THE MULTIPLICITY OF FACETS OF CONTEMPORARY FEMININITY IN HIGH FASHION BLOGS

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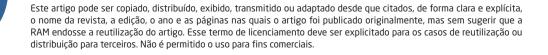
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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Analyze the makeup of contemporary femininities through in-
-depth research into how a group of assiduous readers of high fashion
blogs produces meanings about themselves and the social relationships
in which they are involved.

Originality/gap/relevance/implications: The study advances in the
understanding of how social relationships are complex complexions
and blogs, tools of virtual publication of the content of daily activities
of their idealizers, in new spaces influencing the construction of the
subjectivity of individuals or even understanding them as contemporary
forms of organization.

Key methodological aspects: Qualitative study with data collected from
virtual observation techniques and semi-structured interviews.

Summary of key results: The high-fashion blog as a business organiza-
tion with a profile of readers presenting common interests and charac-
teristics, in addition to the emergence of femininity as a multifaceted
complex of characteristics both near as distant from the old public roles
played by women.

Key considerations/conclusions: The conception of the blog conjectures
as a digital *locus* where social interactions and market relations are pos-
sible. The study also allowed bringing the debate of postmodern femi-
nist approaches to the field of organizational studies, reaffirming the
intermittent character of the subjective constitution of the feminine
gender in the contemporary emancipatory perspective.

KEYWORDS

Contemporary femininities. Blogs. Virtual organizations. Gender. Sub-
jectivity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Femininity is the gender's constitution and may be expressed regardless a biological sex. It is a synthesis of subjects in social spaces, historical and cultural contexts, contemplating individual characteristics and power relations resulting from social coexistence (Cappelle & Melo, 2007). The feminine identity, in this sense, is a social construct (Goldenberg, 2005; Medeiros & Valadão, 2011) and the feminine gender can be registered as a subjective production that opens possibilities to escape dichotomies or sexual dualisms (Ferreira & Nogueira, 2013).

For Crane (2006), fashion can help to define social identities, contributing to the constitution of gender, by continually attributing new meanings to artefacts that are meaningful to consumers, as they express the ambivalences that surround them. Thus, fashion can be a symbolic representation of status, belonging, social hierarchy, class, gender, race, ethnicity, community, culture, or any other type of individual or social identification. In this context, high fashion blogs appear as contemporary tools that help in the spread of information regarding consumer's trends and the supply of artifacts configured as "fashionable" (Tavernari & Murakami, 2012).

Firstly, blogs were presented as tools of virtual publication of the content of daily activities of their idealizers, a variation of a 'written diary'. Today, they are based on the rapid updating and use of micro-contents of frequent publication, possible with the new configurations of society from the emergence of information and communication technologies and the transformation of virtually conducted social relations (Tavernari & Murakami, 2012). Bedê (2010) indicates that there is, in this context, a rupture between the private and the public: cyber-intimacy. The blog is a tool to support writing about oneself in the cyber-culture, and, at the same time, and in contexts of various social transformations, represents a means for the disclosure of models and the construction of personal or social identity.

Machado (2003) states that the knowledge of social reality is productive in the context of organizations, through the study of identities, in view of their directing role in actions. For González Rey (2012), identity is defined by subjective senses and, therefore, lies within a larger complex system, subjectivity, which is constituted by subjects and is, at the same time, part of the same subjects, in an inextricable relationship of social processes.

Inspired in this context, high fashion blogs are commercial spaces on the internet, kept and fed daily by bloggers, aiming at the dissemination of content of their publications among readers with common interests (Mes-

quita, Matos & Figueiredo, 2016). Therefore, blogs, as social organizations in virtual environment, and the behavior of their readers, constitute the object and unit of analysis of this study.

In spite of the relevance of themes and researches carried out with blogs as referenced, the influence exerted on blog readers regarding the construction of individual subjectivities, and the relevance to understand them as a contemporary form of social organization, become unique contributions in relation to the management area, as it allows the perception of a new contemporary form of business and the capture of influence of a new type of celebrity (the blogger) in consumption habits. The link between a blogger and her followers influences both the blog position (Hahn & Lee, 2014) as their purchase intentions (Pate & Adams, 2013), since, in those spaces, women readers can experience identities and identifications between themselves and the bloggers (Marwick, 2013).

Thus, the study responds to the following research question: how do contemporary femininities in women, understood as socially constituted, have their construction influenced by the reading of high fashion blogs? Such issue will be treated via immersion in the field to be surveyed, that is, focusing on women of the millennials generation who access those blogs. The aim is to capture the reality they share as members of virtual communities, aiming at the analysis of the constitution of contemporary femininities through in-depth investigation of the way assiduous readers of high fashion blogs produce meanings about themselves and their social relations, especially with regard to access to online organizations.

