Good Young Nostalgia: Camera Phones and Technologies of Self among Israeli Youths

Ori Schwarz, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel

Abstract: The nostalgic consumption of images, which only a few years ago was practised mainly by adults, has lately become prevalent among Israeli teenage-girls. Girls often describe themselves as "nostalgic" and nostalgia has become a desired emotion. Unlike the nostalgia of former generations, this nostalgia is cumulative and not necessarily based on a strong dichotomous contrast between past and present. The transformation of nostalgia is closely related to developments in technology (the camera-phone and the internet) and in the possession-patterns of devices. Personal mobile phones are used by teenagers for production, archiving and consumption of documentary images on a daily basis. These images, not unrelated to those of mass media, are consumed by teenagers in order to evoke nostalgia and other emotions, as a technology of self. This trend also contributes to blur the ontic distinction between events and their representations.

Keywords: nostalgia, photography, youths, emotions, emotionology, blogs, camera phones, technology of self, databasification, consumption, egodocuments

Requiem for a mobile phone

In November 2005, 16-year-old Israeli girl nicknamed "Adida", published in her blog a post entitled "You can't reconstruct nostalgias, can you?" The 440 words this post holds are dedicated to her laments over the loss of data stored on her mobile phone – photographs, videos and voice recordings she had never backed-up. Adida felt her past is doomed to be forgotten, and was afraid she'd never be able again to feel the nostalgic feelings that used to be evoked by the lost photos, videos and recordings:

I don't know how, or why I deserve it, or how it happened just like this, without warning, without notice in advance, without being ready for it.


And don't tell me again and again that "you can reconstruct it". Cause it's impossible to reconstruct memories. You can't make time move backwards, you can't bring back moments that are already gone.

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Such feelings, as will be demonstrated below, are not unusual among Israeli youth. This article examines how Israeli youths use mobile phones for self-documentation and evocation of nostalgic feelings. I'll analyse the rise of a new culture of youth-nostalgia, and reflect on the way in which socio-technological developments – like the invention of the camera phone and changes in the form and ownership of means of production, storage and consumption of images – contributed to this trend.

For Adida's emotions are indeed not unusual, but neither are they trivial. Traditionally, those considered more prone to nostalgia are the aged. According to sociologist Fred Davis (1979), since modern industrial society deprives the aged of social power and fails to endow them with an alternative social role, they remain with nostalgia alone as their source of self-esteem and a means for creating continuity between their past and present identities.

In Chicago in 1977, Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton found that children and teenagers only seldom ascribe great importance to photos, whereas their parents are more prone to such feelings, and their grandparents are most likely to do so (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981, pp. 66-69). They suggested an essentialist explanation for the age differentiation: nostalgia, they maintained, is an old people's emotion. Since they have "more past" – relatives and friends that passed away, memories which will be forgotten if not saved from oblivion by the photos – it's no surprise that photos have higher emotional importance for the

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1 Quoted posts are cited in standard black font. All other graphic characterizations were left untouched, including underlines, bolding, emoticons etc. Bracketed italicised text is transcription of the Hebrew slang term. All posts quoted were accessed between April and September 2007.
old folk. Nancy Martha West's research indicates that in the early 20th century, children were considered an ideal object of future nostalgic feelings, hence the ultimate object of parents' domestic photography (West, 2000:76-88), but in no way were they considered nostalgic beings. West suggests that the attempt to market cheap cameras for children failed as a result of "Kodak's success in replacing photography's playful qualities with its nostalgic obligations. Based as it is on loss, yearning, and the pain of experience, nostalgia is an adult's game, not suitable for players under twenty-one" (107-108). Even as late as 2003, Michael Haldrup and Jonas Larsen argue that “the charm of the family photo-album, being a nostalgic medium, grows with age”, as people come closer to their own death (Haldrup and Larsen, 2003:40-41).

However, materials gathered from contemporary blogs written by Israeli youths indicate that these explanations, common sense as they may sound, are contingent rather than essential. Adida's preoccupation with “nostalgia” can be traced among many other Israeli teenagers. In Israel of the early 21st century, children and teenagers are intensively engaged with recalling their personal past through artefacts like photos and videos, and ascribe great importance to it. This is especially true for female teenagers. Among the characteristics that female teenage bloggers list when describing themselves in their personal online-profiles, “nostalgic” appears very often. The vast majority of female teenage respondents to a survey I conducted described themselves as "nostalgic" or "more nostalgic than average". Only 3% described themselves "not nostalgic". The respondents also often used the word "nostalgia" while asked to describe in their own words their emotional reaction to particular sorts of photos.

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2 Another hypothesis raised by Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (though they tended to doubt it) was of a more historic nature: that old people attribute great value to photos due to the rarity and costliness of photos at the time of their youth, and since they have much less photos than younger generations. This implies the predication that the value of photos for old people will decrease over generations, a predication that seems to be refuted in the 28 years passed since the publication.

3 Unlike modern scholars, some 19th century scholars did believe that children are more prone to nostalgia, since they live in a world of illusions (Haspel, 1873, quoted in Smith, 2000).
Both the survey and analysis of blogs indicate that nostalgia is a highly
gendered (feminine) emotion, but is far from being the exclusive domain of the elderly.

How are we to explain this development? To what degree was it influenced by develop-
ments in technologies and their possession-patterns?

**What is Nostalgia?**

In this point we must stop and ask: is the "nostalgia" described by 21st century blog-
gers, 20th century elderly and 19th century psychologists one and the same emotion? and
what is the very nature of this emotion? In other words, isn't it possible that the only change
was in the semantic range of the word "nostalgia"? This word has already known shifts of
meaning since the 18th century, when it referred to soldiers' homesickness. From a word re-
ferring to a nervous disease in the medical discourse, it turned to an everyday word referring
to an emotion, which might be enjoyable and even welcome if not taken too seriously. The
object of nostalgia changed as well: from the spatial (the remote home or homeland) to the
temporal (the irrecoverable past). The nostalgic experience is usually described as a contem-
plative, bitter-sweet mood, combining the sweetness of the past memory and the sorrow of its
passing. While Wilson interprets it as the construction of a desired future ("a longing for a
utopia, projected backwards in time"), Smith brilliantly stresses that nostalgia cannot be a
basis for action. For Smith, the concept of nostalgia as invented in the 19th century by pro-
gressives includes not only the universal feeling of longing for the past, but also a set of inter-
pretations of it: the assumption that the past as remembered is idealised and has never exis-
ted; and the labeling of the wish to return as irrational. Thus, the category of nostalgia helped
to disarm anti-progress forces, and to ascribe nostalgia the exclusive role of enrichment for
private life (Smith, 2000; Davis, 1979; Wilson, 2005; Wernick, 1997).

