



Tik tok: life and emotions of a teenager during covid

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Abstract:

This article aims to explore the content of videos produced by young people with the TikTok application in the context of the Covid pandemic which, since March 2020, has led to the death of millions of people around the world. They creative practices on Tiktok evolve according to a process of social mimicry. A production taking the place of a model is the source of hundreds of others wanting to different from the original. We have selected three popular productions during the pandemic for in-depth study. Our analysis is based on the approach socioanthropological which is a contemporary current of sociology understanding

Keywords: TikTok, adolescence, social mimicry, anthropological invariants, emulation

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning of 2020, the planet has been experiencing a major health crisis. Virus of Covid has resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people across the world. In Canada, overnight, the lockdown, social distancing, the wearing a mask and washing hands have become part of the daily routine of the population. High school students have suffered the heavy consequences of this pandemic. They have had to temporarily leave school in March 2020 and continue online the learning. Their world has been turned upside down. They could no longer live this pleasurable ritual of meeting up with classmates. Many of them then retreated into cultural practices such as TikTok to share their life experiences and showcase their know-how. TikTok is a video sharing application launched in 2016 by the Chinese company ByteDance. It has enjoyed a growing worldwide popularity since 2019. It is about from the second most downloaded application by young people in the world. She's ahead of Facebook Instagram in particular (Moghaddam, 2020).

The concept of TikTok is simple. Users create, most often with their phone, videos whose duration does not exceed sixty seconds. The most popular are imitated by users, but certainly not identically, because they adapt to their context and their personality. Since the beginning of the pandemic, TikTok has been massively used by young people to put images of their daily lives.

They filmed themselves dancing, laughing, crying, but also having fun to take a nosedive at the coronavirus. We have been interested in the phenomenon of emulation or more precisely of "social mimicry" (Gebauer and Wulf, 1995) in the production of TikTok videos. Emulation is a form of learning process which consists of being inspired by an initial model to produce its own creation. The emule does not seek to faithfully copy the model, but rather to appropriating it to remake it in its own way (de Villeroy, 2017). On the platform TikTok, teenagers don't plagiarize other people's videos, but they adapt them to starting from their interests¹, their motivations and the social effects they want produce.

Our study shows that adolescents put in images, under the mode of humor and parody, their feelings of loneliness, disarray, despair and identity floating. At this age of life, their identity is in transformation¹. TikTok thus provides them with the opportunity to share with

¹Tudor and Ladjouzi (2020), work with the same theories on the identity construction of adolescents to show practices of creation and redocumentalization based on information and of political images circulating on social media. Their conclusions, especially in terms of creativity young people, are very close to ours.



others what is happening in them, what affects them, what they can't verbalize spontaneously (Jeffrey, 2018)

The platform serves as a springboard for them to reveal themselves. Self-exposure, as Serge Tisseron has clearly seen (2001), is a generator of meaning to existence and of taste of life.

This article is based on a theoretical framework that complements the work by Jeffrey, Lachance and Le Breton (2016) on the rites of passage to adulthood and the research of Gebauer and Wulf (1995) on "social mimicry" to analyze three TikTok productions. It aims to describe and understand two phenomena: that the emulation of teenagers on TikTok and, on the other hand, the initiatory dimension inherent in this cultural practice in adolescence.

In the first two parts, we present the state of the art on initiation to adolescence and on the theories of social mimicry. Our work is part of a socio-anthropological approach whose originality lies in the use of tools concepts of traditional anthropology to analyze social phenomena contemporary. It belongs to the great tradition of comprehensive sociology

who is interested in the experience of individuals, therefore in the human dimension of social action.

The third part presents the studied productions and the three criteria of their choice.

The object of our study aims to understand, through the analysis of three productions TikTok, the experiences of Western teenagers during the pandemic. The last part presents them.

1. The rites of passage in adolescence In traditional societies, young boys are called to walk in the not from their ancestors. Rites of passage are planned to tear them away from the world of childhood and introduce them to their adult responsibilities. An important phase of these rites concerns the learning of sacred knowledge about life, death, suffering, the supernatural beings, in fact, on the great invariants of the human condition (Prop, 1970, Bruner, 2000).