Since the study investigates the subjectivity of the analyzed subjects, it has qualitative nature and uses techniques of observations and interviews. The complementation of phrases, a technique pointed out by González Rey (2012) and employed by Ferreira and Nogueira (2013), is also used to uncover how blogs, for this constitution, influences their assiduous readers and how it interferes in contemporary femininity.

2. CONTEMPORARY AND DESIRED FEMININITY

For Augé (2010), the ideal when studying cultures, ethnicities, gender and other representations of a specific group would be that each formation was an island linked to others and, at the same time, different from the others, and that each island was an exact homologue of its neighbor. Nevertheless, this ideal would not correspond to reality. So, why studying groups

of women if it is not possible to define a single female gender and, at the same time, corresponding to the other members of the group? "Because every representation of the individual is, necessarily, a representation of the social bond that is consubstantial to him/her" (Augé, 2010, p. 24).

As "discourses structure the world, they, at the same time, structure the subjectivity of the person, providing him/her with a particular social identity and a form of being in the world" (Alvesson & Deetz, 2012, p. 248). Thus, one sees femininities as constituted and a constituent of subjectivity in multiple voices, as well as any other subjective sense, which could not be emphasized by the unicity of a feminine gender. In fact, the attempt to establish a standard can make subjectivity "precarious and uncertain" when "the immense variety of universes that mix in each subjectivity ends up making their figures and languages obsolete very quickly, leading them to an almost permanent commitment of reconfiguration" (Souza *et al*., 2013, p. 207).

González Rey (2003, p. 211) places subjectivity in a complex social system in which the "processes of organization and production of meanings and senses" are articulated within a historical-cultural approach. In this same sense, by her history, her local context and her contemporary culture, "the woman remains contradictory, and still acts according to the values of past generations, wanting to move to the future", giving a new meaning to her own roles. "If the models were fixed before, what made it easier to follow them, since their validity was not questioned, today, because they are not fixed, they bring a lot of insecurity and anxiety" (Maluf, 2012, p. 105). An author can refer to different periods in which women's groups already experienced the struggle for subversion of social models, more or less visible.

The liberating promises of neoliberal policies, for example, are still another form of exploitation – now also exploitation of the feminist ideology (Eisenstein, 2009) –, imposing as a rule what Standing (1999) calls the feminization of labor. Acker (2004) points out that it is not possible to speak of globalization and its effects without mentioning the centrality of women's work as a resource for global capital, as well as their appropriation for the capitalism, not only of their productive and reproductive work, already pointed out by feminists, but also of their ideology and political work, placing feminist ideals at the service of capital.

Contemporaneity shows the rupture between the past and present context, permeated by slower or faster transitions of some aspects, by the increasing appreciation of the new and the constant rejection of the traditional. Along with contemporaneity, there are also changes in patterns of behavior that provoke changes in the role of women and in the subjectivity of women (Nunes, 2008). Those changes are not homogeneous, but cons-

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trained by ambiguities constituted by the experience of being a woman in a society where she has to play the role of wife, mother, educator of children, among others, linked to traditional and modern models. Self-government, professional, non-procreative sex, and more, such as political militancy and participation in left-wing parties, a typically male arena (Goldenberg, 2005), are all new contemporary attributions of modern women. Today's woman is no longer the same, but still corresponds to the figure of feminine roles that run generations, structured by a masculine hegemony determinant of her role. However, women have conquered other spaces in public and private life and this fact is due to the norms and values culturally spread in organizational spaces, influencing the meanings of being a man and being a woman (Medeiros & Valadão Júnior, 2011).

In this new reality, the constitution of the gender cannot leave aside the configuration of the new woman, as she wants to be considered: a figure under construction who seeks to develop her potential obscured by the traditional conception of her being (Goldenberg, 2005). The woman learns and wants to compete for her place, because there are changes in the definitions of what would be valued in being a woman and being a man, while women are characters of a historical process under construction and are in search of a new identity (Goldenberg, 2005). "The emergence of a renewed female social role is a complex process that encounters historical obstacles" (Braga, 2007, p. 16). "The contemporary woman seeks, nowadays, a new space of action, not only in the family, but also in society. She is a being in the process of seeking new roles, and this vision stimulates her more and more" (Maluf, 2012, p. 38), challenging her to produce transformations in all spheres of life, especially at work, in the family and in people.

When analyzing a group of women and questioning them about aspects of the contemporary world, Maluf (2012, p. 71) states that "disposability is bothering them in general, beyond consumerism and the sense of emptiness, disposable culture, immediacy, the difficulty of preserving values". Despite the history of society contributing to a greater freedom experienced by women, those same social processes redefine culture, social and individual life and are reorganized according to consumer logic (Lipovetsky, 2004). Within that logic, Nunes (2008) exposes the situation experienced by young readers of a self-help book for adolescent women. The material presents tips and recipes for success and happiness based on a minimum standard of beauty and care that all women need to have. Thus, capitalism, the logic of consumption, and the superficiality of expected patterns make society a spectacle in which "women seem to need to be always ready to step in" (Nunes, 2008, p. 45).