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4 Though not representative sample, the respondents are a highly diverse group, recruited through posts
published in sundry internet forums and through viral mailing.
This privatised nostalgia, transformed into a Proustian harmless leisure activity, is the same one found in blogs compiled by contemporary girls. The blogs I have read indicate that the experience of nostalgia as a bitter-sweet contemplation of the past hasn't changed much. Yet, transformations in the feeling rules (Hochschild, 2003) or the "cultural scripts" (Smith, 2000) concerning nostalgia may well be recognised, e.g. in the objects found appropriate for future nostalgia, in the time span which should separate the documentation's production from its nostalgic consumptions, in the production of artefacts used for the arousal of nostalgia etc. As I'll demonstrate below, while the subjective experience of nostalgia might well be similar to that of former generations, the "nostalgic structure of feeling" as Stuart Tannock called it, has been subjected to changes. For Tannock and Davis, nostalgia is a "periodising emotion", which contrasts the stable situation of prelapsarian past with the gloomy present, thus organising a person's life (Tannock, 1995). The cellular youth culture may help to characterise the shift from this structure, which I'll refer to as "dichotomous nostalgia", to what I'll term "cumulative nostalgia", which evolved together with the inflation in nostalgic objects, due to technological developments.

**Cellular Nostalgic Documentation as a Technology of Self**

The last decades have witnessed the establishment of a large corpus of research in the sociology and history of emotions. Emotions are now understood as socially and historically constructed, activated in different contexts due to changing "feeling rules". The meaning of specific emotions, the circumstances and social groups in which they are considered appropriate, wished and expected to be felt have become objects to historical research (e.g. Kotchemidova, 2005). Yet, the contribution of technologies and their consumption to emotionology has not yet received its due attention from sociologists.5 The relations between technology, consumption and emotion gained much more attention from the applied disciplines, in-

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5 One of the few exceptions is Ben-ze'ev's discussion on the way internet communication changes love and the traits ascribed to the beloved (Ben-ze'ev, 2005)
interested in the impact of emotions on technology acceptance, rather than vice versa. Unlike other private-consumption technologies (e.g. dishwashers), aimed at improving efficiency, the functions of camera phones are perception's management, sharing and recall. The consumption of cellular photos and videos among Israeli youth is to be understood as not dissimilar to the consumption of music. As Tia Denora demonstrated, the consumption of music is a "technology of self" (Foucault, 1988), which enables individuals to manipulate their emotions, "reconfigure themselves", "get into the mood", and shift into a desirable mode of agency (Denora 1999, 2000).

I'll argue that the consumption of self-produced cellular documentary materials among Israeli youths shares similar traits. Hence, it is an optimal locus for students of technology consumption's impact on emotionology. As I'll demonstrate below, "consumption of the past" stored in camera phones as visual representations – photos and videos – is used to evoke not only nostalgia in the narrow sense, but a wider spectrum of emotional impacts (including laughter and merriment). However, youths experience all these practices as "nostalgic", since their effectiveness derives directly from their ability to resuscitate pleasant moments of the personally-experienced past. Below I'll demonstrate how they're all integrated in a unitary culture of nostalgia.

Israel, where almost every adult and teenager has a personal mobile phone, and the norm is to carry it at all times (Lemish and Cohen, 2005), may indeed be a good study case. Even if not originally acquired mainly for this purpose, mobile phones do help their owners to manipulate their own emotions. A special focus will be given to staged videos made by teenagers, sometimes modeled after the mass media. I'll argue below that contrary to the first impression, those videos shall be interpreted as personal-documentation, and more important, as a part of the new culture of nostalgia.
Camera-phones are a rather new development, commercially produced since autumn 1999, hence only scarcely studied. Carole Rivière stressed they enable users to intensify experiences through their capturing and to easily share experiences with others "at the same level", thus "mak[ing] possible a process of empathetically participating in the world". She identifies camera phones with Baumann's notion of liquid postmodern culture of immediacy, since (she claims) those images are immediately watched, shared with others, but never archived or kept for nostalgic use (Rivière, 2005). These findings might be right for the Japanese society Rivière studied, but sharply contrast with the prevalent practices among Israeli youth. It seems indeed that camera phones were developed in order to enable users to send photos to others, like text messages (as assumed by Lehtonen et al. 2002). However, among Israeli youths, they seem to have taken some of the traditional roles of film and video cameras in creating a lasting documentation of personal life – thus making a good example of the unexpected way emotional repertoires can be moulded by changes in the design of consumer goods.6

The fact that cameras, video cameras and sound-recorders have become standard features of such an omnipresent consumer item as the mobile phone means that production and consumption of self-documentation are always available. Unlike traditional cameras, taken only to certain events, in which photography is anticipated and often defined as "family-possession", camera phones are personal and enable spontaneous, costless photography. Mobile phones are not only teenagers' main tool for taking photos, they're also their main storage platform and consumption (viewing) platform. In order to watch the photos or videos, one doesn't have to carry a massive album: the database of documentation materials is always

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6 Researches from South Korea, U.S. and Britain also show that photo sharing is usually done face-to-face, in the presence of the photographer – like showing a traditional photo album – and not by sending a MMS (Kindberg et al, 2005; Hjorth, 2006)
there, thus enables spontaneous consumption. Like many Israeli teenagers, Adida stated in
the side-column of her blog, "you'll never see me without my mobile or without a camera".7

Methodology

In order to address the aforementioned questions, I used two main sources of data.
The main source was blogs written by Israeli youths, where they describe practices of cellular
documentation – either as a main theme in itself or incidentally – which I gathered using
search engines. Tens of thousands of Israeli teenagers keep a blog8. Blogs are a distribution
platform for a large share of the products of the documentation: many teenagers publish pho-
tos they took with their mobile phones on their blogs on a daily basis. But not less important,
blogs also contain first-person descriptions of practices concerning the documentation's pro-
duction, archiving and consumption, and the circumstances in which they take place, as well
as statements concerning the documentation's meanings. Hammersley and Atkinson noticed
that ethnographers are usually over-occupied with oral communication and tend to neglect
texts – both formal and informal, verbal and visual, although anthropology is no longer ex-
clusively dedicated to the study of non-western oral cultures. Diaries, they say, when read in
awareness of their authors' rhetoric interests, may supply us with information on routine
events, help us to sensitise concepts, shed light on the imagery of the author, etc. This is prin-
cipally true for all egodocuments, written to be published or for one's drawer, online or off-
line (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Offline diaries are usually unavailable for the ethno-
grapher, unless solicited by her (for the uses of solicited diaries, see Plummer, 2001, p.48 ff).
However, this is not true for online diaries. They can be used in a similar way historical an-
thropologists use historical diaries to uncover practices, cultural models and rituals (e.g.
Jancke, 2005; Burschel, 1999; Algazi, 2002; Rutz, 2002).

