settings is not always considered appropriate by (religious) minorities and migrant groups. Furthermore they note that digital sex education initiatives aimed at Moroccan-Dutch youths miss their target as they “feel their voice is not heard; they cannot identify with the [existing] sites but rather feel repulsion and rejection” (2010, p. 235). Internet forums are taken up as an alternative space for circulating knowledge and education pertaining to sexuality. Bringing in sexuality in the public digital space of discussion forums, they demonstrate to successfully breach the dichotomy of masculine public and feminine private space that is noted to exist in Morocco (Mernissi, 1987; Graiouid, 2005; Sadiqi, 2003).

Ilham, 13-year-old, states, “*it is fun to know for me what people have to say when I have put something online*”. But, learning from others is also of great importance, especially also to receive peer-group verification from other girls which is central during adolescence. Ilham explains “*I just want to know what ‘the real deal’ is so to say, but for instance when I have put something on Marokko.nl I want to know what people think of it*”. Fellow discussion board participants offer advice, support, and information, all from the relative safety of their computer screens. They assist a number of our informants to decide upon action. “*If you want to get something of your chest, yes if you want to know something, than you just open [a topic]... and everyone reacts and they can give you advice*” (Loubna, 14-year-old).

An imagined comfort zone atmosphere established by anonymity and moderation contribute to the experience. In the words of 14-year old Senna especially “*Chaima.nl is for girly girls, you won’t find any boys there, if you look at the names there, all you see is girl, girl, girl!*”. Ilana, a 16-year-old girl confirms, “*it is a good thing, to have all those girls together and they can really talk about girlish things*”. Khalid Mahdauoi, co-founder of *Marokko.nl* states that the majority of visitors are female: 60% (Van der Zee, 2006, p. 53). Some overestimate the absence of boys, “*in my opinion there are almost no guys on Marokko.nl. I think it is more something for girls*” (Meryam, 15-year-old). The bottom-line however is that girls feel comfortable enough to discuss very serious issues on the site. As such Internet discussion forums as a form of anonymous Internet communication may also lead towards forming personal relationship and greater intimacy among contributors. As Amina notes:

Yes, you also make new friends there. Even though you don't know them. Most of the time they are girls. You don't trust them immediately or something like that. But you get a bit closer by also sending private messages to each other. 'Hey, how are you?' 'In which school are you?' 'What age are you?' and so on. I have met girls who were similar to me like that.

In-between gender positioning and agency

Everyday sexual practices and experiences are discussed from the bottom-up. Online message boards make it possible for young Moroccan-Dutch girls to discuss and ask questions not just about sexuality in general, but also in connection to Islam. The forums provide participants with a supportive vehicle to re-negotiate their relationship with their sexualities and their Islam, as Meryam (a 15-year-old girl) attests:

There are also many stories about Moroccan girls who behaved badly and who have improved their behavior, who have returned to their faith, Islam, and they have worked very hard to achieve that.

Lenie Brouwer argues that message boards are especially popular among Moroccan-Dutch girls to voice the struggles they experience in their efforts “to negotiate strict Muslim demands placed on them with liberal youth culture” (2006, np). Girls may find in message boards a space with particular socio-cultural dynamics that allow for acquiring new positions vis-à-vis certain notions (of gender relations) upheld by their parents or fellow community members and in dialogue with both Western and mainstream Dutch conceptions of sexuality and relationships. Following Homi Bhabha who argues that in taking an in-between position, subaltern subjects can find agency to mark out “an interstitial future” (1994, p. 313). Online discussion forums assist Moroccan-Dutch youths in staking out a position in-between claims of rooted familial, religious and community norms and routed youth cultural expectations. The next section considers this process further by expanding on how informants perform their religiosity.

3.5 “Halal” or “haram”: Performative Islam

Figure 3.4 is included to introduce the third theme: negotiating Islamic codes of conduct. A fashionable headscarf-wearing girl is depicted wearing pink lipstick and carrying a handbag. The girl confidently states she feels attractive and smart but criticizes Muslim girls who do not cover their hair. Also she feels smoking cigarettes cannot be reconciled with the principles of the Muslim faith, gossiping about Asma as a “Tfoe kehba” (Moroccan-Arabic for dirty whore) because she saw her smoking with Mo. A text balloon presents us with her thoughts:

Long live public transport. I'm still in MBO, but that does not matter. I feel hot and I am smart. I have EVERYTHING. I hate those showing heads of curls because they do not wear a headscarf, Tfoe what kind of muslims are they? I never gossip, oh by the way do you know Asma? Yes her from west, she SMOKES, yes I swear it, I saw her yesterday with mo!!!!!!! Tfoe Kehba..



Figure 3.4 A representation of contested religiosity (Mocro_s, 2007a).

During our interview, 15-year-old Meryam spoke about *Handboek voor moslimvrouwen* (in English: *Handbook for muslim women*), a book that she had in her handbag. She shared that she liked to keep a book like that with her at all times. “I read those, because it gives you a lot of rules and how you can do your best to become a good Muslim woman”. These books give her something to hold on to, offering guidance in making everyday decisions. For similar purposes, she turns to *Marokko.nl* to read about personal stories that people have shared. The book, she notes, was bought “at the mosque and it gives you rules to abide by”. While “on *Marokko.nl*, I type ‘Islam’ and many different pages appear. And I look at those. Some rules are not in the book, but they might be available on the Internet”. Meryam adds how she “noses around” in forums on Islam. The tension between believers’ being provided with meanings by authorities and their texts and believers taking the opportunity to articulate personal religious interpretations themselves lies at the heart of this section on performative Islam.

Internet forums frequented by religious people have been recognized to manifest the tension over religious authority. Online discussion forums such as *Marokko.nl* have been likened to “digital minarets” (Brouwer, 2002). The minaret is a sign which conveys its meaning as a distinct element of Islamic architecture. It has become a universal symbol of Islam and Muslim community but it also provides a vantage point for making the call to prayer (Bloom, 1989). Interestingly, *Marokko.nl* has sought to incorporate these features by including a visual representation of a minaret in its logo (see figure 3.5). By using a logo with a minaret, the site signals it also provides vantage points for Islamic prayer as well as giving a visual cue for congregating Muslims. Before assessing the dynamics informants’ attribute to the discussion board I contextualize the intersections between religion and digital technologies.



Figure 3.5 Logo *Marokko.nl* (Marokko.nl, 2011b).

Digital reconfiguration of religious authority

Collaborative, bottom-up, peer-to-peer networking through social media “has led to a complex reconfiguration of religious authority models” (Bunt, 2009, p. 17). The functioning of new media in the Muslim world in the Middle East fragments (religious) authority by opening up “a marketplace of ideas, identities, and discourses” (Eickelman and Anderson, 2003, p. xii). And this process goes beyond the metaphor “[i]t is a reality that decisively shifts forms and resources of such discourse and its practices in favour of middle-class actors” and “feeds into new senses of a public space that is discursive, performative and participative, and not confined to formal institutions recognized by state authorities” (2003, p. 2). Charles Hirschkind observed an Islamic counterpublic in Egypt is partly fed by cassette-sermons as an alternative to the televisual and press media promoted by the state (2006). The recent revolutions across the Middle East and North Africa have also partly been attributed to the distinct role of digital technologies to organize protests and air alternative voices.²³ Nadirsyah Hosen identifies a

²³ See the special issue on “The Arab Spring & the Role of ICTs” edited by Ilhem Allagui and Johanne Kuebler in the *International Journal of Communication* (2011).

democratisation of religious authority in Indonesia as middle-class Muslims actively “shop around” in locating Islamic guidance and legal opinions (“fatwas”) they find suitable to their lifestyle by browsing different Islamic websites (2008).

Such practices can lead to a subversion of the top-down authority over interpreting Islamic principles and practices. A diversity of performative Islamic practices are made visible to other users, opening up visibility on the multiplicity of ways Muslims connect with Islam beyond the parameters of traditional networks and communities. Carmen Becker acknowledges, “a broader decentralizing tendency within Islam” in Europe, as she notes Salafi Muslim activists in German and Dutch online spaces engaged in “meaning-making activities that tell people how to behave and how to ‘be in the world’” (2009, p. 79). Cindy van Summeren investigated multidimensional interpretations of Muslimhood on *Maroc.nl* and found that Moroccan-Dutch youths turn to message boards as a guide in the maze of Dutch norms and values with Islam as a frame of reference (2007, p. 291). Furthermore, the anonymous character of message boards has been recognized as a valuable “opportunity to submit sensitive questions about Islam to a cyber-Imam or to peers” among Moroccan-Dutch youths (D’Haenens, 2003, p. 411).

Voicing religious in-betweenness

Fifteen-year-old Sousou was cited in the opening of this chapter when she described she turned to *Marokko.nl* to share in celebrating the end of the fasting month of Ramadan. She adds:

Marokko.nl is easy, you can easily find out about things, when you want to know something. On the site, there are many Moroccans, most of them are Muslim, just almost everyone I believe. Thus you can really read their stories and you can really express your sincere interests.

The informants assess the value of being able to discuss one’s interpretation of Islam as the missing middle in various ways. Some informants note that the Internet has enabled them to learn about topics that used to be left untouched. Amina, a 13-year-old interviewee describes: “*religion, for that I often go to Chaima.nl and I am also active on the topics about Islam. Where people [discuss] how they see Islam, and how I see Islam so to say. This way you also make the differences smaller.*” She pointed towards the positive potential of social media, as people can draw upon personal religious interpretations of other individuals they encounter online. These processes of knowledge production and consumption have been described as a form of “cut-and-paste Islam”, highlighting its eclectic character where people shop around for their religious preferences (Buitelaar, 2008, pp. 248-249).

Bringing different views on Islam together in one space, a collaborative habitus is developed at the crossroads of top-down and bottom-up performances of Islam.

Being able to articulate and narrate a personal relationship with Islam is highly relevant as Buitelaar and Stock learned in their interviews with Moroccan-Dutch Muslims they feel externally pressured in Dutch society to take sides: “[t]he spatial metaphor ‘to take sides’ occurs frequently in the narrations of our interlocutors”, they feel “caught between a Muslim and a non-Muslim ‘camp’ that both claim definitional power” over them (2010, p. 170). Public TV is not considered as a solution in bridging those two camps, as apart from the negative framing of Moroccan-Dutch boys as rascals and thieves informants noted the lack of recognition of Islam as a viable institution in the Dutch mainstream press “yes, *public broadcasting is there for everyone, but they don’t focus on for instance the Islam*” in a positive way (Ilham, a 13-year-old girl).



Figure 3.6 Cartoon *Overvaren* (In English: Sailing across) (Rafje.nl, 2011).

Forums offer an alternative. In my interview with Rafje, an artist whose provocative statements are published on *Marokko.nl* regularly, he shared he aims to capture the tendencies and ambivalences in Dutch multicultural society. Noteworthy is his reworking of a traditional Dutch children’s song and play in which toll has to be paid to a skipper who will take people across one of the Dutch rivers (figure 3.7). Rafje clearly renders visible the hermetic division – instigated by “skipper” Wilders and his followers – between good (read secular) people and bad (read Muslim) people in this statement: “Wilders, will you let me sail across? Yes or no? If so, should I hate Islam? Yes or

No?”²⁴ Away from the Dutch mainstream, message boards are used to acquire a self narrated religious position.

As another invocation of a (counter) public sphere our informants report to engage in similar religious meaning-making activities. Sixteen-year-old Ilana states that in the rubric *“Islam and me’ many things about Islam are discussed also the rules of Islam”*. Sahar, a 14-year-old girl, also participates in this rubric and adds people exchange ideas, *“about things you should and you shouldn’t do”*. Negotiating, sometimes strict, Muslim demands with Dutch liberal youth culture, informants told me that many people discuss whether certain things are “halal”, allowed in Islam or “haram”, forbidden in Islam.²⁵ Ferrab, a 14-year-old boy, provides an example: *“whether you may have a boyfriend and so on”*. Not everyone appreciates bottom-up interpretations of what is haram or halal. Some see disadvantages in online performances of religion, as Nevra critiques that *“you now see that people who are engaged with their faith, they actually make a personal version of their faith. They do things that they aren’t allowed to do, because many people do it [and share their actions online], they say, they can also do it”* (girl, 16-year-old). Inas, a 13-year-old informant also voiced her scepticism about online discussions on Islam: *“I do not try to find too many things about it”*. She chooses to uphold her own conceptions about Islam *“those are my own opinion. And someone else should not change my opinion”*. Nonetheless, 15-year-old Inzaf notes that converts might find in *Marokko.nl* a space of support: *“those who have converted to Islam ask about what they should do, where they have to go. The people on the site help them and say what they can do best”*.

In their contribution to forums, together with references to Islam, for instance Bibi chose a picture of the Amazigh flag, while Nevra includes a photo of her hands covered in henna and Meryam includes Taourirt, her nickname, and also the town where her parents were born in Morocco. Performing one’s Islam through discussions, nicknames and avatars is a personal, micro-political example illustrating how definitional power may be appropriated beyond the camps of mainstream Dutch society and religious authorities. Prior research shows Moroccan-Dutch youths use signatures and nicknames to perform religious affiliations on *Maroc.nl*, one of *Marokko.nl* predecessors. To signal their belonging and gain further recognition among other participants, *Maroc.nl* posters

²⁴ “Skipper, will you let me sail across, yes or no? Do I have to pay toll, yes or no?”, as originally in Dutch: “Schipper, mag ik overvaren, ja of nee? Moet ik dan ook tol betalen, ja of nee?” The children’s play centers around one child, the skipper, who sets the terms for other children in the play to cross a path she or he chooses.

²⁵ “Halal” and “haram” form the twofold distinction between what is seen as lawful and what is seen as forbidden. Eating ritually slaughtered beef is for example halal while consuming alcohol is considered haram. There are three intermediate categories between the two poles that complete a five-part scale: “mandub” for what is recommended, “mubah” for a neutral permissible and “makruh” for what is objectionable and repugnant (Leaman & Ali, 2008, pp. 46-47, 72).

used nicknames such as “Dutch Muslim” and “Muslima25” and signatures “Servant of Allah” or “May Allah give a heart to the heartless and then fill the hearts of the people with peace, brotherly love and tolerance” (Van Summeren, 2007, p. 285). Religious positions are acquired on Internet forums, and Buitelaar states that defining oneself by expressing “I am Muslim” for many Moroccan-Dutch youths has become a more positive way to articulate one’s individual identity as opposed to an ascribed ethnic identity such as “you are allochthonous” or “you are a cunt-Moroccan”. Next to hiphop, urban and the like, Muslim youths can chose to be ‘Muslim’ online (2008, pp. 244-247). As I analyze more in-depth in chapter four, interviewees combine religious, youth cultural and ethnic affiliations in their instant messaging nicknames and avatars.

3.6 Conclusions

In this chapter I focused on how young Moroccan-Dutch become space invaders in their engagement with messageboards. *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl* are the national networks of Moroccan-Dutch youths. Discussing how informants perceive to (re) define and articulate alternative gender, ethnic and religious positions I gave three examples of how Internet forums can function as counter-publics. Although performed in commercial, socio-cultural structures of power, informants feel they can publish narratives of self in their digital space, instead of being identified as a member of an imposed group. In this way, Moroccan-Dutch youths’ agency becomes apparent. This form of agency must be seen in the light of the politics of difference, recognizing how individuals are located in multiple positions of subordination. Doubly marginalized Moroccan-Dutch girls may work against both simplistic stereotypes of Muslim girls as being passive and oppressed that persist in Dutch society while they also negotiate their individual gendered positionality in the context of the sometimes strict demands of Islam, their parents and their families.

The struggle over allocated and acquired subject-positions can be further explained by considering Michel Foucault’s writings on power and knowledge. As two sides of the same coin, he distinguished two sides to the organization of power. On the one hand, Foucault writes, people are inscribed and subjected to power, as their range of action is restricted for instance. On the other hand, individuals are the subjects of power as they have the ability and capacity to make changes (1982). Knowledge acts as a regulatory mechanism, those in power exercise their command by defining, labeling and categorizing people. In a similar vein, Moroccan-Dutch youths are allocated subordinate

positions. Moroccan-Dutch contributors use Internet forums to exercise their speaking power and narrate their self-acquired positions. In voicing themselves they are able to strategically foreground alternative collective ethnic, gender and religious identities and voice the essentials of their belongings in their own terms (Spivak, 1990, p. 11). The grasped opportunity for re-signification is a significant form of agency. By voicing themselves, they take the opportunity to speak for themselves, instead of being positioned by Dutch societal, Moroccan-Dutch community and familial social norms as well as religious authorities.

Henry Mainsah pleads in his study on the use of digital technology among ethnic minority youths in Norway that “valuable insights might be gained from paying attention to ‘the subjective aspects of struggle’” as it may provide new insights on voice and identity online (2009, p. 171). Moroccan-Dutch youths will not be able to overthrow the unequal power structures in Dutch society by voicing themselves on message boards, however voice may give hope for future change. They might feel empowered when they feel safe enough to voice their in-between identities, as they expand the discursive space beyond allocated gender, ethnic and religious positions circulating in the settings they move through. Although imagined as a hush harbor where informants feel safe, my discussion of journalists’ ghettoization and politicians’ regulation of counter narratives published on *Marokko.nl* reminds us of the disciplinary and control mechanisms that remain at play. If these acts of repression would get the upper hand, Moroccan-Dutch youths might be left with a feeling of nowhere. This is not the case, because informants felt they have the final say over their space.

Message boards, as a digital space of contestation, offer a glimpse on the multilayered experiences of what it means to be Moroccan-Dutch in the Netherlands. Although Moroccan-Dutch youths become the majority, 13-year-old Ilham invites ethnic majority Dutch youths to visit their space: “*it is dot NL, not something like dot Morocco, so it is for everyone, everyone is mar7hbabikoum (in Dutch: welcome) everyone can come*” (Ilham, 13-year-old). Most importantly, as 15-year-old Sousou notes, message boards like *Marokko.nl* are spaces where one can feel heard and feel appreciated by like-minded people: “*you can pleasantly talk with fellow Moroccans about all kinds of stuff, where you can read beautiful stories. There, you can just be with other Moroccans*”. Moving on from the public space of Internet forums, I turn my attention to the private network of *MSN Messenger* in the next chapter.

4 Networked personal territory: Instant messaging¹

The time is 8:30 pm on a Saturday evening late January 2010, when classmates Khadija and Nadia, two 18-year-old Moroccan-Dutch girls, have a private conversation over *MSN Messenger*.² The conversation below follows an exchange about a school assignment that the two classmates have to prepare. The girls agree to sit down after the weekend to finish their presentations about fashion and clothing. The girls also talk about a holiday trip that Khadija's parents made to Dubai. Her parents' holiday was "chill", or very cool. They took nice pictures and bought a *Playstation portable* as a holiday gift for her brother. She herself received Dubai souvenir t-shirts, Mexx blouses and "expensive fabric for a Moroccan dress". Nadia types "besaba" to congratulate her in Latinized-Arabic for these gifts.

-- Ms. Laouikili ♥ , Some people!!!- Li Tmenit Lqito Fik says: ah well
im going for a nice swimm tomrw
really feel like going
* *Porque es el destino. says:* Haha thats good!! Good dont drown he hahaah
-- Ms. Laouikili ♥ , Some people!!!- Li Tmenit Lqito Fik says: no no I
have nough love handles
* *Porque es el destino. says:* hahahahahah Silly
-- Ms. Laouikili ♥ , Some people!!!- Li Tmenit Lqito Fik says: haha yea
true
* *Porque es el destino. says:* Swia swia [shwia shwia: calm down, calmdown]
tina was doing a diet of some sort [tina: you]
-- Ms. Laouikili ♥ , Some people!!!- Li Tmenit Lqito Fik says: hahaha
yeah, ze3ma [ze3ma: expressing doubt]
I have started to eat les and so
but it is quite difficult
the temptation is too strong
especially here at home
* *Porque es el destino. says:* hahahha
I believe so for sure
with that little chef
eee we havvve
soon
-- Ms. Laouikili ♥ , Some people!!!- Li Tmenit Lqito Fik says: haha

¹ Prior versions of this chapter have been published as: Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (2012). Dutch Moroccan girls performing their selves instant messaging spaces. In K. Ross (Ed.), *The handbook of gender, sex and media*, (pp. 436-454). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell; Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (2011). Gendering the construction of instant messaging. In M. Ames & S. Burcon (Eds.), *Women and language: Essays on gendered communication across media*, (pp. 199-214). Jefferson, NC: McFarland; and Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (2011). Communicative spaces of their own. Migrant girls performing selves using Instant Messaging software. *Feminist Review*, 99, 55-78.

² MSN has recently been renamed *Windows Live Messenger*, but all the interviewees keep referring to it as *MSN*.

* *Porque es el destino. says:* eat that dish of your mama
 -- Ms. Laouikili ♥ , *Some people!!!- Li Tmenit Lqito Fik says:* yes i just told herr tha
 * *Porque es el destino. says:* tina have to learn me
 -- Ms. Laouikili ♥ , *Some people!!!- Li Tmenit Lqito Fik says:* we hadnt had tha in a long time
 -- Ms. Laouikili ♥ , *Some people!!!- Li Tmenit Lqito Fik says:* yes i have to lear it myself
 tina should come make t yema with me [yemma: mother]
 * *Porque es el destino. says:* Yes inshallah [inshallah: God willing]
 -- Ms. Laouikili ♥ , *Some people!!!- Li Tmenit Lqito Fik says:* inshallah

In the transcript, Khadija talks about how she is planning to go swimming the next day. Nadia jokingly urges her to be careful not to drown. Half jokingly, Khadija replies her “*love handles*” will keep her afloat. Nadia turns to Arabic, stating “*schwia schwia*” or in English: “calm down, calm down” to downplay this last remark. She then asks about the diet Khadija was following. Khadija explains that the cooking skills of her mother made it difficult to pursue the diet. Nadia in return types she wants to learn from Khadija and her mother how to prepare good food. Nadia and Khadija end their conversation in Arabic wishing “*Inshallah*” or God willing,³ they will soon learn to cook together. We observe how Khadija states she “*ze3ma*”, meaning “with doubts”, “*started to eat les and so*”.⁴ In typing the word “*ze3ma*”, the number three is used to write the Arabic letter ع. This is the 18th letter of the Arabic Alphabet, which has no equivalent in the Latin alphabet. When having to use a Latin alphabet keyboard to type Arabic, this letter can be represented with a 3. Ending their conversation, Khadija and Nadia expressed “*inshallah*”, God willing, they would get together to learn to cook from Khadija’s mother (“*yema*”). In all these cases, the Latin alphabet is used to write a specific dialect, Moroccan-Arabic or Darija.⁵

The MSN conversation excerpt sheds light on the private side of one-on-one conversations and the more public side of broadcasting one’s affiliation to one’s list of contacts. Socio-technologically, the medium configures the ways users can narrate their identities in these two ways. In this chapter, I explore these two dimensions further to better understand the popularity of instant messaging among informants. First,

³ Insha’ Allah, inchAllah or In šā’ Allāh is an Arabic phrase (إن شاء الله) that can be translated into English here as “If it is God’s will”, or “God willing”.

⁴ According to Boumans, the word “*ze3ma*” is a discourse marker used among Europeans of North-African descent to express uncertainty: “perhaps it is so” (Boumans, 2003, p. 1).

⁵ Darija covers varieties of Arabic spoken in the Maghreb.

considering that Nadia and Khadija use instant messenger software to discuss personal struggles over dieting, the excerpt illustrates that instant messaging (IM) is considered a safe communicative space they can use to discuss intimate matters among themselves. On the private side, or “backstage” of instant messaging (Jacobs, 2003, p. 13), the informants seem to be primarily engaged in under-the-radar, iterative identity forming processes. Therefore I assess how IM is valued as a relatively safe personal networked territory, where youths can receive a validation of their feelings and cement their relationships. Second, on the more public side that consists of one’s IM contacts, words from various languages (Dutch, English, Spanish, and Moroccan-Arabic) were used in the display names. Khadija used the display name “*Li Tmenit Lqito Fik*” (Moroccan-Arabic for “what I hoped I found in you”), illustrating how various affiliations are circulated in IM expressive culture. Khadija expresses multiple belongings with this display name which is broadcasted to everyone in her friend list. Therefore, I assess how interviewees – in the more public “onstage” of IM that goes beyond the one-on-one conversation (Jacobs, 2003, p. 13) – use display names that represent multi-axial identification.

In this chapter I argue that IM is actively made into a communicative space of their own among Moroccan-Dutch youths, where they can negotiate personal and social identities at the crossroads of national, ethnic, racial, age and linguistic specificities. Instant messaging can be understood as a private territory where individuals in specific material-embodied spatial contexts perform everyday, but very meaningful, discursive interaction. Instant messaging remains relatively understudied and under-theorized because data gathering within this private space is not straightforward; users control who they let into their network and exchanges are not stored in a publicly accessible environment online but on the computers of *MSN* users. In this chapter I make an empirical contribution to the performance of self in the digital space of IM while also aiming for theoretical refinement of the understandings of the medium-specificity of instant messaging and distinct processes of adoption by its users. Drawing from *Wired Up* large-scale survey findings, in-depth interviews, and IM transcripts sent in by six informants – Fatiha, Naoul, Midia, Kamal, Khadija, and Inzaf – I set out how gender, diaspora, youth culture and technologies intersect and influence each other in this communicative space (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011c, p. 56).

This chapter is structured as follows. In section 4.1, I ground Moroccan-Dutch youths’ IM use in *Wired Up* survey findings and explain the key characteristics of *MSN*

in the words of my interviewees. In section 4.2, I bring together insights from computer mediated communication (CMC) and digital literacies scholarship by turning to instant messaging as a discursive practice with an emphasis on postcolonial intersectionality. Earlier work on IM is mostly centred on white American teenagers; I diversify this scholarship by focussing on adolescent, Moroccan-Dutch youths' intersectional performance of identity. In section 4.3, I discuss the specificities of the methodological approach I take in this chapter. Subsequently, I explore two dynamics of *MSN* expressive culture that arose during my analysis of the corpus of interviews and chat transcripts. The focus in section 4.4 is on the backstage of IM, where I highlight how our interviewees negotiate ownership over their IM territory and engage in intimate and personal identity formation. In section 4.5 the focus is on the *onstage* of IM through which collective local, transnational diaspora and global youth cultural links can be expressed semi-publicly. As forms of social identification among their peers I analyze whether Moroccan-Dutch youths act against ethnic absolutist labels by authoring multiple selves and expressing diverse social belongings.

4.1 Moroccan-Dutch youths and *MSN Messenger*

When I get home, I go online. I press 'busy' and I go downstairs. I grab something to eat and I go and pray a bit. Then I go back upstairs and have a look at who has talked to me. I have a look what's going on and talk about homework. And about, 'have you heard about this'; you know gossip, just to keep up to date about everything that is going on.

– Bibi, 16 years old

In this section I introduce main patterns of usage my informants noted. From the responses by Moroccan-Dutch young people who participated in the Wired Up survey it shows that IM is very popular. The great majority of girls (97%) and boys (93%) use the technology at least once per week, while 53% of participating girls and 43% of boys reported that they to log in more than once daily.⁶ Respondents also expressed their attachment to IM, almost three quarters of the participating Moroccan-Dutch girls and half of the boys reported that they would miss IM very much if they were not able to use it anymore. More specifically, 95% of the girls versus 82.5% of boys would miss it at least somewhat if they were not able to use it anymore (see table 4.1).

⁶ This finding shows that Moroccan-Dutch youths resemble the larger population of young people in the overdeveloped world. Lenhart et al. report that three quarters of American adolescent teenagers use IM frequently, and they found that girls are especially attracted to the communicative space (2002, p. 38). In the Netherlands *MSN* is considered to be the most important communication technology for keeping in touch with others among young people. In the Netherlands, 86 percent of all boys and 91 percent of all girls use *MSN* at least weekly and almost one in every two young people use it on a daily basis. Girls use *MSN* more than boys and use it for longer (Duimel & de Haan, 2007, p. 88).

Attachment to IM usage	<i>Completely not</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Very much</i>	<i>Total</i>
Girls	5.0 %	32.2 %	62.8 %	100 %
Boys	17.5 %	32.5 %	50.0 %	100 %

Table 4.1 Would Moroccan-Dutch youths miss IM software if they could not use it anymore? (n= 344).

The interviewees corroborate these survey findings, as 18-year-old Safae confessed, *“I think you can call it an addiction, because automatically I go on MSN, every day”*, while 13-year-old Amina laughingly shared *“MSN? I use it every day. I have been online this morning, and yes tonight again. I just have to check my MSN”*.

I learned for instance from Fatiha that she uses IM *“every day at least 2 hours”*. Major motivations behind IM use include connecting with her friends, as she states: *“all of my friends use MSN”* and *“it is a free way of talking to your friends and family”*. Naoul agrees and adds, *“it is convenient in the case you need to reach somebody”*. Thirteen-year-old Soesie notes *“when you have nothing to do, you go and enjoy yourself on MSN”*. Night after night, IM is bustling with activity. Fourteen-year-old Inas states that *“especially in the evening, when everyone has finished doing homework, I also go online”*. Now that young people increasingly own mobile phones with Internet access, they are also on MSN more often. Fourteen-year-old Senna notes that she is nearly always online: *“I’m on MSN almost every day. The whole day. When I have my mobile with me, then I’m online”*.

IM is distinct from social networking sites such as *Hyves* and *Facebook*, which I discuss in chapter five, as it is considered as a more intimate space, says 15-year-old Hajar: *“On Hyves it’s less personal, because everyone can see it, on MSN it’s more personal and you can share things”*. Meryam, also 15 years old, adds: *“MSN, I find it totally different from Facebook. Facebook is more to horse around while MSN is to have a chat. More serious”*. The medium-specificity youths recognize in IM as a space that is not publicly accessible – allowing for greater personal autonomy in circulating personal information among a selected group of friends – is however not always acknowledged by adults, says 16-year-old Naoul:

My mother thinks that MSN is like chat. That you are chatting with the weirdest people from across the globe. But that’s my mother, I can explain it to her one thousand times, and she still does not understand it. She will see a picture of me on the screen and she will say ‘do not put any pictures on the internet’, and I will say ‘no this is not the Internet, this is a picture on MSN, only the people in my personal list can see it’, she will say ‘no this is the Internet’. I can explain, but she won’t take note of it. So I keep it to myself.

Although not fully publicly accessible, informants nevertheless note staggering numbers of people in their personal contact lists. Fourteen-year-old Ziham has 789 contacts, 15-year-old Carlos brags he has “*something like 900*” contacts, and 13-year-old Soesie lists 328. As ready knowledge that informants list from off the top of their heads, these numbers seem to mean much. For some, large numbers of friends are seen as a status symbol. Thirteen-year-old Rachid however comments:

I have something like 50 friends in my MSN list. I am unlike some people who have I don't know 500 people in their list. They just add people that they don't even know, just to get a long list. But I don't think it's cool to have so many people in my list.

A friend list is a status symbol that allows young users to show off how many people they know. However, Wired Up survey findings show that young people with a migration background have more people in their IM contact lists than ethnic majority Dutch youths. Moroccan-Dutch young people list an average of 231 contacts and ethnic majority Dutch youngsters list 205 contacts (Wired Up, 2012). The higher average can partly be explained when considering that migrant teenagers may maintain contact with family and friends in the diaspora using IM. For instance 16-year-old Faruk describes he has family members living in the Netherlands, France, Spain and Morocco in his list. However, as I argued in section 1.4, like most other informants I spoke with, Faruk does not really communicate with contacts in the diaspora himself but he mainly brokers access to contacts from abroad for his parents:

We just use MSN. My parents do not really know how it works. Yes I log in for them; I will click on my aunts' name when she is online. I set it up for them. I will put my parents in front of the webcam and have them communicate. Actually I enjoy it because my mother eyes the webcam with a real look of amazement on her face. It's nice because in the past I can say they would have never been able to do that. They are astounded.

Sixteen-year-old Naoul for instance also describes, “*the children have to start up everything, and my dad will sit in front of the camera and he will talk. He does not know how to do it*”. Informants note that parents cannot manage using IM on their own. These statements by Faruk and Naoul attest to a generational divide in ICTs knowledge and skills that informants note to exist in some Moroccan-Dutch families. Moreover it should be noted that some parents – especially Moroccan mothers of Berber descent who migrated to the Netherlands – were illiterate or had received little formal education at the moment of immigration (Pels & De Haan, 2007, p. 72; Brouwer, 1991, p. 76). Having grown up with technologies such as *MSN* that their parents are unfamiliar with, Moroccan-Dutch youths may act as technology brokers as they assist their parents to cross a digital divide

by brokering diasporic IM connections. Complicating intergenerational relations, the roles of parent as educator and child as learner get reversed. This practice resembles other instances of invisible work multilingual migrant teenagers may have to engage in such as “culture” and “language brokering” when having to translate for their parents across private (e.g. filling in financial documents) and public domains (e.g. medical consults) (Orellana, 2009, pp. 19-21; De Haan, 2012). As the possibility to have conversations with contacts in the diaspora does not fully explain its value in the lives of Moroccan-Dutch youths, the question arises as to which other identity performance roles are invested in the communicative space of IM. Below I discuss scholarship in the traditions of CMC (computer-mediated communication) and digital literacies to theorize instant messaging as a power-laden discursive practice that displays how identities are performed across axes of differentiation.

4.2 Understanding IM as a way of being in the world

Forms of computer-mediated-communication come and go. The online social networking site *Facebook* has, for instance, superseded weblogging sites from the early 2000s such as *LiveJournal* and *Xanga*. Instant messaging, on the other hand, has been around for almost two decades. Instant messaging, available online since the 1990s, remains an important communication tool in the lives of many adolescents. IM has been established as “fact of life, a way of being in the world” (Lewis and Fabos, 2005, p. 470). In the 1990s scholars recognized that instant messaging software is used as a supportive technology in the workplace. However, since the start young people have also used IM. They became space invaders as they appropriated the technology to further their own goals (Grinter & Palen, 2002). Magdalena Alberó-Andrés asserts that IM use is a regular evening activity among adolescents. She adds that IM has “replaced the long telephone conversations between friends that used to be so frequent in adolescence” (2004, p. 112). As danah boyd argues, the importance of IM can be grasped by comparing it to offline gathering places such as shopping malls and schoolyards. Mostly away from close adult supervision, such spaces are important to fend off boredom, “hang out” in groups and engage in various “friendship-driven” activities (2010, pp. 80-84). By logging on to IM, young people are able to connect with groups of friends who are “always-on” (Baron, 2008).

Being a fundamental part of everyday communication, IM has been studied from a variety of perspectives (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011a, 2011c, 2012). CMC scholars argue

that “computer mediated written language often has speech-like characteristics” (Hård af Segerstad & Hashemi, 2006, p. 56). In instant messaging, these speech-like characteristics are represented through a distinct writing style with its own “internet-speak” norms, consisting of abbreviations, apparent misspellings, ungrammatical and incorrect uses of typed language. Unlike the hypervisual dynamics of *Facebook* and *Myves* (see chapter five), IM is mainly about typed narratives. Journalists, teachers, policymakers and parents have expressed their concerns about these linguistic features of IM. Often dressed up in moral panic rhetoric, IM applications and the informal speech circulating there are seen as a challenge to written culture. The practice is suspected of corrupting formal writing skills among young people and causing harm to print culture institutions (Thurlow, 2006). Naomi Baron discusses how discussions of IM by educators and in the media conflate “language change” and “language decline” when arguing that IM is “destroying language” (2008, p. 161). Sali Tagliamonte and Derik Denis argue that IM is not leading to “linguistic ruin”; they rather, and more importantly, acknowledge that it has “its own unique style” (2008, p. 3). Appropriating the digital space, youthful users constitute alternative language norms that differ from offline state official norms and ways of speaking (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 45).⁷

From the perspective of performativity of self, the question is not whether IM is detrimental to language, but rather, what process of meaning making lies behind its unique style for youths, and young people with a migration background in particular? Therefore I am interested in the meanings that can be attributed to the dynamic, expressive culture circulating in IM; for instance, that of the display names that appear in friend lists of users. Additionally, IM expressive culture includes sending short messages, exchanged by users to express themselves, using a “full range of variants from the speech community – formal, informal, and highly vernacular” (Tagliamonte & Denis, 2008, p. 24).⁸

⁷ Pierre Bourdieu notes that official languages are linguistic laws that are bound up with state formation processes: “[o]bligatory on official occasions and in official places (schools, public administrations, political institutions, etc.), this state language becomes the theoretical norm against which all linguistic practices are objectively measured” (1991, p. 45).

⁸ As is also apparent from the excerpt of the IM conversation between Khadija and Nadia included at the beginning of this chapter, conversations have specific compositions that may be seen as a new genre of writing. The transmission style of messages includes the breaking up of single utterances into several lines of chat. Naomi Baron gives three reasons why users employ this particular style. Her first reason is technological. To maintain the attention of the interlocutor, utterances are often broken up into smaller pieces. By pressing enter while continuing to write an utterance, the conversation partner can begin reading the message, while the sender types the remainder. Her second reason refers to the readability of the message. Conversations are easier to follow when messages consist of short lines instead of larger chunks of text appearing on the screen. Finally, users reported to her that in their division of utterances over

Scholars in the new literacy studies (NLS) tradition have examined digital literacies that have evolved in IM. Eva Lam recognizes that “to perform different voices and versions of one’s self dependent on the audience has come to characterize the aesthetics and epistemology of IM” (2009, p. 380). The communicative space of IM sheds light on two “modes of adolescent connectivity”: private self-identity formation and the more public social identity formation (Boneva et al., 2006, p. 202). In the first mode of adolescent connectivity, teenagers engage in “person-to-person communication” for purposes such as comparing themselves “to similar others and to receive verification for his or her own feelings, thoughts and actions” (ibid.). In their personal conversations youths “‘decipher’ the self” and negotiate their being in the world. Besides private self-identification, IM is used for “one-to-many communication” which is a second mode of adolescent connectivity. “[C]rucial to their social identity formation”, this allows adolescents to express their “connectedness to a group that creates a feeling of group belonging” (Boneva et al., 2006, p. 202). Display names are examples of more public one-to-many forms of communication in IM. By naming themselves in distinct ways, users show affiliations, for instance with peer groups.

The distinction between the onstage and backstage underlines the distinct ways instant messaging is taken up. Building on Goffman’s dramaturgical understanding of the everyday theatre of the performance of self (1959), Gloria Jacobs describes the IM practices of Lisa, a white, American middle-class adolescent girl: “the backstage conversations [synchronous, dyadic IM exchanges] are where alliances are formed, problems are discussed and solved, and plans are made beyond the hearing of others ... the onstage places [display names] are where alliances are declared and social positions and presence are established” (2003, p. 13). The distinction between what is collectively made visible onstage by IM users such as display pictures and display names, and what is negotiated in the backstage in personal conversations corresponds with the two modes of adolescent connectivity of public and private identity formation. In the backstage, IM can be used to “rehearse different ways of being before trying them out offline”, as Deirdre Kelly, Shauna Pomerantz and Dawn Currie learned from their interviews with Canadian girls (2006, p. 3). In the onstage, IM can be used to signal affiliations and claim memberships. Cynthia Lewis and Bettina Fabos argue, for instance, that IM is “multi-voiced”, as it can be taken up to “perform a version of self” that can be shifted for

multiple turns “they are consciously attempting to make the results visually resemble a poem” (2004, p. 417).

different audiences (2005, p. 493).⁹ However, these findings are mostly based on the study of North American white, middle-class teenagers.

Recently, scholars have begun to focus on IM practices of American minority youths. Youngjoo Yi, for instance, studied IM identity construction among Korean-American adolescent youths. Her interviewees embraced IM as a safe space in which they “were becoming active, participatory social agents who constructed their own transnational and transcultural community”. They were “‘re-makers’ of the textual, technological, linguistic, and cultural resources available” (2009, p. 123). Lam conducted an in-depth case study of instant messaging multiliteracies of Kaiyee, a Chinese-American adolescent girl. She traces the IM networking of Kaiyee with the local Chinese immigrant community, her translocal network of Asian American contacts and transnational connections with peers in China (2009). Yi focuses mostly on the performance of transcultural identifications, while Lam focuses on the issue of adolescence and migration. In both cases, isolating one of multiple axes of signification means that others are overlooked.

As I have noted in the prior three chapters, with an intersectional lens I aim to make visible the ways the informants are differentially positioned and position themselves in specific ways in particular situations, because gender, generation, diaspora, religion and youth culture as well as issues of stereotyping complicate their processes of coming-of-age. This way, I consider the multilayered identification and complex intersecting journeys of children of immigrant groups. In the wider Dutch discourse on migration and integration, Moroccan-Dutch people are seen as the “absolute other” and females with a migrant and Islamic background especially run the risk of being isolated as “unemancipated others” (Ghorashi, 2010, pp. 75-81). In chapter one I set out how gender and other categories of difference such as age, generation, diaspora and youth culture, are embodied and imagined acts that are performed through material representations. In this chapter I consider intersecting symbolic grammars of difference as constituted through performative instant messaging practices.

Within the structure of *IM*, performative acts of for instance age, gender, ethnicity, generation and diaspora in instant messaging include the updating of one’s display name, display pictures and abiding by *IM* speech conventions of emoticons, exchanging short utterances and using opening and closing conventions. By

⁹ Unlike chapter three, the concept of voice refers here to the appropriation of personal space, where users stake out their individual identities. Voice is connected to the articulation of (dynamic and shifting) collectives in online discussion boards.

acknowledging the fluid and complex dynamics of socio-technological networks like IM I once more underline my theoretical aligning with feminist technoscience approaches that go beyond “gender essentialism” and “technological determinism” (Wajcman, 2007, pp. 294-296):

The Internet then can be seen as an ‘unformed place,’ which depends to some degree on its use to find its structure. It is at the interface of user and technology that socialization instills order to the disorder of the Internet.

– Meenakshi Gigi Durham (2001, p. 37)

Similar to other communicative spaces such as social networking sites, everyday exchanges on MSN are bound but not fully determined by interfaces, algorithms, corporate interests and discursive norms. Technological, linguistic and social norms give order to the performance of self in IM, but also leave room for re-signification in the ways individuals and collectives of users adopt the medium (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011, pp. 206-208; Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2012, pp. 440-441). In sum, in my analysis of IM, I combine CMC and digital literacy perspectives and remain aware of symbolic grammars of difference that intersect in our interviewees’ performance of self in the digital realm (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011c, pp. 58-62).

4.3 Entering and analyzing a private space

MSN is something different. You can say many things there that you do not easily say in the streets, because you might be embarrassed. For instance when there is a girl standing in front of you, you can blush and so on. While on MSN, you can just type without her seeing it. On the Internet, you can actually be yourself more, than outdoors. You can talk freely and be a bit looser.

– Faruk, 16 years old

MSN is a private communicative space. In 13-year-old Midia’s words, MSN “*is for your self, nobody sees who and how many contacts you have in your list*”. Relationships and affiliations that are built within this space can be kept personal; they are only for the eyes of the individual users. Faruk and Midia’s comments suggest MSN is taken up to negotiate processes of coming-of-age where identity-in-the-making can be observed. However, IM is largely kept shut off from parental supervision and from other onlookers. Its private character has for instance caused concern among some parents. Declining our invitation to participate in the study, a mother who migrated from Morocco to the Netherlands voiced her concerns over the computer use of her three children (aged 8, 11 and 13): “*occasionally I have seen the [IM] conversation history and the conversations between the kids did not charm me very much. Many girls had a webcam and did their very best to look attractive*”. She

eventually decided to prohibit her kids from using IM and online social networking sites: *"I am of the opinion that too much dirt and nonsense is sold and spread through these media and the disadvantages outweigh the advantages"* (e-mail conversation held between December 21 and 29, 2009).

Everyday discussions of personal issues, emotional support, fights, gossip and flirting take place on *MSN*. Such activities generate a fascinating window into the private and personal engagements of teens with their peers mediated through the performance of self in a digital space. However, entrance to this private space is not straightforward (Jacobs, 2005; Thiel-Stern, 2007). I believe this is why in-depth studies examining the expressive culture of IM are scarce, while research on the more publicly accessible digital spaces such as social network sites like *Facebook* and microblogs such as *Twitter* is a growing enterprise. Especially outside the United States, work on IM is scarce.



Gathering transcripts

All 43 interviewees I spoke with used *MSN*. A smaller group of 6 informants have granted me access to their personal *MSN* communication network by saving and sharing conversation transcripts. The six participating young people were requested to ask their contacts permission in the beginning of their conversations to save the transcript and to subsequently share the transcript with us for our research. This approach was adopted from research carried out by Jacobs (2005) and Shayla Thiel-Stern (2007). Only conversations that were agreed upon by contacts to be saved and shared were included in my analysis. Asking permission was done for instance as follows:

El Hoceima is the bom, that's the place where i come from so just tell everyone thats the city number ONE says:

I participate in a research on msn and I have to copy and paste conversations and send them to them would you allow me to use this conversation?

~ ..*ق. ن O u ي ا .ق.* ~ says:

yea course sweetie  ... hahaha its bout nothing anyway 

Informants Fatiha, Naoul, Midia, Kamal, Khadija and Inzaf responded to my call to submit IM conversation transcripts. They were invited to save IM conversations to the hard drives of their computers during the period of December 2009-February 2010. They are aged between 13 and 18 years old: Khadija is an 18-year-old avid *YouTube*r, sending around 30 text messages per day, 17-year-old Fatiha is a heavy texter; Kamal is a 16-year-old soccer fanatic; 15-year-old Inzaf likes to post and read personal stories on online message boards; and Naoul (16) and Midia (13) are into playing online games such as

World of Warcraft. The transcript data gathering is skewed, as the group of six people sharing transcripts consists of five girls and one boy. Interested informants were asked to save IM transcripts of conversations with five people of their choice. From their collection, I asked the young people to select five transcripts consisting of at least ten turns, which they deemed fit for me to read.

I stressed in my invitations that I did not mind with whom informants spoke or what their conversations were about. I welcomed everyone and all topics. In total, I received 26 transcripts, ranging in length from 10 sentences to over three pages. Participants sent in IM logs of conversations with friends ranging from 13 to 22 years old. All interviewees said the transcripts they sent in were talks with friends that they knew from outside the digital realm, for instance through school, work or from their neighbourhood. In total, twenty of the talks were with women friends, and six with male friends. Interview narratives were used to provide a more gender-balanced supplementary interpretative context. Interview data from the 37 other informants was used to supplement my argumentation.

I recognize that participants chose conversations to construct a self that they wanted me to see. First, although it became apparent from the survey and the interviews that *MSN* was widely used to engage in intimate or romantic conversations I mostly received transcripts of friendly conversations between contacts of the same gender. Secondly, those who shared transcripts with me estimated that 10 percent of their contacts live abroad. Informants explained to assist their parents in initiating *MSN* webcam conversations with family members who live abroad. Interviewees share their personal accounts with them, as some parents were unable to manage *MSN* on their own. However transcripts of such exchanges were not shared with me and transnational conversations are therefore not further considered in the analysis. The transcripts provided allow a partial view on their everyday private digital identity positioning.

Analysis

Figure 4.1 shows a screenshot of an instant messenger conversation I initiated with Soufian, a 12-year-old, during the summer of 2011. The example is included here to set out the various analytical dimensions to the medium-specific performativity of self in IM I aim to unpack. At the top of the conversation screen, Soufian's display name "@ Marokko ☀" appears. Logging in to *MSN*, he indicated in his display name that he was on holidays in Morocco at that moment and the sun was shining. As Soufian logged into

MSN using *Ebuddy.com webmessenger*, an automatic second name is added below his display name. *Ebuddy* allows users to have conversations with *MSN* contacts without having to install any software on a computer. The application does not store any conversation history on the computer, unlike the *Windows Live Messenger software* that does archive exchanges by default. Soufian uses a display picture showing the blue, green and yellow Berber flag next to the green-starred red Moroccan national flag. Soufian's display name shows up in friend lists of people who have added him, together with the names of all other people in their lists. The display picture appears on the screen of the conversation partner upon initiation of a one-on-one conversation. At the bottom of the conversation screen, a box is shown where users can enter messages to the conversation partner. A small smiley emoticon appears in the bottom. When clicked, a drop down menu appears from which users may insert a smiley in their conversation. At the bottom, a commercial message appears "[b]eautiful dresses for low prices you order at bonprix.nl".

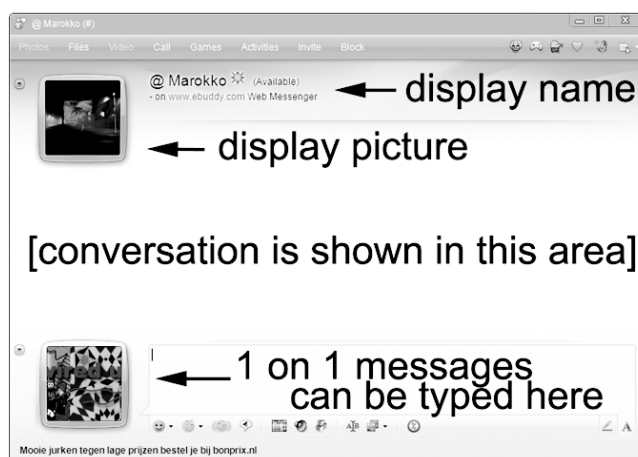


Figure 4.1 Screenshot *MSN Messenger* conversation with 12-year-old Soufian (July 22, 2011).

Following the guidelines I describe in section 2.4, the IM transcripts were translated into English, meaning non-Dutch words were left untranslated, and decorative spellings were carried over into English. Similar to the interview narratives, the shared transcripts were coded in search for emergent patterns. In my argument I use transcript excerpts to include the voices of the interviewees. I have however not been able to include conversations from all transcriptions in the running text, though they were all examined. Aiming to generate a contextualized analysis I focus on mapping the topics,

values of instant messenger conversations, iterative identity construction and practices of territorial boundary making. Also I scrutinise issues of multi-axial identity, consumption and youth culture by unravelling how display names and other features are specifically used to express belongings. Firstly, I focus on the various ways ethnic minority youths negotiate their ownership and perform the boundaries of their personal space. Secondly, I analyze the micro-politics of updating display names and display pictures.

4.4 The private backstage

The importance of being able to negotiating ownership over IM can only be understood when considering what is discussed there. The IM transcript below is an example of boy-talk. Seventeen-year-old Fatiha is in conversation with her 22-year-old Somalian-Dutch classmate Owsark. Owsark makes sure that nobody can eavesdrop on the conversation by asking Fatiha whether she is sitting behind the computer all by herself. Once they are both convinced that they have the privacy to talk, the girls turn to the sensitive topic of boy-talk. This IM gesture can be compared to non-mediated settings when it sometimes is desirable to make sure nobody can overhear the conversation.

owsark says: ohyea theres something are you alone
Show remorse!!Allah (swt) will accept it from you and inchAllah will offer you goodness!! says: yes
why
owsark says: hha well
i was at fatima
on the laptop
and i saw a photo
in her pictures folder
guess who
Show remorse!!Allah (swt) will accept it from you and inchAllah will offer you goodness!! says: who?
owsark says: that one guy i told you about
i told her what are these photos doing here
Show remorse!!Allah (swt) will accept it from you and inchAllah will offer you goodness!! says: which ones?
owsark says: she know him
the guy in school
our the one you interviewd
Show remorse!!Allah (swt) will accept it from you and inchAllah will offer you goodness!! says: ooh khalid
hahahaha
owsark says: yes that one
wallah saw [wollah: with Allah, for extra emphasis]
a picture of him

The exchange is about something that happened when Owsark visited Fatima, a mutual friend. There, stored on Fatima's laptop in the personal pictures folder, she discovered photos of a boy she likes. It appears from the text that Owsark is somewhat jealous. She wants to know from Fatiha how she thinks the photographs got there. She quickly fires a series of short questions about the girl: does *"she know him"*, *"the guy in school"* and *"the one you intervind"*? In this section I first discuss the main conversational topics informants discuss in IM. Next I discuss how informants become gatekeepers over their own, networked territory in their use of physical and digital processes of boundary making. Subsequently I assess the risks and opportunities in using IM to seize the opportunity to engage with boys and girls without having to meet face-to-face.

Conversational topics

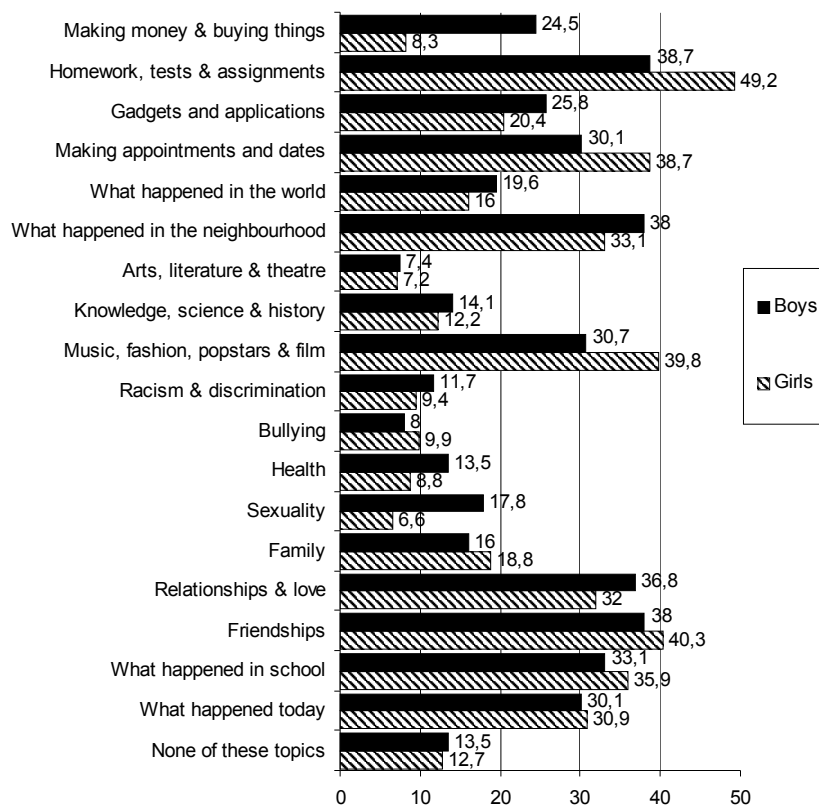


Figure 4.2 Topics Moroccan-Dutch youths report to discuss (graph shows percentages, n = 344).

When I asked what 15-year-old Inzaf and her friends usually do on IM, she reported that girls gossip “*mostly about boys with whom they are in love with or about other people*”, while 16-year-old Naoul added: “*girls talk about things such as shopping, school and some girls talk about boys*”. In the Wired Up survey, respondents were asked what topics they prefer to talk about online rather than face-to-face (see figure 4.2). The three most frequently mentioned topics among Moroccan-Dutch girls are talking about “homework”, “friendships” and “music, fashion, pop stars and film”. Moroccan-Dutch boys list “friendships”, “what happened in the neighbourhood” (38%) and “homework” most frequently. Furthermore, important topics for both girls and boys are “relationships and love”, “what happened today”, and “what happened in the school”. For the girls who participated in the survey, “making appointments and dates” is done more frequently than boys, while boys report the topics of “sexuality”, “making money and buying things” and “new gadgets and applications” more often than girls. One out of every three boys and girls list the topic of relationships and love. It shows that using MSN to make appointments and dates is mentioned by almost 40% of Moroccan-Dutch girls (see figure 4.2).

Topics such as friendships, relationships and love resonate with private self-identity formation, the first of two modes of adolescent connectedness, next to more public social identity formation. Processes of private self-identity construction can be understood as backstage performances of self. Following Erving Goffman’s use of theatre metaphors to describe everyday interaction (1959), Jacobs argues that “backstage behaviour”, beyond the observation of power holders, is often done in IM to “build and test social ties”. “Once operating within the safety of the backstage”, her informants “use a variety of discourse cues and conventions to signal closeness, to build meaning and to work through misunderstandings” (2003, pp. 8, 31). With these characteristics, IM appears to be used as a playground for establishing (romantic) relationships.

Boundary making

I do have a laptop of my own, but my brother has changed the password, so I can't log in. He only lets me use it for school. He controls what I have done; he looks at the [browsing] history, which he forbids me to delete. He checks whether I only do school work, instead of going on Hyves or so on. But I also have Internet on my phone. Mostly I use my Blackberry, because my brother doesn't allow me to go on sites like MSN, that's why I use my mobile.

– Ziham, 14 years old

Ziham reflects she strategically negotiates access to her IM contacts by logging in on her *Blackberry* smartphone. This way she circumvents the restrictions her brother places on her Internet use. The backstage is consciously safeguarded from unwanted onlookers. Sixteen-year-old Naoul makes sure she talks to the right person by phoning her friend “*it can always also be someone else on MSN, so if I call her I know for sure it is her*”. Surveillance by older brothers and sisters also can be denied says 16-year-old Nevra: “*my brother sometimes comes and takes a look at what I’m doing. But I click everything away*”. She feels IM is a space of her own. When he wants to oversee her behavior she notes to “*close every screen, it is none of his business, he does not need to know*”. Various informants, similar to Soufian in figure 4.1, engage in IM conversations using the web-based messenger service *Ebuddy.com*. Conversing with IM contacts with this service has its advantages over the standard *Windows Live Messenger* as it does not leave traces of personal conversations stored on the computer, so they do not have to worry about conversation histories being read by family members or siblings. Thirteen-year-old Inas logs on to IM when she knows her parents are away:

I usually do it when they are not around, otherwise they will look at what I’m doing. And I don’t like that. Because when I’m for instance talking to a boy, I do not want my mother to be standing behind me, you know? My mother will know what I say to that guy.

American adolescent girls in Thiel-Stern’s study consider IM a private space where adults are literally shut out. Using codes such as “mh” for “Mom’s here” and “brb” for “be right back” girls keep conversations private, and they make sure they can share their thoughts on personal, compromising and embarrassing topics on IM. IM users can quickly close the chat window when unwanted onlookers, such as parents or siblings, approach the computer (2007, p. 52). The American teenagers in Rebecca Grinter and Leysia Palen’s study emphasized the advantage of being able to operate IM “below the radar”: “use can be unobtrusive, go unnoticed, or even be covert” (2002, p. 26). Much the same, my informants describe their *MSN* conversations as very intimate and personal; as 13-year-old Midia claims, IM “*is for yourself, nobody sees who and how many contacts you have in your list*”.

Within the communicative space itself, territories are also digitally bounded and maintained by codes and conventions. The lack of visual cues of regular face-to-face communication in IM has lead users to creatively develop a cultural repertoire with a distinct writing style that includes smileys to convey emotions and manage impressions. Linguistic practices become meaningful for users themselves and others through a citation and reconstitution of norms and repertoires. IM requires skills that are not fixed

or pre-given. These skills demand continuous investment. IM norms are not static. Midia explains that “you see by the way someone talks on MSN whether he always uses it or sometimes”. As the excerpt included in the beginning indicates, among our informants, IM writing style includes interethnic language use. In the opening of a conversation Midia asks Soad how she feels:

I am Crazy in love with you ❤️ .. *my feelings for you cannot go away* 😊
says:
Eey, darling whatsup??
Checkmate sweetie says:
hmdl with youu sweetty? [hmdl: Praise to Allah]
I am Crazy in love with you ❤️ .. *my feelings for you cannot go away* 😊
says:
good good hmdl keep it tat way hea zinaa xxxx [zina: beauty]

Midia “hmdl” feels good and Soad responds with “hmdl”, she is okay. Midia wishes Soad “hmdl” keeps it that way, sharing “xxxx” for her “zinaa”. With the abbreviation “hmdl”, the word “alhamdoelilah” is inserted, which can be translated into “all praise is due to Allah”. “Zina” is a word used in Moroccan-Arabic and Berber that can be translated into “beauty”. Thus, Soad wishes that Midia with the help of Allah will keep healthy, calls her a beauty and offers her kisses.

Such dynamic language and social norms serve as exclusionary and inclusionary mechanisms, determining who is part of the in-group and who is not. Karen Bradley links the importance of personal autonomy during adolescence to the Internet. She states, “adolescence is marked by the desire for autonomy and independence” and recognizes that “the Internet offers adolescents social, moral, recreational, and intellectual experiences that are not mediated by adults” (2005, p. 62). Beyond the control of adults IM users have an active say over their space.

A sense of greater autonomy seems to result in feeling less inhibited to express one’s intimate feelings. Sixteen-year-old Faruk is of the opinion that you can “be a bit looser” while on MSN. Having to type emotions is experienced as easier than sharing them otherwise. Fourteen-year-old Mehmet agrees, “on MSN you dare a lot more, you dare to do and say more”. It should be noted that IM is not primarily used to get in touch with strangers. The majority of informants say they only speak to people they know from elsewhere and learn more about them using IM. Using IM, Moroccan-Dutch youths note feeling less easily embarrassed, as from text it does not show whether one is blushing or not when talking about sensitive and personal topics. According to 15-year-old Kamal “when you are typing, difficult things can be said more easily” because “the words don’t have to come

out of your mouth". One can keep up one's appearance: *"on MSN you also never stutter, and when you make a mistake you can correct it, for instance when you have typed something wrong"* (16-year-old Amir). This does not only hold true for boys, fourteen-year-old Sahar agrees she can feel ashamed when talking about relationship issues away from the computer *"but on MSN, you do dare to say it. Because you are just on your own, and you do it more quickly"*. Fifteen-year-old Sousou explains IM *"usually makes it easier to talk"* and she feels less inhibited because *"you don't have to look at each other"* face-to-face. This observation also may help to understand why in one study on young people in the U.S., over one third of participants reported to have said something over IM they would not have said elsewhere (Lenhart, Rainie & Lewis, 2001, p. 22). Youthful users thus dare to share more, as they feel less inhibited to share their feelings.