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According to Harju and Huovinen (2015, p. 1608), "traditionally, feminism criticizes women as an object of gaze; post-feminism, on the other hand, sees the woman as willing to become a subject who uses her corporeity as an instrument of power". However, beauty, observation derived from the body, is judged as if there was an ideal pattern, and the social advantages of those that are beautiful are ascribed to the obviousness of their physical appearance, a more accessible aspect to those who do not deepen relationships or who visualize each other only passing.

Therefore, women are compelled to consume and nourish that self-image, which assists in the constitution of their femininity and their acceptance (Livramento, Hor-Meyll, & Pessôa, 2013). Beauty, although not the only desired attribute of femininity, was also the object of a study by Machado-Borges (2008) that sought to analyze how a printed magazine of Brazilian national circulation represented women and plastic surgery and how femininity would associate with class and race issues. "A common denominator among the muses, misses, models, businesswomen, stars and actresses of the magazine is that most of them are white, light-skinned and straight-haired people" (Machado-Borges, 2008, p. 152).

For Nunes (2008), those patterns are cultural constructions disclosed by means of communication that reach the feminine public, affirming an ideal of femininity that involves sacrifices and punishments. Women are led to perceive themselves as alien to those images and to apprehend "the weight that appearance and image have in contemporary culture" (Nunes, 2008, p. 49). In a study performed with a low-income female audience, Livramento *et al.* (2013) identified values that lead those women to buy beauty products, even without financial conditions to provide their own food, as well as other basic needs. For the millennials generation, those conditions also involve a growing interest in information on fashion and beauty products, based on the social pressure associated with an indication of success or social belonging (Fernandez & Karhawi, 2015). What for some is superfluous, for those women, it is a condition of acceptance, which can be understood as a yearning to climb the scale of social hierarchy.

3. METHODOLOGICAL SCOPE

The immersion in the field and the interaction with individuals surveyed, within a certain target community, become fundamental to understand the meanings and senses attributed by subjects to what they observe in the virtual scene of high fashion blogs. Moreover, "there is no more social

analysis that can make savings of individuals, nor analysis of individuals that can ignore the spaces through which they transit" (Augé, 2010, p. 110). This study approaches the characteristics of ethnographic research in order to investigate aspects of the feminine culture of high fashion blog readers, through daily living, sharing the same virtual environment, in the quest to analyze the production of meanings about themselves and about the social relations between the participants of those spaces.

The blogs were accessed daily by one of the researchers from this study during the months of July 2013 to January 2014. These blogs were intentionally chosen because they were constantly updated, provided indications and reviews of products and images of bloggers using clothes and footwear they disclosed. The blogs surveyed were *"Garotas Estúpidas"*, *"Blog da Thássia"*, *"2Beauty"*, *"Chata de Galocha"*, and *"Fashionismo"*. All chosen blogs were considered high fashion and identified in this way as they mentioned and/or divulge national and international branded beauty products, ranging in terms of prices. In addition to those five blogs, the blog *"Shame on You, Blogueira"* was included, a type of space containing criticisms to blogs that published analysis of content of other blogs as a way to identify veiled advertisements and other situations, indicating the misuse of advertising tools or of Portuguese language.

The interviewed readers were selected after defining the blog group previously mentioned, indicating the form of access to all of them as one of the selection criteria. In addition to this, other criteria made up the profile of the respondents to be interviewed: all college students aged between 20 and 25 years old, single, without children, and with daily access to those virtual environments. Those readers were chosen after informal conversations in order to assess their closeness to the profile defined for the study. This is similar to most blog readers who most seek online information on products (Pate & Adams, 2013), especially from the fashion and beauty market (Fernandez & Karhawi, 2015), in order to make a purchase decision (Mangold & Smith, 2012), representing the millennials generation.

The interviews lasted approximately one hour each and were conducted in person with audio recording on a device. After transcription, the researchers listened to the recordings repeatedly and performed the analysis concomitantly with that process. Fifteen women responded to a number of questions that sometimes escaped guiding topics and phrases, as they spoke about aspects of their lives and social conditions, important facts to answer the research question. The criterion used to define the number of subjects was the purposeful selection by theoretical saturation, with the accomplishment of some interviews beyond that mark, in an attempt to guarantee greater
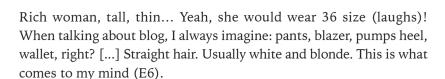
empirical confidence. During the analysis, the comments were identified by date of the posts at the origin blogs and the interviewees, by cardinal numbers. It is noteworthy that the comments taken from the blogs were chosen intentionally for diverging from those who only mentioned compliments to the blogger and present some critical reflection of the reader. Moreover, the interviewed women did not write those comments and, in this way, they were identified differently.

