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# Transcultural Identity Formation among Canadian-Arab Youth: Nurturing Self-Knowledge through Metissage and Blunting Canadianness as an Alterity

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## Overview

While cultural reductionists and right-wing populist politicians point to the incompatibility of Western and Arab identity or cultural values, we speak to young Arabs living in Canada to understand how they eschew such discursive narratives by nurturing self-knowledge through hybridity. This nurturance allows for transcultural identity formation. It is made possible when youth embrace their multiple cultures, identities, and senses of belonging through open-minded exploration. In this chapter, we investigate the transcultural identity formation of Arab youth through an epistemology of metissage that challenges the idea that Canadianness is an alterity to them. We draw upon survey results from over 860 Canadian-Arab youth and structured focus groups with two hundred youth. We ask them how art, music, culture, and social media shape their conceptions of the world, and explore how Arab youth in Canada navigate their identities and stay translocally and transnationally connected to the people, spaces, and objects associated with their home country cultures. We find that Arab youth hybridize their lives by balancing attachment and longing, living in Arabic culture, demarcating the inside and outside of cultural boundaries and choosing positions on an issue-by-issue basis, and pursuing Arab-Western metissage as an identity.

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## Introduction

But you know, if you're dedicated enough and feeling nostalgic, you're going to want to go back to Arabic music ... and get sense of Arabic roots ... [it's] not something you can buy, [or] something you get from you and your parents; it's something a lot of people here forget you know, like white washing is a big problem. I'm going to say it proudly, people need to know where their roots come from, can't let that go!<sup>1</sup>

As many chapters in this volume attest, transcultural Arab identity mobilization is not simply an expression of transnational citizenship engagement, nor is it necessarily a form of pan-Arab reclamation that might mirror a pan-Arabism of the past; if it is pan-Arab at all, it would do it justice to see it as a novel form of pan-Arabism that is multicentered and reflexive (e.g., open to how agency has the capacity to be dominating, carrying awareness of how the peripheries of Arab knowingness are multifariously expressed). Such a novel conception of pan-Arabism eschews older generations' rejection of Western cultural values for the sake of preserving cultural sensitivities or revolts against cultural colonialism for the sake of cultural redemption. Arab cultural identity formation is not currently a reaction "to" or a reaction "for" but rather an expression of an unfolding yet to be fully crystallized. Contemporary transcultural Arab identity formation and production(s) are thus not expressions of coagulated and globalized cultural values where Arab identity moves transnationally into Western cultural spaces and vice versa, thus prompting a cultural amalgamation that necessarily unifies or affixes the cultures together, but where Western values are accepted on a case-by-case basis, down to the individual level, through personal forms of hybridity and collective forms of Arab cultural glocalization in a Western milieu. This transculturation is not a cultural expression alternative between the binary options of exporting Arab culture or keeping it protectively located in the home country (Hannerz 1996) whose "either/or" might be ostensibly relieved by circular and ongoing cultural performances (Cho and Westley 2002). It is also not reducible to a binary between uncoerced and privileged physical and imaginary mobility (cultural identities that experience zero "check-stops" while passing borders) and coerced and marginalized displacement (cultural identities that only experience stoppages while passing borders, as well as dislocation/dispossession) (India and Rosaldo 2002). Transcultural identity is prompted, as Eid Mohamed and Ayman A. El-Desouky note in the Introduction, from the seismic action that rocked Arab states multiple times before and after 2011 and from ongoing Arab subject formation. This is not to say that everything is in flux, but much is undergoing significant renegotiation, especially in terms of acculturation or transculturation, language and creativity in public spaces, collectivizing mobilizations, and Arab self-perception. As the editors ask, what new dynamics are emerging, what new modes of expression are being expressed, and what forms of knowing are being transmitted that transcend or subvert those traditionally determined by the politics of institutions, the national and postcolonial histories, and discursive expert opinions in and on the Arab world?

We interject in this conversation by asking questions about how Canadian-Arab youth as a transnationally situated and moving set of Arab subjectivities articulate their epistemological and cultural connections to the Arab world, what they prioritize in their struggle to reclaim themselves in the face of what Mohamed and El-Desouky call the “irreducible heterogeneity” of the public sphere, which is true in the Arab world as it is in Canada, and how do they express their views on cultural loyalty and belonging to Canada and the Middle East? How does metissage or hybridity create cultural emergence from interaction?

What one typically finds in this literature are various attempts to link the stories of immigrant experiences in the North American context with questions of social identity formation and social belonging with an inquiry into the parameters and norms surrounding multiculturalism, assimilation, and prejudice. Immigrant populations in the American context have some cultural idiosyncracies that they are expected to abandon in a bid to locate the Anglo-American values they are expected to adopt. Any type of “heterolocalism without integration” (Zelinsky and Lee 1998) is often seen as subversive because it might involve a stable love and yearning for homeland cultural reference points that might impede assimilation which would therefore be seen to impede the Americanization of them as a new entrant to a system expecting sameness. Keeping ties to the homeland cultures might be seen as loyalty to one set of values that are at odds with the new set of values and groups that require protection in the American context.

Nagel and Staeheli (2005) are among those scholars who point out that cultural retention and citizenship mobilization in the new society are not mutually exclusive processes. They argue that the perceived impossibility of immigrants to fully assimilate into American culture stems from “the fusion in public debate between particular understandings of assimilation and citizenship as all-or-nothing conditions. One is assimilated or not. One is citizen or not. Yet immigrants and other marginalized groups often move between sameness and difference in ways that challenge those constructions” (10). The authors mention their surprise in discovering that between 2003 and 2004, Arab-American activists preferred strategies of assimilation over multiculturalism that were modeled on the Irish immigration experience. Assimilation tactics were seen by those interviewed to build loyalty, credibility, and normalize their difference(s) vis-à-vis a mythic mainstream American society. With hard work, patience, public education, and time, the activists of their study believed that Arabs would become fully accepted members of the American polity and would become “white.” “Their comments represent an attempt to situate Arab immigrants with respect to American society and citizenship, even as they attempt to broaden and challenge mainstream understandings of what it means to be an American as an immigrant” (Nagel and Staeheli 2005: 4).

The expectation and reality of assimilation was so common that many organizations had to teach Arab language and culture to the second and third generations, and indeed, teaching those generations about their own culture was an important goal for many groups. To some degree this was necessary to counteract the negative

images of Arabs and Islamic cultures the children would face ... many activists were also worried about being swallowed into an American culture. Some second generation activists worried that unfamiliarity with their own culture would mean they would never be fully American, even as being raised in the US meant they would never be fully Arab.

(Nagel and Staeheli 2005: 15)

Interest in how Arab cultures evolve and transpose themselves around the world will continue to increase as new social networks, rapid labor mobility, and new modes of global idea exchange continue to expand. As transnational spaces open up for intercultural understandings, the influences of the West in the Arab region and the impact of Arab/Islamic culture on Western societies cannot be ignored. After all, the Arab region is a growing source for Western immigration, and a large number of Arab students are flocking to learn in Western universities. What these youths learn abroad and take home with them can be a valuable part of understanding the future trajectory of their societies (Momani 2015). More and more Arabs now hold dual citizenship, particularly from the Western world, and Arab communities in Europe and the Americas are increasing their ties to the Arab region. In many parts of the West, the migration of Arabs and Muslims is rapidly increasing and accelerating due to the Syrian refugee crisis. Among incoming immigrants, Arabs and Muslims now comprise one of the largest ethnocultural and religious groups in the Western world. In Canada, immigrants hailing from Arab countries have become the second largest immigrant group for several years. This is particularly evident in major Western cities, such as in Toronto where nearly 10 percent of the population is Muslim.