Unstable boundaries: Risks and opportunities

Perhaps informants feel less inhibited because they can maintain the boundaries to IM themselves by deciding who is added to and banned from their contact list. Fatıha describes negative experiences with boys who demanded that she show herself on her webcam; she said that IM turns bad *"when the other directly asks whether you can turn on your cam"*, leading to an avoidance of those contacts. Midia spoke to us about her straightforward solution when people she did not know *"stalked"* her; *"you just have to block them and delete them off your list"*. This technical feature enables users to keep out unwanted outsiders. Furthermore, female informants note they can verbally counter boys better on IM than offline.

For example 13-year-old Inas types it is easier to talk back to guys on IM: *"when I'm in a fight with someone, I don't go to him. But I go to MSN, I like that better to quarrel with someone. It's easier there, maybe I regret it later on, but it is easier on MSN"*. Fourteen-year-old Kenza similarly feels IM allows one to be more outspoken: *"when you say something personal, you maybe have to cry. On MSN you don't really have to cry"*. This however leads 15-year-old Meryam to note: *"things can get pretty rough on MSN"*; it is not all rosy *"because you can type whatever you like and nobody will stop you"*. In their study of adolescent girls in Canada, Kelly and colleagues learned they stop boys and men from harassing them by blocking them off their friend lists (2006). The authors recognized the significance of girls being able to block "boys who were mean": "this power to respond to insults is significant in light of research showing that girls and women still appear to be more vulnerable to sexual insults, because boys and men have more diverse sources of strength and status" (Kelly

et al., 2006, p. 22). On a micro-political level of negotiating gender relations, girls may seize the opportunity to counter mean boys. However IM is not a realm disconnected from real life, and intimate conversations spilling outside of the space of IM may have very serious consequences.

There remains a danger of exposing oneself in the backstage of IM, as Lenie Brouwer argues: the Internet it is not a social vacuum (2010, p. 227). In the case of IM, the line between private and public is unstable. Most informants noted the danger of private conversations getting copied and pasted to other contacts. Fourteen-year-old Mehmet Ali explains: *“when you talk to someone about personal things, that person can copy and paste and show it to everyone”*. During the interview with Inzaf and Naoul, they reflected on a bad IM sexual-harassment experience of a girl they both know. Their friend was pressured into showing parts of her body to a boy using a webcam on instant messaging. He forced her into showing herself in the nude, stating he would spread other revealing pictures of her if she would not cooperate. Eventually she exposed herself in front of her webcam, which had very serious consequences. After their relationship ended, the boy broke the codes and conventions of MSN space and circulated the webcam images he saved outside of the space. The images became a new instrument of power, used to seek revenge.

Interviewers: Do you see any dangers or unpleasant things in MSN?

Naoul: *Yes the webcam*

Interviewers: Why do you feel it's dangerous?

Naoul: *For girls that have lots of contact with boys, they can do things they will regret later. For instance they will go camming and the boy will press printscreen. A girl I know she did a really stupid thing with a boy and the boy pressed printscreen and sent it to the whole city. This will make you get a reputation. That is really dangerous and you have to be really careful. [...]*

Naoul: *Parts of her body, she showed to the cam and that boy took a picture and he sent that to everyone in our city. And at a certain point it got to her nephew, and he beat her up badly.*

Inzaf: *Yes terrible, she ended up in the hospital.*

Naoul: *For two days she was in the hospital I believe, and at a certain point her dad found out and she got beaten up again, she spent a week or so in the hospital.*

Inzaf: *She showed me her bruises [pointing to her neck and shoulders].*

Naoul: *She really got hit in the neck.*

(Interview with Inzaf and Naoul held on October 15, 2010).

The exchange over *“camming”*, slang for webcamming which often implies cybersex, reminds us that girls can remain very vulnerable in the digital realm, and it illustrates how familial, ethno-cultural and religious norms regulate the partly overlapping but also partly divergent spaces of IM and the offline world. Perhaps the continuing attachment to IM can be explained by taking into account again that within their families,

Moroccan-Dutch girls are sometimes more restricted in their movements than boys, as they are perceived as gatekeepers “to maintaining the family honour” (Pels & de Haan, 2003, p. 61). Inzaf for instance notes that her parents are worried over her conversations with the opposite sex in IM: “*my parents do know what MSN is, but they say ‘yes, you should not have too many boys in your list and this and that’ but [I don’t mind]*”. In section 1.3 I argued that contradictory gender discourses circulate in youth cultures and informants’ family circles.

Requirements from the two domains can be opposing. In some families values such as honour and chastity prevail and are especially expected of girls. Familial social norms govern some informants to remain modest in their contacts with boys. Such differential expectations also color their digital practices. My study of Internet forums has revealed how public digital spaces are taken up collectively to relatively anonymously nuance and counter gendered, religious and ethno-cultural expectations, and IM offer further insights on how personal digital spaces are assumed to meander between contradictory assumptions. Fourteen-year-old Loubna mentions she protects her reputation by deleting digital traces of her exchanges in IM: “*you can always have the conversation history retrieved by someone in your home*”. Although they recognize the dangers of being found out, IM is used among some interviewees to extend the parameters of their physical and social worlds (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011c, pp. 70-71).

Fourteen-year-old Mehmet Ali thinks that MSN is more popular among girls than among boys, as he feels girls are more confined to the home “*as a girl when you are not allowed to go out, you can still talk with your friends*”. Grinter and Palen found that IM enables young people to remain connected away from adult supervision, while being confined to their homes; IM is a “quiet technology” that can be “used to talk with friends outside the times that would be allowed either by natural constraints or by socially-determined constraints” (2002, p. 26). Brouwer also recognized that for some Moroccan-Dutch girls, the Internet sometimes “functions as a protected meeting place,” as it is not always considered “appropriate for a Muslim girl to go to a café to meet the opposite sex” (2006, np.). Sixteen-year-old Bibi illustrates that MSN is appealing for Moroccan-Dutch girls to get in touch with boys, away from the watchful eyes and scrutiny of her community:

In any case you are at home. You are in your room. Nobody from the community is around [...] For instance concerning the topic of love, when I like someone I don’t dare to say to someone at first things like ‘yes I love you’. On MSN it is easier, because that someone is not standing in front of you.

IM is used to circumvent restrictions placed on Moroccan-Dutch girls by parents and siblings, enabling users to get in touch with other people. Wired Up survey findings show that almost 40% of participating girls use IM to schedule meetings and dates. The interviewees report that girls can, for instance, exert agency in setting up dates. Inzaf is hesitant about it: *"I don't know but I think there are many girls who think it is easier"*. Midia on the other hand told me: *"well I think that every girl first talks to a boy on MSN to get to know each other better and then tries to schedule a date"*. Because familial and community control over their freedom remains a key issue, Naoul finds *"it is easier to approach a boy via MSN via the internet than a boy who would walk by here, especially for girls who are a bit shy"*. In the words of Fatiha: *"you get the chance to get to know somebody better without having to be with somebody face to face"*. IM seems to be used as a space to get acquainted, as Brouwer describes: *"if a girl wants to make a date with a boy, after some chat sessions, she will meet with the intended party in the company of friends"* (2006, np.). These findings add another layer to the study by Kelly et al. who argue that use of instant messaging among girls they interviewed *"allowed them to rehearse different ways of being before trying them out offline"*. They also used instant messaging to practice taking the initiative in (heterosexual) relationships in IM (2006, pp. 3, 20).

Having the blocking feature at hand, IM is used to try out private conversations. Although Inzaf raised the issue of her friend getting beaten up after showing herself on a webcam using IM, she thinks that IM remains a safer option: *"it is a greater risk to approach a stranger on the street just like that, you never know how that person is, he could be aggressive"*. If the conversation goes in the wrong direction, or a contact demands webcam images, our interviewees report that they will block and delete the contact from their buddy list. Naoul told us about what can go wrong, but she still uses instant messaging *"because it is a fun way to spend your free time"*. Susan Herring argues, *"women participate more actively and enjoy greater influence in environments where the norms of interaction are controlled"* (2003, p. 209). The different ways users take pleasure in staking out their own private communicative space resonates with the notion of *"jammer girls"*. Merskin claims that, facilitated by sociological and technological changes and informed by third wave feminism,¹⁰ *"jammer girls"* negotiate their worlds by making use of Internet applications to *"enjoy a sense of freedom and a sense of control"* over their own communication in order to securely be able to *"validate their feelings"* (2005, pp. 57, 64). Notwithstanding

¹⁰ Moving away from essentialism and embracing ambiguity, third wave feminism is concerned with the micro-politics of multiple oppressions, but also the opportunities for agency in the everyday life of women (Mack-Canty, 2004).

dangers that remain, part of the power of IM is that it is a space where young people, away from unwanted onlookers, can have fun, rehearse personal identifications and experiment with intimate relationships. In the next section, I discuss the onstage of IM use, where informants perform their identities by actively re-mixing different cultural affiliations.

4.5 Performing symbolic grammars of difference onstage

Besides a key topic of IM conversation, love and affection is also commonly expressed in the display names that interviewees and their friends use. For instance, Souad, Midia's 13-year-old girlfriend used the display name *"I am Crazy in love with you ♥ .. my feelings for you cannot go away 😊"* to share her crush with her friends. Fifteen-year-old Inzaf also shared she wrote *"short poems"* in her display name *"when I for instance am in love with someone, I will create those"*. Achmed, Fatiha's 21-year-old conversation partner went by the display name of *"Only when the fish stop swimming I will stop looking for girls :-)"*. In this section, I shift my focus from the backstage of private one-on-one IM communication to the second important mode of adolescent connectedness of one-to-many social identification. Besides publishing romantic feelings, "onstage" IM behavior accommodates different ways of being. Display names and display pictures are "a way to take the stage for a select audience" and they can be dynamically used to perform various versions of themselves (Jacobs, 200, p. 26). In updating display photos and articulating display names, "digital labour" (Nakamura, 2009) is performed to gain status and grab the attention of peers. I first interpret display pictures by locating them in the context of youth cultural industries. Second I explore display names as a form of multilayered bricolage and discuss how being able to include interethnic language use in IM cultural repertoires is significant for the informants.

Display pictures and consumption

Display pictures are important means to perform an onstage presence (as I will also elaborate in chapter five where I discuss the use of display pictures on social networking sites). Kamal for instance wants to look *"cool"* in his MSN display picture while Khadija wants to appear *"friendly"* and *"fashionable"* in hers. Inzaf suggested that girls show *"most of the time pictures of their lips or of themselves"*, while boys show *"pictures of themselves with their friends and sometimes of their sixpack"*. Seventeen-year-old Fatiha adds that girls use *"mostly nice sensual or emotional images"*, while boys use *"mostly tough looking pictures"*. These remarks

indicate a dominant localization of commercialized global youth discourses: a perpetuation of the dichotomy of clear-cut masculinity versus complimentary femininity as sensuality and affectivity versus rough- and toughness. Salima, a 13-year old, confirms “a girl I know added ‘sweet’ in her name, while a boy named himself ‘coolboy’”, thus “guys want to act tough, something like ‘I am the best’, while girls want to look nice in pictures, so everyone will like them”. Used as digital self-portraits of their bodies, display photos as such can be seen as virtual real estate for marketing the self, in an ongoing verification of complimentary feminine and masculine conventions. Youths sell their gendered selves to each other in their gendered peer attention economy (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011a, p. 208).

Furthermore, the fragmentation of the body into sexualized objects – showing seducing lips for girls and well-muscled abdomens for boys – reflects idealized stereotypical images of adolescent girls and boys. Preoccupations with physical beauty myths are typical for Western adolescents and their consumption of perfect sexual body discourses. These for instance find resonance in the literature on American adolescent girls’ messenger use (Thiel-Stern, 2007, p. 85; Durham, 2001). Thiel-Stern argues that American adolescent girls consume ideals of culturally defined female identities on IM: “IM is a space as guided by corporate and commercial discourses as any magazine or television show” (2007, p. 97). Throughout my research in the months of January and February 2010 I looked at the “MSN today”-pop-up screen that automatically appears when signing in. The pop-up screen provides an overview of newsworthy articles for MSN users. It can be seen as a piece of virtual real estate used by corporations to attract IM users to their advertisements, with common topics such as dieting (“lose wait like Beyonce”), celebrity gossip (“Brad and Angelina break up”, “Dinand frank about cheating”) and sex-tips (“Prima Donna’s in porn”), all of which play into stereotyping gender, sexuality and body-myths. Corporations are seeking entrance to the private space of IM. Pop-ups, IM bots (automated IM partners added to one’s contact list offering information about banking, shopping etc.) and commercials appear within the personal space (Thiel-Stern, 2007, p. 100). As another invocation of culture jamming, informants generally reported paying little attention to advertisements in MSN. Fatiha for instance told me: “I ignore those commercials and they do not bother me”.

Beyond a stereotypical gendered performance of self, other axes of differentiation are also highlighted in display pictures. As already shown in figure 4.1, Soufian included the Moroccan and Berber flag in his display name. Other informants similarly exert affiliations with Morocco in their pictures. Fourteen-year-old Kenza

signals being proud of her ethnic background by showing the Moroccan flag: *"I put the flag of Morocco there, so people will know that I am Moroccan"*. Thirteen-year-old Tariq adds that next to showing being proud, the flag is also a way to stake out one's individuality: *"I have chosen for a photo of the flag of my country. It shows my descent. Not many people do that. I do it to show I'm proud of it."* Fourteen-year-old Senna notes that next to the Moroccan national flag the Amazigh flag is also used, because *"it is a part of them, a Moroccan part"* that users want to show. Performing oneself as Moroccan is however not done by only publishing ethnic signifiers such as the Moroccan national flag or the Berber movement flag.¹¹ For example 15-year old Meryam stated *"I wear a headscarf, so when I put my picture up on MSN, others will know that I am Moroccan"*, signalling religious markers indicating membership in the Moroccan-Dutch community are also included in display pictures.

Display names and bricolage

The crafting of an appealing display name is another example of identity work that is communicated from one-to-(a selection of the)many. It not only appears in person-to-person conversations, but also in the buddy list of IM contacts. By double-clicking on someone's display name in one's list of friends, users can start conversations. By making references to specific inspirations and showing orientations to friends, display names are similar to display photos used to demarcate and manage an online presence. And they are used to attract attention from potential conversation partners. The young people who participated in the study of Lewis and Fabos were constantly monitoring their buddy lists, as friends in these lists regularly changed their display names. Lewis and Fabos observed that the buddy list is used as a means of surveillance (2005, p. 489). Young people keep an eye on the various ways in which their friends (re-) author themselves. Analyzing display names in the gathered transcripts reveals that this naming is gendered but also displays hybrid forms of religious, ethnic, and youth cultural belonging.

In the words of interviewee Noual, a display name *"as a matter of fact tells a sort of life story"*. The interviewees re-mix various linguistic symbolic grammars of difference in their onstage display names. Thirteen-year-old Ilham is of the opinion that updating display names on IM is in a way similar to publishing *Twitter*¹² status updates: *"sometimes when I'm for instance doing my homework, I will change my status to 'sht, I'm busy doing my homework'. Actually that's just like Twitter only I don't use Twitter"*. Updating of display names

¹¹ See chapter five for a further discussion of digital circulations of Amazigh symbols on social networking sites.

¹² *Twitter* was known but little used among my informants at the time of research.

can be read as digital rituals. Kevin Hillis foregrounds that people are increasingly online and they turn to networked rituals to give order to their lives. Rituals, he writes, can accommodate different ways of being in the world: “ritual allows participants to performatively enact or rehearse strategies to cope with the crucial changes they may undergo” (2009, p. 56).

The habitual updating of display names covers one of its dimensions, its bricolage character highlights another.¹³ Jannis Androutsopoulos comments on diasporic groups’ online multilingualism in Germany: “being marked off as a personal territory, screen names and signatures allow their bearers to engage in cultural bricolage, appropriating resources from various domains” (2006, pp. 539-540). Fifteen-year-old Oussema explains that he lists his name, together with “*mocro*”, which he says “*just means Moroccan boy*” and as a second nickname he adds a reference to the hajj his parents made “*because I am proud that my parents have gone to Mecca, I typed ‘Mom and dad have gone to Mecca’*”.¹⁴ Fifteen-year old Meryam articulated her nostalgic imagination of Morocco “*I always type ‘Morocco is the country to dream of’. Because I think Morocco is really a beautiful country and I really would like to stay there all the time. But it’s impossible! This way people know that I am crazy about Morocco*”. See chapter six for a discussion of the functioning of affectivity and nostalgia. Display names in the corpus reveal ethnic affiliations, often used in combination with gendered articulations. Examples include the use of “*Maroc*”, referring to the French word for the country of Morocco, “*mocro chick*”, “*mocro girl*” and “*mocro boy*”. Inzaf informs me such names are common. She told me, “*mocro boy means I am from Morocco and I am a boy*,” and she thinks names such as these are written in English “*to sound cooler*”.¹⁵

References to ethnic ties are among the markers of difference expressed in display names. Inzaf logged in to *MSN* using a display name written in English: “*El Hoceima is the bom, that’s the place where I come from so just tell everyone that’s the city number ONE*”. The rhyme combines rap vernacular, informed by global youth culture, with an

¹³ Building on Claude Levi-Strauss, Jacques Derrida noted that readers of texts engage in bricolage. He recognizes readers actively participate in meaning production, and become engineers of texts by deconstructing language structures through their linking of them with concepts beyond and behind the text. In this way, readers decentre texts by recombining them with other materials (1978). Dick Hebdige, in his analysis of punk as a subcultural style, argues that bricolage refers to signature style elements that are used to mark distinctiveness “[i]t is basically the way in which commodities are *used* in subculture which mark the subculture off from more orthodox cultural formations” (1979, p. 103, his emphasis). In the digital context, the concept can be taken to grasp the combination and juxtaposition of materials to create new meanings.

¹⁴ Hajj refers to the pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. As the fifth pillar of Islam, hajj is a religious duty for every Muslim who can afford it. Hajj is the largest pilgrimage in the world (Raj, 2007, p. 137).

¹⁵ In his study Androutsopoulos also found that ethnicity is articulated through English language nick names, mostly in combination with gendered expressions, “as in Persian Girly, PersianLady, prince of Persia, and sexy greekgirl, GreEk Chica, greekgod19” (2006, p. 540).

expression of diasporic belonging. Inzaf told me she stumbled upon something similar on a website and she felt it was something for her so she altered her display name accordingly. She adds that *“it rhymes in English”* and it is *“nicer to say it in English than in Dutch”*. Explaining its significance she shared: *“it means a lot to me because that is the town in Morocco where I am from and I want to show that I am proud of it”*. The name represents her attachment to the city of El Hoceima in Morocco: *“I was not born there but my father is from El Hoceima. When I was using it, he saw my name and he thought it was good”* (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011c, p. 73).

In chapter one I argued that identification among diasporic subjects concerns an ongoing marking of difference and sameness, as people in changing settings affiliate with where they came from in combination with what they want to become (Gilroy, 1993a; Hall, 1990). In the case of the bricolage of display names in IM by Moroccan-Dutch youths, these junctures are mediated in the digital realm. Fourteen-year-old Kenza for instance says: *“this way I show people what I am like.”* The display name of Inzaf displays the emotional influence the migration experience of her father has on her life. However, there is another layer to this marker. The display name also illustrates her mediation of contemporary orientations. Turning to English, she signals her affiliation with contemporary global youth culture.

In IM, as Jacobs argues, “spellings indicate membership in an online community” (2003, p. 35). For instance, in my research, I came across the display name of a girl who crafted a netspeak translation of the Arabic name Nour, *“.e n O u я я .e.”*, and also the display name of a boy consisting of both Latin and Arabic characters, *“Mø محمد BadBoy”*. In the latter netspeak, Mø, is combined with Arabic alphabet characters to write the name Mohammed. The name also integrates a connection to mainstream global hip-hop culture by referencing BadBoy, the American record label set up by Sean P. Diddy Combs. The take-up of CMC-specific writing styles in display names reveals another dimension to the ways in which our interviewees become active agents over their own representation: they author multiple selves and express diverse social belongings. These display names appear on the screen over and over, every time a new line is typed and the enter button is pressed. By choosing to name themselves in these specific ways they come into being as gendered, ethnic and youth cultural beings in the context of IM. Through repeating these names, IM installs the user’s differential identity.

Besides netspeak and English, the informants also tap into Latinized Arabic. Khadija in the conversation excerpt included at the beginning of the chapter listed

‘Li Tmenit Lqito Fik’, Moroccan-Arabic for “what I hoped I found in you”, while Fatiha logged in with the display name showing religious orientations: (partly translated from Dutch) “*Show remorse!!Allah (swt) will accept it from you and inchAllah will offer you goodness!*”¹⁶. During my interview with Khadija, she makes it clear that this statement is used to express her commitment to Islam: “*I am a believer and what is in my name is a sort of phrase taken from the Koran*”. Similarly, 16-year-old Nevra logged in with the display name “*Allah ou akbbar*”. Fourteen-year-old Senna notes that Moroccan-Dutch IM users might “*have something Moroccan in there, a word. For instance ‘Ana Maghribia’*”. Ana Maghribia can be translated as “I am from the Maghreb” in Dutch. The interviewees thus not only turn to English to express their affiliations. Display names that include Moroccan Arabic written in the Latin alphabet appear widely.

A funky, informal writing style

By writing Arabic while using the Latin alphabet, David Palfreyman and Muhamed al Khalil argue, IM users can claim membership to specific peer groups, but also enjoy this “funky” everyday informal writing style that generates “peer-group prestige” (2003, np). Palfreyman and Al Khalil analyzed the representation of Arabic in IM conversations in the United Arab Emirates. Similarly to the examples discussed here, their interviewees, female university students, combined characters from the Arabic alphabet with characters from the Latin alphabet to write Arabic in their IM exchanges. They found that employment of the Latin alphabet instead of the Arabic alphabet is shaped by “linguistic, technological and social factors.” Using Latin characters is partly attributed to the influence of the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) on online communication, which Palfreyman and Al Khalil recognize as “a kind of lingua franca of the Internet” (2003, np). There is a general lack of support for Arabic script in keyboards, computers, and operating systems. Globally, the ASCII computer character set is the technological default. The standard mainly covers Latin letters, which are most commonly used in European languages, and excludes Arabic script (among other non-Latin scripts).

However, the practice of using Latinized Arabic, dubbed “ASCII-ized Arabic” (AA) by Palfreyman and Al Khalil, is not only shaped by constraints of computer character sets. ASCII-ized Arabic has also been taken up as an everyday informal writing style. In their casual IM conversations with peers, the students participating in the study

¹⁶ Here, “swt” is the acronym for “Subhanahu wa ta’ala” meaning “may He be glorified and exalted”.

by Palfreyman and Al Khalil wrote in ASCII-ized Arabic because of its “ease of typing”. However, they also reported using it because of privacy concerns (their parents would not be able to follow the conversation) and because they were interested in “writing in an unusual script” (2003, np).¹⁷ Among Moroccan-Dutch youths, this writing style has likewise grown into an informal and generationally specific symbolic resource invested with shared meanings. The style is used to articulate a bounded collective identity with an in-group that recognizes its principles, and allows its users to exclude outsiders such as teachers and other adults. In a similar vein, Yi notes that his Korean-American interviewee Mike came to think of reading and writing Korean as “cool” after his peers complimented his use of Korean in diary writing and web-posting. “[H]e seemed to (re)learn the value of his heritage language and to construct a positive self-image” (2009, p. 108). IM might also be a significant safe space for our interviewees to find acknowledgement of their heritage language as a positive, empowering resource.

These insights allow me to intervene in two scholarly debates. In the Netherlands, youngsters with a Moroccan background have been recognized as linguistic trendsetters in creating and distributing slang (Vermeij, 2004). Lotte Vermeij however adds that their language crossing practices are very limited and that interethnic language use is chosen as a way to express the liking or disliking of others: “the interethnic language users do not use this way of talking for conversations about ordinary topics” (2004, p. 164). In *MSN* expressive culture, apart from signalling religious and ethnic affiliations in display names, non-Dutch words are also used in IM conversations for instance to express liking each other (“*zina*”), thanking one another (“*besaba*”, “*hmdl*”), doubt (“*swia swia*”, “*ze3ma*”) and for instance to talk about preferred drinks (on *MSN* 17-year-old Fatiha invited her friend to come over for “*3assir*”, a fruity drink). The analysis of the corpus displays that interethnic language use is quite rich; it is interspersed in everyday conversations to establish a shared common ground and to symbolize gender, diasporic and youth cultural affiliations. Second, earlier research established that boys use more slang in their everyday speech than girls (Gordon, 1993). In Moroccan-Dutch young people’ use of IM however, slang is not restricted to the male domain; girls are avid slang producers in the conversations and display names I analyzed.

¹⁷ Typing in ASCII-ized Arabic, students in the United Arab Emirates were seen to negotiate between localized, linguistically specific vernaculars and Modern Standard Arabic. Linguistic vernaculars in the United Arab Emirates were previously only used for genres such as poetry and cartoons. In their use of IM, these vernaculars are now actively transferred and translated for the purpose of everyday informal computer-mediated communication (Palfreyman and Al Khalil, 2003, np).

The display pictures and display names discussed above indicate how the lived experience of difference among Moroccan-Dutch youths – who are sometimes made hyper visible as absolute others – is not always an oppressive one, but can also be empowering. I observed the ways informants take the stage to gain solidarity from various peer groups by foregrounding various community memberships, belongings and loyalties. Becoming active agents over their own representation, the interviewees go beyond a singular onstage articulation of identity; rather they perform a multiplicity of selves by re-mixing diasporic, gendered, youth cultural, internet culture and religious affiliations.

4.6 Conclusions

Instant messaging has been immensely popular among young people since the 1990s. IM goes back to the purely text-based roots of the Internet, but outside of use in the workplace it has remained a relatively understudied and undertheorized social media technology because it is not straightforward to gather data within this private space. In the chapter, I opened up this private space. IM was shown to provide a window into the private engagements of teens with their peers that includes interaction with private/public spaces, interethnic language and slang use in the construction of selfhood, the negotiation of friendship and the production and consumption of sexuality. Focussing on performativity of self, remaining aware of how users adapt to the environment and by taking into consideration how the applications' interface, restrictions imposed by dominant computer character sets, and commercial incentives inscribe themselves upon the users' performance of self, I unravelled how in IM Moroccan-Dutch youths actively (re) position themselves in their personal networks. Together with survey and interview findings, the transcripts Fatiha, Naoul, Midia, Kamal, Khadija and Inzaf shared offer a glimpse of how that relatively safe backstage space is negotiated and how differential social belongings are communicated.

I analysed two kinds of identity work IM is used for. *MSN* is taken up as an opportunity to perform diversified selves onstage and iterating a personal identity backstage resulting from multiple forms of negotiations with technical skills, digital literacies, net speak along with consuming and bending stereotypical gendered discourses, youth branding and localised forms of global connections. Moroccan-Dutch young people and especially girls, in their quotidian interaction with the digital realm, carve out a communicative space of their own. Our interviewees maintain their own private

networked territory as they themselves control its boundaries. Gatekeeping is done physically – offline – as well as digitally – online. Experimenting with relationships and rehearsing personal identities, interviewees are empowered, expanding the parameters of their social and physical worlds through IM, while navigating between conflicting familial, gendered, religious and ethno-cultural motivations. Said Graiouid similarly found that female chatters in Morocco build relationships with males and females with less fear of losing face, illustrating once more the impact digital media use has on spatial regulations of gender and social relations (2005, p. 84).

I have argued that for Moroccan-Dutch boys and girls instant messaging appears to be a space where they can negotiate these issues backstage and become active agents over their own multi-axial representations onstage. Despite all existing constraints that are related to gender restrictions, often disenfranchised family backgrounds, religious dictums, surveillance by parents, siblings and peers, and stereotypical youth cultural gender ideologies, which effect Moroccan-Dutch boys and especially girls in specific ways, IM is also a unique space for exerting their agency in playful and intimate ways. In tandem with discussion forums, using IM informants find themselves in a safe enough space to circulate self-narratives and appreciate their cultural and gendered trajectories. Unlike publicly accessible forums, in their own networked territory they are able to limit their communication to a self-chosen audience of friends. However, IM, too is an in-between space; it is no social vacuum. The example of sexual harassment raised by Inzaf and Naoul indicates girls remain susceptible to male domination in their personal territory. The relationship between IM and the offline world remains intricate and complex; at certain points, both worlds overlap and sometimes collide, at others they diverge and provide autonomy. In the following chapter the focus shifts from the mostly text-based space of IM to visually oriented social networking sites.

5. Visual representations and hypertextual selves: SNSs¹

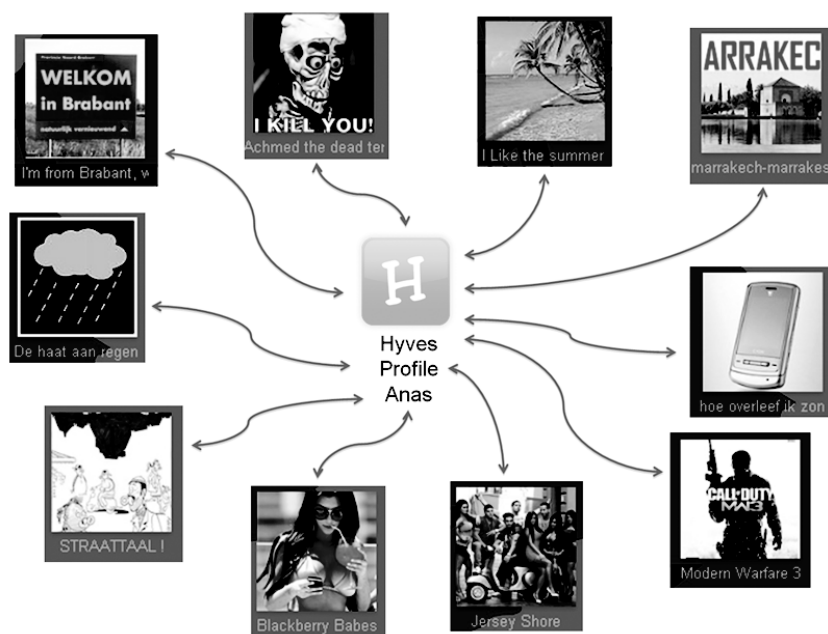


Figure 5.1 *Hyves* groups 13-year-old Anas links to on his *Hyves* profile page (July 22, 2011).

After joining a group on the Dutch social networking site *Hyves*, a clickable icon appears on the user's personal profile page. As I argued in section 1.5, by joining groups, users articulate hypertextual narratives of selves. In figure 5.1 the interest groups Anas, a 13-year old rap fanatic, has joined are shown. From the top left he lists "I'm from Brabant where the fuck you from?", a group referring to the province in the south of the Netherlands he is from. "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 indicates to prefer warm weather. Joining the group "Marrakesh", he publishes symbolic transnational affiliations. His parents were born in Marrakech, in Morocco, and by listing the 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

¹ Prior versions of this chapter have been published as Leurs, K. (2012). Migrant youth invading digital spaces: Intersectional performativity of self in socio-technological networks. In R. Gajalla & Yeon, J.O. (Eds.), *Cyberfeminism 2.0*, (pp. 285-304). New York, NY: Peter Lang and Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (2011). Mediated crossroads: Youthful digital diasporas. *M/C Journal*, 14(2), np.

“STREETLANGUAGE?”. The first shows his attachment to his mobile phone, the second to a first-person shooter video game, the third to the *Jersey Shore* MTV TV series and the fourth to slang and urban youth culture. “Blackberry Babes” is a page where photos are published of girls and their mobile phones. The site is used for dating purposes, as it is dedicated to exchanging *PingChat* messenger contact details. The image is exemplary for the stereotypically gendered images girls circulate, and the dominant perspective of the heterosexual male gaze in the group. Lastly he lists “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 site (SNSs) use, in particular to its visually gendered and multi-axial hyperlinked dimensions. Although SNSs share a given set of technological components, the ways users materialize and embody practices in these spaces result in particular expressive cultures. The same principle also became apparent in my analysis of forums and instant messaging use among my informants. In their definition of social-networking sites, danah boyd and Nicole Ellison recognize that the “key technological features are fairly consistent”, adding that “the cultures that emerge around SNSs are varied” (2008, p. 210). However, scholars are only just beginning to consider the context-specific cultural dynamics of these platforms.² Therefore, to understand better the contextual dynamics of situated user practices there is a need to carry out critical readings of SNS practices. Addressing the gap in the literature, in this chapter I develop two complimentary approaches to analyze social-networking site user cultures from different partial perspectives.

On social-networking sites, users are expected to compose digital personas by crafting a profile page. Users can for instance articulate their digital identities by publishing texts, images, hyperlinks, videos and music. Earlier empirical studies mostly focused on the textual components of SNS self-profiling (Siibak, 2009), in my attempt to diversify the scholarship I focus on profile photos and hyperlinking practices. Visual representations 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. Therefore, the following main question guides this chapter: how do Moroccan-Dutch youths perform their identities by publishing visual representations and hypertextual affiliations on their personal profile pages on *Hypes* and *Facebook*? As

² For example Grasmuck et al. argue there are “still relatively few culturally specific online social network studies” (Grasmuck, Martin and Zhao, 2009, p. 161) while Andra Siibak argues that little research is done on “language-and-national-identity-specific” social networking practices (2009, np).

they become active agents over their own representation – bounded by profile template structures and peer norms – I scrutinize which aspects of their identities they highlight in their photos and hyperlinked affiliations.

Besides Wired Up survey findings and interviews, additional material considered in the chapter was collected by asking informants access to their personal profile pages and by conducting interviews with *Hypes* community moderators and founders. 14-year old Ayoub, 13-year old Anas, 13-year-old Midia, 13-year-old Mohammed, 15-year old Oussema and 15-year-old Yethi provided me access to their personal profile pages. Furthermore I have carried out contextual face-to-face and e-mail interviews with eight group page founders and moderators.

As I described in section 5.1, Wired Up survey findings suggest that publishing gender is one of the key self-profiling aspects Moroccan-Dutch youths take up. I therefore focus on gender as the primary analytical category when examining the use of personal profile photos. Guided by my observation of the use of stereotypically gendered display pictures in instant messenger in chapter 4, I continue exploring whether a fetishization of male and female bodies is also dominant in the ways in which users present themselves in SNS profile pictures. Not wanting to remain blinded to other axis of differentiation in my scrutiny of Moroccan-Dutch youths' SNS expressive cultures, I additionally concern myself with the implications of intercultural encounters on social-networking sites by interpreting how Moroccan-Dutch youths perform hypertextual selves on their profiles. Building further on Gilroy's understanding of convivial multicultural encounters (2005), 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 ethnic positions they often find themselves allocated to.

This chapter is structured as follows. In section 5.1 I introduce the workings of *Hypes* 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 5.3 I assess how social-networking site profile photos are imbued with gender and sexuality among Moroccan-Dutch youth. Section 5.4 develops further the figuration of hypertextual selves, theorizing hyperlinks as objects to think with that are helpful to acknowledge processes of networked belonging and the performance of gendered, ethnic, religious, and youth cultural fandom identities.

5.1 Moroccan-Dutch youths on *Hypes* and *Facebook*

In this section I acquaint the reader with Moroccan-Dutch youths' use of social networking sites by detailing the use of *Hypes* and *Facebook* in the words of the informants. I discuss reasons for joining these platforms, dynamics of setting up a profile page and how personal profile pages can be used to signal affiliations. At the time of writing *Facebook* was beginning to outgrow *Hypes*, however *Hypes* was found to be especially popular among younger users in contrast with adults.³ *Hypes* was setup in October 2004, "named after beehives. The users are bees and the social network is the hive". The space is developed to be nationally oriented and most content is posted in Dutch (Banner, 2011, p. 587). During the period of fieldwork, its founders sold the site to owners of the Dutch conservative daily newspaper *De Telegraaf*. Oussema noted he stopped using the site, similar to a lot of other Dutch citizens, 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 towards students, *Facebook* became publicly accessible in September 2006, and a Dutch-language version was released in May 2008.⁴

<i>Attachment to SNS use</i>	<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 %

Table 5.1 Would Moroccan-Dutch youths miss social networking sites if they could not use them anymore? (n= 344).

Social networking sites are digital spaces informants visit on a daily basis. Ilana, 16-year-old, says a profile page allows "sharing your own photo's and videos, what you do in your daily life". 17-year old Ferran makes "daily use of it, when I'm on the computer, I sign in to *Hypes*" and he adds his use is "not an addiction but more of a habit". 16-year-old Nevra adds its "standard" she logs in automatically. By asking whether respondents would miss the digital space of SNSs if they were not able to frequent them anymore, it was found that roughly two-thirds of Moroccan-Dutch young people reported they feel attached to the communication platform (see table 5.1). Online social networking seems interwoven into

³ In July 2011 it was reported that *Facebook* for the first time had amassed more Dutch members in comparison with *Hypes* (4,9 million versus 4,8 million). Two thirds of users make use of both platforms. However, of particular interest for this study, *Hypes* is recognized to be popular among young users, while *Facebook* is more used among adults (Oosterveer, 2011, np).

⁴ At the end of December 2011, the site had 845 million monthly active users globally (Facebook, 2011, np).

the fabrics of everyday life, as is also illustrated with the verbs facebooking and hyving that have become common parlance among the interviewees (see also appendix 6 and 7).

In general, the younger interviewees aged between 12 and 15 years old note to primarily use *Hypes*, while informants aged 16 years old and upwards seem to prefer *Facebook*. Both aesthetic and functional differences are experienced between the two sites. *Hypes* offer more opportunities for customization in comparison with *Facebook*. Fifteen-year-old Hatim feels “*Hypes, 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*”. Yeti, 15-year-old states “*Hypes is more colorful, Facebook is a bit dull*”. Digitizing the passages from childhood to adulthood, informants noted to move from *Hypes* to *Facebook*, as older adolescents note to prefer the clean, orderly and more professional look of *Facebook*. Furthermore, unlike *Hypes* which is mostly frequented by Dutch speaking users, *Facebook* enables users to establish transnational contacts with those living in the diaspora outside of the Netherlands, as Wafaa, 15-year-old, says: “*not the whole world has Hypes. There you don’t have your family living in Belgium, Morocco and so on. It’s more the Netherlands*”. In *Hypes* a nationally bounded community is established (Imre, 2009), in contrast with the global reach of *Facebook*. Sixteen-year-old Ilana describes this dynamic as follows: “*Hypes is mostly about what happens in the Netherlands. And on Facebook you have people from all over the world*”.

Wired Up survey findings show that Moroccan-Dutch youths on average have befriended 239 contacts.⁵ It is interesting that informants note a delicate line between privacy and public access. Motives collide, on the one hand informants note to be interested in attracting new friends while they also want to maintain privacy over their personal information. Platform settings complicate this process further. *Facebook* and *Hypes* differ slightly in the privacy options they provide, this difference is 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 *Hypes*, informants note to appreciate being able to provide access to their profile pages to the contacts of those people they have befriended. This way, they can 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 for ‘only visible for friends of your friends’ only ‘for friends’ or ‘for everyone. On*

⁵ This number is close to the average of 250-275 *Facebook* friends American college students link with (Walther et al., 2011, pp. 28-29). I am aware that the definition of friendship is stretched, as these numbers exceed the 10-20 close relationships people have been found to sustain on average in traditional relationships (Park, 2007).

Hypes the settings are 'not visible for anyone', 'for friends', 'for friends of friends', 'for all Hypes' and 'for everyone'".

Self-profiling attributes

In the Wired Up survey, respondents were asked what it is they like to show off themselves on their personal profile page. Nicknames, gender and photos can be seen as three of the most important self-profiling attributes Moroccan-Dutch youths use, as these attributes were mentioned most often. More than two-thirds of respondents say to include these on their profile pages. Especially girls frequently noted to add their gender and nicknames while boys reported to show location markers such as their city, neighborhood and school. Other personal backgrounds that were frequently mentioned are publishing one's age, first name, nationality, birthday, languages one speaks, and one's descent (figure 5.2).

In chapter 4 I argued that IM users update their multilayered display names in the onstage. Similarly on *Hypes* and *Facebook*, users can post nicknames and status updates on their personal profile wall for their friends to see. 16-year-old Naoul sees her profile page on *Hypes* as her presence on the web "*it feels like your own sort of blog, your own site*". On *Hypes*, users can enter a 'w.w.w.' (who, what, where?), says 13-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's on your mind?' in status updates. For instance Oussema says he likes to update his status with his "*favorite phrases*". 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.

When they include a nickname on their page, 13-year-old Inas shared, "*often users put for instance Moroccan and this and that as their name*". Moroccan-Dutch youths engage in specific naming practices as for instance 3724 users in *Hypes* include "Mocro" in their nick name,⁶ often combining it together with age, gender, sexual preference, religious, sport, music and other youth cultural affiliations. As I described in section 1.4, the term Mocro is a Moroccan-Dutch honorary nickname stemming from Dutch-language rap and hip-hop culture. Think of nicknames such as "Mocro^boy-96", "^m0cr0^girlsZz^", "MY OWN_MOCRO_STYLE" and "MocroLiciouz". In the following section I address motivations for self-profiling.

⁶ User figures calculated on October 31, 2011.

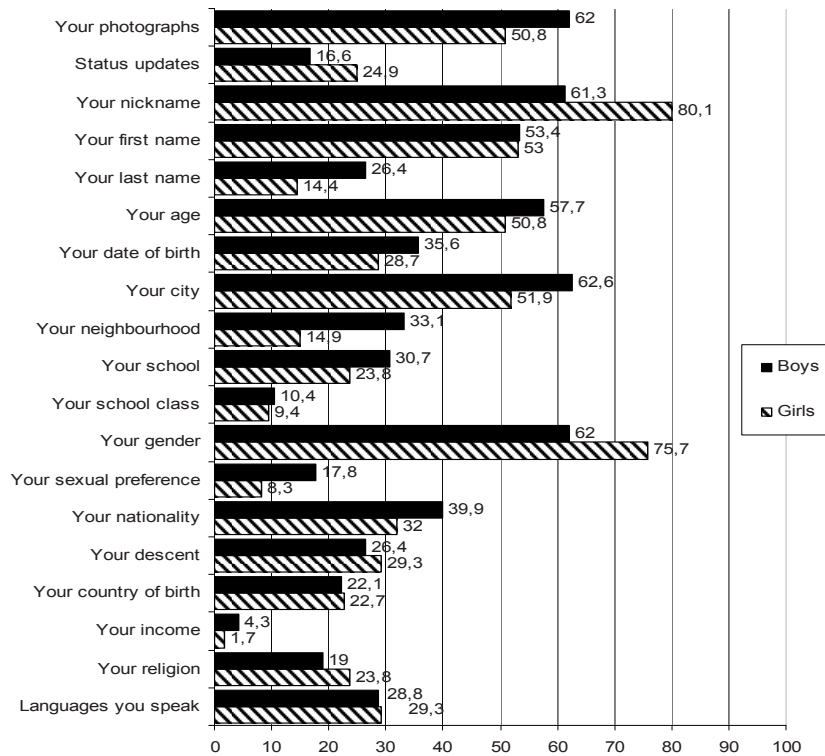


Figure 5.2 Moroccan-Dutch youths self-reporting SNS profiling attributes (graph shows percentages, n = 344).

Motivations

Informants explained that they mainly value the opportunity to visually represent themselves on social networking sites. Soufian, 12 year old, notes that with *Hyves* profiles “at a glance you see what people are like”, 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 specifies setting up a profile on *Facebook* “is like introducing myself to someone, only on the Internet”. Fifteen-year-old Oussema lists users can include “photographs of your friends, of yourself, your pet, your family, where you live”, and users can show “what you like, where you are interested in, your sexual preference, males or females”.

In the interviews, access to sociability was mentioned as an important reason to join social networking sites. Informants mentioned feeling the urge to follow in the footsteps of their peers and set up a profile of their own. Loubna, 14-year-old, for instance joined *Facebook* because she noticed her sisters having fun using it “*my sisters always went on Facebook, so I thought ‘yes I will also setup a Facebook’ account*”. Similarly, thinking aloud about why he set up a profile on *Hypes*, 15-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 also invited to reflect on the reasons why they include certain attributes on their profile pages (see figure 5.3). 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 variety of ways Moroccan-Dutch youths 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.

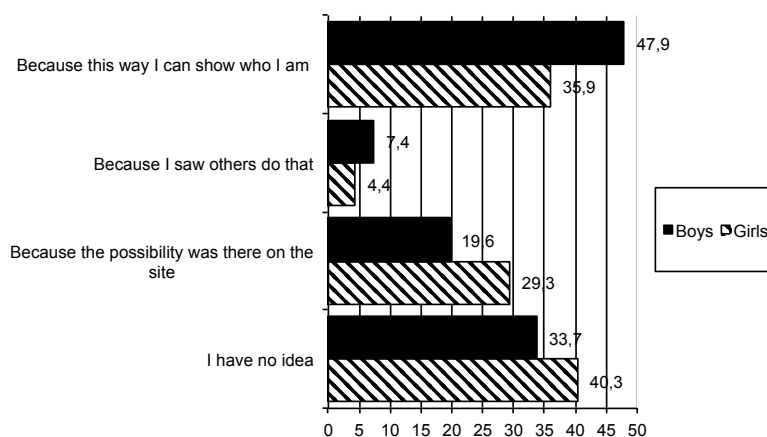


Figure 5.3 Moroccan-Dutch youths self-reporting reasons for profiling (multiple answers possible, graph shows percentages, n = 344).

The red thread of the remainder of the chapter is woven from two specific dynamics. In section 5.3, I focus on two attributes which came up in the survey findings as dominant themes in self profiling: photographs and the portrayal of gender. I study photographs and gender in tandem by addressing whether a gendered gaze is 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 avatar included on individual personal profile pages, individual users are also brought together as their membership is made visible on the group page itself. Anas' example indicates users can simultaneously become an audience member across a variety of spaces. I unravel this dynamic further in section 5.4 by considering intercultural encounters in hypertext networking. Finally, the Wired Up survey findings emphasize a tension between users wanting to articulate their individuality and users being guided by norms and pre-structured profiling options. For instance, half of boys notes to publish photos to show others who they are, while almost one-third of girls notes to do so after the option was offered to them by the platform. I theorize this tension further in the next section.

5.2 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). The process of informants constructing a profile on social networking sites is bound to technological restrictions and user cultures, corporate decisions 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. Describing *MySpace* architecture and user adoption, Jenny Davis argues users can publicly disclose how they want to present themselves in a pre-formatted way by making use of the provided “templated

biographical categories”. How the template “is actually used, however, varies considerably” (2010, p. 1111).⁷ Templates offer users choices to negotiate, but Ashley Donnelly recognizes these choices in Western-oriented platforms are essentially restricted to “cultural signs rooted in mainstream Western culture” (2011, p. 173). These signs are ideological indicators of particular age group, gender and religion norms. Lisa Nakamura specifies that Internet interface decisions produce and reflect hierarchical ethnic and racial categorizations. She criticizes the early utopian appraisal of digital identities as free and unbounded by pointing to how interfaces – by providing a limited set of options to choose from in the form of drop-down menu boxes to tick – narrow “choices of subject positions available to the user”, as users are made to “to choose ‘what’ they are” from a limited set of options. “When race is put on the menu”, Nakamura writes, limited options render “mestiza or other culturally ambiguous identities” invisible when they are not “given a ‘box’ of their own” (2002, pp. 104, 120). Sherri Grasmuck, Jason Martin, and Shanyang Zhao note that ethnic minorities publish elaborate ethno-racial narratives of self on *Facebook*. By doing so they resist being silenced by “dominant color-blind ideologies” (2009, p. 158). My informants also noted menu-options in discussing their self-profiling. When asked how users can show their cultural or religious preferences, Oussema reflects that in *Facebook* “there is a special box to publish your religion and I find it important to let that show”, but he describes there are alternatives when there is no menu-option that suits profiling preferences: “you can for instance type ‘yes I have just had couscous’,⁸ that is possible, there is not really a box to register your culture”.

Templated biographical categories, 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 recognized that “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). Similarly, boyd uncovered that American teenager preference for either one of these spaces reflected a reproduction of dominant social categories of ethnicity and social-economic status. Analogous to the 1960s “white flight” by white American families from city centres to suburbs, she observed a recent “networked exodus” of white, affluent teenagers towards *Facebook*. *Facebook* started as a social

⁷ *MySpace* is a social-networking site that was overtaken in popularity by *Facebook* in 2008.

⁸ Couscous is a popular dish across North Africa and it is said to be a Berber invention (Albala, 2011, p. 232; Escher & Wüst, 2010).

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”. boyd summarizes that mainstream fear of the digital space of the “other” mirrors and magnifies American social divisions (2012, pp. 203-220).

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 to have transferred from *MySpace* 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 young teen life towards a more professional outlook. The younger ones considered *Facebook* dull, the older one’s found *MySpace* too colorful.

Corporate logic

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 behavior of people using their services (Mitchel 1995, p. 111; Lessig, 2006). Ippolita, Geert Lovink and Ned Rossiter deconstruct the “approximation of the social” design principles of social networking sites and argue that social networking sites “are designed to be exploited” (2009, np). Weighing costs and benefits for the consumer is difficult as social networking sites are set up to background disclaimers and terms of services users have to abide to. For example, although *Facebook* officially asks for parental consent and guidance for users under 13 and *MySpace* for users under the age of 16, most survey respondents and interviewees for instance reported they have the autonomy to decide what they like to publish online (see appendix 5). 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).⁹ User activities are transferred into

⁹ The following exchange between me and 15-years-old Yethi is exemplary:

Koen: look, take this Facebook page

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

“commercial commodities” and “marketing campaigns” (Andrejevic, 2011, pp. 97-99).¹⁰ 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.¹¹

The advertisements shown in figure 5.4 illustrate how direct marketing algorithms may work in the lives of my informants. The figure is a compilation of advertisements that appeared on my personal *Facebook* profile page. After a friend sent me a message about new material by the Red Hot Chili Peppers 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 in discussions I held there with informants and after I had joined *Facebook* groups that pertained to the Moroccan diaspora in the Netherlands, 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 and Birzescu, 2010). Using an image of the Moroccan flag and the question “[a]re you looking for a nice gift?”, *Prepaidunion.com* attracts Moroccan-Dutch users of *Facebook* to its website “[g]ive call-credit to your family and friends in Morocco. Surprise them with an original gift and get up to 400% bonus. Order

Yethi: Ah here, like Nike and so on

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

Yethi: Wajoo that’s quite irritating hee [wajoo: wow, pfft]

Koen: yes it is

Yethi: for real

Koen: 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: yes

Yethi: I had not really considered that

Koen: 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: 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

¹⁰ Additionally, there are also explicit ways users pay for using social networking sites, most notably when having to pay for in-game currency and buy virtual goods to enhance in social network games such as *Mafia Wars* and *Farmville* on *Facebook*.

¹¹ *Facebook* has repeatedly been heavily scrutinized when privacy settings changed. For instance user updates, photographs and links used to be private by default (meaning they were visible only to approved friends). In December 2009 the default was changed to public (meaning they became visible to everyone on the Internet), causing heated debates.

now”. Using *Facebook* advertisements, the company seeks entrance in the lucrative transnational telephone market of Moroccan diasporians. Similarly using an image of the Moroccan flag, asking “[a]re you also Moroccan?” *Etnoselect.nl*, a commercial research company, seeks to attract Moroccan-Dutch people to participate in survey taking and product testing “[r]eceive surveys in your mail and complete them whenever it suits you. Maximum reward: 5 euro per survey!”. Facebook algorithms transfer performed affiliations and signalled networked belongings with the Moroccan diaspora into a value-generating ethnic niche-marketing opportunity.



Figure 5.4 Compilation of *Facebook* advertisements (October 16, 2011 and January 11, 2012).

Similarly, having joined groups related to Islam, an advertisement for Islamic products appeared. The company *Islamproducten.nl* uses an image of a headscarf-wearing girl with a tagline “20% discount on our whole stock. Use the code actiejan2012”. The advertisement, from “the largest islam webshop in the Netherlands”, presents 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. Little is known about the relationship between the cultural industry and the use of social networking sites among migrant and ethnic minorities other than the pioneering work by Radhika Gajjala and Anca Birzescu. They analyzed subjectivity and agency of marginalized subjects who use *Kiva.org*, a social networking tool set up by a non-governmental organization. They argue that 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).

Teenager logic

Summing up these power relations, one almost begins to wonder why informants 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; Ünlüsoy, De Haan & Leander, 2010). Young people put in an effort in updating their profile pages hoping their peers will notice it. Research among American college students for instance shows that the amount of information users upload on their *Facebook* profile predicts the number of contacts they attract (Lampe, Ellison and Steinfeld, 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 perform their selves on their personal profiles, adolescents learn which social expectations and norms they need to meet in order to be accepted and liked, as boyd notes “by looking at others’ profiles, teens get a sense of what types of presentations are appropriate” (2007, p. 76). 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 gain “access to resources and social and practical solidarity” (Tufekci, 2008, p. 546). *Hypes* is used among young users to market themselves to their peers (Utz, 2008, pp. 236-237). For example digital photographs are used as identity building blocks that assist in sustaining peer-groups (Van Dijck, 2008). Online picture sharing transforms the boundaries between publicity and privateness (Lasén & Gómez-Cruz, 2009). On average, in one year, *Facebook* users change their profile pictures seven times (Strano, 2008).

Attention-seeking activities on social-networking sites are not gender neutral. Ashley Donnelly argues profile pictures are problematically gendered and sexualized cultivated by masculine fantasies that dominate the Internet. She found that in the U.S., teens on *Facebook* are expected to “sell” themselves through their personal profiles to gain friends and access to their social capital. She notes that 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 (2011, p. 179). In their study on the use of *Facebook* among Muslim girls in Qatar, Rodda Leage and Ivana Chalmer found these girls engage in four approaches to online identification as in their navigation of gendered, religious and cultural norms. 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 display photos 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 the risk they circulated personal photographs and befriended boys, while trying to keep their parents away from their digital profiles (2010, pp. 31-40).

Feelings of confidence, attractiveness and popularity are of particular relevance during the informants’ life stage of adolescence. Publishing specific information and visual material may assist in attracting a greater number 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, np). Below I consider two different perspectives to consider further the wider

implications of social-networking sites. I first focus on the gendered gaze in/of profile pictures, before considering hypertextual networking and intercultural encounters.

5.3 Visual representations and the gendered gaze

In my discussion of MSN display photos in section 4.3 I found that digital self-portraits of the body 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*”. They discussed how they use display photos to show certain parts of their bodies. Girls for instance used pictures where they show their touted lips while boys exhibited their muscled “*six-packs*”. This way, bodies are fragmented into sexualized objects. Analyzing the Wired Up survey findings, I argued in section 5.1 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 continue my exploration of how the two are related.

“You’ll see more and get a chance to know more about a person”. This statement by 12-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, np). Besides technological constraints that inscribe themselves upon user self-profiling, the way profile photographs are used by users to stand in for themselves on social networking sites is also partly influenced by gendered peer norms and expectations. Guided by these insights I focus in this section on gender as the primary analytical category in my analysis of how informants (perceive the) use of profile images.

Display picture ideals

A question was included in the Wired Up survey that asked respondents 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. Answers given to the question allow for

reflecting on impression-management, expectations of appropriate self-presentations and ideal beauty-standards among Moroccan-Dutch youths.

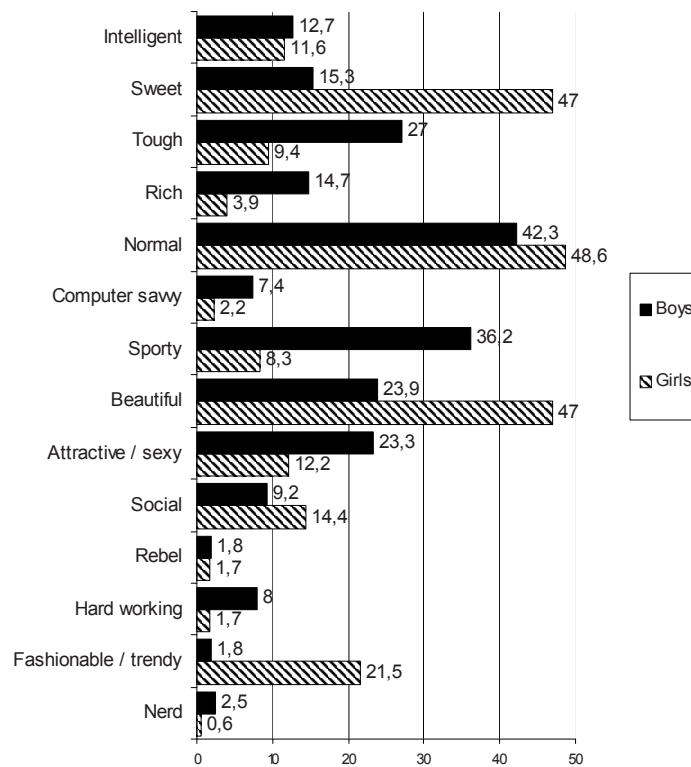


Figure 5.5 Moroccan-Dutch youths self-reporting their visual self-presentation ideals (graph shows percentages, n = 344).

Most strikingly, survey findings show that nearly half of the Moroccan-Dutch girls and boys in the survey sample report they would like to present themselves as “normal” (figure 5.5). In addition to the label “normal”, boys and girls chose specific labels to describe 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” (see 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 reveal how Moroccan-Dutch youths would ideally represent themselves. Striving to meet expectations of what is accepted as normal and standard in profile-page culture seems an important ideal. Meeting the normal standard is combined with dichotomous gender ideals. Girls’ ideals are being beautiful and sweet, while boys aim 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 U.S. (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 ethnic groups.

During the interviews, informants described a stereotypically gendered practice of profile photo selection. Oussema described that most boys show themselves as follows: “*look at how pretty I am, look at how nice my eyes as a ray of light shines in it*” or they pose in their pictures with “*pumped up chests*” and aim to go for a “*look at how tough I am, look at how muscled I am*” impression or, while girls “*lean forward*”, show their bodily curves and “*blow a kiss to the camera*”. 14-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 Bibi, 16-year-old, in some photos “*girls show their boobs almost popping out of their bras*”. 14-year-old Ayoub notes “*girls put lots of make-up on*” or show pictures “*when they have just come from the shower*”. Although individual informants often nuanced their own positioning (see last section of this section on in-betweenness), the majority of the informants gave a highly stereotypically gendered description of photograph ideals.

In her visual analysis of photos posted to *Rate.ee*, the most popular social networking site in Estonia, Siibak found strikingly similar patterns. 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” (2007, np).

The particular ways of showing that the informants note to be encouraged in social networking sites signal hierarchical power relations. Girls wanting to come across as sweet and beautiful are more submissive portrayals than 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 in the digital realm. Following Donnelly, in expressing themselves on social networking sites, users build on cultural signs of desirability stemming 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.

– Ashley Donnelly (2011, p. 174)

Although users themselves decide to publish certain digital self-portraits of their bodies on their profile pages, their choices are to a certain extent guided by the ideals and expectations of an imagined audience of peers. Informants frequently brought up their audiences during the interviews, and getting reactions from peers is highly valued. For example, 16-year-old Bibi notes 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 on my photo’. You know, I am very curious*”. Photographs are used to attract attention, 15-year-old Hajar notes that boys go on Facebook where they “*search for girls that they like*”, and they will then “*react on photos, you know, to ask the girl out on a date and so on*”. And they allow users to gain status. 14-year-old Ayoub notes you can become very popular when you post good photos. His friend uploaded a photo and asked everyone “*to give respect to the photo*”. Ayoub adds this is done because “*when you have a photo, and a lot of people have reacted on it, on that day, it will appear on ‘the story of the day’, the opening page of your Hyves friends*”.¹²

¹² Similar to the “Like” button on Facebook, on the social networking site *Hyves*, users can click a “Respect” button that allows friends to express their acknowledgement of a photo.

Meeting the gaze: Objectification and/or representation

The question arises whether feminine (submissive) self-portrayal and objectification must be understood purely as a lack of empowerment. Can it also be a strategic decision by users to publish feminine photographs to their profile page? Kristine Blair and Pamela Takayoshi discuss the complex dialectic by pointing out that “images of women on the Web exist along a continuum from objectification to representation” (1999, p. 7). They add that the objectification of women cannot be fully attributed to men only, as women themselves also navigate the continuum “consciously and unconsciously in their own production of electronic discourse” (ibid.). Assessing the dynamics of female bloggers, Clancy Ratliff notes that some appropriate their femininity in their attempt to secure a large audience: “some women participate in this seeming objectification, or, rather, they consciously and purposefully use their sexuality and beauty as a way to attract readers” (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. Furthermore, 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 photos online these girls can take up self-expression liberties they did not have offline.

These forms of power and agency also have their obvious wide-ranging drawbacks. As Laura Buffardi and W. Keith Campbell describe, *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” (2008, p. 1311). 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 that:

[t]he 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.

– Marta Zarzycka (2009, p. 159)

In feminist film theory, presuming an asymmetrical relation between the active men and passive women, the male viewer’ gaze 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

self-chosen photographs to one's profile page, a girls' internalization of the gaze might result in seizing 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 ideals in visual culture 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 (ibid.; cf. Foucault, 1977). In their attempts at gender stereotypically inscribing themselves in the desiring gazes of masculinist objectification, girls' aspirations to meet the male fantasy are impossible to completely fulfill. Again punctuating the myths of utopian digital disembodiment, when falling victim to the heterosexual male gaze and sensing digital their photographic self-depictions do not meet its ideals, girls might not feel valued as full human beings.