The data from interviews and comments were organized and analyzed through the discourse analysis techniques, of French lineage, which, according to Maingueneau (1997), are not limited by textual linguistic analysis, but rather by an analysis of sociological or psychological perspective that articulates the discourse to its conditions of production. The interlace of those two domains designates the social context that surrounds the investigated *corpus*, making it impossible to separate the textual and the discursive community that makes it possible, such as a relation between external and internal. Maingueneau (1997, p. 70) asserts that "the same movement that generates the statements structures the community" and "meaning and language do not overlap with economic and social relations, but they consist of a constitutive dimension of those relations" (Maingueneau, 1997, p. 188). The results of those analysis are presented in the following sections entitled "The Woman and Femininity in the Contemporaneity" and "Disclosed Aesthetics and Criticism of Mass Production", both incorporating the multiple facets of contemporary femininities, evidenced from the interpreted results.

4. THE WOMAN AND FEMININITY IN THE CONTEMPORANEITY

The blog, considered a space for completeness of subjectivities (Mesquita *et al.*, 2016), appears as an instrument that propels the woman's image. That image associates with certain identifiable patterns, questioned in the interviews with the readers. A direct question asked about the profile of women on high-fashion blog sites. The responses varied in relation to the own reader's focus of identification, but they converged with respect to some characteristics, such as those discussed below in the speeches fragments.

> […] they spend all day with makeup! It is production, makeup…
> It gives an idea of perfection. […] My God, they have nothing out of
> place […] It is an image that does not fit reality (E1).
> Rich (E2).

> Rich woman, tall, thin… Yeah, she would wear 36 size (laughs)! When talking about blog, I always imagine: pants, blazer, pumps heel, wallet, right? [...] Straight hair. Usually white and blonde. This is what comes to my mind (E6).

The female blogger is "perfect", as the first reader says. She does not let her flaws appear or seem to want to expose them. However, that image of perfection does not match the reality of the interviewee and, more than that, does not fit other social realities, as the next reader says – the image of a "rich" female blogger. The financial condition separates that subjective figure built from the perception of several other real women who do not fit that economic profile. The speech of the sixth interviewee (E6) condenses some physical attributes of the woman's image the reader says to perceive when accessing the blogs: tall, white, blonde, thin and rich woman. Nunes (2008) argues that the feminine ideals instituted by specific cultures have strength in the construction of subjectivity of the gender itself and contemporaneity feeds a production of the meaning of "being woman", no longer based on external conquests, but on the so-called "beauty-youth-health triad" (Nunes, 2008, p. 54). The formatting of the body (objective) comes from the subjective and the sense it produces about itself and its condition comes from the complex continuous relationship between it (singular) and the (social) spaces it attends.

Hegemonic power relations, as presented in the Foucaultian approach, function "as a power device to delimit and classify what is **normal** to the detriment of the **abnormal**" (Souza *et al.*, 2013, p. 209, bolds of the author). Thus, the woman who does not fit those standards, or does not strive to fit in, is the abnormality – the one that distances herself from the disseminated feminine normality models. According to González Rey (2012, p. 98-99),

> [...] one of the most efficient forms of power is to hegemonize social representations [...] that dominate all means of dissemination and all institutions and, in turn, prevent the authentic symbolic production of certain sectors of society.

The different stereotypes of what is feminine (or even what is masculine) disclosed in blogs perpetuate forms that show gender inequalities, with emphasis on the roles played by each one (Medeiros & Valadão Júnior, 2011), evident in the following speech of an interviewee:

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> [...] for me, the woman can do everything! Women, nowadays, are, like, "powerful"! They are free to be what they want to be. Woman is independent, woman is free to be woman. Different from man, right? Man has to be that thing that society imposes. Man has to be strong, man cannot cry. Not woman! (E3).

In the speech, there is a clear segregation between the masculine and the feminine. However, unlike the context of historical inequalities that diminish women in relation to men, the respondent here emphasizes the positive advantages: their freedom of expression, feeling, use of the body, aesthetics and strength, everything focused on comparison. This (E3) was a singular interview when compared to the others in relation to the construction of an image of women, since it shows the polarization of genders, bringing important contribution to the debate of feminine complexion in contemporaneity – a possibility to see the feminine in those questions of free will, as a formation superior to the masculine.

Those asymmetric relations of power determined by adverse possibilities would lead to any conclusion other than the endless debate that would list attributes in which one or the other would win. As Calás and Smircich (2012, p. 312) write, "it is no longer just about gender, since both men and women [...] struggle against inequalities, injustices, inequities and intolerance"; it is not about divisions, advantages, it is about approximations that do not identify gender or other predicates that favor class, race, color, religion, etc. The very current condition of society, driven by forces emerging from an economic system, weakens the power of the previous argument.