In our contemporary societies, this type of rites of passage is lacking. They teenagers are left to their own devices to advance in age. They have to build from their own initiative their adult identity and find their place in society. From where the feeling of uncertainty of some of them in front of the future (Le Breton, 2014; Ehrenberg, 1995). It is up to them to face, most often alone, the trials of the life. If they are a little lucky, they will benefit from the kindness of a friend or from the support of a significant adult. Not all are equal before this passage which, from our days seem to drag on (Fize, 1998). Some young people hesitate to make the leap to the adult life, "others accept it, but at the same time, they would like to keep their privileges as children" (Jeffrey, 2020, p.1). The disappearance of rites of passage this explains, in part, the long teenage quests. As the according to Lachance, Mathiot and St-Germain (2016), young people want to be recognized as adults, but at the same time, they



love their youth life. It belongs to so it is up to each of them to find a personal posture that puts the obligations of adult life and the desire to enjoy the freedoms peculiar to adolescence.

Many authors have emphasized the singularity of the life paths that lead a young at the age of responsibility. However, whatever his background, he is irretrievably confronted with the great invariants of the human condition. What are they? Let's think about death, suffering, frustration, loneliness, the state helplessness, childhood fears, feelings of failure, loss, fallibility, of lack of being and vulnerability, to impulsive overflow, to vivid affects of love and hate, to the ignorance of one's place in society, to the ambivalences of identity, to the anguish of the unknown, to the loss of innocence, to the meeting of mysteries, from the wonderful and the sacred, to the inner disorder, to the discovery of both its uniqueness and its belonging to the human family, to the desire to merge into a great Whole, to the courage of heroism, to the limits of fate

and freedoms, etc. Each invariant refers to a fundamental human experience

which has an initiative² dimension. These experiences are narrated in the religious myths, the great epics such as the Iliad and the Odyssey, the fables, the tales, novels, theater, cinema, television series and other productions cultural. They are invaluable productions of the meaning of the human spirit (Eliade, 1959; Viene, 1972, 1973; Dupont, 1991; Chaliand, 1995; Henstsh, 2002; Squeegee, 2015). In ancient societies, young people are introduced to a set of great invariants during rites of passage, often very complex, aimed at access to the

adult world (Van gennep, 1981). In our contemporary societies, no secular institution does not explicitly take over for their teaching (Turner,1990). Young people who attend contemporary school systems are no longer initiated to the great invariants that give life its meaning and its value. This could well have the consequence that many young people are left to their own devices in their quest for meaning. They will have to rely on their own resources to understanding existential wealth.

Some discover the deep meaning of an invariant during a reading, in the theater, in the cinema or in a TV series. Several events in their own lives –like, the loss of a loved one, the coming out, a school failure, a serious injury, risky driving, a trip abroad or a betrayal in love sometimes leads them to revelations about the great invariants of the human condition. Adolescence constitutes this period when the new and unprecedented situations of initiatory experiences during which a young gets to know yourself, to fabricate your identity and to give meaning to your existence. He will discover his inner world and that of his loved ones to realize –it is salutary for him –, that he is not alone in walking in a quest for meaning. That she is normal and that it will take courage for her to project herself into a future happy. Every turning point in a young person's life can therefore become an opportunity to get to know each other better, to better grasp the expectations of others and to better

² The concept of initiation is used according to the typology of Mircea Eliade (1959).



understand the world in which he lives. An opportunity also to mature and to seek to do recognize one's worth and one's life experiences.

However, many young people today do not know a quality interlocutor to share their feelings. They don't necessarily have the chance, as in the traditional societies, to be accompanied by elders in their discovery of the sacred secrets of the origin of the universe, the meaning of life and their place in the

company. The pandemic situation with its confinement and fire cover constraints accentuates more in them the feeling of being abandoned, isolated, neglected.

This loneliness is all the more difficult to bear when the family environment is few welcoming to their experience, anxious or even violent. That is why number

teenagers take refuge in social media and massively use the applications like TikTok to promote themselves. In fact, TikTok gives them a space creative to put yourself on the stage freely. Each one delivers, in his own way, a part of his inner world. In this regard, when a video is imitated by thousands of young people, it is because these last feel concerned and touched by a fundamental experience of the human condition. The emulation practices on TikTok confirm that young people are looking for ways to express their feelings in a creative way. This practice possesses, as we will show, an initiatory dimension.

