

Consumo, alteridade e ascensão social no perfil @blogueiradebaixarenda

Consumption, alterity and upward mobility in the @blogueiradebaixarenda profile

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Resumo: O artigo pretende compreender os sentidos do consumo no perfil @blogueiradebaixarenda nas mídias sociais Instagram e Youtube, considerando suas articulações com dinâmicas de mobilidade social. Trata-se de analisar quais elementos compõem o “lifestyle baixa renda” enquanto categoria nativa, dentro do contexto dos “influenciadores digitais”. Através de pesquisa de observação online, foram analisadas publicações, hashtags e comentários nas duas plataformas, procurando-se explorar de que modo as práticas de consumo aparecem como mediadoras de dinâmicas de hierarquização social e construções identitárias. Entre os resultados, as articulações entre materialidade e mobilidade social, bem como o papel da blogueira como curadora de consumo e “inspiradora” de trajetórias de ascensão.

Palavras-chave: *lifestyle; grupos populares; consumo; mobilidade social; blogueira de baixa renda.*

Abstract: *The article aims to understand the meanings of consumption in the profile @blogueiradebaixarenda on online social networks Instagram and Youtube, considering its articulations with social mobility dynamics. It's about analyzing which elements construct the “low-income lifestyle” as a native category, within the context of the “digital influencers”. Through online observation research, publications, hashtags and comments were analyzed on both platforms, seeking to explore how consumption practices appear as mediators of social dynamics and identity constructions. Among the results, the articulations between*

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materiality and social mobility, as well as the role of the blogger as consumer curator and “inspiring” of ascension trajectories.

Key words: *lifestyle; low-income groups; consumption; blogueira de baixa renda*

Introduction

The historical indifference to the consumption of popular groups in the social sciences was partly due to a dominant logic of “lack” and “struggle for survival” that practically removed the phenomenon from its structuring symbolic and cultural dimension. As Barbosa (2004) has observed, the phenomenon of consumption, when structured in Brazil, for a long time appeared more under the lens of “losses and absences” than a perspective of “gains and positive changes” (p. 62).

Differently, the present work agrees with those that seek to understand the behavior of specific social groups as a privileged form of mapping modern-contemporary culture, exploring the interface between communication and anthropology (ROCHA, 1985; TRAVANCAS, 2008; SILVA, 2010; CAMPANELLA, 2012, among others). Specifically, in consumption studies, this means to analyze consumption as a phenomenon that creates and maintains social bonds, classifies identities, expresses subjectivities, mediates society’s fundamental values, and, in short, articulates category systems that bear expressive and symbolic functions (DOUGLAS; ISHERWOOD, 1979; MILLER, 1987; SLATER, 2002; SAHLINS, 1979; APPADURAI, 2008).

Therefore, this research participates in a field of studies that proposed to consider consumption acts as significant everyday phenomena of cultural creation (MILLER, 1987). Miller sought to arrive at the meanings and implications of the multiplication of material goods by understanding industrial society as having the specificity of “advancing” through the continuous emergence of external forms in the shape of goods. Through the process he calls “objectification,” persons and objects become linked after consumption, where subjects reveal their choices, their worldviews, and aesthetic judgments in their uses of objects. As Kopytoff (2008) also stressed, the object-person separation is very particular and restrict though lived in Western society as if it were a universal phenomenon. Objects, in their relations, always constitute classification systems in which we situate and hierarchize.