When questioned about the definition of contemporary woman, the question was latent and they did not know whether they belonged to that concept of identity. The inquiry into whether they were close to or distant from what they understood by what they were describing led them to justifications that tried to explain why they were distant or close, for what they said might be strange. For Souza *et al.* (2013, p. 209), "identity will always be precarious, unstable and contingent, being necessary for its existence to include the other by which it is delimited". As for Marwick (2013, p. 3), "some feminist scholars have framed fashion blogs as a space where young women can explore with feminine identity". The following interview fragments point to some of those doubts and comparative/justification needs.

> [...] today's women, at least the ones I live with, the family, are not so primordial. For me, they are (E4).

In my conception, marriage is important [...] For the most modern ones, I do not know, I do not know if it is an ideal. I think so (E6).

What is it to be a woman nowadays? The contemporary woman does not have a single definition, she is multiple and, therefore, that question received several different answers in the interviews.

[…] my image of a woman is a woman who works, a woman who earns her money (E8).
The woman is the one who, even with all chores, work, children, home, has time to take care of herself, but without the paranoia of being beautiful all the time. I do not have that ambition of 100% (E1).
You have to be a warrior without losing your delicacy (E9).
Independent (E11).

The first two descriptions (E8 and E1) explain the multifunctional character that the definition receives, subdivided into at least three dimensions. The first one refers to herself, the maintenance of body care, without the need to reach perfection, which can be understood by the subjective construction of the feminine ideal. The second one corresponds to the assignments of home and family, conventional expectations of women's public roles (Maluf, 2012). The third one, added to the previous ones, is the dimension of work outside the home, a characteristic intrinsic to contemporary feminine social emancipations. Finally, in those fragments, one word that is recurrent elsewhere in the interview is "independent". Here, coupled with the general concept of woman, independence appears several times when it comes to success, as shown in the following lines.

[…] financial independence! (E2).
A successful woman is, above all, an independent woman, capable of maintaining herself and a woman who is well with herself regardless of impositions (E14).
A successful woman is a Gisele [Bündchen]! [...] She is beautiful, isn't she? Normal, got it? Even waking up she must be beautiful (E1).

Independence and happiness were the most repeated features in the descriptions of the successful woman. Specifically, independence can have the economic focus, as two of the respondents (E2 and E14) stated, one of them (E14) complemented with the independence that frees her from the

constraints of external impositions. The others point to happiness associated with success, two terms synonymous with feeling good about themselves, with what they have. Marriage is also one of those common conventional roles of women (Maluf, 2012), but here it is not so essential: "if she did not get married, it does not matter" (E3). Being successful does not depend on it. The reference to Gisele Bündchen, a Brazilian model of international fame, intrinsically carries some predicates that make her a successful-woman reference, for the interviewee in question (E3). There are not only physical characteristics, but also a condition of normality associated with those aspects. For that reader, success is beauty, but not any: the naturalness of the beautiful.

As pointed out at the beginning of this section, "being woman" and "being feminine" are not synonymous constructs. "Being woman" relates to power, knowledge, freedom, social relations, as already evident in the fragments of previous interviews and respective analysis. It is the production of meaning that prioritizes the subjective. Female emancipations are revisited in the current conception of the contemporary "being woman", built from the discourses of high fashion blog readers. On the other hand, the definition of "being feminine", of feeling more or less feminine, runs through characteristics of an objective nature. The body gives a voice to femininity. The image of feminine is fragmented, but not incomplete. It is broken down into accessories that make up a feminine idea. According to Machado-Borges (2008, p. 158), "the symbols of power and legitimacy are, thus, literally sewn into the body of the modern Brazilian woman".

5. DISCLOSED AESTHETICS AND THE CRITICISM OF MASS PRODUCTION

Another empirical evidence, derived from the interviewees' statements, was the constant criticism of the subjective mass production of women from aesthetic standards widely disclosed in women's blogs and in other media. The fragment of a reader's commentary, shown below, shows a concern with the consumption culture (aesthetic standard), which influences children, adolescents and adults.

> [...] after seeing those videos that I will post on the links I was REALLY worried about the negative influence of those fashion bloggers... [...] The girl is 11 years old and makes videos of how to pronounce international brands (some wrong) and responding tags, and,

> moreover, she lies. [...] Any doubt that those bloggers are spoiling even children's head? [...] I hope she does not become another futile and useless blogger in the future (Reader's comment to the post at the blog *"Shame on You Blogueira"*, on October 2, 2013).

The reader commented about the video of a child describing pieces of clothes she wore, talking about her participation in fashion events, and showing her knowledge about international clothing and accessories brands. Her outrage associates with the influence that bloggers have on children, in particular, in this example above. The terms "futile", "useless" and "spoiling" confirm the influence negativity, as the reader thinks. For Livramento *et al.* (2013), brands function as a disguise of position in the social hierarchy, a quality flag. However, as Tavernari and Murakami (2012) assert, bloggers move from the social role of counselor, the one who recommends products with expertise, to celebrities who go beyond the virtual limits of exposure and range, sometimes, disseminating sponsored opinions that interfere with the attribution of value judgment of their readers.