Victimization and cautionary measures

A statement 17-year old Ferran made can be taken to further ground the potential for agency in the context of the Moroccan-Dutch context. He thinks 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 adds, "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 section 4.4 of Naoul and Inza's friend who was severely beaten up after engaging in MSN webcam intimacy is an exceptional, but brutal reminder of negative repercussions. As 17-year-old Sadik notes, 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 knew 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 street language, the dismissive label "bezem" stands for "hooker" in the case of girls and "homosexual" in the case of boys (Hamer, 2010, np). 15-year-old Hatim explains, "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 which said 'Hookers of the city' which included a lot of photographs". Figure 5.6 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 displays a girl who looks upwards 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 12" years old.



Figure 5.6 Still *Bezems 2010.!!* by Bezemswalla on *YouTube* (February 8, 2010).

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 81 people clicked the dislike button, versus 30 people who clicked the like button. When trying to access the video, users are now shown the following message: "[t]his 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. Victimizing young people through brooming is a new semi-anonymous form of cyberbullying, hostile behavior which re-shifts power balances. Similar to the disturbing example discussed in section 4.4, for example ex-lovers carry out these practices to digitally take revenge after

relationship break-ups (Hamer, 2010, np). 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 disappear after being victimized and rendered helpless.

Judging from the informants' descriptions and *YouTube* search results this practice is observable among youths of a variety of backgrounds in the Netherlands but it seems to be especially prevalent among Moroccan-Dutch youths, indicating how conflicting gender and sexual morals affect girls in specific ways (which also became apparent in chapter four on instant messaging). *Hypes* co-founder Raymond Spanjar writes in his book on the history of the social networking site that virtual bullying seems to be "especially prevalent among allochthonous girls and the victim is portrayed as a slut". This is not without dangers, as he cites from a desperate e-mail by *Hypes* user Fatima he received "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 in the study by Leage and Chalmers used creative methods to safely express themselves on *Facebook* (2010, p. 41), interviewees report to take cautionary measures to monitor their privacy and reputation. For instance 14-year-old Senna shared she restricts 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 keeps a close watch at whom she befriends, and unfriends contacts whenever she thinks its 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, shared she also became more hesitant over placing photographs on *Hypes*, and she made sure to "*make the profile invisible, only visible for my friends*". Fourteen-year-old Kenza listed fictive personal information while 15-year-old Meryam shared she chose a creatively spelled pseudonym instead of her real name when she setup her profile page on *Facebook*.

In this way, Meryam renders it more difficult for non-friends to locate her in the space. She noted to fear 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, *Facebooks'* 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 note they adapt the space to their own preferences, saying that policy instilled forms of peer accountability are insufficient, arguing that pseudonyms, fictive information, making one's profile invisible and consciously choosing what pictures to upload are 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 recognizes the constructedness of networked performance of gender and sexuality in the social networking site *MySpace*. Similar to how Moroccan-Dutch youths upload a profile image for their peers, he argues 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 notes a citation and reiteration of gender and sexuality norms in social networking site practices. Following the digitally articulated sexual encounters of gay, lesbian and hetero people he finds 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 (2009, pp. 5, 17). In a similar way, informants do underline that they do not necessarily always conform to the dominant gender stereotypical modes of visual representation I have described so far. For instance Oussema specifies that he positions himself "*in-between, always in-between*" in his profile images. He states:

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 zoom in further on how social-networking sites are used to articulate in-between identities. I shift the focus, from analyzing the use of pictures to perform a version of the self, to using hyperlinks for the same purpose. Besides photographs, hyperlinks are visual statements that are part of the larger visual narrative

of self users compose on their personal profile pages. By signaling affiliations, hyperlinks can be seen as another way to brand and communicate oneself to one's peer community.

5.4 Hypertextual selves: Convivial fandom and networked belonging

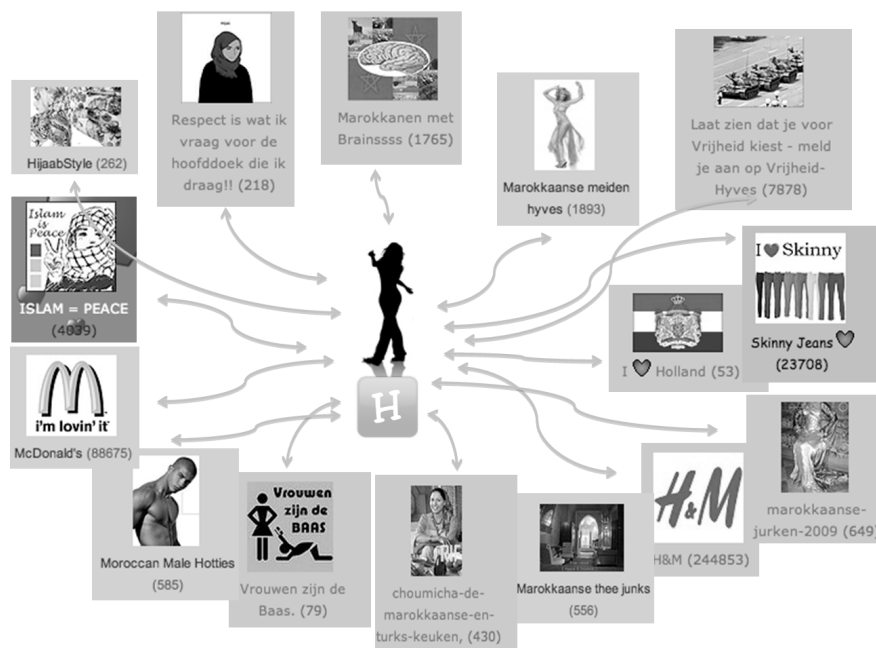


Figure 5.7 *Hyves* groups Midia links to on her *Hyves* profile page (April 15, 2009).

Profile images are only one example of the myriad ways SNS users constitute a graphical narrative of self on their profile page. In figure 5.7 the icons of the groups 13-year-old Midia hyperlinks to on her *Hyves* profile page are shown. She connects to a variety of groups ranging from feminist interests (“Women in Charge”), Dutch nationalism (“I love Holland”) to food cultures relating to both migration backgrounds (“Choumicha, the Moroccan and Turkish kitchen”, “Moroccan tea junky”) as well as global junk food (“McDonald’s”). She expresses belonging to religious interests (“Hijaab Style”, “Islam = Peace”), different clothing styles such as from headscarves (“Respect is what I ask for the headscarf that I’m wearing”), 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 vary in member-size from 53 members who joined the

group “I love Holland” to 244853 members who joined “H&M”.¹³ Joining these groups, hyperlinked icons are published on Midia’s profile and these different visual statements cover a wide spectrum of interests, belongings and affiliations. Taken together on a profile page, these different hyperlinked constitute a multicultural bricolage of fandoms and a discursive space of intercultural encounter.

Social networking sites allow users to traverse and add hyperlinks to their personal websites in the forms of profile pages, the publishing of preferences, and possibilities of participating in and affiliating with interest-based communities. Profile pages consist of a dynamic hypertext based on Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) coding. HTML is the protocol of documents that refer to each other, constituting the backbone of the Web; every text that you find on the Internet is connected to a web of other texts through hyperlinks. These links 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 the groups Ryan, Anas, and Midia hyperlink to 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). Donna Haraway recognized that hypertext emphasizes making of connections, but it does not foreground or forecloses certain areas of the Internet. 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 section 1.5 I introduced hypertext as a figuration, empirical material and a means of intervention. In this section I develop my understanding of hyper textual selves further to shed light on 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 majority Dutch youths 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. The promising double-sidedness of cultural identification is subsequently theorized from the perspective of postcolonial theory. I turn to hypertextual performativity of self and argue informants’ linking to

¹³ Pages were accessed on October 20, 2011.

group pages is an example of conviviality that allows me rethink multiculturalism from below.

Self-profiling as fandom

In expressing a variety of affiliations, Midia displays actively re-values her ethnic, religious and gendered embeddings. Writing about young people more broadly, Sonia Utz argues that users on *Hyves* actively brand themselves towards their peers (2008, pp. 247-254). Similar to how on *Facebook* users can press the “Like” button to show their appreciation of a page, video or photo uploaded on *Hyves* people perform their preferences. I want to consider these processes in this section as a form of fandom. Studies on fan cultures stress the relevance of studying how individuals as dedicated and participatory audience members select from the repertoires of popular culture. Together with Henry Jenkins, John Fiske rendered fandom into a viable object of scholarly attention. 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). Fiske wrote about fandom as an ongoing process of “capital accumulation”: “[f]an cultural capital, like the official, lies in the appreciation and knowledge of texts, performers and events” (1992, p. 42). Fans are active consumers who become often, and especially in digital settings, also producers and distributors of content. Fiske recognized that fandom arises from 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, np).

Hyperlinking is a slice of the larger domain of fandom practices on social networking sites. The dynamics of performing ethnicity as fandom practice can be illustrated by considering how the publishing of Berber belongings. 16-year-old Bibi for instance notes 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, 21-year-old moderator of the “Imazighen” group *Hyves* (<http://imazighen.hyves.nl/>), he shared he started the group on 08 April 2007. He compares his group to the famous Dutch football club PSV Eindhoven *Hyves* group. “*On your personal profile page within the social networking site, you can list your interests, but you can also do*

this through group hyves. A PSV fan would join a PSV-groups hyves for instance". The difference with the football group site lays in the fact that the Imazighen Hyves concerns ethnic fandom. Rafik describes the goal of his site as follows:

My group Hyves 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.

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 soccer club, Hyves users can opt to join the "Imazighen" hyves to perform their ethnic affiliation online. On this page, Moroccan-Dutch youths 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 5.8 "I'm a Berber Soldier", archived from <http://imazighen.hyves.nl/> (September 19, 2009).

Figure 5.8 is an image uploaded to the group 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.¹⁴ 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

¹⁴ 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, np).

green blue, green and yellow Berber flag. Moroccan-Dutch youths have mixed the Aza with other expressions of global youth culture. The gun and textual exclamation are for instance expressions lifted from the contexts of global (English language) hip-hop toughness. This exemplifies how ethnicity is consumed through a detour of youth cultural re-embedding. The monitored group page is considered safe enough to publish textual and visual statements to an intended audience of fellow Berber identifying youths or interested individuals. Digital Berber fandom identification is one example of cultural self-profiling.

Cultural self-profiling

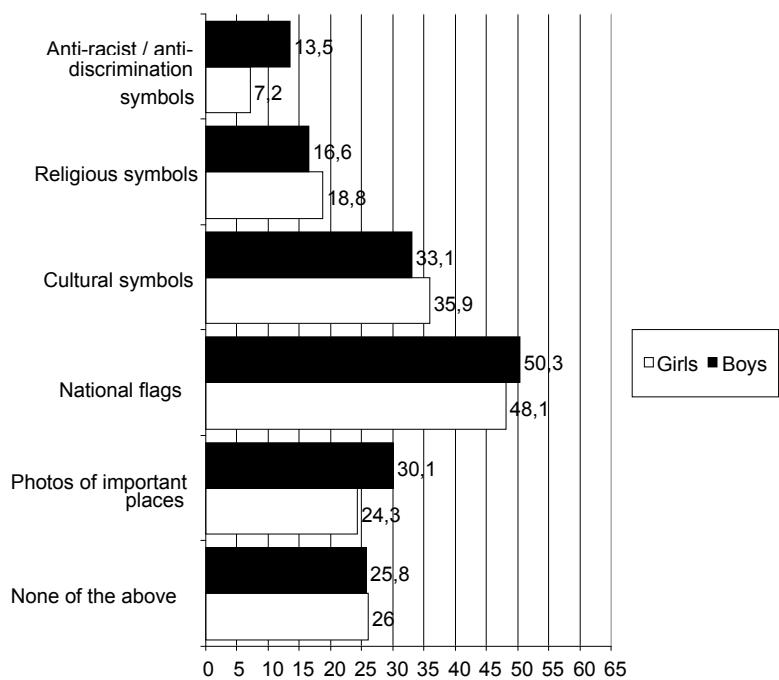


Figure 5.9 Cultural self-profiling Moroccan-Dutch youths (graph shows percentages, n = 344).

With the Wired Up survey quantitative empirically grounded insights were generated on online self-profiling activities. The survey invited respondents 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 link to and include on their profile page. Figure 5.9 provides the findings of (gender differences in) cultural self-profiling among Moroccan-Dutch youths.

A quarter of Moroccan-Dutch youths reported they do not put any of these cultural self-profiling things on their personal page. The option to include “national flags (Netherlands, Morocco, Turkey, Surinam, Curacao, etc)” was popular among boys and girls. Roughly half of them reported to incorporate their national flag on their profile page. More than boys, girls listed they would include “cultural symbols (windmills, Amazigh/Aza, Nazar etc)”,¹⁵ while boys more than girls chose for “pictures of important places (your street, neighbourhood, holiday destination)”. Furthermore, “religious symbols (including Christian, Islamic, Jewish)”, were more frequently listed by girls, while including “anti-racist or anti-discrimination signs or texts”, was more popular among boys.

During the follow-up interviews, informants expanded on the different cultural elements they incorporated in their self-presentations. Underlining ethnic pride and wearing the headscarf as an important identity-marker, 13-year-old Inas describes 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 to highlight their attachment to for instance the Islam by showing they are a member of groups pertaining to Islam on their online profile page. Grasmuck, Martin and Zhao found that *Facebook* allows users 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 and young adults” (2009, p. 180). However, Safae, 18-year-old, reported that signalling 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 out-dated, it’s something of the past’. That was bad, you can’t say that. I feel that is discrimination.

This remark once again emphasizes offline social divisions also color digital behavior. As such ethnic and religious minorities sometimes 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 others by fellow users. However, in return, Moroccan-Dutch *Hyves* users actively respond

¹⁵ Nazar refers to the amulet used in Turkey and elsewhere to protect against the evil eye.

to such acts of racism by disrupting stereotypes, a process which shows similarities to the typed contestations of allocated positions on online discussion boards.

In section 1.5 I introduced the *Hyves* groups Ryan links to on his profile page. For instance by joining the “Allochthonous Hyves group” an image appeared on his page that reads “Netherlands was partly made possible by Moroccans”. Linking to the icon of the group on his site, Ryan makes a visual statement. Figure 5.11 and 5.12 are other examples of how visual representations circulate that ironically reflexively play with Dutch mainstream representations of Moroccan-Dutch young people. The figures were downloaded from the “Proud to be Moroccan” group page (<http://trotsopmarokko.hyves.nl>). 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 ethnic-cultural background.

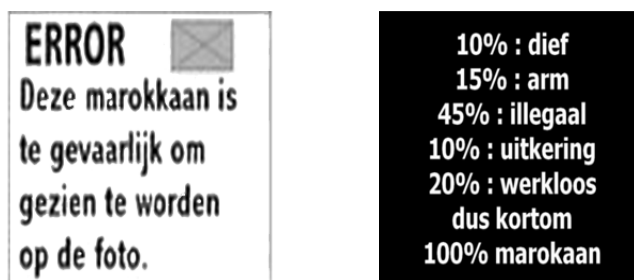


Figure 5.10 “Error” and 5.11 “100% Marokaan” archived from <http://trotsopmarokko.hyves.nl> (October 23, 2009).

Figure 5.10 reads, “ERROR, this Moroccan is too dangerous to be depicted in a picture”. Figure 5.11 is a critical reading of what it means to be allocated a position as Moroccan-Dutch: “10% is a thief, 15% is poor, 45% is illegal, 10% is on welfare, 20% is unemployed, in sum 100% Moroccan”. The figure reveals some of the ways Moroccan-Dutch youths perceive to be stereotyped. In my interview with Abdelilah Amraoui, the founder and moderator of the Proud to be Moroccan group, he notes he started the page as a joke in response to *Trots op Nederland* (In English: Proud of the Netherlands), a Dutch conservative party, and to be able to gather information and remind fellow Moroccan-Dutch youths of Moroccan-Dutch role models such as soccer players and musicians.¹⁶ These examples display agency on the side of ethnic minority youngsters to create alternative fandom positions by circulating new signifiers of Moroccan-Dutchness.

¹⁶ In my analysis of *YouTube* in chapter 6 I expand further on humorous and ironical digital forms of resistance.

¹⁷ Giselinde Kuipers emphasizes that distinct normative frameworks guide humor. Ethnic jokes are mostly only accepted when made by a member of the group joked about: “Blacks joke about Blacks, Turks about Turks” (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” group *Hypes* page where fellow Moroccan-Dutch youths congregate. Through their participation in this fandom counter culture, they establish a shared identity and a mutual sense of belonging.

Differential networking

Inspired by Midia’s hyperlinked affiliations, 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 show food, music and celebrity preferences on three locality dimensions (host, migrant or transnational cultures) on their profile page (table 5.2). For instance on the topic of celebrities the survey asked respondents to tick a box indicating whether they would show “Dutch celebrities (for example famous Dutch people, soap stars or sportsmen/ women)”, “Famous migrants (for example Raymann, Najib Amhali or Moroccan, Turkish or Carribean” and “International stars (for example Hollywood, international footballer players, Bollywood). Respondents could click more than one option.¹⁸

I zoom in on two themes in the self-profiling of Moroccan-Dutch and ethnic majority Dutch youths. 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 list Dutch music and celebrities more. 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

¹⁷ In the art-scene similar counter initiatives emerged where Moroccan-Dutch artists ironically reflexively played with negative stereotypes. Consider for instance the 2005-2006 Kunstmarokkanen contemporary art project (which can be translated into Art Moroccans). The name is a pun that hints at the negative label of “Kutmarokkanen” (in English: cuntmoroccans), commonly used when dismissing Moroccan-Dutch boys who misbehave (see www.kunstmarokkanen.nl/).

¹⁸ Regarding food preferences, respondents were invited to chose whether they would self-profile “Dutch food (for instance fries and mayonnaise, borecole, sandwiches with cheese)”, “Migrant background food (for instance couscous, Turkish pizza, kebab, kouseband, baklava) and/or “International food (for instance tapas, sushi, McDonalds, KFC, Italian food) or no food preferences. For music preferences, the options were “Dutch stars (for instance soap actors, famous sport people)”, “Famous migrants (for instance Raymann, Najib Amhali or other Moroccan, Turkish or Carribean)”, and/or “International stars (for instance Lady Gaga, Kanye West or other hip-hop, rap, rock and R&B)” or no music preferences.

to highlight the diasporic element of their identity. 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 to include 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 youths. Singling out migrant affiliations among Moroccan-Dutch youths and Dutch affiliations among majority Dutch youths does however not paint the full picture.

<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 <i>Dutch</i> 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 <i>migrant</i> 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 <i>international</i> 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

Table 5.2 Cultural self-profiling (n= 344 Moroccan-Dutch and 448 ethnic majority Dutch respondents)

The differences between the groups in terms of their self-profiling 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. At least 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 percent of boys and over two thirds of ethnic majority Dutch boys and girls selected it.

The two-sidedness of cultural self-profiling (identification with ethnic and international markers) can be drawn out on the basis of the dynamics of cultural identification as recognized by various postcolonial theorists. Stuart Hall sees cultural identification characterized by historical, collectively shared “continuous frames of reference and meaning” (1990, p. 223). However, he argues that cultural identity is also subject to simultaneous transformation; it remains “a matter of ‘becoming’” (1990, p.

225). In parallel, Gilroy specifies that a double consciousness among migrant subjects is reflected by affiliating with “roots” and “routes” as part of a complex cultural identification (1993, pp. 19, 190). As two sides of the same coin, roots refer to the stable and continuing elements of identities where people imagine to be coming from, while routes refer to disruption and change in response to interaction and exchange with changing cultural environments. Gilroy stresses the importance of not just focusing on one of either roots or routes but argues for an examination of their interplay.

Conviviality and intercultural encounters

Paul Gilroy distinguishes between institutionalized multiculturalism and everyday multiculturalism. Beyond political, governmental, scholarly and mainstream media understandings of the failure of multiculturalism, he sees multiculturalism in action from the bottom-up and refers to this as “conviviality” of cohabitation. Conviviality offers a way to acknowledge the potential for empowerment in interactional processes that render “multiculturalism an ordinary feature of social life” (Gilroy, 2005, p. xv). The hyperlinking practices of Midia, Anas and Ryan and the survey findings suggest that everyday multiculturalism can be observed in action, in the (Dutch) digital realm as well. People with a variety of affiliations encounter one another as they digitally mediate their everyday lived experiences and fandom affiliations.

Hyperlink practices on social networking sites allow Moroccan-Dutch youths 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, Avtar Brah argues that such spaces arise from “the point at which boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, of belonging and otherness, of ‘us’ and ‘them,’ are contested” (1996, p. 205). On *Hypes* and *Facebook*, by showing different dimensions of one’s identity users can stake out their individuality. In the words of my informants, 13-year-old Ilham compares digital spaces and describes that on MSN “*you see one side of someone*” while a profile page “*allows you to show more of yourself*”. 18-year-old Mustafa notes, “*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 adds that when profile visitors notice the different elements someone puts on his page this “*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 *MySpace* and *Facebook* therefore can be said to offer a glance at everyday multiculturalism or conviviality. Individuals 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 youths 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, that 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 do not meet the mainstream norm of *MySpace'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 a reminder that the digital realm is increasingly policed, certain minoritarian practices become restricted as well (Leurs, 2012). Nelli Kambouri and Dimitri Parsanoglou stress that digital Muslim/migrant networks are treated as risks to society by authorities: "[m]igrant digital networks are increasingly conceptualized as an

Internet security threat, in particular after September 11th and the rise of Islamophobia”. New technologies thus also “generate new means of intensified monitoring and surveillance of migrant bodies” (2010, pp. 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: “[w]hile 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.” Under increased Israeli government pressure, the page was however deleted soon after by *Facebook* administrators (Protalinski, 2011, np). Similarly, political activity is restricted within *Hynes*. Its founder, Raymond Spanjar, chose to forbid anti-groups 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).

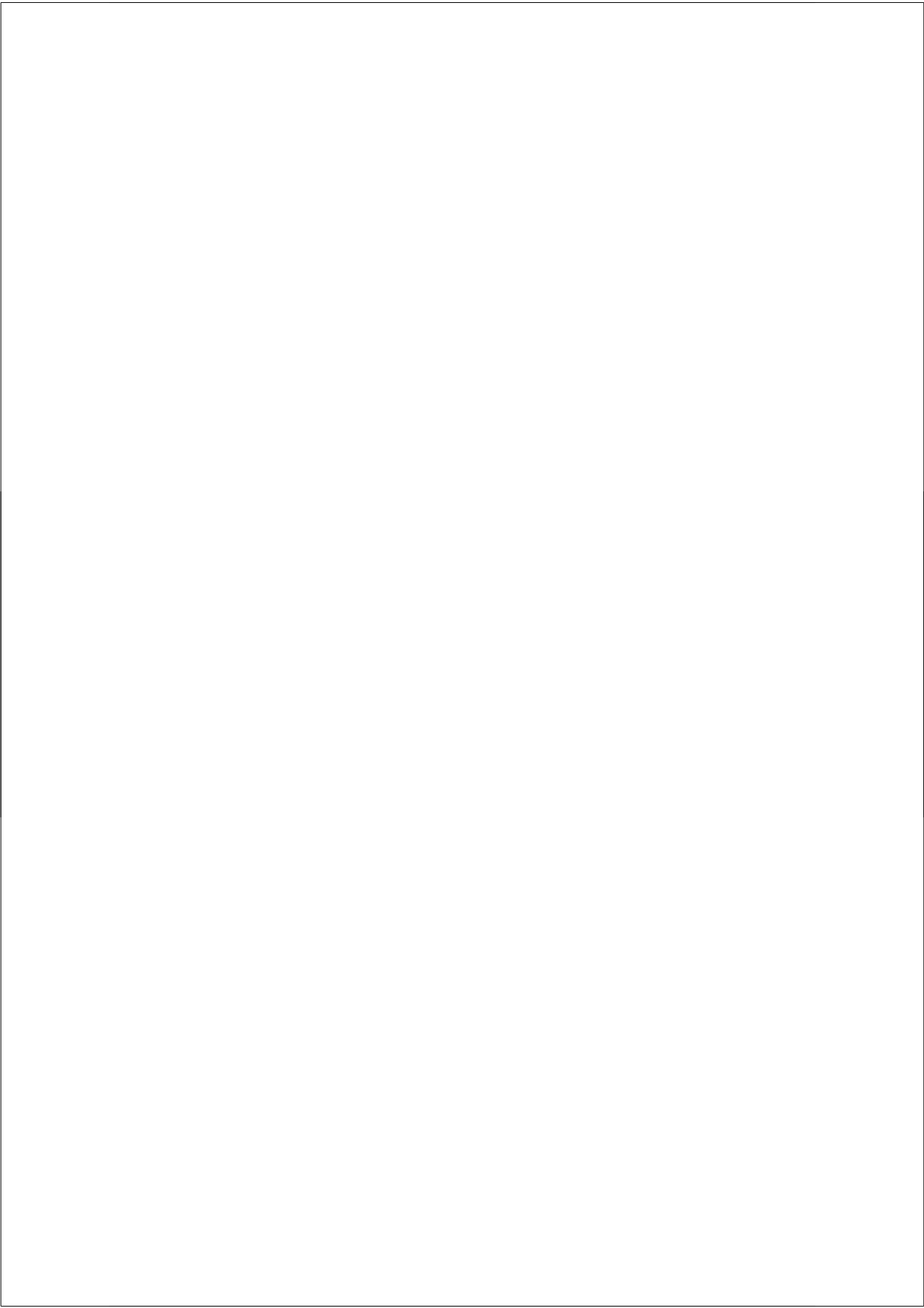
In sum, hypertextual selves performed on personal profile pages may be taken to reflect the multiplicity of Moroccan-Dutch youths identification. Hypertext as an in-between space where different points of articulation can meet and in-between identities can be expressed presents a strong example of how 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 youths articulate their graphical narrative of self and engage in intercultural encounters with various social networking site users.

5.5 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 that technological restrictions, user cultures, corporate motives and peer norms shape a particular age, gender, and religiosity-based politics of 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 gendered photographic self-depiction ideals. 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 submissive pose reflecting awareness of the heterosexual masculine gaze. Bodies are disciplined to meet these expectations, but versions of hegemonic 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 developed.

Additionally, I turned to analyze in-between forms of identification in 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 youths 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 culture. In their cultural-self profiling on line, the younger generations not only tap into migrant heritage elements. Rather than a straightforward continuation of cultural legacies of their parents, such individuals are actively transforming those in ways that resonate with the dominant global youth cultures in which they grow up. Hypertextual selves was taken up as a figuration to acknowledge bottom-up representation of decentered identities that signal the bankruptcy of the clichéd, narrow image of Moroccan-Dutch youths. Furthermore hyperlinks can be followed as personal trajectories of intercultural encounters with multiple others in the space of social networking sites. Considering hypertextual in-between positioning of Moroccan-Dutch youths 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 turn to emotional identification and *YouTube* video viewing.



6. Affective belongings: *YouTube*

From time to time I watch videos, self-made ones, showing different Moroccan scenes. I kind of enjoy watching those. They make me go back in my mind to Morocco, and every once in a while I like that.

– Nevra, 16 years old

The first video ever uploaded on *YouTube* is a short 19 seconds clip entitled *Me at the Zoo*. Set in the U.S. San Diego Zoo, we see Jawed Karim – one of *YouTube* founders – in front of an elephant enclosure stating, “alright, so here we are in front of the elephants. The cool thing about these guys is that they have really, really really long.. um trunks, and that’s cool. And that’s pretty much all there is to say” (Jawed, 2005). The viewing of such videos allows users to reconnect to and presence themselves at a distant location elsewhere from behind their screens. Illustratively, 16-year-old Nevra shared that she literally travels back to Morocco in her mind by watching videos shot in Morocco on *YouTube*, sparking her memories and making her relive her earlier experiences there. She reports to feel emotionally moved by watching these videos. Nevra and other informants consume *YouTube* as a way reconnect to their childhood histories or past holiday visits. The videos restore memories of their (or their parents’) home outside of the Netherlands. The majority of the informants were born in the Netherlands and their imaginings of a home outside of the Netherlands are thus indeed mainly virtual, based especially on holiday travel and for instance emotional identification through consuming *YouTube* videos filmed in Morocco. Besides watching such videos, informants turned to *YouTube* to access music videos from various artists across the globe. When asked why informants used *YouTube*, they commonly stated watching videos made them feel “*less homesick*”, “*nostalgic*”, “*good*”, “*soothed*”, “*emotional*”, “*relaxed*” and/or “*happy*”. They are affected in various ways by watching *YouTube* videos.

In this chapter, I consider the digital space of *YouTube* as a “repository” of electronic and mediated affectivity, an “archive of feeling” (Fortunati & Vincent, 2009; Cvetkovich, 2003, p. 7).¹ My argument can be situated in the “affective turn” (Clough & Halley, 2007). I map out, describe and analyze what emotions may be evoked in the bodies of informants as they watch *YouTube* videos. A focus on affectivity is pressingly

¹ For instance Brian Massumi points to one’s state of consciousness to distinguish between emotions and affect. Affect include visceral emotions that happen outside of consciousness, but they include memories that can move people when invoked, while emotions are culturally scripted action-reaction circuits (2002, p. 26). In the present chapter, by focusing on how people are moved by watching video materials I go beyond this binary distinction as I for instance consider memories, too, as culturally coded and socially constructed.

required in the fields of migration and communication/media studies (Boehm & Swank, 2011; Fortunati & Vincent, 2009).² More specifically I focus on video consumption processes that give viewers a feeling of belonging, sustained through the “affective contact with objects” (Ahmed, 2010, p. 29). The interviewees mostly participate in *YouTube* as consumers by watching and commenting on videos. In comparison with other young people, their engagement with the platform is not uncharacteristic. Geert Lovink specifies that the actual number of users who post videos to *YouTube* is small: “YouTube’s slogan, ‘Broadcast Yourself’, is put into action by less than 1 per cent of its users” (2007, p. 11, see also Lange, 2008). Thus, the “1 % rule” also known as the “89-10-1 ratio” of Internet culture participation – a generally observed pattern of social media participation where 89% of the audience view content, 10% edit, modify or comment on content and 1% create and share content – seems to hold for *YouTube* as well (Arthur, 2006).³ However, prior research on *YouTube* and online video has mostly focused on processes of content production and uploading instead of consumption (e.g. Burgess & Green, 2009; Burgess, 2011; Lange, 2008, 2009, 2011; Nelson & Hwang, 2012). In this chapter I take a different stance, as I focus on the informants’ watching of *YouTube* media I unpack different sides to their affective audiencehood.⁴

Amparo Lasén asserts that considering “affective bandwidth” provides insights on what happens in-between online content and user signification practices, a process which cannot be reduced solely to either meanings or “bytes” (2010, p. 49). To locate the affective dimension in-between, I understand informants’ consumption practices as the affective engagement with a number of their favorite “videos of affinity” (Lange, 2009, p. 71). Consuming these videos gives rise to feelings of being connected to groups of other people, because affective investment in objects can “promise” people a sense of community (Ahmed, 2004, p. 198). Affect can be “transmitted” (Brennan, 2004) and taking up symbolic materials of belonging allows one to be emotionally attached to “affective communities” (Gandhi, 2006). Affective belonging is not constricted to a singular community. As Sara Ahmed writes, “emotions show us how histories stay alive”

² For instance Deborah Boehm and Heidi Swank note that the research “on migration rarely captures the affective and emotional dimensions of global processes” (2011, p. 1) while Leopoldina Fortunati and Jane Vincent signal the scarce attention for affectivity in studies on ICT: “[w]e are at the infancy of studies on emotion and ICT’s” (2009, p. 15).

³ Recent user figures illustrate this trend: in May 2011, *YouTube* announced that more than 48 hours of video is uploaded every minute, while the site receives 3 billion viewers each day (YouTube Blog, 2011).

⁴ I follow the suggestion by Burgess, who rightly noted that “[w]hile much popular and scholarly discourse imagines casual viewing of content as the lowest level of engagement, with creation as the highest level, perhaps it is time we took more seriously once again the question of the audience – asking what is involved in being an audience for user-created and user-distributed content, in media ecologies that also include television content, as in *YouTube*” (2011, p. 328).

adding that they “also open up futures, in the ways they involve different orientations to others” (2004, p. 202). As such, the multiplicity of emotions and affectivity echoes the double sidedness of cultural identification at the crossroads of roots and routes (see chapter four and five).

This doublesideness emerged as a pattern in the way informants spoke to me about *YouTube*. Ilham for instance explains how she sees *YouTube* by stating: “*you can watch anything you want there, by searching for a key word. You will find video-clips of songs, and real videos*”. Ilham juxtaposes “*video-clips*” and “*real videos*”. With “*video-clips*” she refers to professional music videos from American, Moroccan, Middle-Eastern and Berber artists she enjoys to listens to. With “*real videos*” she points to amateur content such as user-generated travel videos made in Morocco that also give a good feeling. Other informants, in their discussion of *YouTube* video consumption practices also made this distinction, noting they enjoyed looking up music videos while they also had a preference for watching amateur videos dealing with Morocco, religion or the Moroccan-Dutch community. My informants’ distinguishing between the two genres of “*video-clips*” and “*real*” videos echoes scholarly divisions made between mainstream materials uploaded by commercial corporate and/or institutional players and vernacular, user-generated contents (Androutsopoulos, 2010; Burgess & Green, 2008; Lange, 2011). Although I recognize that the boundaries between the two genres are blurry I follow the distinction informants and scholars alike make for its explanatory power and to structure my argument.

In section 6.1 I situate *YouTube* use among Moroccan-Dutch youths and discuss the video-battle following the publication of the anti-Islam film *Fitna*. Next, I theorize affective belonging in amateur and professional video. Section 6.3 considers that vernacular religious videos and nostalgic videos shot in Morocco are sources of affective identity formation for the interviewees. I expand my understanding of symbolic transnationalism by focusing on how informants consume *YouTube* videos as vehicles to strengthen their emotional belonging to their imaginary homeland and other groups. For this purpose I analyze emotional identification that emerges from the consumption of *YouTube* videos as a form of “transnational affect” (Wise & Velayutham, 2007). More specifically, I approach nostalgia and sensorial memories, observable in informants’ consumption of Moroccan-themed videos, religious movies and satirical videos of affinity as three particular instantiations of transnational affectivity. However, transnational affectivity is not the sole purpose of *YouTube* use among my informants.

Many mentioned that they turn to the platform to access music videos of artists from different parts of the world. In section 6.4 I therefore consider YouTube as a space of conviviality by arguing how interviewees display a routed multi-geography affectivity in their consumption of music videos.

6.1 Moroccan-Dutch youths using *YouTube*

Globally, *YouTube* is the third most frequented site on the web, as is revealed in a recent 3-month analysis of global website user traffic (Alexa, 2012). Based on the number of times *YouTube* was included in the Internet maps, *YouTube* is the second most valuable platform online after *MSN* among the informants. Its popularity also becomes apparent from the findings of the large-scale Wired Up survey (see figure 2.3 in chapter 2). Most Moroccan-Dutch youths (77%) report to go on *YouTube* 4 days per week or more. Additionally, they report a strong attachment to the platform as more than half of the respondents noted they would miss the platform when they would not be able to use it anymore. Two-thirds of Moroccan-Dutch girls and over half of boys reported they would miss using *YouTube* very much (see table 6.1).

<i>Attachment SNS use</i>	<i>Completely not</i>	<i>Somenbat</i>	<i>Very much</i>	<i>Total</i>
Girls	8.3 %	32.6 %	59.1 %	100 %
Boys	11.0 %	36.8 %	52.2 %	100 %

Table 6.1 Would Moroccan-Dutch youths miss *YouTube* if they could not use it anymore? (n= 344).

13-year-old Ilham explained she sees *YouTube* as a global platform, where a wide variety of material can be found. She also emphasizes its contested character; videos that do not meet *YouTube*'s moderation policy can be deleted.

It is a site, very much global, it has been a great success. It has existed for 5 years, I recently read about it. You can upload all sorts of videos there. They can be about many different things. Some will be deleted when they are really dirty or when they hurt people.

Informants report to make use of *YouTube* for a variety of reasons. 17-year-old Sadik considers *YouTube* a good place to learn new guitar tricks "*the advantage with YouTube is that you don't have to take guitar lessons, because they are given for free there*". Using a website such as *Keepvid.com*, 14-year-old Mehmet Ali downloads Moroccan-Arabic and Berber songs from *YouTube* to his mobile phone, a *Nokia N-95*. 15-year-old Oussema discussed how he acted as a knowledge broker and turned to *YouTube* together with his father before his parents embarked on their Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca: "*I'm not a practicing Muslim, but for my dad it was useful, he wanted to learn more before he went on his pilgrimage*". Two reasons were

mentioned most frequently: the first is that informants turn to *YouTube* to look up music videos and second they access videos pertaining to Islam and Morocco. 38 interviewees (88%) turn to *YouTube* to watch music video-clips, while 18 (42%) look up user-generated videos about Islam and 12 informants (28%) videos taken by people traveling in Morocco.

Besides the contents of videos uploaded, the comment section is also used for discussion and self-expression. In the comment section, flaming and other forms of anti-social behavior are not uncommon: “insulting, swearing or using otherwise offensive language ... appears to be very common on YouTube” (Moor, Heuvelman & Verleur, 2010, p. 1536). 16-year-old Inzaf shared she accepts that people can leave their opinion, even if sometimes it hurts: “*yes they can post [whatever they want], as freedom of speech applies there*”. She adds that comments affect her only when the video contents are dear to her heart, as is the case when videos “*are about [things] or people I know*”. In such cases, she shows concern about the comments, “*I do have a look at what people have to say about it*”. One of 16-year-old Naoul’s statements reminds us that Moroccan-Dutch youths also remain space invaders on *YouTube*. Naoul said that the comment sections for videos pertaining to Morocco sometimes fill up with verbal abuse and hostility: “*when you watch a video on YouTube, they [ethnic majority Dutch people] shout ‘cunt-Moroccans’ and this and that about Moroccans*”.

Fitna

One video in particular, *Fitna* – and the video responses it provoked – has dominated recent Dutch public and scholarly debates over digital video, Muslims and *YouTube* (Leurs, Hirzalla & Van Zoonen, 2012). The anti-Islamic visual pamphlet *Fitna* was made by Dutch right-wing Member of Parliament Geert Wilders. *Fitna* is a 17-minute cut-n-mix collage that includes excerpts from the Quran, crosscut with suras,⁵ blurry video segments and newspaper clippings portraying acts of violence carried out by Muslims across the globe. The video opens with a cartoon by Kurt Westergaard depicting Prophet Muhammad wearing a turban in the shape of a lighted bomb, which was a central image in the *Jyllands-Posten* Muhammad cartoons controversy (Blaagaard, 2010, np; Kuipers, 2008). Centering on perceived negative influences of Islam in the Netherlands, the film implies that Islam promotes terrorism, anti-Semitism, violence against women, homosexuals and non-believers. *Fitna* is an example of how those in positions of power

⁵ A sura refers to one of the 114 particular sections or chapters of the Quran.

in the Netherlands – Wilders was a member of Dutch parliament at time the video was released – hail Muslim identities in negative terms. Ryan, a 15-year-old interviewee, shared his frustration with Geert Wilders and *Fitna*:

He had just made Fitna, and I got very angry with him. I really did not like that. He combined all sorts of outrageous stuff [in the video]. He included strange things, I found it outrageous. He says that many [Muslim] people wear a burqa, but in my family no one wears a burqa, I never see a burqa in the streets. Why does he make such a fuss about it, that Geert Wilders I believe also has good points to him. Like, that we would have to pay lower taxes. But he has a lot of nonsensical points, such as about Islam.

Fitna was followed up by an intensive video battle that has not gone unnoticed by scholars. Thousands of *YouTube* users from across the globe uploaded their own videos to critique or show their support of the film. The responses for instance consisted of activism and culture jamming by tagging unrelated videos with keywords pertaining to *Fitna* to make *Fitna* more difficult to find online, videos in which people offer their personal apologies for Wilders' making of *Fitna* and satirical and parodying cut-n-mix videos. Liesbet van Zoonen, Farida Vis and Sabina Mihelj recognize these acts as particular performances of dispersed citizenship (2010, p. 260). Young Muslim women from Egypt in particular were found to be active in uploading videos that critiqued Wilders for speaking for them and presenting Islam as an oppressive religion (Vis, Van Zoonen & Mihelj, 2011, pp. 123-127). The *Fitna* video battle has also been analyzed in terms of humor, however some comedians defending their Islamic faith on video blogs (vlogs) posted in response were found to be mostly excluding instead of fostering constructive and uniting dialogue (Hirzalla, Van Zoonen & Müller, 2011). The battle is still going on, and Geert Wilders is working on a sequel to *Fitna* (Van den Dool, 2011, np).

I want to give an idea of video battle dynamics by describing one example of a comical response to *Fitna* one of the informants mentioned: *Kop of munt* (in English: Head or tails). *Kop of munt* is a film that can be positioned in the video debate that unfolded after Wilders released *Fitna*. The video was made in October 2009 by MUNT, a collective of Moroccan-Dutch young people, and it has attracted 430.000 views so far (MUNT, 2009).⁶ This 9-minute short movie is accompanied by the following tagline on *YouTube*: “In *Kop of munt*, the day is sketched on which Moroccans have left the Netherlands en masse” (my translation). In the video some of the stereotypical consequences of what the Netherlands would look like without Moroccan-Dutch

⁶ The video has accumulated 144.857 views on March 08, 2012 (see Munt, 2009). Another copy of the video uploaded to *YouTube* accumulated an additional 284.247 views (see Mlamaiz, 2009).

inhabitants are visualized: newspaper delivery stagnates, Moroccan-Dutch shows in the theatres are cancelled, barbershops close down, newspaper commentary and opinion sections are left empty, taxi's become scarce, social housing projects are abandoned, prisons are put up for sale because they are untenanted, requests for social services decline and there are major traffic jams in Belgium, France and Spain in the direction of Morocco. The film counters Islamophobia by exaggerating what the Netherlands would look like without Moroccan-Dutch inhabitants, exposing the absurdities in the debates on Moroccan-Dutch people.⁷

After he first saw *Kop of munt* Oussema, a 15-year-old interviewee, wrote to me in a *FaceBook* chat conversation. He reflected on the video from two perspectives: “as a [video] editor I think it is well composed and I think the color balance (magic bullet looks) is well done”;⁸ and “as a Moroccan I find it quite funny and I believe they are so right” in addressing these topics. He admired the satire, “I love how you see the hairdresser taking off, taking the [satellite] dish with him”. The satellite dish has become a symbol of alterity. Because migrants can tune in to channels from their country of origins, satellite television is increasingly seen as a reason why ethnic minorities fail to integrate in Dutch society (Scheffer, 2007, p. 40). A flood of verbal abuse is visible in the comment section. Oussema was quite offended by the amount of negative responses and reactions left by other viewers, as he wrote to me “172 dislikes :S 😞”, adding a shocked and sad face emoticon. A large number of people had clicked the *YouTube* “dislike” button, while 204 users pressed the “like” button. He dismisses the many negative, discriminating and painful comments by emphasizing these are views coming from the margins of Dutch society.

In the worldview set forward by Wilders in *Fitna* the religion of Islam is equated with violence and oppression, and its believers are framed as violent, backward and frightening. This way, at the mercy of being hailed by those in power, Muslim people from around the globe and the Netherlands in particular are denied their status as full human subjects; they are not seen as equal. Rather, Muslims become de-humanized objects deviating from the norm, and are allocated positions as inferior citizens, being somehow less than fully human. As a form of humorous agency, *Kop of munt*, displays how such injurious hailing acts can begin to be subverted and re-signified by returning a

⁷ Videos that similarly satirically showcased what would happen if a particular ethnic minority group would leave a country include *The city without Jews*: a prophetic Expressionist film about what would happen if all Jews would leave Vienna (Breslauer, 1924) and *A day without a mexican* depicting what would happen if all Mexicans would leave the U.S. state of California (Arau, 2004).

⁸ Magic Bullet is a video-editing software plug-in which enables filmmakers to edit digital video to make it look like a professional film.

gaze through acts of vernacular video parody. *Kop of munt* received major exposure in mainstream news coverage (such as TV news and major national newspapers).⁹ The video shows that humor is able to “transcend cultural boundaries” by speaking to audiences outside the ethnic-specific normative community it may have arisen from (Kuipers, 2008, pp. 7-8).

The *Fitna* video battle is a significant feature of digital video culture among Muslim and Moroccan-Dutch youths, however in this chapter, I study videos that informants mentioned more often. By analyzing the perceptions interviewees had of videos I focus on emotional attachment to digital videos in particular. The videos discussed in the chapter were brought up by the informants during the interviews, or shared during follow up conversation on *MSN*, *Facebook*, *Hypes* or e-mail. In the first part of the analysis I consider the engagement of informants with religious and nostalgic-themed user-generated videos. In the second part of my analysis on music video consumption, I consider the music artists the informants report to listen to. When informants during the interview reported they made use of *YouTube* to listen to music, they were invited to share their favorite artists by adding them on the Internet map they had drawn. As my aim was to learn more about their music preferences, I asked interviewees to situate the artists they mentioned in terms of gender, language use, genre and geographical context. Before analyzing informant’s consumption of user-generated and professional material, I describe the politics of *YouTube* and position myself in theories on affectivity below.

6.2 Theorizing affectivity and *YouTube*

As Patricia Lange writes, on *YouTube*, “people might have affiliations to many types of things such as hobbies, institutions or ideologies that form the overt content of a video’s subject matter” (2009, p. 71). I take the consumption of transmitted amateur and mainstream videos as my entry point to consider how Moroccan-Dutch informants experience a sense of belonging to affective communities on *YouTube*. In this section, I first elaborate my perspective on affectivity, the transmission of affectivity and the construction of affective communities. Secondly, I contextualize my argument in the wider context of affectivity and digital media. Finally, I analyze the politics of *YouTube*, and (geographical) forms of affectivity that *YouTube* video consumption might sustain.

⁹ *Kop of munt* was for example discussed in a news item on Dutch public television (*NOS op 3*) and in national newspapers such as *NRC Next* and *De Volkskrant*.

Transmission of affectivity

The affective turn, although first recognized as a way to shift the focus away from deconstructing signifying practices (Grossberg, 1992), can inform feminist post-structural interpretations of affective meaning production, subjectivity and power (Koivunen, 2010). Affect is a translation from the Greek term “affectus” which can be understood as “passion”, “emotion” and “desire” (Brennan, 2004, pp. 3-4). Sarah Ahmad, in her critical theorizing of the cultural politics of affectivity, writes that emotions are doings that should not only be considered as mental states but also as “social and cultural practices” (2004, p. 9). She takes an alternative view on emotions by focusing not on individuals, their psychological states nor their characters but on how emotions arise from the contact of people with material and imagined objects.¹⁰ These objects do not singularly determine an emotion; rather in their relationship a feeling emerge. Seen as social and cultural practices, emotions cover the relationships between “‘signs’ and how they work on and in relation to bodies” (ibid, p. 194). Ahmad adds that emotions can be considered as boundary making practices, making their subjects feel as insiders or outsiders to for example nationhood or other communities (ibid).

Following Michel Foucault, affectivity is a “technology of the self”, transforming bodies to reach a different state (1988, p. 18).¹¹ Affectivity itself is a non-coded emotion; it concerns the sparks in our bodies that can be coded (Gajjala, personal communication, February 9, 2012). Teresa Brennan understands affect as an evaluative orientation, a judgment accompanied by a “physiological shift” and she argues that affectivity coded in emotional linguistic or visual signs can be “transmitted” from one person to another (2004, pp. 5-6). The transmission of affect through different symbolic materials fosters the establishment of “affective communities” (Gandhi, 2006).¹² In the digital space of *YouTube*, transmitted visualized emotions can give its viewers a feeling of belonging to an affective community. Below I survey the literature on digital circuits of affect.

¹⁰ I build on Ahmed’s understanding of affect. Her critical theoretical affective lens is another deployment than related Deleuzian renderings (see for instance Massumi, 2002) or psychoanalytic interpretations (see for instance Sedgwick, 2003).

¹¹ Foucault describes technologies of the self “permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality” (1988, p. 18).

¹² Leela Gandhi developed her notion of “affective communities” to historically situate anti-colonial activists in late-Victorian Britain, who demonstrated an active “co-belonging” with Others. However, on a philosophical level she refers to an affective ethic of solidarity across differences (2006). I deploy the term differently, as a way to capture the affective differential group belongings that may grow from consuming *YouTube* videos (see also Cetina, 2005).

Digital circuits of affect

Although work on affectivity in relation to *YouTube* is scarce, scholars are starting to bring into focus the “emotionality of the digitalized everyday” by looking at how affect circulates in mediated contexts and online networks (Kunstman, 2012, p. 12). In this section I chart the terrain to contextualize my analysis of affectivity and *YouTube* video consumption.¹³ Leopoldina Fortunati argues that bringing in emotion in the study of mediated communication is urgent, as prior scholarship too often relied on “sociological theories without heart” (2009, p. 5).¹⁴ Charles Hirschkind’s ethnography of the circulation of cassette sermons in Cairo in the mid-1990s found this circulation shapes an “Islamic counterpublic”. He notes the collective “ethical affect” of listening to Quranic recitations: shopkeepers for instance play sermons as environmental sounds, growing awareness of their duties and enhancing their dispositions and morals as a form of relaxation (2006, p. 82). Extending the focus from analog to digital media can counteract prior disembodied understandings of signification through digital media (Lasén, 2010).

Mark Hansen emphasizes how perception is embodied and argues that the impact of digital images on users more broadly is not merely technological but an affective encounter. He considers bodies as the affective medium between information and constituted mental images, specifying that affectivity is the capacity to act on one’s body: “to catalyze body’s action on itself” (2004, p. 226). For example, Teun Dubbelman argues that story-driven computer games give the player the sense of being physically present within the digital game space (2011). Studying webcam culture and graphical chat as digital affectivity, Kevin Hillis notes that “online rituals” open up new ways of saying and seeing for participants. However increasing attachment to these rituals may be fetishized as people feel the need for seductive flows (2009, pp. 263-264). Describing affect and pornography, Susanna Paasonen studies how people may have a “fondness for specific images” that result in particular sensory effects (2010, p. 58). Lisa Leung proposes tracing “circuits of affect” as a tool for feminist Internet criticism. Tracing the circulation of affect, she found that, in a male-dominated social movement *Facebook* group, female users emotionally juggle swearing and verbal violence as a risky source of pleasure and hurting (2011, p. 93). Lena Karlsson argues that the affective pleasures if

¹³ As I focus on viewing practices instead of video production, I have chosen not to engage in dialogue with the critical work done on the cases of “affective labor” and “immaterial labor” and the complex interplay of user-generated content and corporate commodification (see for example Terranova, 2010).

¹⁴ Studying “haptic cinema” viewing practices and affects, film studies scholars like Laura Marks (2002), Steven Shaviro (2010) and Vivian Sobchack (2004) have similarly took the initiative to bring together critical theories with a focus on multi-sensorial experiences.

women's diary blog reading stem from their search of gender, age, race/ethnic, education-based "sameness" and "recognition" (2007, p. 138). This section served to show that the study of affect enriches understandings of re-embodiment in digital cultures in multiple ways. Consuming digital media often entails affective encounters; people embody sensory effects by listening to cassettes, playing video games or watching images. In a search for sameness, affective engagement with digital media may also be partly shaped by uneven categories of difference such as gender, ethnicity, and religion.

The politics of *YouTube*

Before elaborating affectivity on *YouTube*, in this section I focus first on the politics of the platform itself. In her analysis of the workings of emotional capitalism, Eva Illouz argues that our previously private sphere of emotions is increasingly intertwined with public economic spheres. Although commodified through the culture of capitalism, the communication of emotions fosters "sociability" between people as well as selfhood (2007, p. 21). *YouTube* can be used to transmit affectivity, but its culture of capitalism should not be left unnoticed. Emotions and affinities communicated and consumed are quantified and remain subject to profit-oriented motives of measurement and control. Lovink recognizes the changed dynamic of consuming multimedia, as users search and select the videos they want to watch: people "no longer watch films or TV; we watch databases" (2007, p. 11). Watching databases has its downsides, as user behavior on the platform is monitored and made into a valuable economic asset that is exploited by *YouTube's* owner *Google*.¹⁵ User behavior such as the actual uploading, tagging, sharing and commenting enables *YouTube* to expand as the number of videos on offer grows and they are opened up to larger audience (Kessler & Schäfer, 2009, pp. 278-285).

Viewing patterns have also become an asset as an exploitable database of user preferences. Personal viewing preferences for instance provide unique personally targeted advertising opportunities that *Google* can sell to corporations. *YouTube* viewing practices have been noted to mirror those of television audiences, with the difference that they do leave "material traces on the *YouTube* network, and this evidence of an attentive audience is essential to demonstrating the value of *YouTube* to advertisers" (Burgess, 2011, p. 327). Every user's interaction with the site leaves a trace in the *YouTube* database; this is an act of "implicit participation", as the tracing of users is built into the software design

¹⁵ *YouTube* was launched in early 2005 by Steve Chen, Chad Hurley and Jawed Karim, three former employees the e-commerce business *PayPal*. In November 2006, *Google* acquired *YouTube* for 1.65 billion U.S. dollars. In 2011 *YouTube* commenced its video rental service, challenging other corporations which offer similar services such as *Apple iTunes* and *Netflix*.

(Kessler & Schäfer, 2009, p. 285). Corporations pay to tap into *YouTube's* database of user-profiles, this way they are able to individually target users with advertisement banners and commercial videos.

YouTube's orientation towards attracting a particular, more profitable, segment of users from around the globe also has its consequences. Luc Pauwels and Patricia Hellriegel for example found a distinct “Anglo-Western stance” in their assessment of the cultural traits embedded in the platform structures and moderators’ intervention behavior. They recognize that *Youtube* is a “constantly monitored platform with predefined options and categories and rules of engagement”. The platform structures user behavior to bind together users in order to expand the consumer potential (2009, pp. 395-396). Technological decisions and user preferences were found to result in “hegemonic masculinity”: Faye Hendrick and Simon Lindgren studied video production and consumption among young Swedes and found that videos made by girls are scarce, and those girls that publish videos are prone to receive sexist comments (2011, p. 165). Besides gender hierarchies, other forms of unevenness have also been recognized.

Melissa Wall studied *YouTube* videos featuring the countries of Ghana and Kenya. She argues that videos uploaded to the platform by ordinary people may be taken up to circulate alternative representations of African countries: these videos are “providing a small opening for Africans to create and present their own stories to the world” (2009, p. 405). However, there are significant issues that downplay or at least nuance the potential to subvert dominant Western gazes. Stereotypical representations do get replicated. Most of the content posted either stems from Western tourists, international aid agencies and Kenyans and Ghanaians who posted entertainment content but strayed away from providing serious information about their countries. She found that historical inequalities are perpetuated on *YouTube*, allowing those from the west to take the dominant perspective:

YouTube enables the average westerner in particular to become a chronicler of other peoples in faraway lands just as travelers and missionaries ‘discovered’ Africa in previous centuries. Most of these westerners, although not the official voices of the past, do not offer a remedy to the Othering of Africa. Indeed, many of their contributions to YouTube reinforce and naturalize stereotypes.

– Melissa Wall (2009, p. 405)

The *YouTube* structure and search algorithms also make user-generated videos more difficult to find in comparison with corporate, government or institutional videos that appear higher in search results rankings. This becomes apparent when considering

the videos *YouTube* suggests to users as related with Morocco. After carrying out a search in the *YouTube* interface using the keyword “Morocco”, the vast majority of videos coming up on the first page of results are not user-generated and vernacular but videos uploaded by mostly Western oriented travel agencies, retail exporters, western corporate news outlets, government institutions, and western artists.¹⁶ Although user generated content is provided on the subsequent pages of search results, the order of results hurts the chances of user-generated views on Morocco being located by a wider audience, as “80 percent to 90 percent of browsers do not look beyond the first page of results after a search” (Levinson, 2007, p. 250). The promoting of non-user generated content also partly stems from the selection of videos on the basis of high technological standards automatically carried out by the *YouTube* video search-engine algorithm, as videos with the label High Definition or HD are listed higher in the search results rankings.¹⁷ However, beneath the surface of the profit-driven Anglo-Western stance, Pauwels and Hellriegel also simultaneously recognize the heterogeneous user base that appropriate *YouTube* in ways that they seem fit (2009, p. 395).

User preferences have already impacted upon the development of *YouTube*; the platform started out as an online dating site but the makers observed different than expected user behavior and they re-positioned the platform as a video repository. With this change, *YouTube* of course also sought to expand its market. Pauwels and Hellriegel give other examples of tactical behavior through which top-down exercised power is resisted such as: circumventing *YouTube*'s policy that forbids hyperlinks outside of the site, providing mock descriptions and false information to resist direct-marketing techniques and to maintain one's individual privacy (2009, p. 389). Media sharing practices among diasporic communities reveal how groups of users can creatively work around standards and restrictions of the platform. In 2009, the time-limit for uploading videos was 10 minutes, and Burgess and Green emphasize the value of circumventing such restrictions among diasporic subjects: “the uploading of Philippino or Turkish soap

¹⁶ Illustratively, at the top and bottom of the first *YouTube* search results page users are presented with “promoted videos”, both are videos about “Group Tours and Tailor Made Trips” in Morocco by the company On the Go Tours. This company makes use of *YouTube*'s “Promoted Video Ads”, a service *YouTube* offers to boost user viewing counts making use of “keyword-based targeting” for video promotion to reach more customers, “drive community engagement” and “engage with an audience” (Google, 2011, p. 1). To contextualize this result, I carried out an exploratory search using the *YouTube* search engine. I carried out a search with the keyword “Morocco”, and this returned 26.800 results. The first page depicts 26 results, containing 5 corporate transportation oriented videos, 5 non-Moroccan corporate news videos, 5 corporate videos by recording and dance artists, 3 travel organizations videos, 2 tourism board videos uploaded by the Moroccan government, 1 retail importer video, and 1 international festival video. This leaves us with 4 videos (or 15,4%) in the first page of results that are possibly user-generated.

¹⁷ 6 out of the first 7 search results described in the prior note are labeled as HD videos.

opera episodes, divided into pieces to get around YouTube's content limits, can be seen as acts of cultural citizenship" (2009, p. 81).¹⁸

Affective geographies

Earlier I mentioned that when people feel bodily moved by something, this process happens at the interplay of objects and human signification. *YouTube* can be considered as "an archive of feeling", which Ann Cvetkovich describes as "repositories of feelings and emotions, which are encoded not only in the content of the texts themselves but in the practices that surround their production and reception" (2003, p. 7). This repository consists of a great variety of material. For instance from the top 100 of videos that receive most views, 17.2% percent is user-generated material, versus 43.2% of content coming from corporate YouTube partners, 4.7% consisting of advertisements and 34.9% consisting of pirated material (Tubemogul, 2010). Informants categorized the videos they watched in two ways, in the words of Ilham the two video genres she consumes are commercial music "*video-clips of songs*" and user-generated "*real videos*".

Aymar Jean Christian who studied vlogs, a form of self-expression consisting of posting personal *YouTube* videos, noted a similar distinction. He states that "real" videos are considered "sincere, personal and community-focused" in contrast with professional content that is "market-centered" (2009, np). Jean Burgess and Joshua Green describe *YouTube*'s "double function as both a 'top-down' platform for the distribution of popular culture and a 'bottom-up' platform for vernacular creativity" (2008, p. 6). Similarly Jannis Androutopoulos separates *YouTube* vernacular and global media content. He understands vernacular video as multimedia circulated from below (2010, pp. 203-204). This distinction is not a black-and-white binary opposition, as I realize that user-generated video can very well borrow from stylistic repertoires of profit driven video-making in order to obtain a professional style, and that vice versa market-centered video's tap into vernacular modes of video-making for the incorporation of authenticity and personality. However, the distinction between the two genres is useful, as this is the way informants categorized video-materials and it theoretically enables me to consider digital medium-specific styles, decisions and user values.

The two genres of mainstream "*video-clips*" and "*real videos*" are consumed for contents that meet specific desires and preferences of its users. Both sorts of material can

¹⁸ In July 2010, the time limit was increased to 15 minutes. Initially there was no time limit, but in an attempt to reduce users' copyright infringements by their uploading of films and TV-series, a limit was introduced in March 2006 (Fisher, 2006).

be interpreted as “videos of affinity”, a notion Lange uses to describe how videos may provide viewers with feelings of attachment and belonging. She adds that affinity may concern shared “feelings of attraction to people, things or ideas” (2009, p. 71). The study by Tobias Raun on white American transgender youths that “come out” by posting vlogs is exemplary for the fostering of community belonging taking place by sharing affinities on *YouTube*. Raun notes the makers of these confessional “affective self-presentations” and their virtual audiences, as “intimate strangers” connect in an intimate public (2012, p. 178). The affective sense of community belonging arises from connections that are both imagined and digitally articulated. Consumers of videos share their audiencehood with imagined fellow other members, but this relation is also digitally manifested. Audience members can engage in discussions in the space that is offered below video-clips and by looking at the automated *YouTube* counter they can see how many fellow site visitors have watched the particular clip they are watching. Also they can be informed of the video’s popularity in the wider community by looking at how many others have clicked the like button to approve or dislike button to disprove the video’s contents.