Transcultural identity development is not just how local actors might think and work globally, how they might be Canadian, but continually projecting their Arabness, for example, in every facet of their engagement with the world or how they forge multiple networks of social relations between Canada and the Arab world (Schiller et al. 1995). It is also not just how identities might be, in a counterintuitive sense, simultaneously boundary-defiant, rooted, and cosmopolitan but also socially networked and geographically situated (Mercea and Bastos 2016). What we mean by this is that identities, especially of immigrants qua transnationals, are neither entirely local nor global, they are neither entirely a hybrid of these two things, and in many cases identities are the result of a complex interplay of seemingly contradictory forces including statelessness, dispossession, grounded-ness, worldliness, parochialism, being socially constituted, and yet individually and communally idiosyncratic. We have focused in other academic works on how actors, identities, and political technologies move in A ↔ B “return-trip” forms transnationally, but also in meshwork forms, from A to various points on a spider-web-like trajectory in disparate directions and then back to A again. We have theorized how these mobilizations and movements encompass different forms of circular citizenship capacity-building (Finn and Momani 2017, 2019; Finn, Opatowski, and Momani, 2018).

In this chapter, we investigate how a growing number of Arab transnationals, particularly young people living in Canada, connect to and frame their cultures based on lived interactions in Canadian society. We also study how their metissage

or hybridity is expressed by them, as they work to navigate complex spaces of being distinctly Canadian, and yet decidedly also Arab. This analysis problematizes the idea that Western and Arab identities are incompatible for we find in Canadian-Arab youth a lived hybridity that carries visceral meanings and claims-making to origination and identity emergence in both Canada and the Arab world. We find also an internal struggle in these youth who feel mostly “at home” in Canada but who face discursive narratives and questions about the capacity of Arabs to be Canadian. In this study of Arab émigrés, we describe their affiliations using the language and reference points of transnationalism rather than diaspora. Although diaspora helps capture Arab settlement in the Western world because it connotes the physical diffusion of immigrants across a landscape, state, or region, transnationalism better explains youth connections to homeland because it denotes exchange, which is an important concept for theorizing political and civic agency and identity development. Regarding transcultural identity formation among Canadian-Arab youth, we find four patterns in our qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry: (1) pursuing belonging in Canada by strengthening connections to circles of Arab friendship and the Arabic language in ways that fulfill an intrinsic longing for homeland while forming attachments in a Canadian land; (2) seeing cultural artifacts and productions as core to living in Arabic culture which manifests itself in an appreciation for Arab music as the most consumed cultural product; (3) interweaving cultural threads in complex and novel ways presented in a strong appreciation for family ties, and criticism and/or disavowal of misogyny, patriarchy, and collective shaming found in Arab culture; and (4) engaging in active reflexivity of cultures and expressing cultural loyalty by (re)claiming Arab-Western hybridity as an identity. In all of these expressions, we find Canadian-Arab youth, in their pursuit for belonging and home, making epistemological claims about how to ground self-knowledge through metissage and blunt “Canadianess” as an alterity (Zuss 1997; Baumann and Gingrich 2005).

### Home and Metissage

Home means different things to ethnic and religious minority youth, particularly those originating from immigrant families; their views are highly divergent based on complex and at times idiosyncratic outlooks, experiences, and practices. In many cases, immigrant minority youth straddle or multifariously invest themselves in multiple “homes.” What is politically interesting about transnationally connected youth is that they are culturally and politically connected to two or more different countries (Nagel and Staeheli 2005; Tarrow 2005). Kenneth Wald (2008) found in a study on Middle East heritage groups in the United States that transnational migrants feel that they actively pursue issues in their “home” countries by participating in their “resident” country’s politics, and that “micro-level” political consciousness among transnationally connected communities, locally in places of residence, affects individual connections and impact abroad. We see throughout our study several instances of “micro-level” political consciousness among Canadian-Arab youth built around Arab popular culture, hybridized social values, and friendship building. Wald argues that ethnic

identities of diaspora communities can become politicized, wherein members are variously attentive to homeland issues despite being in diaspora, depending on the priority or prominence of the “homeland” in minority peoples’ political thinking, behavior, and connections which he measures. He finds that the “more individuals participate in culture-forming organizations, maintain endogenous social life, and develop powerful symbolic ties to the ethnic community, the greater the probability that ethnic identity will spill over into other aspects of social behavior” (2008, 276). Collective consciousness building among individuals that connect back to homeland concerns or orientations depends on the particular experiences of their families in how they exited the home country and how well they were received in the country of current residence (Wald 2008). For example, many early Arab immigrants to Canada are Christian and migrated to pursue work opportunities—in many respects, their connection to their specific homeland countries is more important to them than their connection to the Arab world; alternatively, many (not all) current Arab immigrants to Canada are Muslim and migrate as refugees fleeing war and social unrest and therefore build a collective consciousness around Arab-ness as a way to cope, survive, and stay connected to their homelands.

Looking at cultural citizenship, or cultural belonging in a society, Sunaima Maira (2008) explores how Muslim youth in the United States connect to the concept of (cultural) citizenship in multiple ways. For the purposes of this particular chapter, Maira’s analysis of flexible citizenship is highly relevant. Flexible citizenship is the use of transnational connections among migrants because a single nation-state does not provide all of the political and material resources they need. Flexible citizenship is enabled when migrants keep transnational ties (bridge home and residence countries) for economic reasons (e.g., to send or receive remittances to family), when they stay connected to “home country” popular culture because of its convenient prominence in their homes, and by their willingness to act as flexible labor in neoliberal societies. For Maira, polycultural citizenship, though more about political contestation in the public sphere, refers to how youth navigate their complex political affiliations that are not reducible to a discrete culture (Ewing 2008; Maira 2008). Since citizenship is not just what people have (in terms of status) but also what they do (Turner 2016), the attempts of Canadian-Arab youth to consolidate their hybridity by building translocal and transnational connections among other Arab peoples, spaces, and objects are forms of citizenship mobilization (Finn and Momani 2019).

Shain and Barth (2003) find that the effectiveness of transcultural connectedness among what they call diaspora is affected by the foreign policy choices of host country to “home” country politics and the openness of the “home” country to domestic influence. Gans (1997) found that assimilation among immigrant communities into the culture and lifestyles of resident communities does not necessarily follow a straight line. In many cases, third-generation members of transnationally connected communities can be found embracing core aspects of the groups’ particular practices, views, and customs. Alba and Nee (2003), on the other hand, have found that connectedness to group particularities tends to erode over time as generations settle in a new locale.