As an attribute of a generation that has more participation in social networks and is more influenced by online reviews of fashion and beauty products (Pate & Adams, 2013), even when there is no direct commercial intention, blogs create desires for millennials women when perceived as instruments of expertise (Fernandez & Karhawi, 2015). The little knowledge about fashion, or its absence, guides the readers to the consumption of certain brand or product when they consider the information that the blogger publishes consistent and reliable. This is unlikely to change after acquiring knowledge through sources treated as neutral and secure assessments (Fernandez & Karhawi, 2015).

Hahn and Lee (2014) alert that bloggers should be careful when promoting fashion products on their blogs, as it is essential for consumers to have access to unbiased opinion rather than to sponsored information. It is also noteworthy the importance given by followers to the maintenance of blogger's image as an "equal". The profile of bloggers and their readers is compatible because they both share the status of women, under the thirty's, single, childless, high consumption pattern, and searching the Internet for sources of information on what they want to buy (Pate & Adams, 2013), in terms of majority. Thus, proximity is more than a chance, but a condition of success of the blogger who depends on an audience that relies on what she informs and that recognizes her as the figure of a "friend" and/or an "expert" (Fernandez & Karhawi, 2015).

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Marwick (2013) states that many blog followers feel cheated if an advertiser sponsors the look presented by a blogger in order to promote a particular brand. Mangold and Smith (2012) warned the need for attention to consumer reviews and comments on blogs, since the information the millennials generation receives and shares in those spaces heavily influences the trade focused on them.

Under those conditions, each subject has the following options, as presented by González Rey (2012, p. 149):

> to subordinate themselves to the various orders that characterize the institutionalization of spaces in which they are developed, or to generate alternatives that allow them unique options within their socialization in those spaces.

It is possible to view both choices when reading comments on social networks more open than blogs (Instagram, Twitter and Facebook, for example). There are those who do not accept the stereotyped profile of women submitted to the current fashion order, and those who claim to be contrary, who criticize the formatted standards and, in an attempt to escape, demonstrate to be unrelated to those formats. Yet, abstaining from standardization and not being absent from the virtual *locus* of conception of that mass production seems to be ambiguous. The confusion lies in the completeness of the subjectivities of those who attend those environments, since there is a target audience, a clear direction, which indicates who are the women who will access a blog or another.

Birman (2012) refers to a current inertia that does not allow to question, break or discontinue the superfluous senses allied with capitalism, appearances and consumption, that is, subjective productions guided by the current economic system that require an individual and group spectacle to ensure the acceptance of the woman. In spite of such subjective productions and the consequent absence of change, there is a transience of what is feminine, however small, as articulated by Maluf (2012), because the changes provoke anxiety and insecurity, amplified here by the latent possibility of online critics. The ease of exposure of private life on the internet and the ambitions to receive positive comments make it difficult to formulate a reliable opinion on certain situation. Both readers and bloggers are not comfortable in pointing out failures. Everything that is not praised is excluded, although this statement is not generalizable, as the following comment fragment shows.

> [...] but people, look, me, here! (laughs). A lot of people came to tell me that they saw me here today (I did not even know the blog), of course negative advertising is not good, but, anyway, it is advertisement right? In short, I found the comments mischievous, but they are still opinions and I will never fail to respect them. The truth is that it is not that bad to appear here, people have a very negative view of the blog, as if it was just offense, but deep down is just another way to entertain people and I respect and even have fun together. [...] In the end, each one has her style [...] and far from me to hope that this will please everybody [...] (Comments from blogger/reader to blog post "Shame On You *Blogueira*"on September 5, 2013).
> Congratulations [...]! Good humor even when criticized is a sign of pure intelligence. Now, I'm your fan, xxx! (Response 1)

"Negative propaganda" and "mischievous comments" refer to a so-called "infantilized" clothe, worn by a blogger who would be considered overweight. The blogger writes about the opinions that the readers had and should be heard, not ignored. As a result, several readers have applauded the reaction of the blogger, and the speech following her comment express this. It is not just the blogger's behavior, but her "style" and "not please everyone" that catch the eye. She gives up a model and wears the clothes she wants, exposing her body, even if it is not in accordance to the expectations. The spread of a stereotyped profile occurs through different mechanisms, corroborated by society and/or social organizations. It reinforces conformism and reduces the possibilities of reflection on the *modus operandi* of feminine constitution, but it does not prevent the emergence of resistance or change reaction (Medeiros & Valadão Júnior, 2011). The following fragment also allows the visualization of that resistance to change.