Research approaching the consumption of popular groups predominantly observed this phenomenon as an expression of distinction and emulation, supported mainly and respectively by the contributions of Bourdieu (1979) and Veblen (1965). Although these contributions provide important analytical keys, it was necessary to broaden this field of inquiry with research on specific situations that reveal other facets of such a nuanced theme. From this point, studies emphasize the act of consumption as a desire for belonging, as Silva (2010) explores in their ethnography on ways of using cell phone devices to express a form of access to the broader society or a “being-in-modernity.” Others showed that poverty of resources was not synonymous with material scarcity (BARROS, 2007; SCALCO; PINHEIRO-MACHADO, 2010; CASTRO, 2016). These works place an emphasis on materiality as a rich source of cultural meanings, revealing budgets that comprise a diversity of consumption items far from the restrictive logic of “livelihood items.” Parallel to academic studies, within segments of middle- and upper-strata groups in Brazil, there was moral condemnation against the profusion of “out-of-place” objects among popular groups, as evident in the purchase of expensive cell phones and high-tech TVs. The expansion of material culture is apparently inconsistent with the economic situation of scarce resources.

It is in this context that emerges the interest to analyze the @blogueiradebaixarenda profile as a signal of relevant issues in the field of popular groups’ consumption. This social media profile proposes to disseminate the “low-income lifestyle,” having consumption as a prominent place.

This paper proposes, then, to understand the meanings of consumption in the @blogueiradebaixarenda profile on Instagram and YouTube, considering its articulations with dynamics of social mobility in an extremely hierarchized society such as the Brazilian. The work analyzes which elements compose the “low-income lifestyle” as a native category within the context of “digital influencers.” This latter denomination refers to subjects that build a generally positive reputation in social media, which leads to visibility and a remunerated digital career (ABIDIN,

2015). The research was developed through the analysis of posts in the @blogueiradebaixarenda profile on the Instagram and YouTube social media since the beginning of its online presence till May 2021.

The observation includes hashtags, considering these are native classifications. Besides constituting a form of grouping messages that allow searches for specific content on social media, hashtags are interesting because users themselves create and list them, enabling the observation of agents' classification logic. Hashtags can also express feelings, ideas, or humorous content when the intention is not just to assist in the convergence of topics. They reveal themselves as complex and multi-functional linguistic devices that not only have classificatory aspects but conversational ones too (WIKSTRÖM, 2014).

The procedure adopted in the field was online observation (FLICK, 2018), a type of observation research performed in the digital environment that follows social dynamics in platforms without interacting with users. In hidden observation (SKÅGBY, 2011), researchers do not express themselves publicly, staying anonymous as they follow social phenomena in progress. The selected material for analysis corresponds to photos, videos, and texts composing posts in line with the multimedia aspect of digital research and interactions found in comments.

It was not necessary to camouflage faces in the images included in the text because the @blogueiradebaixarenda profile on Instagram is public, not a private account. From the next section onward, BBR stands for Blogueira de Baixa Renda [Low-income Blogger].

This work does not use the term “virtual” because it implies an opposition with the domain of the “real.” Alternatively, the paper adopts the expressions “online” or “digital” as synonymous. As Miller and Slater (2004) have indicated, there is no point making a previous distinction between online and offline neither from a methodological nor from an analytical point of view. The relationship between both domains must be explored in specific situations, observing when and how such distinctions make sense and how they integrate.

According to Ramos (2015), we may classify processes of subjectivization that occur in the online context in terms of identity experience and identity realism. In the first case, there is the possibility of building different personas according to diverse network segments. Through identity experimentation, subjects can structure social relationships, freely modifying their gender and age and creating body shapes, among other possibilities of removing themselves from their offline identity. Differently, in identity realism, there is a correspondence between identities inside and outside social media, between online visibility and the world outside the network, which makes individuals' relationships move through the inner and outer worlds (RAMOS, 2015, p. 66). Offline identity is not more authentic than one online; both are just specific contexts that may exist in more or less convergent ways according to the situation at hand.

The case in the present study is an online context of identity realism (RAMOS, 2015) in which there is an expectation of correspondence between both spheres. This paper understands the Blogueira de Baixa Renda profile as the online experience of the civil identity of its creator, Nathaly Dias, who seeks to express values and worldviews in her social media that she takes as guides in her trajectory. The research focuses on activities in the online environment to analyze structural relationships behind tacit meanings of digitally explicit data.