7 This formula appears in many other blogs, as in the caption of a photo published by a girl in an Israeli Social
Network Site, showing her sitting on the toilet bowl.
8 In October 2006, the main Israeli blogs site, Isra-blog, contained more than 100,000 active blogs, most of them
kept by teenagers. According to Weissman, 73% of the bloggers in Isra-blog in 2004 were females, and 78%
aged less than 19 years (Weissman, 2004)
Blogs are egodocuments (Wolf, 2002; Schulte Nordholt, 2002), subjected to what Philippe Lejeune called “the autobiographical pact”: subjective, manipulative and audience-aware as they might be, almost never are they fictional, and even while lying they want to be seen as true. Since blogs are often read by online acquaintances of their authors, blunt lies would result in attack on their author, online as well as offline. Hence, blogs may serve as a powerful tool for the ethnographer who studies an unknown subculture and its practice, just as historical egodocuments are used by historical anthropologists; as well as for the ethnography of identity, while understood as practices of identifying (Hammersley and Treseder 2007). Blogs do not only offer a cheap substitute for interviews and observations, but may complement them with unique information that would not otherwise be revealed to the outsider observer/interviewer. As Hammersley and Atkinson write, texts are a source of data, not better or worse than any other, and indispensable when trying to analyse highly literate and self-documentary cultures. I refer to some 50 bloggers, most of them 13-19 year old, and the rest in their early twenties. Their diary entries ("posts") include not only “folk theories” and generalisations about practices, but also many detailed and well-contextualised concrete cases. Since Adida's post systematically enumerates genres of documentation products and their respective modes of consumption, I'll use it as a study case and as a rhetorical 'skeleton', while supplementing all my arguments with other sources.

The other main source is the documentation's products published online: hundreds of personal videos published in video-sharing sites like Youtube and in blogs; and hundreds of photos published in online albums and blogs. Thus, visual products and texts which discuss their production-circumstances supplement each other. Examples of genres mentioned in blogs are thus made available and can be analysed. Videos are also often reflective, i.e. include important information on their production as an interaction or a social activity. Thus, Hine's goal in multisited research - "tying those texts to particular circumstances of produc-
First I'll discuss the totalisation of personal experience and its translation into a database, which produces materials for future-nostalgia, while distinguishing between different technologies of translation. Later, I'll analyse the production and consumption patterns of documentation and its main subjects, as a ground for a more refined typology.

**Life as a Database**

The translation of the past into an always-available database on one's personal mobile phone is part of a much wider cultural shift, the outlines of which were well-portrayed by Lev Manovich (2001). He suggested that in the world of new media, the narrative logic of the film or the book is being replaced by the non-narrative logic of databases and (search) algorithms. "As a cultural form, database represents the world as a list of items and it refuses to order this list", says Manovich (p. 225).

The existence of the database in itself does not explain the flourishing of the nostalgia culture. But it does produce its objects, rendering the recollection and mediation on the past much easier. Thanks to databasification, the past (or chosen segments of it) is being reified and made extremely more available: it becomes an artefact, a subject of manipulation, a medium that helps evoke certain emotions and surpass others (i.e. change the emotional regime), thus, a raw material for a whole range of technologies of the self.

Mobile phones are used for the production of personal nostalgic databases in three different ways. Firstly, some past-materials are produced automatically: a by-product while sending or receiving text messages is having them archived on one's handset. Communicators must neither exert any effort for the databasification to take place, nor chose what to archive (although they often sort and delete messages due to the mobile's restricted memory capacity).
teenagers and young adults often describe in their blogs the common practice of reading incoming and outgoing SMS-correspondence, in order to recall past events and arouse nostalgic feelings. 23-year-old “Alfa Charlie” could not bring himself to delete the messages documenting his relationship with his ex-girlfriend, including their traumatic breakup, and happened to read them ten months later, out of boredom. Readers identified with his inability to delete the messages. The 18-year-old author of the blog "Sound of Silence" enumerates among the 39 things she loves the most "reading nostalgic messages in the mobile phone", while the accidental deletion of messages is mentioned as a tragic event. Not unlike Adida, 20-year-old blogger "Antonio Montana" eulogized (he used the term himself) in his blog the loss of his "nostalgic messages" from girlfriends, friends, his army commander, etc. In four years he transferred the messages four times from one mobile to the other, and after accidentally losing them, he tried to recall them and published the reconstructed text to be saved from oblivion in his blog. This eulogisation is easy to understand: a loss of data as experienced by Adida and "Antonio Montana" are surely a premature, 'bad death': a successful/ideal career (Kopytoff, 1986) of an emotionally laden moment would include its reification as a photo, video or SMS; an interim period in the camera; "first burial" (Hetherington, 2004) on a hard disk, CD or media-sharing internet site (e.g. Flickr, Youtube); and possibly a final, second burial – as a highly symbolic act (e.g. following a romantic breakup) or as part of data reorganisation. Teenagers often give close friends access to this data, not unlike letting them browse their personal photo-albums or personal diary. Since the storage space on the phone is limited, teenagers often have to review the stored materials and reflect on them in order to decide what should be kept and what should be deleted or transferred to their PC to avoid loss.

Mobile users also use them for manual databasification of their memories: unlike taking notes on paper, using the mobile to take notes turns them into a part of a searchable and reproducible database, often used as a memory-prostheses. However, this article will focus on
a databasification which is neither automatic nor completely manual: data collected as a result of an explicit decision to indexically document a segment of reality through still photography, videos, and sound recording, features included in most contemporary mobile phones and intensely used by teenagers.

**Content-Oriented Typology**

This indexical initiated databasification of one's life is not total. In order to understand the youth culture of self-documentation, one has to take into consideration the objects chosen for documentation, its audience, and the patterns of its production and consumption. Adida's post, which is to be subsumed under the genre of eulogy or obituary that portrays and praises the deceased, may be of great help. After lamenting her bad fate, she explains the important role her mobile played in her life. Thanks to this, we are lucky to have an unusually detailed and systematic inventory of the sundry contemporary documentation-practices of Israeli youths, which could serve as the cornerstone of a typology. Adida mentions many production-patterns and consumption-patterns of her self-documentary project. The production of documentation (comprising still photography, sound recording and filming), she says, took place "about every day". What were the criteria that guided her decision to document one event and avoid documenting the other? Are we dealing with documentation in the first place, i.e. with the memorialisation of events which were to take place anyhow, or with the creation of media-events, home-made artistic/entertainment products modeled after television? And as far as the second answer is correct, how could such productions be integrated into a culture of nostalgia?