2. Mimetic action or social mimicry³:

Gebauer and Wulf (1995) favor the heuristic concepts of mimicry, of acting corporeal and ritual to describe the behavior of individuals. For these teachers of historical anthropology of the Free University of Berlin, mimicry is at the foundation of all learning. Children enter into humanity by imitating first of all their parents (Wulf, 2002). They will imitate their smile and other signs observe. Then they reproduce their gestures, their temperament and their behavior.

So children learn the norms and lifestyle of their parents by imitating their way of being. They imitate their brothers and sisters as well as other members close family. Mimicry is the basis of the desire in children to identify with your family members to become like them (Wulf, 2014). They will internalize social norms through the processes of imitation. Mimetic learning is fundamental since it allows children to access the culture of their society and to integrate into it (Gebauer and Wulf, 2004).

In adolescence, the quest for autonomy leads them to distance themselves from the norms of the parental sphere (Fize, 1994). They are animated by a "differentiating frenzy" which is the condition for the emergence of their personal identity (Marcelli, 2007: 255).

Socialization outside the family allows them to gradually imitate adults who matter, the stars of music, sports or cinema, and of course the buddy. Imitation practices mainly affect the body dimension (gesture, posture, outfit, intonation of the voice, etc.), dress codes and language expressions (Jeffrey, 2011). Young people share a common look according to

³ In this research, we do not use the new concept of "same" given its semanticism yet uncertain



their tribu⁴ of belonging which testifies to their desire to bond with others. However, they imitate each other by adding a typical personal trait each time. Game social mimicry leads them to create an identity similar to others, but also at the same time different from the others.

Thus, a culture of emulation between peers develops. They don't imitate their peers to copy them faithfully, but are rather inspired by them to display characteristics that are unique to them. As Wulf (2014) noted, imitation does not should not be understood as the making of a copy, but rather as a human ability to create from a model. It is this creative force in the imitation that we designate by the term of emulation. When a young person imitates the another's video on TikTok, he adds a dimension that is unique to him. There video production TikTok therefore participates in this game of social mimicry by which young people express parts of their identity, their personality, and suddenly, of their lived experience of the pandemic. TikTok allows them to get out of the gloom to invest in a new social space. The analysis of their productions shows their desire to assume, most often under the mode of humor, derision and parody, the initiatory dimension of existence which refers to the great invariants of the human condition.

3. Description of the videos

Here we are interested in three TikTok productions posted online at the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020. Our choice was based on three criteria: their popularity, their response to the pandemic, and the initiatory dimension of the themes they behave. Thousands of productions are put online daily on TikTok. We could not know all of them for this job. That's why we first, we selected the most popular productions that had to do with pandemic. In all of these productions, we have chosen those that staged an initiatory theme. Out of more than thirty productions, three of them stood out for the bold staging of their theme initiatory. The first video is called *#Blanket life (B)* and deals with the loneliness of young people during the first lockdown. The second one is called *#Hand washing dance (H)* and shows how they have overturned in amusement the sanitary obligation hand washing. The third video is entitled *#I used to be so beautiful (I)* and deals with the ambivalence of their identity. Even if the latter was launched before the pandemic in 2019, she returned to popularity until the end of the year 2020. In besides, apart from the second video (H), it was impossible for us to trace the initial production of the videos (B) and (I). It must be said that young people produce and share an astronomical amount of content on TikTok. We will start by describing the scenario of the videos as faithfully as possible before present our analyses .

3.1. #Blanket life

In the first video (B)⁵, a young person is first lying in bed under a sheet. We can't see his face.

⁴ In the sense that the sociologist Michel Maffesoli (1988) gives to this concept.

⁵ *#Blanket life*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VoXFQifWD_w.



He comes out abruptly, still covered by the sheet. Then, while we hear an energetic orchestral music, he launches frantically to the fridge to get something to put under the tooth.

Often a junk food dish such as potato chips or sweet cupcakes. It then returns to his bed, gets rid of the sheet and anarchically eats the food. No words are spoken. The musical piece that accompanies the video is entitled *The Flight of the Bumblebee*, created in 1900 by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov for the opera *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*. Despite the fact that the music coats the scene with a dramatic atmosphere, the video still has a dimension humorous. When the young person launches himself towards the fridge, it is as if he is floating above from the ground like a ghost. He is not holding the camera, because the scene is filmed from the end of the room. The variants of this TikTok video are many.

For example, young people have replaced the figure of the ghost with that of a zombie.