The low-income lifestyle

The BBR profile present in digital platforms was created by Nathaly Dias, a resident of the Morro do Banco community in the West Zone of the city of Rio de Janeiro. In posts, she tells the story of her upbringing in a family that faced great economic hardships until her admission to an undergraduate course in Business Administration on a full scholarship.

Nathaly acts on the social media Instagram and YouTube² as a content creator, aiming, in her terms, to promote the “lifestyle of the poor”

2 Instagram, @blogueiradebaixarenda, 235 thousand followers; Youtube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/blogueiradebaixarenda>, 288 thousand subscribers. Data from September 2021.

and make her low-income followers – who she nicknamed “baixa rendinhas” [low-income people] – aware that belonging to that social class does not prevent them from achieving mobility.

In the profile’s introduction on Instagram, Nathaly declares she is “(re)signifying influence.” According to her explanation in an interview, she realized the universe of so-called digital influencers³ mostly comprised women promoting luxurious lifestyles with consumption standards that were very far from the everyday reality of most of the population. Hence the idea of approaching the “low-income lifestyle,” “(re)signifying influence” in a more realistic tone that matches the experience of the country’s popular groups.⁴

The concept of lifestyle has Bourdieu (1979) as one of its principal references, suggesting different classes exhibit diverse ways of living according to the place they occupy in the social hierarchy. “Taste,” as an inclination to appropriate objects and practices, appears as a set of distinctive preferences that express themselves in elements such as furniture, clothing, and bodily hexis, among others. This paper takes lifestyle as a native category, seeking to analyze its constitutive elements and meanings present in the BBR profile.

Nathaly started acting as a content producer on the internet when she created the @blogueiradebaixarenda profile on Instagram on October 3, 2017. She had a clear motivation for choosing this social media to begin her activities as a blogger. Instagram is known for the striking presence of luxury and ostentation images in a series of profiles, especially in those of “digital influencers” who promote lifestyles attached to high standards of consumption. The BBR profile explicitly opposes this elitist universe of consumption, offering a self-proclaimed “down to earth” approach that seeks to inject “reality” doses in each post. “Dreaming” is

3 A digital influencer is a content producer that uses their online channels (especially blogs and social networking apps) to “influence behaviors” both on the internet and outside it.

4 Besides Nathaly Dias, other content producers born in communities in Rio de Janeiro and adjacent neighborhoods have emerged, like Nathalia Rodrigues (Nath Finanças profile), who offers financial guidance to poor people.

also a motif but from the blogger's unglamorous everyday life: "I struggle every day for an internet that I've always wanted to see, REAL."

Low income is an adjective the profile uses to encompass a universe of situations, consumptions, modes of being, sociabilities, and moralities. Posts discuss themes such as "how to travel without spending much," "how to paint your home's walls," "how to shop in a controlled way," "how not to procrastinate," and "how to cook low-income corn" and have hashtags usually formed by the adjective low income – for example, #casalbaixarenda[@low-incomecouple] and #faxinabaixarenda[@low-incomecleaning]. The adjective also expands to identities that gravitate around the profile, like @maridobaixarenda[@low-incomehusband].

Given the success achieved on Instagram, BBR opened a channel on YouTube and started drawing the attention of the corporate market, becoming recognized as the influencer of "C class" consumers. This "target audience" classification refers to how the market named emerging consumers from poorer strata, who experience significant economic ascension during Lula's government. With the improvement in living conditions, marketing professionals elected this segment as a target for their actions, undertaking market research and creating new modes of advertising persuasion (DEPEXE; AMARAL, 2009; MOURA, 2015). At this point, it is worth highlighting Souza's (2010) perspective that, anchored in Bourdieu, duly criticizes the idea of taking income increase as the sole criterion for the constitution of a social class. This scenario of relative change also incited discussions about the circulation of discourses concerning the "mediatization of the new middle class" (GROHMANN, 2014; TRINDADE, 2012), "new representations" of the lower classes in recent television fictional productions (MAURO; TRINDADE, 2012; MAURO, 2012; MOURA, 2015), and the resistance to new consumption standards of emerging groups (PEREZ, 2020). These emblematic issues call attention to reconfigurations and disputes in media representations of popular segments and to the rearrangement of the status of those now called "emerging consumers."