In order to answer these questions, one must focus on the documentation's consumption patterns. I'll now suggest a content- and consumption-oriented threefold categorization of documentation, and demonstrate that achieving certain emotional impacts while being in un-
desirable emotional states is the main reason for the intense consumption of the documenta-
tion's materials belonging to two of the these categories.

**First Category: Kissing in Front of the Lens**

Some of the videos were watched by Adida herself, while facing feelings of sadness
or longing. These include documentation of interactions with significant others, watched in
order to relive the presence of beloved persons. For instance, every time she missed a boy
named Sagi (who probably had a romantic relationship with her, though tracing his exact
status from this post or the whole blog proved, unfortunately, impossible), she used to watch
a video showing them kissing. The kiss was videotaped on the same day Adida got her new
mobile phone – only four months before the data was mistakenly deleted – and the document-
ation was probably prompted by her enthusiasm over the new phone. Teenage bloggers often
state explicitly that they took pictures because a camera was available, especially if it's a new
one.

It is quite possible that filming kisses was not a recurring behaviour pattern for Adida
(she never mentioned any other such film in her blog), but the documentation of this intimate
situation was clearly not a taboo for her, and seems not to arouse unusual embarrassment.
Adida is no exception. Kisses, and to a lesser degree other sexual acts, are not uncommon
subjects for cellular documentation among Israeli youths and young adults. A high percent-
age of the teenage users of the Israeli social network site "Shox" stated they don't exclude the
possibility of having themselves photographed during sex.⁹

Still "kissing pics", often taken with a camera phone by one of the participants, has
become a genre in its own right. The blogger "18(+1)-Year-Old Female" tells in her blog
how, after her boyfriend took some photos of her in his camera phone, he suggested: "I want

⁹ The question is a part of the standard "personal profiles" in the site. In June 2006, more than 30% of all 24-
year-old users replied to this question, among them 31.6% said they would like to do it, 25.3% excluded the
possibility, and 43.1% replied they "might" do it. No dramatic differences between males and females were
recognized. Random sample of 14-21-year-old users gave almost identical results among the male users, but
most female excluded the possibility.
to make us a 'kissing pic', you know, like the longtime couples". What follows is a series of photos showing them kissing, as evidence and reification of the seriousness and significance of their relationship, though only four weeks old. 13-year-old blogger "DarDasaba" has published in his blog kissing pics of himself and his first girlfriend, only three weeks after his first kiss, thus announcing his new status. Those sets consist of few pictures in highly conventionalised poses – a sensual French kiss, a kiss on the cheek, and a hug in which both partners look at the camera. The "kissing pics" genre abides to so strict and recognisable a set of conventions that it is possible to parody it or make sophisticated tributes - like the girl who posted in her blog a set of photos of herself and her Teddy bear kissing, strictly following the conventions of the genre, as a private message to a friend. These photos are often published in blogs and public online photo-albums, or as personal avatars (images representing a person on internet sites), yet even when stored only on one's mobile phone, they are still accessible to friends (Israeli youths often take friends' mobile phones, watch their photos and read their messages. The right to do it serves as evidence for a faithful friendship). However, unlike films, cellular photos must not be sent for development in a lab, so they need not be exposed to the gaze of adults. Unlike still photos of kisses, video documentations of kisses are relatively rare in Israeli blogs or video sharing sites, probably both because it is less common a practice (as the survey I conducted clearly indicates) and because these materials have a more "private" status than still photos and kept almost exclusively for offline consumption (although not necessarily self-consumption).

One way or the other, the importance of the film does not mainly derive from the fact it depicts a kiss, but from the fact it encapsulates a past (and past feelings) never to return

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10 Even during a relationship crisis, while considering a break up with her boyfriend, 16 years old blogger Nofar still had herself photographed kissing with him in a cinema, and had the photo published in her blog.

11 Another fascinating common phenomenon, which lays far beyond the scope of this article, is simulated or staged kissing performed in public in order to be photographed.
(and hence, "not reconstructable"), and enables one to simulate the presence of beloved persons:

Whenever I missed Sagigi, I used to watch me and him kissing while self-videotaping, LIVE, and there was his old room. Same as when I met him - with the Arab scarf and the stuff on the wall, before we renovated his room.

The "old" look of the room (with the Arab scarf and the stuff on the wall) reminds her of her old feeling for the boy in the very beginning of their friendship ("same as when I met him"). Similarly, Adida used to watch videos showing Olga, her best friend, whom she greatly missed after Olga was drafted to the IDF in July 2005. "Whenever I missed Olga, I used to watch these videos of the circumcision", Adida tells. Here, the circumstances of documentation (a circumcision ceremony) played even more minor a role. The videos are so important, since they enable to experience again and again the presence of a far-away person, an object of her longing. Here it is important to emphasise that Adida kept all the videos stored on her mobile phone, which she always carried, so as to make the memory of her loved-ones available at all times. The intensive consumption of the videos can be inferred from the fact that, although she owned the mobile for only four months, she used in both cases the phrase "whenever I missed": she watched the documented materials often, and they had their nostalgic value already shortly after they were produced. This should be contrasted with the traditional family album, a heavy and canonical object lying on the shelf and opened only rarely, surely not on a daily basis – neither for adding new materials, nor for viewing the old ones. These material also differ from the small photographs people keep in their wallets, which are iconic stand-in for the person, the function of which could well be replaced by a lock of hair (Freeland, 2007). While these were justly compared with the mobile phone's single desktop-photo (Rivière, 2005: 176, 182-3), Adida's videos and photos are well contextualized rather than iconic – depicting not only persons but rather moments (especially the videos). Also, un-
like the wallet photos, they're carried by a teenage girl rather than an adult; and depict other teenagers, rather than kins.

The intensive nostalgia-oriented documentation does not only make a past moment available in the future: it also changes the experience of the documented moment in present time, increases performativity, and turns the present into a process of direction and production of future-nostalgia. "Nostalgia is now even planned for. Like Kierkegaard, we look back in the midst of enjoyment to recapture it for memory, and envisage nostalgia for future events", David Lowenthal wrote in 1985 (p.12). But the replacement of this mental act of recapturing with documentation by mobile camera phones represents a major shift. It produces an unchanging artefact available for consumption. It's also examined on-the-spot and even improved by another "take" if found unsatisfying, thus making the *mis en scene* much closer to directing a film, the intended audience of which is usually the future self.

**Second Category: Once in a Lifetime**

A second category of documentation is aimed at creating an archive of especially important events, which was not necessarily meant for consumption in the short term or for consumption at all. For instance, Adida filmed 23(!) short videos documenting the making of her first tattoo. Above all, the volume of the documentation indicates the major importance she ascribed to this event – since it functions as a rite of passage, or as she phrased it, "a once-in-a-lifetime experience". The filming of tattooing seems to be very common, and many such videos are published online in blogs and video sharing sites, often photographed by one or more of the accompanying friends and focusing either on the suffering face of the tattooed or on the tattoo being created.