> [...] she has authenticity. For example, this issue of not undergoing plastic surgery on her nose and mouth that everyone insists her to do, because they think she is not in the pattern. I think when you assume your condition [...] is a wonderful thing because we are different, isn't it? (E13).

The interviewed reader reinforces the reaction of a blogger and claims to be wonderful that power of choice in terms of choosing to resist to changes despite the spread of an expected pattern. Her opinion also reflects the reason why she accesses a certain blog and why she remains faithful to that space: the blogger's authenticity. Miller and Shepherd (2004) argue

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that authenticity is one of the contemporary social forces that leads to those accesses, a dissatisfaction with what other forces mediate.

In the blogs *"Fashionismo"* and *"Garotas Estúpidas"*, the first one with weekly posts, there are publications requesting that the readers to vote and choose the best look among the ones available. The look is the set of clothes, accessories, hairstyle and type of makeup, that is, the set of everything that frames the female body and exposes the intentions of who dresses or the team that produced the person. The credits of the look appear just below the photos in most cases, with links that indicate where the reader can purchase the same or similar pieces. The comments suggest the need for such indications, as women want to wear the same lipstick, asking the color that certain actress is wearing. They want to know which designer is responsible for certain dress, since there is a party and they intend to wear the same dress, and so on. Even spontaneously, those concerns are not voluntary, as González Rey (2012) asserts when saying that capitalist logic guides people to the production of meanings, including the attribution of values, corroborating Birman's (2012) thinking that social subjectivity guarantees economic interests.

While decision-making spaces are open to democratic choice, the blogger herself states that she may value some of those choices more than the chosen by her audience; or, still, in the current week, there is a new character who has changed her style and, thus, may be a valid choice for decision. Although the indication is unclear, many implicit aspects may influence the reader to select one or another woman profile. The choice of certain option is already a conditioning factor, and, even more, a transformation of a refusal in something that can guarantee acquiescence. This phenomenon is not explicit, but interspersed by the constant exposure of photographs subtitled by messages, which identify where a reader will get the same objects that 'that woman' uses, as they indicate to be the model to follow – a phenomenon known as "the massification of wishes". The provocation of the feminine subjective by the constant and continuous display of images awakens an awareness of judgment that leads people to desire the same brand or products, or to be "that woman".

This conclusion is possible because several bloggers post "news", "nominations" and "advices" sporadically and, in a search for other blogs, realize that those same products are also pointed out with similar quality references and with the promise that they will promote some significant positive change. Coincidentally or not, a cosmetic is released in the market and the most varied reviews – bloggers' opinions on it – can be found a few days before or after the product is launched for purchase. The readers call this

the "collective unconscious", supported by the figure of "*Blogueira* Shame", who has already denounced implicit publicity to competent governmental bodies. The collective unconscious, as they judge, is the business practice of buying spaces to divulge a product launched on a blog, asking the blogger not to report that it is a sponsored post, misleading the readers.

Seeing the same product repeatedly, with different descriptions that converge on the unison voice of business interests, has implications for the attribution of readers' senses. They acknowledge that influence and other studies have already identified that power of attraction and credit of trust that the blogger possesses (Schweig *et al.*, 2009; Tavernari & Murakami, 2012) for the construction of feminine subjectivity (Nunes, 2008). Massification consists of yearning for private interests in arousing desires in a large number of potential customers, as well as in a number of daily visitors received by those sites. The complex system of completeness of subjectivities, thus, has a force that drives women to become constrained by interests based on economic causes, but not exclusively.

6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The complex of subjectivities, in its complex network of connections among productions of meanings, constitutes the gender as an intermittent and constantly improving formation. Therefore, historical, cultural and ideological constructions of each half make gender relations in the organizational spaces, making it necessary to figure out at first the context of the relationship in organizational spaces for better understanding the gender constitution within the researched *locus*.

The objective of this study was to analyze the constitution of contemporary femininity in women by investigating in depth the way a group of assiduous readers of high fashion blogs produce meanings about themselves and their social relations, especially in the access to virtual organizations. In contrast to the literature surveyed, there are many types of women in the contemporary world; many facets that redefine and re-signify contemporary femininities. There are female readers of fashion blogs who identify with the images of those bloggers, trying to participate in the same events, wear the same clothes and use the same products as a symbolic production of social belonging.

The access to blogs becomes a common space sharing, where women live with other similar profiles, or profiles that wish to own, either in physical terms (such as the body), either in economic or social situation. However,

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just as there are proximities, there are those who distance themselves, who do not agree and claim to be another type of woman. In this way, frequent readers of high fashion blogs can ratify and question the femininity affirmed by images and speeches in those spaces.