We contribute to this growing literature by building further knowledge about the Canadian context for Arab youth and this demographic’s core priorities as first-,

second-, or third-generation immigrants. We find that although their transnational ties to the MENA are prominently cultural, especially as they relate to “home country” popular culture, as Maira (2008) has found, they also have competing ideas about how to navigate multiple identity affiliations, tend to reject affiliation to a single discrete culture, and are openly critical of some Arab cultural practices that contradict what they see as Canadian values, especially how they relate to gender and the collective surveillance and regulation of the individual in his or her own choices. We argue that these decisions are related to the epistemological lens they use to see their identity (what they see and why) and that this lens is founded centrally on metissage. Hybridity is the kaleidoscope through which Canadian-Arab youth tend to read their world and govern their practices in it.

## Methodology

In order to explore and theorize Canadian-Arab youth transcultural connections to home countries and in the process contribute to the literature looking at transcultural identity formation, we conducted both quantitative and qualitative methods with this demographic. We first went across Canada to twelve large and medium-sized cities to ask Arab youth to fill out a survey. We were able to bring youth to fill out the survey by wearing t-shirts saying, “Arab and under 29? Earn \$25.” For their participation, youth were issued a \$25 gift card as a reimbursement. We went to places where Arab youth hang out including shish bars, cafés, restaurants, Arab supermarkets, and some universities. We did not approach places of worship in order to avoid selection biases, preferring instead to convenience sample from the street. From this survey, we gathered over 860 responses for a population size of 380,620 Canadians of Arab ancestry and 661,750 of partial Arab ancestry (Census 2011). When we factor in our goal to speak to Arab youth, the representativeness of the sample size we attained was extremely high.

After completing the surveys, we conducted further research using focus groups in two major Canadian cities to get more qualitative data and to triangulate our findings. Participants for the focus groups were recruited using Facebook and other social media platforms. We did not advertise the theme of our discussions in order to avoid selection bias of those who are culturally connected. Instead, we advertised the meeting as social events supporting research-based discussions. To incentivize participants and ensure attendees, we offered dinner and raffle prizes composed of gift cards to popular retailers. The specific topic was revealed while we gathered participant consent at the start of the discussions. Focus groups were composed of approximately six to eight youth at a time and a total of 100 participated in each city.

At our focus groups, we asked four questions that garnered discussions that lasted an hour to an hour and a half for each group. We had both English and French discussions; French discussions were translated into English transcripts. Few youths opted to have discussions in Arabic, as all felt more comfortable in English or French. Our questions were designed to uncover potential connectivity to and interweaving with Arab culture and values. Our four questions were as sterile as possible so as to not

have suggestive questions that lead to predictable answers, but at the same time, we could not sustain youth interest if we did not have some focused questions. Finally, we asked the same questions of all of our 200 youth to standardize the process.

Based on structured focus groups with 200 Arab youth, split evenly, in Montreal and Toronto, we asked them four questions: (1) How are you connected to Arab culture around the world? (2) Do you consume Arab media, film, music, theater, literature, or art? If so, by which means do you have access? (3) What Arab cultural values do you want to retain in the diaspora or pass on to your children? What Arab cultural values do you not want to pass on? and (4) In your opinion, can your Arab identity be compatible with Western identity (in any way you would interpret either)? In both settings, focus groups lasted a few hours and were combined with dinner in small groups of six to eight individuals, with one note taker at each table. For those readers who would like to know more about the details of our findings beyond the analysis, we have provided the raw data findings for this study in the Appendix of this chapter.

### Transcultural Identity Formation of Arab Transnationals

Among Canadian-Arab youth, there is an epistemological privileging of Arab self-identification over Canadian self-identification in their formations of hybridity. We consistently found, for example, that majority of first-, second-, and third-generation Canadian-Arab youth in our study preferred seeing themselves as “Arab” or “Arab-Canadian” rather than “Canadian-Arab” or “Canadian.”<sup>22</sup> The majority of surveyed youth are highly connected to individuals from their home countries not living in Canada. Arab youth are also connected with their home countries often using WhatsApp and Facebook on a weekly basis. Specifically, 83 percent use at least one of the following methods of communication at least once a week: Skype, phone, Facebook, text, BBM, FaceTime, email, Tango, Viber, WhatsApp, Instagram, or Snapchat. Further, approximately 70 percent of respondents use the aforementioned methods daily to communicate with people from their home country who are not living in Canada (see Table 7.1).

Moreover, from our survey findings, we tested the relationship between sense of belonging to Canadian society and level of connectivity to individuals from home countries. We ran a linear regression and found supporting evidence that a lower sense of belonging to Canadian society translated to higher connectivity to home countries and vice versa. Respondents who feel isolated or marginalized in Canada were more likely to reach out to home country networks for support.

Significant differences were also found between respondents who identified as “Canadian” and those who identified as “Canadian-Arab,” whereby Canadian-Arabs were significantly more likely to exhibit high connectivity to home countries. On the flip side, Arabs were more likely than Arab-Canadians to have high connectivity levels. When dual identities (“Arab-Canadian” vs. “Canadian-Arab”) were compared in isolation, no significant differences in high connectivity levels were found. Self-identity similarly affected likelihood of high engagement in MENA media, such that

**Table 7.1** Most and least frequently used methods of communication with home country.

	At least once a week		At most once a year	
	Total number of respondents	Percentage of respondents	Total number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Skype	207	28	251	34
Phone	458	61	86	11.5
Facebook	518	69	89	12
Text or BBM	377	52	223	30.5
Facetime	210	29	341	47
Email	251	35	311	43
Tango or Viber	277	38	292	40
WhatsApp	523	71	101	14
Instagram	387	53	251	34
Snapchat	389	53.5	276	38

respondents who identified as “Arab” or “Arab-Canadian” were more likely to be highly engaged in MENA media (news, TV, music, and film) than those respondents who identified as “Canadian” or “Canadian-Arab.”

When dual identities (“Arab-Canadian” vs. “Canadian-Arab”) were compared in isolation, a significant difference in high MENA media engagement was also found. Namely, Arab-Canadians were more likely to be highly engaged in MENA media than Canadian-Arabs. And, while levels of MENA media engagement between Canadians and Canadian-Arabs were significantly different at  $p <.05$  (with Canadians being less engaged), a significant difference in MENA media engagement did not exist between Arabs and Arab-Canadians.<sup>3</sup>

### The Metissage Complexities of Attachment Formations and Longings

The epistemology of metissage (the lens of hybridity that affects what the people see and why) grounding Canadian-Arab youth self-understandings of identity is found in the complex interplay between attachment and longing. The lens through which Arab youth view their lives, and the politics they rely upon to reinscribe hybridity into their lifeworlds, emerges in their pursuit of local Arab friendships and language development. Friendships and language are central to their grounded belonging in Canada. Canadian-Arab youth “become” Canadian by weaving Arab threads into their lives. Their Canadian houses are built on an Arab foundation.