In this scenario, Nathaly Dias appears as a relevant “digital influencer” (native term) close to popular groups, participating in diverse marketing projects for companies such as SERASA Experian, Gol, Superdigital MEI, Editora Intrínseca, and Unicesumar, her *alma mater*. Paid advertising posts – also called “publi” in Brazil and marked in the profile with the hashtags #publi and #publibaixarenda – tend to financial literacy and professional growth within a context of encouraging social ascension.

The profile publishes content with a strong motivational emphasis that seeks to “inspire,” like in the following posts: “I came from rock bottom, I got there and couldn’t go any lower, and I was able to climb up, I’m restoring myself, building a beautiful thing. Lots of things that will help and stimulate you.” “What did you wake for? You woke up for winning!” Or “Let’s wake up every day to win and beat sadness away. After all, every day, we wake up to fight.” Followers’ replies are usually enthusiastic, complimentary – for instance, “you’re beautiful,” “you’re the top,” and “the best blogger!” –, and thankful for the motivational messages. There is also the validation of the proposal to promote and represent low-income segments in comments such as “this Instagram is wonderful. I feel represented ❤️.”

The Morro do Banco community, where BBR lives, is present in multiple posts, like in the YouTube video *TOUR PELA FAVELA | MORRO DO BANCO*. The title underlines the “effect” of social conditions, circumstances, and constraints on individuals. The emphasis on the physical, social, and human “geography” of the favela as a place of origin expresses the feeling of belonging to a reality perceived as very active in creating aspects such as behaviors, sociabilities, living conditions, and sensuities. In this latter aspect, videos emphasize the loud sounds in the community, which appear in neighbors’ boisterous chatter or in noises such as a motorcycle passing by. “In the low income, it’s like this,” comments Nathaly in a video as if apologizing for an aspect perceived as unwanted.

The embarrassment revealed in the emphasis on “lacks” that make life in favelas precarious resonates with the construction of these communities as “problematic” places since their emergence in late-nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro. Since then, grave social problems have been linked to this urban space as the focus of extreme poverty, dirt, insalubrity, housing crisis, and the genesis of social violence (MACHADO DA SILVA, 2002). Precarious living conditions in the community and possible strategies to face and solve adversities are, thus, themes present in the profile.

Though aspects of the “problem-favela” appear in content, this is not the tone of posts that, instead, highlight the perception of a space of morality in which conditions can shape noble values like perseverance and persistence. Posts value the people who live in the community, emphasizing their adaptability to scarce resources – “pobre se vira” [“poor people find a way”] –, creativity, and “warriors” in the “battle” of everyday life profile. In this emphasis, one should not be ashamed of the favela – that is, its social construction as a “problem-place” – but feel proud for belonging, something expressed, for example, in the sayings of a T-shirt that appears in a photo, published on Instagram, with a window view of the community in the backdrop: “Respect my story.”

In this context of appreciation of favela residents, BBR presents herself as an inspiring example, emphasizing her trajectory from her poor childhood as the daughter of a domestic worker who raised two children alone to her current moment as a digital influencer who graduated from a higher education institution. The stress is on effort, tenacity, formal education, and honest work to reach a new social place.

The phenomenon of consumption occupies a prominent place in publications. Posts like “Poor people’s breakfast,” “Shopping for produce with 30 reals,” or “Monthly shopping on Guanabara’s birthday”⁵ represent the low-income lifestyle, in keeping with the proposal of showing “life as it is” for the lower classes. Among the many themes published in

5 “Guanabara’s birthday” refers to the birthday of the Guanabara supermarket chain in the state of Rio de Janeiro, which usually takes more than a million consumers to its shops. Images on the internet show consumers filling stores after special offers.

this context, cleaning is quite present, appearing in images of scrubbing activities or through the exhibition of recommended products. Discussing laundry practices in Brazil, Barbosa (2006) showed how notions of disgust and pollution are at the center of the classification system operating in the country. As Douglas (1976) proposed, cleanliness lies at the heart of the symbolic reproduction of order.