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12 Kitzmann maintains that more than a window to the past, videos and photos are an extension of the past to the present, artefacts full of details which have not been reduced to text and remain always open for new interpretations (Kitzmann:2004, pp. 150-152)

13 Failure to produce the desired documentation of a beautiful moment in numerous takes might result in frustration and ruination of the moment (Hjorth, 2006)
Unlike documentation of daily life or the intimate sphere, rites of passage are an extremely common, even classic object of photography. Among French peasants they used to be the only legitimate circumstances for photography (Bourdieu, 1990). Photos were traditionally used as components integrated into an autobiographic narrative represented by the photo-album, the significance of which is “emblematic of the worth of that life” documented (Stewart, 1993). The album organised life around a normalized meta-narrative, a representation of a standardised successful life-path (Chalfen, 1987). But contrary to school graduation ceremonies, usually documented by parents, this rite is a part of youth-subculture, documented by the teenagers themselves. This is typical of Adida's cellular documentation as a whole: at least in her blog, adults are never mentioned, neither as objects of mobile documentation, nor as its audience. **

The socio-technological shift from documentation with a family-camera to documentation with a personal mobile phone does not represent a shift from public to private documentation (as we've seen, the photos are often accessible to other teenagers), but rather from "familial gaze" to a "youth-culture gaze", producing its own narrative, inaccessible to adults. This is true for the vast majority of videos and photos published by teenagers in the blogs and video-sites I examined (Adults, mainly teachers, are only shown when ridiculed or mocked). The camera phone enabled the creation of a new image-economy in which teenagers own the means of production, produce, exchange and consume images. The autobiographic normalised narrative represented by photos now contains tattooing, drinking experiences etc.

While trying to comfort herself after the loss of her mobile phone, Adida stated that although she's aware of the irreversibility of the footage's loss, "maybe I'll also make a new tattoo soon, and document it with my mobile". If the documentation of this new tattoo is lost as well, "then I'll know it's my destiny – that nothing will remain with me forever, I guess", she declared. And so indeed, in May 2006 Adida made a second tattoo and photographed it.
Unlike the first time, when she decided to put off uploading the photos to her blog and hence lost them, this time she published the photos in her blog, protecting them from loss.

Actions (or even whole scenes) might even be repeated in front of the camera because they had not been documented in the first time, or because the documentations' products were disappointing. Whenever the 22-year-old blogger "Shirley84" and a friend did something funny while the camera was turned off during a day trip to Tel-Aviv, they repeated it in front of the camera. It does not, however, have the cultural status of forgery, but experienced as an effort to take authentic photos. However, the claim for authenticity places strict limitations on the reenactment: going to the tattoo shop the following day in order to take photos without making a new tattoo, or reconstructing the funny moment in the trip to Tel-Aviv a day later rather than two minutes later, would be taken for forgery when published in a blog, and would have no meaning as a personal nostalgic memorial. Moreover, contemporary self-documentation is aimed at depicting a moment from the subjective point of view of the documenter's experience. As one British photoblogger told sociologist Kris Cohen, he had missed the opportunity to take a picture of a beautiful place he saw at dawn one day because he hadn't taken his camera, but he could not come later and take this picture again since, in order to do it, he would possibly be “obliged to imbibe the same amount of alcohol” as at the other night (Cohen, 2005).

In a sharp contrast with the videos in the other categories, Adida did not mention the consumption of videos of the second group and did not describe their emotional impact as their raison d'être. The significance of the videos of these groups does not derive from their intensive immediate consumption, but from other sources. These videos may indeed be used to recall "once-in-a-lifetime moments" or share them with others (as done sometimes by bloggers who publish them online, thus informing their readership on the rite of passage being undertaken. Teenagers also watch such videos in face-to-face meetings, comparing their
tattooing experiences). But more than being watched, their main role is to be archived, as evidence, thus constituting an autobiographic life-narrative comprising rites of passage, certain “first times” (but definitely not all of them: Chalfen, 1987, p. 94), etc. In this sense, this category is closer in nature to the traditional (non-cellular) photography, though widening its range of objects and agents.

**Third Category: Laugh All Over Again**

The tattoo, the circumcision ceremony, and apparently the kiss would have taken place even had Adida never owned a sophisticated mobile. However, this cannot be said about all events depicted in videos: many of them are events of entertaining nature, directed especially for the camera. These materials constitute the third category under consideration. Though often made mainly for the consumption of others, they serve also for self-consumption: whenever Adida missed her friend Olga, she "used to listen to the recordings we made and laugh all over again". Adida also shared that "whenever I was sad, I watched Gali’s video, when she tries to imitate an autistic person and drivel came out of her mouth (...) and I used to have laugh attacks because of it". Such videos were often presented to others:

> Whenever I met people who had never seen these videos, we, me and Olga [usually] used to show them the videos and let them listen to the recordings. It was our amusement, our attraction, our intertimend [false transcription for entertainment]. Something which is the fruit of our labour, we did it. She wore a kippah, I filmed… we made everybody laugh".

While documenting funny things, like being silly (including silly behaviour practiced only in order to be documented), it's possible to let others watch it as "entertainment". The fact Adida herself used the English term (though in distorted form) indicates she thought about it in terms of the entertainment industry. However, sociologically speaking, Adida did not create an entertainment product: unlike many other bloggers, she did not upload her videos to her
blog or to video-sharing sites like Youtube. Even later, when she bought the required technical equipment, she still avoided uploading videos, and uploaded only still photos. Instead of distributing her videos as if they were a product of the entertainment industry, she let only certain people (even if some of them were new acquaintances) watch the videos under controlled circumstances, most likely as an act of trust and intimacy. It should be further investigated whether showing videos in youth culture is a part of a reciprocal exchange, constituting and enhancing friendships and alliances.

Examination of videos that other teenagers did publish may place Adida's videos into context. One genre of funny videos, mentioned also by Adida, is usually tagged as "Khirfoonim" (being silly). Those videos depict relatively spontaneous unrestrained behaviour of girls (and less often boys): screaming, laughing, dancing wildly, making weird voices, mugging for the camera, etc. They are almost always produced in social gatherings. Sometimes all attendees take part, and sometimes there are performers vs. audience. The lack of control seems to be taken as an indicator for real fun experienced. Other videos tagged "funny" do not depict loss of control but a wide range of behaviours, including mimicry (e.g. of autistic or mentally challenged persons); more structured and TV-like sketches; hoaxes; and mundane social interactions in which one of the actors borrows from the styles of newscasts, advertisements, etc.