YouTube allows for the transmission of diaspora attachments. Matteo Vergani and Dennis Zuev observed two ways *YouTube* is used among Uyghur people (2009).¹⁹ They point out that the platform is used as a recreational space, where music is shared among the group for the purpose of diaspora identification, amusement and fun. However, after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the US, the Chinese official discursive framing of Uyghurs changed from “Uyghur separatists” to “Muslim terrorists”. The sharing of Uyghur-themed *YouTube* videos became politicized. Uyghurs engaged in video productions as a way to continue their cultural traditions of music and dance and to cope with the Chinese state attack on their identities. As such, Uyghur vernacular videos play two roles, they are consumed in ways that establish “spatial togetherness” as a form of “transnational loyalty” by linking together members of the community, and at the same time they allow to shine a new light, “broadcasting a positive image of the Uyghurs to a wide audience” (2009, pp. 1, 11-12). The circulation of transnational loyalty through videos among Uyghurs in the diaspora can be understood as an example of “transnational affect”.

¹⁹ Diasporic Uyghurs are Turkic-speaking Muslims originating from the Autonomous Region of Xinjiang in the northwest corner of China. Uyghur diaspora communities have formed across Central Asia, Russia, Turkey, Europe and the United States.

The concept of “transnational affect” was coined by Amanda Wise and Selvaraj Velayutham to signal the role of emotions in the (re-) production of transnational relations. They describe transnational affectivity as a: “circulation of bodily emotive affect between transnational subjects and between subjects and symbolic fields which give qualitative intensity to vectors and routes thus reproducing belonging to and boundaries of transnational fields” (2006, p. 3). Transnational affectivity concerns different overlapping modalities including material objects, strategic action, embodiment, moral economies of shame and pride and symbolic identification and belonging. When migrant subjects take up ICTs such as *YouTube*, they can be present in multiple locations, which leads Dana Diminescu to argue “the idea of ‘presence’ has thus become less physical, less ‘topological’ and more active and affective” (2008, p. 572). Through these means, multiple geographies are made sensible. Furthermore, Wise and Velayutham specifically single out “the intensities of nostalgic, sensorial and embodied memories” as an area of research that demands further scrutiny (2006, p. 3). This study follows up on their plea, focusing in section 6.3 on the ways in which *YouTube* videos are consumed among Moroccan-Dutch youths to (re-) produce feelings of diaspora nostalgia and relive sensorial memories. However, informants mentioned that music video-clips also play a significant role in their lives. In section 6.4 I will consider implications of the finding that informants listen to artists hailing from different geographical locations across the world. I operationalize multiple-geography oriented affectivity in the second part of my analysis.

6.3 Vernacular videos and transnational affectivity

In this section the focus is on consumption of user-generated or vernacular *YouTube* video materials as a source of emotional identification and belonging. I trace, describe and analyze two different examples of how informants noted to be moved by videos with a transnational orientation. First videos related to Islam such as lectures, suras, Anasheed uploaded to *YouTube* are considered from the perspective of transnational religious affectivity. Subsequently, I zoom in on nostalgic transnational affectivity by analyzing interviewees’ perceptions of vernacular videos shot in Morocco by Moroccan diasporic individuals.

The Ummah and transnational religious affectivity

More than 40 percent of the interviewees (7 boys and 11 girls) discussed watching videos pertaining to Islam. Charles Hirschkind noted cassette sermons in Cairo act as an “ethical

soundscape” bringing together bodily sensations, moral actions and ethical affect (2006, p. 83). Transferred from cassettes to the digital videos posted on YouTube, sermons and other devotional material play a similar role in the lives of the informants.²⁰ 18-year-old Mustafa for instance reflected on how he turned to *YouTube* during the fasting month of Ramadan to look up videos of people reciting suras “*of course, for me it can get very emotional when hearing someone state these words in a beautiful voice*”. Similarly, 15-year-old Meryam – the informant who showed her *Handbook for Muslim women* during fieldwork – praises the platform as she feels able to find exalting material there: “*there are children that have learned the whole Quran by heart; I think they are very bright, that they can do it. And yes, I have a look at those*” adding “*it gives me inspiration to better commit myself to my religion*”. Some of the younger informants, for example 12-year-old Soufian, 13-year-old Hanan and 14-year-old Sahar, look up “*Anasheed*” movies. *Anasheed* are songs typically performed in Arabic but increasingly also in Dutch that offer young people an accessible way to incorporate a sense of Islam in their everyday life (Razzaqi, 2011, p. 272).²¹ Hanan argues that she listens to such “*songs that deal with the peacefulness of Islam. For instance by Maher Zain, he has a very pretty voice. I don’t know, his songs have a soothing effect on me*”. Videos are affective objects, informants note to feel touched by them, providing an inspirational boost, guidance or moving them to the brink of tears.

Videos are taken up to learn more about Islam. Fourteen-year-old Ziham shared: “*say when I did not know how to pray yet, I turned to YouTube to learn about the steps to take and later I turned to books, and now I just pray every day*”. *YouTube* for her was a fun way to follow instructions on Islamic devotion. 16-year-old Nevra learns more about what is halal or haram “*what you are supposed and not supposed to do according to Islam*”. Seventeen-year-old Sadik, too, shared he learns more about Islam and his role as a Muslim through *YouTube*: “*for example they talk about Islam in English, which I understood better, because Arabic I don’t understand that well. They for instance discuss the state of the world, and how Islam is seen across the world and how it started*”. He gave the example of watching a series called *The Arrivals*,

²⁰ Claiming *YouTube* is filled with anti-Islamic propaganda, multiple platforms devoted to Islamic video have been set up modeled after *YouTube*; see for instance *Islamic YouTube (ISYouTube.com)*, *IslamicTube.com*, *HalalTube.com*, *TubeIslam.com* and *Islamondemand.com*. None of the informants preferred one of those platforms; they felt videos such as Islamic verses could very well be accessed through *YouTube*. For example 18-year-old Mustafa notes “in my own eyes I have not seen anyone stating something bad about Quranic verses on *YouTube*”.

²¹ *Anasheed* are Islamic vocal music, a capella or accompanied by instruments that references Islamic history, beliefs and interpretations but also politics and current events. *Anasheed* can be compared to nursing rhymes, and they can also be understood analogous to psalms and hymns sang in Christian contexts (Razzaqi, 2011, p. 272).

“about the dangers that go around the world”. Islamic authorities have dismissed the series as a pack of lies and conspiracy theories.²²

In chapter three, I discussed that digital media are taken up as “a missing middle” between the textual scrutiny of Islam of elite intellectuals and Islam as a socio-cultural force among the mass of followers (Anderson, 2001; Leurs, Midden & Ponzanesi, 2012, p. 162). In *YouTube*, alternative conventions of religious authority can arise, being partly shaped by prior user behavior and algorithms that translate prior viewer and search practices in key word search rankings (Bunt, 2009, p. 31). Online performances of Islam decentralize religious authority and provide interpretative opportunities to a wider range of actors, but this democratization may also result in the circulation of problematic content. Some insist that when religious education and Muslim scholar credibility is undermined; the dangers of extremism, offensive jihad and legitimating violence may grow. Therefore, there is an urgency to provide young people with the tools of media literacy to weigh and judge the validity of the materials they encounter online (Ryan, 2007).

Overall, consuming Islamic sermons, lectures and Anasheed provide informants with an affective sense of belonging to the “Ummah” (the worldwide Muslim community). Instead of being passive members, searching out the Islamic videos they feel personally moved by, they affectively enact and claim belonging to this community (Roy, 2004, p. 183). Gary Bunt specifies that especially during the Islamic month of Ramadan, the Internet offers a sense of identity and cohesion as information, rituals and norms are shared (Bunt, 2009, p. 97). During the fast, believers abstain from eating, drinking, smoking and sexual intercourse but not from browsing the Internet. For Mustafa *YouTube* sermons offered emotional support during Ramadan, and Bunt contextualizes that more broadly “the Net helps bring iMuslims together during this sacred month, especially those living outside of established Muslim communities” (2009, p. 97). Imagining an audience of fellow Muslim video viewers, informants sense a shared frame of reference that goes beyond the confines of the context of the Netherlands. This affinity can for instance be language and/or geography based, 16-year old Naoul specifies that the lectures on *YouTube* are rarely in Dutch, *“most often they are in Arabic, sometimes with*

²² One of the film-makers has been banned from *YouTube*, and *The Arrivals* series has been criticized for the “distortion of hadith, the odd underlying Shia associations, and the disillusion it creates among Muslims by making shaytan, freemasonry, the occult and whatever political powers may be appear more mighty than Allah’s Haqq” (Israel, 2010, np, see also WikiIslam, 2012). In this remark, the word “hadith” refers to the actions and statements of Prophet Muhammed, “shaytan” to the devil in Islam and Haqq, the Arabic word for truth is interpreted in the Islamic context as right and reality.

subtitles". Additionally she feels drawn to Islamic-themed videos made by people in the Moroccan diaspora "there are people in Morocco who post them". In the next section I expand on the consumption of videos shot in Morocco as a form of nostalgia to develop a greater understanding of transnational diaspora affectivity.

Nostalgia and transnational diaspora affectivity

I looked up the YouTube video Marrakech City Drive. A while back I was really looking forward to the holidays and by coincidence I spotted that clip on YouTube. I had not been to Morocco for some time back then. That's why I looked up some videos. [In that video] with the two of them they are in a car, and they film the city. I recognized many things; I saw all the famous things in my city.

– Anas, 13 years old



Figure 6.1 Still *Marrakech, Morocco City Drive* uploaded to *YouTube* by eMoroccan (October 8, 2010).

In chapter four I have considered transnational oriented *MSN* display names, and in chapter five I have considered diasporic display photos and hypertextual ties. I proposed that these findings demand an extension of prior understandings of transnational diaspora activity. Besides sending remittances and the maintenance of transnational conversations via services such as *Skype* between those who migrate and those who stay put, transnational networking for those born in the diaspora to a greater extent entails transnationalism becomes a symbolic representation of identification. In this section I discuss viewing user-generated video uploaded by Moroccan diasporic individuals to *YouTube* as nostalgic transnational affectivity. I uncover the motives of those producing vernacular videos of nostalgic desire and discuss the role of the materiality of the videos.

Subsequently I highlight different sides to emotional attachment of nostalgic belonging by considering the politics of home-making that are invoked, and by problematizing nostalgia as a form of utopian desire that is difficult to relive.

In our conversation, 13-year-old Anas brought up the video *Marrakech City Drive* (see figure 6.1). He recalled watching the video before he went on holidays to Marrakech, the city where both his parents were born. *Marrakech City Drive* is a *YouTube* clip shot by the Moroccan-American adult male *YouTube* user “eMoroccan” from a moving car on Avenue Mohammed V in Marrakech. The video consists of one single take of 78 seconds, filmed in a first-person perspective with a digital hand-held camera or mobile phone. Only synchronous, diegetic sounds are included; the viewer hears the engine of the running car the filmmaker is in, together with the noise of a passing motorcycle and birds’ chirping in the palm trees the car passes. The first-person point of view of the video adds to Anas’ feeling of being able to immerse himself in the scene. In the video, following the single trajectory of the road, the viewers gradually approach the cities’ fortifications and in the distance the Koutoubia Mosque is featured, but mostly the video shows the journey of driving around itself. For Anas, watching the video is a feast of recognition that makes him feel good.

For some of the Moroccan-Dutch youths I interviewed, watching videos shot in Morocco is part of their yearning to stake out their place in the world, as they symbolically connect to a homeland. During the interviews, informants explicitly mentioned turning to *YouTube* when they felt “heimwee” – the Dutch word for homesickness or nostalgia – vernacular videos shot in Morocco helped them combat homesickness and feel better. 14-year-old Kenza shared she values *YouTube* highly to look up videos that make her think about Morocco “because sometimes I do get quite strongly filled with a feeling of nostalgia, because I’m missing Morocco for instance”.

The word “nostalgia” combines two words with Greek roots, “nostos” meaning “homesickness” or “returning home” and “algia” meaning “longing” or “pain”. Svetlana Boym states Johannes Hofer coined the word in a medical dissertation to describe sad moods that can arise from desires to go back to one’s native land. Boym notes that nostalgia now stands for “a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed. Nostalgia is a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one’s own fantasy” (2001, pp. xiii, 3). She recognizes that feelings of nostalgia can become especially pertinent among descendants of those who have migrated themselves “[f]irst-wave immigrants are often notoriously unsentimental, leaving the search for roots to their

children and grandchildren” (ibid, xv). As a remedy to homesickness, Kenza additionally shared she searches for songs from Cheb Ghany, a Moroccan artist, and the famous Algerian “*King of Rai*” Cheb Khaled that she says to make her “*happy again*”. Sarah Ahmed writes that happy emotions arise when positive affective values are attributed to circulating social goods “to be happy is to be affected by something” (2010, p. 29). Listening to songs by Moroccan artists and looking up videos shot in Morocco give the informants feelings of happiness, as transnational affectivity is invoked.

Reflecting on *YouTube* videos in which users seek to capture their presence in a certain location, Tom Sherman argues that video – as a “vernacular form of the era” – has become one of the ways “people place themselves at events”, to geographically situate and frame their identities and existence. In this light, he expects that travel will become increasingly captured on film and shared digitally: “travelogues will prosper, as road ‘films’ and video tourism proliferate” (2008, pp. 161-162). Moroccan-Dutch youths (imaginatively) presence themselves in Morocco by watching videos made and/or shared by fellow diasporians. The videos are consumed as symbolic anchors of migratory affiliations. Consuming these videos meets their emotional needs to attach themselves to the diaspora community. All informants make frequent holiday trips to Morocco to visit grandparents, extended family members and friends, but also often do so to tour the country and spend time at one of the country’s beaches or other nice holiday destinations. Apart from their holidays, for Moroccan-Dutch youth, *YouTube* is one of the few other ways to experience Morocco. Abdelsammad, a 15-year-old boy, explains this dynamic as follows:

I watch movies about where we come from. On YouTube there are movies about where we lived, that is nice to see. There is much to find about Nador. Many many movies. For instance clips that show the roads, the shopping malls, the boulevard. Lots of things that you are familiar with. I was born there and lived there until I was three years old, but I know it better from holidays. [Moroccan-Dutch] people from the Netherlands, who go there on holidays, when they get back they put the video they took there online.

With over 215.000 people having viewed one of his 39 movies, eMoroccan appears to play a key role in producing and circulating nostalgia videos.²³ His videos include for instance *Athan (Call to Prayer) in Morocco*; *Autoroutes du Maroc*; *Casablanca Street View*; *Casablanca, Morocco, Taxi*; *Hassan II Mosque*; *Landing in Morocco onboard Royal Air Maroc*; *Marina Agadir*; *Traditional Berber Folklore Music*. He lists the aim of the videos on his *YouTube* profile, welcoming to “*virtual Morocco*” the users of *YouTube*. In an interview

²³ The 39 videos have attracted a combined total of 215.236 views (07 February 2012, see <http://www.youtube.com/user/eMoroccan/>).

conducted via *YouTube's* personal messaging system, user eMoroccan articulated his motivations for contributing to *YouTube* with videos shot in Morocco:

A common theme among Moroccans living abroad is their continual attachment to their country (l'blad) and their hometowns. Some have been living abroad for years and haven't been able to return to Morocco due to several reasons. I wanted to create a virtual outlet for these individuals so that they may experience Morocco visually and hopefully fill some void. But I also enjoy making videos in general and have a keen interest in Morocco. By using the internet a Moroccan individual becomes an 'eMoroccan' who can experience 'virtual Morocco'.

In his response, eMoroccan touches upon the issue of user-generated video being consumed by people in the Moroccan diaspora as a way to connect to their homeland, literally “visually experiencing” the country again for instance when physical travel is unattainable. *YouTube*, for him, allows Moroccans living abroad the means to become “eMoroccans” by virtual traveling Morocco by watching his movies. Diasporic individuals’ renderings of Morocco such as eMoroccan’s “virtual Morocco” videos can be recognized as a separate *YouTube* video genre, with their particular subject and aesthetic choices. The subject choices, such as *Autoroutes du Maroc; Casablanca, Morocco, Taxi; Marrakech, Morocco City Drive* and *Landing in Morocco onboard Royal Air Maroc* reveal a particular topical preference which may appeal to those in the diaspora more than Western tourists, as people who do not share the habitus of migratory affiliation will experience these vernacular videos completely differently.

The clips, filmed with camera-phones and hand-held digital camera’s, include mostly low resolution, uncut and unedited shots taken while driving around the country in cars showing the roads, traffic in all its variety, cities and towns and seemingly random living areas and structures. There is no sound added, viewers overhear people speaking in the taxi or airplane, interspersed with the noises of traffic and car engines. The tourist highlights of sandy beaches, palm trees, museums, luxury and splendor are not included and instead the video accentuates mundane, little everyday things of life. Such scenes can have an important social meaning for diasporic subjects but may be perceived as banal by tourists. Vergani and Zuev argue that the low-resolution character of *YouTube* videos communicate symbolic tokens of authenticity (2009), which may further play into the value of user-generated video among those in the Moroccan diaspora. The value for ethnic minority youths resides in the way the specific materiality of the videos enact affective relations of nostalgia, and therefore “quality is not necessarily the determining factor in terms of how videos affect social networks” (Lange, 2008, p. 368). The video’s

digital materiality performs its indexicality,²⁴ as the viewer is confirmed the filmmaker and camera were actually present (Olivieri, 2012, p. 83). Consisting of single camera position shots, being uncut, low-resolution, unedited and without the addition of non-diegetic sounds and music, the videos mediate a sense of authenticity. The viewer can follow the footsteps of the maker who has been present in the filmed location. These material features bestow these videos with authenticity, trustworthiness and power as emotionally touching, transnational diaspora objects. Hamid Naficy similarly found that nostalgic music videos that show Iranian streets and bazaars are similarly enjoyed among Iranian exiles in the United States because of their shared “live ontology” that creates an alluring “reality effect” (1998, p. 58).

Informants frame their existence by being able to place themselves (through physical acts of holiday travel or *YouTube* inspired imagined acts) in different locations near and far, part symbolic and part geographical. For instance in the citation of Nevra I included in the beginning of the chapter, she speaks about traveling “back” to Morocco in her mind when watching videos with “*different Moroccan scenes*”. Meryam expresses how she imagines Morocco: “*you think of the country like I would want to stay there for every, because yeah my parents are from there, and a piece of it is in you*”. The politics of location and/or dislocation are central to feminist and postcolonial studies. For example in work on migrant literature, Rosemarie Buikema notes that the “poetics of home” function as symbols for stability, belonging and safety (2005, p. 168). For Rosemary George, practices of “home-making” are organized around patterns of inclusion and exclusion. Homelands are exclusive, and therefore they establish difference. She argues that home, next to axes such as gender, sexuality and class “acts as an ideological determinant of the subject” (1999, p. 2).

Home-making concerns a set of desires all humans share: to move away from being unmoored and the chaos of unbelonging towards boundedness, stability, anchoring and reterritorialization. People long to belong. Nostalgic longing for home for members of diasporic communities’ concerns imaginings of having a safe place in the world. Feeling able to occupy a welcoming location, in the presence of significant likeminded others, it concerns an individual as well as collective way of orienting towards origins and belongings. “As an *idea* it stands for shelter, stability, security and comfort” (McLeod, 2000, p. 210, his emphasis). And for the informants this idea may be based on feelings of

²⁴ In semiotics, indexicality considers a specific relation between reality and representation, as it indicates the mediation of a state of affairs. Indexicality entails signs that point to an actual direct physical relationship with (a referent object in) reality. According to Charles Peirce indexical quality “may simply serve to identify its object and assure us of its existence and presence” (1958, p. 4.447).

connectedness with the house and areas where they themselves or parents of those born in the diaspora grew up. As Stuart Hall recognizes “migration is a one way trip. There is no ‘home’ to go back to” (1996, p. 115). Salman Rushdie similarly noted that it is only through imagined fictions migrants can reclaim a sense of the homeland they left-behind (1991, p. 10).²⁵ The idea of one’s home has to be actively re-constructed.

For the informants, watching vernacular videos can become a home-making practice. A return to home can be experienced when viewing diaspora videos spurs affective acts of nostalgic imagination. Morocco becomes an emotional tie evoked by digital mediations. As such, imagined homelands, Morocco’s of the mind find various shapes. *YouTube* is not the only space these imaginative acts are observable. For instance during a period of heavy snow fall in the Netherlands, on 3 February 2012, Anas posted a comment on his *Facebook* profile that can be read as nostalgic desire: “*It’s snowing ☹ I wish I were in Morocco*”. Nostalgic desires and the imagination of a home allow for a temporary suspension of one’s physical situatedness in the here and now in the Netherlands.

Roger Aden specifies that communicating feelings of nostalgia for those disenchanted with aspects of their surroundings, may find in it an escape to a temporary secure place of oppositional belonging. “Nostalgic communication provides individuals with a means of symbolically escaping cultural conditions that they find depressing and/or disorienting”, he writes, adding that nostalgia can be experienced to promise “a sanctuary of meaning”, as people can sense being “safe from oppressive cultural conditions” (1995, p. 35). Nostalgic transnational diaspora affinity provides informants with a temporary escape to the sanctuary of an affective, imagined community. As a shared audience of vernacular videos of nostalgia, interviewees experience a sense of belonging and feelings of reassurance they are not left on their own.²⁶

Although on the one hand used as an empowering source of inspiration, Morocco’s of the mind are based on dreams of imaginary perfect places. Nostalgia

²⁵ Illustratively, Salman Rushdie thinks of his childhood experiences in Bombay before he migrated to England as “imaginary homelands”. Writing about fellow Indian migrants he notes “our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, Indias of the mind” (1991, p. 10).

²⁶ Miriam Gazzah notes that the Moroccan folk music genre Shaabi has become a popular genre of nostalgic affiliation among Moroccan-Dutch people: “Many newer Shaabi songs that have proved popular outside Morocco are about separation and loss of a loved one, in many cases the loved one being an immigrant. The song *Bladi kif yansak al bal* (roughly translated: ‘My Country, How Could I Forget You?’) by Yahia is about the difficulties of living far away from your native country and is dedicated to ‘all the [Moroccan] immigrants.’ The song glorifies all the beautiful cities and places of Morocco, and the singer remembers the weddings and pleasant times spent there with family and friends” (2010, p. 402).

becomes a utopian fantasy, which is more or less unattainable in reality. When traveling to one's imagined home, one's desires might be denied (George, 1999, p. 2). Informants' discussions of their holiday travel indicate how the imagined renderings of their homeland do not meet their lived experiences of physical realities of the actual locations. 14-year-old Mehmet Ali's reflection on his holiday experiences – Mehmet Ali was born in Nador in Morocco but migrated to the Netherlands at the age of four – reveals the double-sidedness of nostalgic affectivity. On the one hand he emphasizes that while in the Netherlands he misses being in Morocco: *"you miss everything that's there"*. While the experience of visiting Morocco and being in Nador during the holidays differs from his fantasy of home: *"it is really really hot, most of the time, and busy, very very busy in the city"*. Reality can differ from the affective nostalgic sanctuary. Nostalgic longings may continue to "haunt" them (Naficy, 1998, p. 58).²⁷

15-year-old Ryan describes his parents were born in the coastal city of Kenitra, however he adds that *"we do not often go there, when we go on holidays [in Morocco] we go to other places, where the nature is beautiful, in the mountain areas and so on"*. In this case holiday travel is adjusted to meet desired imaginings of homeland, instead of visiting Kenitra, more "beautiful" areas are visited. 14-year-old Badr similarly shared that he enjoys visiting Morocco: *"but only for two or three weeks, after that I want to go back, because I'm more used to being here"* in the Netherlands. Back in the Netherlands, Badr shared he again wants to hold on to his holiday experiences, for instance by posting pictures on his personal *Hypes* profile page. In the utopian fantasies of their homeland, informants can imagine commonality with inhabitants of Morocco and their everyday life, however, once they are traveling there, they remain visitors and feelings of similarity can be denied. Instead of reassurance and belonging, nostalgia might result in feelings of denial and unbelonging.

Finally, ethnic outsiders can position virtual tourism to Morocco on *YouTube* as a counter-hegemonic desire. The sanctuary of nostalgic transnational affectivity is not safe from disruption from outsiders who might feel excluded by material they perceive as different. Upon encountering vernacular diaspora video, outsiders might not understand what's going on in the movie or what its aim is, and for instance expectations of content, aesthetics and digital materiality might not be met. "By lacking 'an aesthetic'", Lange

²⁷ Holiday travel and thinking back about the good times spent on the Moroccan beaches or in the mountains has been noted by Dorien Meijerink as a coping mechanism for Moroccan-Dutch youths to be able to deal with the polarizing tensions in Dutch society. Traveling to Morocco entails going about daily life without being constantly singled out as a Moroccan-Dutch youngster or as a Muslim (2009, p. 64-68). As my informants described, joyfully feeling at home might temporarily be established through virtual travel by watching vernacular videos of nostalgia.

asserts, often means “the right kind of aesthetic as determined by certain cultural groups or individuals” (Lange, 2011, p. 40). As Wise and Velayutham noted, transnational affectivity produces boundaries (2006, p. 3). Nostalgic diaspora videos too operate as including and exclusionary mechanisms. Interviewees share how hostile and offensive processes of flaming can abruptly punctuate nostalgic feelings. The discussion by 16-year-old Naoul and 14 year-old Ayoub reveals that vernacular videos of nostalgia can be an excluding location where social divisions can be perpetuated. Naoul reports “*they shout ‘cunt-Moroccans’*” while Ayoub notes that “*similar to how some people give me a dirty look outdoors, under videos dealing with Morocco, they write ‘get out of the country’ and so on. It does not really bother me; there is not much I can do. Yes, I can only give a minus point*”.²⁸ Setting up a we-versus-them divisional line, which dismisses a singular, homogenized group of ethnic majority Dutch youths as “them”, interethnic relations are put under pressure.

In sum, as the informants are being touched by vernacular videos of nostalgia, transnational affectivity enables them to renew and re-imagine bonds with their diasporic identities. My exploring of the emotional performance of nostalgia as transnational affectivity – experienced collectively as well as individually – reveals ongoing crossings between physical and imaginative groundings, locations near and far, and between presence and absence. Although imagined homes may disconnect from the real ones and *YouTube* viewers have to withstand the accidental hostility in the form of flaming in commentaries posted to videos, physical and imagined connections may provide an alternative but contested location of familiarity for Moroccan-Dutch young people to work through their emotions. In the next section I turn my attention to affectivity and the multiple geographical contexts of corporate music videos informants consumed.

6.4 Corporate music videos, geographies and affectivity

I just have my own style, I think. I don't belong to any group. Everyone is different, [people say] someone is Turkish, the other is a Moroccan and another is Dutch, but for me it's not like that. It's not really like I [fit] in one particular group, it's more multiculti I think.

– Amir, 16 years old

In his affective self-positioning in the youth cultural landscape, Amir argues that his attachments go beyond singular notions of group belonging. I assess the transformative potential such youth cultural engagements by researching *YouTube* viewing. Reflecting on the potentialities of youth culture, Paul Gilroy wrote that the “grounded, multi-cultural utopia that these cultures sometimes bring into being can be a valuable material force as

²⁸ Ayoub refers to the “thumbs-down” button, allowing users to “vote down” a comment. With enough clicks on the button, *YouTube* moderators are notified and decide whether the comment will be deleted.

well as a symbolic one” (Gilroy, 1993b, p. 3). The prior section focused on viewing vernacular videos and transnational religious and nostalgic diaspora affectivity. In this section, I continue my consideration of the geographical referentialities of *YouTube* videos and affectivity, however I move away from focusing on transnational practices and user-generated content. I turn to Moroccan-Dutch engagement with mainstream music videos, which Ilham describes as “*video-clips of songs*” in contrast with vernacular “*real videos*”. More specifically, I empirically trace, describe and reflect on the geographical locations of the artists whose music videos the informants report to look up on *YouTube*. First *YouTube* music video viewing practices are situated in critical theories of youth culture and consumption. Next an overview of the geographies of affective communities interviewees sustain in their viewing of music videos is given. Finally I discuss implications of music video viewing practices by considering the multiple geographies interviewees reference.

***YouTube* and music videos**

Yes when I get on the computer, I immediately, instantly open YouTube. Yes, listening to music, yes YouTube is only listening to music for me.

– Meryam, 15 years old

Meryam uses *YouTube* mainly to listen to music. Meryam is not alone, as the platform is a preferred space to access music for the majority of the informants. From the total of 43 interviewees, 23 youths (53%) report they visit the platform mainly to watch and listen to music videos. With the advent of *YouTube*, and its growing database of music videos that can be played on demand, music-videos have become easily accessible, and an audience member can decide by herself which video she wants to watch without having to watch television and tune in to *MTV*.²⁹ Unlike before, audience members do not have to wait until the lucky moment their favorite music video is broadcasted. 16-year-old Amir explains this dynamic as follows:

It is more convenient now, because you can look up videos. For instance when you switch to TMF [Dutch music video station], and a song has just ended, you can go on YouTube and you can look it up and watch it. On TV you would have to wait for 100 songs before the video would show again.

²⁹ It must be noted that growth of *YouTube* has alerted record companies to summon the platform to take down pirated copies of songs and music videos. In an attempt to please corporations who may want to advertise or circulate paid content on *YouTube*, the platform has willingly implemented restrictions on its users who want to upload video and the platform has taken down a large number of videos containing pirated materials. This development also leads to a large number of videos, targeted by U.S. corporations at U.S. viewers, being made inaccessible for viewers outside of the U.S., including the Netherlands.

Even though the platform and video watching practices have changed, the importance of music videos in the life of young people has not diminished: music-videos remain a significant form of youth cultural expression.

Consuming music is of great significance for some of the informants. Fourteen-year-old Loubna illustratively says *"YouTube is very important for me, yes even more important than Hypes, Facebook and Marokko.nl and everything else. Because I think music is very important. Yes that's it, because what can you do without music?"*. The question arises what it is exactly what Loubna and others can do *with* music videos. Why is music so important? What meanings can be attributed to their music consumption? Which affective communities are sustained when unpacking their audiencehood?

In scholarly writings on consumption, Arjun Appadurai provides a lead on the positive side of the spectrum when he recognized, "where there is consumption there is pleasure, and where there is pleasure there is agency" (1996, p. 7). From a Marxian-inspired perspective, on the more skeptical side of the spectrum, consumers are seen as passive dupes who can be manipulated by omnipotent commercial forces. As often, a middle-ground perspective is most fruitful, remaining aware that, as I pointed out in section 6.2, to engage with *YouTube* also implies increased surveillance and control over user's behavior. As I also explored in the prior chapters on forums, instant messaging and social networking sites, in *YouTube* user behavior is partly propagated and channeled by corporations, advertising and marketing agencies who seek to ideological hail consumers.

However, individuals remain agentic, consumptive practices involve active engagement with materials that open up diverse subject-positions and spark affective belongings. Listening to and watching music videos gives users pleasure and agency as they may imagine an affective affinity with recording artists, the subject matter of their songs as well as their lifestyles, political backgrounds and geographical locations. As such, personal imagination may offer the means to challenge constructs as "a staging ground for action, and not only for escape" (Appadurai, 1996, p. 7). Angela McRobbie explains that young people who find themselves in an age-based position of "institutional powerlessness" can turn to youth culture for agency and subjectivity. She adds they may "find in youth cultural forms strong symbolic structures through which 'who you are' and 'who you want to go put with' can be explored, not in any finalized way, but rather as an ongoing and reflective social process" (1994, p.192). As youth cultural forms provide the means for an ongoing process of identification, negotiation and redefinition

of relations between young people's selves "who you are" and their various affective communities "who you want to go put with", once more the understanding of identity as singular and fixed is shattered (ibid.). More specifically, young people's consumption of music recently has been recognized to have moved beyond attachments to fixed singular subcultural genres, individual preferences are better seen as a way of fluid shifting through several group attachments (Osgerby, 2004, p. 131; Maffesoli, 1996, p. 76; see also Bennett, 1999).

In the case of *YouTube*, as Androutsopolous argues, videos can be seen as "landing points" of circulating signs and texts. Landing points allow young people to individually attribute value and position themselves in affective relations with others by grounding *YouTube* videos as resources for the negotiation of "identities and relationships" (2010, pp. 204-206). Paul Gilroy's writings on the societal roles of music and youth cultures offer the means to consider the wider political values of youth cultures. Gilroy recognizes youth cultures are important grounds where convivial multiculturalism is alive, away from and "after the failure of state-managed anti-racism" (1993b, p. 2). He distinguishes three reasons why he considers youth cultures of importance in the micro-political struggle against racisms, nationalisms and ethnic absolutisms:

firstly, because I think it is possible to show that youth cultures are essentially hybrid social and political forms; secondly, because their transnational and international character points to new conceptions of subjectivity and identification that articulate the local and the global in novel and exciting patterns; and thirdly because the notion of any culture based primarily around age and generation contains an inherent challenge to the logic of racial national and ethnic essentialism.

– Paul Gilroy (1993b, p. 6)

In sum, *YouTube* music video consumption, as an affective landing point of youth cultural texts, can be a source of agency for young people to redefine who they are and who they want to go put with. *YouTube* as an archive of feeling becomes politically meaningful when multi-geographical and cross-national are convivially hybridized in viewer practices. In the next section I begin exploring the different geographies informants land in their music video viewing preferences.

Music videos and geographical affectivity

Andreas Hepp, Cigdem Bozdog and Laura Suna have looked at the ways "mediatized migrants" in Germany communicate, position themselves and express their belonging.

They distinguish between three types of positioning, communication and cultural identification among migrant subjects: “origin-oriented”, “ethno-oriented” and “world-oriented practices”. This typology categorizes the ways their interviewees geographically self-defined their media use. Origin oriented belonging concerns networked belonging among migrants focused on their homeland; ethno-oriented belonging concerns bi-cultural networking between the their homeland and their present living contexts; while world-oriented practices concerns a transcultural networking oriented towards the world beyond their homeland and country of migration (2011, pp. 151-238, 2012, pp. 177-181). Similar to the work by Hepp, Bozdog and Suna, during my interviews, informants employed (language-specific but also) especially geographically oriented labels to describe their music video viewing practices. Interviewees used categories such as “American”, “Moroccan” and “Turkish” when describing the music videos of their favorite artists they look up on *YouTube*.

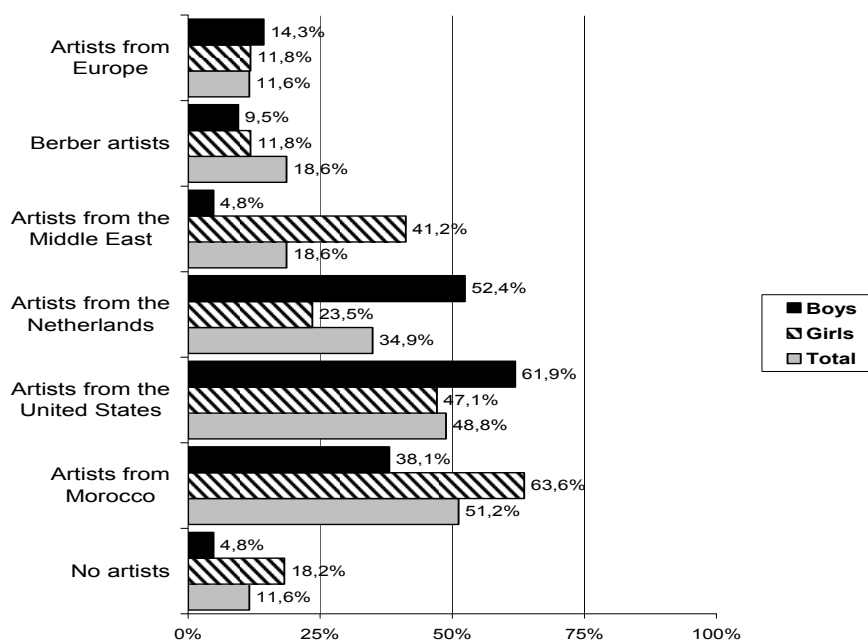


Figure 6.2 Geographical locations of music artists interviewees look up on *YouTube* (multiple answers possible, graph shows percentages, n = 43).

In figure 6.2 an overview is given of the geographical backgrounds of the music artists informants mention search for on *YouTube*.³⁰ More than half of the informants, and especially girls, watch videos of Moroccan artists. 14-year-old Ziham explains “*most of the time I listen to Moroccan music, I prefer that sort. Especially Mohamed Sami, Morad Salam, Laila Chakir and Amazrine. They sing about love stories*”. 14-year-old Mehmet Ali discusses his inclination towards looking up Moroccan videos: “*most often I look up Moroccan songs*”, the artists sing “*about love, about the country Morocco itself, about its cities and its history, by artists that are famous in Morocco*”. This way, non user-generated videos can thus also be a source of nostalgia.

Amir shared that consuming music videos of two Moroccan rap groups gives him a feeling of being unique, as it is an original way to stand out from others: “*I listen to H-Koije and Fnaïre, these are two Moroccan rap groups. They only have shows in Morocco, and they rap in Arabic. They are famous in Morocco, I haven’t heard anything about them here*” in the Netherlands. H-Koije and Fnaïre are rap crews making music that is not part of the mainstream global circuits of youth culture (yet), and these groups have not been embraced by most fellow Moroccan-Dutch youths either. Knowing these groups gives Amir a sense of being special and unique, as he discovered their music while on holidays in Marrakech, the city his parents migrated from. Also, stressing the groups’ rap in Arabic, Amir emphasizes another dimension to his self-positioning. Stressing his affinity with Arab-speakers, instead of one of the Berber-dialects speaking people of Morocco, allows him another way to set himself apart from the majority of Moroccan-Dutch youths who are mostly born to parents that principally speak one of the Berber dialects.

Secondly, the informants and especially boys, watch music videos from North-American artists. Showing his affinity with American forms of youth culture, 16-year-old Ryan in our conversation said he prefers to listen to international, English-language music: “*Dutch music for instance, I find it so boring, I always fall a sleep by that. Moroccan music I also don’t really like, as a matter of fact only English, international music*”. Ryan’s self-positioning and musical preference is indicative for a belonging that goes beyond the level of the nation and ethnicity. 13-year-old Inas shared her attachment to international youth icon Justin Bieber, while beginning to giggle she said, “*Justin Bieber, I like him. Just to watch videos of him, yes him especially*”. To download his songs from *YouTube* to her *Samsung Wave* mobile phone she uses the website YoutubeConverter.org. Engaging with Justin Bieber music videos

³⁰ Graph based on main geographical location of operation of artist, as reported by informants or as found on website of artists the informants have reported. Five interviewees did not mention listening to music on *YouTube* (four girls and one boy), some of them preferring vernacular videos of Koran recitations, others preferred to spend their time differently.

she becomes part of the global affective community of fellow Justin Bieber fans that consists mostly of girls. Next to artists from Morocco, and the United States, Ilham and other girls prefer videos from artists hailing from countries in the Middle East and the Netherlands. Next to artists from the United States, boys' favorite music videos feature artists from the Netherlands, from Morocco and to a small extent other countries in Europe. However, as I argue in the following section, singling out emotional attachment to artists from either of these geographical locations does not do justice to the multi-geographical complexity of the informants' favorite music videos.

The multiplicity of affectivity

The typology of Hepp, Bozdag and Suna is helpful to distinguish between various forms of migrant subjectivity and belonging by being able to tease out three sorts of practices: practices that aim for a connection with a homeland, ethnicity and the world (2011, 2012). Informants' viewing videos of Moroccan artists can for instance be categorized under "origin-oriented practices", while a preference for videos that feature American artists can be slotted as a "world-oriented practice" (ibid). However with these categorizations I cannot fully acknowledge the hybridity and multiplicity of Moroccan-Dutch youths *YouTube* music video practices (Leurs, 2011). The statement by Amir I quoted in the beginning of this section on feeling "*multiculti*" reveals his multiplicit and multicultural rather than monocultural belonging, he expresses he does not feel connected to any standalone group in particular, but only to a combination of groups.

As figure 6.3 displays, the articulation of belonging with youth cultural forms based on a singular geographical location is observable, as one-fourth of the interviewees (and especially girls) report to look up music videos from recording artists coming from one geographical location. This includes looking up videos by artists from either Morocco or the U.S. that were considered in the prior section. However, the viewing preferences of the majority of the informants surpass these distinctions. The group that views only music by artists from one of the above mentioned geographical locations is smaller than the group of informants who turn to *YouTube* to listen to music by artists from at least two different geographical locations. Moreover, almost one out of every four interviewees reported to listen to artists from 3 or more areas across the world. For instance 15-year-old Hajar told me "*I listen to all sorts of things, Moroccan and English. Just a mix of all these things*".

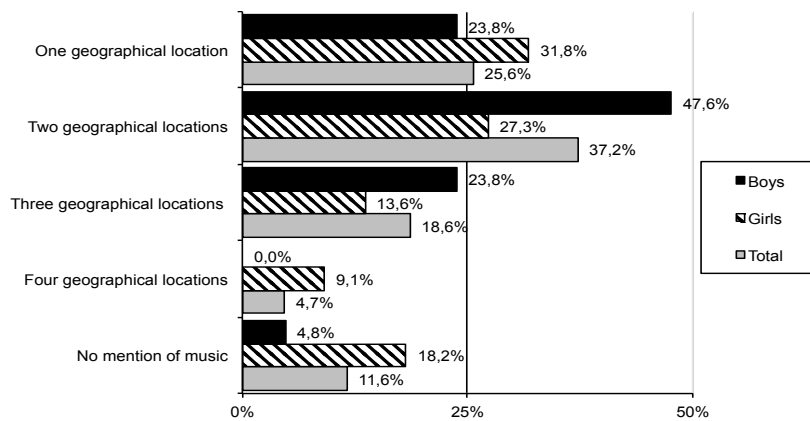


Figure 6.3 Geographical locations of artists interviewees combine in their *YouTube* viewing practices (graph shows percentages, n = 43).

16-year-old Bibi mentions her favorite artists are from four different locations across the world. I want to unpack her description to think about the implications of embodying a multiplicity of geographical affinities:

Now I'm addicted to the new song by Rihanna, 'What's my name' or something like that. I'm fully hooked, with Drake, I listen to it 24 hours [a day]. Other artists are [Moroccan] such as Daoudi or Douzi or Sabab and Rola, you know, from 'Yana yana', from Mourad Salam, from Laila Chakir. Just those really famous artists.

A variety of affiliations are combined in the statement. Rihanna is an American R&B artist from Barbados, while Drake is a Canadian rapper of mixed African-American and Jewish descent. Both sing in English. Daoudi is a Shaabi musician singing in Darija (Moroccan-Arabic). The genre Shaabi, (Arabic for “off the people”) concerns popular Moroccan folk music that may give rise to feelings of nostalgia.³¹ Douzi is a Moroccan rapper singing in English and Darija, and he collaborates with the Moroccan-Dutch rapper Appa. Sabab and Rola are Libanese singers singing in Arabic, while Mourad Salam and Laila Chakir sing in Berber. The hybridity of youth culture inspirations signal affective relations with different groups of people where Bibi wants “to go put with” (McRobbie, 1994, p. 192). She combines Berber, North American, Middle-Eastern and Dutch artists, English, Darija, Arabic and Dutch languages, genres of R&B, Shaabi and rap.

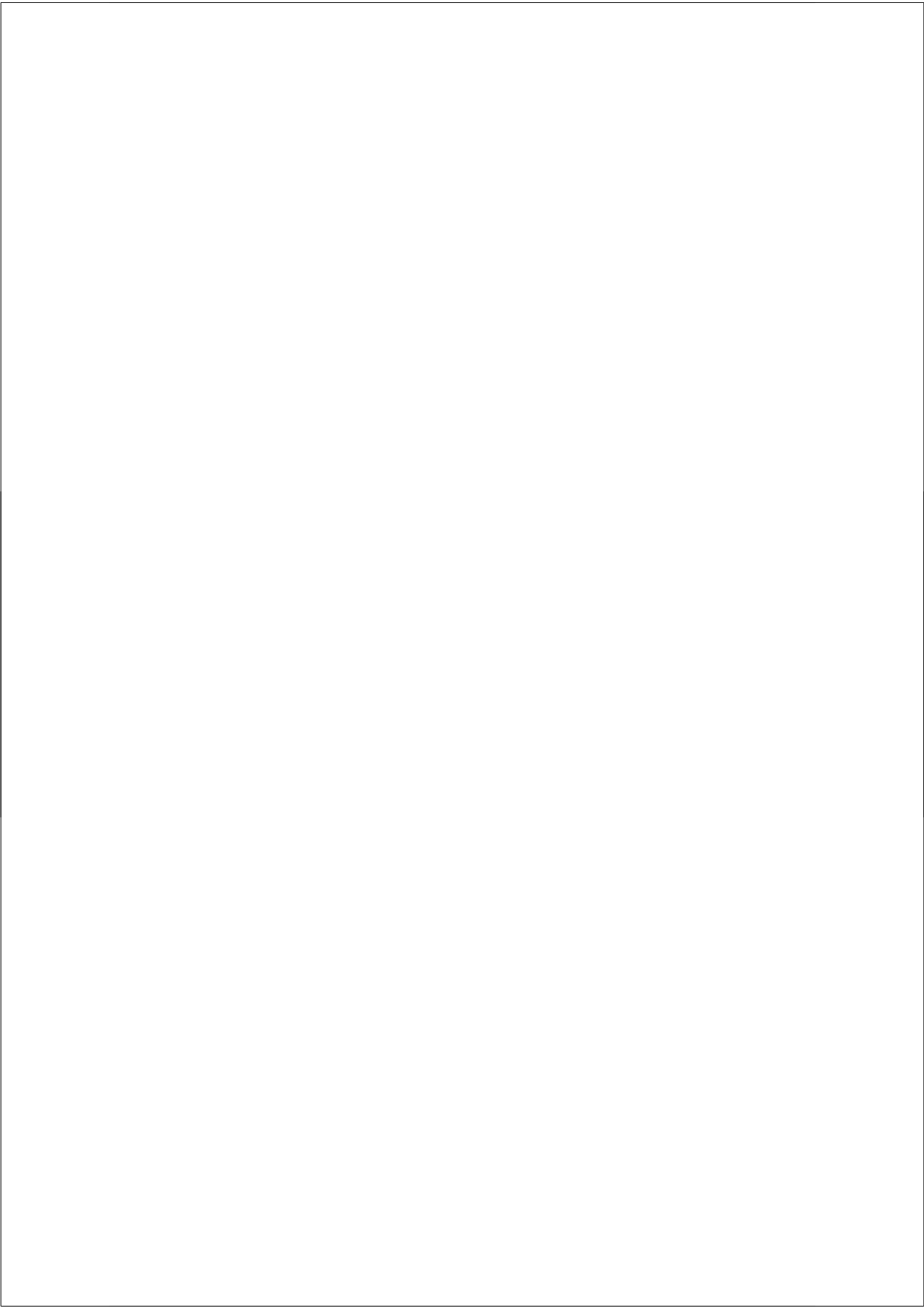
³¹ Gazzah states that the genre of “Shaabi music is a symbol for Morocco and Moroccan tradition and culture and therefore serves as a tool to evoke a sense of nostalgia, solidarity and unity among Dutch-Moroccans” (2009, p. 14).

The process of consuming multiple music video geographies as affective affinities presents another invocation of how identities become distributed as hypertextual selves. Bringing together in her preferences different geographies, languages and genres, Bibi moves beyond singular attachments to nationalism or diaspora affiliation. *YouTube* youth culture is appropriated as a landing point to follow the “routes” of imagined memberships to multiple affective communities (Gilroy, 1993a). The multiple geographies enable layered affective identity construction beyond expectations of narrowly defined, stereotypical Moroccan-Dutch identities. Consider for example Inas, a 13-year-old girl who feels strongly about covering her hair in public and also strongly values *YouTube* to look up Justin Bieber music videos. Her affective engagement with global girl culture does not meet the expectations of prejudiced Orientalist discourses of headscarf wearing Muslim women as backward and/or oppressed (Peila, 2012, pp. 2-3; Said, 1979). Furthermore, *YouTube* music video consumption may counter ethnic absolutism, as it is in the consumption of music from different youth cultural scenes that young people of various backgrounds - as audience members – can convivially connect (Gilroy, 2005).

6.5 Conclusions

This chapter focused on re-embodiment aspects of Moroccan-Dutch youths’ identity performativity amidst cultures of origins, youth cultures and cultures of immigration by considering affectivity as the potential of digital media artifacts to spark emotions. *YouTube* can be seen as an affective technology used for the constitution of selves, and I detailed various affective belongings spurred by viewing videos on *YouTube*. This way, my argument is situated in the “affective turn” (Clough & Halley, 2007). The platform was considered as a repository of affectivity where archived transmitted feelings can be accessed. I aimed to contribute towards a greater understanding of the cultural politics of digital forms of affectivity by considering affectivity as an active doing that emerges when bodies are emotionally touched by objects, in this case moving images (Ahmad, 2004). Assuming that viewing digital videos sheds light on the yearnings for community of informants, viewing processes were understood to foster feelings of belonging to “affective communities” (Gandhi, 2006). *YouTube* affective community formation was problematized by weighing the implications of medium-specific economic incentives (its “Anglo-Western” stance) and opportunities for appropriation by user communities (Pauwels & Hellriegel, 2009).

In particular, the affective geographies of belonging sparked by two specific genres of videos were empirically mapped out, described and analyzed. Following the distinction informants and scholars make, first what informants experienced as “*real*” and scholars have described as amateur, user-generated and vernacular video was considered. The viewing of distinct user-generated content was interpreted as a form of transnational affectivity, taken up to foster religious and nostalgic diaspora belonging. User-generated video materials uploaded by diasporic subjects offer a sanctuary for feelings of sameness and recognition for those who have a prior habitus to appreciate their content matters and materiality but may operate as exclusionary mechanisms, triggering negative responses from outsiders who see these videos as counter-hegemonic. Furthermore, as nostalgia is a utopian imagination, these desires when found out to be unrealistic – for instance during holiday travel – may lead to feelings of rejection and unbelonging. Subsequently the focus was on interpreting profit driven music videos as videos of affective affinity. Watching music videos of recording artists coming from cross-national locations, informants land youth cultural material as a source for hybridity and multiplicity. As a political form, the multi-geographical complexity of Moroccan-Dutch youths’ viewing of music videos in its conviviality counters ethnic absolutism and nationalism. In these myriad ways, the affective optic on digital videos demonstrates that – in contrast with early utopian writings on the disembodiment of cyberspace – digital practices implicate an active re-embodiment of the user online.



Conclusions¹

By making a cartography of identity performativity across Internet applications, I have detailed how relationships between diaspora, gender, youth culture and digital media are articulated in the specific case of Moroccan-Dutch youths in the Netherlands. With the title of this book, digital passages, I drew an analogy between mid 19th century arcades or commercial passageways that were developed in European cities like Bologna, Brussels and Paris and early 21st century Internet applications like discussion forums, instant messenger, *YouTube* and *Facebook*. In the words of Walter Benjamin, arcades were “the most important architecture of the nineteenth century” (1999, p. 834). Although it would be an overstatement to claim they are the most important architecture of the present age, it is a fact that digital spaces nowadays play a fundamental role in the daily lives of millions of people. Benjamin recognized that passageways had an ambivalent meaning; they captured collective utopian and dystopian views. New in their era, they offered pleasure by promising “a new world” of safe urban excitement, however passages also implied oppression by their promotion of commodity fetishism (ibid., p. 637, 939, 943). Passages played a double-faced role, which Benjamin explained with the following example: “[d]uring sudden rainshowers, the arcades are a place of refuge for the unprepared, to whom they offer a secure, if restricted, promenade – one from which the merchants also benefit” (ibid., p. 31). Neither skepticism nor evangelism fully captured the dynamics of arcades fully, and Benjamin pleaded to consider them as a “constellation saturated of tensions” (ibid, p. 475).

A passage was seen as a miniature world (ibid., p. 32), not only was it a new space where commodities were exchanged but it also became a comfortable urban environment where people could find shelter from rainy weather, observe others, do window-shopping, stroll around and spend their time in an enjoyable way. In this study I argued that Internet applications like discussion forums, instant messenger, *YouTube* and *Facebook* can be seen as present-day arcades as they offer their users an enjoyable miniature world, that at times works as a shelter from undesired external circumstances.

¹ Revised parts of this chapter will be published as Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (forthcoming a). Intersectionality, digital identities and migrant youth. In C. Carter, L. Steiner & L. McLaughlin (Eds.), *Routledge companion to media and gender*, (np). London: Routledge and Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (forthcoming b). Bits of homeland. In C. Ponte & M. Georgiou (Eds.) Special issue on Media, technology and the migrant family. *Observatorio (OBS*)*, 7(1).

Digital spaces offer users a chance to enjoy themselves, observe other people and do some (window) shopping. Internet applications are no public domains, they serve private interests and they have been developed to make profit. As digitized passageways, Internet applications offer advertisers a chance to market their products and monitor consumer preferences. Digital spaces have become “walled gardens” (Zittrain, 2008), that similar to offline arcades concentrate commercial establishments in a single bordered space.

In tandem with the ambivalent meanings of arcades, scholars have either applauded Internet applications as utopian, inclusionary and participatory spaces of disembodiment or criticized them for their profit-oriented and exclusionary character. These extreme perspectives however cannot fully capture the dynamics of digital space. Building on transdisciplinary theories of new media, postcolonial and gender studies I therefore developed a middle-ground perspective by combining medium specific analysis with a commitment to political engagement and social justice. I argued that identity performativity in digital space revolves around a complex process of socio-technological, material-embodied, imagined-discursive interactions (Leurs, 2012, p. 299). The in-between position I advanced is attuned to the mutual constitution of identity and technology in everyday, situated, and power-laden medium-specific contexts. Invisible to those who meet its requirements, each Internet space reserves certain dominant gendered, ethnic, age-specific positions and mainstream users reinforce those norms. Such mainstream configurations restrict but not fully determine user behavior.

When having to assert themselves against the grain, users become invaders of online territories. I developed the optic of space invaders to empirically trace and theorize digital spatial biases and their subversion but also to intervene in dominant thinking about digital media potentialities (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011a; Leurs, 2012, pp. 289-291). With the notion of digital passages, I referred however not only to the navigation of Moroccan-Dutch youths across demarcated digital spaces, but also sought to capture their digital identity formation processes at the interstices of online and offline relations that included coming-of-age, rites-of-passage and the negotiation of gendered, diaspora, religious and youth cultural expectations. These processes were shown to revolve around a politics of hybridization in which multiple minority and majority legacies, belongings and loyalties were enacted. As a process of subversion from below, their participation can be taken to refute emerging views of failed multiculturalism and ethnic segregation.

I have empirically sustained my arguments by innovatively bringing together a variety of data gathering approaches. My extensive fieldwork period consisted of a combination of surveys, qualitative in-depth interviews and participant observation. The fieldwork took place in the context of Wired Up, an international, collaborative research project that brought together scholars from the humanities and social sciences to critically explore the multifarious implications of digital media use among migrant youths. The computer-based survey was developed together with other researchers in the project. A total of 1408 young people, contacted through seven secondary schools in five Dutch cities, completed the questionnaire in classrooms or computer labs. The central database of their answers, shared among Wired Up researchers, was used in this study to get a general impression of digital media use frequencies, attachments to platforms and online self-presentation practices. Furthermore in-depth interviews were carried out with a group of 43 young Moroccan-Dutch individuals consisting of 21 girls and 22 boys. In order to ground the study in a broader context, I also spoke with a modest number of Moroccan-Dutch parents, website founders, moderators and artists. In a process of participant-observation, digital narratives of self circulating across digital spaces were gathered and archived.

From the survey findings and interviews I learned that Moroccan-Dutch youths consider online discussion forums, instant messaging (IM), online social networking sites (SNSs) and video sharing platforms most important in their lives. These four digital spaces were studied on a case-study basis. In the case studies I have achieved a complex variety of layered insights. In this concluding chapter I bring these different insights together in order to revisit my main research question: how do Moroccan-Dutch youths participate in and appropriate digital spaces in order to convey their belongings across multiple axes of identification such as gender, sexuality, diaspora, religion and youth-culture? In the following, I first consider the theoretical and methodological issues I encountered and tackled. In section one, I address the ways in which new media, gender and postcolonial theory worked together to unearth the complex dynamics of digital identity performativity. In section two, I describe how I have produced new knowledge on digital identity construction in my creative collision of methodological approaches from the humanities and social sciences. In section three I discuss how offline exclusionary mechanisms such as gender, ethnic, religious and age-based norms travel online, structure digital spaces and create new digital divides. In section four I reflect on

the implications of space invader strategies that Moroccan-Dutch youths employ to cope with digital forms of inequality.

1. Transdisciplinary dialogues

In the introduction and first chapter I have situated myself in different fields of critical inquiry. My transdisciplinary journey through these fields assisted me to select a specific focus and acknowledge the contestedness and multilayeredness of identity performativity and belonging in digital space. Now it is time to take stock of how this research speaks to those fields I have tapped into. Rather than moving beyond or against disciplines, I take transdisciplinarity to denote a reflexive discussion of an interdisciplinary research endeavor (Lykke, 2011). By virtue of its transdisciplinary approach, this study touches on various debates across multiple disciplines, and in the following I reflect on the relevance my journey may have for different disciplines. Therefore, I consider now what the study does – in terms of issues that can now be addressed – for the fields of new media, gender and postcolonial studies, migration and transnationalism, religion, media and communication studies, cyber feminism, studies of girlhood and studies on the Moroccan-Dutch community in particular. Also I point out possible future points of inquiry.

In theoretically staking out and empirically sustaining an in-between position between utopian and dystopian perspectives on digital embodiment and identity; I brought new media studies, feminist technoscience and postcolonial theory into dialogue. Gender studies and postcolonial theories provided the lens to remain attentive to social injustices, the reproduction of gendered, ethnic and religious unevenness as well as agency and empowerment across online discussion forums, instant messaging, social networking sites and video sharing platforms. New media studies tools allowed me to anchor the ways in which medium-specific characteristics co-construct identity performativity. Studying medium-specific spatial dynamics, I positioned myself in the “spatial turn” that is finding resonance across the humanities and social sciences and deployed the lens to study digital media practices as spatial power relations (Shome, 2003; Soja, 2009; Warf & Arias, 2009). A focus on space also brings out the potential of combining gender, postcolonial and new media studies. Combining them culminated in my extending of the notion of space invaders to empirically map out, conceptually reflect on and transform digital spatial hierarchies (Purwar, 2004).

I present a timely contribution to the fields of communication and media studies, given the recent growing scholarly interest among scholars working in these fields to account for migration and diaspora issues. A number of edited volumes and monographs on the topic have just been released (e.g. Christensen, Jansson & Christensen, 2011; Fortunati, Pertierra & Vincent, 2012a) and the interest in migration in relationship to media has recently become institutionalized. For instance, as part of *The European Communication Research and Education Association* (ECREA) conference panels are organized in the “Diaspora, Migration and the Media Section” and similarly a “Diaspora and Media working group” has been set up as part of *The International Association for Media and Communication Research* (IAMCR). Additionally, this contribution engages in dialogue with the broader ongoing shift towards de-Westernization and internationalization in media and Internet studies (Park & Curran, 2000; Thussu, 2009; Goggin & McLelland, 2009).

The study adds to prior scholarship on information and communication technologies (ICTs) use in the field of migration studies and transnationalism by focusing mostly on the digital performativity of identity of young people born in the diaspora, the generation of descendants of those who have migrated. Earlier work has shed light on how migrants use of ICTs to maintain transnational conversations with people in their country of origin (e.g. Everett, 2009; Georgiou, 2006; Karim, 2010; Madianou and Miller, 2012; Miller & Slater, 2000; Vertovec, 2009). The use of ICTs among descendants of migrants and migrant children however remains undertheorized (Green & Kabir, 2012, p. 101). Besides transnational *Skype* and *MSN Messenger* conversations between the near and far connecting those who have migrated, those who have stayed and those in the diaspora, the attention in this study on the particular configurations of age and generation revealed that youths who are born in the diaspora are more concerned with the digital remediation of diaspora as an affective, symbolic affiliation. Digital media are appropriated to re-imagine and exert proudness of migratory roots by producing, circulating and viewing representations of transnational belonging across IM display names, *Hyves* and *Facebook* group pages and vernacular diaspora *YouTube* videos.

Taking a feminist, postcolonial approach enabled me to bring to the forefront the paradoxes of hybridized local, transnational and global orientations in digital media practices (Fernández, 1999; Ignacio, 2006). By considering how multiple axes of differentiation intersect in Dutch-Moroccan youths’ everyday conveyal of belonging, I give an example of how intersectionality can be a promising way to diversify studies of technology use. This is pressing because cyberfeminism has been oriented towards

young, white, middle-class, Christian, North-American women (Consalvo, 2003; Leurs, 2012). Similarly, the study demonstrates how ethnicity, age, generation and religion differently impact upon processes of coming-of-age, and how an intersectional perspective can inform future feminist studies of girl cultures and understudied cultures of boys (Durham, 2004; Lemish, 2010).

Scholars of religion find in the study insights on the role of the Internet in the lives of young Muslims. In chapter three I argued that religious top-down authority is decentered through digital identity performativity, as informants turn to online discussion forums to voice and share religious interpretations of what they feel is right (“halal”) or wrong (“haram”), choosing their righteous path at the crossroads of gender, sexuality and generation. Digital practices also reveal affective dimensions of faith, as in chapter six viewing Islamic sermons, lectures and Anasheed music videos on *YouTube* was noted to be a mode of affective belonging to the wider community (Ummah) of Muslims. In general, in considering the emotional bonds informants established with (and through) *YouTube* videos, I offered an example of how to bring in affectivity to study processes of migration and the use of ICT, which is pressing in the fields of migration and media/communication studies (Boehm & Swank, 2011; Fortunati & Vincent, 2009).