Hence, emphasis on cleanliness can be experienced as a way of dealing with the stigmatization of poverty as the pollutant element (DOUGLAS, 1976), somehow loosening class segregations. In the BBR profile, the hashtag #problemaslimpinho [#poorbutclean] and variants like #velhinhaslimpinho [#oldbutclean] appear. Observing the ensemble of hashtags, we see a profusion related to the themes of cleanliness and domestic work. For instance: #fogaolimpo [#cleanstove], #cozinhalimpa [#cleankitchen], #casaorganizada [#tidyhome], #faxina [#spring-cleaning], #donadecasa [#homemaker], #meuape [#myplace], #meular [#myhome], #limpeza [#cleanliness], #decor, #vidadecasada [#marriedlife], #blogueiradolar [#homemakerblogger], #eletrolux, #vizinhasdolar [#homemakerneighbors].

The identification with the cleaning theme led to the BBR's first commercial partnership with the Limpango company, which sent her a basket with its line of products:

Figure 1 – In a sea of products



Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/Bk-y0yNlsaf?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Besides appearing as an element that serves a positive identity construction in the dimension of poverty, cleanliness emerges in another context in which the “basic” meets the lifestyle, as in the following post:

Figure 2 – The basic and the *lifestyle*



✳ When the color palette matches the supermarket offer. ✳

My blogger way of being... I can't see laundry detergent without wanting it. #blogueira [blogger] #casaorganizada [#tidyhome] #casalimpa [#cleanhome] #meuape [#myplace] #meular [#my-home] #supermercado [#supermarket] #donadecasa [#homemaker] #faxina [#spring-cleaning] #limpeza[#cleaning] #roupalimpa [#laundry] #lookdodia [#outfitoftheday]

Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/BITLkPv188n/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

The hashtags #faxina [#spring-cleaning] and #casalimpa [#clean-home] come next to #lookdodia [#outfitoftheday], highlighting the aesthetic and performative aspects of the dissemination of lifestyles in the online environment that brings enchantment to banal tasks of everyday life. Similarly, the “marmita” [packed lunch], a stigmatized symbol of belonging to the popular classes, appears in a decorated model in another post that highlights the union of a “basic” good with an aesthetic frame.

Thus, a low-income lifestyle attenuates poverty’s negative connotation through a conversion from the latter to the former in which the idea of lifestyle points to the act of choice (SLATER, 2002) and to something that one can observe, admire, and emulate.

Other recurrent themes in publications besides cleaning are meals, recently purchased household products, like kitchenware and decorative objects, items and goods photographed in shops as consumer objects of desire, and apartment spaces. In one of the posts, the “real life” dimension blends with a daydream (CAMPBELL, 2001). With the title “THE TABLE I’D LIKE TO HAVE ✕ THE TABLE I’M GOING TO BUY,” the post shows two photos: a photo of the table BBR says she can afford and another of the desired product. Besides cataloguing the purchased or donated goods that make up her home, BBR also registers consumer objects of desire in which the dream component mixes with the recorded materiality. Together with purchased and desired objects are non-materialized dream goods, like the “imaginary couch.”

Figure 3 – Imaginary couch



Trying my imaginary couch

I have no idea when I will be able to buy one, but I'm determined, and even if it is not a priority, I have already built everything in my mind.

Have I told you that I never had a couch? To be true, I never had a living room!