Contrary to what one might assume, these videos are still part of the culture of nostalgia: though they may not have documented a standalone reality, they did document an enjoyable experience of their own making – a fact that plays a great role in the emotionlogy of their consumption. It should be emphasised that the making of these videos was usually a leisure social activity, while sociability and leisure are historically the classical realm of “private” photography (Chalfen, 1987, ch.4). More often than not, such videos were not supposed to have an intrinsic artistic or entertaining value in the entertainment industry's stand-
ards (they are often spontaneous, unrehearsed, and depict teenagers explicitly referring to the act of their being filmed). They were kept to perpetuate the enjoyable experience of their own making, i.e. a documentation of the experience of documenting and being documented. This is the reason why Adida used to watch such "entertainment-videos" she made with her friend Olga while missing her.

Some bloggers are indeed aware of it. Yoav, a 16-year-old boy, is one of the biggest "stars" of the Israeli blogosphere: his blog registers thousands of views per day, and Yoav was interviewed by various TV channels about his blog. One of the videos displayed in the blog is influenced to a high degree by the genre of Reality TV. In the video, which is the third in a series of videos documenting Yoav eating disgusting food (thus presenting itself as a quasi-TV-series), Yoav is seen eating a sandwich with mustard, chocolate and iced-coffee, emphasising how disgusting the task is. He is accompanied by an audience, music, applause etc. The other teenagers photographed are aware of the fact that the video is set to be published in Yoav's blog. Unlike Adida, Yoav's video is a media-production. Yet, while one of the girls filmed mentions the blog towards the end of the video, Yoav replies by saying: "20 years from now, we'll all gather at my place, watch it and laugh about it". Here, Yoav follows the diaristic ethos of bloggers. Israeli teenage bloggers are more likely to admit they strive for ratings and less critical of self-marketing-methods than their adult English counterpart, yet most of them do believe that inner motivations for blogging are the most appropriate.

Though it's an edge case, where the influence of the television model is extremely apparent, Yoav still seems to believe that what he creates is first and foremost a documentation of himself and his friends, made for his future ego, and only secondly a commercial product made for present-day others (i.e. his online audience).

14 Cf. Cohen, 2005. In one of the weekly questionnaires Isra-blog offers its bloggers, the most common answer for the question "do you write the blog for yourself or for others" was "mostly for myself", yet most bloggers admitted their interest in being read by others: http://israblog.nana10.co.il/quest.asp?week=200520
A major fact not to be ignored is that when bloggers list their activities on a certain
day or event, they usually enumerate "taking photos of each other" among them, as if there
were no categorical difference between meeting friends, watching a film or having a lunch -
and taking photos of these activities. When 15-year-old Dani had the girl Yulia as a guest one
afternoon, he wrote in his blog: "later we photographed ourselves using my mobile, watched
television, chatted on ICQ [an instant messaging program], and all kinds of things". 13-year-
old blogger "Just Me Little Lonely Girl" wrote in her blog after a house party: "We danced a
lot and photographed ourselves. It was really fun". 12-year-old blogger "Little Monster" even
transcribed a funny video she made with friend in her blog, just as any other funny conversa-
tion which is worth being documented. In a short report in his blog of a day in the Be'er
Sheva Mall, 15-year-old boy Shai mentioned twice that he had photographed himself and his
friends with his mobile phone. He didn't upload the photos to his blog or ascribe to them any
(artistic or other) great value: the only reason he mentioned taking the pictures was that he
didn't find taking pictures of his friends any less important – or ontologically different – than
visiting shops or eating fast-food: all are activities of the same order. This is evidence of an
ontic shift: most adults asked to describe a trip would not enumerate taking photos among
their activities.

Some events would have not taken place without the presence of a camera, yet they
cannot simply be dismissed as pranks or purely fictitious. These events, although initiated as
a reaction to the presence of the camera and performative as they may be, were experienced
to a higher degree as “real”. For example, a teenage girl nicknamed “morbid princess” de-
scribed in her blog kissing other girls in a house party in front of the boys, with about six of
them capturing videos of the kisses. The text indicates clearly that the blogger enjoyed being
watched and photographed and indeed watched the videos (since she could state they “turned
out sooo nice”), probably during the party itself. She wrote (though probably jokingly) that
the kiss was a “very intimate moment” and “great fun”, thanks to the piercing on the other girl's tongue. Probably, this kissing could have taken place only under total lack of privacy (in front of anybody's cameras), where they could avoid being interpreted as “real” lesbian intimacy, and instead be read as a playful performance or provocation. In the similar case of 16-year-old Anna, the influence of mass media conventions is even greater: she kissed a female friend and let a boy film it, in order to give him a false impression of them being lesbian. The kissing took place in a toilet and videotaped through the open door, in imitation of a television convention, which is supposed to give the viewer the voyeuristic feeling of uninvitedly intruding a private sphere.

The representational model for photography, which from a sociological point of view was never fruitful, has now totally collapsed. Not only the traditional distinction between reality and its image or representation blurs in the era of simulacra, as Baudrillard argued – the very ontic and emotional distinctions between documentation and reality as two distinct orders of existence (life as "reality of first order", and reflection upon it or representation of it as "reality of second order") collapsed altogether. This may partially be explained by the immediacy of digital cameras, which enables the photographer to see the photos and present them to the photographed person just after they were taken. Thus the documented events and the event of watching the documentation mix and interact (Goggin, 2006). In a more macro-cultural level, it is part of the image culture that blurs traditional differentiations between objects and representation, as well as between the consumption of commodities and the consumption of media (Jansson, 2002). This is the context needed for understanding the interpretation I offered for Adida's third category of videos within youth nostalgia culture. Since

15“Sweatheart, it was great funn to kissss you!! especially with that piercing lol. Woww and then all the boys were coming!!And i see some six cameras pointed at us photographing us in mooomoooooovie and they really kept the record and it actually turned out sooo nice hahah. and hmmm... it was fun that 5 girls kissed with me hahahawooooow, boys are such zeros“.

16 Another practice which might undermine this ontic distinction is sending private messages to a single reader by disclosure of one's feelings in one's blog. The message is published even before it was read by its addressee, thus creating “documentation ante factum”, avoiding any distinction between the act and its documentation, like in Reality TV
making videos is an activity as any other, it can arouse nostalgic feelings, it is threatened by forgetfulness, and hence, it deserves being documented.