This study intervenes in the debates about Moroccan-Dutch youths in the context of the Netherlands. Moroccan-Dutch youths have become the primary locus of fear over ethnic and religious otherness in the Netherlands (Ghorashi, 2010; Leurs, Midden & Ponzanesi, 2012). The majority of news reporting and scholarly work covers issues around juvenile delinquency (e.g. Van Gemert, 1998; Werdmölder, 2005; De Jong, 2007), mental health problems (e.g. Stevens, 2004; Veen et al., 2010), radicalization and Islam (e.g. Buijs, Demant & Hamdy, 2006; Slooman & Tilly, 2006) and unemployment, educational underachieving and social security reliance (Crul & Doornik, 2003; Dagevos, 2006, Van Praag, 2006). Bringing these four themes together, Jurgens speaks of a pressing “Moroccan drama” (2007). I add to the emerging alternative body of work on the everyday experiences of Moroccan-Dutch youths (Pels & de Haan, 2003; Buitelaar, 2007; Nortier & Dorleijn, 2008; Gazzah, 2009; Brouwer, 2006a). In particular I contribute to a greater understanding of ethnic, diaspora, religious, gendered and youth cultural dimensions of their everyday Internet use.

Last but not least, this research also raises new questions related to digital embodiment, migration and political change among other things. Future research can continue exploring the fissures emerging from the embedding of offline identities online

by assessing for instance issues around queerness, heteronormativity and class that I have left untouched (Kunstman, 2009). Furthermore, empirical scrutiny of the role of diaspora subjects in political activism might be useful to ground and develop nuanced understandings of recent uprisings in the Middle East and elsewhere that have been overtly celebrated in Western news reporting as rosy social media revolutions (Allagui & Kuebler, 2011). The role of ICTs (and their relationships with gender) in both forced migration and human trafficking also largely remains uncharted (Verstraete, 2007). More research on migrant youths is necessary to better understand the implications of generational differences (Green & Kabir, 2012, p. 101) and digital practices of multiculturalism, cultural citizenship and intercultural encounters also warrant future scrutiny.

2. Methodological considerations

Finding a middle-way in between the extremes of hard-boiled empiricism and postmodern rejections of essentialism, this research results from a creative collision of different methodological approaches. Although quantitative and theoretical/qualitative approaches to research are often dualistically separated out, I proposed they are not necessarily mutually exclusive poles. Different methods construct differently “situated knowledges” (Haraway, 1998). Combining quantitative and qualitative methods, I gathered different accounts of everyday digital identity performances. From large-scale surveys I learned what to focus on during in-depth interviews and the interviews subsequently directed me to focus on specific digital practices. Combining these partial, situated and contingent accounts allowed me to conduct a multi-layered study.

I have suggested measures to consider the pitfalls of speaking for informants and advanced several initiatives to study identities and digital practices with informants (Spivak, 1993a). I have sought to share my power of definition over the lives of the informants, as interviewees were invited to come up with pseudonyms to include their voice on their own terms. Also, throughout the text I have used the label Moroccan-Dutch, as this was the label the majority of informants used when asked to introduce themselves at the beginning of the interviews. Advancing a way to share interpretational power, I studied digital practices together with the informants by encouraging them to reflect on what their Internet looks like and to draw out this mental picture in an Internet map showing favorite Internet destinations. I built on their reflections to demarcate this study. By focusing on forums, instant messaging, social networking sites and *YouTube*, I

analyze those locations that were most prominently featured in the Internet maps the informants made. Circumventing ethical issues that may arise from anonymously lurking and gathering materials from publicly accessible Internet applications, I restricted myself largely to participating in, observing and archiving those discussion topics, IM conversations, social-networking profiles and *YouTube* videos that my informants specifically spoke to me about or shared with me via e-mail, IM or *Facebook* chat. In this way, the preferences of informants were also taken to limit my online fieldwork (Hine, 2005; AOIR, 2011).

Carrying out offline fieldwork together with Fayrouz Boulayounne, a Moroccan-Dutch research assistant, brought to the fore the shifting gendered, ethnic, religious, age and education based power relations in interviewer-interviewee positioning. There were instances where informants joined up with facets of Fayrouz when she was perceived as an insider to their worlds on the basis of a sensed shared ethnic background, gender, or religious upbringing. However I noted that being seen as different or an outsider means multiple things. It may hinder interaction but it may also promote exchange: this became apparent as informants sometimes took extra effort to explain issues that might be left uncovered or taken for granted among insiders. In some instances informants allowed me into their worlds especially because I was an outsider, unjudgemental over behavior in light of their ethnic or religious background, in others they did so when they considered me an insider to their world on the basis of me being male, being interested and/or knowledgeable in digital media, youth culture, fashion, sports or music or my outspoken commitment to anti-racism and social justice. The issue of trust also emerged as a locus of power struggles, with paradoxically experienced allowances and restrictions across school, non-institutional and online interviewing settings. Among the interviewees, there were some who preferred to disclose their personal opinions in the setting of school instead of online, or online instead of elsewhere.

Finally I proposed post-structuralist discursive analysis, attentive to medium-specific narratives, as a way to deconstruct how multiple axes of identifications intersect and perpetuate and/or contest hierarchical power relations. The multi-spatial micro-politics of power and its subversion were brought out in informants' narratives (ranging from transcribed interviews to gathered instant messenger chat transcripts) by taking an agency-sensitive approach combined with attentiveness to multiperspectivism, polyphony and fragmentation. To convey these strategies I for instance adopted a reflexive writing style. Avoiding the "God-trick" of assuming a position of an external objective observer

(Haraway, 1988, p. 581), I made my own presence clear in the text, and I italicized statements by informants to distinguish between their voice and my own reasoning. Italicization was also chosen to highlight my awareness of the politics in my translation into English of Dutch (and some Moroccan-Arabic and Berber words). Furthermore, choosing the word “youths” over “youth” I have opted for a label that emphasizes multiplicity instead of homogeneity. These methodological considerations may provide useful for researchers in disciplines like (new) media studies, gender studies and youth studies interested in grasping the meanings young people attribute to digital media practices.

3. Digital inequality and spatial hierarchies

Reflecting on prior strands of scholarship on inequality and digital media, I argued that digital divides need to be addressed in a novel way. I learned from Wired Up survey findings that computer ownership and Internet access is widespread among Moroccan-Dutch youths, as 98.3% of girls and 96.9% of boys report they have a computer in their homes with Internet access. These figures are similar to the national averages in the Netherlands. However, digital divides go beyond ownership and access. The first studies on digital gaps focused on uneven distribution of computer ownership and Internet access along geographic scales (the level of development of a country) and social categories (hardware was found to be mostly owned by young, white, affluent, males). The second wave of research analyzed divides between so-called information haves and have-nots caused by a similar asymmetrical distribution of skills and literacies. I have proposed digital gaps should be assessed in a new way. To put the recent celebratory discourses surrounding Web 2.0 in perspective, more attention is needed for how the profit-driven and peer production of the digital divide co-create uneven opportunities for non-mainstream groups to participate in digital culture. In this section, I recap how normative ways of being – sustained by profit-driven computer algorithms, interface templates and majority user cultures – operate as exclusionary mechanisms.

Norms and hierarchies in digital space emerge from the interplay of technological decisions and the preferences of the majorities of users. Young, white, masculine and middle-class bodies are the main target group of the profit driven cultural industry that develop Internet applications. Invisible to those who meet its requirements, each digital space holds dominant gendered, ethnic, age-specific positions for its defining users. In their participation in digital spaces, user majorities also occupy and produce certain ideal

types. These hegemonic, mainstream positions and norms may restrict subaltern users in their ability to become active agents in their own representation.

In section 1.1 I gave the example how computer algorithms can establish norms. I discussed the auto-search complete suggestions the *Google Netherlands* search engine gives when typing the Dutch word for Moroccans in the search box. The suggestions *Google* provides after typing “Marokkanen” revealed some of the ways Moroccan-Dutch youth are allocated positions. The first, third and ninth suggestion were “moroccan jests”, “moroccan jokes” and “moroccan problem gouda”. So when I typed the word I was guided to mockery and highly mediatized events in Gouda, a town in the Netherlands where a small group of Moroccan-Dutch youths caused disturbances. The *Google* auto-search complete example thus demonstrates how an ethnic minority group can algorithmically be slotted in positions of negative hypervisibility. By conveying particular suggestions, algorithmic associations magnify these views, slandering reputations (boyd, 2011, np).

In a similar vein, I found that *YouTube's* profit-driven search engine, guided by a filtering algorithm that demotes amateur, user-generated content pertaining to Morocco, while promoting sponsored and professional High Definition videos, further perpetuates western perspectives (Pauwels & Hellriegel, 2009, p. 395; Wall, 2011, p. 205). Algorithms are thus power-ridden. Options for self-presentation offered by pre-formatted template structures on social networking sites are limited in order to channel behavior and facilitate the generation of consumer profiles (Andrejevic, 2011). 15-year-old Oussema reflected that in *Facebook* “there is a special box to publish your religion and I find it important to let that show”, however, he adds that additional categories cannot so easily be included: “there is not really a box to register your culture”. Emphasizing the limitations of “menu-driven identities” that perpetuate “dominant color-blind ideologies” (Nakamura, 2002, p. 104; Grasmuck et al., 2009, p. 158), template structures do not offer users the opportunity for hybridization and multilayered identification.

Financial motives also guide the policing of ethnic minority activities online. Consider for instance the Anti-Wilders *Hypes* group. The icon of the group consists of a crossed-out photograph of the Dutch anti-immigrant and anti-Islam Member of Parliament Geert Wilders. As a form of protest, everyone who joins this group includes this image on their profile page. However, when such groups grow large, they get marked as a security risk. Large-scale political activity is restricted within *Hypes*, because these acts also flood the screens of the advertisers. Advertisers do not want their product to be

associated with political struggles (Spanjar, 2011, pp. 137-138). Upon deletion of the Anti-Wilders *Hypes* group users are again made to feel out of place, being disempowered by the tools that they had manipulated in order to make a political statement and empower themselves.

The norms, dispositions, actions and preferences of a majority of users may also cause people to feel unwelcome on a specific platform. In different digital spaces informants felt out of place, or got the feeling as if they were trespassing. Besides certain aged-based expectations, ethnic and religious norms also characterize digital space. As informants grew older they moved from the Dutch social networking site *Hypes* to *Facebook*. The latter is considered to be a more professional space. Exchanging the one for the other is indicative of a rite-of-passage away from what older informants describe as the childish, bright, colorful and messy *Hypes* towards the more serious young adulthood of *Facebook*. Exclusionary majority norms were for instance apparent in computer game culture. A fan of the game *Counter Strike*, 15-year-old Oussema shared that he had bad experiences after he disclosed his ethnic and religious background: “*When saying I am Moroccan, I am a Muslim, I get called a terrorist*”. Discussing comments made on *YouTube* videos pertaining to the country of Morocco, 16-year-old Naoul said: “*When you watch a video on YouTube, they shout ‘cunt-Moroccans’ and this and that about Moroccans*”. Eighteen-year-old Safae told me after her friend who covers her hair uploaded a picture on the Dutch social networking site *Hypes*, somebody sent her a message typing “*we live in 2010, a headscarf is out-dated, it’s something of the past*”. Once inside, the interviewees have to actively work against being othered and struggle to acquire a desired position. When having to assert themselves against the grain, users become invaders of online territories. Having mapped out how digital spaces are constructed as prescriptive, normative spaces the question arises how they can be subverted, invaded or transformed by the contributions of subaltern subjects, as they create diversity in spaces that were previously defined as neutral and universal.

4. Space invader strategies and the conveyal of belongings

In this section I reflect further on the subversive space invader strategies that Moroccan-Dutch youths use to cope with digital forms of inequality. According to Nirmal Puwar space invaders are considered to be bodies out of place that cross, trespass and invade institutional settings where the norm is to be populated by mainstream, white, male, elite bodies. Women and minorities have, however, permeated those through top down

governmental practices (like the integration of minorities through multicultural policies) and bottom up approaches by creating countercultures and entering the no-go spaces through social climbing, education and other tactics to decolonize the dominant spaces (2004). Following Puwar, the question arises what happens when Moroccan-Dutch youths take up “‘privileged positions’ which have not been ‘reserved’ for them” across digital space (2004, p. 144)? How do subjects on the wrong side of the template and peer-produced digital divide invade prescriptive spaces transforming them from within but also creating alternative platforms for communication and belonging? The notion of trespassing digital space bring the new media, gender and postcolonial and approach to the fore again, useful to unearth the complex dynamics of how the body is reinscribed online and how online gender/ethnicity/age/nationality/language/sexual preferences and their offline counterparts influence in different ways the invasion of normative digital spaces.

The first space invader strategy I consider here is the masking of difference. Fifteen-year-old Ryan engages in various acts of ethnic impersonation or racial passing. His desire to be included in my study under the pseudonym Ryan can already be seen as an act of passing, as he did not chose for a Moroccan name, as most other interviewees did, but an English given name. Talking about the *Dutch* online social networking sites *Hyves*, he noted “*when someone sees me there [on Hyves], they say I do not look like a Moroccan, but obviously I am one, but I do not let it show*”. Masking Moroccanness, he passes as an ethnic majority Dutch boy. As a gamer, he feels he acts “*very different from what normal Moroccan youths in my school do*”. He experiences playing computer games is “*Dutch culture*” as it is mostly “*Dutch kids who play games*”. He makes an effort to be accepted in Dutch gaming culture by backgrounding Moroccan affiliations during in-game interaction “*when I talk I do not appear to be Moroccan*”. An act of racial passing is a performance that reveals much about how users negotiate their embodiment online. Homi Bhabha recognizes the ambivalence of passing as an act of “mimicry”: it offers camouflage but it also offers resistance and transgression. By passing, subaltern subjects may achieve “partial presence” by passing for something one is not and “becoming a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite” (1994, pp. 122-123). Ryan takes up the space invader strategy of passing by strategically employing dominant cultural repertoires and making less visible the ways he diverts from the norms of user majorities. As Lisa Nakamura asserts, digital strategies of racial impersonation however leave the foundations of dominant exclusionary, white national identities intact (2002, pp. xvi, 37).

Appropriating a space to become the majority is a second space invader strategy. More popular among Moroccan-Dutch youths than ethnic majority Dutch youths, online discussion forums such as *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl* are used to publish alternative collective voices. Online discussion forums foster hopes for transformation, as they allow Moroccan-Dutch youths to gather and become the ethnic majority in their own digital space. Forums enable them to counter stereotypes, speak for themselves and develop their own normative ways of being. Discussion forums are used to acquire new positions in response to narrow-fitting allocated ethnic, gender and religious positions. These spaces are considered as safe loci for multiple forms of discursive contestation (Mitra & Wats, 2002, p. 489). The medium-specific sense of anonymity fuels disinhibition as these forum participants feel they can safely articulate views that may violate offline norms with a smaller risk of sanctions, repercussions or disapproval than elsewhere (Bargh et al, 2002). Forming a “subaltern counter public” (Fraser, 1990, p. 67) that feels hushed away from the mainstream, Moroccan-Dutch youths were found to speak back to allocated ethnic positions. Gender is of central concern in these ethnic boundary countering processes as boys and girls relate differently to both Dutch society and Islam, for example, because the stereotypical allocated positions and racisms they experience are not the same (boys are depicted as criminals, girls as headscarf-wearing and therefore backward and oppressed). Furthermore, their position in the public debates in the Netherlands about Islam differs, as female Islamic dress is more heavily discussed than most male traditions are (Leurs, Midden, Ponzanesi, 2012, p. 173). Moreover, girls can circulate counterviews online towards two of the prejudiced discourses that discipline Muslim women: (neo) Orientalist representations of backwardness and oppression by Muslim men and conservative Islamist discourses that criticize Western women’s roles as sex objects (Piela, 2012, pp. 2-3).

Seeking a middle-ground between familial, Dutch societal and global youth-cultural notions of gender and sexuality, Moroccan-Dutch girls share to feel less restricted in disclosing themselves on online forums and because of that they dare to bring up personal experiences they have difficulties with sharing elsewhere. They use forums to negotiate “hchouma” topics connected to love, relationships, marriage and sexuality, which would be shameful or taboo to discuss offline (Skalli, 2006, p. 96; Sadiqi, 2003, p. 67). By doing so, they expand their radius of action and achieve greater autonomy. By bringing gender issues and sexuality into the public digital space of discussion forums, they also breach the dichotomy of masculine public and feminine

private space that is noted in Moroccan socialization (Mernissi, 1987; Graiouid, 2005; Sadiqi, 2003; Brouwer, 2006a; Pels & De Haan, 2003).

Online forums are also used to negotiate Islamic codes of conduct. By performing Islam, religious authority is digitally reconfigured and decentred. Although most informants considered it a space of their own, forums are increasingly monitored and surveilled. Politicians and public news media link discussion sites frequented by Moroccan-Dutch individuals to radicalism and these sites are dismissed as segregated ghettos, unknown grimy spaces disconnected from the mainstream (Hulsman, 2005; Oostveen, 2004). Nonetheless, my analysis of the interview narratives emphasize the value of forums to be able to appropriate definitional power over collective self-identification away from Dutch societal, Moroccan-Dutch community and familial social norms as well as religious authorities that ascribe singular identity positions (Leurs, Midden & Ponzanesi, 2012; Leurs, Hirzalla & Van Zoonen, 2012).

Besides the collective voices on forums, informants noted to feel they could control the boundaries to the space of instant messenger, where gender boundaries are drawn and erased in additional ways. Away from their parents and siblings, and actively monitoring their contact list, they felt a great sense of autonomy over their private communicative space, which is of great appeal during the life phase of adolescence (Bradley, 2005, p. 62; Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011a, p. 206). Informants spoke of being less inhibited about sharing their personal feelings. Such feelings pose both risks and opportunities. Boys and girls take the opportunity to get to know each other personally, but on the other hand personal typed conversations were found to be prone to being copied and pasted to other contacts and similarly, while also the circulation of intimate webcam images beyond its original contexts was reported to have very serious consequences. A friend of two interviewees, 16-year-old Naoul and 15-year-old Inzaf, was for instance seriously beaten up after the girls' father and nephew were confronted with nude images she had decided to privately share in good faith with her boyfriend over *MSN* (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011c, pp. 70-72; Leurs, 2012). Furthermore, the gender stereotypical ways girls and boys posed in instant messaging and social-networking sites display photos reveals the hegemonic functioning of shared gender norms to achieve a desired level of attractiveness and attention. In their gendered peer economies, youths were found to tap into stereotypical dichotomous feminine and masculine conventions. Furthermore, the example of sexual harassment raised by Inzaf and Naoul as well as the

manipulation of personal profile images and re-publication on *YouTube* (“brooming”) indicates girls remain susceptible to male domination.

The conveyal of hybridized belongings across Internet applications indicates informants also opt for a third space invader strategy. Scholars like Paul Scheffer and anti-immigrant political parties argue that transnational communication opportunities such as satellite television and long distance phone calling taken up by migrants to stay in contact with their family and friends in their homeland and diaspora is detrimental to integration. They feel that ethnic minorities become ethnic enclaves when they can remain connected to their homeland, religion and diaspora instead of interacting with ethnic majority Dutch people (2007, p. 40). I observed that *Skype* and *MSN* are used among the informants to maintain transnational conversations. Having grown up with technologies their parents are unfamiliar with, such as *MSN* and *Skype*, Moroccan-Dutch youths mainly acted as technology brokers, assisting their parents in crossing a digital divide by brokering diasporic instant messaging and *Skype* connections. Complicating intergenerational relations, the bounded roles of parent as educator and child as learner get reversed (Orellana, 2009, p. 19-21; De Haan, 2012). These acts sustain the Moroccan diaspora as a distinct group (Slade, 2010; Backx, 2010).

However, I also noted a distinct generational specificity. Rather than a straightforward continuation of cultural legacies of their parents, Moroccan-Dutch individuals are actively transforming these in ways that resonate with the dominant youth cultures in which they grow up. In contrast with their parents, the informants, who are mostly born in the diaspora, invoke transnationalism more as a symbolic representation by including references to Morocco in their instant messaging display names and including Berber symbols in display photos on their personal profile page on *Hyves* rather than using *Skype* to talk to family members. Growing up in the Netherlands, most speak better Dutch than they speak Moroccan-Arabic and/or a Berber language. Rather than having telephone conversations and person-to-person transnational contacts, symbolic diaspora attachments were found to be published online as a way to signal ethnic pride. Also, amateur videos shot in Morocco viewed on *YouTube* sustained feelings of nostalgia and promoted emotional bonds with an imagined homeland. Symbolic transnationalism as such sparks a sense of affective belonging to a community, which is more imagined and virtual than a physically grounded connection.

Moroccan-Dutch youths' identification moves beyond the maintenance of singular migratory ties. At the beginning of my interviews, I asked how they would normally introduce their backgrounds to people they did not know. Fifteen-year-old Inzaf introduced herself by stating: *"I am born here, but my parents are from Morocco. I would not say that I am Moroccan because I was born here"*. Ilham, 13-year-old, laughed about her differential positioning and shared *"I am Moroccan, Berber and Muslim, but as you see I do have the Dutch nationality as well"*. Sixteen-year-old Naoul explained her positionality by stating *"I follow my own path"*. Similarly, 16-year-old Amir went beyond ethnic categorizations by stating, *"Everyone is different, [people say] someone is Turkish, the other is a Moroccan and another is Dutch, but for me it's not like that. It's not really like I [fit] in one particular group, it's more multiculti I think"*. And 15-year-old Oussema specified, *"I can't be pinned down to something specific, I am a bit of everything"*, he positioned himself *"in-between, always in-between"*. In their countering of positions of marginality informants expressed "new ethnicities", these hybrid identities exceed the sum of its positioning parts (Hall, 1996c). The examples of informants' narrating of self outside the Internet resonated in their differential digital identity performativity.

Informants namely extended the boundaries of their ascribed position as Moroccan-Dutch people beyond the "rooted" form of identification (Hall, 1990, p. 225; Gilroy, 1993a, p. 19). For example in instant messenger, Inzaf expressed her affiliation with El Hoceima, the city in Morocco where her parents were born, but does so tapping by into international repertoires of youth culture, rhyming in English: *"El Hoceima is the bom, that's the place where I come from so just tell everyone that's the city number ONE"*. Explaining its significance she shared: El Hoceima *"means a lot to me because that is the town in Morocco where I am from and I want to show that I am proud of it"*. She added that *"it rhymes in English"* and it is *"nicer to say it in English than in Dutch"*. Such acts of hybridization reflect active intercultural encounters. Different loyalties are brought together, as she "routes" and embeds her identity performance in the youth culture in which she grows up (Gilroy, 1993a, p. 19). She signals transnational affiliations with the city of El Hoceima in Morocco where her father was born, but she symbolically mediates it through the vocabulary of English-language global hip-hop youth culture. It becomes a way to emphasize one's individuality to peers, but also to connect with others.

In addition, street language and slang spoken among urban youths in the Netherlands of various backgrounds includes Moroccan-Arabic and Berber words. Instant messaging also revealed a breaching of a teenage gender habitus: while for

example Michael Gordeon established that boys use more slang in their everyday speech than girls (1993), among the informants the use of slang on IM was not restricted to boys. Creatively working around the medium specific constraints of the American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) Latin computer character set of their Dutch keyboards; informants use the Latin alphabet to write Moroccan-Arabic and Berber dialect words. Typing words such as “*ʒeʒma*” to express doubt and “*ʒassir*” to refer to a fruity drink, youths develop a generational specific, hybrid style. They not only borrow from youth cultural styles; the styles that they develop and infuse are also taken up by non-Moroccan-Dutch youths. Music produced by Moroccan-Dutch rappers is consumed by the mainstream; Ali B.’s 2006 hitsingle *Crazy macro flavour* for example topped Dutch music charts. Girls were avid slang producers in the conversations and display names I analyzed. Also ethnic majority Dutch youths tap into the repertoire of “Moroccan flavored Dutch” (Nortier & Dorleijn 2008, pp. 132-139), for instance nearly one in four ethnic majority Dutch survey respondents reported to include migrant-background artists on their profile pages.

I observed another strategy of space invasion in the articulation of hypertextual narratives of selves. The examples of how Ryan, 13-year-old Midia and 13-year-old Anas link to different groups on their *Facebook* and *Hyves* profile pages showed affiliations with issues ranging from Dutch nationalism, global consumerism, sexism, feminist interests, ethnic affiliations, religious concerns, gadgets, political activism and youth culture (Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2011b, np). Likewise, in their preference for music videos, informants mostly combine recording artists coming from more than one location in the world. Informants emotionally bonded with music videos as a source of multiplicity, as their viewing reflects affective affinities that stretch across geographies. In the hyperlink practices and viewing strategies of Moroccan-Dutch youths, the multiplicity of their personal cultural trajectories becomes visible. These findings provide new leads to consider how descendants of migrants who have been shown to be more concerned with identity issues and belonging than their parents, rearticulate their selfhood (Boym, 2001 xv.; Berry et al., 2006, Brouwer, 2006, np; Mainsah, 2011; De Leeuw & Rydin, 2007; Green & Kabir, 2012).

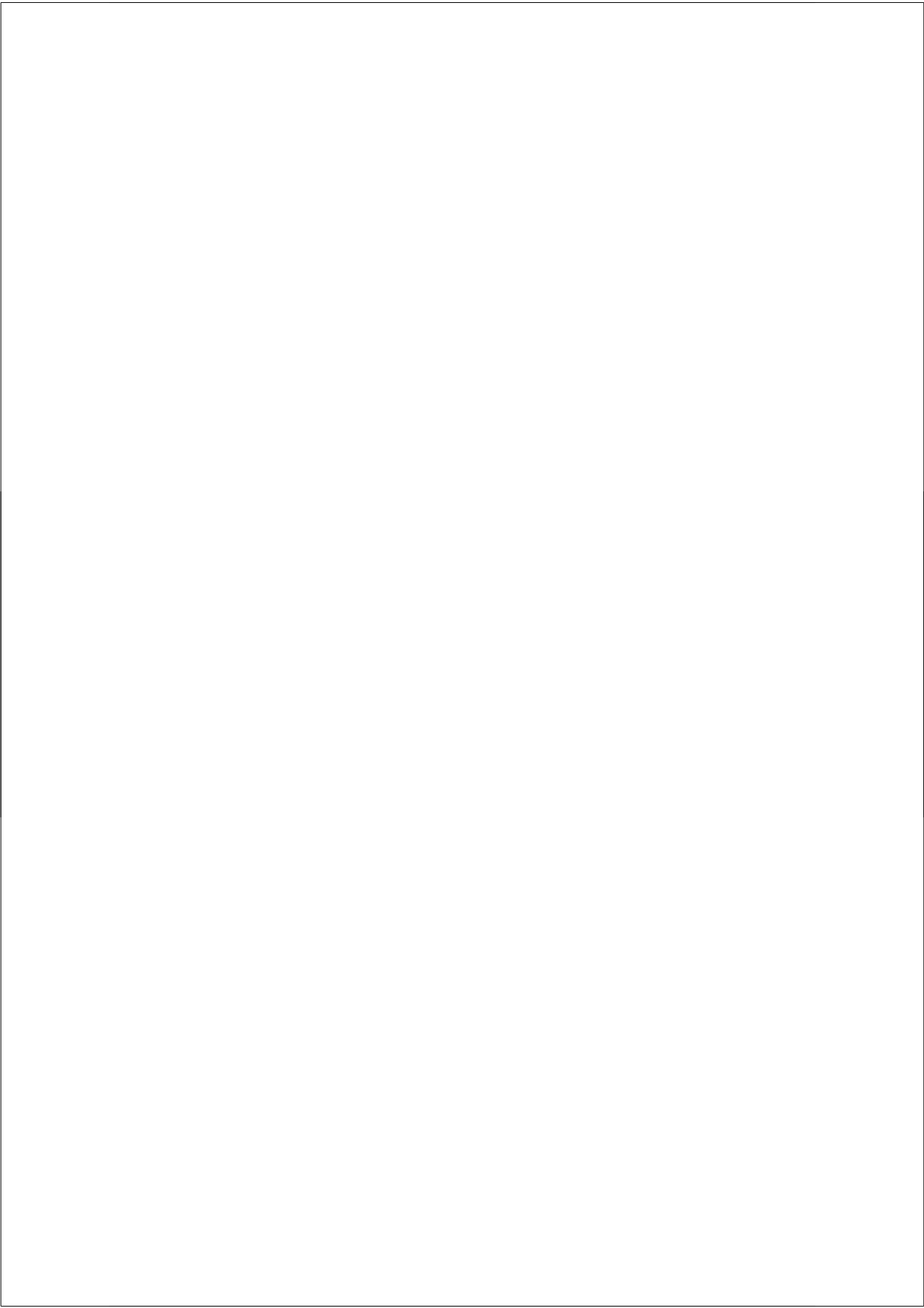
The digital practices Moroccan-Dutch youths engage in showed unexpected coalitions of ethnic minority youth as space invaders: minoritarian subjects align with majority groups through a variety of shared affiliations. Not only immigrant heritage is

highlighted. Rather than a straightforward continuation of migrant cultural legacies the informants are actively transforming those legacies in ways that resonate with the dominant local and global youth cultures in which they grow up. I provided different empirical foundations for what Eliezer Ben-Rafael and Yitzhak Sternberg have theorized earlier: “[d]iaspora communities in Western societies may remain involved in networks of varying amplitude, across borders and continents, and this does by no means preclude them from to invest their best in efforts to integrate into their actual society (2002, p. 11). On the basis of binary thinking between modes of cultural continuation versus assimilation of minoritarian cultures, scholars such as Paul Scheffer and Dutch politicians like Geert Wilders and Piet-Hein Donner have argued that multiculturalism has failed. My study on Moroccan-Dutch digital passages provides theoretical and empirical fundaments to challenge this binary view.

In sum, considering how Moroccan-Dutch youths as invaders of digital space are simultaneously empowered and disempowered, digital spaces prove to be promising entry points to discern various intersecting issues of identity and belonging, and they raise new questions about everyday multiculturalism. Away from state-organized initiatives of multiculturalism, Paul Gilroy sees everyday multiculturalism or conviviality in action in the “liberating ordinariness” of everyday “heteroculture” that ranges from art, music, food, transport and consumption (2005, p. 119). In their everyday mediation of lived experiences through digital practices, Moroccan-Dutch youths encounter people, representations and ideas from a variety of backgrounds. For Gilroy, the key to a culture of conviviality lies in the recognition that European culture is more than a monolithic, homogeneous white culture. He emphasizes that histories of everyday dwelling beyond the manipulations of political leaders and commerce can counter anti-immigrant and racist perspectives in European societies. These counter-histories can not only help to produce a new understanding of multicultural Europe, but also assist to discover the emancipatory possibilities of convivial culture to remedy xenophobia and neo-imperialism (2005, p. 144). More research on digital intercultural encounters is urgent to continue speaking back to pessimists that argue multiculturalism and integration have failed.

My cartography of Moroccan-Dutch youths’ multi-spatial digital identity performativity provides a history of the present full of promises but also full of personal experiences of struggle. The relationship between digital templates and user cultures and conveying belonging across multiple offline axes of identification remains intricate and

complex. At certain points, the online and offline world overlap or augment one another and at others they collide, providing room for re-signification. The boys and girls I interviewed are constantly confronted with various aspects of Dutch multicultural society: while they are often considered the other, they nevertheless also constantly create and connect new passages between their Dutch, Moroccan-Dutch, Muslim, diaspora and youth cultural belongings.



Bibliography

- Abbos, S., Majiti, R., Dadou, A., Hasnai B.N., El Achkar, M. & Eddaoudi, A. (2003) Manifest koerswijziging. [Manifest to change course]. *Koerswijziging.nl*. Retrieved from: <http://web.archive.org/web/20080609192750/http://www.koerswijziging.nl/> (accessed September 29, 2011).
- Adamic, L.A. & Adar, E. (2001, May). You are what you link. Paper presented at the *10th International World Wide Web Conference*, Hong Kong. Retrieved from: <http://www10.org/program/society/yawyl/YouAreWhatYouLink.htm> (accessed October 21, 2011).
- Aden, R.C. (1995). Nostalgic communication as temporal escape. *Western Journal of Communication*, 59(1), 20-38.
- Afshar, H. (2008). Can I see your hair. Choice, agency, and attitudes: the dilemma of faith and feminism for Muslim women who cover. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31(2), 411-427.
- Ahmed, S. (2010). Happy objects. In M. Gregg & G.J. Seigworth (Eds.), *The affect theory reader*, (pp. 29-51). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ahmed, S. (2004). *The cultural politics of emotion*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Albala, K. (2011). *Food cultures of the world encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara, CA: Greenwood.
- Alberro-Andrés, M. (2004). The Internet and adolescents. In J. Goldstein, D. Buckingham & G. Brougere (Eds.), *Toys, Games and Media*, (pp. 109-129). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Alexa. (2012, February 10). YouTube.com site info. *Alexa*. Retrieved from: <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/youtube.com> (accessed February 10, 2012).
- Allagui, I. & Kuebler, J. (2011). The Arab Spring & the role of ICT's [Special feature]. *International Journal of Communication*, 5. Retrieved from: <http://ijoc.org/ojs/index.php/ijoc/issue/view/6> (accessed October 26, 2011).
- Alonso, A. & Oiarzabal, P.J. (Eds.), (2010). *Diasporas in the new media age*. Reno, NV: University of Nevada Press.
- Anderson, J.W. (2001). Muslim networks, Muslim selves in cyberspace: Islam in the post-modern public sphere. *NMIT working papers*. Retrieved from: <http://www.mafhoum.com/press3/102S22.htm> (accessed January 23, 2012).
- Anderson, W. (2002). Postcolonial technoscience. *Social Studies of Science*, 32(5-6), 643-658.
- Andrejevic, M. (2011). Social network exploitation. In Z. Papacharissi (Ed.), *A networked self*, (pp. 82-101). London: Routledge.
- Androutsopoulos, J. (2010). Localizing the global on the participatory web. In N. Coupland (Ed.), *The Handbook of Language and Globalization* (pp. 203-231). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Androutsopoulos, J. (2007). Language choice and code-switching in German-based diasporic web forums. In: B. Danet & S.C. Herring (Eds.), *The Multilingual Internet*, (pp. 340-361). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Androutsopoulos, J. (2006). Multilingualism, diaspora, and the Internet. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, 10(4), 520-547.
- Ang, I. (1996). *Living room wars: Rethinking media audiences for a postmodern world*. London: Routledge.
- Antias, F. (2002). Where do I belong? Narrating collective identity and translocational positionality. *Ethnicities*, 2(4), 491-514.
- Anzaldúa, G. (1987). *Borderlands/La Frontera: The new Mestiza*. San Francisco, CA: Spinsters/Aunt Lute.

- AOIR. (2011). AOIR Ethics Guidelines Review Draft 2011. *Association of Internet Researchers*. Retrieved from: aoirethics.ijire.net (accessed January 17, 2011).
- Aoyama, S. (2007). *Nikkei-Ness: A cyber-ethnographic exploration of identity among the Japanese Peruvians of Peru* (unpublished master thesis). Department of anthropology: Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley.
- Appadurai, A. (2006). *Fear of small numbers: An essay on the geography of anger*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at large*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Arau, S. (Producer), (2004). *A day without a Mexican*. Los Angeles, CA: Jose & Friends.
- Arthur, C. (2006, July 20). What is the 1% rule. *The Guardian*. Technology section. Retrieved from: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2006/jul/20/guardianweeklytechnologysection2> (accessed February 08, 2012).
- Åsberg, C. & Lykke, N. (2010). Special issue on feminist technoscience studies. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 17(4), 299–444.
- Backx, Q. (2010). Bicultural media use: Amsterdam. *Journalism*, 11(6), 733-737.
- Bailey, O., Georgiou, M. & Harindranath, R. (Eds.), (2007). *Transnational lives and the media*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
- Bakardjieva, M. (2005). *Internet society: The Internet in everyday life*. London: Sage.
- Bakhtin, M.M. (1984). *Rabelais and his world*. (H. Iswolsky, Trans.). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Bannier, S. (2011). Netherlands. In G. Barnett (Ed.). *Encyclopedia of social networks*, (pp. 586-588). Los Angeles: Sage.
- Bargh, J., McKenna, K. & Fitzsimons, G. (2002). Can you see the real me? Activation and expression of the “true self” on the Internet. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(1), 33-48.
- Barlow, J.P. (1996, February 9). A Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace. *Electronic Frontier Foundation*. Retrieved from: <https://projects.eff.org/~barlow/Declaration-Final.html> (accessed November 15, 2011).
- Baron, N. (2008). *Always On. Language in an online and mobile world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Baron, N. (2004). See you online. Gender issues in college student use of instant messaging. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 23(4), 397-423.
- Baudrillard, J. (1994). *Simulacra and simulation*. (S.F. Glaser, Trans.). Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan.
- Bauman, Z. (2002). Identity in the globalizing world. In B.R. Eliezer & Y. Sternberg (Eds.), *Identity, Culture and Globalization*, (pp. 471-82). Leiden: Brill.
- Baxter, J. (2008). Feminist post-structuralist discourse analysis: A new theoretical and methodological approach? In K. Harrington, L. Litosseliti, H. Sauntson & J. Sunderland (Eds.), *Theoretical and Methodological Approaches to Gender and Language Study*, (pp. 243-255). Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008.
- Bazeley, P. (2007). *Qualitative data analysis with NVivo*. London: Sage.
- Beets, G. Bekke, S. ter & Schoorl, J. (2008). Migration history and demographic characteristics of the two-second-generation groups. In M. Crul & L. Heering (Eds.), *The position of the Turkish and Moroccan second generation in Amsterdam and Rotterdam*, (pp. 27-47). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Bel Ghazi, H. (1986). *Van souk naar arbeidsmarkt, Marokkaanse migranten en hun kinderen in Nederland*. [From the souq to the job market, Moroccan migrants and their children in the Netherlands]. Houten/Amsterdam: Unie Boek BV.
- Benjamin, W. (1999). *The arcades project*. (H. Eiland & K. McLaughlin, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Bennett, A. (1999). Subcultures or neo-tribes? *Sociology*, 33(3), 599-617.
- Ben-Rafael, E. & Sternberg, Y. (2002). Analyzing our time: A sociological problématique. In E. Ben-Rafael & Y. Sternberg (Eds.), *Identity, culture and globalization*, (pp. 3-20). Leiden: Brill.
- Bernal, V. (2010). Diasporas and cyberspace. In K. Knott & S. McLoughlin (Eds.), *Diasporas. Concepts, intersections, identities*, (pp. 167-171). London: Zed Books.
- Bernal, V. (2005). Eritrea online: Diaspora, cyberspace and the public sphere. *American Ethnologist*, 32(4), 660-675.
- Bernstein, M.S., Monroy-Hernández, A., Harry, D., André, P., Panovich, K. & Vargas, G. (2011). 4chan and /b/: An analysis of anonymity and ephemerality in a large online community. *Proceedings of the Fifth International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media*, 50-57. Retrieved from: <http://www.aaai.org/ocs/index.php/ICWSM/ICWSM11/paper/view/2873/4398> (accessed January 23, 2012).
- Berry, J.W., Phinney, J.S., Sam, D.L. & Vedder, P. (2006). *Immigrant youth in cultural transition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bertrand, I. & Hughes, P. (2005). *Media research methods*. Hampshire: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Bezemswalla. (producer), (2010). *Bezems 2010!!* YouTube. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33fQre3zNIE> (accessed October 27, 2011).
- Bhabha, H. (1994). *The location of culture*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H.K. (1990). The third space. Interview with Homi Bhabha. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity, community, culture, difference*, (pp. 207-221). London: Lawrence & Wishart.
- Blaagaard, B.B. (2010). Media and multiplicity: Journalistic practices and the resurgence of xenophobia in Europe. *Translocations: Migration and Social Change*, 6(2) Retrieved from: <http://www.translocations.ie/Vol%206%20Issue%202%20-%20Europe%20-%20Blaagaard.pdf> (accessed February 08, 2012).
- Blair, K. & Takayoshi, P. (1999). Introduction: Mapping the terrain of feminist cyberscapes. In K. Blair & P. Takayoshi (Eds.), *Feminist cyberscapes: Mapping gendered academic spaces*, (pp. 1-18). Stanford, CT: Ablex.
- Bloom, J.M. (1989). *Minaret, symbol of Islam*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Boehm, D.A. & Swank, H. (2011). Introduction. *International Migration*, 49(6), 1-6.
- Bolter, J.D. & Grusin, R. (2000). *Remediation: Understanding new media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Boneva, B.S., Quinn, A., Kraut, R., Kiesler, S. & Shklovski, I. (2006). Teenage communication in the instant messaging era. In R. Kraut, M. Brynin & S. Kiesler (Eds.), *Computers, phones, and the Internet*, (pp. 201-218). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Boomen, M. van den (2000). *Leven op het net. De sociale betekenis van virtuele gemeenschappen. [Life on the net. The social meanings of virtual communities]*. Amsterdam: Instituut voor Publiek en Politiek. Retrieved from: <http://boom.home.xs4all.nl/boek/3ageo.htm> (accessed January 23, 2012).
- Boomen, M. van den, Lammes, S., Lehmann, A.S., Raessens, J. & Schäfer, M.T. (2009). *Digital material. Tracing new media in everyday life and technology*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Borghuis, P., Graaf, C. de & Hermes, J. (2010). Digital storytelling in sex education. Avoiding the pitfalls of building a 'haram' website. *Seminar.net*, 6(2), 234-247. Retrieved from: <http://seminar.net/index.php/home/75-current-issue/148-digital-storytelling-in-sex-education-avoiding-the-pitfalls-of-building-a-haram-website> (accessed January 23, 2012).

- Boubekeur, A. (2005). Cool and competitive. Muslim cultures in the West. *ISIM Review*, 16, 12-13. Retrieved from: http://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/10076/Review_16.pdf (accessed February 20, 2012).
- Boumans, L. (2003). Ze3ma. Een Noordafrikaans epistemisch partikel dat zich verspreidt. *Gramma/TTT*, 10(1), 1-26.
- Boumans, L. (2002). Meertaligheid op Marokkaanse elektronische prikborden. [Multilinguality on Moroccan electronic forums]. *Levende Talen*, 3(1), 11-21.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste*. London: Routledge.
- Bouw, C., Merens, A., Roukens, K. & Sterckx, L. (2003). *Een ander succes. De keuzes van Marokkaanse meisjes*. [Another success. The choices of Moroccan girls]. Amsterdam: Siswo. Retrieved from: www.siswo.uva.nl/pdf1/eenandersucces.pdf (accessed December 06, 2011).
- boyd, d. (2012). White flight in networked publics? In L. Nakamura & P.A. Chow-White (Eds.), *Race after the Internet*, (pp. 203-222). New York, NY: Routledge.
- boyd, d. (2011, September 12). Guilt through algorithmic association. *Apophenia*. Retrieved from: <http://www.zephoros.org/thoughts/archives/2011/09/12/guilt-through-algorithmic-association.html> (accessed February 14, 2012).
- boyd, d. (2010). Friendship. In M. Ito (Ed.), *Hanging out, messing around and geeking out*, (pp. 79-115). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- boyd, d. (2010, June 10 - October 11). Personal communication. E-mail correspondence on carrying out ethnographic interviews with teenagers on the topic of social media.
- boyd, d. (2008). *Taken out of context. American teen sociality in networked publics*. (Doctoral dissertation). Graduate division of the University of California, Berkeley. Retrieved from: www.danah.org/papers/TakenOutOfContext.pdf (accessed January 17, 2011).
- boyd, d. (2007). Why youth heart social network sites: The role of networked publics in teenage social life. In D. Buckingham (Ed.) *Youth, identity and digital media*, (pp. 119-142). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- boyd, d. & Ellison, N. (2007). Social network sites: Definition, history, and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(1), 210-230.
- Boym, S. (2001). *The future of nostalgia*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Brah, A. (2003). Diaspora, border and transnational identities. In R. Lewis & S. Mills (Eds.) *Feminist postcolonial theory: A reader*, (pp. 613-634). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Brah, A. (1996). *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*. London: Routledge.
- Braidotti, R. (2011). *Nomadic subjects: embodiment and sexual difference in contemporary feminist*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Braidotti, R. (2006). *Transpositions: On nomadic ethics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bradley, K. (2005). Internet lives: Social context and moral domain in adolescent development. *New Directions for Youth Development*, 108, 57-76.
- Brandist, C. (2001). The Bakhtin circle. *The Internet encyclopedia of philosophy*. Retrieved from: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/bakhtin/> (accessed January 23, 2012).
- Brennan, T. (2004). *The transmission of affect*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Breslauer, H.K. (Producer), (1924). *The city without jews*. Vienna: H. K. Breslauer-Film
- Brinkerhoff, J.M. (2009). *Digital Diasporas: Identity and transnational engagement*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Broek, A. van den & De Haan, J. (2006). Digitale contacten en integratie van allochtone jongeren. [Digital contacts and integration of allochthonous youth] In J. de Haan & C. van 't Hof (Eds.), *Jaarboek ICT en samenleving 2006. De digitale generatie*, (pp. 83-108). Amsterdam: Boom.
- Brouwer, L. (2011). Jokes, raps and transnational orientations. Protests of Dutch-Moroccan youths in the debate on Islam. In M. de Theije & T. Salman (Eds.), *Local battles: Global stakes*, (pp. 175-194). Amsterdam: VU University Press.
- Brouwer, L. (2010). The Internet as a vehicle for empowerment. In C. Timmerman, J. Lemans & H. Roos (Eds.), *In-between spaces: Christian and Muslim minorities in transition in Europe*, (pp. 219-232). Brussels: Peter Lang.
- Brouwer, L. (2006a). Giving voice to Dutch Moroccan girls on the Internet. *Global Media Journal*, 5(9), np. Retrieved from: http://lass.calumet.purdue.edu/cca/gmj/fa06/gmj_fa06_brouwer.htm (accessed 26 September 2011).
- Brouwer, L. (2006b). Dutch-Moroccan websites: A transnational imagery? *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 32(7), 1153-1168.
- Brouwer, L. (2002). Marokkaanse jongeren en virtuele discussies [Moroccan youths and virtual discussions]. *Sociologische Gids*, 49(2), 121-135.
- Brouwer, L. (1992). Binding religion. Moroccan and Turkish runaway girls. In W.A.R. Shadid & P.S. van Koningsveld (Eds.), *Islam in Dutch society*, (pp. 75-89). Kampen: Kok Pharos.
- Brouwer, L. & Wijma, S. (2006). De zin en onzin van forumdiscussies op Marokkaanse websites. [The sense and nonsense of forumdiscussions on Moroccan websites]. In J. de Haan & C. van 't Hof (Eds.), *Jaarboek ICT en samenleving 2006. De digitale generatie*. [Yearbook ICT and society 2006. The digital generation], (pp. 109-123). Amsterdam: Boom.
- Buckingham, D. (2007). Introducing identity. In D. Buckingham (Ed.) *Youth, identity and digital media*, (pp. 1-24). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Buffardi, L.E. & Campbell, W.K. (2008). Narcissism and social networking sites. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34, 1303-1314.
- Buikema, R. (2009). Crossing the borders of identity politics. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 16(4), 309-323.
- Buikema, R. (2005). A poetics of home. In S. Ponzanesi & D. Merola (Eds.), *Migrant cartographies*, (pp. 177-187). Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Buikema, R., Griffin, G. & Lykke, N. (2011). Editorial introduction. Researching differently. In R. Buikema, G. Griffin & N. Lykke (Eds.), *Theories and methodologies in postgraduate feminist research*, (pp. 1-11). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Buitelaar, M. (2008). De Islamisering van identiteit onder jongeren van Marokkaanse afkomst. [The Islamisation of identity among youth of Moroccan descent]. In M. ter Borg (Ed.), *Handboek religie in Nederland: Perspectief, overzicht, debat*, [Handbook religion in the Netherlands: Perspective, overview, debate] (pp. 239-252). Zoetermeer: Meinema.
- Buitelaar, M. (2007). Staying close by moving out. The contextual meanings of personal autonomy in the life stories of women of Moroccan descent in The Netherlands. *Contemporary Islam*, 1(1), 3-22.
- Buitelaar, M. (2002). Negotiating the rules of chaste behaviour: re-interpretations of the symbolic complex of virginity by young women of Moroccan descent in The Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 25(3), 462-489.
- Buitelaar, M. & Stock, F. (2010). Making homes in turbulent times: Moroccan-Dutch Muslims contesting dominant discourses of belonging. In H. Moghissi & H. Ghorashi (Eds.), *Muslim diaspora in the west*, (pp. 163-180). Farnham: Ashgate.

- Buijs, F., Demant, F. & Hamdy, A. (2006). *Strijders van eigen bodem. Radicale en democratische moslims in Nederland*. [Warriors from our own soil. Radical and democratic Muslims in the Netherlands]. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Bunt, G.R. (2009). *iMuslims. Rewiring the house of Islam*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Burgess, J. (2011). User-created content and everyday cultural practice: Lessons from YouTube. In J. Bennett & N. Strange (Eds.), *Television as digital media* (pp. 311-331). Durham, NC: Duke University Press
- Burgess, J. & Green, J. (2009). *YouTube. Online video and participatory culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Burkhalter, B. (1999). Reading race online: Discovering racial identity in Usenet discussions. In M.A. Smith & P. Kollock (Eds.), *Communities in cyberspace*, (pp. 60-75). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (2005). *Giving an account of oneself*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press.
- Butler, J. (2003). Performative acts and gender constitution. In A. Jones (Ed.), *The feminism and visual culture reader*, (pp. 392-402). London: Routledge
- Butler, J. (1999). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. 10th anniversary edition, New York, NY: Routledge.
- Butler, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter: On the discursive limits of 'sex'*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Byrne, D.N. (2008). The future of (the) 'race': Identity, discourse, and the rise of computer-mediated public spheres. In A. Everett (Ed.), *Learning race and ethnicity: Youth and digital Media*, (pp. 15-38). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Castells, M. (2009). *Communication power*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Castells, M. (2001). *The Internet galaxy*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- CBS. (2011a). Population; sex, age, origin and generation. *Statistics Netherlands Statline*. Retrieved from: <http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=37325ENG&D1=0&D2=0-4,136,151,214,231&D3=0&D4=0&D5=139&D6=a,10-8&LA=EN&VW=T> (accessed December 16, 2011).
- CBS. (2011b). Population; sex, age and nationality. *Statistics Netherlands Statline*. Retrieved from: <http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=70798NED&D1=a&D2=0&D3=1-5,21,39,51,116,171,186&D4=1,6,l&HDR=T,G3&STB=G1,G2&VW=T> (accessed March 19, 2012).
- CBS. (2011c). Population; sex, age, origin and generation. *Statistics Netherlands Statline*. Retrieved from: <http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=37325ENG&D1=1-2&D2=0-4,136,151,214,231&D3=0&D4=0&D5=139&D6=a,10-8&LA=EN&VW=T> (accessed December 16, 2011).
- CBS. (2011d). Leerlingen voortgezet onderwijs; aandeel medeleerlingen naar herkomst [Students higher education, number of students by descent]. *Statistics Netherlands Statline*. Retrieved from: <http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=71832NED&D1=0&D2=1-2&D3=6&D4=0&D5=0,7,25&D6=l&HDR=G5,G1,G3,T&STB=G4,G2&LA=EN&VW=T> (accessed December 16, 2011).
- CBS. (2012). ICT gebruik van personen naar persoonskenmerken. [ICT's use and personal characteristics] <http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=71098ned&D1=33-133&D2=0-3&D3=a&HDR=G1&STB=T,G2&VW=T> (accessed March 18, 2012).
- Certeau, M. de (1984). *The practice of everyday life*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

- Cetina, K.K. (2005). Complex global microstructures. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22(5), 213-234.
- Chaima.nl. (2011). Registratie. [Registration]. *Chaima.nl*. Retrieved from: <http://www.chaima.nl/register.php?do=register> (accessed 30 September 2011).
- Chun, W.H.K. (2006). *Control and freedom. Power and paranoia in the age of fiber optics*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Christensen, M., Jansson, A. & Christensen, C. (Eds.), (2011a). *Online territories. Globalization, mediatization and social space*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Christensen, M., Jansson, A. & Christensen, C. (2011b). Introduction: Globalization, mediated practice and social space: Assessing the means and metaphysics of online territories. In M. Christensen, A. Jansson & C. Christensen (Eds.), *Online territories. Globalization, mediatization and social space*, (pp. 1-16). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Christensen, N.B. (2003). *Inuit in cyberspace. Embedding offline identities online*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press.
- Christensen, P. H. & James A. (Eds.), (2000). *Research with children: Perspectives and practices*. London: Falmer Press.
- Clough, P.T. & Halley, J. (Eds.), (2007). *The affective turn*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Code, L. (1991). *What can she know? Feminist theory and the construction of knowledge*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Consalvo, M. (2003). Cyberfeminism. In S. Jones (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of new media* (pp. 108-109). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- cooke, m. (2007). The Muslimwoman. *Contemporary Islam*, 1(2), 139-154.
- Cottaar, A. & Bouras, N. (2009). *Marokkanen in Nederland. De pioniers vertellen*. [Moroccans in the Netherlands. The pioneers tell their stories]. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff.
- Couldry, N. (2010). *Why voice matters*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Crul, M. & Doornik, J. (2003). The Turkish and Moroccan second generation in the Netherlands. *International Migration Review*, 37(4), 1039-1064.
- Cvetkovich, A. (2003). *An archive of feelings: Trauma, sexuality, and lesbian public cultures*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Czaja, R. & Blair, J. (2005). *Designing surveys*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
- Dagevos, J. (2006). *Hoge (jeugd)werkloosheid onder etnische minderheden*. [High (youth)unemployment among ethnic minorities]. Den Haag: SCP.
- Dahlberg, L. & Siapera, E. (Eds.), (2007). *Radical democracy and the Internet*. New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Davis, J. (2010). Architecture of the personal interactive homepage: constructing the self through MySpace. *New Media & Society*, 12(7), 1103-1119.
- Davis, K. (2008). Intersectionality as buzzword. A sociology of science perspective on what makes a feminist theory successful. *Feminist Theory*, 9(1), 67-85.
- Davis, K. (2006). Feminist politics of location. In K. Davis, M. Evans & J. Lorber (Eds.), *Handbook of gender and women's studies*, (pp. 476-480). London, Sage.
- Deleuze, G. (1994). *Difference and repetition*. (P. Patton, Trans.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Derrida, J. (1978). *Writing and difference*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago.
- D'Haenens, L., Summeren, C. van, Saeys, F. & Koeman, J. (2004). *Integratie of identiteit? Mediamenu's van Turkse en Marokkaanse jongeren*. [Integration or identity? Mediamenu's of Turkish and Moroccan youths?]. Amsterdam: Boom.

- D'Haenens, L. (2003). ICT in multicultural society. The Netherlands: A context for sound multiform media policy. *Gazette: The international journal for communication studies*, 65(4-5), 401-421.
- DHC. (2004). *Hirsi Ali Diss*. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyu4njwPqPs> (accessed January 23, 2012).
- Dijck, J. van (2009). Users like you? Theorizing agency in user-generated content. *New Media & Society*, 31(1), 41-58.
- Dijck, J. van (2008). Digital photography: Communication, identity, memory. *Visual Communication*, 7(1), 57-76.
- Diminescu, D. (2008). The connected migrant: an epistemological manifesto. *Social Science Information*, 47(4), 565-579.
- Donnelly, A.M. (2011). Read my profile: Internet profile culture, young women, and the communication of power. In M. Ames & S. Burcon (Eds.), *Women and language: Essays on gendered communication across media*, (pp. 167-181). Jefferson, NC: McFarland.
- Dorleijn, M. & Nortier, J. (2009). Code-switching and the Internet. In B.E. Bullock & A.J. Toribio (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of linguistic code-switching*, (pp. 127-141). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dool, P van den. (2011, April 1). Wilders komt volgend jaar met Fitna 2 over 'zieke geest Mohammed' [Wilders will come with Fitna 2 next year, dealing with 'the sick mind of Muhammad']. *NRC Handelsblad*. Retrieved from: <http://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2011/04/01/wilders-komt-volgend-jaar-met-fitna-ii-over-zieke-geest-mohammed/> (accessed February 08, 2012).
- Doorn, N. van (2009). The ties that bind: The networked performance of gender, sexuality and friendship on MySpace. *New Media & Society*, 11(8), 1-22.
- Doorn, N. van & Zoonen, L. van (2009). Theorizing gender and the Internet. In A. Chadwick & P.N. Howard. *Routledge handbook of Internet politics*, (pp. 261-274). New York: Routledge.
- Doorn, N. van, Zoonen, L. van & Wyatt, S. (2007). Writing from experience. Presentations of gender identity on weblogs. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 14(2), 143-159.
- Drotner, K. (1994). Ethnographic enigmas: 'The everyday' in recent media studies. *Cultural Studies*, 8(2), 341-357.
- Drotner, K. & Livingstone, S. (2008). Editor's introduction. In K. Drotner & S. Livingstone (Eds.) *The international handbook of children, media and culture*, (pp. 1-16). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Dubbelman, T. (2011). Playing the hero: How games take the concept of storytelling from representation to presentation. *Journal of Media Practice*, 12(2), 157-172.
- Duimel, M. & Haan, J. de (2007). *Nieuwe links in het gezin*. [New links in the family]. Den Haag: Sociaal en Cultureel Planbureau.
- Duits, L. & Zoonen, L. van (2006). Headscarves and *porno-chic*: disciplining girls' dress in the European multicultural society. *The European Journal of Women's Studies*, 13(2), 103-117.
- Dunyahenya (2011, April 23). Kanker hoofddoek [Headscarf is a cancer]. *A muslima living in the big world! Wordpress blog*. Retrieved from: <http://dunyahenya.wordpress.com/2011/04/23/kanker-hoofddoek/> (accessed January 11, 2011).
- Durham, M.G. (2004). Constructing the 'new ethnicities': Media, sexuality and diaspora identity in the lives of South Asian immigrant girls. *Critical studies in media communication*, 21(2), 140-161.
- Durham, M.G. (2001). Adolescents, the Internet and the politics of gender. *Race, Gender & Class*, 8(4), 20-41.

- Eagleton, T. (1986). *Against the grain. Essays, 1975-1985*. London: Verso.
- Ebo, B. (Ed.), (1998). *Cyberghetto or cybertopia? Race, class, and gender on the Internet*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Echchaibi, N. (2001). We are French too, but different. Radio, music and the articulation of difference among young North Africans in France. *International Communication Gazette August*, 63(4): 295-310.
- Eickelman, D.F. & Anderson, J.W. (2003). *New Media in the Muslim World*. Second edition. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Ennaji, M. (2005). *Multilingualism, cultural identity and education in Morocco*. New York, NY: Springer.
- Erikson, E.H. (1975). *Life history and the historical moment*. New York, NY: Norton.
- Escher, A. & Wüst, M. (2010) Couscous, Tajine und Bastilla. Ein Versuch über die marokkanische Küche. In I. Schütze (Ed.), *Über Geschmack lässt sich doch streiten. Zutaten aus Küche, Kunst und Wissenschaft*, (pp. 61-81). Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos.
- Everett, A. (2009). *Digital Diaspora. A race for cyberspace*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Facebook. (2011). Newsroom: Factsheet. Retrieved from: <http://newsroom.fb.com/content/default.aspx?NewsAreaId=22> (accessed March 7, 2012).
- Fallis, D. (2007). Epistemic value theory and the digital divide. In: E. Rooksby & J. Weckert (Eds.) *Information Technology and Social Justice*, (pp. 29-46). London: Information Science Publishing.
- Fernández, M. (1999). Postcolonial media theory. *Art Journal*, 58(3), 58-73.
- Fiske, J. (1992). The cultural economy of fandom. In L. A. Lewis (Ed.), *The adoring audience: Fan culture and popular media*, (pp. 30-49). New York: Routledge.
- Fortunati, L. (2009). Theories without heart. In A. Esposito & R. Vich (Eds.), *Cross-modal analysis of speech, gestures, gaze and facial expressions*, (pp. 5-17). Berlin: Springer Verlag.
- Fortunati, L., Pertierra, R. & Vincent, J. (Eds.), (2012a), *Migration, diaspora and information technology in global societies*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Fortunati, L., Pertierra, R. & Vincent, J. (2012b). Introduction: Migration and diasporas – Making their world elsewhere. In L. Fortunati, R. Pertierra & J. Vincent (Eds.), *Migration, diaspora and information technology in global societies*, (pp. 1-17). London, Routledge.
- Fortunati, L. & Vincent, J. (2009). Introduction. In: L. Fortunati & J. Vincent (Eds.), *Electronic emotion*, (pp. 1-25). Bern: Peter Lang.
- Foucault, M. (1988). Technologies of the self. In L.H. Martin, H. Gutman & P.H. Hutton (Eds.), *Technologies of the self*, (pp. 16-49). Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. In H.L. Dreyfus & P. Rabinow (Eds.), *Michel Foucault: Beyond structuralism and hermeneutics*, (pp. 208-226). New York, NY: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge*. Brighton: Harvester Press.
- Foucault, M. (1978). *The history of sexuality. Volume 1: An introduction*. New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
- Franklin, M. I. (2004). *Postcolonial politics, the Internet and everyday life*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Franklin, M.I. (2003). I define my own identity: Pacific articulations of 'race' and 'culture' on the Internet. *Ethnicities*, 3(4), 465-490.
- Fraser, N. (1990). Rethinking the public sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. *Social Text*, 25/26, 56-80.
- Freud, S. (1949). *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego*. New York: Liverlight.