Many Arab youths yearn to be “more connected” to Arab culture but recognize that living in the diaspora is a disconnecting experience. Those who have just come from the Arab region felt less disconnected than those who had been in the West longer. For many young people, they gravitated toward friendships with other Arabs to increase cultural connections and to help them integrate into Canadian society from familiar starting points. As one youth noted,

I think that a part of living abroad sort of makes you more connected and intertwined in your Arab culture because you’re coming somewhere and would like to see someone who has similar habits, similar cultural background, similar language, it just makes it easier to navigate the city. So I found that right when we came here, that’s the first thing that we wanted to meet, lots of Arabs, and then you will eventually integrate within the city. But that first starter point, you need to meet a lot of Arabs.<sup>4</sup>

A prominent method of attachment formation in Canada was the practice of entering, inculcating, and nurturing friendship circles with other Arabs. Such friendships help youth boost their confidence and self-understanding as Arabs. As one youth noted, [in Arab friendships/communities] “You don’t feel embarrassed to pronounce your name because everyone is familiar with that name. [For example, non-Arabs say] ‘Akhmed’ [instead of Ahmed]. So yeah, it’s a good idea being surrounded by Arabs.”<sup>5</sup> Some of the most oft-repeated words used to explain why youth befriend other Arabs were “warmth” and “familiarity.” Emerging from this emphasis on the warmth and familiarity we read a longing for their Arab identity as a place of comfort, security, and clarity of self in the world.

This is one aspect of the metissage or hybridization process for Canadian-Arab youth: building an epistemology (or lens to read the world) through self-knowing in one cultural space grounded by attachment and longing to a different ancestral cultural space. An oft-cited prerequisite or precursor to this process is self-awareness about how multiple network channels can be strategically advantageous. Many youths noted that they actively gravitate toward Arab friendships, and that this is encouraged and preferred by their parents, but that they actively pursue friendships with non-Arabs as well. Both forms of friendship building are their way of expanding attachments to Canadian society and youth construct strategies to make that possible. Part of the reason youth develop friendships with non-Arabs was due to a natural and genuine interest in their cohort, and part of the interest was built around an appreciation of the social benefits of having non-Arab friendship networks. Youth recognized that they would experience difficulty integrating into Canadian society and would face difficulties in the workplace if they only had Arab friends. Some of the social benefits that Arab youth identified in having non-Arab friends included helping people in society understand Arab culture better and *ipso facto*, helping their social and political communities overcome discrimination and prejudice, participating in a community outside of their ethnic circles, avoiding the social losses that accompany isolation, and building hybridity as a social good. As one youth noted, “If you don’t have that integration, you miss a whole link with the culture especially living in a

western community. If you seclude yourself to a group of Arab friends, other people don't learn about you! [Hence] You see the whole antagonizing [of] Islam and Arabs. Mixing is essential.”<sup>6</sup>

Arab youth come to know better who they are by building cultural loyalties with different Arab groups and communities in order to expand their sense of belonging in Canada. Arab youth are not connected to Arab culture in exactly the same ways, and we found that the variations were often based on national or geographical origin. Many North Africans living in Montreal expressed greater ambivalence about their Arab identity compared to Levant Arabs living in Ottawa. Nevertheless, when pressed, many of the Montreal youth noted that what binds North Africans is the same attributes that binds them to Levantine Arabs. We frequently heard that being Algerian, Moroccan, or Tunisian youth, they often made friends to Levantine Arabs because of the same feelings of transcultural connectedness. Moreover, many youths explained that Montreal had a large Arab community of people from various national backgrounds that facilitated high interaction and comfort with other Arabs.

### Living in Arabic Culture

Through metissage or hybridity, Canadian-Arab youth see cultural artifacts and productions, particularly Arabic music, as core to living in Arabic culture, and in the process, feel more grounded living in Canada feeling like their cultural cups are full. Canadian-Arab youth actively consume Arab music, films, and television shows, and tend to passively consume news media from the Middle East. Thus, in sum, Arab music is a very important part of their lives and news media is less likely to be pursued for its own sake even though parents actively consume it. The news was deemed by some of the participants to be too depressing, and for that reason, they avoided it. As one respondent noted, “I always try to avoid that, just because being raised in an Arab surrounding, you’re always surrounded by news. So, as a kid, I just wanted to run away from that, it was always a noise and just a headache. I didn’t understand it and I wasn’t interested. I tried to just drift away from that.”<sup>7</sup>

From our quantitative survey, we found that the most popular form of MENA media is music and film, followed by news and television. Frequency of reading/watching MENA media does not appear to be correlated with age (within the 18–29-year-old bracket). However, frequency of reading/watching one type of MENA media is significantly positively correlated with watching/reading other types of MENA media at  $p < .000$ , which is to say a respondent is significantly more likely to frequently watch MENA TV if they frequently watch MENA news or listens to MENA music/watches MENA films. The majority of survey respondents are highly engaged in media originating from the MENA region. Specifically, 63 percent watch/read MENA news, TV, music, and/or films at least once a week. Further, approximately 36 percent of respondents watch/read MENA media daily (see Table 7.2).

For Arab youth, there is an apparent passion for Arab music. They often consume this at events like weddings and festivals, but also download music through YouTube and Facebook sharing. As one youth noted,

**Table 7.2** Frequency of reading/watching MENA media.

	At least once a week		At most once a year	
	Total number of respondents	Percentage of respondents	Total number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
MENA news	361	50	205	27
MENA TV	318	44	265	36
MENA music/films	425	58	158	22

I may not watch a lot of TV, I will go online though and watch talk shows every once in a while or like comedy skits. But one thing I have noticed that will always be is Arab music, as much as I listen to English western music, I will always kind of go back to Arabic music because it was what I was raised on, it's just very different and sometimes you need that little dose of it.<sup>8</sup>

The music of Arab pop-stars is particularly favored and enjoyed by many Arab youth. They listen to artists such as Wael Kfouri and Amr Diab via music videos or by playing such music at home with their parents or in their cars with their friends and cousins. Classic Arab singers, such as Fairouz and Umm Kuthum, are also popular. Sometimes the music is consumed for its own sake, sometimes it is used by youth to help them reconnect to their culture, and sometimes it is used to help youth connect to other Arabs who are not from their national origin. For example, one youth noted that “I am Algerian, but I really like Egyptian music and so, yes, I love listening and I access it through YouTube. It’s mostly the music that connects me to the Arab culture, mostly Egyptian and Lebanese, Algerian music if it’s modern music groups.”<sup>9</sup> While pop-stars are popular, some noted they listened to alternative Arab music as well. For example, one youth said: “I’m a big fan of Arabic music, especially Arabic rock, the new bands of rock music, there are a lot in Jordan. Also, I sometimes watch mostly through YouTube. I really like Moroccan drama and movies, they’re really good, and it’s a way to connect with my background, it’s really nice.”<sup>10</sup>

While alone, Arab youth, like many other Canadian youth demographics, consume popular media online. They listen to music and watch TV skits frequently via internet downloads. One youth said, “For films, I think the Internet mostly [is where I go to get them], as in YouTube, Sound Cloud, music streams, especially living in the West you’d have to pay quite a bit to have the regular TV service to come. So out of falling on Internet, YouTube videos are the best.”<sup>11</sup> Arab youth are especially fascinated by Arab soap operas or “Syrian dramas”<sup>12</sup> on satellite which they watch with their parents. Soap operas are watched with greater intensity during holiday celebrations such as Ramadan.