**Nostalgia and the Banal**

Due to its rhetoric aim – stressing the importance of the lost materials – Adida's text underrepresented the documentation of the mundane and the seemingly meaningless, though she published many such photos in her own blog. However, many excerpts from blogs cited above, which refer to the common practice of photographing oneself and one's friends on a daily basis as a pastime activity, might have compensated for it. A huge amount of such photos can be found in Israeli online-albums and Social Network Sites. Some pioneer researches have already noticed that mobile photography differs significantly from traditional photography in its objects: it is no longer focused on the occasional (represented in our model by the second category), or even on the exceptional, but rather on the mundane (including a big share of self portraits) (Goggin, 2006:145 ff.; Walker, 2005; Hjorth, 2006). Joe Moran argues this trend of vernacularisation might extinguish nostalgia in the sense many of us think of it. The existence of so many photos and videos, many of them documenting mundane moments, often stored unordered as databases, makes it much harder to integrate them all into an idealised nostalgic narrative of childhood like those used to be produced by the family album. “When contemporary childhoods come to be remembered through photographs and other visual media, they may not provide the cosy narrative circularity which Stewart ascribes to nostalgia, as technological change arguably makes these narrative connections harder to achieve”, Moran writes (Moran, 2002, esp. 165-166). However, he does not prophesy the end of nostalgia, but rather a new notion of fragmentary and reflective nostalgia. As I've demonstrated, not only is this not the end of nostalgia, but its new flowering. It seems that the multiplicity of photos and the mundane and anecdotal character of many of them (being faintly re-
lated to the core life narrative) does not prevent other “meaningful” photos from retaining a special aura, even in cellular format.

Susan Stewart rebukes nostalgia as a deliberate and inauthentic sadness, and argues that it denies or degrades the present as it is lived, while transforming the past into the site of immediacy, presence, and authenticity (Stewart, 1993, pp. 139-145. for the critique of nostalgia critique, vide: Tannock, 1995). This might be true for the "dichotomous nostalgia" which presumes and creates a clear-cut dichotomy of past and present, the golden era of yore and the iron era of nowadays. According to Davis, a stable past contrasted with the present is a precondition for every nostalgia. But as we've seen, this is far from being the case with the desired emotional mood Adida and many other Israeli teenagers refer to when they talk about "nostalgia" and try to arouse it by consumption of camera-phone based images. Rather than dichotomy, it creates a fluid, ever-accumulating past. When 15-year-old blogger Kara writes about her "nostalgias", she actually enumerates about 50(!) past social and romantic events which she enjoys recalling, almost all of them fall within the timeframe of a year and do not dichotomically contrast with her present. However, this should not be taken as evidence for a postmodern decentralization/disintegration of the self: mundane photography is becoming indeed another site for identity-formation, alongside many others (cf. Gubrium & Holstein, 2000), but blogs clearly show that teenagers can document anecdotal items textually and visually and still be able to tell broader autobiographic narratives.

The materials of "cumulative nostalgia" are not autobiographic myths, but rather yesterday's mundane actuality. However, even though this nostalgia is often evoked by directed (or at least highly performative) videos, ironically, they might indeed infuse the past they depict with more authenticity than the present.

**Between Personal Documentation and Mass Media**
The research of cultural studies has not failed to notice that television is a means of symbolic production that distributes and globalises cultural repertoires, thus having a major impact on the world construction and the repertoires of practices, including intimate (emotional and sexual) ones. It is clear that youths model their fights after WWF wrestling programs just as they model their romantic moments after images from soap operas, youth dramas and advertisements. But self-documentation adds a major factor to the *mis en scène* of daily life. Adida could – and did – watch herself kissing on the screen and could actually compare her romantic moment – as seen from outside – with the televisual images and conventions, yet without feeling this romantic moment to be any less authentic.\(^{17}\)

It is quite possible indeed that the ability to watch the kiss from outside gave it an even more "real" or "authentic" status (though this assumption has yet to be examined).\(^{18}\) Hence, the typology I proposed, as useful as it may be, may be misleading. There is continuity between the different categories, between the moments documented for self-consumption and those made for distribution. Video self-documentation is, in a way, the dream of appearing on TV coming true. However, Sontag's notion that photography is now needed to change the ontic status of experiences and confirm their reality (1977:24) is inadequate: it ignores the role of photography in the disposal of experiences and persons through their reification as artefacts that stay in abeyance at their owner disposal for future reuse – what Hetherington (2004) brilliantly termed "absent management", i.e. "The mobilisation, ordering, and arrangement of the agency of the absent".

Even before camera-phones, evocation of emotions through consumption of media was far from being unfamiliar to teenagers – rather, it is one of the cornerstones of contemporary emotionology. Scholars like Peter Stearns, Todd Gitlin and Christina Kotchemidova

\(^{17}\) Watching oneself kissing from an observer-perspective might bear other consequences, considering the psychological literature on sexual-objectification and its damages, which will not be discussed here.

\(^{18}\) Cf. van de Port's article on the way video documentation in TV-like style endowed rituals with an aura of authenticity and authority borrowed from TV shows (van de Port, 2006)
suggest that electronic media offers a safe substitution for day-to-day intense emotions, which have become either unprofitable in modern capitalist society (Gitlin, 2003) or even illegitimate and embarrassing in the US of the last 80 years (Stearns, 1994). According to Stearns, "Middle class people (...) use leisure safely to compensate for the growing stringency of their emotional life" (p.271). For Gitlin, "Emotions must be contained, reserved for convenient times when they may be expressed without risk to workaday life. Emotions must refresh, not drain or disrupt. They must be disposable and, if not free, at least low-cost. We are on our way here into the society of non stop popular culture that induces limited-liability feelings on demand" (p.41). Klaus Scherer defines many of the emotions we feel today as "commotions" – emotions evoked by the media through such mechanisms as empathy and emotional-contagion, which have less to do with the life, interests and self-esteem of the individual feeling them (Scherer, 2001).

The feelings Adida experienced while watching her videos stand in polar opposition to the media-generated emotions as sketched above: they are anything but disposable, detached from her life narrative or sterile. Yet, they are feelings-on-demand experienced through technology: by using her mobile phone, Adida turned sundry moments in her life – workaday or ritualistic, public or intimate, funny or serene – into artefacts ever-available for consumption and sharing.

Hennion and Gomart (1999) discuss music and drugs as belonging to an "unusual class of events" in which "the actors act upon a mediator, and then await the effect which it might return to them", i.e. actively producing the circumstances in which they may "lay back" and passively feel the effect, thus "pass[ing] between active and passive. That is, between 'I am manipulated' (because I agree to it) and 'I manipulate' (an object which is stronger than myself)'". This two-phase model is undoubtedly applicable here. However, Hennion and Gomart's theoretical polemic motivation makes them strongly undervalue the intentionality and
agency in the process: Adida chose to watch a certain video since she could predict (to a reasonable probability) its anticipated effect – replacing sadness and longing with nostalgic feelings, laughter and merriment. Furthermore, we should not consider the passivity of the second phase complete: a false effect may sometimes be compensated by "antidotes". Hence, it is a "technology of self" in the sense of DeNora's account of music, rather than "suspension of the self" in the sense of Hennion and Gomart's account: emotional management rather than technology for a controlled loss-of-control over emotions.