Human behavior, in this research, feminine, bases on overcoming, in several aspects, the past generation, emancipating from what is considered negative to the present situation. Values that were previously insurmountable and unquestionable, years later, may become irrelevant or non-existent. Breaking the past cultural model, in which the social role of women was predestined even before its conception, though gradually, seems to be fundamental to the establishment of contemporary femininity. However, it is necessary to emphasize that some of the public and private roles of women remain unchanged, since they are interdependent, resulting in asymmetries of power that maintain the order of male hegemony.

One may conclude that contemporary femininity produced by women from the millennials generation are, thus, multifaceted and curtailed by external influences that foster reproduction or criticism, when the woman herself is comfortable with the situation, for the first case, or strange, for the second one. Critique or reproduction of subjective social patterns interfere with the objective topics of being a woman, her body, and her ornaments. The possibility of criticism and non-reproduction of standards becomes a form of emancipation when it enables both singular as social change.

Producing this work enabled some contributions, highlighting at least three. The first one lies in the design of the blog as a company, a digital *locus* where social interactions and marketing relations are possible, despite its non-physical space, opening space for investigations in other virtual platforms. The proximity of anthropology to administration in the purpose of this study emerges as a second methodological-character contribution; the combination of data collection techniques that can be used when the search object move between the physical and the virtual worlds. The anonymity of the online commentary and the proximity of conversation in an interview can be combined or contrasted, since the speech can compete as readers have their identity associated with their speech. The comparison of empirical findings with the literature allowed further discussion of feminist post-modern approaches in the field of organizational studies, which sets up the third evident contribution, reaffirming the change character of the subjective constitution of the female gender in contemporary times and her emancipations.

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A MULTIPLICIDADE DE FACETAS DAS FEMINILIDADES CONTEMPORÂNEAS EM *BLOGS* DE ALTA MODA

RESUMO

Objetivo: Analisar a constituição das feminilidades contemporâneas por meio da investigação em profundidade do modo como um grupo de leitoras assíduas de *blogs* de alta moda produz sentidos sobre si e sobre as relações sociais a que estão envolvidas.

Originalidade/lacuna/relevância/implicações: O estudo avança na compreensão de como os relacionamentos sociais se constituem em compleições complexas e os *blogs*, ferramentas de publicação virtual do conteúdo das atividades diárias de seus idealizadores, em novos espaços influenciadores na construção da subjetividade de indivíduos ou mesmo entendendo-os como formas contemporâneas de organização.

Principais aspectos metodológicos: O estudo qualitativo com dados coletados a partir de técnicas de observação em ambiente virtual e entrevistas semiestruturadas.

Síntese dos principais resultados: O *blog* de alta moda como uma organização empresarial, com um perfil de leitoras apresentando interesses e características comuns, além de a feminilidade emergir como um complexo multifacetado de características próximas e distantes dos antigos papéis públicos desempenhados pela mulher.

Principais considerações/conclusões: Conjectura-se a concepção do *blog* como um *locus* digital onde são possíveis interações sociais e relações mercadológicas. O trabalho também permitiu trazer o debate das abordagens feministas pós-modernas para o campo dos estudos organizacionais, reafirmando o caráter intermitente da constituição subjetiva do gênero feminino na perspectiva emancipatória contemporânea.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Feminilidades contemporâneas. *Blogs*. Organizações virtuais. Gênero. Subjetividade.

LA MULTIPLICIDAD DE LAS FACETAS DE LA FEMINEIDAD CONTEMPORÁNEA EN LOS *BLOGS* DE ALTA MODA

RESUMEN

Objetivo: Analizar la composición de las femineidades contemporáneas por medio de una investigación en profundidad sobre como un grupo de lectoras asiduos de *blogs* de alta moda producen significados sobre sí mismas y las relaciones sociales en las que están involucradas.

Originalidad/laguna/relevancia/implicaciones: El estudio avanza en la comprensión de como las relaciones sociales son complexiones complejas y *blogs*, herramientas de publicación virtual del contenido de las actividades cotidianas de sus idealizadoras, en nuevos espacios que influyen en la construcción de la subjetividad de los individuos y entenderlos como formas contemporáneas de organización.

Principales aspectos metodológicos: Estudio cualitativo con datos recogidos a partir de técnicas virtuales de observación y entrevistas semiestructuradas.

Síntesis de los principales resultados: El *blog* de alta moda como una organización empresarial con un perfil de lectoras que presenta intereses y características comunes, además de la aparición de la femineidad como un complejo multifacético de características cercanas y distantes a los antiguos roles públicos desempeñados por las mujeres.

Principales consideraciones/Conclusiones: La concepción de las conjeturas del *blog* como *locus* digital donde las interacciones sociales y las relaciones de mercado son posibles. El estudio también permitió llevar el debate de los enfoques feministas posmodernos al campo de los estudios organizacionales, reafirmando el carácter intermitente de la constitución subjetiva del género femenino en la perspectiva emancipatoria contemporánea.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Feminidades contemporáneo. *Blogs*. Las organizaciones virtuales. Género. Subjetividad.

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