Canadian-Arab youth’s hybridity is also cemented through multilingual practices. Advanced use of English and French is met with an attachment to and longing to develop skills in the Arabic language and be connected to the Arabic accent. For one participant, connecting to home meant staying connected to the accent of Arabic people made accessible through popular media:

I do miss my country, and the people and the accent so I do find myself watching shows from that country so I can see and be surrounded and listen to that accent and feel more connected in that sort of way. Because, personally, I barely find Jordanians here, or Palestinians from my nationality, so I don't really hear the accent. I do find myself listening to songs and watching shows with that accent just to feel more connected.<sup>13</sup>

Another links language survival to watching TV shows:

I watch a lot of series, and a part of watching Arab shows is just to keep some type of Arabic language in the daily life, because I speak English with almost everyone I know, and everyone speaks it. So, I like to just have shows every now and then to hear the different dialects and keep in touch with the culture. If we're watching English TV, and talking English, we'll eventually start losing our Arabic.

Arab cultural products like film, literature, and poetry are not as interesting to Arab youth in the West. Some youth noted that if their Arabic was stronger, they would read more Arabic literature because they hear that it is quite rich. A number of youth were fascinated by Arabic calligraphy as an art form and turned to social media to access it.

### The Epistemological and Social Significance of Boundaries

In the process of hybridizing, Canadian-Arab youth actively demarcate social boundaries. The nuances of this social boundary making are unique to them. If family is imagined as a space, Arab youth draw borders around it to emphasize its importance and their desire to "own" family as a value. Youth in our study expressed great appreciation and love for strong family ties which they linked back to Arab culture. Very strong emphasis on family and close familial relations was one value that Arab youth felt distinguished Arab culture from Western culture, which they regarded as more individualistic. As one participant put it, "We are very family oriented, most Arab families are very close, and not only between our first family but our further family members too."<sup>14</sup> Others echoed comparisons between Arab cultural values and non-Arab values: "The respect in the family is definitely something I've noticed in the non-Arab community [that] is not prominent, and I do not want that. The whole respect and family staying close, like I'm connected to my cousins, my great aunts, uncles and everyone. That would be such a nice thing to keep."<sup>15</sup>

Nagel and Staeheli (2005) found that Arab-Americans believed they shared values with American culture on such areas as family, religion, and justice, but that Arab culture differed from American culture in the degree to which they acted upon these values. In explaining why Western families are less close-knit than Arab families, many identified a perceived individualism and business-orientedness to Western culture:

I feel like in the West it's mostly, it's more of like individualistic society. I really like our sense of community in Arab countries where like your neighbours are your friends and you visit each other and talk to people ... I really like that sense of belonging and going out. I feel like here it's more about your professional life and career, and you sort of work on yourself and it's not about working together as a community.<sup>16</sup>

Similar sentiments were shared by others. For example, one youth noted:

People here aren't really attached to family, it is very different from our culture and I don't want to pass that on to my children ....[also, in Canada] we live in an open country and religious values aren't really present in society, which is different from Algerian culture. We have certain convictions in Arab culture and I want to pass that on and they aren't here in Western culture.<sup>17</sup>

While the importance of family was resoundingly the most important characteristic of Arab culture that participants wanted to pass on to their children, others included generosity, hospitality, food and culinary practices, respecting elders, pushing for academic success, altruism, and charity.

Arab youth build knowledge about their identities through self-awareness and re-evaluation. Contrary to how they might be perceived, Arab youth do not take their cultures, values, and practices at face value or accept them as they have been socialized to accept them. This is profound because many youth are taught not to question the values of their upbringing. In conservative Muslim circles, values of patriarchy remain strong and children are encouraged to never challenge their parents out of respect for them, except if parents ask their children to act against the religion. In the wider Arab community, people take an interest in other people's affairs and it is considered normal, even an obligation to intervene when a person feels another is going in the "wrong" direction. Arab youth, instead, make claims about who they are through an open-minded hybrid exploration; it is an exploration of self-understanding regarding the limits of what they consider acceptable and unacceptable, some of which involves deviation from inculcated practices. The epistemology of their particular hybridization process therefore includes boundary making around Arabic cultural spaces and practices that do not define them. In this way, they live outside of particular parts of the cultural space instead of inside of them. Youth may be then in a Canadian space or a decidedly new one that may or may not pay deference to Canadian values. While many young Arabs noted that they like the collective nature of Arab culture, they criticized it as well.

As for values [that] I don't want to pass on, one thing I feel we have in the Arab community that is slowly diminishing is the whole kind of parents choose your way of life for you when you grow up. That's definitely not something I want to give to my kids. I want to let them [make choices], make it more open for them, but definitely sneak in my advice here and there, but ultimately I want it to be their choice of what they do in life. We can be very controlling sometimes; there is also a whole stigma with things in religion. I was raised up in a moderate to strict, not

the most strict like I do have my freedoms but, I definitely want to pass that on. I don't want to be too strict because to grow up you need to make your own mistakes in life and learn from that.<sup>18</sup>

Cognizant of the misogyny prevalent in their community, many put themselves outside of that cultural space, on the other side of the boundary that they had drawn. Arab Muslim youth argued that their parents confused religion with culture. Religion, in their opinion, is often more progressive on gender issues than Arab culture. For example, one participant noted:

You see a lot of Arab families usually have the wife staying at home and is a stay-at-home mom always. I feel that that responsibility should be shared among both, *and religiously it should be shared among both.* It just culturally it's not shared among both. I want to bring to light where it's okay for the wife to work, the husband can work and they can both share the raising of the kids. It would be much better as a family. It could also lead to less marriage problems.<sup>19</sup>

Arab youth widely echoed and rejected sentiments that conflated cultural taboos with religious mores. This was often most reflected upon when discussing gender roles. Many of the youth participants made this connection to women working outside the home. They often defended a woman's right to work outside the home on religious grounds and noted that in Western society with the cost of living, it was difficult financially for women to stay home. Others also criticized what they perceived as hypocrisy in Arab culture concerning the appropriate roles for men and women. As one noted,

Basically some [Arab] parents and older generations would think that a girl is not well seen when she comes late at home. But when it is a guy, it's fine? This is something I don't want my kids to grow up with! A guy can do whatever he wants and you can't do whatever you want and because you're a girl, and since you're not married, you can't. I feel like that a girl can respect herself coming home at the same time as a guy, that does not change. The gender should not make a difference or be a factor to discriminate about.<sup>20</sup>

This boundary making is not without push-back. Many youths had a strong sense of individual self-expression and self-identity, but still confronted social challenges related to collective shaming for having independent thoughts or values that ran contrary to Arab culture. Arab youth who challenged ideas for being illogical or irrational would often experience elders who disregard their concerns or who painted such ideas as "aib" (shameful). Thus, many parents support and encourage girls and women to pursue higher education partly to increase their perceived marriage potential, but only support women's educational ascension to a point because of the perceived cultural taboo of women holding a higher level of education than their husbands. It was upsetting to many Arab youths that felt pressure to keep limits on their educational ambitions in order to ensure their ability to get married in the community. Arab

youth frequently cited shaming others, laziness, lack of punctuality, gossiping, and materialism as characteristics of Arab culture that they wanted to disavow and not pass on to their children.