- Frissen, V. (2008). *De digitale diaspora. De virtuele realiteit van de multiculturele samenleving*. [The digital diaspora. The virtual reality of the multicultural society]. Utrecht: Forum.
- Frissen, V. & Mul, J. de (2000). *Under construction. Persoonlijke en culturele identiteit in het multimediatijdperk*. [Personal and cultural identity in the multimedia age]. Amsterdam: Infodrome.
- Fuchs, C. (2011). *Foundations of critical media and information studies*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Gajjala, R. (2012, February 9). Personal communication. Skype conversation on critical studies of affectivity, subalterneity and Internet culture.
- Gajjala, R. & Birzescu, A. (2010). Voicing and placement in online networks. In M. Levina & G. Kien (Eds.), *Post-global network and everyday life*, (pp. 73-91). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Gandhi, L. (2006). *Affective communities: Anticolonial thought, Fin-de-siècle radicalism, and the politics of friendship*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Gatson, S.N. & Reid, R.A. (2012). Race and ethnicity in fandom. [Editorial]. *Transformative Works and Cultures*, 8. Retrieved from: <http://journal.transformativeworks.org/index.php/twc/article/view/392/252> (accessed January 14, 2012).
- Gazzah, M. (2010). Maroc-Hop: Music and youth identities in the Netherlands. In L. Herrera & A. Bayat (Eds.), *Being young and Muslim*, (pp. 309-323). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gazzah, M. (2009). European Muslim youth: Towards a cool Islam? In J.S. Nielsen (Ed.), *Yearbook of Muslims in Europe*, (pp. 403-425). Leiden: Brill.
- Geense, P. & Pels, T. (2002). Allochtone jongeren op het Internet. [Allochthonous youths on the Internet]. *Migrantenstudies*, 18, 2-19.
- Gemert, F. van (2007). Abdel en Mohammed B; Marginaliseren en radicaliseren van Marokkanse jongemannen [Abdel and Mohammed B; Marginalization and radicalization of young Moroccan men]. In M.W. Buitelaar (Ed.), *Uit en thuis in Marokko. Antropologische schetsen*. [Away from and home in Morocco. Anthropological sketches], (pp. 120-132). Amsterdam: Bulaaq.
- Gemert, F. van (1998). *Ieder voor zich: kansen, cultuur en criminaliteit van Marokkaanse jongens*. [Everyone for themselves: Opportunities, culture and criminality among Moroccan youths]. Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis.
- George, R.M. (1999). *The politics of home: Postcolonial relocations and twentieth-century fiction*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Georgiou, M. (2011). Diaspora, mediated communication and space. In M. Christensen, A. Jansson & C. Christensen (Eds.), *Online territories. Globalization, mediatization and social space*, (pp. 205-221). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Georgiou, M. (2006). *Diaspora, identity and the media*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- Ghorashi, H. (2010). From absolute invisibility to extreme visibility: emancipation trajectory of migrant women in the Netherlands. *Feminist Review*, 94(1), 75-92.
- Ghorashi, H. (2002). *Iranian women exiles in the Netherlands and the United States*. New York, NY: Nova.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self identity, self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Giddens, A. (1990). *The consequences of modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gilbert, M. (1994). The politics of location: doing feminist research at 'home'. *Professional Geographer*, 46(1), 90-96.
- Gillespie, M. (1995). *Television, ethnicity and cultural change*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Gillespie, T. (2010). The politics of 'platforms'. *New Media & Society*, 12(3), 347-364.
- Gilroy, P. (2005). *Postcolonial melancholia*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

- Gilroy, P. (1993a). *The black Atlantic. Modernity and double consciousness*. London: Verso.
- Gilroy, P. (1993b). Between Afro-centrism and Euro-centrism: Youth culture and the problem of hybridity. *Young*, (1)2, 2-12.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Goggin, G. & McLelland, M. (Eds.), (2009). *Internationalizing Internet studies. Beyond Anglophone paradigms*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Gómez-Peña, G. (2000). Chicano Interneta. The search for intelligent life in cyberspace. *Hopscotch: A Cultural Review*, 2(2), 80-91.
- Goodenow, C. & Espin, O.M. (1993). Identity choices in immigrant adolescent females. *Adolescence*, 28(109), 173-184.
- Google. (2012). Autocomplete. *Google. Inside search*. Retrieved from: <http://support.google.com/websearch/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=106230> (accessed January 11, 2011).
- Google. (2011). Welcome to promoted videos. *YouTube*. Retrieved from: <https://ads.youtube.com/pdf/YouTube-Promoted-Videos.pdf> (accessed August 09, 2011).
- Gordon, M. (1993). Sexual slang and gender. *Women and Language*, 16(2), 16-21.
- Graham, M. (2011). Time machines and virtual portals: The spatialities of the digital divide. *Progress in Development Studies*, 11(3), 211-227.
- Graiouid, S. (2005). Social exile and virtual Hrig: Computer-mediated interaction and cybercafé culture in Morocco. In M. Wilberg (Ed.), *The interaction society: Practice, theories and supportive technologies*, (pp. 57-92). Hershey, PA: Information Science Publishing.
- Grasmuck, S., Martin, J. & Zhao, S. (2009). Ethno-racial identity displays on Facebook. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, 15, 158-188.
- Gray, J.B. (2005). Althusser, ideology and theoretical foundations: Theory and communication. *NMediaC. Journal of New Media & Culture*, 3(1). Retrieved from: <http://www.ibiblio.org/nmediac/winter2004/gray.html> (accessed January 11, 2011).
- Green, L. & Kabir, N. (2012). Australian migrant children: ICT use and the construction of future lives. In L. Fortunati, R. Pertierra & J. Vincent. *Migration, diaspora and information technology in global societies*, (pp. 91-103). London, Routledge.
- Gregg, M. (2007). Thanks for the ad(d): Neoliberalism compulsory Friendship. *Online Opinion*. Retrieved from: <http://www.onlineopinion.com.au/view.asp?article=6400&page=0> (accessed October 25, 2011).
- Grewal, I. & Kaplan, C. (1994). Introduction. In I. Grewal & C. Kaplan (Eds.), *Scattered hegemonies: Postmodernity and transnational feminist practices*, (pp. 1-33). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Griffin, G. (2011). Writing about research methods in the arts and humanities. In R. Buikema, G. Griffin & N. Lykke (Eds.), *Theories and methodologies in postgraduate feminist research*, (pp. 91-104). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Grinter, R. E. & Palen, L. (2002). Instant messaging in teen life. In *Proceedings of the 2002 ACM Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work* (pp. 21-30). Retrieved from: <http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/587078.587082> (accessed 14 October 2011).
- Grossberg, L. (2002). Postscript. *Communication theory*, 12(3), 367-370.
- Grossberg, L. (1992). *We gotta get out of this place. Popular conservatism and postmodern culture*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Grosz, E. (2001). *Architecture from the outside: essays on virtual and real space*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Grosz, E. (1995). *Space, time and perversion*. New York, NY: Routledge.

- Haan, M.J. de (2012). Immigrant learning. In K. S. Gallagher, R. Goodyear, D. Brewer & R. Rueda (Eds.), *Urban education: A model for leadership and policy*, (pp. 328-341). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Haan, M.J. de & Leander, K.M. (2011). The construction of ethnic boundaries in classroom interaction through social space. *Culture & Psychology*, 17(3), 319-338.
- Habermas, J. (2002). The public sphere. In: P. Marris & S. Thornham (Eds.). *Media Studies. A Reader*. Second edition, (pp. 92-97). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Hall, S. (1997a). The local and the global: Globalization and ethnicity. In A. McClintock, A. Mufti & E. Shohat (Eds.), *Dangerous liaisons: Gender, nation, and postcolonial perspectives* (pp. 173-187). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hall, S. (1997b). Old and new identities, old and new ethnicities. In A.D. King (Ed.), *Culture, globalization, and the world-system: contemporary conditions for the representation of identity*, (pp. 41-68). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Hall, S. (1997c). *Representation. Cultural representation and signifying practices*. London: Sage.
- Hall, S. (1996a). When was the "post-colonial"? Thinking at the limit. In I. Chambers & L. Curtis (Eds.), *The post-colonial question: Common skies divided horizons*, (pp. 242-260). London, Routledge.
- Hall, S. (1996b). Introduction: Who needs identity? In S. Hall & P. du Gay (Eds.), *Questions of Cultural Identity* (pp. 1-17). London: Sage.
- Hall, S. (1996c). New ethnicities. In H.A. Baker, M. Diawara & R.H. Lindeborg (Eds.), *Black British cultural studies: A reader*, (pp. 163-172). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Hall, S. (1996d). Minimal selves. In H.A. Baker, M. Diawara & R.H. Lindeborg (Eds.), *Black British cultural studies: A reader*, (pp. 114-119). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference*, (pp. 222-237). London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Hamer, H. (2010, September 17). 'Bezemen' treft docenten en leerlingen. ['Brooming' affects teachers and students]. *Trouw* Retrieved from: <http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4324/Nieuws/article/detail/1792176/2010/09/17/Bezemen-treft-docenten-en-leerlingen.dhtml> (accessed October 31, 2011).
- Hansen, M.B.N. (2004). *New philosophy for new media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Haraway, D. (1997). *Modest witness@Second millenium. FemaleMan meets OncoMouse: feminism and technoscience*. New York, Routledge.
- Haraway, D. (1991). *Simians, cyborgs, and women: the reinvention of nature*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Haraway, D. (1988). Situated knowledges: The science question in feminism and the privilege of partial perspective. *Feminist Studies*, 14(3), 575-599.
- Haraway, D. (1985). Manifesto for *Cyborgs*: Science, technology, and socialist feminism in the 1980s. *Socialist Review*, 80, 65-108.
- Harchaoui, S. & Huinder, C. (2003). Inleiding. [Introduction]. In S. Harchaoui & C. Huinder (Eds.), *Stigma: Marokkaan. Afstoten en insluiten van een ingebeelde bevolkingsgroep*. [Stigma: Moroccan! Excluding and including an imagined community], (pp. 7-22). Utrecht: Forum.
- Hård af Segerstad, Y. & Hashemi, S.S. (2006). Learning to write in the information age. In L. Waes, M. Leijten & C.M. Neuwirth (Eds.), *Writing and digital media*, (pp. 49-64). Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- Harding, S. (1991). *Whose science? Whose knowledge? Thinking from women's lives*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

- Harvey, D. (1990). *The condition of postmodernity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Harvey, A. (2011). Constituting the player: Feminist technoscience, gender, and digital play. *International Journal of Gender, Science and Technology*, 3(1). Retrieved from: <http://genderandset.open.ac.uk/index.php/genderandset/article/view/126/256> (accessed February 06, 2012).
- Hayles, K.N. (2004). Print is flat, code is deep: The importance of media-specific analysis. *Poetics Today*, 25(1), 67-90.
- Hayles, K.N. (1999). *How we became posthuman: Virtual bodies in cybernetics, literature and informatics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Hebdige, D. (1979). *Subculture: The meaning of style*. London: Methuen.
- Heelsum, A.J. van (1997). *De etnisch-culturele positie van de tweede generatie Surinamers*. [The ethno-cultural position of second generation Surinamese] Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis.
- Hendrick, S.F. & Lindgren, S. (2011). YouTube as a performative arena. In E. Dunkels, G.M. Franberg & C. Hallgren (Eds.), *Youth culture and net culture*, (pp. 153-169). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
- Henning, F. (2006). *Virtual teahouses. New public spheres of Turkish youngsters in the Netherlands* (unpublished master thesis). Universiteit Maastricht, Maastricht. Retrieved from:
- Hepp, A., Bozdog, C. & Suna, L. (2012). Mediatized migrants: Media cultures and communicative networking in the diaspora. In L. Fortunati, R. Pertierra & J. Vincent (Eds.), *Migrations, diaspora, and information technology in global societies*, (pp. 172-188). London: Routledge.
- Hepp, A., Bozdog, C. & Suna, L. (2011). *Mediale migranten. Mediatisierung und die kommunikative Vernetzung der Diaspora*. [Mediatizing Migrants. Mediatization and communicative practices in the diaspora]. Wiesbaden: Springer.
- Herring, S.C. (2003). Gender and power in on-line communication. In J. Holmes & M. Meyerhoff (Eds.) *Handbook of language and gender*, (pp. 202-28). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hillis, K. (2009). *Online a lot of the time*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Hine, C. (2008). How can qualitative Internet researchers define the boundaries of their projects? In A. Markham & N. Baym (Eds.), *Internet inquiry: Conversations about method*, (pp. 1-32). London: Sage.
- Hine, C. (2005). Virtual methods and the sociology of cyber-social-scientific knowledge. In C. Hine (Ed.), *Virtual methods. Issues in social research on the Internet*, (pp. 1-16). Oxford: Berg.
- Hine, C. (2000). *Virtual ethnography*. London: Sage.
- Hirschkind, C. (2006). *The ethical soundscape: Cassette sermons and Islamic counterpublics*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Hirzalla, F., Zoonen, L. van & Müller, F. (2011). How funny can Islam controversies be? Comedians defending their faith on YouTube. Paper presented at *The Future of the Religious Past*, Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), Amsterdam, June 18, 2011. Retrieved from: <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/ss/research/FTTNA/Documents/How%20funny%20can%20Islam%20controversies%20be%20-%20Submitted%20to%20Numen%20proposal.pdf> (accessed February 08, 2012).
- Hornscheidt, A.L. & S. Baer (2011). Transdisciplinary gender studies: Conceptual and institutional challenges. In R. Buikema, G. Griffin & N. Lykke (Eds.), *Theories and methodologies in postgraduate feminist research*, (pp. 165-179). New York, NY: Routledge.

- Hosen, N. (2008). Online Fatwa in Indonesia: From fatwa shopping to googling a Kiai. In G. Fealy & S. White (Eds.), *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia* (pp. 159-173). Singapore: ISEAS Publishing.
- HRW. (2010, December 14). Morocco/Western Sahara: More freedom to name their children. *Human Rights Watch*. Retrieved from: <http://www.hrw.org/news/2010/12/14/moroccowestern-sahara-more-freedom-name-their-children> (accessed January 16, 2011).
- Hulsman, B. (2005, January 08). Getto's op het web. Op Internet heeft elke groep zijn eigen waarheid. [Getto's on the web. On the Internet, every group creates its own truth]. *NRC Handelsblad*, p. 33.
- Ignacio, E.N. (2006). E-scaping boundaries. Briding cyberspace and diaspora studies through netnography. In D. Silver & A. Massanari (Eds.), *Critical cyberculture studies*, (pp. 181-193). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Illouz, E. (2007). *Cold intimacies. The making of emotional capitalism*. Oxford: Polity Press.
- Imre, A. (2009). National intimacy and post-socialist networking. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 12(2), 219-233.
- Ippolita, Lovink, G. & Rossiter, N. (2009). The digital given: 10 Web 2.0 theses. *Fibreculture*, 14. Retrieved from: http://fibreculture.org/journal/issue14/issue14_ippolita_et_al_print.html (accessed October 20, 2011).
- Irani, L., Vertesi, J., Dourish, P., Philip, K. & Grinter, R.E. (2010). Postcolonial computing. A lens on design and development. *Proceedings of the 28th international conference on human factors in computing systems*, 1311-1320. Retrieved from: <http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?doid=1753326.1753522> (accessed November 15, 2011).
- Israel, D. (2010, March 18). Scholars respond and critique "The Arrivals" film series. *Muslimology. Dawah research and development*. Retrieved from: <http://muslimology.wordpress.com/2010/03/18/scholars-respond-and-critique-the-arrivals-film-series/> (accessed February 07, 2012).
- James, A. (2007). Giving voice to children's voices: Practices and problems, pitfalls and potentials. *American Anthropologist*, 109(2), 261-272.
- Jacobs, G. (2005). 'Ur part of it': *Portfolio people and adolescent use of instant messaging*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Department of Teaching and Curriculum, University of Rochester.
- Jacobs, G. (2003, April). Breaking down virtual walls. Paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association*, Chicago, IL.
- Jaikumar, P. (2011). Postface. In S. Ponzanesi & M. Waller (Eds.), *Postcolonial cinema studies*, (pp. 233-242). London: Routledge.
- Jawed. (Producer), (2005). Me at the zoo. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNQXAC9IVRw> (accessed February 06, 2012).
- Jean Christian, A. (2009). Real vlogs: The rules and meanings of online personal videos. *First Monday*, 14(11). Retrieved from: <http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2699/2353> (accessed February 06, 2012).
- Jenkins, H. (1992). *Textual Poachers: Television fans and participatory culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence culture*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Jenkins, H., Purushotma, R., Weigel, M., Clinton, K. & Robison, A.J. (2009). *Confronting the challenges of participatory culture*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

- Jong, J.D.A. de (2007). *Kapot moeilijk. Een etnografisch onderzoek naar opvallend delinquent groepsgebruik van 'Marokkaanse' jongens*. [An ethnographic study of noticeable delinquent group behavior among 'Moroccan' youths]. Amsterdam: Aksant.
- Jurgens, F. (2007). *Het Marokkanendrama*. [The Moroccan drama]. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff.
- Karlsson, L. (2007). Desperately seeking sameness. *Feminist Media Studies*, 7(2), 137-153.
- Kadiri, N., Moussaïd, A. & Hatfield, E. (2004). Morocco. In R.T. Francoeur & R.J. Noonan (Eds.), *The Continuum complete international encyclopedia of sexuality*, (pp. 703-713). New York, NY: The Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Kahn, R. & Kellner, D. (2007). Globalization, technopolitics and radical democracy. In L. Dahlberg & E. Siapera (Eds.), *Radical democracy and the Internet*, (pp. 17-36). New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Kambouri, N. & Parsanoglou, D. (2010). Transnational digital networks, migration and gender: Literature review and policy analysis. *Mig@Net deliverable 3* (pp. 1-45). Retrieved from: http://www.mignetproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/MIGNET_Deliverable_No3_Literature_review_and_policy_analysis_Final1.pdf (accessed October 28, 2011).
- Karim, K.H. (2010). Diasporas and media. In K. Knott & S. McLoughlin (Eds.), *Diasporas. Concepts, intersections, identities*, (pp. 162-166). London: Zed Books.
- Karim, K.H. (2003). Mapping diasporic mediascapes. In K.H. Karim (Ed.), *The Media of Diaspora* (pp. 1-17). Oxford: Routledge.
- Kaya, A. (2002). Aesthetics of diaspora: contemporary minstrels in Turkish Berlin. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 28(1), 43-62.
- Kelly, D.M., Pomerantz, S. & Currie, D.H. (2006). "No Boundaries"? Girls' interactive, online learning about femininities. *Youth & Society*, 38(1), 3-28.
- Kendall, L. (1999). Recontextualizing 'cyberspace': Methodological considerations for online research. In S. Jones (Eds.), *Doing Internet research*, (pp. 55-74). London: Sage.
- Kessler, F. (2009). What you get is what you see. In M. van den Boomen, S. Lammes, A.S. Lehmann, J. Raessens & M.T. Schäfer. *Digital material. Tracing new media in everyday life and technology*, (pp. 187-197). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Kessler, F. & Schäfer, M. (2009). Navigating YouTube. In P. Vonderau & P. Snickars (Eds.), *The YouTube Reader*, (pp. 275-291). New York, NY: Wallflower Press.
- Ketner, S. (2010). *Marokkaanse wortels, Nederlandse grond. Jonge moslims over opgroei in Nederland*. [Moroccan roots, Dutch soil. Young Muslims speaking about growing up in the Netherlands]. Utrecht: Verwey-Jonker Instituut.
- Kleck, C. A., Reese, C., Ziegerer-Behnken, D. & Sundar, S. (2007, May). The company you keep and the image you project: Putting your best face forward in online social networks. Paper presented at *The annual meeting of the International Communication Association, San Francisco, CA*, (pp. 1-30). Retrieved from: http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p172756_index.html (accessed October 25, 2011).
- Knaap, J., Stoepker, S. & Wegloop, O. (2011). *Hoofdboek. Onthullend magazine over de hoofddoek*. [Headbook. Revealing magazine about the headscarve]. Haarlem: Cup of Culture.
- Knijff, C. (2009, November 06). Marokko.nl: Nuttige kijk op de onderbuik. *Volkscrant*. [Marokko.nl: A useful glance at gut feelings]. Retrieved from: <http://www.volkscrant.nl/vk/nl/2694/Media/article/detail/364713/2009/>

- 11/06/Marokko-nl-Nuttige-kijk-op-de-onderbuik.dhtml (accessed February 4, 2011).
- Knott, K. (2010). Space and movement. In K. Knott & S. McLoughlin (Eds.), *Diasporas: Concepts, intersections, identities*, (pp. 79-83). London: Zed Books.
- Koivunen, A. (2010). An affective turn? Reimagining the subject of feminist theory. In M. Liljeström & S. Paasonen (Eds.), *Working with affect in feminist readings*, (pp. 8-28). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Koning, M. de (2005). Dit is geen poep wat ik praat. De Hirsi Ali Diss nader belicht. [This is no bullshit. Assessing the Hirsi Ali Diss] *ZemZem*, 1(1), 36-41.
- Koster, W. de (2010). Contesting community online: Virtual imagery among Dutch orthodox Protestant homosexuals. *Symbolic Interaction*, 33(4), 552-577.
- Kozinets, R.V. (2010). *Netnography. Doing ethnographic research online*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Kristeva, J. (1986). Word, dialogue and novel. In T. Moi (Ed.), *The Kristeva reader*, (pp. 34-61). New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Kuhn, T. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions*. Second edition. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Kuipers, G. (2008). The Muhammad cartoon controversy and the globalization of humor. *Humor*, 21(1), 7-11.
- Kunstan, A. (2012). Introduction: Affective fabrics of digital cultures. In A. Kunstan & A. Karatzogianni (Eds.), *Digital cultures and the politics of emotion: Feelings, affect and technological change*, (pp. 1-17). New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Kunstan, A. (2009). *Figurations of violence and belonging: Queerness, migranthood and nationalism in cyberspace and beyond*. Oxford: Peter Lang.
- Kvasny, L. (2005). The role of the habitus in shaping discourses about the digital divide. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 10(2). Retrieved from: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol10/issue2/kvasny.html> (accessed December 1, 2011).
- Labovic, S. (2005, October 22). Marokkaanse websites vormen uitlaatklep, zeggen beheerders. [Moroccan websites form an outlet, administrators say]. *Het Parool*, p. 27.
- Lacan, J. (1977). *Ecrits*. (A. Sheridan, Trans.) London: Tavistock.
- Lam, E. (2009). Multiliteracies on instant messaging in negotiating local, translocal, and transnational affiliation: a case of an adolescent immigrant. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 44(4), 377-397.
- Lammes, S. (2010). Postcolonial playgrounds. *Eludamos. Journal for computer game culture*. 4(10), 1-6.
- Lampe, C.A.C., Ellison, N. & Steinfeld, C. (2007). A familiar face(book): Profile elements as signals in an online social network. *Proceedings of the ACM CHI 2007 Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*. San Jose, CA: 28 April - 3 May 2007. Retrieved from: <http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?doid=1240624.1240695> (Accessed October 18, 2011).
- Landow, G.P. (2006). *Hypertext 3.0. Critical theory and new media in an era of globalization*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Lange, P.G. (2011). Video-mediated nostalgia and the aesthetics of technical competencies. *Visual Communication*, 10(1), 25-44.
- Lange, P. G. (2009). Videos of affinity on YouTube. In P. Vonderau & P. Snickars (Eds.), *The YouTube Reader*, (pp. 228-247). New York, NY: Wallflower Press.
- Lange, P. G. (2008). Publicly private and privately public: Social networking on YouTube. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 13(1), 361-380.
- Lanier, J. (2010). *You are not a gadget: A manifesto*. London: Penguin Group.

- Lásen, A. (2010). Mobile media and affectivity: Some thoughts about the notion of affective bandwidth. In J.R. Höflich, G.F. Kircher, C. Linke & I. Schlote (Eds.), *Mobile media and the change of everyday life*, (pp. 131-154). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Lásen, A. & Gómez-Cruz, E. (2009). Digital photography and picture sharing: Redefining the public/private divide. *Knowledge, Technology & Policy*, 22(3), 205-215.
- Lauretis, T. (1987). *Technologies of gender: Essays on theory, film, and fiction*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Lawson, V. (1995). The politics of difference: Examining the quantitative/qualitative dualism in post-structuralist feminist research. *Professional Geographer*, 47(1), 449-457.
- Leage, R. & Chalmers, I. (2010). Degrees of caution: Arab girls unveil on Facebook. In S. Mazzarella (Ed.), *Girl wide web 2.0*, (pp. 27-44). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Leaman, O. & Ali, K. (2008). *Islam: The key concepts*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Leander, K.M. (2003). Locating Latanya: The situated production of identity artifacts in classroom interaction. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 37, 198-250.
- Leeuw, S. de & Rydín, I. (2007). Migrant children's digital stories. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 10(4), 447-464.
- Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The production of space*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Leijendekker, M. (2010, May 10). Gouda heeft écht een probleem. [Gouda really has a problem]. *Goudse Stemmen. NRC Weblogs*. Retrieved from: <http://weblogs.nrc.nl/goudsestemmen/2010/05/10/gouda-heeft-echt-een-probleem/> (accessed January 4, 2012).
- Lemish, D. (2010). Foreword. In S.R. Mazzarella (Ed.), *Girl wide web 2.0*, (pp. ix-xiii). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Lenhart, A. (2009). *Adults and social networking sites*. Retrieved from: http://www.pewinternet.org/~media/Files/Reports/2009/PIP_Adult_social_networking_data_memo_FINAL.pdf.pdf (accessed January 30, 2012).
- Lenhart, A., Rainie, L. & Lewis, O. (2001). *Teenage life online*. Retrieved from: <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2001/Teenage-Life-Online.aspx> (accessed 14 October 2011).
- Lessig, L. (2008). *Remix: Making art and commerce thrive in the hybrid economy*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Lessig, L. (2006). *Code: Version 2.0*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Leung, L.Y.M. (2011). Pro-suming swearing (verbal violence). 'Affect' as (feminist) Internet criticism. *Feminist Media Studies*, 11(1), 89-94.
- Leurs, K. (2012). Migrant youth invading digital spaces: Intersectional performativity of self in socio-technological networks. In R. Gajalla & Yeon, J.O. (Eds.), *Cyberfeminism 2.0*, (pp. 285-304). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Leurs, K. (2011). Vernacular spectacles? Dutch-Moroccan youth on / using YouTube. Paper presented at *Video Vortex 6. Beyond YouTube*. Institute of Network Cultures, Amsterdam, the Netherlands 10 - 12th March 2011. Retrieved from: <http://networkcultures.org/wpmu/videovortex/archives/2306> (last accessed February 10, 2012).
- Leurs, K., Hirzalla, F. & Van Zoonen, L. (2012). Waar moslimjongeren hun eigen koers kunnen varen. [Where Muslim youth can follow their own course]. In A. Benschop & C. Menting (Eds.) *Zinzoekers op het Web. Internet en verandering van geloofsbeleving*. [Searching for faith on the web. Internet and changing religious experiences], (pp. 129-139). Vught: Skandalon.

- Leurs, K., Midden, E. & Ponzanesi, S. (2012). Digital multiculturalism in the Netherlands: Religious, ethnic, and gender positioning by Moroccan-Dutch youth. *Religion and Gender*, 2(1), 150-175. Retrieved from: <http://www.religionandgender.org/index.php/rg/article/view/36> (accessed February 22, 2012).
- Leurs, K., Ponzanesi, S. & Midden, E. (forthcoming). Transcoding difference and sameness. In A. De Brock (Ed.), *The intersectional Internet: Race, gender, and culture online*, (np). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (forthcoming a). Intersectionality, digital identities and migrant youth. In C. Carter, L. Steiner & L. McLaughlin (Eds.), *Routledge companion to media and gender*, (np). London: Routledge.
- Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (forthcoming b). Bits of homeland. In C. Ponte & M. Georgiou (Eds.) Special issue on Media, technology and the migrant family. *Observatorio (OBS*)*, 7(1).
- Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (2012). Dutch Moroccan girls performing their selves in instant messaging spaces. In K. Ross (Ed.), *The handbook of gender, sex and media*, (pp. 436-454). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (2011a). Gendering the construction of instant messaging. In M. Ames & S. Burcon (Eds.), *Women and language: Essays on gendered communication across media*, (pp. 199-214). Jefferson, NC: McFarland.
- Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (2011b). Mediated crossroads: Youthful digital diasporas. *M/C Journal*, 14(2), Retrieved from: <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/> (accessed January 4, 2012).
- Leurs, K. & Ponzanesi, S. (2011c). Communicative spaces of their own. Migrant girls performing selves using Instant Messaging software. *Feminist Review*, 99, 55-78.
- Levine, M. (2008). *Heavy metal Islam: Rock, resistance and the struggle for the soul of Islam*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.
- Levinson, J.C. (2007). *Guerilla marketing*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Lewis, C. & Fabos, B. (2005). Instant messaging, literacies and social identities. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 40(4), 470-501.
- Liberman, S. & Williams, L. (2010). Mektab and Sabr: Cultural and societal factors affecting mental health treatment for Moroccan adolescents. *Humanity in Action*. Retrieved from: <http://www.humanityinaction.org/knowledgebase/314-mektab-and-sabr-cultural-and-societal-factors-affecting-mental-health-treatment-for-moroccan-adolescents> (accessed December 13, 2011).
- Lister, M., Dovey, J., Giddings, S., Grant, I. & Kelly, K. (2009). *New media: A critical introduction*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Livingstone, S. (2009). *Children on the Internet: Great expectations, challenging realities*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Livingstone, S. (2003). Children's use of the Internet: Reflections on the emerging research agenda. *New Media & Society*, 5(2), 147-166.
- Lobe, B., Livingstone, S., Olafsson, K. & Simões, J.A. (2008). *Best practice research guide: How to research children and online technologies in comparative perspective*. Deliverable D4.2. London: EU Kids Online.
- Loukili, A. (2007). Moroccan diaspora, Internet and national imagination. Building a community online through the Internet portal Yabiladi. Paper presented at the *Nordic Africa Days conference*, Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, 5-7 October 2007. Retrieved from: <http://org.uib.no/imer/14Nordic/Papers%20fra%2014.%20Migrasjonsforskerkonferanse/Loukili.pdf> (accessed February 12, 2012).

- Lovink, G. (2007). The art of watching Databases. In G. Lovink & S. Niederer (Eds.). *Video Vortex Reader* (pp. 9-12). Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.
- Lucassen, L. (2005). Een kort overzicht van de immigratie naar Nederland in de twintigste eeuw. [A short overview of immigration to the Netherlands in the 20th century]. In R. Buikema, & M. Meijer (Eds.), *Cultuur en migratie in Nederland. Kunsten in beweging. 1900-1980*, [Culture and migration in the Netherlands. Moving Arts. 1900-1980], (pp. 428-433). Den Haag: Sdu uitgevers.
- Lykke, N. (2011). This discipline which is not one. In R. Buikema, G. Griffin & N. Lykke (Eds.), *Theories and methodologies in postgraduate feminist research*, (pp. 137-150). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Liotard, J.F. (1984). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Mack-Canty, C. (2004). Third-wave feminism and the need to reweave the nature/culture duality. *Feminist Formations*, 16(3), 154-179.
- Maddy-Weitzman, B. (2011). *The Berber identity movement and the challenge to North African states*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Madianou, M. & Miller, D. (Eds.), (2012). *Migration and new media: Transnational families and polymedia*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Madison, S. (2012). *Critical ethnography. Method, ethics and performance*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Maffesoli, M. (1996). *The time of the tribes: The decline of individualism in mass society*. London: Sage.
- Mainsah, H. (2011). Transcending the national imaginery: Digital online media and the transnational networks of ethnic minority youth in norway. In E. Eide & K. Nikunen (Eds.), *Media in motion: Cultural complexity and migration in the Nordic region*, (pp. 201-219). Surrey: Ashgate.
- Mainsah, H. (2009). *Ethnic minorities and digital technologies. New spaces for constructing identity*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Oslo University, Norway.
- Maira, S. (2002). *Desis in the house: Indian American youth culture in New York City*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple.
- Mak, G. (2005). *Gedoemd tot kwetsbaarheid*. [Doomed to vulnerability]. Amsterdam: Atlas.
- Maliepaard, M., Lubbers, M. & Gijssberts, M. (2010). Generational differences in ethnic and religious attachment and their interrelation. A study among Muslim minorities in the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 33(3), pp. 451-472.
- Mallapragada, M. (2006). Home, homeland, homepage: Belonging and the Indian-American web. *New Media Society*, 8(2), 207-227.
- Mamadouh, V. (2001). Constructing a Dutch Moroccan identity through the World Wide Web. *The Arab World Geographer*, 4(4), 258-274.
- Manovich, L. (2001). *The language of new media*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Marcus, G.E. (1998). *Ethnography through thick and thin*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Marks, L. (2002). *Touch. Sensuous theory and multisensory media*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Markham, A.N. (2004). Representation in online ethnographies: A matter of context sensitivity. In M.D. Johns, S. Chen & G. Hall (Eds.), *Online social research: Methods, Issues and Ethics* (pp. 793-820). New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Marokko.nl (2011a). Registreer op Marokko community. [Register on Marokko community]. *Marokko.nl*. Retrieved from: <http://forums.marokko.nl/register.php> (accessed 30 September 2011).

- Marokko.nl (2011b). Home. *Marokko.nl*. Retrieved from: <http://home.marokko.nl/index.html> (accessed 5 October 2011).
- Massey, D. (2005). *For space*. London: Sage.
- Massumi, B. (2002). *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Matsuda, M.J. (1991). Beside my sister, facing the enemy: Legal theory out of coalition. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1183-1192.
- McLeod, J. (2000). *Beginning postcolonialism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- McMurray, D.A. (2001). *In & out of Morocco: Smuggling and migration in a frontier boomtown*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- McNeil, M. & Roberts, C. (2011). Feminist science and technology studies. In R. Buikema, G. Griffin & N. Lykke (Eds.), *Theories and methodologies in postgraduate feminist research*, (pp. 29-42). New York, NY: Routledge.
- McRobbie, A. (1994). *Post modernism and popular culture*. London: Routledge.
- McRobbie, A. (1982). The politics of feminist research: Between talk, text and action. *Feminist Review*, 12, 46-57.
- Mead, G.H. (1967). *Mind, self and society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Meijer, M., Buikema, R., Hoving, I., Lucassen, L., Vogel, J., Wekker, G. & Willems, W. (2005). Voorwoord bij de reeks [Series foreword]. In Buikema, R. & Meijer, M. *Cultuur en migratie in Nederland. Kunsten in beweging. 1900-1980*, (pp. i-x). Den Haag: Sdu uitgevers.
- Meijerink, D. (2009). *Dutch-Moroccan youngsters and Morocco*. (Unpublished master thesis). International Development Studies, Wageningen University, Wageningen, the Netherlands). Retrieved from: <http://www.forum.nl/Portals/0/pdf/Dutch-Moroccan-Youngster-and-Morocco-Dorien-Meijerink.pdf> (accessed September 19, 2011).
- Mernissi, F. (1987). *Beyond the veil. Revised edition. Male-female dynamics in modern Muslim society*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Merskin, D. (2005). Making an about-face. Jammer girls and the World Wide Web. In S.R. Mazzarella (Ed.), *Girl wide web*, (pp. 51-67). New York: Peter Lang.
- Metzger, M.J. & Flanagin, A.J. (Eds.), (2008). *Digital media, youth and credibility*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Miller, D. & Slater, D. (2000). *The Internet. An ethnographic approach*. Oxford: Berg.
- Mitchel, W.J. (1995). *City of bits: Space, place, and the Infobahn*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Mitra, A. (2004). Voices of the marginalized on the Internet: Examples from a website for women of South-Asia. *Journal of Communication*, 54(3), 492-510.
- Mitra, A. & Watts, E. (2002). Theorizing cyberspace: The idea of voice applied to the Internet discourse. *New Media & Society*, 4(4), 479-498.
- Mlamaiz. (Uploader), (2009). Hoe Nederland er uit zou zien zonder Marokkanen? Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XN9GQ6vmB3c> (last accessed March 08, 2012).
- Mocro_s. (2007a). Gemiddelde Marokkaanse meisjes zien er zo uit [FOTO]! [Average Moroccan girls look like this [PICTURE]!]. *Marokko.nl*. Retrieved from: <http://forums.marokko.nl/showthread.php?t=3357013&page=1> (accessed January 19, 2012).
- Mocro_s (2007b). Gemiddelde Marokkaanse Jongens zien er zo uit! [foto] [Average Moroccan Boys look like this [PICTURE]!]. *Marokko.nl*. Retrieved from: <http://forums.marokko.nl/showthread.php?t=3355237> (accessed January 19, 2012).

- Mohanty, C.T. (2003). 'Under Western Eyes' revisited: Feminist solidarity through anticapitalist struggles. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28(2), 499-535.
- Moor, P.J., Heuvelman, A., & Verleur, R. (2010). Flaming on YouTube. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 26(6), 1536-1546.
- Moore-Gilbert, B. (1997). *Postcolonial theory: Contexts, practices, politics*. London: Verso.
- Morgan, M.H. (2009). *The real biphop: Battling for knowledge, power, and respect in the LA underground*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Morozov, E. (2011). *The net delusion: The dark site of Internet freedom*. New York, NY: Public Affairs.
- Mosco, V. (2004). *The digital sublime: Myth, power, and cyberspace*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Motivaction (2007). *Nieuwe Nederlanders zeer gehecht aan cultuurgebonden media*. [New Dutch people attached to cultural media]. Retrieved from: <http://motivaction.eu/content/allochtonen-gehecht-aan-cultuurgebonden-media> (accessed October 5, 2011).
- Müller, L. & Van Gorp, J. (2011). *Media and diaspora. Project summary*. http://www.uu.nl/SiteCollectionDocuments/GW/GW_Onderzoek/GW_Cultu resIdentities/110930-Media-and-Diaspora-report.pdf (accessed March 15, 2012).
- Mullings, B. (1999). Insider or outsider, both or neither: some dilemmas of interviewing in a cross-cultural setting. *Geoforum*, 30, 337-350.
- Mulvey, L. (1975). Visual pleasure and narrative cinema. *Screen*, 23(2-3), 6-18.
- MUNT. (Producer), (2009) *Kop of Munt*. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNhiE3g70s> (last accessed March 08, 2012).
- Murelli, E. & Okot-Uma, R.W.O. (2002). *Breaking the digital divide: implications for developing countries*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Nabben, T., Korf, D.J. & Yesilgöz, B. (2006). *Van Allah tot Prada. Identiteit, leefstijl en geloofsbeleving van jonge Marokkanen en Turken*. [From Allah to Prada. Identity, lifestyle and religiosity among young Moroccans and Turks]. Utrecht: Forum.
- Naficy, H. (1998). Identity politics and Iranian exile music videos. *Iranian Studies*, 31(1), 51-64.
- Nakamura, L. (2009). Neda Soltani, race and digital labor. In *Difference Engines*. Retrieved from: <http://www.differenceengines.com/?p=189> (accessed October 14, 2011).
- Nakamura, L. (2008). *Digitizing race. Visual cultures of the Internet*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Nakamura, L. (2006). Cultural difference, theory and cyberculture studies. In D. Silver & A. Massanari (Eds.), *Critical cyberculture studies*, (pp. 29-36). New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Nakamura, L. (2002). *Cybertypes. Race, ethnicity and identity on the Internet*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Nakamura, L. & Chow-White, P. (2012). Introduction-race and digital technology: Code, the color line, and the information society. In L. Nakamura & P. Chow-White (Eds.), *Race after the Internet* (pp. 1-18). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Nakamura, L. & Lovink, G. (2005). Talking race and cyberspace: An interview with Lisa Nakamura. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 26(1), 60-65.
- Narayan, K. (2003). How native is a 'native' anthropologist? *American Anthropologist*, 95(3), 671-686.
- Nayar, P.K. (2010). *Introduction to new media and cybercultures*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

- Nayar, P.K. (2009). Augmented spaces: Virtual worlds, 'new' territories, and the politics of cyberspace. In B.P. Giri & P.C. Kar (Eds.), *Thinking territory: Some reflections*, (pp. 152-170). New Delhi: Pencraft.
- Nayak, A. & Kehily, M.J. (2008). *Gender, youth and culture*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Nelson, A. & Hwang, J.W. (2012). Roots and revelation. Genetic ancestry testing and the YouTube generation. In L. Nakamura & P.A. Chow-White, *Race after the Internet* (pp. 271-290). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Newman, N. (2009). 'That's all concept; It's nothing real'. Reality and lyrical meaning in rap. In S. Alim, A. Ibrahim & A. Pennycook (Eds.), *Global linguistic flows. Hip hop cultures, youth identities, and the politics of language*, (pp. 195-212). London: Routledge.
- NFF. (2011). *Acceptance speech Nasrdin Dchar for Golden Calf*. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYkSPiYbKg8> (accessed January 4, 2011).
- NFF. (2011). *Speech Nasrdin Dchar bij Gouden Kalveren* Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qKsbx7B5f5g> (accessed January 4, 2011).
- Nortier, J. & Dorleijn, M. (2008). A Moroccan accent in Dutch: A sociocultural style restricted to the Moroccan community? *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 12(1-2), 125-142.
- Nunes, M. (2006). *Cyberspaces of everyday life*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Nunley, V. (2004). From the harbor to da academic hood: Hush harbors and an African American rhetorical tradition. In E. Richardson & R. Jackson (Eds.), *African American rhetoric(s): Interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 221-241). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Odin, J. (2010). *Hypertext and the female imaginary*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Odin, J.K. (1997). The edge of difference: Negotiations between the hypertextual and the postcolonial. *Modern Fiction Studies*, 43(3), 598-630.
- Olivieri, D. (2012). *Haunted by reality. Toward a feminist study of documentary film: Indexicality, vision and the artifice*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Department of Media and Culture Studies, Utrecht University. Retrieved from: <http://igitur-archive.library.uu.nl/dissertations/2012-0126-200346/olivieri.pdf> (accessed February 08, 2012).
- Oosterveer, D. (2011). Facebook in Nederland meer gebruikers dan Hyves. [More Facebook users than Hyves users]. *Marketingfacts*, Retrieved from: http://www.marketingfacts.nl/berichten/20110705_facebook_iets_groter_dan_hyves_in_nederland/ (Accessed January 27, 2012).
- Oostveen, M. (2004, November 27). De knip- en plak-islam; Hoe jonge moslims in Nederland hun radicale wereldbeeld samenstellen. [Cut- and paste-Islam; how young Muslims in the Netherlands compose their radical worldview]. *NRC Handelsblad*, p. 38.
- Orellana, M.F. (2009). *Translating childhoods: Immigrant youth, language and culture*. Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Osgerber, B. (2004). *Youth and the media*. London: Routledge.
- Paasonen, S. (2010). Disturbing, fleshy texts: Close looking at pornography. In M. Liljeström & S. Paasonen (Eds.), *Working with affect in feminist readings*, (pp. 58-71). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Palfreyman, D. & Al Khalil, M. (2003). A funky language for teenzz to use: representing gulf Arabic in instant messaging. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, 9(1).

- Retrieved from: <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol9/issue1/palfreyman.html> (accessed October 14, 2011).
- Papachrissie, Z. (2009). The virtual sphere 2.0: The Internet, the public sphere and beyond. In A. Chadwick (Ed.), *Routledge handbook of Internet politics*, (pp. 230-245). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Parentsconnect. (2012). Name: Ryan. Retrieved from: http://babynamesworld.parentsconnect.com/meaning_of_Ryan.html (accessed March 18, 2012).
- Pariser, E. (2011). *The filter bubble*. New York, NY: The Pinguin Press.
- Park, M.J. & Curran, J. (Eds.), (2000). *De-Westernizing media studies*. London: Routledge.
- Parker, D. & Song, M. (2009). New ethnicities and the Internet. Belonging and the negotiation of difference in multicultural Britain. *Cultural Studies*, 23(4), 583-604.
- Parker, D. & Song, M. (2006). New ethnicities online: reflexive racialisation and the Internet. *The Sociological Review*, 54(3), 575-594.
- Parks, M.R. (2007). *Personal networks and personal relationships*. Mahway, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Pauwels, L. & Hellriegel, P. (2009). A critical cultural reading of 'YouTube'. In S. Hatzipanagos & S. Warburton (Eds.), *Handbook of research on social software and developing community ontology* (pp. 381-399). New York, NY: Information Science Reference.
- Pels, T. & Haan, M.J. de (2007). Socialization practices of Moroccan families after migration: A reconstruction in an 'acculturative arena'. *Young*, 15(1), 71-89.
- Pels, T. & Haan, M.J. de (2003). *Continuity and change in Moroccan socialization*. Utrecht: Verwey-Jonker Instituut / Utrecht University.
- Peirce, C.S. (1958). Euler's diagrams. In C. Hartshorne, P. Weiss & A.W. Burks (Eds.), *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce*, (pp. 347-371). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Peters, R. (2006). 'A dangerous book'. Dutch public intellectuals and the Koran. *RSCAS Working Paper 39*. Retrieved from: <http://dare.uva.nl/document/225275> (Accessed March 18, 2012).
- Phalet, K. & Wal, J. ter (Eds.), (2004). *Muslim in Nederland. Diversiteit en verandering in religieuze betrokkenheid*. [Muslim in the Netherlands. Diversity and change in religious engagement]. Den Haag: SCP.
- Phillips, N. & Hardy, C. (2002). *Discourse analysis. Investigating processes of social construction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002.
- Piela, A. (2012). *Muslim women online*. London: Routledge.
- Pietersen, R. (2008, 21 January). Forum waar beledigen mag. [Forums where verbal abuse is allowed] *Trouw*. Retrieved from: <http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4324/Nieuws/article/detail/1260775/2008/01/21/internetfora-Forum-waar-beledigen-mag.dhtml> (accessed 30 September 2011).
- Plant, S. (1997). *Zeroes + ones: Digital women and the new technoculture*. New York: Doubleday.
- Ponzanesi, S. (2002). Diasporic subjects and migration. In G. Griffin & R. Braidotti (Eds.), *Thinking differently. A reader in European women's studies*, (pp. 205-220). London: Zed Books.
- Ponzanesi, S. (2001). Diasporic narratives @ home pages: The future as virtually located. In G. Stilz (Ed.), *Colonies – missions – cultures in the English-speaking world*, (pp. 396-406). Tübingen: Stauffenburg.
- Ponzanesi, S. & Blaagaard, B. (2011). In the name of Europe. *Social identities*, 17(1), 1-10.

- Ponzanesi, S. & Merolla, D. (2005). Introduction. In S. Ponzanesi & D. Merolla (Eds.), *Migrant cartographies* (pp. 1-46) Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- Poorthuis, M. & Saleminck, T. (2011). *Van harem tot Fitna. Beeldvorming over de Islam in Nederland 1848-2010*. [From harem to Fitna. Representation of Islam in the Netherlands 1848-2010]. Nijmegen: Valkhof Pers.
- Praag, C. van & Schoorl, J. (2008). Housing and segregation. In M. Crul & L. Heering (Eds.), *The position of the Turkish and Moroccan second generation in Amsterdam and Rotterdam*, (pp. 49-62). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Prins, B. (2002). The nerve to break taboos: New Realism in the Dutch Discourse on multiculturalism. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, (3)3-4, 363-379.
- Prins, B. (1997). *The standpoint in question. Situated knowledges and the Dutch minorities discourse* (unpublished doctoral dissertation). Gender studies, Utrecht University.
- Protalinski, E. (2011, March 29). Facebook backpedals: Removes Third Palestinian Intifada page against Israel. ZDNET. Retrieved from: <http://www.zdnet.com/blog/facebook/facebook-backpedals-removes-third-palestinian-intifada-page-against-israel/1049> (Accessed October 28, 2011).
- Puwar, N. (2004). *Space Invaders. Race, gender and bodies out of place*. Oxford: Berg.
- Raj, R. (2007). The festival of sacrifice and travellers to the City of Heaven (Makkah). In R. Raj & N.D. Morpeth (Eds.), *Religious tourism and pilgrimage festivals management*, (pp. 127-139). Cambridge, MA: Cabi.
- Ramazanoğlu, C. & Holland, J. (2002). *Feminist methodology. Challenges and choices*. London: Sage.
- Ratliff, C. (2007). Attracting readers: Sex and audience in the blogosphere. *The Scholar and Feminist Online*, 5(2), 1-4. Retrieved from: http://barnard.edu/sfonline/blogs/ratliff_03.htm (accessed October 27, 2011).
- Raun, T. (2012). DIY therapy: Exploring affective self-representations in trans video blogs on YouTube. In A. Kunstman & A. Karatzogianni (Eds.), *Digital cultures and the politics of emotion: Feelings, affect and technological change*, (pp. 165-180). New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Razzaqi, Z. (2011). Performing arts. In F. Crowe, J. Goddard, B. Hollingum, S. MacEachern & H. Russell (Eds.), *Islamic beliefs, practices, and cultures*, (pp. 270-289). Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish.
- Reyes, L. (2011, March 31). Berlusconi rescues tiny Italian island from invading migrants. *Digital Journal*. Retrieved from: <http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/305224> (accessed January 4, 2012).
- Rich, A. (1985). Notes towards a politics of location. In M. Díaz-Diocaretz & I.M. Zavala *Women, feminist identity and society in the 1980s*, (pp. 7-22). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Ricoeur, P. (1991). Narrative identity. In D. Wood (Ed.). *On Paul Ricoeur: Narrative and Interpretation*, (pp. 188-200). London: Routledge.
- Rijksoverheid. (2009, October 29). Van der Laan: Afspraken met Marokko.nl voor beter beheer website. [Agreements with Marokko.nl for better administration website]. *De Rijksoverheid. Voor Nederland*. Available at: <http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/nieuws/2009/10/29/van-der-laan-afspraken-met-marokko-nl-voor-beter-beheer-website.html> (last accessed 04 February 2010).
- Roy, O. (2004). *Globalised Islam: The search for a new Ummah*. London: Hurst & Company.
- Rushdie, S. (1991). *Imaginary homelands: Essays and criticism 1981-1991*. London: Granta.

- RVD (2007). Toespraak van Prinses Máxima. [Speech delivered by Princess Máxima]. *Het Koninklijk Huis*. Retrieved from: <http://web.archive.org/web/20071011154310/http://koninklijkhuis.nl/content.jsp?objectid=20871> (accessed December 20, 2011).
- Ryan, J. (2007). *Countering militant Islamist radicalization on the Internet*. Dublin: Institute of European Affairs.
- Sache, I. (2009). Berbers. Imazighen. *Flags of the world website*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fotw.us/flags/xb.html> (accessed January 31, 2012).
- Sadiqi, F. (2003). *Women, gender and language in Morocco*. Leiden: Brill.
- Said, E. (1994). *Culture and imperialism*. New York, NY: Vintage books.
- Said, E. (1979). *Orientalism*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
- Sánchez, M.C. & Schlossberg, L. (Eds.), (2001). *Passing: Identity and interpretation in sexuality, race and religion*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Sanjakdar, F. (2011). *Living west, facing east. The (de)construction of Muslim youth sexual identities*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Santrock, J.W. (2007). *Adolescence*. 11th edition. Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Saywitch, K., Camparo, L.B. & Romanoff, A. (2010). Interviewing children: implications of research and policy. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 28(4), 542-562.
- Schäfer, M. (2011). *Bastard culture! How user participation transforms cultural production*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Scheffer, P. (2007). *Het land van aankomst*. [The country of arrival]. Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij.
- Scheffer, P. (2000, January 21). Het multiculturele drama. [The multicultural drama]. *NRC Handelsblad*. Retrieved from: <http://retro.nrc.nl/W2/Lab/Multicultureel/scheffer.html> (accessed January 10, 2012).
- Schoorl, J. (2006). Demografische gegevens [Demographic figures]. In C. van Praag (Ed.), *Marokkanen in Nederland: Een profiel* [Moroccans in the Netherlands: A profile], (pp. 3-13). Den Haag: Nidi.
- Sedgwick, E.K. (2003). *Touching feeling: Affect, pedagogy, performativity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Sefton-Green, J. (1998). Introduction: Being young in the digital age. In J. Sefton-Green (Ed.), *Digital diversions. Youth culture in the age of multimedia*, (pp. 1-20). London: UCL Press.
- Selwyn, N. (2004). Reconsidering political and popular understandings of the digital divide. *New Media & Society*, 6, 341-62.
- Serkei, C. & Bink, S. (2011). De emanciperende werking van online media. [The emancipating functioning of online media]. *Miramedia*. Retrieved from: <http://www.miramedia.nl/publicaties/de-emanciperende-werking-van-online-media.htm> (accessed December 21, 2011).
- Shaviro, S. (2010). *Post cinematic affect*. Winchester: Zero books.
- Shepherd, T. (2012). *Persona rights in young people's labour of online cultural production: Implications for new media policy*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Concordia University Montréal, Canada.
- Shepherd, T. (2010, September 18-29). Personal communication. E-mail correspondence on the interview effects of using mobile phones to tape interviews with teenagers on the topic of digital media.
- Sherman, T. (2008). Vernacular Video. In G. Lovink & S. Niederer (Eds.). *Video vortex reader* (pp. 161-168). Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.
- Shohat, E. & Stam, R. (2003). Introduction. In E. Shohat & R. Stam (Eds.), *Multiculturalism, postcoloniality, and transnational media*, (pp. 1-17). Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

- Shome, R. (2003). Space matters: The power and practice of space. *Communication Theory*, 13(1), 39-56.
- Shome, R. & Hedge, R. (2002). Postcolonial approaches to communication: Charting the terrain, engaging the intersections. *Communication theory*, 12(3), 249-270.
- Siapera, E. (2010). *Cultural diversity and global media*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Siibak, A. (2009). Constructing the self through the photo selection. *Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace*, 3(1). Retrieved from: <http://www.cyberpsychology.eu/view.php?cisloclanku=2009061501> (accessed January 26, 2012).
- Siibak, A. (2007). Reflections of RL in the virtual world. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace*, 1(1). Retrieved from: <http://cyberpsychology.eu/view.php?cisloclanku=2007072301> (Accessed 24 October 2011).
- Sikkema, P. (2008). *Allochtone jongeren 2007*. [Allochthonous youth 2007]. Amsterdam: Qrius.
- Skalli, L.H. (2006). *Through a local prism: gender, globalization, and identity in Moroccan women's magazines*. Oxford: Lexington Books.
- Slade, C. (2010). Media and citizenship: Transnational television cultures reshaping political identities in the European Union. *Journalism*, 11(6), 727-733.
- Slootman, M. & Tilly, J. (2006) *Processes of radicalisation among some Amsterdam Muslims. Why some Amsterdam Muslims become radical*. Amsterdam: Imes. <http://home.medewerker.uva.nl/m.w.slootman/bestanden/Slootman%20Tillie%202006%20Processes%20of%20Radicalisation.pdf> (accessed November 29, 2011).
- Smelik, A. (2009). Lara Croft, *Kill Bill*, and the battle for theory in feminist film studies. In R. Buikema & I. van der Tuin (Eds.). *Doing Gender in Media, Art and Culture*, (pp. 178-192). Oxford, Routledge.
- Sobchack, V. (2004). *Carnal thoughts: Embodiment and moving image culture*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Soja, E. (2010). *Seeking spatial justice*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Soja, E. (2009). Taking space personally. In B. Warf & S. Arias (Eds.), *The spatial turn. Interdisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 11-35). New York: Routledge.
- Somekh, B. & Mavers, D. (2003). Mapping learning potential: Student's conceptions of ICT in their world. *Assessment in Education*, 10(3), 409-420.
- Spanjar, R. (2011). *Van 3 naar 10.000.000 vrienden*. [From 3 to 10.000.000 friends]. Amsterdam: Lebowski Publishers.
- Spivak, G.C. (1999). *A critique of postcolonial reason: toward a history of the vanishing present*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Spivak, G.C. (1993a). Can the subaltern speak? In P. Williams & L. Chrisman (Eds.), *Colonial Discourse and post-colonial theory*, (pp. 66-111). Harlow: Longman.
- Spivak, G. (1993b). The politics of translation. In G. Spivak (Ed.), *Outside in the teaching machine*, (pp. 179-200). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Spivak, G.C. (1990). Criticism, feminist and the institution. In S. Harasym (Ed.). *The post-colonial critic*, (pp. 1-16). London: Routledge.
- Steiner, P. (1993, July 5). On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog. *New Yorker*, p. 61. Retrieved from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/On_the_Internet_nobody_knows_you%27re_a_dog (accessed January 11, 2011).
- Stekelenburg, J., Oegema, D. & Klandermans, B. (2011). No radicalization without identification: How ethnic Dutch and Dutch Muslim web forums radicalize over time. In A.E. Azzi, X. Chrysochoou., B. Klandermans & B. Simon

- (Eds.). *Identity and participation in culturally diverse societies*, (pp. 256-274). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Stevens, G.W.J.M. (2004). *Mental health in Moroccan youth in the Netherlands* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Erasmus University Rotterdam. Retrieved from: repub.eur.nl/res/pub/7352/041117_Stevens.pdf (accessed November 29, 2011).
- Stichting Maroc.nl (2001). *Maroc.nl. Digitaal lief en leed van Marokkaanse jongeren. [Maroc.nl. Digital love and sorrow of Moroccan youths]*. Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Contact.
- Stoep, J. van der (2009). The princess and the mushroom. Globalisation, existential insecurity and the search for a national identity. In I. ter Avest (Ed.), *Education in Conflict*, (pp. 117-136). Münster: Waxmann.
- Nelson & L. Grossberg, Eds., 1988, Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press).
- Strano, M.M. (2008). User descriptions and interpretations of self-presentation through Facebook profile images. *Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace*, 2(2), Retrieved from: <http://cyberpsychology.eu/view.php?cisloclanku=2008110402&article=5> (Accessed October 24, 2011).
- Strauss, A.L. & Corbin, J.M. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sue, V.M. & Ritter, L.A. (2007). *Conducting online surveys*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Sullivan, J. (2010, July 28). Testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on the Judiciary. *Hearing on: Online privacy, social networking, and crime victimization*. Retrieved from: judiciary.house.gov/hearings/pdf/Sullivan100728.pdf (Accessed January 31, 2012).
- Sultana, F. (2007). Reflexivity, positionality and participatory ethics: negotiating fieldwork dilemmas in international research. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, 6(3), 374-385. Retrieved from: www.acme-journal.org/vol6/FS.pdf (accessed November 21, 2011).
- Summeren, C. van (2007). Religion online: The shaping of multidimensional interpretations of Muslimhood on Maroc.nl. *The European Journal of Communication Research*, 32(2), 273-295.
- Tagliamonte, S. & Denis, D. (2008). Linguistic ruin? Lol! Instant messaging and teen language. *American Speech*, 83(1), 3-34.
- Tapscott, D. (1998). *Growing up digital: The rise of the net generation*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Terranova, T. (2010). Free labor: Producing culture for the digital economy. In P. Nayar (Ed.), *The new media and cybercultures anthology*, (pp. 335-356). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Thiel-Stern, S. (2007). *Instant identity. Adolescent girls and the world of instant messaging*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Thurlow, C. (2006). From statistical panic to moral panic: the metadiscursive construction and popular exaggeration of new media language in the print media. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 11(3), 667-701.
- Thussu, D.K. (Ed.), (2009). *Internationalizing media studies*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Trinh, T. M. (1992). *Framer framed*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Tubemogul (2010, January 31). YouTube's Top 100 By Type. *TubeMogul*. Retrieved from: <http://www.tubemogul.com/research/report/31> (last accessed 14 September 2011).
- Tucker, K.H. (2005). From the imaginary to subjectivation. *Thesis Eleven*, 83(1), 42-60.
- Tufekci, Z. (2008). Grooming, gossip, Facebook and MySpace: What can we learn from these sites from those who won't assimilate? *Information, Communication and Society*, 11(4), 544-564.