Some raised the food at arm's length, as a champion does with a trophy that he just won. Others get out of bed to seek comfort with their dog. Several showed their parents watching a ghost go to the kitchen. The parents then became witnesses of what the young.

3.2. #Hand washing dance:

In the second video (H)⁶, the young people seek to raise awareness among their peers about the importance of hand hygiene. The initial video was uploaded by two young Vietnamese who created a dance called #Hand washing dance. She wears the message that hand washing can be fun. The sequences of this video consist of the main steps to properly wash your hands. Each step is spaced out with a few funny dance moves.

At the beginning of the video, the two young people are side by side facing the camera. They don't but not to set an example. First they hold their hands, slender arms, in front of their torso and pretend to wash their hands. Then, they do a series of synchronized gestures that aim to encourage young people to protect themselves from the virus. They finish by miming the main steps to wash their hands. The video is accompanied by a song entitled *Ghen Cô Vy* produced by the ministry vietnamese Health. Its English title, *Jealous Coronavirus*, refers to the idea that the virus would be frustrated that it had been defeated by hand washing. This song has been spotted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) who shared it on her social networks; which helped to make her viral.

Many young people were therefore able to imitate this video by adding their own originality. The forms of video emulation are multiple. The young people of each countries have adapted it according to their cultural context. For example, in Canada and in the United States, the original song *Ghen Cô Vy* has been replaced by another more popular, and with an evocative title, named *Toxic* which is performed by Britney Spears.

Other teenagers did not put on music and were content to show the different steps to wash your hands properly. Some young people have created a small staging where he washed his hands with his family. All these reasons for emulation had the aim is to remind you of the importance of hand washing during the pandemic.

⁶ #Hand washing dance se trouve à: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ctF5aMV05kM>



3.3. #I used to be so beautiful:

The third TikTok (I)⁷ video dates from September 2019, but its popularity has increased extended until the end of 2020. The young people script it alone or in pairs. The action takes place in their bedroom. They introduce themselves to the camera first in an unkempt style of dress. They then imitate the lyrics of a song whose the chorus is: I used to be so beautiful now look at me .Then, the young people make a movement quick in front of their face and they reappear in a sparkling look. The video ends as they proudly walk in front of the camera. They're miming the following lyrics: My actions are beautiful it's clear to see. The song that the accompanying video is titled Absolutely Anything. She is played by a young american artist named CG5 who is accompanied by the original singer korean OR3O. This song addresses the passage of young people towards the age of responsibility. His words are explicit in this regard: Come on and step out of that cage. There's a new chapter, turn the page, or even This body I must renew. The choice of this song is therefore not trivial since it refers to the experience even to grow up. The fact of changing one's appearance is like putting on a new skin, that is, a new identity.

The analysis of these three videos shows that their forms of emulation are exponential. We have listed hundreds of examples for each one. There initial video has been reproduced with more or less significant alterations. We we will not be able to account for the extent of their transformation in our analysis. In the video (I), to give this example, some young people dressed up as manga Japanese. Others scribbled their faces to look like the Penny-pinching clown from the movie It (2017). In the finale, some appeared disguised as a princess, in clothes a magician or even a Frankenstein. It is necessary to recognize their effort to transform into a character who revealed a part of their feelings in the context covidien

4. Thematic analysis of the videos:

By watching the three selected TikTok productions on multiple occasions, we we realized that their scenario is structured in three sequences that form a line temporal. A sequence presents a scene composed of strong images that aim to exploiting a theme such as that of loneliness, loss of bearings, the self-transformation or even anxiety. In a scenario, each theme is unique. However, one cannot access its meaning without referring it to the themes

⁷ I used to be so beautiful: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHRMfGCu0X4>



of the other two sequences. The three main themes of each scenario form a coherent whole. The analysis of the scenario of a video focuses on each of the three sequences here named primer, plot and finale.

This categorization is inspired by the tripartition rites of passage established by Van Gennep (1981)⁸. The first step is introductory. It exposes the context of a problematic situation called to be transform. In the second stage that forms the plot, the young videographer brings answers to this situation. In this sequence is developed the central theme of video. The finale presents the denouement of the scenario, that is to say how the young people feel after having provided answers to the situation that was a problem.

It is easy to recognize each sequence, because it refers to planes whose montage fails to erase transitions well⁹. The sequences appear always in the same order since a TikTok production mimes with creativity a model video. So we were interested in the meaning of the theme of each sequence of the selected videos, but also to the sequence of themes since they form a coherent scenario. Also, since the production of the videos proceeds by mimicry, we must refer to the videos of the same family to understand the set of meanings. In this regard, it is interesting to appreciate how a theme is treated in the same family of video productions.