### (Re)claiming Arab-Western Hybridity as an Identity

Canadian-Arab youth engage in active reflexivity about culture and express their cultural loyalty through Arab-Western hybridity as their identity. Arab-Western hybridity was natural to many youths who took offense in being asked whether their Arab identity is compatible with being Western. We left what “being Western” might mean in abeyance and allowed the focus group participants to address or imply what it might mean to them. For Arab youth, “being a westerner” refers to more or less adopting a liberal social and political values framework on a spectrum, pursuing individual aggrandizement, leaning more toward a secular outlook, being respectful (or tolerant) of others and of differences, being privileged in terms of material comforts, and adhering to values of civility and civil society including the pursuit of peaceful resolutions to conflict. Being “Canadian” meant, for some, being part of a nation of peoples whose common linking bond is their multicultural differences and thus being allowed to be fluid in the expression of identity. Given that we found in Arab youth a desire to be inside and outside of Arab cultural boundaries, the fact that some might embrace the identity fluidity premised on metissage is not surprising. The resounding opinion of the groups was that Arabs can still retain their cultural attributes while being Western. This sentiment is shared by one youth which was typical of other responses.

I think the question separates the two identities and I don't see it as two different identities. I see right now, that I am a little bit of here, and a little bit of there, and [those two things] came together and I am what I am right now because of [my] experiences within the Middle East and experiences in the West, that forms my identity. It has a bit of both in it. I am not 100% there, and I am not 100% here either. I am hyphenation; in the middle.<sup>21</sup>

A youth responded to the last statement with this: “I agree. Of course our identities can come together as one, but I mean obviously there are some differences. Compare one Western person to another Western person; they won't be compatible as well. We can be compatible, but not 100%. No one is perfect.”<sup>22</sup> Again, we heard the view that their identities do coexist, and that one does not have to choose one or the other. As one youth noted, “The Arab identity, or Algerian identity, is very attached to religion. The western identity is very just open to everything and there is no religion. They are not necessarily fully compatible, but you can still mix both together.”<sup>23</sup> Another youth noted, “I think that being Arab or Canadian is not contradictory. You can be one and the other at the same time. Canadian, Arab, Muslim, occidental, these don't contradict each other. I think each identity has a different colour on the personality. The stronger colour will show, but it doesn't define the entire image.”<sup>24</sup> Again, we heard this appeal to

superimposed layers (upon layers) or a multi-circle Venn diagram to understand their hybridity of identities. One youth eloquently noted,

I don't think you can identify solely as one nation, but as a bunch of nations. I think I'm Québécois, a Montrealer, Canadian, Arab. So yes, but how does one define what Arab and Muslim culture is? Western values are compatible with Arabs. Because it's the same values. But, for example, the Arab political culture is garbage, but our arts are amazing. The two can be compatible, just depends what values I look at like "liberty, fraternity, equality."<sup>25</sup>

A number noted that the flexibility of Canadian multiculturalism (which expects people to respect others) allowed Arabs to make their identity compatible with Western identity because they could be genuine in individually self-expressing themselves. For example,

Arab identity is very compatible with western identity because western identity is actually a broad concept, so, as long as you respect other people you can be yourself and act according to your Arabic identity and still fit in the Canadian society. Western society is very open and inclusive so you can be yourself and still be part of the western world in some way.<sup>26</sup>

Similarly, another youth noted that hybridity might manifest itself in identity bifurcation (or multi-furcation) to make belonging possible:

I can comfortably, at least in Canada, express my Arab identity along with my Western identity in a society that is very multicultural. I can come to events like this and speak only in my home language. At the same time, I can walk 30 seconds outside and be in a completely different Western world, and express my own Western, or Western adopted identity simultaneously. I don't think it can really be exclusive to one or the other.<sup>27</sup>

Others reflected on the idea that their hybridity through mixing and interacting with others allowed them to take the best of the Western and Arab cultures and leave what they did not want to adopt:

Even the West can learn things from Arab culture and the Arabs can learn lots of things from the West. ... You can be a person that agrees to aspects from Arab culture and the Western culture. I don't see any of us here agreeing fully with the Arab culture or fully with the western culture. We have a little bit of both.<sup>28</sup>

Similarly, another youth added, "I always try to take the best from like Arab identity and best of Western, and try to have a mix of both as much as I can. Try to think what is best and mix ... I think I'm a mix of both."<sup>29</sup>

Many Arab youths did not want to have to choose between being either Arab or Western identities or cultures. On the contrary, they often advocated for the value and

merit of their hybridity. Some reflected on how Canadian multiculturalism had also given non-Arab Canadians an opportunity to learn from Arab culture:

Even if you look at an average white person who has had some experience with Arabs, he does himself have an Arab identity in him because he's just observing something from us. You absorb something from everyone you meet and that forms who you are in the end. In the end, your identity comes down to whom you interact with, and just how you are, and what your values are.

Similar views about being Muslim in a social environment where encounter is a form of exchange were also echoed. Arab youth are also cognizant of religious fundamentalism in their community. The youth that we spoke to were often supportive of having strong spiritual faith but did not want fundamentalist values in their lives.

While many youths noted that although they feel that Arab and Western values can coexist in this hybrid identity space, there was an acknowledgment that their identities can be in conflict. For example, one young person who was part Egyptian and Palestinian but born in Canada noted,

I am proud to say, I am half Egyptian, half Palestinian, but when you go back there [in Egypt, it] is always this feeling that you're not really integrated. Why? Because the language barrier, yes it's the same, but they have some dialects that you'll not understand, or some insides you won't understand because it's not the same thing. You feel [like] a visitor in your own home country while you're born here. You also feel as not necessarily an immigrant, but you're not Canadian-based like as a real Canadian because you have [a] background and origin [different] than other people here.<sup>30</sup>

Similar views were expressed about how their hybrid identity was not always understood by others. One youth noted, "When I'm in Algeria, they'll ask you where you're from, and when you're in Canada, they'll ask you where you're from. So, I don't belong anywhere. Being in Canada I feel like there's different values. And they'll hear you're Algerian or Muslim, so on the exterior I see that I have a difference." The idea that Arab youth felt both Arab and Western was repeated, but that both family in the Middle East and North Africa and other Canadians, always ask "where are you from?" was frustrating. As one noted, "Yes, my Arab identity can become compatible with my western identity. I feel like I don't really have to choose. But when I go to Morocco, people are like where are you from? And like here in Canada, they're like, 'where are you from?' and I'm like 'Morocco'."<sup>31</sup>

Another youth added a similar sentiment,

I live in a really Québécois neighborhood, and I didn't have a lot of Arab friends, mainly Québécois friends. But I do carry forth from my parent's culture and my language .... Yes, I am very connected by my Arab parents. [] When I'm in an Arab country it's different though, I am not Arab enough for them. You cannot answer whether I am Arab or Canadian; like I feel attached to both, you have the

Canadian part and the Arab part, it combines both of them and it makes “you”. You can’t feel just Arab or Canadian, I feel both. I feel happy and proud of my country and I feel happy and proud of Canada.<sup>32</sup>

A number of youth reflected on how rising global populism and Islamophobia were raising a binary trope between being Arab/Muslim and Western. One youth went further to say, “there is a policy of division telling us we can’t have both [Arab and Western identity], but we can have both!”<sup>33</sup>

Many youths wanted to visit the Middle East or North Africa or “back home” more often if they could. But most youth acknowledged that they preferred to raise a family in the West: “When we talk about going back to these countries and not mixing in, it is because the values we have adopted here in the West aren’t there, like being open, pushing for feminist agendas, all these things are really present here in the West and we can’t find them there.”<sup>34</sup>