- Turkle, S. (2007). The things that matter. In S. Turkle (Ed.), *Evocative objects: Things we think with*, (pp. 3-11). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Turkle, S. (1997). *Life on the screen. Identity in the age of the Internet*. New York, NY: Touchstone.
- UNHCR (2000). Morocco: Brief history of the Berbers including their origins and geographic location. *Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada*. Retrieved from: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/topic,463af2212,469f279a2,3df4be668,0.html> (accessed December 16, 2011).
- Ünlüsoy, A., Haan, M.J. de & Leander, K.M. (2010). Netwerken van jongeren als nieuwe leeromgeving. [Youth networks as new learning environments]. *Pedagogiek*, 30(1), 43-57.
- Urbanconnect. (2011a). Welkom op onze homepage. [Welcome on our homepage]. *Urban Connect BV*. Retrieved from: <http://www.urbanconnect.nl/index.php?nav=static&pagina=Advertentiecampagnes> (last accessed 30 September 2011).
- Urbanconnect. (2011b). Marokko.nl. *Urban Connect BV*. Retrieved from: <http://www.urbanconnect.nl/index.php?nav=static&pagina=Marokko.nl> (accessed 30 September 2011).
- Utz, S. (2008). (Selbst)marketing auf Hyves [(Self)marketing on Hyves]. In P. Alpar & S. Blaschke (Eds.), *Web2.0. Eine empirische Bestandsaufnahme [Web2.0 - an empirical inventory]*, (pp. 235-258). Wiesbaden: Vieweg & Teubner.
- Valk, H. de & M. Crul (2008). Education. In M. Crul & L. Heering (Eds.), *The position of the Turkish and Moroccan second generation in Amsterdam and Rotterdam*, (pp. 63-85). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Veen, V., Stevens, G., Dorelijers, T., Ende, J. van der & Vollebergh, W. (2010) Ethnic differences in mental health among incarcerated youths. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 19(5), 431-440.
- Vergani, M. & Zuev, D. (2009, June). Uyghur videos on YouTube: Theoretical and methodological issues. Paper presented at the meeting of the *5th International Conference on e-Social Science*, Cologne, Germany 24th - 26th June 2009, pp. 1-12. Retrieved from: <http://www.ncess.ac.uk/resources/content/papers/Vergani.pdf> (accessed February 07, 2012).
- Verhagen, F. (2010). *Hoezo mislukt? De nuchtere feiten over de integratie in Nederland*. [Failed, in what way? The bare facts about integration in the Netherlands]. Amsterdam: Nieuw Amsterdam.
- Verhoeff, N. (2012). *Mobile screens*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Vermeij, L. (2004). 'Ya know what I'm sayin?': The double meaning of language crossing among teenagers in the Netherlands. *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 170, 141-168.
- Verweij, A. & Bijl, R. (2012). Monitoring integration in the Netherlands. In R. Bijl & A. Verweij (Eds.), *Measuring and monitoring immigrant integration in Europe*, (pp. 239-252). The Hague: The Netherlands Institute for Social Research.
- Verstraete, G. (2007). Women's resistance strategies in a high-tech multicultural Europe. In K. Marciniak, A. Imre & Á. O'Healy (Eds.), *Transnational feminism in film and media*, (pp. 111-128). New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Vertovec, S. (2009). *Transnationalism*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Vis, F., Zoonen, L. van & Mihelj, S. (2011). Women responding to the anti-Islam film Fitna: Voices and acts of citizenship on YouTube. *Feminist Review*, 97, 110-129.
- Vries, I.O. (2011). *Tantalisingly close. An archeology of communication desires in discourses of mobile wireless media*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

- Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher mental processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Waal, M. de (2003). Soms op de kaasmanier, soms op onze manier. [Sometimes in the cheese-way, sometimes in our way]. In H. Blanken & M. Deuze (Eds.), *De mediarevolutie. 10 jaar wmv in Nederland, [The media revolution. 10 year wmv in the Netherlands]*, (pp. 146-167). Amsterdam: Boom.
- Wajcman, J. (2007). From women and technology to gendered technoscience. *Information, Communication & Society*, 10(3), 287-298.
- Wall, M. (2009). Africa on YouTube. *The International Communication Gazette*, 71(5), 393-407.
- Walther, J.B., Carr, C.T., Choi, S.S.W., DeAndrea, D.C., Kim, J., Tom Tong, S. & Heide, B. van der (2011). Interaction of interpersonal, peer, and media influence sources online. In Z. Papacharissi (Ed.), *A networked self*, (pp.17-38). London: Routledge.
- Warf, B. & Arias, S. (2009). Introduction: the reinsertion of space into the social sciences and humanities. In B. Warf & S. Arias (Eds.), *The spatial turn: interdisciplinary perspectives*, (pp. 1-10). Oxon: Routledge.
- Warshak, R. (2003). Payoffs and pitfalls of listening to children. *Family Relations*, 52(4), 373-384.
- Weedon, C. (1997). *Feminist Practice and Post-structuralist Theory*. Second edition. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Wekker, G. (2009). Where the girls are... some hidden gendered and ethnicized aspects of higher education in the Netherlands. In S. Vandayar & M. Nkomo (Eds.), *Thinking diversity, building cohesion: A transnational dialogue on Education* (pp. 151-164). Amsterdam: Rozenberg.
- Wekker, G. (2006). *The politics of passion: Women's sexual culture in the Afro-Surinamese diaspora*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Wellman, B. & Haythornthwaite, C.A. (2002). *The Internet in everyday life*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Werdmolder, H. (2005). *Marokkaanse lieverdjes. Crimineel en hinderlijk gedrag onder Marokkaanse jongeren*. [Moroccan darlings. Criminal and annoying behavior among Moroccan youths] Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Balans.
- Wilders, G. (Producer), (2006). Fitna. Retrieved from: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NciCTcxVvx4> (accessed 09 August 2011).
- WikiIslam. (2012, January 27). The Arrivals. Retrieved from: http://wikiislam.net/wiki/The_Arrivals (accessed February 07, 2012).
- Wikipedia. (2011). Fitna (film) 25 July 2011. Retrieved from: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fitna_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fitna_(film)) (accessed July 27, 2011).
- Wired Up. (2012). *Research report*. Retrieved from http://www.uu.nl/wiredup/pdf/Wired_Up_-_Technical_survey_report.pdf (accessed March 06, 2012).
- Wired Up. (2010a, March 08). Leuke bijbaan, assistant bij Wired Up Internet onderzoek. Retrieved from: <http://forums.marokko.nl/showthread.php?t=3132059> (accessed November 21, 2011).
- Wired Up. (2010b, February 16). Swia swia, ze3ma. Retrieved from: <http://www.maroc.nl/forums/wie-schrijft-blijft/293645-swia-swia-ze3ma.html> (accessed November 21, 2011).
- Wise, A. & Velayutham, S. (2006). *Towards a typology of transnational affect*. Sydney: Macquarie University, Centre for Research on Social Inclusion. Retrieved from: <http://www.crsi.mq.edu.au/public/download.jsp?id=10615> (accessed February 1, 2012).

- Yi, Y. (2009). Adolescent literacy and identity construction among 1.5 generation students. *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication*, 19(1): 100-129.
- YouTube Blog (2011, May 25). Thanks, YouTube community, for two BIG gifts on our sixth birthday! *YouTube*. Retrieved from <http://youtube-global.blogspot.com/2011/05/thanks-youtube-community-for-two-big.html> (accessed February 10, 2012).
- Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Intersectionality and feminist politics. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 13(3), 193-209.
- Zandbergen, D. (2011). *New edge. Technology and spirituality in the San Francisco Bay Area*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Department of cultural anthropology, Leiden University, the Netherlands. Retrieved from: <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/handle/1887/17671> (accessed December 1, 2011).
- Zarzycka, M. (2009). Cindy Sherman confronting feminism and (fashion) photography. In R. Buikema & I. van der Tuin (Eds.). *Doing Gender in Media, Art and Culture*, (pp. 151-161). Oxford, Routledge.
- Zittrain, J. (2008). *The future of the Internet*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Zoonen, L. (1994). *Feminist media studies*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Zoonen, L. van, Vis, F. & Mihelj, S. (2010). Performing citizenship on YouTube: activism, satire and online debate around the anti-Islam video Fitna. *Critical Discourse Studies*, 7(4), 249-262.

Appendix 1 – Survey document

Section 1: Internet use & attitude

1. How often do you do the things mentioned below?

	Never	1 day per week or less	2 or 3 days per week	4 or 5 days per week	Once every day	All the time
Reading newspapers and magazines						
Reading books						
Watching TV / DVD's						
Playing computer games on consoles (X-Box, Playstation, WII etc)						
Using Mp3-player / I-Pod etc						

2. **Telephone**

How many phone calls do you make on your mobile per day?

- 0 calls
- 1 – 5
- 6 – 10
- 11 – 15
- 16 – 20
- 21 – 25
- 25 – 30
- > 30

3. How many phone calls do you make on a fixed landline per day?

- 0 calls
- 1 – 5
- 6 – 10
- 11 – 15
- 16 – 20
- 21 – 25
- 25 – 30
- > 30

4. **Texting**

How many texts do you send per day?

- 0 texts
- 1 – 5
- 6 – 10
- 11 – 15
- 16 – 20
- 21 – 25
- 25 – 30
- > 30

5. **How often do you do the things listed below?**

	Never	1 day per week or less	2 or 3 days per week	4 or 5 days per week	Once every day	All the time
Instant Messaging (f.i. MSN, E-buddy, G-talk)						
Calling on the internet (f.i. Skype)						
Webcamming (f.i. Skype, MSN)						
Chatting in chatrooms/chatboxes						
Searching information (f.i. Google)						
E-mailing						
Watching video's (f.i. YouTube)						
Downloading (f.i. music, films, games)						
Browsing and updating profile pages (f.i. Hyves, Facebook, MySpace)						
Twitter						
Games that you play by yourself online (f.i. spele.nl)						
Games that you play with others online (f.i. Counterstrike, World of Warcraft)						
Visiting and participating in forums/newsgroups						
Visiting, making and participating in blogs						

6. **What do you miss in this list?**

Is there something missing in this list?
.....

7. **Would you miss any of the things listed below?**

If you weren't able to do them anymore

	Completely not	A little	Very much
Instant Messaging (f.i. MSN, E-buddy, G-talk)			
Calling on the internet (f.i. Skype)			
Webcamming (f.i. Skype, MSN)			
Chatting in chatrooms/chatboxes			
Searching information (f.i. Google)			
E-mailing			
Watching video's (f.i. YouTube)			
Downloading (f.i. music, films, games)			
Browsing and updating profile pages (f.i. Hyves, Facebook, MySpace)			
Twitter			
Games that you play by yourself online (f.i. spele.nl)			
Games that you play with others online (f.i. Counterstrike, World of Warcraft)			
Visiting and participating in forums/newsgroups			
Visiting, making and participating in blogs			

Section 2: Access, control and importance

1. **Do you have a computer or laptop with Internet connection in your home?**

- Yes
- No

2. **Where do you go on the Internet?**

	Never	1 day per week or less	2 or 3 days per week	4 or 5 days per week	Once every day	All the time
In my bedroom						
Somewhere else in my home						
At friend's or family's place						
In a public library or internet-café						
At school						
Somewhere else via wireless / mobile internet						

3. **Do you agree?**

Below you'll find a number of statements. Please list to what extent you agree.

	Completely disagree		Neutral		Completely agree
I can do whatever I want on the internet					
I decide by myself what I get from the internet (videos, texts, images)					
I decide by myself with whom I talk on the internet (via IM/MSN, Hyves, etc)					
I decide by myself what I download from the internet					
I decide by myself what I put on my profile page (Hyves, Facebook etc)					

4. **Who controls your Internet use? (multiple answers possible)**

For instance by telling you how long you can use the internet or by checking what you are doing.

- My father
- My mother
- My broter(s)
- My sister(s)
- My teacher
- Somebody else:..... (type in box)
- Nobody controls my internet use

5. **Do you do these things? (multiple answers possible)**

- I keep my password secret
- I change my password regularly
- I make sure nobody else is around when use the internet
- I delete the browser history (and/or download history, cache history)
- I don't tell others what I do on the internet
- I don't use my real name or real pictures where I'm in
- I don't do any of the things listed above

6. **Do you consider the Internet a good place to talk about personal stuff?**

- No, not at all
- No
- Sometimes yes / sometimes no
- Yes
- Yes, very much

7. **For which things is the Internet especially useful?**
(instead of having to meet people)

	Completely disagree		Neutral		Completely agree
To find information on things I need to know					
To buy things that are hard to get or that I don't like buying in a shop					
To contact organizations					
To find people who can help with my problems					

8. **I rather use the Internet to talk about the following things (multiple answers possible)**

- What happened with me today
- What happened in school
- What happened in the neighborhood
- What happened in the world
- Friendships
- relations, love
- family
- religion
- how to use new gadgets and programmes
- homework, exams, assignments
- making appointments
- Earning Money, buying things
- music, fashion, popstars and films
- knowledge, science and history
- arts, literature, theatre
- sexuality
- health
- Being bullied or bullying
- Racism or discrimination
- Other:..... type in or type none of the above

9. **Can you list your 5 favorite websites below?**

1.	www.
2.	www.
3.	www.
4.	www.
5.	www.

Section 3: Identity markers

Many youths use social networking sites

The following questions are about creating and updating a profile page on social networking sites. Below, you'll find questions about what you would put on your profile page when you make or update one.

1. **Which of the things listed below do you normally put on your profile page?**
(Multiple answers possible)

- Pictures of yourself or others
- Status updates (what you are doing)
- Your nickname
- Your first name
- Your last name
- A profile picture
- Your age
- Your date of birth
- The city in which you live

- The neighborhood in which you live
 - The name of your school
 - The school class
 - Your gender; boy/girl
 - Your sexual preference, whether you dig boys or girls
 - Your nationality
 - Your ethnicity
 - The country in which you were born
 - Your income
 - Your religion
 - The languages that you speak > if answered yes > go to question 2, otherwise skip
2. **Which languages would you like to show?**
(multiple answers possible)
- Netherlands
 - Arabic
 - A Berber language: Tamazight, Tashelhiyt, Tarifit
 - English
 - French
 - Spanish
 - Papiamentu
 - Turkish
 - Another language..... [type in box]
3. **Youth groups**
Which of the groups listed below would you like to name or show on your profile page?
(multiple answers possible)
- I don't want to belong to a group or don't want to show
 - Activist (politics, environment, animal, religious)
 - Alto (Dutch subcultural label for those attached to alternative music forms)
 - Dance
 - Trendy/fashionista
 - Gabber/lonsdaler (a Dutch electronic music variant)
 - Goth
 - Hiphop
 - Kakker/bal (Dutch subcultural label roughly translatable to fratboys or sorority sisters)
 - Emo
 - Gamer / computer fan
 - Metalhead/rocker/punker
 - Muslim
 - Religious
 - Riot grrl (girl power)
 - Skater (skateboard/extreme sports)
 - Sports fanatic (soccer, tennis, boxing etc)
 - Urban (rap, soul)
 - Another group: [type in box]
4. **Which of the things listed below would you like to put on your profile page?**
Food preferences (multiple answers possible)
- Dutch food (f.i. fries, kale, sandwich with cheese)
 - Migrant food (f.i. couscous, Turkish pizza, kebab, kouseband)
 - International food (f.i. tapas/sushi/Italian, McDonalds / KFC / Burger King/ Pizza Hut)
 - I wouldn't put a food preference online
5. **Celebrities (multiple answers possible)**
- Dutch celebs (f.i. Bekende Nedelranders, Soap stars, sport heroes)
 - Celebs with a migrant background (f.i. Moroccan, Turkish, Caribbean)
 - International (f.i. Hollywood, international soccer players, Bollywood)
 - I wouldn't put any celebrities online

6. **Music preferences (multiple answers possible)**
- Dutch (f.i. Nederpop, Nederhop, dance, smartlappen)
 - Migrant background (f.i. Ali B., Appa, Dio but also other Rai, Chaabi, Turkse pop, Suripop)
 - International/English (f.i. Lady Gaga, Kanye West or other Hip–Hop, Rap, Rock, RnB)
 - I wouldn't put any music preferences online
7. **Symbols (multiple answers possible)**
- Pictures of important places (your street, neighbourhood, holiday country)
 - Cultural symbols (Windmills, Amazigh/Aza, Turkish evil eye)
 - National flags (Netherlands, Morocco, Turkey, Surinam, Curacao, etc)
 - Religious symbols (Christian, Islamic, Jewish etc)
 - Anti-racism, anti-discrimination signs or texts
 - I wouldn't put any of these online
 - Other things, [text box]
8. **Why do you put things such as pictures and music on your site? (multiple answers possible)**
- To show others who I am
 - I have seen that on the pages of others
 - Because the possibility to do so was provided on the site
 - I have no idea
9. **Profile picture**
How would you show yourself in your profile picture to be liked by your friends? (Max 3 answers possible)
- Cool/though
 - Intelligent
 - Hard working
 - Sweet
 - Rich
 - Computer-savvy
 - Handsome/sexy
 - Sporty
 - Nerd
 - Social
 - Trendy/fashionable
 - Rebel
 - Beautiful
 - Normal
10. **Locking/closing off profiles**
 Have you closed of your profile page from strangers?
- Yes
 - No
 - I have no profile page

Number of friends: SNS

How many friends do you have on your profile page (Hyves/Facebook etc)
 [text box] (list 0 if you don't have one)

Number of friends: SNS

With how many of these friends do you have frequent contact?
 [text box] (list 0 if you don't have one)

Number of friends: MSN

How many friends do you have in your MSN friendlist? (list 0 if you don't use MSN)

Number of friends: MSN

With how many of these friends do you have frequent contact? (list 0 if you don't use MSN)

Section 4: Learning and Production

1. How did you learn this?

[Choose maximum 3]

	never done this	Through a print resource	Via the help links	Tried out for myself without guide or help from someone	Asked to friends, parents offline	Asked to friends, parents online
Downloading, editing, uploading music						
Creating or editing a web page or weblog						
Playing a computer game						
Creating or modifying a game avatar						

2. How did you learn the activities below?

[Choose maximum 3]

	never done this	Through a print resource	Via the help links	Tried out for myself without guide or help from someone	Asked to friends, parents offline	Asked to friends, parents online
Texting (mobile phone use)						
Creating a profile page (e.g., Hyves)						
Creating, editing, or posting a photo online (e.g., on Flickr)						
Creating, editing, or posting a video (e.g., YouTube)						

3. Where would you most likely look for information for each of these areas?

[Choose maximum 3]

	A book, newspaper or magazine	My parents or a teacher	Would ask 'offline' friends or contacts	Would ask 'online' friends or contacts	Search on Internet	I don't search for this
School Work						
Local News (what happens nearby)						
Popular Culture (music, pop stars, film)						
Literature, Art, Science						
Religion						
Buying things						
Business (making money, selling goods or services)						
Health						

4. Where do you get these most of the time?

	From print resources (e.g., books, magazines)	From 'offline' contacts	From 'online' contacts	From software	Through a web search (e.g. Google, Yahoo)	I create these materials myself
Photograph						
Images (sketches, maps, diagrams)						
Video clips						
Stories						
Other print texts						
Music or sound files						
Virtual Objects (e.g., animations, gaming objects)						

5. If you get these things online, from what websites do you get it from?

	From Dutch language websites	From English language websites	From other language websites	From Mother language websites
Photographs				
Images (sketches, maps, diagrams)				
Video clips				
Stories				
Other print texts				
Music or sound files				
Virtual Objects (e.g., animations, gaming objects)				

Section 5 Personal information

1. **What is your date of birth?**

2. **Are you a girl or a boy?**

- Girl
- Boy

3. **Do you live with your parents?**

I live

- With my father and mother
- With my father
- With my mother
- At times with my mother and at times with my mother
- Other:

4. **What is your first name?**

5. **What is your family name?**

6. **How many brothers do you have?**

(state 0 in the case you do not have any brothers)

7. **How many sisters do you have?**

(state 0 in the case you do not have any sisters)

8. **What kind of school do you go to? (Dutch education system)**

- vmbo, leerweg ondersteunend
- vmbo, basis
- vmbo, kader
- vmbo, theoretisch
- vmbo, kader-basis gemengd
- vmbo, kader- theoretisch gemengd
- havo
- athenaeum/vwo
- gymnasium
- mbo
- hbo
- universiteit

9. **In what year of school are you now?**

- First year
- Second year
- Third year
- Fourth year
- Fifth year
- Sixth year

10. **In what country were you born?**

- Netherlands
- Surinam
- Netherland Antilles / Aruba
- Turkey
- Morocco
- Another country:

11. **In what country were your parents born?**

Netherlands Surinam Dutch Antilles/ Aruba Turkey Morocco Other..[text field]
Your mother
Your father

12. **Are you religious?**

- Yes, my religion is Buddhism, Hinduism, Shintoism
- Yes, my religion is Islam
- Yes, my religion is Protestantism
- Yes, my religion is Roman-Catholicism
- Yes, but my religion is something else:
- No, I'm not religious
- I don't know

13. **What languages are spoken in your home?**

(multiple answers possible)

- Dutch
- Arabic
- A Berber language: Tamazight, Tashelhiyt, Tarifit
- English
- French
- Spanish
- Papiamentu
- Turkish
- Another language: [text box]

Section 6: Network

5.1 Name generator

Think about 5 people with whom you frequently communicate on the Internet.

Choose 5 persons in your network

Fill in Name and Last name (Jan Smit) or if you prefer JS,
Vincent van Gogh = VvG

Contact 1 Name + Lastname

Contact 2 Name + Lastname

Contact 3 Name + Lastname

Contact 4 Name + Lastname

Contact 5 Name + Lastname

Now you will receive a number of questions about these 5 people.

5.1.1 Following questions are about Contact 1 [the name entered by respondent appears]

1. Contact 1 is:

- one of my parents >>routed<<
- my brother or sister
- another family member
- a friend of mine
- my boyfriend/girlfriend
- someone I know but not a friend of mine

2. Is Contact 1 in your school or class?

- [>>> Routing: skip if contact is a parent <<<]
- Yes, in my class
 - In my school but not in my class
 - No, not in my school

3. Contact 1 is:

- boy / man
- girl / woman

4. Contact 1 is [] years old (if you don't know, give an estimate).

5. How often do you have contact online with Contact 1 ?

- Daily
- Several times a week
- Weekly
- Several times a month
- Once a month or less

6. How often do you have contact with Contact 1 offline?

- Daily
- Several times a week
- Weekly
- Several times a month
- Once a month or less
- I have never met this contact in real

7. Where does Contact 1 live?

- In my household
- In my neighborhood
- In my own town or village
- Outside my own town/village but in the Netherlands
- Outside of the Netherlands

8. At home, Contact 1's family mostly speaks:

- 0 Dutch
- 0 Arabic
- 0 Berber (Tamazight, Tashelhiyt, Tarifit)
- 0 English
- 0 French
- 0 Spanish
- 0 Turkish
- 0 Papiamentu
- 0 Other []

9. My communication with Contact 1 is:

Very personal 1 2 3 4 5 Not personal at all

10. The communication with Contact 1 is mostly about (multiple choice)

- 1. What happened with me today
- 2. What happened in School
- 3. What happened in the neighborhood
- 4. What happened in the world
- 5. Friendships
- 6. Relationships & love
- 7. Family
- 8. Religion
- 9. How to use Technology/gadgets
- 10. Homework, exams, projects
- 11. Arranging a meeting / going out
- 12. Earn Money, buy things
- 13. Music, fashion, celebrities and film
- 14. Science, information, history
- 15. Art, literature, theater
- 16. Sexuality
- 17. Health
- 18. Other []

11. What kind of things do you and Contact 1 do online?

	Mostly I do it	Mostly Contact 1 does this	We both do it / mutual	We almost never do it
Check each other's profile page				
Share links, photos, texts, images, videos				
Discover - discuss new things information				
Ask for advise				
Create-edit-make things online				
Give feed-back – evaluate each others work				

12. How often do you and Contact 1 do the things listed below?

	Never	Monthly	2-3 times per month	2-3 times per week	Almost every day
Check each other's profile page					
Share links, photos, texts, images, videos					
Discover - discuss new things information					
Ask for advise					
Create-edit-make things online					
Give feed-back – evaluate each others work					

[The above section is repeated for Contacts 2-5]

5.2 – Contacts network

Please think about the relations between the people you just mentioned.

Some of them may be total strangers in the sense that they wouldn't recognize each other if they bumped into each other on the street. Others may know each other and sometimes they are very good friends.

1. Are Contact 1 and Contact 2 ...

- 0 Don't know each other
- 0 Know each other
- 0 Know each other very well

[Followed 9 more times for all other combinations between contacts]

Section 7: contact with the participant

This is the end. Thank you for answering the questions!

We hope you enjoyed participating. If you are interested in keeping involved in our research, please enter your email address below.

Appendix 2 – Media consumption

	Never	1 day per week	2/3 days per week	4/5 days per week	Daily	All the time
Reading newspapers and magazines	21.2%	40.1%	23.3%	7.6%	6.4%	1.5%
Reading books	27.9%	32.8%	17.4%	9.9%	6.4%	5.5%
Watching TV/DVD's	0.6%	9.6%	13.7%	14.0%	24.7%	37.5%
Playing computer games on consoles	22.4%	16.0%	20.1%	8.1%	15.7%	17.7%
Using MP3-player / I-Pod	8.4%	7.6%	10.5%	16.0%	16.9%	40.7%

How often do Moroccan-Dutch youths make use of non-Internet media? (percentages, n=344).

Appendix 3 – Texting

	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	25-30	>30
Girls	11.0%	29.3%	11.0%	11.0%	6.1%	3.3%	6.1%	18.8%
Boys	22.1%	31.3%	12.3%	9.8%	8.0%	3.1%	3.1%	10.4%

How many short text messages do Moroccan-Dutch girls and boys sent per day user their mobile phone? (percentages, n=344).

Appendix 4 – Usefulness of the Internet

	Fully disagree	Disagree	Sometimes	Agree	Fully agree
To search for information					
Girls	5.5%	1.1%	4.4%	28.2%	60.8%
Boys	7.4%	5.5%	15.0%	28.8%	46.6%
To buy things that are difficult to get					
Girls	22.1%	13.3%	28.8%	22.1%	13.8%
Boys	25.8%	14.8%	26.4%	15.3%	17.8%
To reach organizations					
Girls	24.3%	18.2%	30.9%	16.6%	9.9%
Boys	26.4%	13.5%	35.0%	11.0%	14.1%
To find people who can help me with my problems					
Girls	46.4%	20.4%	18.8%	5.5%	8.8%
Boys	45.4%	16.0%	16.0%	11.0%	11.7%

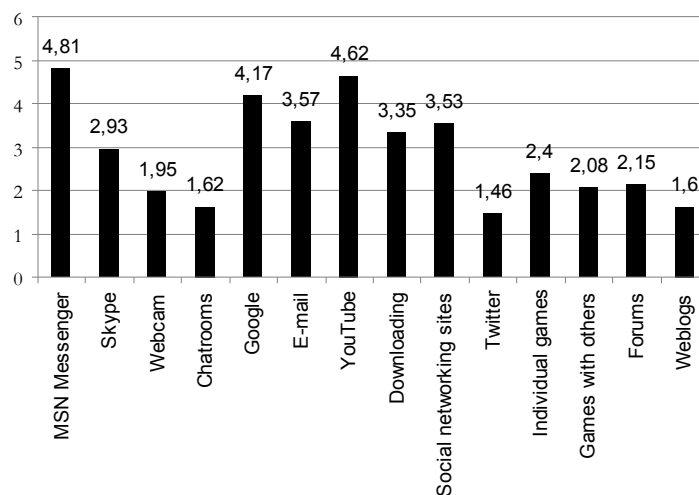
To what extent do Moroccan-Dutch youths find the Internet appropriate for certain practices? (percentages, n=344).

Appendix 5 – Autonomy and restrictions

I can do whatever I like on the Internet	<i>Fully disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Fully agree</i>
Girls	11.1%	7.2%	28.2%	19.3%	34.3%
Boys	11.7%	10.4%	23.3%	8.6 %	46.0%
I decide what I take from the internet (videos, texts, pictures)	<i>Fully disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Fully agree</i>
Girls	9.9%	6.6%	17.1%	21.5%	44.8%
Boys	9.8%	12.3%	17.8%	17.2%	43.0%
I decide who I talk with on the internet	<i>Fully disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Fully agree</i>
Girls	7.2%	6.6%	11.0%	22.4%	52.5%
Boys	4.3%	8.6%	9.2%	24.0%	54.0%
I decide what I download from the internet	<i>Fully disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Fully agree</i>
Girls	10.5%	8.3%	23.2%	14.9%	43.1%
Boys	11.0%	10.4%	19.0%	19.6%	39.9%
I decide what I publish on my profile page	<i>Fully disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Fully agree</i>
Girls	10.5%	4.4%	15.0%	19.3%	50.8%
Boys	9.8%	7.3%	8.0%	19.0%	55.8%

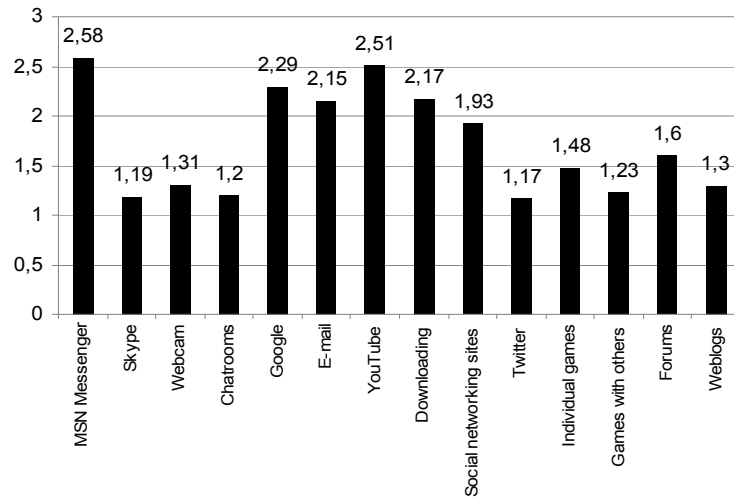
To what extent do Moroccan-Dutch youths feel restricted in their use of the Internet? (percentages, n=344).

Appendix 6 – Frequencies of digital practice

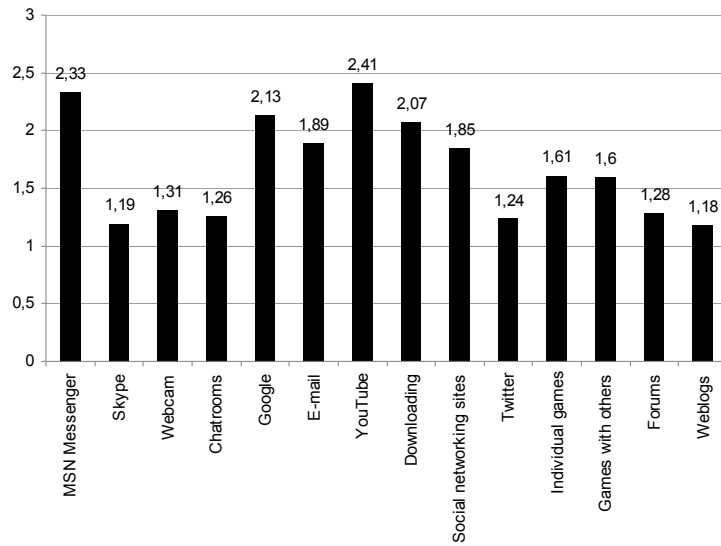


How often do Moroccan-Dutch youths engage in digital practices practices? (graph shows means on a 5-point-scale, n=344).

Appendix 7 – Attachments to digital practices



Moroccan-Dutch girls' attachment to applications and platforms (graph shows means on a 3-point-scale, n= 181).



Moroccan-Dutch boys' attachment to applications and platforms (graph shows means on a 3-point-scale, n=163).

Appendix 8 – Interview protocol

Introduction

Welcome and thank you very much for participating in my research. I study the role of Internet in the lives of young people in the Netherlands. In particular, I study youth culture, identity, religion and differences and similarities between boys and girls. And I want to know how young people show who they are and what they stand for online. I ask questions like what do you think about the Internet and what do you do online. In our project Wired Up we focus on the experiences of different ethnic minority groups in the Netherlands. In total, 120 young people are interviewed in the Wired Up project. Your ideas and experiences will be invaluable in helping to shape the research. With your permission, the interview will be audio-recorded so I can remember and analyze our conversation later on as well. You may choose to stop the interview at any time, or choose not to answer any question that you feel uncomfortable answering. Do you have any questions before we begin? Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

Internet map

After showing and describing my own personal internet map: would you like to think about the things you like to do most online and draw a map of your favorite internet destinations? You can put your name in the middle of this piece of paper and map out those sites you visit most often or that you consider most important? Can you add a few words to indicate what you do in these spaces?

General questions

- Can you please introduce yourself? (If needed prompt with questions such as: How old are you? What is your favourite subject in school? What are your favorite pastimes? What kind of boy or girl are you? What sets you apart from your peers and what connects you with others, in terms of style, subculture, religion, music and political preferences?)
- Who knows most about Internet and computers in your home?
- Can you describe the setting where you most often use the Internet?
- In order to make sure I use the correct words, how would you describe your ethnic background? Where are your parents from?
- Does your whole family live in the Netherlands, if not, where do your family members live?
- Do you keep in touch with family or friends abroad? Do you use the Internet? Can you tell me about this process?
- Earlier studies have suggested that Moroccan-Dutch youths are active on the Internet, what do you think about this statement?

Social networking sites

- Imagine I don't know what *Hypes* or *Facebook* is. Can you describe what happens there? Is there something you can compare it with offline?
- How often do you use *Facebook/Hypes*?
- What does Facebook mean for you? Why is it important? What are the differences between *Facebook* and *Hypes*?
- What can people tell about themselves on *Facebook/Hypes*? What do you put on *Facebook/Hypes*? Why?
- Are you a fan of any group or page on *Facebook/Hypes*? Which ones? Can you explain why?
- How can you find out what kind of cultural background, religion or ethnic background someone has online? How do you show these things? Do you put up things that have to do with your background? Why?
- What do boys put online and what do girls put online?
- To what extent is all information that you put online the truth? Do you ever publish false information?
- If I may ask, how many friends do you have on *Facebook/Hypes*? Can you tell me more about them, who are those people? Where do they live?
- How do you decide whether someone can become your friend?
- How do people become popular on *Facebook/Hypes*? What kind of people become popular?
- Are there any / what are the less fun things of *Facebook/Hypes*?
- What do you think about commercials on *Facebook/Hypes*?
- Have you closed off your profile page from strangers? Why?
- What other things happen on *Facebook/Hypes*?

Instant messaging

- Imagine I do not know what *MSN Messenger* is. Can you describe what happens there? What are the differences with sites like *Facebook*? Is there something you can compare *MSN* with offline?
- How often do you use *MSN*?

- What does *MSN* mean for you? Why is it important?
- If I may ask, how many friends do you have on *MSN*? Who are your friends on *MSN*? Are these contacts the same friends you have on *Hyves/Facebook*? Where do these friends live?
- How can you show who you are and what you stand for on *MSN*? (How can you see what someone is like on *MSN*? How can you learn more about someone's personality?)
- What is your display name on *MSN*? What does it mean? What does it say about you?
- Is *MSN* more popular among girls or among boys? Do boys and girls do different things on *MSN*? Do they use different display photos or display names?
- To what extent is talking on *MSN* different from offline settings?
- To what extent is *MSN* a good space to share secrets? (To what extent is it suitable to have private conversations or to keep things secret?)
- To what extent do you consider *MSN* a good way for boys and girls to flirt, and why? Are there other spaces that are more suitable?
- Sometimes the media pay attention to the dangers of *MSN*. What are the dangers in your opinion?
- To what extent does someone keep an eye on you while you are using *MSN*?
- Which languages do you use on *MSN*?
- Can you learn me five favorite words you like to use on *MSN*?

Online discussion forums

- Imagine I do not know what forums are. What happens on forums? Who visits them? What are the differences with *MSN* and *Hyves/Facebook*? Is there something you can compare forums with offline?
- How often do you visit forums? What kind of forums are there? What are the differences? What do forums mean to you?
- Do you feel you are anonymous on forums? Why is that?
- What are your favourite topics/rubrics? What is the topic you were last active?
- What do boys do and what do girls do on forums?
- What is the role of a nickname/avatar/signature on a forum?
- Do you have an account? What is your nickname/avatar/signature? What do these things say about you?
- Is someone's status important? (Do you consider it when someone has posted more he gets a higher status?)
- To what extent do you feel like you can give your voice in Dutch public debates? Do you have the feeling you can do so on forums? Why?
- To what extent do you feel at home and/or supported in discussion forums?
- The topics discussed on forums, for instance regarding religion, to what extent are they different from the newspapers or television?
- What kind of news items are shown about Moroccan-Dutch youths in newspapers and on television? How do you feel about that? To what extent is it different on online forums?
- To what extent do you find information about your religion on forums? Why is that important?
- What do you feel about there being a special page for girls (*Yasmina* on *Marokko.nl* and *Girlsboard* on *Maroc.nl*)?
- To what extent do you think people have multiple accounts? What do you think about that?
- What is your opinion about the fact that some forums are moderated?
- Are there also ethnic majority Dutch people on forums? How do you feel about that?
- What opinion do you think Dutch people have on forums?
- What languages are used on forums?
- To what extent are discussion forums suitable to look for a partner?
- What do you feel about commercials on forums?

Video sharing platforms

- Imagine I don't know what *YouTube* is. What happens there? What is the difference with other spaces? Is there something you can compare *YouTube* with offline?
- How often do you visit *YouTube*? Why is *YouTube* important for you?
- What do boys do and what do girls do on *YouTube*?
- Have you ever uploaded a clip? What is your nickname?
- Are you a fan of someone on *YouTube*? Idol/favorite artist? Who are they? Where do these artists sing about?
- To what extent do you watch or publish videos that deal with your ethnic/cultural/religious background? Can you please explain?
- To what extent do you watch news broadcasts on *YouTube*?
- Can you write down the names of some of your favorite *YouTube* video's?
- What kind of comments do people post on *YouTube*? How do you feel about possibility?
- Do you ever download *YouTube* video's or other things?

- What do boys download and what do girls download?
- What are the languages used in the things you download?
- Some people say that downloading is stealing, how do you feel about that?

Concluding questions

- What is your opinion about chain-emails?
- Are there any other sites you visit that have to do with your ethnic/cultural/religious background we have not yet discussed?
- What do you think, did people experience their cultural/ethnic/religious backgrounds different in the time when there was no Internet yet?
- Are there things you can do more easily on the Internet than offline?
- Do you feel that the internet gives you inspiration/strength/power? What sites give you this feeling?
- Have you ever encountered racism/discrimination online? Do you think there is more or less racism online?
- What is the worst thing you (or your friends) have ever experienced online? What is the best you (or your friends) have ever experienced online?
- Is there something else that is important and that we have not covered yet? Are there things about young people and the Internet that I really should know?
- How do you feel about this interview? How did you like the questions, were they difficult or easy?
- I am going to transcribe our conversation. Should I encounter any difficulties during this process, do you mind if I get back in touch with you? Can I contact you, when other questions arise?
- Thank the informant, and hand her/him a giftcard.

Appendix 9 - Meet the informants

Main informants

Abdel

Abdel, (a pseudonym he chose himself) is a 13-year-old, 2nd year VWO student from Rotterdam. His parents have migrated from Al Hoceima, his family is Berber and he also mainly speaks Berber with his parents. He describes himself as *"tough but also nice, spontaneous Moroccan boy"* and he feels connected to Muslim and hip-hop youth. He underlines he does not feel he belongs to a particular group, but *"he is just himself"*. He has 3 sisters, and his favorite subject in school is religion. Outside, Anis likes to play football and other games. He connects to the Internet mostly using his desktop computer in his bedroom. He does not feel anyone has a say over his use of the Internet. He is into rap-music, and he listens to both Moroccan-Dutch artists such as Yes-R and Ali B. and African-American rappers such as 50 Cent and Tupac. He includes the word *"macro"* in his e-mail address. He uses the Internet mostly to log in to MSN, to send e-mails, to update his profile page and to watch videos on *Youtube*. He has befriended around 200 people, both on *Hypes* and MSN. He reports to receive overwhelming numbers of chain-emails having to do with religion and current affairs, but he states to be interested especially in those that address ways to help people in wars across the globe, and mentions the specific case of Palestine. Abdel participated in the survey and Fayrouz and I interviewed him in a school multimedia centre.

Abdelsammad

Abdelsammad is a 15-year-old MAVO student from Rotterdam. His parents migrated to the Netherlands from Nador in Morocco. His relatives live across Europe, in France, Spain, Belgium but also in Morocco. He speaks Dutch and Berber with his parents at home and he has three brothers and two sisters. His favorite subjects in school are Dutch language and athletics. In his spare time he likes to spend his time playing football and being at the computer. He describes he is tough and sporty and that he listens to rap-music. Logging into his account, his parents makes use of MSN voice chat to keep in touch, next to almost yearly visits. His older sister helps him when something is not working on the computer. She also monitors what he downloads and whom he talks to online. He likes to put up his holiday pictures taken in Morocco on his *Facebook* profile page. Abdelsammad prefers *Facebook* because it is more international than *Hypes*, and he has around 90 friends there. He for instance talks to his nephew who lives in Spain on *Facebook*. On MSN, he has 350 friends, and on *YouTube* he likes to look up Dutch, Moroccan and American rap videos. Furthermore, he likes to re-live his visits to Nador by watching YouTube videos showing the streets, shopping malls and the boulevard alongside the sea. Among other things, he has also included the name of the city in his e-mail address, together with a gender affiliation *"nadorboy"*. Furthermore he likes playing computer games such as *Grand Theft Auto* and *Fifa Soccer games*. Abdelsammad participated in the survey and I interviewed him in a school multimedia centre.

Anas

Anas is a 13 year old, 2nd year VMBO K/B student from 's-Hertogenbosch. He was born in the Netherlands while his parents are from Marrakech, and the family returns there during holiday trips. He has two older brothers who are both enrolled in the university. During the interview he was a bit shy, but with his friends he became very noisy afterwards. His hobbies are being on the computer and going outside to play football. He has also takes part in athletics. The majority of his family still lives in Morocco, and his parents make use of his MSN account to remain in touch with them. Himself, he uses *Facebook* to talk to his nephews in Morocco. He enjoys looking up R&B, hip-hop en house music on *YouTube*, but he also likes to watch videos shot in Marrakech. Recently he was mostly helping his dad to find out how to use *Google Maps* to print out driving directions, as his dad at the time was driving all over the Netherlands for job interviews. Also he is attached to downloading music. Anas has 50 friends on *FaceBook*, but he just quit *Hypes* where he had befriended 158 contacts, just like he has on MSN. He participated in the survey. I carried out the interview with Anas in a school meeting room.

Amina

Amina (a pseudonym she chose herself) is a 13-year-old, 2nd year VWO student from Rotterdam. In describing her ethnicity, she states her parents have migrated from Nador, stating *"Yes I am a Berber"*, adding *"I still remain Moroccan. I have been born in the Netherlands, and I have command over the Dutch language, and my Moroccan [Arabic] is not so good"*. With her parents she speaks Dutch and Berber. Most relatives she knows best live in the Netherlands, but more distant relatives live in Spain, Germany and France but also in Morocco. She describes herself as quite fashion-conscious and she sees herself as computer-savvy and adds she is very eager to learn. Amina can access the Internet from her own room using her laptop, but she also uses the desktop computer in the living room. There she has to share the computer with her 5 siblings; she

has one brother and four sisters. She is not interested in online social networking sites, but she logs in to MSN daily. On MSN, she has befriended around 130 people. Additionally she is connected to the Internet via her smart-phone, and she checks her messages during our interview. She is a heavy user of what she says the "girly online discussion board" *Chaima.nl* to share sensitive, romantic and personal stories and to talk about nails, beauty and fashion. She is a fan of Maher Zain, a Swedish-Lebanese R&B singer who she describes as an artist who sings in English "about the peacefulness of Islam". Amina participated in the survey. I conducted the interview in an empty classroom where Fayrouz was simultaneously interviewing Ilham in another corner.

Amir

Amir is a 16-year-old, 4th year VMBO-B student from 's-Hertogenbosch. He was born in the Netherlands, and his parents migrated from Marrakech, in northwestern Morocco. He has one brother and three sisters. With his parents he mainly speaks Moroccan-Arabic, and he stresses he does not feel Berber, but Arabic. He describes himself as "having my own style. I don't belong to one particular group, but I'm just multiculti I think". While some of his family members have moved to Algeria, most family still live in Morocco. Once every year he visits his family there. His favorite subject is Tourism, an elective course he is following. He has a computer of his own, in his own bedroom. He likes to play football in his spare time. When he is at home he logs on to the computer, or he watches TV. He includes the word "macro" in his e-mail address. Amir is a hip-hop fanatic and he listens to Moroccan-Dutch artists like Yes-R, AliB, Ree B and Soesi B. as well as Moroccan rap groups H-Kayne and Fnaire. He is proud to know the last two groups, as they are not well known in the Netherlands yet. Amir has 349 *Hypes* friends over 200 MSN friends. To get in touch with girls he uses the international dating/ social networking site *Tagged.com* and he likes to visit *FRMF.ma*, 'Site Official de la Fédération Royale Marocaine de Football' to keep up-to-date on the proceedings of the Moroccan national football team. Amir participated in the survey, and I interviewed him in an empty classroom. After the interview we maintained extensive e-mail contact.

Ayoub

Ayoub is a 14 years old, 2nd year VMBO B/K student from 's-Hertogenbosch. He describes himself as a normal, sporty Muslim boy and he loves to surf the Internet, play football and chill with his friends. He has 3 sisters and 1 brother and he happily announced that his mother was pregnant. Ayoub talks Dutch and Berber with his parents. He is born in the Netherlands, but his parents migrated from Haroun in east Morocco. At the time of the fieldwork he was very excited about the upcoming visit of his grandfather from Morocco. Most of his father's side of the family lives in the Netherlands, while most of his mother's relatives lives in France, Germany, Belgium and Morocco. Besides annual holiday trips, he mostly is in touch with his nephew who lives in Belgium. Together with his parents he uses video-chat on MSN to talk to family in Morocco. He does not experience any restrictions in using the computer by anyone in his household and he uses MSN and *Pingchat!* on his Blackberry smart phone too. His favorite online game is online billiard, which he played using the site *gamzer.com*. He has over 700 friends on *Hypes*, 500 MSN contacts and he is an avid *Twitter* user. Ayoub participated in the survey and was interviewed by me in a school meeting room.

Badr

Badr is a 14-year-old, 3rd year student VMBO K/B student from 's-Hertogenbosch. His parents are from Nador in Morocco and he is born in the Netherlands. At home he speaks Dutch and Berber with his parents and his younger brother and younger sister. His favorite subject in school is German because he can also practice it with his nephew who is living in Germany. Badr likes to play sports, mainly football. He also frequently plays games on his *PlayStation III* and his desktop computer that he has to share with his siblings. He likes to go to Morocco, but only on holiday, because after two or three weeks he likes to go home, because he feels more at home in the Netherlands. His family has spread out across Europe, living in Belgium, Germany, France, Spain and Denmark. Mostly he keeps in touch with his nephews in Germany and Belgium. But he sets up *Skype* for his parents; they do not know how to use it. Everyday, he is online for a couple of hours and he likes to chat with one of his 500 MSN contacts or hang out in chat-boxes, and update his profile page for his 500 *Hypes* friends to see. Also he actively plays *OSM.nl* an online soccer manager game. On *YouTube* he searches for highlight videos of his favorite football clubs Ajax and Real Madrid. Above all, he is a Michael Jackson fan. Badr participated in the survey and I interviewed him. He appeared to feel a bit uncomfortable during the interview held in an empty classroom.

Bibi

Bibi (a pseudonym she chose herself) is a 16-year-old, 4th year VMBO B/K student from 's-Hertogenbosch. Bibi is an openhearted girl who has much to share. Her parents migrated from Nador, a city on the Mediterranean coast in northeastern Morocco. She has two younger brothers and younger two

sisters. With her parents she mainly speaks Berber. She speaks very fast and curses and swears every now and then. Bibi describes she is one of the more lively girls in her school class; she jumps and dances, and is very active, adding "I am Moroccan, and I am proud of it". Sometimes she clicks her tongue to say 'no'. Most of her family lives in the Netherlands, but there are also family members in Morocco. She only uses *MSN* and *Hypes* to keep in contact with nieces and nephews living in the Netherlands, her other family she only reconnects with during yearly holiday trips when she likes to bring her nieces gifts. She thinks Dutch kids are more restricted in their use of the Internet, and she says "we Moroccan youths secretly take our laptops and hide them under our bed sheets and go on *MSN* and *Facebook*". She admits she is always very curious to learn about what other people think about the pictures she puts up online. In her spare time, Bibi likes to play sports; she has joined indoor football and kickboxing clubs. Also she likes to help her mother out and to spend time with her friends. She has a laptop that she uses in her own room in the attic of the house. Her sisters also join her there when they want to use the computer. She likes to do her homework there, with her sisters. She lists 560 *Hypes* friends and 290 *MSN* contacts. Bibi participated in the survey and Fayrouz interviewed her in a school meeting room.

Carlos

Carlos (a pseudonym he chose himself), is a 15-year-old 3rd year VMBO K/T student from 's-Hertogenbosch. Carlos calls himself a half-blood, adding, "I have Dutch looks, but when I talk I talk like a Moroccan". His father is Dutch and his mother is from Rabat, the capital city of Morocco. He has a younger brother and sister, and he has to share the desktop computer located in the living room with them. He wants to be seen as a normal, Muslim boy. In his household Dutch and Moroccan-Arabic are spoken. The majority of his mother's side of the family resides in Morocco, but he mentions a number of his aunts live in the Netherlands, France and Spain. He keeps in touch with them via *MSN* and *Facebook*. Interestingly, he speaks Italian with those family members that have migrated, as they first settled in Italy before moving onwards towards other countries in Europe. The pseudonym he chose to have his voice included in the study also reflects his affinity with Italy. Athletics is his favorite subject in school, and in his spare time he plays sports in football and kickboxing clubs. At night he likes to be on the computer, connecting with his friends on *MSN* and *Facebook* and to listen to music. However, he says he is also online "24/7". He connects to the Internet using his *Blackberry* mobile phone, and he uses *PingChat!* a lot. He does not feel as if anyone in his household restricts him in his online behavior. Carlos has 900 friends on *MSN* and 850 friends on *Hypes*, he mentions this is mostly to get in touch with girls, his 50 contacts on *Facebook* are mostly family in the diaspora. He includes the word "badboy" in his e-mail address. Like Senna, he spoke passionately about a page of remembrance on *Hypes*, a RIP-page, set up for a friend of his who had recently passed away after a traffic accident. And he enjoys looking up info on motor scooters. He is into hip-hop; he listens to Moroccan-Dutch artists like Ali. B. and Yes-R; Antillean-Dutch artists like Hef, Dio and Gio as well as and North-American hip-hop artists like Eminem. Carlos participated in the survey and I interviewed him in an empty classroom.

Faruk

Faruk (a pseudonym he chose himself) is a 16-year-old, 3rd year MAVO student from Rotterdam. He describes himself as having Moroccan parents and born in the Netherlands. He adds he is interested in hip-hop and Islam. Sometimes he feels sad when he feels he and his friends are being more tightly monitored than other young people when they enter shops. He speaks Dutch, Moroccan-Arabic and Berber with his parents at home. He has one brother and two sisters. He has family in the Netherlands, but also France, Spain and Morocco. In school, his favorite subjects are English, Geography and Physics. His favorite pastimes are hanging out with his friends, playing football and going to the shopping mall. Also he likes to be at the computer and play games on his *Playstation* console. Faruk accesses the Internet from a laptop that is shared among the household, but he brings it to his own room and sits on his bed using the laptop. In his household they are most strongly connected to his aunt in France, he logs on to *MSN* for his parents let them talk with her using their webcam. He calls the opportunity to call for free and even get image to talk to his family abroad for free one of the biggest advantages of the internet. He has around 100 friends on *MSN*. He is not restricted by anyone in his household in his use of the Internet. His online interests resemble his offline interests, he likes to play *osm.nl Online Soccer Manager*, or watch football clips on *YouTube*. Also he likes to look up music videos of the American rapper Eminem, he also has converted some of his songs into MP3's that he puts on his Samsung slider phone. Faruk participated in the survey and Fayrouz interviewed him in a school multimedia centre.

Fatiha

Fatiha is a 17-year-old, 4th year HAVO student from Eindhoven. She was born in the Netherlands, and both her parents were born in Morocco. She describes herself as Muslim and finds it important to present herself as a believer online as well, for instance on by choosing the following *MSN* display name "Show remorse! Allah (swt) will accept it from you and inshAllah will offer you goodness!!". She has three sisters and

one brother. At home she mostly speaks Dutch and Berber with her parents. She feels quite free in her use of the Internet, except for the school settings where she feels the schoolteacher monitors her. She states to be attached to *MSN*, *Hypes*, and *Youtube*, sites she visits on a daily basis. She has befriended around 115 people on *MSN* and on *Hypes*. Additionally, she often participates in online discussion boards, for instance *Marokko.nl*, and Moroccan-Dutch girls oriented *Chaima.nl* and the Islam oriented *Islaam.nl*. The Islam portal website *Al-Yaqeen.nl* (literally the trust in Islam) is also among her favorites. Fatiha shared *MSN* transcripts with me and participated in the piloting of the survey and the interview. I interviewed her through e-mail and *MSN* and we maintained e-mail contact.

Ferran

Ferran is a 17-year-old student in the second year of his MBO degree (vocational education) in social work from Venlo. He describes himself as a "Moroccan-Dutch boy". He mainly speaks Dutch and Berber with his parents. Most of his family lives in Morocco, Germany and the Netherlands, but he also has relatives in Spain. Quite frequently he meets his relatives at weddings; recently he attended one in Germany. It's mostly his mother who uses *MSN* and webcam to talk to her brothers, sisters and her mother who live outside the Netherlands. His most important hobby is playing football, which he does both for his club as well as on outdoor courts. He often turns to *VL.nl* a site with football news and he likes to use the Internet for entertainment purposes; he for instance watches funny videos gathered on *Dumpert.nl*. Other habits are browsing the profile pages of his 160 *Hypes* contacts and logging in to *MSN* talk to any of his 110 contacts. Also he looks up funny videos in Berber on *YouTube* as well as Koran lectures. He accesses the Internet in his own bedroom using his own laptop. Ferran participated in the piloting of the interview, and Fayrouz and I together interviewed him in a hotel lobby cafe.

Hajar

Hajar is a 15-year-old, 3rd year VMBO K/T student from 's-Hertogenbosch. Her parents have migrated from the Berber city Meknès in northern Morocco. She has 2 brothers and one sister. She describes she is a normal and social Dutch-Moroccan girl, who stands up for herself, adding that she is from Moroccan descent but she is born in the Netherlands. She speaks Dutch, French and Moroccan-Arabic at home. Her hobbies are being at the computer and hanging out at with friends either at home on the couch in the winter and outside in the summer. She says she is very tidy, and states she strongly asserts herself, when people gossip about her she gets very angry. Reflecting on her wearing of a double wrap headscarf she feels she stands out from others because of her faith. At home, she shares the desktop computer in the living room with her family. But she also connects to *MSN* on her mobile phone. Her fathers' side of the family lives in the Netherlands and her mother's side lives in Belgium. She keeps in touch with them via *Skype* and *MSN*, and she helps her mother set up connections. She thinks Moroccan-Dutch youths are active on the Internet because of the diasporic connections with grandmothers and uncles living in Morocco and elsewhere. She feels her parents and her brother control her Internet actions. Hajar enjoys looking up pictures of Takshitas (Moroccan dresses) on the discussion board *Marokko.nl* and social networking sites. She has 100 friends on *Facebook*, 487 on *Hypes* and 230 on *MSN*. She is into electronic dance music, and stresses she is addicted to mobile phone texting and to listening to Sami Yusuf, an Iranian-British singer. Hajar participated in the survey and Fayrouz interviewed her in a school meeting room.

Hatim

Hatim is a 15-year-old, 3rd year VMBO K/T student from 's-Hertogenbosch. He was born in Aklim, northeast Morocco and he migrated to the Netherlands with his parents at young age. Hatim has three brothers and two sisters. His favorite subject in school is athletics and in his spare time he is occupied with football and kickboxing. He describes himself as "someone who follows the mood of the moment and who is adventurous", and added he is a Muslim. He likes electronic dance and house music. At home he speaks Dutch and Berber. His family lives in the Netherlands and in Morocco. He accesses the Internet from a desktop computer in his own bedroom, and first thing in the morning he turns on the computer to check whether he has received new messages. He does not feel anyone in his household monitors his actions online. He likes the Internet for *MSN*, watching videos on *YouTube*, downloading music and updating his profile page. He has 135 friends on *Facebook*, 556 on *Hypes* and 600 on *MSN*. Above all things he is an active gamer, specializing in *Call of Duty: Black Ops*, a first-person shooter video game on the *Playstation III*. Hatim participated in the survey. The interview took place in a school meeting room. He was a bit reserved when answering, perhaps because Fayrouz, an adult female, interviewed him.

Ilana

Ilana is a 16-year-old, first year student MBO (vocational education) in social work from Venlo. She describes herself "as Dutch but of Moroccan descent". She has one older brother. Her relatives live in Morocco, Germany and the Netherlands. She uses *MSN* to talk to her cousins in Germany, and she likes to practice her German with them. Her favorite pastime is shopping. She accesses the Internet in her bedroom using

her own laptop. She does not know by heart how many people are in her *MSN* of *Hypes* friend list, but reckons that from her lists most often around 10 people are online at the same time. Most of all she likes to surf to *Marokko.nl* and read stories that other people have posted, she is especially interested in reading about funny events and exciting experiences people have. Also she sometimes goes to the thread on “Islam and I”, to open topics to get more information about things in life related to Islam. On *YouTube* she likes to look up Moroccan-Arabic and English language music. Ilana participated in the piloting of the interview and Fayrouz and I together interviewed her in a museum cafeteria.

Ilham

Ilham is a 13-year-old, 2nd year VWO student from Rotterdam. Her favorite subject is history, and her hobbies are football, swimming and reading books. She has four sisters. Ilham describes she embodies “*opposite poles*”, she is social, sweet and companionable but also quiet and at times over-excited. She is interested in politics, electronic dance-music, hip-hop, Islam and religions. Furthermore she confidently states “*I’m Moroccan, Berber and Muslim, holding Dutch nationality*”. Different affiliations also become apparent from the e-mail address she chose, she includes “*miss*” and “*Riff*”. Riff is an Arabic word meaning “edge of cultivated area” and it is commonly used to refer to the groups of Berber people occupying parts of northeastern Morocco, ranging from the desert in the centre of Morocco to the Mountains to the Mediterranean coast. Her parents were among those people, having migrated from the coast city of Nador. Most of her mother’s side of the family currently lives in the Netherlands, while most of her father’s side lives abroad in Spain, Belgium and Morocco. She speaks Dutch, Moroccan-Arabic and Berber with her parents. She mostly uses the laptop in the living room, where she has to share it with her siblings. She feels quite controlled in her use of the Internet, her parents and her sisters keep tabs on her behavior. But she says she for instance uses *Ebuddy.com* to log on to get in touch with her *MSN* contacts. *Ebuddy* is a web-based client that does not store any of her conversations on the computer as the *MSN* application does. She forms a clique with two of her best girlfriends, at school but also online. She also likes *MSN* because she uses it to maintain her friendships with girls she has befriended during holidays in Morocco. In total, she has 133 friends on *MSN*. She finds *Google* important and she likes to read up stories on *Marokko.nl*. She likes listening to music using *YouTube* videos, especially music by the American pop singer Christina Aguilera. She was very curious also to know the background of Fayrouz who interviewed her. Ilham participated in the survey, and the interview took place in the empty classroom where I was interviewing Amina in another corner.

Inas

Inas is a 13-year-old, 2nd year VWO student from Rotterdam. She has 2 brothers and 1 sister. She describes she finds it important to have her own style and describes that “*my origins are in Morocco, but I was born in the Netherlands*”, adding she is sweet, intelligent but also rebellious at times. She sees her headscarf as a fashionable but also important identity marker, which she also shows in photographs she puts online on *Hypes* and *MSN*. In school, her favorite subject is math, and outside school she likes to hang out with her friends, and practice swimming. She speaks Dutch and Moroccan Arabic with her parents. She accesses the Internet from the family’s desktop computer in the living room. Her relatives live in Morocco, Spain and the Netherlands. Especially her parents talk to family using *MSN* and the webcam. She logs in to *Hypes* on a daily basis. On *Hypes*, she befriended 90 people, on *MSN* she lists around 250 contacts. She is a fan of Justin Bieber and to download his songs from *YouTube* to her *Samsung Wave* mobile phone she uses the *YoutubeConverter.org*. Her major passion is fashion, she spends a lot of her time browsing around different fashion web-logs and she also finds inspiration on the Moroccan-Dutch, girls-oriented discussion board *Chaima.nl*. She praises the Internet as a uniting force; underlining the fun she has in meeting people online who are also interested in sharing their thoughts on the latest fashion trends. Inas participated in the survey and I interviewed her in a school library.

Inzaf

Inzaf is a 15-year-old, 4th year VMBO-T student from Eindhoven. In describing herself she says she is Muslim, but she adds “*I follow my heart, I am not really someone who follows a group*”. In addition, she shared: “*I would not say I am Moroccan, my parents are from Morocco, but I was born here*”. Her parents have migrated from Al Hoceima in the north of Morocco, and other family members live in Belgium, France and Morocco. She has two sisters and one brother. At home she speaks in Dutch and Moroccan-Arabic with her parents. She likes to be on the computer and to go to the city and hang out with her friends in shopping centers, or to go out for dinner. She logs on to the desktop computer in the living room, where she has to share it with her siblings. She is relatively free in her Internet activities, occasionally her mother checks up on her. Discussion forums, chatting on *MSN* and watching videos are her main preoccupations online. Frequently she logs in to online discussion boards *Marokko.nl* and *Yasmina.nl* to find out about good recipes, “*most often Moroccan dishes, those dishes my mother does not know how to make*”. And she likes to post and read online stories. She has befriended around 150 people on *MSN* and 120 on *Hypes*. Fayrouz and I interviewed

Inzaf together with Naoul in a lunchroom. She participated in the piloting of the survey and interview and she shared MSN transcripts. We kept in touch via e-mail.

Kamal

Kamal is a 15-year-old, 3rd year VMBO-T student from Eindhoven. He was born in the Netherlands from parents who migrated from Morocco. He has three sisters. At home, he mainly speaks Berber with his parents. He describes himself as a sweet, Muslim, football fanatic, computer savvy, gamer boy. He connects to the Internet using his desktop computer in his bedroom, and he does not experience much supervision by anyone in his household. Every day he plays videogames on his *Playstation*. He likes to watch his favorite TV series online using the site *RTLgemist.nl*. Furthermore he likes to connect with fellow youngsters on the virtual hotel/social-networking site *Habbo.nl*. Also he likes to connect with Moroccan-Dutch youths on the online forum *Marokko.nl*. He has befriended around 600 people on *Hypes*, and 200 people on *MSN*. Kamal shared MSN transcripts and participated in the piloting of the survey and interview. I interviewed him via e-mail and *MSN* and we maintained e-mail contact.