That is why I am so attached to the fact of having one. ♥

"Desired" items I want and will accomplish in 2019:

- Couch
- Table
- Headboard and box spring
- Kitchen cabinets

And a television in my living room, who knows? DREAMING IS SO GOOD, I AM ADDICTED TO IT

Obs.: I tagged Magalu just in case it works! HAHHAHAHAHA

Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/Bocr7CLBLg7/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Whether paid advertising or not, posts showing household items contain information about the retailer and the price, indicating a good buy:

Figure 4 – Consumption curatorship



Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/BmbxvzhNW1/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Typical follower comments in this kind of post express enthusiasm with the accessible price or the item's beauty, besides the election of the desired object: "Another thing saved, another store that will have my money at the end of the month... That can't be @blogueiradebaixarenda."

Along with material culture elements, the low-income lifestyle comprises sociabilities, modes of feeling, moral values, attitudes, and postures before events. In BBR's case, the mode of expressing is significantly permeated by humor. Posts portray everyday situations under wry lenses that bring lightness to the scene. Hashtags are also a vehicle for the humorous tone, as shows a post in which BBR, during a work trip, comes out of the hotel swimming pool: #hotel #viagem [#travel] #sp #rj #blogueiradebaixarenda #naoseinadar [#Idontknowhowtoswim] #sereiendo [#mermaiding] #diva #acessivel [#accessible]

Financial literacy and upward mobility

A recurring theme in posts is financial literacy, seen as an essential element for achieving a balance in spending and the desired economic ascension. Many posts offer practical guidelines for followers to avoid consumption impulses, not fall into debt, and start effectively controlling expenses, as suggested in hashtags like #SuaContaSuasRegras [#YourBankAccountYourRules]. Recommendations seek to fill a gap in the audience's experience: "We, low-income people, didn't receive financial education. We, low-income people, are not used to talking about money, but we must talk about it all the time. My mom is out of control. She can't have a credit card. But the person was raised like that and has lived like that for 40 years. It's hard to change."

Expense management is elected as the central point in the upward social mobility project, as the post shows:

Figure 5 – Financial literacy



"Financial literacy is the basis for the LOW-INCOME person to prosper.

Let's win for real! Educate yourselves 🍀

Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/B0N34skg3m6/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link".

Financial literacy links to the general management of everyday life with an appeal to rationality and self-control. For fulfilling this life project, BBR presents tools for planning and organizing daily activities, like a weekly planner.

Commercial partnerships follow the ethos of saving and control in financial life. With the Supedigital company, BBR made an ad post promoting a pre-paid physical card with which consumers can only spend what is available in their accounts and thus avoid impulse consumption that does not fit their budget:

Superdigital prepaid physical card. You spend only what you have in your account and don't go into the red. I LOVED IT! @superdigitalapp take me traveling again? AND LET 2019 COME WITHOUT DEBTS AND LOTS OF TRIPS LIKE THIS ONE 🍷

#SuaContaSuasRegras [#YourBankAccountYouRules] #publi [#ad] #blogueiradebaixarenda #blogueira [#blogger] #25demarço #compras [#shopping]

Source:

https://www.instagram.com/p/Bq8KmTqByMY/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Besides an identity and lifestyle, the low-income qualification indicates a state that can and should be changed:

You use the credit function, but the money comes out of your account immediately, like debit. This way, it's easier to control the money because we are low-income but want to be high, right? 🍷

Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/BfTarBABoJk/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

By making a summon with the maxim “Occupy all spaces,” BBR encourages her audience to challenge the historical barriers to upward mobility in the country and be present in situations that were previously unattainable, such as traveling by plane or learning languages.

Many markers of mobility appear in the profile, such as living in a place separate from the family of origin, having a bank account or enrolling in higher education. In addition to financial control, prioritizing

formal education is considered a preferred means of transforming the condition of poverty.

The apartment space, in turn, is a very present setting in Instagram posts. When beginning her activities on this social media, BBR had just moved to the apartment that she considers her first “real home,” indicating a significant “life improvement” (SARTI, 1996).

