Belonging to neo-tribes or just glocal youth talk: Jewish israeli adolescent girls representing themselves on Facebook

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Eight focus groups comprising 35 upper-middle-class Jewish Israeli girls ranging in age from 12 to 18

# Abstract

This article examines the role of Facebook language tools in shaping and preserving community limits among Jewish Israeli adolescent girls, who constitute a young, dynamic, western and age-specific community. We describe how actions such as confirming friend requests, updating statuses and assigning ‘likes’ serve as means of phatic communication and as deictic elements that sketch out the community’s limits. Based on interviews with eight focus groups comprising a total of 35 Israeli adolescent girls, we challenge the prevalent view that social networks and the Internet in general facilitate fast and superficial transitions between sites and identities. Quite the contrary, we argue that these ostensibly random transitions in fact set clear limits by means of apparently banal authorizations of belonging to a community that occur on a daily basis. These community limits set by this youth communication are more rigid and conservative than those apparent in these girls’ everyday lives offline.

# Outcome

Levin and Barak-BranDeS (2014) found that activity on the Facebook social network powerfully attests to the rigidity of identities. The study shows for better or for worse, Facebook tools do not liberate individuals from the shackles of off-line identity, but rather reinforce these restraints. the consumer or neo-tribe lifestyle identity thought to be fundamental to the pluralism promoted by the Internet has clear limits. The freedom to adopt identities that transcend nationality is limited by age-related and ethnic structures that maintain the notion of glocal youth. Moreover, the affordances offered by the Facebook social network heighten its rigid character, as opposed to the fluid postmodernism usually associated with the Internet in general. the girls did distinguish between the quality of conversations on the net and the deeper, more meaningful conversations they conducted offline. Not all of them attached any importance or significance to the dozens of birthday messages received from distant acquaintances, and there were those who talked about Facebook in terms of an addiction they must overcome