## Conclusion and Analysis

Canadian-Arab youth use a number of tactics and strategies to stay translocally and transnationally connected to their Arabic culture which is widely adored by them. In exploring these Canadian-Arab youth translocal and transnational connections to their “home” countries, we observed four main themes: transnationally connected Arab youth long for stronger Arab connections in friendships and language, they appreciate Arab music and consume it with enthusiasm, they love having family ties but are critical of the misogyny, patriarchy, and collectivism, where it exists, in Arab cultures, and they have strong feelings of Arab-Western hybridity as an identity. Self-identity was shown to affect respondents’ connectivity to home countries, whereby those who identified as Arab or Arab-Canadian were more likely to have high connectivity (at least weekly communication with individuals from home countries) than those respondents who identified as Canadian or Canadian-Arab. Our findings support the work of Maira (2008) that shows how popular culture prominently characterizes Arab youth’s connections to the MENA culture and that they are vocal in criticizing gender relations and collective suppression of their desire to determine their destiny, while still respectful of collectivism as it relates to respecting family connectedness. Nurturance of a hybridity or metissage (as a lens for seeing their world and explaining their “why” in the world) is a core precursor for Canadian-Arab youths’ transcultural identity formation and helps them to blunt the idea that Canadianness is an alterity to them.

## Notes

1 Focus group respondent. Ottawa. June 20, 2016.

2 Among Canadian-Arab youth not born in Canada, 40.2 percent identify as “Arab,” 30.2 percent identify as “Arab-Canadian,” 2.5 percent identify as “Canadian,” and 13.1 percent identify as “Canadian-Arab” (10.6 percent identify as “Other”).

- 3 Note: In these findings, we discover that whereas earlier studies had identified differences in “connectivity” between Arabs and Arab-Canadians, but had overlooked differences between dual identities themselves, we provide evidence that such differences between dual identities exist. Youth media engagement with the Arab world might have more to do with knowledge of language, and therefore Canadians (who may not speak Arabic) are less engaged than all other groups who do speak Arabic. Thus, the difference between Canadian-Arabs and Arab-Canadians in media consumption is likely a consequence of the fact that Canadian-Arabs are not as fluent, whereas Arab-Canadians and Arabs are equally fluent and therefore have a similar prevalence of higher engagement.
- 4 Focus group respondent. Ottawa. June 20, 2016.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Focus group respondent. Montreal. July 18, 2016.
- 10 Focus group respondent. Ottawa. June 20, 2016.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Focus group respondent. Montreal. Translated from French. July 18, 2016.
- 18 Focus group respondent. Ottawa. June 20, 2016.
- 19 Ibid. Emphasis added.
- 20 Focus group respondent. Montreal. July 18, 2016.
- 21 Focus group respondent. Ottawa. June 20, 2016.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 Focus group respondent. Montreal. Translated from French. July 18, 2016.
- 24 Focus group respondent. Montreal. July 18, 2016.
- 25 Focus group respondent. Montreal. Translated from French. July 18, 2016.
- 26 Focus group respondent. Ottawa. June 20, 2016.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Ibid.
- 29 Focus group respondent. Montreal. July 18, 2016.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Focus group respondent. Montreal. Translated from French. July 18, 2016.
- 32 Focus group respondent. Montreal. July 18, 2016.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 Ibid.

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## Appendix

### CAYS STATA Workbook

#### LEGEND

Never	1
Yearly	2
Special occasions	3
Once a month	4

Total number of valid observations: 814

- 564 respondents are between 18 and 24
- 250 respondents are between 25 and 29

#### Self-identification

- 237 respondents identify as Arab
- 43 respondents identify as Canadian
- 183 respondents identify as Canadian-Arab
- 233 respondents identify as Arab-Canadian
- 72 respondents identify as Other
- 46 missing responses

What is your age range?	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1824	<b>564</b>	<b>69.29</b>	<b>69.29</b>
2529	<b>250</b>	<b>30.71</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Total	<b>814</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

How do you self-identi- fy?	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	<b>237</b>	<b>30.86</b>	<b>30.86</b>
2	<b>43</b>	<b>5.60</b>	<b>36.46</b>
3	<b>183</b>	<b>23.83</b>	<b>60.29</b>
4	<b>233</b>	<b>30.34</b>	<b>90.62</b>
5	<b>72</b>	<b>9.38</b>	<b>100.00</b>
Total	<b>768</b>	<b>100.00</b>	

## Frequency and Methods of Communication with Home Country

Frequency of Home Country Communication - Skype				Frequency of Home Country Communication - Facebook			
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	186	25.14	25.14	1	73	9.76	9.76
2	65	8.78	33.92	2	16	2.14	11.90
3	191	25.81	59.73	3	52	6.95	18.85
4	91	12.30	72.03	4	89	11.90	30.75
5	104	14.05	86.08	5	149	19.92	50.67
6	103	13.92	100.00	6	369	49.33	100.00
Total	740	100.00		Total	748	100.00	

. tab Phone

Frequency of Home Country Communication - Phone				Frequency of Home Country Communication - Text or BBM			
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	53	7.08	7.08	1	194	26.61	26.61
2	33	4.41	11.48	2	29	3.98	30.59
3	110	14.69	26.17	3	66	9.05	39.64
4	95	12.68	38.85	4	63	8.64	48.29
5	142	18.96	57.81	5	182	13.99	62.28
6	316	42.19	100.00	6	275	37.72	100.00
Total	749	100.00		Total	729	100.00	

. tab FaceTime

Frequency of Home Country Communication - FaceTime				Frequency of Home Country Communication - Tango or Viber			
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	310	42.64	42.64	1	257	35.35	35.35
2	31	4.26	46.91	2	35	4.81	40.17
3	94	12.93	59.83	3	65	8.94	49.11
4	82	11.28	71.11	4	93	12.79	61.90
5	109	14.99	86.11	5	120	16.51	78.40
6	101	13.89	100.00	6	157	21.60	100.00
Total	727	100.00		Total	727	100.00	

. tab Email

Frequency of Home Country Communication - Email				Frequency of Home Country Communication - WhatsApp			
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.		Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	278	38.56	38.56	1	91	12.35	12.35
2	33	4.58	43.13	2	10	1.36	13.70
3	85	11.79	54.92	3	40	5.43	19.13
4	74	10.26	65.19	4	73	9.91	29.04
5	57	7.91	73.09	5	106	14.38	43.42
6	194	26.91	100.00	6	417	56.58	100.00
Total	721	100.00		Total	737	100.00	

. tab Instagram

Frequency of Home Country Communicati on -Instagram	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	235	32.15	32.15
2	16	2.19	34.34
3	31	4.24	38.58
4	62	8.48	47.06
5	91	12.45	59.51
6	296	40.49	100.00
Total	731	100.00	

. tab Snapchat

Frequency of Home Country Communicati on -Snapchat	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	260	35.71	35.71
2	16	2.20	37.91
3	25	3.43	41.35
4	38	5.22	46.57
5	80	10.99	57.55
6	309	42.45	100.00
Total	728	100.00	

## Most and Least Frequently Used Methods of Communication with Home Country

. ttest Snapchat, by(whatistyouragerange)

Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]
1824	518	4.069498	.0969944	2.207556	3.878946 4.26005
2529	210	3.166667	.15666602	2.270222	2.85783 3.475503
combined	728	3.809066	.0838202	2.261593	3.644507 3.973624
diff		.9028314	.1820844		.5453565 1.260306

diff = mean(1824) - mean(2529) t = 4.9583  
Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 726

Ha: diff < 0	Ha: diff != 0	Ha: diff > 0
Pr(T < t) = 0.0000	Pr( T  >  t ) = 0.0000	Pr(T > t) = 0.0000

. ttest Phone, by(whatistyouragerange)

Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]
1824	524	4.53626	.0704017	1.611569	4.397955 4.674564
2529	225	4.702222	.100104	1.50156	4.504956 4.899488
combined	749	4.586115	.0577379	1.580164	4.472767 4.699463
diff		-.1659627	.1258844		-.4130921 .0811667

diff = mean(1824) - mean(2529) t = -1.3184  
Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 747

Ha: diff < 0	Ha: diff != 0	Ha: diff > 0
Pr(T < t) = 0.0939	Pr( T  >  t ) = 0.1878	Pr(T > t) = 0.9061

At Least Weekly Communicati on with Home Country	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	141	17.32	17.32
1	673	82.68	100.00
Total	814	100.00	

Daily Communicati on with Home Country	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	246	30.22	30.22
1	568	69.78	100.00
Total	814	100.00	

**Independent variable:** Sense of belonging to Canadian society

**Dependent variables:** Very high connectivity (daily communication with individuals from home country); very low connectivity (at most, yearly communication with home country individuals)

. regress veryhighconnectivity feelingofbelongingincanada

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	778
Model	2.27049648	1	2.27049648	F(1, 776)	=	11.46
Residual	153.760352	776	.198144783	Prob > F	=	0.0007
Total	156.030848	777	.200811903	R-squared	=	0.0146
				Adj R-squared	=	0.0133
				Root MSE	=	.44513

veryhighconnectivity	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
feelingofbelongingincanada	-.0548007	.0161889	-3.39	0.001	-.0865799 -.0230215
_cons	.9353694	.0649166	14.41	0.000	.8079363 1.062802

. reg verylowconnectivity feelingofbelongingincanada

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	778
Model	.211240005	1	.211240005	F(1, 776)	=	4.24
Residual	38.6280916	776	.049778469	Prob > F	=	0.0397
				R-squared	=	0.0054
Total	38.8393316	777	.04998627	Adj R-squared	=	0.0042
				Root MSE	=	.22311

  

verylowconnectivity	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
feelingofbelongingincanada	-.0167153	.0081142	-2.06	0.040	-.0326437 - .0007869
_cons	1.012271	.0325376	31.11	0.000	.9483991 1.076143

### Interest in MENA TV, Music, Film, etc.

Read or watch news from MENA	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	76	10.41	10.41
2	119	16.30	26.71
4	174	23.84	50.55
5	202	27.67	78.22
6	159	21.78	100.00
Total	730	100.00	

Watch satellite TV from MENA	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	117	16.05	16.05
2	148	20.30	36.35
4	146	20.03	56.38
5	183	25.10	81.48
6	135	18.52	100.00
Total	729	100.00	

Watch Music/Film from MENA	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
1	64	8.77	8.77
2	94	12.88	21.64
4	147	20.14	41.78
5	202	27.67	69.45
6	223	30.55	100.00
Total	730	100.00	

High Engagement in MENA Media	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	298	36.61	36.61
1	516	63.39	100.00
Total	814	100.00	

Very High Engagement in MENA Media	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	520	63.88	63.88
1	294	36.12	100.00
Total	814	100.00	

. reg MENAPol WatchMENANews

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	706
Model	108.436366	1	108.436366	F(1, 704)	=	68.38
Residual	1116.33417	704	1.58570195	Prob > F	=	0.0000
Total	1224.77054	705	1.73726317	R-squared	=	0.0885
				Adj R-squared	=	0.0872
				Root MSE	=	1.2592

MENAPol	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]	
WatchMENANews	.2401488	.0290405	8.27	0.000	.1831325	.2971651
_cons	2.385338	.1282812	18.59	0.000	2.133479	2.637198

High Interest in MENA Politics			
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	452	55.53	55.53
1	362	44.47	100.00
Total		814	100.00

High Interest in International Politics			
	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
0	429	52.70	52.70
1	385	47.30	100.00
Total		814	100.00

. reg veryhighconnectivity highMENAmediaENGAGE

Source	SS	df	MS	Number of obs	=	814
Model	15.402703	1	15.402703	F(1, 812)	=	80.04
Residual	156.253317	812	.192430193	Prob > F	=	0.0000
Total	171.65602	813	.211139016	R-squared	=	0.0897
				Adj R-squared	=	0.0886
				Root MSE	=	.43867

  

veryhighconnectiv~y	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95% Conf. Interval]
highMENAmediaENGAGE	.2855471	.0319165	8.95	0.000	.2228984 .3481957
_cons	.5167785	.0254114	20.34	0.000	.4668988 .5666583

#### Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]
0	226	.7610619	.028429	.4273814	.7050408 .8170831
1	470	.8978723	.0139827	.3031388	.8703957 .9253489
combined	696	.8534483	.013415	.3539128	.8271094 .8797871
diff		-.1368104	.0281946		-.1921673 -.0814535

diff = mean(0) - mean(1) t = -4.8524  
Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 694

Ha: diff < 0 Pr(T < t) = 0.0000 Ha: diff != 0 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000 Ha: diff > 0 Pr(T > t) = 1.0000

. ttest highconnectivity, by (MixedIdentity)

#### Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]
0	233	.8583691	.0228914	.3494218	.8132675 .9034707
1	183	.8032787	.0294661	.3986104	.7451395 .8614178
combined	416	.8341346	.0182588	.3724076	.7982434 .8700259
diff		.0550904	.036729		-.0171081 .1272889

diff = mean(0) - mean(1) t = 1.4999  
Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 414

Ha: diff < 0 Pr(T < t) = 0.9328 Ha: diff != 0 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.1344 Ha: diff > 0 Pr(T > t) = 0.0672

## Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]
0	226	.5486726	.033175	.49873	.4832991 .6140461
1	470	.706383	.0210293	.4559038	.6650597 .7477062
combined	696	.6551724	.0180296	.4756539	.6197734 .6905715
diff		-.1577104	.0380626		-.2324421 -.0829787

diff = mean(0) - mean(1) t = -4.1434  
Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 694

Ha: diff < 0 Pr(T < t) = 0.0000 Ha: diff != 0 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0000 Ha: diff > 0 Pr(T > t) = 1.0000

. ttest highMENAmmediaENGAGE, by (MixedIdentity)

## Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf. Interval]
0	233	.72103	.029445	.4494583	.6630163 .7790438
1	183	.5846995	.0365268	.4941257	.512629 .6567699
combined	416	.6610577	.0232358	.4739202	.6153831 .7067323
diff		.1363306	.0463861		.0451489 .2275123

diff = mean(0) - mean(1) t = 2.9390  
Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 414

Ha: diff < 0 Pr(T < t) = 0.9983 Ha: diff != 0 Pr(|T| > |t|) = 0.0035 Ha: diff > 0 Pr(T > t) = 0.0017