Both Gitlin and Stearns emphasise that technology hardly accounts for the historical developments they describe. Likewise, the new youth-nostalgia culture is far from being a mere deterministic result of technological developments. Obviously, other forces also account for the evolution in the emotionology of nostalgia, the usual suspects being: the "reflexive" or "narcissistic" tendencies toward "purely personal preoccupations" and "psychic self-improvement" (Lasch, 1979:29); the blurring borders between childhood and adulthood; and economic interests like the media industry's in producing nostalgia which helps it recycle its goods.\(^{19}\)

However, these factors alone cannot explain the patterns portrayed above. The youth nostalgic culture differs sharply from Lasch's conservative notion of "narcissistic culture" in its temporal sensitivity and its embeddedness in social relationships. It must also be noted that reflexive or "narcissistic" practices of self-documentation are nothing new: the personal diary of 19\(^{th}\) century teenage girls was an intensive technology-of-self par excellence. What's new is not the mere preoccupation with the self, but the personal usage of technologies for nostalgic emotional management, the consumption of emotions. Hence, the importance of patterns borrowed from mass media consumption, as discussed above, should not be underestimated. Materiality also has a crucial impact on the development of these new sensitivities: the affordances of the camera-phone (and its personal ownership patterns) have made the in-

\(^{19}\) This last point is noted by Davis, 1979, and developed later by others, but lays far beyond the scope of this article
tense production and consumption of nostalgia's objects far easier and rendered possible the emergence of a new repertoire of practices.\textsuperscript{20}

\textbf{Conclusions}

Nostalgic feelings aroused by photos and videos are nothing new (West, 2000; Chalfen, 1987), but we are witnessing a replacement of the documentation and nostalgia regime. Under the old regime, relatively few special moments were encapsulated. Means of production and archives were owned collectively by the family, and documentation was a joint venture controlled by parents and subject to the family gaze (Haldrup and Larsen, 2003). This "home mode" of communication and its products differed sharply from those of the media industry. Products were stored at home in bulky albums. As Bourdieu noted, photography used to be a "ritual of the domestic cult" and an index of social integration (Bourdieu, 1990). The consumption of products took place only once in a long while, usually long after the documented events took place. Nostalgia was the result of recalling a different stage of life, sharply different from the present.

Conversely, under the contemporary regime whose contours I attempted to outline, means of production are personal property, and there are no recurring production costs. Teenagers create documentation with their peers in mind, subjecting it to the youth-culture-gaze. They always carry a small archive used for self consumption and showing others, which is personal but not private (friends and partners have the "right" to watch it). Some products are also distributed online, and consumed by strangers. But even videos that remain offline often borrow from or make tribute to mass media genres and styles. The documentation's volume is immense, and consumption is intensive, even shortly after production. The production is also being experienced as a leisure activity that warrants documentation. Teenagers use the consumption of the documentation's material in order to manipulate their emotional moods, not

\textsuperscript{20} For the concept of technologies "affordances", action possibilities set by their materiality, vide Gibson, 1979; Hutchby, 2001; Dourish, 2001
Unlike the consumption of music. The consumption makes them feel "nostalgic" – but rather than resulting in rough periodisation, the nostalgia transforms segments of the near past into consumer items, a major part of the leisure culture of young "prosumers".

It could be asked, what share of the cellular documentation produced by youths today will remain in their possession in ten years. No doubt, much of it will share the fate of Adida's materials. But surprisingly, the fact that cellular documentation is more ephemeral than film documentation does not preclude its usage in the culture of nostalgia – quite the opposite.

Another question that remains unanswered is the local specificity of the findings. Although camera-phone technology is globally diffused, my efforts to find evidence for nostalgic consumption of photos in blogs of teenagers from other countries proved unfruitful. However, this cannot be taken to indicate that the phenomenon is exclusively local. One must take into consideration that some American blog-platforms block teenage blogs for searching; and it is also probable that teenagers in other countries do consume self-documentation as technology of self, but fail to refer to it in their blogs due to different blogging patterns. Future research would benefit from comparative ethnographic field research of photo consumption among youths in different countries, which may shed light on this aspect.

As we've seen, Adida created an intensive documentation of her life, which can be sorted into three categories, all of which are nostalgia-oriented: documentation of interactions with significant others, watched often in order to relive the presence of beloved persons; "first-time events", such as her first tattoo, integrated into an autobiographic narrative subjected to the youth-culture gaze and documented predominantly to be archived; and funny (sometimes directed) videos, which may indeed be distributed in different ways for their entertaining qualities, but are also consumed by their creators in solitary, in order to recall the
experience of their own creation (and thus, cheer-up and experience the presence of the friends involved in the production).

Adida, like many other Israeli teenagers, used emotional technology. While referring to videos of the first category, Adida stated that she watched them whenever she felt longing. They helped her cope with the longing and probably fuelled it as well – but this posed no problem, since as we've seen, this nostalgic longing is considered a desirable emotion among her age group, and being "nostalgic" a trait to be proud of. While referring to videos of the third category, she noted that she watched them whenever she felt sad, and they made her laugh. These statements imply that the significance of most videos derived from their intensive consumption and their ability to evoke desired emotions at will, from their sense of agency (even if articulated in a two-phase structure as suggested by Hennion and Gomart). The high availability of the documentation's consumption platform undoubtedly encouraged this practice of "evoking emotions".

However, unlike the photo-album and home-movies, which followed their own aesthetic (what Chalfen termed "home-mode communication"), the "private" production of cellular personal documentation borrows heavily from the mass media, and enjoys both the auras of mass media products and that of home-movies. It is no coincidence that in her descriptions of watching both the filmed kiss and the filmed tattooing, Adida used the word "LIVE", in English capitalised fonts – just as it appears on the screen on commercial TV. Although Adida did not turn her videos into a product that struggles for ratings in the free market (as would have happened, had she published them in her blog or in sites like Youtube, as many of her peers would do), she did create the Reality TV program of her own life. While losing the data stored on her mobile, those segments of her life lost this special status forever.

Acknowledgements

21 In the list of things she loves the most, consisted mainly from erotic, sexual and romantic experiences and objects, Adida also mentioned "Nostalgias "and "Cameras".
I wish to thank Prof. Eva Illouz, Hila Keren, Ruthie Pliskin and the anonymous reviewers for their careful reading and thoughtful comments.

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Ori Schwarz is a Ph.D candidate in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His research focuses on sociology of photography, blogs and Social Network Sites, and their contribution to transformations of social and emotional repertoires, including technologies of the self. Ori.schwarz@gmail.com