Posts track spaces since they were initially empty until filled with objects, utensils, and furniture, bought and donated, which were part of the construction of the household. The family history, projects, the process of social mobility, representations of maintenance tasks, and the organization of the household all appear in the sequence of photos and videos. Elements of material culture are appropriated as a part of the couple’s trajectory in the decoration process because these are, according to Miller (2001), a “source and context of mobility and change,” like in the following post:

Figure 6 - *Home Office*



A WOMAN WHO SETS UP HER HOME OFFICE WITH MONEY FROM HER OWN WORK DOESN'T WANT TO FIGHT ANYONE 🤍

Tomorrow is Thursday and video day on the channel. I shared a little about my beginning on INSTAGRAM and how I spent my first “salary” as a BLOGGER 🤍

👉 Do you remember what you did with your first salary? Tell me in the comments!

Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/Bvh2P5iB1u0/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Final considerations

This article showed how the phenomenon of consumption has a central place in BBR's social media profile, appearing in diverse contexts like shopping curatorship, strategies for acquiring goods, and inventories of purchased and desired items. The low-income lifestyle, a native designation, appears in the BBR profile encompassing situations, consumptions, modes of being, sociabilities, and moralities. In the specific domain of consumption practices, the emphasis on "cleaning," one of the most triggered categories, is significant as a classification marker that positively balances the condition of poverty. Acquired goods appear as signs of upward social mobility – evidenced in the accomplishment of the couple's first rented apartment – and show the role of consumption curatorship that BBR takes on for her followers.

Financial literacy points to a new attitude towards consumption, which enables a more "rational" budget organization, the propelling element of socioeconomic mobility. BBR's summon to "occupy spaces" appears in content related to lifestyle, aiming to counterpose the opulence other digital influencers display on Instagram. The stimulus to social mobility opposes the fatalist stance before poverty, present in the hierarchical context of Catholic tradition. In BBR's case, the emphasis is on individual consciousness, rationality, financial control, and proactivity within a more individualist spectrum (DUMONT, 1972).

The "origin story" (ABIDIN, 2015) of digital influencers is invoked in some cases to offer audiences "authenticity" ingredients, informality, and organicity. Abidin (2015) refers to "personalized advertorials" in which accounts of influencers' personal stories suggest that whatever has worked for them may happen for anyone. This would be a fundamental part of their relatability, understood as their capacity to inspire a feeling of emotional connection with their audiences.

Nathaly Dias justifies the beginning of her work on Instagram as a counterpoint to profiles marked by luxury and aspirational consumption. She proposes, then, a "down-to-earth" profile that emphasizes "life as it is." This positioning within a networking app like Instagram,

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traditionally marked by the glamorous lifestyle experiences of the elites, broadens the visibility of less economically favored sectors.

This article analyzes a case that reveals a process of construction of alterity (high-income lifestyle X low-income lifestyle) associated with an upward social mobility project. BBR affirms a low-income condition, at an initial level, as the result of a social structure that conditions ways of living. Accepting this place appears as the first step toward recognition. At another level, low income is a state that one must overcome.

Thinking of a broader social context, the expectation of mobility in popular segments increased with the economic rise of bottom-of-the-pyramid groups, especially during the two mandates of President Lula. In this period, from 2003 to 2010, there was an improvement in the level of schooling of children of popular strata families due to public policies for education (MARQUES, 2018). Many such families had a first-generation member accessing university. Compared to previous generations, new university students from low-income families, like Nathaly Dias, tend to have more digital literacy, manipulating technological tools to produce online social media content with ease. Though the horizontality aspect of internet relationships does not lead, on its own, to a reduction of social inequalities (MILLER et al., 2019), it is crucial to observe specific situations, such as the one analyzed in this paper, in which movements of relative social ascension are experienced in performances present in online content.

Material forms are a way of dealing with social stratification. Hence their enormous weight in popular groups (MILLER et al., 2019). Without ever disregarding the weight of the enormous economic difficulties faced by the poorest segments, the relationship with material culture may articulate important dynamics of social change in a country that has a significant hierarchical bias like Brazil.

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