Based on our socio-anthropological approach, we have identified that the themes of isolation, loss of bearings, challenges in front of the unknown and the affirmation of autonomy were recurrent. These are themes that include an initiatory dimension whose forms and contents we will discuss.

We have presented above our interpretative framework on the rites of passage and social mimicry, we wish to briefly present here some principles of the tradition of comprehensive sociology which presides over our method of analyzing the selected videos. The term "comprehensive sociology" undoubtedly amounts to Max Weber who, in *Essay on some categories of comprehensive sociology* which dates from 1913, tried both to provide a definition and to circumscribe the domain (Wadier, 2005). This sociological tradition aims to understand the activities that individuals lead. She seeks to know the meaning that these give to this that they do.

The researcher turns to the meaning of their decisions, their decision-making

⁸ According to Jean-Marie Roth (2018), the structure of a film's script usually includes three acts, the beginning, the middle and the end, whose contents are similar to those of the rites of passage.

⁹ Most of the young producers film with their phones and use software for editing, often free or very inexpensive such as, Movavi, Adobe Premiere or Windows Movie Maker. For the vocabulary of film editing, we refer to Briselance and Morin (2010).



words, their actions, their creations, their lived experiences and their feel. He interprets and analyzes them from a social perspective to make account of the way in which they insert themselves into social bonds and strive to maintain. What makes a link between individuals to create a social life is an object privileged of this sociology. The researcher takes it for granted that individuals have an awareness of themselves, that they are able to formulate and pose intentions, to act according to personal motives and to take a position in front of the world and to other individuals.

As researchers, we are subjects facing other subjects whose social productions are considered as social facts. As part of our analysis of the three selected videos, the individuality of the subjects appears in their reasoning, their motivations, their intentions and their behaviors (the implementation scene of their individuality) as it presents itself in the scenario of their production. So we have, on the one hand, the individual postures of the authors of the videos, and on the other their registration in a social activity. One is dependent on the other; that is why their deciphering reflects the state of mind of a young person who is relates to the social state of young people in times of pandemic.

Our analysis, obviously, does not focus on young people, but only on their TikTok productions. Since we do not know them, we could not induce their psychological state. We also could not have access to what they were experiencing truly from the images of their videos. It was impossible for us to know the moments of the pandemic that were the most difficult for them, let alone what happened to them following the broadcast of their video on TikTok. This constitutes important epistemological limits of the analytical work that we have carried out.

It was a given for us that it would have been risky to speculate on their state of health mental, on their path to maturity or even on their future. On the other hand, their videos reveal, even if they are instant productions, ephemeral and labile, what they felt at the moment when they produced them. In addition to the feelings, they stage their state of mind, their ambitions, their commitment to state of what was happening around them, their often parodic and humorous relationship to the inevitability of the pandemic

4.1. The flight of the bumblebee:

The first video (B) features a teenager who, from his bed, rushes to the fridge to look for junk food. The young people use a musical theme from the classical repertoire, the Flight of the Bumblebee, which accentuates the urgency of the movement between the bed and the fridge. This video dates from March 2020, a pivotal moment in the pandemic, because all were waiting to know the level of dangerousness and the populations victims of the virus. The news broadcast dramatic images of elderly people who, in Italy mainly, would die in the greatest desolation. Many young people were then cut off from their social landmarks of the world school, because they had to stay at home. The video (B) comprises the three sequences following:



- 1) a young person is in his bed hidden under a sheet,
- 2) he rushes to the fridge covered with his sheet, which gives him the appearance of a ghost
- 3) he has in hand a dish of junk food and returns to his bed.

In the first sequence, that is, the primer, the young person seems to say that the loss landmarks related to the pandemic make him a ghost, as if he were only the shadow of himself. The figure of the ghost, who is an undead, emerges from the concern of find yourself isolated from friends and classmates. Young people associate life social, dying at the beginning of the pandemic, to the fear of emptiness (Delage, 2008). The choice of the bed, in the first sequence, represents a place of well-being, a kind of protective cocoon (Lachance, 2016). But he must emerge from it to satisfy his natural needs.