Kenza

Kenza is a 14-year-old, 3rd year HAVO student from Rotterdam. She was born in Morocco and migrated to the Netherlands with her parents at young age and Kenza describes herself as being of "*Moroccan descent*". Members of her household are the only ones from her family who are living in the Netherlands; other family members live in Belgium, France, Spain, Italy and Morocco. She has one sister and one brother. At home, with her parents she mostly speaks Moroccan-Arabic. She does not understand Berber, only Arabic. In school, her favorite subject is French. She has also set up an e-mail address on the French e-mail provider *Hotmail.fr*. Outside of school she likes cycling and watching TV. She mostly accesses the Internet using her laptop in her own room. She feels computer-savvy, but adds that her sister asserts quite some control over her use of the laptop, monitoring what sites she visits and whom she talks to. Kenza uses *Facebook* to keep in touch with cousins in Belgium, France, Spain and Morocco. Most important for her is *YouTube*. She likes the site to look up Raï music, especially the Algerian artist Cheb Khaled. Sometimes when she feels "*homesick*" for Morocco, she looks up Moroccan songs. Her best Internet experiences are when she puts up holiday pictures of Morocco on her profile page. Also she likes to play first-person shooter games online. She has 53 friends on *Facebook* and 39 on *MSN*. Kenza participated in the survey and Fayrouz interviewed her in a school multimedia centre.

Khadija

Khadija is a 17 year old, 4th year VMBO-K student from Eindhoven. She describes herself as a Muslim girl and adds she was born in the Netherlands. Her parents were born in Morocco. She mainly speaks Dutch and Moroccan-Arabic at home with her parents. In her spare time, she likes shopping, swimming, watching TV and assisting her mother with cooking. She mostly makes use of the desktop computer in the living room. She has to share the computer with her brother and her two sisters. She feels her mother keeps an eye on her Internet activities, especially concerning what she downloads from the Internet. She considers MSN, Marokko.nl and YouTube the most important spaces she engages with online. She reports to have 53 *Hypes* and IM contacts. MSN is used to have personal conversations with friends. She also likes the internet for it enables her to buy stuff which she cannot find in the shops elsewhere and she uses it to download Moroccan-Arabic and Berber Raï and Chaabi music to her MP3 player. Khadija participated in the piloting of the survey and the interview mostly via e-mail and *MSN* and he shared *MSN* transcripts with me.

Loubna

Loubna is a 14-year-old, 3rd year VMBO K/T student from 's-Hertogenbosch. She describes herself as a confident, sweet, trustworthy girl, and admits she can sometimes be stubborn. She is into electronic dance and hip-hop music, fashion and Islam. Her favorite subject is math. She comes from a large household; she has five sisters and one brother. She speaks Dutch and Moroccan Arabic at home. Loubna describes she is of Dutch-Moroccan descent, but adds that does not mean she does not like to go to the cinema and go shopping for clothes in the city. Apart from her parents, most family members live in Morocco. The family makes frequent visits to Morocco; she says she feels she "*cannot do without Morocco*". Together with her mother she very frequently connects with her family in Morocco using *Skype*, especially at the time of the fieldwork, when her grandmother was seriously ill. Although she has her own laptop, her sisters restrict her in especially what she downloads from the Internet. As a great fan of *Twilight*, she shows her interest in the American series of vampire-themed fantasy romance novels and films with images and clips on her *Hypes* profile page. She has 232 friends on *Hypes* and 320 friends on *MSN*; a lot of people were added to her *MSN* friendlist when she forgot to log out from her account in an Internet café in Morocco during a vacation. Her favorite musicians are North-American R&B artists Beyoncé and Whitney Houston, Libanese singers Nancy Ajram and Elissa and Moroccan artists Khalid Bennani, Sami Yusuf and Elissa.

Loubna likes to read books, but she also enjoys reading about other young peoples' trials and tribulations on the online forum *Marokko.nl*. Loubna participated in the survey and Fayrouz interviewed her in a school meeting room.

Mehmet Ali

Mehmet Ali is a 14-year-old, 2nd year VMBO B/K student from 's-Hertogenbosch. He describes himself as normal Moroccan boy, he was born in the city of Nador in Morocco, and at the age of four he migrated with his parents to the Netherlands. He has three younger brothers. In school, his favorite subjects are drama and athletics. Outside of school he has joined a football club, and he plays midfielder. Using the computer and browsing the Internet are also things he likes to do. Mostly, he speaks in Dutch and Berber with his parents. Most other family members live in Morocco, and his uncle lives in Spain. He shares the common laptop in the living room with his parents and his 3 younger brothers. He uses *MSN* to talk to his nephews who live in Morocco; his parents use the telephone more to connect with family members in the diaspora. He likes to joke around with his nephews, they log in to the Internet in a local Internet café in Nador and when he sees them behind the computer he relives his memories of Morocco. He has 570 people in his Hyves friend list and 195 in his *MSN* list. Badr is a fan of Moroccan-Dutch rappers Yes-R, Fouhadi as well as American rap artists like Jay-Z and the Moroccan singer Douzi. When he misses Morocco, he likes to look up photos and videos on *YouTube* from places he knows there. He has also included Morocco in his e-mail address. Badr participated in the survey and I interviewed him in a school meeting room.

Meryam

Meryam is a 15-year-old, 3rd year VMBO K/B student from 's-Hertogenbosch. Her parents migrated from Taourirt, near Oujda in North-Eastern Morocco. She has one brother and one sister. In her family, Dutch, Moroccan-Arabic and Berber are spoken. During the interview it became apparent that she is heavily engaged with her faith. This became clear when she showed a book entitled *Het Handboek voor Moslimvrouwen* (in English 'The Handbook for Muslimwomen'), a book she bought at the mosque. Her favorite subject is math. She likes to spend her spare time with her friends, watching TV and using the computer. People in her school call her a gangster, because as she says she likes hip-hop and she sometimes comes over aggressive, but she notes, "I do not mean to be like that at all". Besides Dutch and American music, she listens to Jalal El Hamdaoui on *Macro-place.nl*. El Hamdaoui is her favorite musician, who comes from Oujda like her parents. Currently, half of her family lives have migrated, towards the Netherlands, France and Belgium and the other half lives in Morocco. She does not feel as if anyone in her family supervises her in her online activity. She is however very sensitive to putting up information one. Meryam has 60 friends on *Facebook*, 400 on *MSN*. On *MSN* she writes in Arabic when talking to her nieces who live in France, in talking to others she mostly writes in Dutch. She likes to read stories posted on the discussion board *Marokko.nl*. She feels bad that "a lot of people think that Moroccan youths are utterly bad and so on, but there are only a few who completely ruin it for the others". She includes the word "moccogirl" in her e-mail address and she adds, "I always say Morocco is the country of my dreams". Meryam participated in the survey and Fayrouz interviewed her in a school meeting room.

Midia

Midia is a 13 years old, first year VMBO-T student from Utrecht. She was born in the Netherlands; her parents were born in Morocco. She sees herself as a gamer and a Muslim. Occasionally she visits the mosque. She speaks Dutch and Moroccan-Arabic with her parents at home. She accesses the Internet from her bedroom using the desktop computer that she shares with her younger brother and sister. Her mother asserts influence over what she downloads and puts on her profile page. Her favorite online activities are browsing through profile pages on *Hyves*, chatting with her *MSN* friends and exploring the virtual hotel/social-networking site *Habbo Hotel*. She is also into playing online games such as *World of Warcraft* and she likes to speak her mind on *Marokko.nl*. She has befriended 110 people on *Hyves*, and 400 people on *MSN*. Midia participated in the piloting of the survey and interview and she shared *MSN* transcripts with me. I interviewed her through e-mail and *MSN* and we maintained contact via e-mail.

Mohammed

Mohammed (a pseudonym he chose himself) is a 13 year old, 2nd year VMBO K/T student from 's-Hertogenbosch. His parents migrated from Morocco, and he has one brother and two sisters. At home he speaks Dutch and Moroccan-Arabic. He describes himself a normal, intelligent and nice Dutch-Moroccan guy, who is into hip-hop, computers and Islam. He was reserved in his answers in the beginning of the interview but gradually opened up. He likes to play football and listens to hip-hop music a lot. He has to make use of his brother's laptop, mostly in his brothers' bedroom. Also uses the computers at school daily, were he feels his schoolteacher restricts him in his online behavior. He often visits *101barz.bnn.nl* and *hiphopflow.nl*, communities where members discuss and circulate rap songs. He downloads music by artists

such as Ali B, Yes-R, Appa, Sjaak, Anu-D, and puts them on his I-Pod. He is most attached to *MSN* and *YouTube*, and he uses the first to talk to family members living in the Netherlands, Belgium, France and Morocco or one of his 300 other contacts, while he enjoys the latter to review football highlights. On his profile page, his 408 contacts can see he has put up pictures of his holiday trip to Morocco with his parents together with football and music. He participated in the survey and Fayrouz conducted the interview with Mohammed in a school meeting room.

Mustafa

Mustafa is an 18-year-old student from Venlo. He is in the second year of his MBO (vocational education) degree in social work. He describes himself as *"born in the Netherlands, but still also of Moroccan descent, thus Dutch-Moroccan"*. The largest part of his family lives in the Netherlands, but he also has family members living in France, Spain and Morocco. He mainly speaks Dutch and Berber with his parents. His household mainly keeps in touch with relatives living in the diaspora using their landline phone. Being at the computer, swimming and football are Mustafa's hobbies. He accesses the Internet in his bedroom using a desktop computer. He has around 100 friends on *MSN* and on *Hyves*. He likes to play videogames, and he listens to R&B, electronic dance music and Moroccan music. He for instance subscribes to a channel dedicated to the African-American R&B singer Ryan Leslie on *YouTube*, which allow him to follow new music releases of his favorite artist. Using *Keepvid.com* he also downloads these songs to his MP3 player and mobile phone. During Ramadan, he turned to *YouTube* and found a number of inspiring Quran recitals. Also he browses the site *Zoubida.nl* for Berber artists, the site hosts music MP3's of artists from Morocco. Mustafa participated in the piloting of the interview and I interviewed him in a museum cafeteria.

Naoul

Naoul is a 16-year-old, MBO law student from Eindhoven. She describes herself as a Moroccan, Muslim and ambitious girl, and she adds, *"I follow my own path. What other people think or do does not bother me"*. She speaks Dutch and Berber at home with her parents. Her parents have migrated from Morocco, and other family members live in Morocco, Belgium, Germany, France and Spain. She sets up a *MSN* connection for her dad to connect with family members in the diaspora, *"we, the kids, have to prepare it and he comes in and sits in front of the camera and starts talking"*. Next to her school, she has a job on the side, and in her free time she likes to be on the computer and to hang out with her friends. Naoul works a lot on the computer for her studies. She has a laptop of her own, which she takes everywhere. She does not feel restricted in her Internet activities. At home she takes her laptop to her bedroom and logs on. Inzaf is also into playing online games such as World of Warcraft and she is interested in Marokko.nl. There, she finds support from what she describes as her *"own circle"*, to discuss *"Moroccan issues"*. She has around 110 friends on *MSN* and 190 on *Hyves*. Fayrouz and I interviewed Naoul together with Inzaf in a lunchroom. She participated in the piloting of the survey and interview and she shared *MSN* transcripts. We kept in touch via e-mail.

Nevra

Nevra is a 16-year-old, 4th year VMBO-K student from 's-Hertogenbosch. Her parents have migrated from the capital city of Morocco, Rabat. She has included the word Rabat in her e-mail address. She has three brothers and three sisters. Nevra sees herself as sweet Moroccan-Dutch and Muslim girl. She likes to spend her part-time with her girlfriends, shopping. She likes to play crazy tricks she says. She connects to the Internet from her own room using her own laptop, and she does not feel as if anyone in her household restricts her in her Internet usage. Also, she shared she is online *"24/7"* by using her *Blackberry*, to stay logged in to *MSN* all the time. Of all Internet applications she likes *MSN* and online discussion boards like *Marokko.nl* the most. About the latter she says young Moroccan-Dutch people *"can say what they want, and they can show it is not all bad"* there. She likes to download music from *Moero-place.nl* such as Raggada, an old genre of wedding music from the Eastern parts of Morocco and Chaabi, Moroccan folk music, and Raï music, which blends African Spanish, French, and Arabic musical forms. She has 408 friends on *Hyves* and 450 on *MSN*. Lives in a middle-sized city in the southern part of the Netherlands Nevra expressed to really enjoy participating in our research, she completed the survey and Fayrouz and I interviewed her together in a school meeting room.

Oussema

Oussema (a pseudonym he chose himself) is a 15-year-old, 3rd year HAVO student from Rotterdam. His family has migrated from near Nador in Morocco to *"various countries across the world, not India, but across Europe and the United States"*. He feels he is *"someone in between"* which he explains by stating *"I listen to all sorts of music, rock, Dutch, R&B, electro, all of it, I love sports, but I love computer games a lot too. I am Muslim. I am not a chubby kid, but also not super muscular, I can't be pinned down to something specific, I am a bit of everything"*. He feels his personally duty is to actively change the negative image of Moroccan-Dutch youths, he does so for instance by assisting elderly people. He has two older brothers and a younger sister. He speaks Dutch, Moroccan-

Arabic and Berber with his parents at home. His favorite subjects are biology and technology. His hobbies are judo, football and being at the computer. He uses *Facebook* to keep in touch with his cousins in the diaspora. He can access the Internet using the desktop computer in his bedroom, the computer in his brother's room and on his mobile phone. He also had a laptop but it recently crashed after playing too many computer games. He likes first-person shooter games such as *Call of Duty Black Ops*, *Half Life 2* and *Counter Strike* and he also likes to explore his creativity using video editing and *Photoshop* image editing software. He for instance makes 'skins', new visuals such as characters and new weapons for computer games. He also participates in online discussion board competitions, where his *Photoshop* creations get rated and he recently made it to the 2nd place overall of the forum. Below an image is included he shared with me. At the time of the fieldwork his parents were on Hajj, pilgrimage to Mecca. He had just deleted his Hyves account, but he has 150 friends on *Facebook* and 300 friends on *MSN*. Oussema participated in the survey, and I interviewed him in a school multimedia centre. After the interview we kept in touch via *Facebook* chat.

Rachid

Rachid (a pseudonym he chose himself) is a 13-year-old, 2nd year VWO student from Utrecht. His parents were both born in Tanger and Driouche in northern Morocco. He has a younger brother and a younger sister. He tries to handle in name of Islam as much as he can, adding, "*when I have time, I go to the Mosque, at least I try to go every Friday*". With his parents he speaks Dutch, Moroccan-Arabic and Berber mostly. He accesses the internet from a shared desktop computer, everyday he starts the day by going online checking whether there are any changes in his roster for the day. He is in touch with nephews and nieces living abroad on *MSN*, but when he is on the computer and his mother sees that family is also online she usually takes over the computer. His relatives live in the Netherlands, Germany and Morocco. Connecting to the Internet in Morocco is not commonplace for everyone, he says, and also remarks that due to a recent flood in Morocco Internet connections got broken. In his spare time, he often goes to swimming practices at his club, and he likes to be at the computer and he likes to play games on his *Playstation Portable* (PSP). He has 266 friends on *Facebook* and similar number of contacts on *MSN*. On *Facebook* he also likes to play games, for instance Snake, but he also uses it to find out about school exams and assignments and to circulate school texts. He is into both Dutch-language as well as English language rap, hip-hop and R&B. He uses *Limewire* and *Utorrent* software applications to download music and movies. Rachid proudly spoke about being able to circumvent Internet restrictions at school by visiting those blocked sites he likes using proxy. Rachid participated in the piloting of the survey and interview, and I interviewed him in a university canteen.

Ryan

Ryan (a pseudonym he chose himself) is a 15-year-old, 4th year VMBO-T student from 's-Hertogenbosch. He was born in the Netherlands, but his parents are from Kenitra, in the northwestern part of Morocco. He has one sister and one brother. He is a very spontaneous talker, and he wants to be seen as normal, but states he can also be rebellious. His favorite subjects are English and biology and he would like to continue his education in a laboratory school. Nine of his mother's siblings live in the Netherlands, while most family members from his father's side still live in Morocco. His parents speak Dutch and Moroccan-Arabic. Once a year he visits his family in Morocco with his parents, and he uses *MSN* and *Skype* to remain in contact with his nephews in Morocco. As his choice for an English pseudonym already signals, Ryan considers himself different from most other Moroccan-Dutch young people. On his *Hyves* profile page he for instance subverts the dominant image of Moroccan-Dutch youths: "*when someone sees me there, they say I do not look like a Moroccan, but obviously I am one, but I do not let it show*". Also he "*mostly only plays games on the computer*" which he thinks is "*very different from what normal Moroccan youths in my school do, they mostly use MSN, YouTube and listen to music*". Gaming is more "*Dutch culture*", he says, "*Dutch kids, I know a lot of them who play games*". He likes electronic dance music and spends most of his spare-time playing the third-person shooting game *GunZ: the Duel* and the online role playing game *League of Legends*. He also plays *Modern Warfare* and *Call of Duty 2* on the PlayStation 3 and he likes to participate in online discussion boards, especially *Worldwidegaming.org* to discuss the games he plays. However, Ryan is also an active swimmer for the local swimming club. He has 300 friends on *Hyves* and over 400 friends on *MSN*. Ryan participated in the survey and I interviewed him in a school meeting room.

Sadik

Sadik, from Venlo, is a 17-year-old student in the second year of his MBO (vocational education) degree to become a teaching assistant. He describes himself as Muslim, and both his parents have migrated from Morocco, while he himself was born in the Netherlands. Apart from his household, and one uncle who live, in France, all his relatives live in Morocco. His favorite past-times are playing the drums and swimming. He accesses the Internet from his bedroom using either his own laptop or his own desktop

computer. His parents give him a lot of autonomy over his Internet activities; sometimes they come and have a look at what he is doing. But he says his father knows he handles the technologies well. Logging in to *Hypes* and *MSN* are daily routines. He has befriended 450 people on *Hypes*, and 150 on *MSN Messenger*. Just before the fieldwork he started using Twitter, and he finds it most interesting because he is now able to follow the personal experiences of people he admires from all over the world. Among his friends *Twitter* is used to arrange get-togethers and negotiate conflicting class schedules. Also he frequently surfs to *Explosm.net*, a site where funny cartoons are published. Finally he likes to look up *YouTube* videos of musicians and Islam; he has saved them to a play list in his account. He likes videos of good drummers, guitarists and beatboxers. Sadik participated in the piloting of the interview and I interviewed him in a museum cafeteria.

Safae

Safae, from Venlo, is an 18-year-old student in the third year of her MBO (vocational education) degree in social work. She describes herself as Moroccan but adds, “*I was born and raised here, so in principle I am just an ordinary Dutch*” youth. Her hobbies are fitness and using the Internet. She accesses the Internet from her bedroom using her own laptop. She also has a mobile phone she uses to access to the Internet. Her favorite sites are *MSN*, *Hypes*, *Facebook* and *Marokko.nl*. She considers *MSN* as a sort of an addiction, because “*automatically I log in to MSN every day*”. Sometimes her mother sits next to her behind the computer when she is talking to her friends on *MSN* or looking through the forum discussions on *Marokko.nl*. *Marokko.nl* she likes for reading “true stories”. When her mother cannot answer questions she has about her background or questions relating to the Islam, she considers *Marokko.nl* a good space to search for answers. She listens to Moroccan, English and Dutch artists. Safae participated in the piloting of the interview and Fayrouz interviewed her in a museum cafeteria.

Sahar

Sahar is a 14-year-old, 3rd year MAVO student from Rotterdam. She describes herself as “*a normal girl, and I am Moroccan, yes I was born in the Netherlands, and I wear a headscarf, most others don't*”. She has one younger and one older brother and at home she speaks Dutch and Berber with her parents. English is her favorite subject. Her grandparents and some other family members still live in Morocco. She accesses the Internet from a desktop computer in her own room. She feels quite unrestricted in her use of the Internet; but her father does keep track of what she puts on her profile page. Outside school, she likes to hang out with her girlfriends and be at the computer and watch TV. She mostly uses *MSN*, browses *YouTube* and weblogs and visits *Marokko.nl*. She has 120 friends on *MSN*. She likes *Marokko.nl* for its capacity for people to say positive things about Moroccans in the Netherlands instead of the “*almost always negative things that people say*”. Also she is interested in discussing fashion and Islam. Her favorite artists are African-American R&B singers Aubrun and Shantelle, Moroccan singer Jalal el Hamdouli and she likes Islamic-oriented Anasheed songs. Also, she keeps a virtual dog via the site *Webpet.nl*. Sahar participated in the survey and I interviewed her in a school multimedia centre.

Salima

Salima (a pseudonym she chose herself) is a 13-year-old 2nd year VWO student from Rotterdam. She describes herself as a calm 13 years old girl. And that she is Moroccan, coming from a large household of 8 people; she has 4 brothers and 1 sister. Her parents have migrated from El Hoccima in the north of Morocco. At home she mostly speaks Berber with her parents. She feels affiliated to Islam and fellow Muslims. Her favorite subject is Dutch, while her favorite past-times are shopping and watching TV. She has to share the desktop computer in the living room with her siblings, and her parents and her sister restrict her in her use of the Internet. Her family has spread out from Morocco across Spain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Her household keeps in contact with family members mostly by calling them on the phone, and by bringing visits. She is most attached to *MSN* messenger, *Google* to look up info and downloading music. She has around 50 friends on *MSN*. Salima includes the word “*macro*” in her e-mail address. To amuse herself she plays games on the website *Funnygames.nl* and she heads to *Chaima.nl*, a discussion board set up and frequented by Moroccan-Dutch girls. Also she is a fan of the website *Mocro-Place.nl* where she listens to Moroccan songs, wedding music and Rai-music such as Lella La3roussa. Salima participated in the survey and Fayrouz interviewed her in a school multimedia centre.

Senna

Senna is a 14-year-old, 2nd year VMBO-K student from 's-Hertogenbosch. She describes herself as a normal girl who sometimes feels a bit shy. Senna was born in the Netherlands; her parents are from Berkane in the Riff in northeast Morocco. She speaks Dutch, Moroccan-Arabic and Berber with her parents at home. She has two brothers and three sisters. Her older brother knows most about computers. Accessing the Internet either on her mobile phone or by using her own laptop in her own room, she feels she is not restricted in her online action by anyone in her household. Her family lives in France, Morocco

and the Netherlands, and she keeps in touch with her cousins abroad using MSN or her mobile phone mostly. Senna uses ethnic identification markers, choosing symbols such as the Amazigh and Moroccan flag in her display image on *MSN*, but also for her avatars on the online forums *Marokko.nl* and *Chaima.nl*. On *MSN* and *Hypes* she has around 200 friends and on the latter platform she has joined groups such as “Takshita’s” (a Moroccan dresses club), “I am proud of Morocco” and “RIP Faysel” to commemorate the tragic passing of one of her friends. On *YouTube* and also websites such as *Marokkia.nl* and *Mocro-Place.nl* she looks up Moroccan artists like Hajja Hamdaouia and Rashid Kasmi. Furthermore she sends onwards chain letters to her friends via e-mail on religion, such as prayers and Du’3as (supplications) and issues around wearing the veil. Senna participated in the survey and Fayrouz conducted the interview with her in a classroom.

Soesie

Soesie (a pseudonym she chose herself) is a 13-year-old, 2nd year VMBO student from ‘s-Hertogenbosch. She was born in the Netherlands, while both her parents were born in Tetouan in northern Morocco. During the summer holidays the family goes to Nador in northeast Morocco. At home and online, she speaks Dutch, Arabic and Berber. Soesie has two younger brothers (aged 2 and 7), and she likes to take pictures of them. For instance during the interview she spoke of a picture she took of the three of them together in the snow, which she uses as her profile picture on *Hypes*. She is quick to laugh; discussing personal things sometimes caused her to blush. Drama is her favorite subject in school. Outside school times she likes hang out with her friends or go on the computer and watch TV. She is interested in electronic dance and hip-hop music, and fashion trends. She admits she spends long hours behind the pc, her mother keeps track of her use and tells her to go outside once she has used it for too long. Her mother also made her make her profile not visible for the public, she did not want pictures to circulate beyond her friends. Using her own laptop, she either goes online in her bedroom, or she does so downstairs on the couch while watching TV. When needed, she uses her Samsung touch screen phone to connect to the Internet, but she likes typing on the pc better. She has the Moroccan flag as the background image of her mobile phone, and she also uses it as a background of her *Hypes* profile page. She has around 90 friends on *Hypes* and 328 contacts on *MSN*. She enjoys talking with her friends on *MSN*, but she also likes to spend time in online chat boxes and playing online games. Sometimes she joins her dad when he uses *Skype* to speak to family in Morocco, her uncle in Germany or other family in the Netherlands. She participated in the survey. I conducted the interview with Susie in a school library.

Soufian

Soufian (a pseudonym he chose himself) is a 12-year-old, 2nd year HAVO student from Rotterdam. His parents are from Al Hoceima in the north of Morocco, while Soufian was born in the Netherlands. He has 3 brothers and 1 sister. Anis sees himself as tough and sporty and describes himself as being both a gamer and Muslim. He expresses his affinity with Berber culture by including the word “*Amazigh*” in his e-mail address. With his parents he speaks Dutch, Moroccan-Arabic and Berber. Next to the Netherlands, his family members live in Morocco, Spain and France. His hobbies are playing football and kickboxing, and he does both at athletic clubs. He has to share the computer situated in the living room with his siblings. Of all people in his environment he feels he is most restricted in his use of the Internet by his schoolteacher. On his profile page on *Hypes*, he included a clock with a Moroccan flag that shows the one-hour time difference between the Netherlands and Morocco. He has around 200 friends on *Hypes*, but around 100 on *MSN*, because there he only includes people he knows well. His favorite site is *YouTube*, where he likes to go to look up comedy video clips and bloopers. Also he goes there to look up R&B, soul music but also Anasheed. The latter is a type of Islamic vocal music, a capella or music accompanied by instruments that references Islamic history, beliefs and interpretations but also politics and current events. *YouTube* has become a space of heavy circulation of such songs, and Soufian listens to English, Berber and Dutch Anasheed songs on the site. It took some time for him to open up and share during the interview. Soufian participated in the survey, and Fayrouz interviewed him in a school multimedia centre.

SouSou

SouSou (a pseudonym she chose herself) is a 15-year-old, third year MAVO student from Rotterdam. Her parents have migrated from Casablanca, Morocco’s largest city. She has one young sister and two younger brothers. With her parents she speaks Dutch and Moroccan-Arabic. The majority of her family lives in Morocco, and she says the best thing about the Internet is that she can use *MSN* to go on webcam together with her parents to talk to her family and friends who live there. She describes herself as witty but shy and she shared she has little confidence, that’s why she finds it difficult to build friendships. Her favorite subject in school is economics. She likes swimming and reading books. She feels affiliated with others interested in politics, Islam, and girl power. She likes to use her own computer in the living room. She feels free to use the Internet but her mother keeps track of what she downloads and what she puts on her profile page. While making homework, she likes to discuss what happened in school on *MSN*. Another

favorite pastime is playing what she describes as “*games for girls*”, web-based games on sites such as *games2girls.com* and *girlsgogames.com*. Also she enjoys being active on *Marokko.nl*, she mentions it is a useful site for people who find it difficult to get in contact elsewhere. She goes there to connect with other youngsters and read and contributes to postings about relationships, Islam, the situation of Moroccans in the Netherlands, sexuality and friendships. She also downloads films and *Nintendo DS games* through *LimeWire*, and music using the *YouTube* converter application. She has 113 *MSN* contacts and somewhat less friends on *Hypes*. SouSou participated in the survey and Fayrouz interviewed her in a school multimedia centre.

Tariq

Tariq is a 13-year-old, 2nd year VMBO-T student from Rotterdam. At different stages in the fieldwork he expressed enjoying participating in the study. His family has migrated to several countries across Europe, his grandparents, aunts and uncles live in Morocco but other relatives live in England and Italy. He describes himself as a normal young guy who sometimes is a bit boisterous. He has one brother and two sisters. With his parents he mainly speaks Berber. In school, his favorite subject is English. His family keeps in touch with webcam conversations on *MSN*, and also makes annual visits. Tariq’s favorite applications are *MSN* and *Hypes* to keep in touch with his friends and he uses it to make plans for the weekends. He has around 120 friends on *MSN*, and 290 on *Hypes*. Tariq accesses the Internet from a desktop computer in his own room, and he does not feel anyone in his household supervises his actions online. After school hours he is active with Thai-Boxing. This also shows on his *Hypes* profile page, next to videos of professional matches he has also put up a video of a Thai-boxing match he played himself. Next to his love for sports he is also proud of his descent, and he has put up a flag of Morocco on his profile page, which he says, shows “*where I am from*”. Also he includes the word “*macro*” in his e-mail address. He does not like English or American rap groups, but he is a fan of Dutch groups and especially THC, a group formed in North-Amsterdam which combines artists from Antillean, Armenian, Dutch, Indian, Moroccan, Surinamese, Tunisian and Turkish backgrounds. He also believes in the value of circulating protest and awareness e-mails, mentioning the case of protesting the Geert Wilders “*kopvoddentaks*” (his initiative to levy taxes on wearing the veil) through chain e-mails. He also remembers to have donated money for victims of the Haiti earthquake after receiving a chain email. Tariq participated in the survey and I interviewed him in a school multimedia centre.

Yethi

Yethi (a pseudonym he chose himself) is a 15-year-old, 3rd year HAVO student from Utrecht. He describes himself as a “*Moroccan boy born in the Netherlands*”. He is a swimming-fanatic but also plays other sports such as fitness and football. For him, “the Internet is a part of my daily needs”. He keeps a profile on *Hypes* and *Facebook*, using *Hypes* for his friends in the Netherlands and *Facebook* for his nieces and nephews who live abroad. He has befriended around 100 people on both sites. He does not feel restricted in his use of the Internet, when he was younger his parents kept a closer look at his online activities. He likes to look up sites having to do with swimming as well as *voetbalprimeur.nl* about the latest development in football. On his profile pages he posts images taken during swimming matches. Especially just before the summer he visits *Marokko.nl* to find out more about how other people are preparing for their holidays to Morocco and to read up on other people’s experiences of traveling to Morocco, there are many discussions about for instance “*being on the road to Morocco*” he mentions. Yethi is into hip-hop, listening mostly to African-American artists such as Lil’ Wayne, 50 Cent and Tupac. Using *LimeWire* download software he downloads their songs to his *Blackberry* smartphone. Yethi participated in the piloting of the interview, and I interviewed him in a university meeting room.

Ziham

Ziham (a pseudonym she chose herself) is a 14-year-old, 2nd year HAVO student from Rotterdam. She describes herself as a normal girl, adding that she feels “*I do not belong to anyone, I am just myself*”. She was born in Morocco and migrated to the Netherlands with her parents at young age. She sees herself as “*Moroccan, very ordinary*”, and adds she “*is just proud of herself*”. She speaks Dutch and Berber with her parents at home. She has two brothers and two sisters and her favorite subjects in school are French and the other languages she takes. Her main interest is playing football for her club, and she takes it very serious and practices a lot. Ziham is very proud of her accomplishments and tries to make the most of her talent. She has a laptop of her own, but her brother has changed the password, and he heavily controls her use of it. For instance, she is not allowed to delete her browser history and he forbids her to use *Hypes*. However, she makes use of her smart phone to circumvent her brother’s restrictions. As a way to remember her football experiences, she likes to upload pictures of her football team on her profile page. Most of her family lives in the Netherlands, but her grandmothers live in Morocco. In her household, the phone is used to keep in touch with them. She likes Moroccan singers such as Mohamed Sami, Morad Salam, Leila Chaleir and Amazrine and she downloads their songs on her phone. She emphasizes her femininity by

including the word “miss” in her e-mail address. She has 180 friends on *Hyves*, and nearly 800 friends on *MSN*. Ziham participated in the survey, and Fayrouz and I interviewed her together in a school library. I also remained in contact with Ziham through *MSN*.

Other informants

Abdelilah Amraoui

Abdelilah Amraoui is the founder of *Geneigerd.nl* a site where ethnic minority youths who are denied access to entertainment venues can share their stories and the “interactive Moroccan forum” *Maghreb.nl*. Amroui believes digital technologies offer the opportunity to create media when it cannot be found elsewhere. The interview with Amraoui took place in a university meeting room.

eMoroccan

I interviewed eMoroccan about the videos he made in Morocco that he posted to *YouTube*. The interview took place via the *YouTube* personal messaging service.

Rabi’a Frank

In the early stages of recruiting informants for the research, this parent of three children aged 8, 11 and 13 got in touch with me via e-mail. She is a Dutch Muslim woman, married to a Moroccan-Dutch man. She shared with me her views on the necessity of supervising children in their use of digital media.

Marocdelicious

Marocdelicious, a 32-year-old male, is the founder of the “Marokkaanse Nederlanders hier melden” (in English “Moroccan Dutch people report here”) *Hyves* group (mijnmarokko.hyves.nl/). Most importantly, he started the site to allow Moroccan-Dutch youths to meet one another and engage in discussions on *Hyves*.

MintTea

MintTea, a 29-year-old woman, is the founder of the “Positive Muslim Newz?!” *Hyves* group (positivemuslimnewz.hyves.nl/). In response to dominant negative news about Muslims, she set up this page to give more attention to positive developments and news for and about Muslims. Our conversation took place via *Hyves* private messaging service.

NOONA

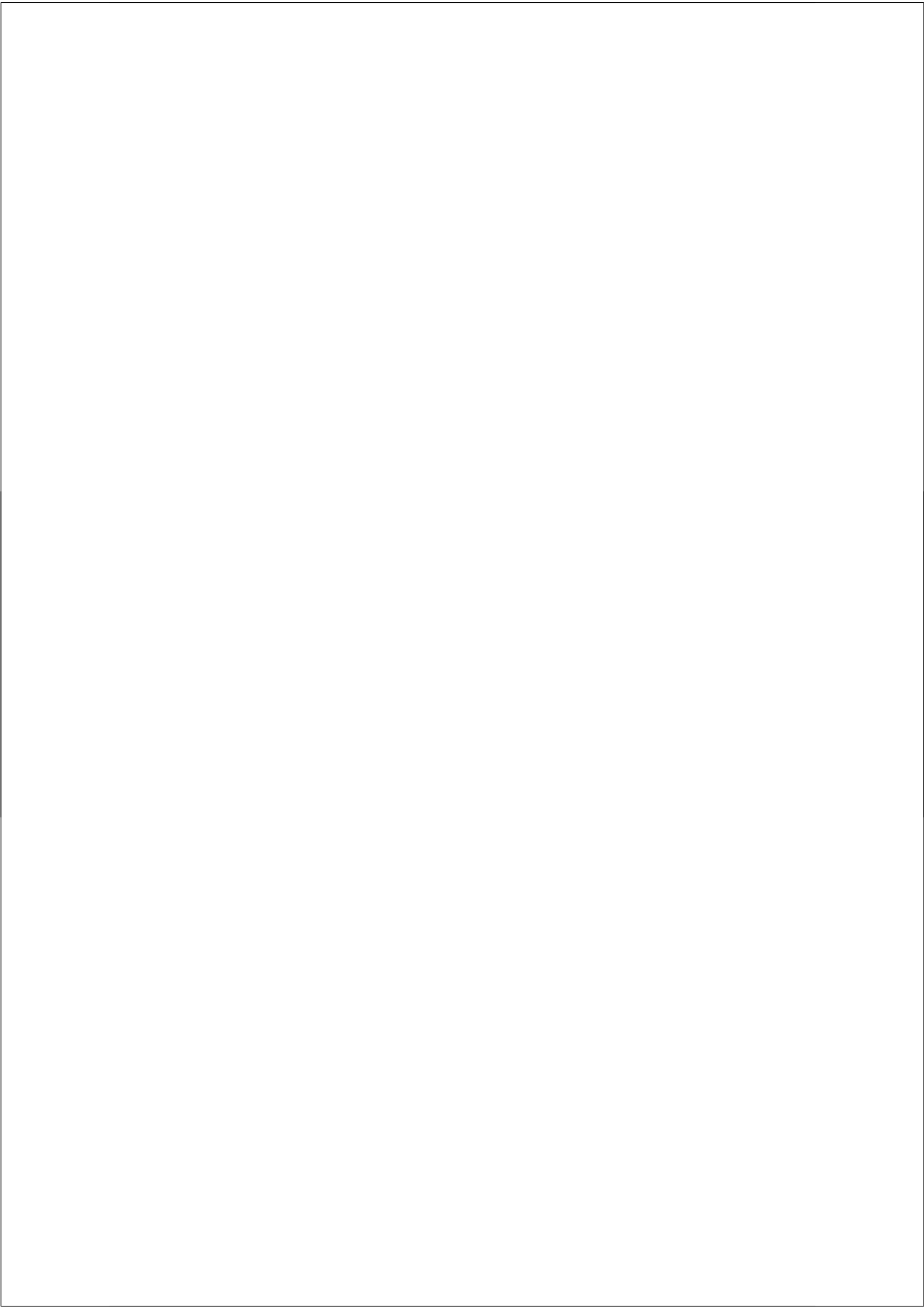
NOONA (a pseudonym she chose herself), a 22 years-old woman, is the founder of the “Royals du Maroc” *Hyves* group (<http://royalsdumaroc.hyves.nl/>). She set up this page in response to the *Hyves* group dedicated to the Dutch royal family. Also she aimed to highlight the progressive developments spurred by the installment of Mohammed VI as the King of Morocco in 1999. During our initial contact she was very restrained. Illustrating the difficulties of gaining access and trust, she shared her frustrations with the dominant negative reporting about Moroccan-Dutch people, she expressed “You can write about this *Hyves* in your book, only I do want to know what you will be writing, because there is enough negative news about Moroccans in the media already”. Our conversation took place via *Hyves* private messaging service.

Rafik

Rafik is the founder of the “Imazighen” *Hyves* group (now offline, as Rafik turned to *Facebook*). He set up this group to disseminate knowledge about Imazighen history and culture on *Hyves*. Our conversation took place via *Hyves* private messaging service.

Rafje

Rafje, an 28-year-old male, is an artist whose societal criticism cartoons are published on the homepage of the discussion forum *Marokko.nl*. The interview with Rafje took place over the phone.



Samenvatting (Summary in Dutch)

In deze studie zijn theorieën op het gebied van postkolonialisme, gender studies en nieuwe media samengebracht om de relaties tussen het gebruik van digitale media en jongerencultuur, migratie en genderproblematieken beter te begrijpen. Aan de hand van een cartografische schets van digitale identiteitsvorming in verschillende internet applicaties onderzocht ik deze relaties en de tot nu toe nog onderbelichte dynamische totstandkoming ervan. De focus lag hierbij op het gebruik van digitale media onder Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren in Nederland, in de leeftijdscategorie van 12 tot 18 jaar oud. Daarbij heb ik gefocust op vier soorten digitale platforms, die een belangrijke vrije tijdsbesteding voor Marokkaans-Nederlandse tieners vormen en door deze tieners – zo blijkt uit mijn onderzoek – bijzonder worden gewaardeerd: online discussieforums (zoals *Marokko.nl*), chatprogramma's (in het bijzonder *MSN Messenger*), sociale netwerksites (zoals *Hyves* en *Facebook*) en websites waarop video's gedeeld worden (voornamelijk *YouTube*). Door te kijken naar hoe deze jongeren omgaan met verschillende gebruikersmogelijkheden en verwachtingen heb ik manieren waarop identiteiten vorm krijgen in deze vier verschillende digitale ruimtes empirisch in kaart gebracht, gecontextualiseerd en geanalyseerd.

De vier digitale platforms bleken meer te zijn dan neutrale omgevingen waarin vrijelijk identiteiten kunnen worden gevormd: ze genereren mogelijkheden en beperkingen, die de handelingen van de gebruikers beïnvloeden. Op basis van zowel commerciële motieven als dominante gebruikersculturen creëren deze digitale ruimtes in- en uitsluitingsmechanismen. Zo krijgen gebruikers te maken met vaste sjablonen voor zelfpresentatie en bepaalde gebruikersverwachtingen die gebaseerd zijn op gevestigde man-vrouwverhoudingen en hegemonische etnische en religieuze ideologieën. Om dergelijke ruimtelijke hiërarchieën op het internet te analyseren, heb ik gebruikgemaakt van het concept van "space invaders", dat oorspronkelijk is geïntroduceerd door Nirmal Puwar (2004). Waar Puwar het gebruikte om na te denken over ruimtelijke machtsverhoudingen in de wereld offline, rekte ik het concept op om mediums specifieke codes en conventies in kaart te brengen. Hiërarchische normen werden zichtbaar gemaakt door te analyseren hoe gebruikers zich digitale omgevingen toe-eigenen waarin andere gebruikersgroepen dominant zijn of die om andere redenen niet voor hen bedoeld zijn. Ook lokaliseerde ik verschillen en overeenkomsten tussen digitale platforms. Het kritisch ruimtelijke bewustzijn dat ik hiermee ontwikkelde was erop gericht om de

mediumspecifieke manieren waarop digitale identiteiten vorm krijgen en ingeschreven worden empirisch vast te kunnen leggen en theoretisch te gronden. Zo stelde ik me tot doel uiteindelijk dominante denkwijzen over digitale platforms te veranderen.

In hoofdstuk één situeerde ik mezelf in debatten die gevoerd worden binnen feministische techniekfilosofie, postkoloniale theorie en nieuwe-mediastudies. Reflecterend op eerdere studies, pleitte ik voor een nieuwe benadering van digitale kloven. Ik vroeg aandacht voor een nieuw aandachtsgebied omdat ook nadat aan meetbare vereisten van eigendom van computer hardware, toegang tot het internet en mediageletterdheid voldaan is, minder expliciete in- en uitsluitingsmechanismen werkzaam blijven binnen digitale cultuur. Uit ons survey onderzoek bleek dat de gemiddeldes van computer eigendom en toegang tot het internet onder Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren overeen komen met algemene Nederlandse gemiddeldes, echter naast toegang en eigendom bleken dominante gebruikersconfiguraties nieuwe digitale kloven te creëren. Daarom pleitte ik voor onderzoek naar de digitale handelingen van etnische minderheden, die niet altijd voldoen aan dominante gebruikersconfiguraties.

In hun gebruik van het internet kunnen gebruikers dus zowel met in- en uitsluitingsmechanismen geconfronteerd worden. In mijn poging een middenweg in de literatuur te vinden tussen paniekerige nachtmerries en utopische dromen over identiteit, participatie en belichaming op internet, heb ik voorgesteld om de totstandkoming van identiteiten te beschouwen als gebonden aan, maar niet volledig bepaald door alledaagse sociaal-technologische, materieel-belichaamde en tekstuele relaties. Ik definieerde identiteit niet als neutraal, stabiel of natuurlijk, maar als een dynamische deelverzameling die vorm krijgt in specifieke applicaties en ingekleurd wordt door een samengaan van verschillende assen van betekenisgeving zoals gender, etniciteit, religie, leeftijd en generatie. In deze beschouwing rees vanzelf de vraag hoe mediumspecifieke eigenschappen van digitale ruimtes zich inschrijven in de manieren waarop Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren verschillende loyaliteiten laten samengaan in de vormgeving van hun identiteiten?

In hoofdstuk twee beschreef ik mijn combinatie van methodologische benaderingen, die mij in staat stelde verschillende soorten van gesitueerde en partiële kennis te vergaren en samen te brengen. Ik opereerde op het snijvlak van het empirisme van sociale wetenschappers en de postmoderne afwijzing van cijfermatige generalisaties en essentialisme onder geesteswetenschappers, dankzij een combinatie van enquêtes, kleinschalige diepte-interviews en observaties van digitale handelingen. Mijn conclusies

zijn gebaseerd op een analyse van 1408 vragenlijsten – ingevuld door jongeren tussen 12 en 18 jaar van zeven middelbare scholen in Nederland –, diepte-interviews met 43 Marokkaans-Nederlandse tieners uit vier steden, en observaties van gebruikers in verschillende platforms. De enquête, die de invalshoeken identiteit, netwerken, leerprocessen en socialisatie samenbracht, werd ontwikkeld binnen *Wired Up*, een onderzoeksproject waarin pedagogen, onderwijskundigen en geesteswetenschappers (drie senior onderzoekers, twee postdocs en twee promovendi) samenwerkten om de impact van digitale media op het leven van jongeren met een migratieachtergrond beter te begrijpen.

Ook reflecteerde ik in hoofdstuk twee op hoe ik kennis heb geproduceerd. Ik heb de voor- en nadelen van het gebruik van surveys en het doen van interviews en observaties besproken. Daarnaast heb ik nagedacht over mijn eigen rol als onderzoeker door de dynamiek van vertrouwen en ongelijke machtsverhoudingen tussen mijzelf als onderzoeker en de informanten als onderzochten kritisch te analyseren. Vragenlijsten werden gebruikt om patronen van gebruikersvoorkeuren te herkennen, maar de antwoorden die respondenten konden geven waren gebonden aan het sjabloon dat zij aangereikt kregen. Interviews en participerende observatie werden gekozen om aanvullende inzichten te verzamelen, maar deze benaderingen brengen ook nadelen met zich mee. Ik blijf verantwoordelijk voor mijn argumentatie, maar ik heb mij bewust ingespannen om de valkuil te vermijden namens de informanten te willen spreken door samen met informanten digitale praktijken te bestuderen. Geïnterviewden werden uitgenodigd om na te denken en op papier in kaart te brengen hoe het internet er voor hen uit zag. Met deze internetkaarten heb ik meer inzicht verkregen in hun favoriete internetlocaties. Deze kaarten gaven bovendien aanleiding om te focussen op vier digitale platforms. Tevens droegen informanten bij aan het onderzoek door een eigen pseudoniem aan te dragen en zelf geselecteerde digitale materialen als *MSN* transcripten en *YouTube* video's in te brengen voor verdere analyse.

In hoofdstuk drie heb ik beargumenteerd hoe internetfora zoals *Marokko.nl* worden gebruikt om alternatieve, collectieve stemmen te uiten. De geïnterviewden bleken gesteld op het digitale prikbord als middel om een landelijk netwerk van Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren te creëren. Het hoofdstuk zoomde in op etnische, gender, en religieuze processen van zelfpositionering. Ten eerste focusste ik op het gevoel van macht dat informanten vertelden te ervaren naar aanleiding van de mogelijkheid om op fora een gezamenlijk standpunt kunnen vormen over de precare situatie van de

Marokkaanse gemeenschap in Nederland. Ik liet zien hoe het semi-verborgen karakter van fora – ondanks de toenemende monitoring en bekritisering van buitenaf – informanten het gevoel geeft dat fora veilige wegen zijn om gedeelde negatieve opvattingen over Marokkaanse Nederlanders te betwisten. Ten tweede heb ik geanalyseerd hoe het mogelijk was dat internetfora aantrekkingskracht uitoefenden op vrouwelijke informant, door te onderzoeken hoe de fora worden gebruikt om gevoelige kwesties omtrent liefde, relaties, huwelijk en seksualiteit bespreekbaar te maken. Ten derde erkende ik hoe informant internetfora gebruikten om vorm te geven aan persoonlijke interpretaties van de Islam.

Hoofdstuk vier bood een kijkje in de privé-identiteit en de persoonlijke verbintenissen van Marokkaans-Nederlandse tieners met hun leeftijdsgenoten op het chatprogramma *MSN Messenger*. Dergelijke *Instant messaging* (IM) chatprogramma's zijn relatief onderbelichte sociale-mediatechnologieën gebleven, omdat het verzamelen van gegevens in deze privéruimtes niet eenvoudig is vanwege de door de gebruikers gecodeerde toegang. Uit de analyse van *MSN* kwam naar voren dat mediatechnologieën in verschillende generaties een verschillende rol kunnen spelen. De ouders van de informant, die veelal geboren zijn in Marokko, gebruiken *MSN* om contact te houden met familieleden en vrienden in Marokko en de diaspora. Onder de informant zelf, meestal in Nederland geboren, wordt de technologie gebruikt om symbolisch vorm te geven aan Marokko als een onderdeel van hun identiteitsvorming. Van de ene op de andere generatie vindt er een verschuiving plaats van een orale cultuur naar een op visuele representatie gebaseerde identificatie met Marokko.

Het mediumspectifieke karakter van IM bleek de dynamische constructie van identiteit op twee manieren te structureren. Gebruikersnamen en afbeeldingen worden gebruikt als een podium om, voor het oog van vrienden in de lijst van toegevoegde contacten, gemeenschappelijke kaders te scheppen. Dit gebeurde bijvoorbeeld in de interactie tussen etniciteit, geslacht, religie, straattaal, *MSN*-taal, interetnisch taalgebruik en/of internationale jeugdcultuur. Eén-op-één chat-gesprekken vinden plaats achter de coulissen, dat wil zeggen dat gebruikers zelf bepalen wie ze toegang verlenen tot hun chatomgeving. Doordat ze in de gaten kunnen houden dat ze niet bespied worden door ouders, broers of zussen, kunnen onderwerpen als vriendschappen, relaties en de liefde aangesneden worden. Op deze manier gebeurden er dingen die bij de gratie van de beslotenheid van de ruimte plaatsvonden. Tijdens mijn veldwerk vernam ik dat wanneer contacten de ruimte uitstappen, de codes die erbinnen gelden doorbroken kunnen

worden, hetgeen ernstige gevolgen kan hebben. Een vriendin van twee informanten belandde in het ziekenhuis nadat ze geslagen was door haar vader en broer. Die waren woedend geworden toen zij naaktfoto's hadden gezien van het meisje. Onder druk had ze haar bovenlijf ontbloot voor haar webcam tijdens een gesprek met haar vriendje. De webcam beelden die hij had opgeslagen op zijn computer bleken een nieuw machtsmiddel, toen de relatie verbroken was nam hij wraak door ze te delen met anderen. Ondanks dergelijke risico's ervaren de informanten *MSN Messenger* als een waardevol instrument om individuele, persoonlijke en intieme identiteiten vorm te geven.

In hoofdstuk vijf lag de nadruk op visuele representaties en hypertextidentificaties op sociale netwerksites zoals *MySpace* en *Facebook*. Ten eerste onderzocht ik hoe en waarom foto's op persoonlijke profielpagina's zijn doordrongen van gender en seksualiteit. Ik beargumenteerde dat de manieren waarop jongeren zich wensten te laten zien in profielfoto's begrepen kunnen worden als een aandachtseconomie. Informanten waren erop gericht om aandacht van hun vrienden te trekken. Dit poogden ze te doen door te voldoen aan bepaalde conventies en verwachtingspatronen. Gewenste lichaamshoudingen bleken veelal gestoeld op stereotype beelden van mannelijkheid versus vrouwelijkheid. Ze herbevestigden ongelijke machtsverhoudingen en vormen van patriarchale dominantie. Ten tweede ben ik nagegaan hoe informanten hyperlinks naar groepspagina's gebruiken om uiteenlopende voorkeuren te benadrukken. Ik heb beargumenteerd dat hyperlinks inzicht verschaffen in de constructie van gelaagde identiteiten en digitaal multiculturalisme. Door te hyperlinken naar verschillende gemeenschappen laten Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren zien dat zij onverenigbaar geachte categorieën zoals Nederlands nationalisme, Islamitische overtuigingen, Marokkaanse kledingvoorkeuren en globale jeugdcultuur en politiek activisme samenbrengen. Dit is een voorbeeld van hoe in het alledaagse leven van jongeren verschillende culturen samengaan en elkaar wederzijds beïnvloeden.

In hoofdstuk zes heb ik de emotionele werking van het bekijken van *YouTube*-video's geanalyseerd als een vorm van affectieve identificatie. Informanten vertelden dat ze geraakt werden door het kijken van video's. Ze gingen zich bijvoorbeeld goed voelen of konden beter met heimwee omgaan. Vandaar dat ik gefocust heb op de manieren waarop het kijken van opnames gevoelens van verbintenis met bepaalde gemeenschappen stimuleert. In het bijzonder onderzocht ik twee *YouTube*-video genres die veel werden aangehaald tijdens de interviews: amateur video's gemaakt door gebruikers en professionele video's. Op de eerste plaats heb ik de ervaringen besproken

die informanten met mij deelden betreffende video's over de islam en Marokko die andere gebruikers zelf hadden gemaakt. Eigenschappen zoals onvaste camera standpunten, onbewerkte beelden of een lage-resolutie opnamekwaliteit dragen bij aan de ervaring van authenticiteit. Deze video's bleken de kijkers een gevoel te geven deel uit te maken van internationale geloofsnetwerken en de transnationale Marokkaanse diaspora.

Ten tweede heb de verschillende gemeenschapsgevoelens die commerciële muziek videoclip op *YouTube* oproepen bij de informanten geanalyseerd. Kijkers ervoeren een affectieve verbondenheid met artiesten en hun aanhang van verschillende geografische herkomst. Door te kijken naar video's van bijvoorbeeld Amerikaanse, Marokkaanse en Nederlandse rappers maar ook artiesten uit het Midden-Oosten combineerden ze verschillende genres maar ook talen zoals Engels, Marokkaans-Arabisch, Berbers en Nederlands. Ze verenigden globale, nationale en transnationale voorkeuren. Zo vormen ze een hybride identiteit, die tegenwicht biedt aan de essentialistische beeldvorming van Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren en van de vermeende toenemende etnische segregatie.

In de conclusie synthetiseerde ik de belangrijkste bevindingen. Ik besprak de bredere implicaties van alledaagse gelaagde en gehybridiseerde digitale identificatieprocessen van Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren die ik aantrof in hun passages van verschillende internet applicaties. Ze bleken de mogelijkheden en beperkingen van deze digitale mediaruimtes te onderzoeken, door te schipperen tussen conflicterende culturele beweegredenen: generatie- en leeftijdsgebonden drijfveren, maar ook motivaties op het gebied van familie, gender, etniciteit, religie en jeugdidentiteit. Daarmee stellen ze de parameters van hun sociale en fysieke werelden ter discussie. Een bespreking van dergelijke identificatieprocessen is maatschappelijk relevant omdat inzicht in het alledaagse leven een welkome aanvulling biedt op eerdere resultaten van onderzoek naar Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren, dat zich voornamelijk richtte op criminaliteit en overlast, psychische gezondheidsproblematieken, radicaliteit en Islam en scholingsachterstanden en werkloosheid.

Mijn studie combineerde de focus van nieuwe-mediastudies op medium specifieke dynamieken met aandacht voor machtsverhoudingen en sociale onrechtvaardigheid binnen gender studies en postkoloniale studies. Ik toonde de waarde van zowel een ruimtelijke focus als aandacht voor affectiviteit in het bestuderen van media en communicatie. Daarnaast droeg ik bij aan cyber-feministische benaderingen door de werking van het concept kruispuntdenken op de proef te stellen. Bovendien

nuanceerde ik inzichten uit migratiestudies en religiewetenschappen door de dynamische uitvoering van digitale identiteiten voorop te stellen. Ten slotte benadrukte deze cartografische studie het belang van een belichaamde benadering van het internet.

Publicisten als Paul Scheffer en politici als Piet-Hein Donner en Geert Wilders hebben gesteld dat de multiculturele samenleving mislukt is. Ze veronderstellen dat het hebben van meerdere affiniteiten de verbintenis met Nederland belemmert. Dit onderzoek laat echter zien dat loyaliteiten elkaar niet uitsluiten maar met elkaar samengaan. Met *MSN* inlognamen, hyperlinks, video voorkeuren en andere narratieven die Marokkaans-Nederlandse jongeren produceren worden bijvoorbeeld onverenigbaar geachte loyaliteiten samengebracht. Identiteitsvorming dient daarom gezien te worden als een deelverzameling. Los van top-down beleidsvoering en politieke machtsstrijd, laten online uitingen van jeugdcultuur zien dat verscheidene culturele invloeden het alledaagse leven van jongeren reeds tekenen. Etniciteit overstijgende, gedeelde voorkeuren voor uiteenlopende artiesten, sterren, eten, muziek maar ook politiek engagement onthulden dat diversiteit een geaccepteerd, alledaags verschijnsel is. Digitale jeugdculturen vormen een belangrijke ontmoetingsplaats, waarin jongeren met verschillende achtergronden kunnen samenkomen.



Summary

The main goal of this study is to consider how the relations between gender, diaspora and youth culture are digitally articulated by Moroccan-Dutch youths between the age of 12 and 18 years old. Combining new media, gender and postcolonial theory, I carry out a transdisciplinary analysis of a young ethnic-minority population whose contribution to digital culture is still undertheorized. In particular I explored how Moroccan-Dutch youths participate in and appropriate digital spaces in order to convey their belongings across multiple axes of identification such as gender, sexuality, diaspora, religion and youth-culture. The extensive fieldwork was conducted in the context of *Wired Up*, a collaborative, international research project operating at the interface of the humanities and social sciences aimed at understanding the implications of digital media use among migrant youths. A large-scale survey was developed together with other researchers in the project. A total of 1408 young people contacted through seven secondary schools in the Netherlands completed the survey. The central database of their answers was used to get a general impression of digital media use frequencies, attachments to applications and online self-presentation practices. Furthermore, in-depth interviews were carried out with a group of 43 Moroccan-Dutch individuals, 21 girls and 22 boys, between the ages of 12 and 18 years. In my aim to provide a broad context of identity deployments a group of Moroccan-Dutch parents, website founders and artists were also interviewed. Through participant observation, narratives circulating in online were gathered.

From the survey and interviews I learned that Moroccan-Dutch youths consider online discussion forums, instant messaging (IM), online social networking sites (SNSs) and video sharing platforms most important. I analyzed these four types of digital space on a case-study basis. Our survey data showed that computer ownership and Internet access is widespread among Moroccan-Dutch youths, however I argued that digital divides go beyond ownership and access. Exploring how offline exclusionary mechanisms travel online and establish new digital divides, I unraveled how technological decisions and mainstream user preferences contribute to medium specific spatial hierarchies. The focus of my analysis was in fact on the ways in which hierarchies are subverted from below and how the medium-specificity of each of the four applications studied inform these processes differently. In other words, I made an inventory of the space invader strategies Moroccan-Dutch youths employed to cope with digital forms of inequality.

Each individual digital space was found to play a distinct role in the lives of

Moroccan-Dutch youths. Interviewees experienced online discussion forums such as *Marokko.nl* as collective spaces of their own and the anonymous character of forums was felt to enable the publication of counter-voices. My analysis of their forum use offers greater understanding of the formation of digital publics and the digital reconsideration of dominant ethnic, gender and religious positions. Describing *MSN Messenger* usage, informants stated they have one-on-one conversations and communicate to a wider public of their contacts by creatively writing display names. Studying their experience of instant messaging (IM) participation therefore allowed me to explore language hybridization and the rearticulation and renegotiation of the public and the private online. The publishing of gender was reported as a key self-profiling aspect on social-networking sites such as *Hyves* and *Facebook*. By scrutinizing display picture ideals I continued my consideration of how Moroccan-Dutch youths juggle varying gender expectations and remain susceptible to male domination. Hyperlink connections with majoritarian and minoritarian loyalties were made on the personal profiles on social-networking sites, a practice that unlocked new insights on how these young people experience participation and conviviality in their digital practices. Lastly, interviewees felt emotionally moved by watching music videos and videos shot in Morocco on *YouTube*. Their viewing strategies reveal that digital practices can structure and communicate cross-cultural affectivity and also convey generational specific nostalgia, imaginary homelands and transnational bondings.

Furthermore, with the title digital passages, I referred not only to their navigation across bordered digital spaces, but also captured the digitization of key identity formation processes such as coming-of-age, rites-of-passage and the negotiation of offline/online gender, diaspora, religious and youth cultural expectations and norms. My cartography of Moroccan-Dutch youths' multi-spatial digital identity performativity provides a history of the present full of promises but also full of personal experiences of struggle. The relationship between digital templates and user cultures and conveying belonging across multiple offline axes of identification remains intricate and complex. At certain points, the online and offline world overlap or augment one another and at others they collide, providing room for re-signification. The boys and girls I interviewed are constantly confronted with various aspects of Dutch multicultural society: while they are often considered the other, in their everyday digital convivial encounters they nevertheless also constantly create and connect new passages between their Dutch, Moroccan-Dutch, Muslim, diaspora and youth cultural belongings.

Biography

Koen Leurs was born on June 27, 1983 in Grave, the Netherlands. After graduating from Maaswaal College in 2001, he began working in the field of mobile communications. Pursuing his interests in communication practices and human relations, in 2002 he enrolled at Utrecht University, specializing in new media and digital culture. He also did a minor in cultural geography. After obtaining a bachelor in Communication and Information Studies (cum laude), he spent a semester abroad at the National University of Singapore during his research master in Media and Performance Studies (cum laude). He studied philosophy at Radboud University in Nijmegen before returning to Utrecht to join the Wired Up research project and write a dissertation about the relationships between digital media, migration, gender and youth culture (2008-2012). As a member of the 7th European Framework Programme MIG@NET project, he extended his focus to education and knowledge in the context of transnational digital networks, migration and gender (2011-2013).

Koen participated in the Network of Interdisciplinary Women's Studies in Europe (NOI♀SE) and the Oxford Internet Institute (OII SDP) summerschools and he is a member of the Netherlands Research School of Gender Studies (NOG), InterGender: International Research School in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies and the Postcolonial Studies Initiative (PCI). He has taught on the philosophy of science, the history and theory of new media, postcolonial ICTs and the spatiality of media. Koen takes a transdisciplinary approach on digital forms of identity, medium-specificity, power hierarchies, multiculturalism, diaspora, gender relations and youth culture by bridging gender studies, postcolonial studies and new media studies. He has presented at various national and international conferences and his work has been published in *Feminist Review*; *M/C Journal*; *Religion and Gender* and anthologies such as *Cyberfeminism 2.0*; *Intersectional Internet*; *the Routledge Companion to Media and Gender*; *the Wiley-Blackwell Handbook of Gender, Sex and Media* and *Women and Language*.