The second sequence shows the young man, covered with the sheet under which he was hiding, get out of bed, open the door to his room and run to the fridge under the accelerated tempo with a well-known classic tune. The objective of this plot is to give a dimension heroic to the confinement situation. Although the young man has become the shadow of himself, his frantic running shows that he is bursting with life (Michon-Raffaitin, 2000). It so do not let yourself be put down by the uncertainty that reigns at the beginning of the pandemic.

In the third sequence, the young man grabs a junk food dish and returns in his bed to devour him. For a teenager, being forced at home is synonymous with social death. David The Breton had already observed that the fact for a young to be isolated causes a feeling of loss of control of existence (2014).

The final scene of the "exit from the bedroom" evokes the fact of "going away to get out", to take his life back into his own hands, to also believe that he will soon be able to "get out from home" to see friends again. By the way, the symbol of junk food is central. It refers to the idea that it is better to devour a bad food rather than not eating anything at all. Therefore, there will always be something to "get put under the tooth". We remember that the supermarket shelves had been literally emptied, in March 2020, by individuals under the influence of a drive purchase. For a young person, a bad hamburger is better than starvation. Behind this food issue loomed the existential issue of the lack of social life. For young people, living in health means knowing how to count on the comfort of friends in a difficult period such as the pandemic (Guédeney, 2011). The young people were able to find this human warmth in their mimicry emulation of the #Blanket life video. Their humorous staging shows that they have been able to create landmarks to escape the isolation of confinement. Fears that teenagers can feel in normal times like those of losing the group of friends, of getting bored, of losing track of school gossip, of no longer being in the blow for invitations to parties with friends or even to be excluded from the band have been accentuated by the isolation effect. TikTok has provided them with a place to virtual socialization where they were able to express that, despite their fears and worries, life goes on.



4.2. Covid enters the dance:

The video (H) has been reproduced by thousands of young people around the world. When from the first wave of Covid in March 2020, schools in Canada and several other countries have locked their doors. The closure of schools has caused a lot of concern among young people. Two young Vietnamese took advantage of the situation by creating the #Hand washing dance video. It comprises the three sequences following:

- 1) two young people present themselves to the camera,
- 2) mime the words of the song Ghen Cô Vy and
- 3) wash their hands while waddling.

For the first sequence, the two teenagers are in a fixed shot in front of the camera, then, arms extended, they raise their hands up to the height of the neck in waving their fingers. This gesture aims to bring young people to realize that there is things to do to protect yourself from the coronavirus. In fact, they have to "take care of themselves hand" or again, take the situation into your own hands, that is, show a certain mastery in the face of uncertainty. The plot, in the second sequence, opens with the song Ghen Cô Vy¹³ whose young people imitate the lyrics while performing a meticulous choreography that goes like this: they pretend to rub their hands, hands move away from the eyes, nose and mouth with signs of peace and love to show that it's easy not to touch them, move their hands from left to right to repel the people near them, imitate the military salute by making goodbye signs aside to push the virus away, place their arms around of their torso to protect themselves, do a flexion of their biceps to encourage the young people to take care of their health, pretend to clean the space around them and raise their index fingers and point them in front of them to indicate that all are concerned by the new rules of hygiene.

The idea behind this sequence is to make hand washing attractive, simple and playful. The choreography rightly adds a fun character to this task which seemed off-putting at the beginning of the pandemic. Not only young people learn the technique of hand washing, but at the same time they are invited to calmly face the virus. In the third sequence, the two boys perfect their choreography of the hand washing on the instrumental version of the song Ghen Cô Vy. This final sequence accentuates the idea that young people can overcome the test of the pandemic. Young Vietnamese therefore present themselves as model students for the other young people. Their staging explicitly aims to de-dramatize the situation by showing that laughter is a powerful remedy to combat anxiety uncertainty (Le Breton, 2014; Jeffrey, 2016).

4.3. Getting a makeover on TikTok:

The third video (I) presents the transformation of young people who are changing appearance with the help of a small illusion created by the movement of their arms. They videos do not last more than 7 seconds. The young person first appears in clothes inside, then he makes a magical movement with his arms and he reappears in a outdoor outfit. The video clearly shows that young people are not the same at home and outside the house. Domestic



intimacy allows for a more released, while extimity, in the words of Tisseron (2001), requires a self-conditioning to look good. Now, young people are staging themselves under the parody mode to show that they retain their self-confidence.

We are interested here in the production of the young American transvestite of 19 years TikTok celebrity Jake Warden. In February 2021, Jake had more than 2.1 millions of subscribers. His video shows him going from a masculine appearance to a

feminine appearance. She suggests that some young people like Jake¹⁰ don't mind to publicly question their identity. The song Absolutely Anything accompanies the three sequences of this video. In his video, Jake introduces himself first in men's clothes, he makes a movement of his hands and appears under the figure of a transvestite. He then confidently stares at the camera placed in front of him. The first sequence shows him in his bedroom. He is facing the camera and is wearing an AC/DC band t-shirt. We can't see his lower body. He has blonde hair and square glasses. For the one who discovers it on TikTok, Jake seems to be an ordinary boy. In appearance at least. In this primer, it looks at the camera with a jaded attitude as if he is discouraged from himself. He then mimes the lyrics "I was so beautiful before, now look at what I am become ». These lyrics from the song Absolutely Anything that accompanies the video deal with the transition from childhood to adulthood. There is a reference to the loss of innocence and pubertal changes that often disturb young people (Fize,1998). In fact, during adolescence, some of them can no longer love each other. They are bad in their bodies. They don't recognize each other anymore. The video expresses without misunderstanding the desire to feel good about yourself.

The second sequence usually involves an arm movement. In the video of Jake, he claps his hands twice before appearing in an outfit female. The clapping of the hand is a magical gesture that helps to make effective the action of transforming. His transformation is complete. Jake reveals himself in a different light new. This total change in appearance in a split second shows that this boy assumes his female alter ego and his share of sexual ambivalence (Dorais,1999).For the finale, Jake proudly walks in front of the camera to the rhythm of Absolutely ... In order to testify to the possibility for any young person to become the person that he chooses to be. His smile at the end of the video is a sign of confidence in life and, above all, a sign of hope for all those who do not dare to get out of their closet¹⁶. He moves his long blonde hair and takes pleasure in showing his long eyelashes at the camera like a star who is proud of her achievements. Number of young people took advantage of the model of this video (I) to show themselves under another day. We can think that they have agreed to initiate themselves to a passage (van Gennepe, 1981) which leads to a better grip on oneself. In today's societies, we stressed that it is up to each young person to take charge of their destiny. It will be confronted, one day or the other, with the invariants of the human condition. He him it then comes back to building meaning for himself on what he is

¹⁰ Jake's emulation can be found at 7:20 of this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ZCWqTEumnU>



experiencing. The TikTok videos are in many ways productions of meaning which testify to the inner life of young people. The TikTok platform allows them to be part of a network of young people who feel the same desire to take the risk of communicating to others, through their creations, parts of the truth about them. Adolescence is a difficult waiting time at times: transformations pubertal, amorous, affective, etc. (Winnicott, 1975). It is a real chance for young people to have social networks to express their dismay, but also their answers to the questions they ask themselves. We emphasize this since the specialists usually bring out their dark side, that is, the fact that there

expresses malicious rumors or offensive sayings¹⁷. But these networks can also serve as a springboard for a young person to get to know each other. Video of Jake, too quickly analyzed, has this fascinating: it shows the need to reveal the person we want to be, and surely also, to formulate a request for recognition (Todorov, 1995).

Conclusion:

Teenagers build their identity by imitating their peers. It is a mode of socialization that leads them to choose the type of person they want to be. There TikTok platform has become a global phenomenon during the pandemic because that it allows young people to come together to express their concern and their hope. In February 2021, Wallaroo (2021) revealed that TikTok had reached more than 1.1 billion subscribers, mostly young people of secondary age. Our analyses show that the phenomenon of emulation on TikTok has allowed its users to put in images the meaning they give to large invariants of the human condition, including those of loneliness, fear of the unknown or even of identity ambivalence. The design of a video on TikTok, encouraged by emulation, participates fully in it under the particular mode of humor, of fun, playfulness and parody. These are postures that show that the young is able to distance himself from himself and put his feelings into perspective, at the same time time that he participates in the initiatory dimension of human existence. In a time of global crisis where the future may seem uncertain, young people have fought against the disorganizing forces of Covid-19 by looking for solutions news to break the health impasse. TikTok videos have been one of them they. They were able to save appearances by scripting values of solidarity, of tolerance and understanding which are essential to regenerate the social order. Their creative energy gives hope for a better post-Covidian world.



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