METAPHORS AND SOCIAL VALUES: what a brand can reveal about our contemporary society

METÁFORAS E VALORES SOCIAIS: o que uma marca pode revelar sobre a sociedade de nosso tempo
METÁFORAS Y VALORES SOCIALES: lo que una marca puede revelar sobre nuestra sociedad contemporânea

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ABSTRACT:
Understanding the relationship between meta-objectives and social values is the focus of the current study, which is an analytical proposal. Theoretically, we understand that metaphors are thoughts ingrained in our daily lives and can therefore reveal the values of a period. Initially, we collected the content posted by the brand Matteo Sorvete Criativo on its official Instagram account, and using a qualitative grade analysis, we identified the underlying principles and values. Our findings show how the brand's marketing pillars (worker, young person, family, joy, reward, and story) reveal the principles of a capitalist, meritocratic, segregated, and globalized society.

KEYWORDS: Brands; Metaphors; Social values.

Introduction

This article presents the initial results of a research project that aims to understand the hegemonic values of society through the metaphors that brands use to represent themselves. The intention is to go beyond traditional branding studies that usually explore strictly marketing perspectives, such as those conducted by Aaker (2014), Martins (2005), Bueno (2005), Motion and Brodie (2007), Kotler and Keller (2012), Wheeler (2019), Gad (2001), and Kim and Mauborgne (2005).

In general, these authors, considered experts in brand studies, seek to highlight them as an important investment made by companies to generate more value for their business. Among their works, it is not uncommon to find manuals and rules teaching how to build economically strong brands.

In contrast to this prescriptive, instrumental, and marketing perspective of brands, this article aims to understand them as complex consumer products of contemporary life and, therefore, as communicational elements loaded with meanings that reveal the hegemonic social values of our time.

To achieve this goal, we chose to analyze the content of Matteo Sorvete Criativo's Instagram account. We selected this brand due to its relevance in the city of the research

group, namely Cuiabá-MT. For example, the brand has 35 thousand followers on the mentioned social network, is the most followed in the capital, and invests the most in brand promotion. Additionally, as a pilot analysis of a methodological proposal under construction, we believe that investigating a brand inserted in our locality would bring us more possibilities for adjustments for future endeavors.

As theoretical support, we began the article by discussing the relevance that brand assets have in current society (Perez, 2004; Carrera, 2018). Then, we resorted to the perspective of metaphor from Aristotle (1965), Nascentes (1966), and mainly Lakoff and Johnson (2002). Finally, we presented a reflection on social values made by França (2018), Coêlho and Corrêa (2014), and Joas (2000).

In the methodological section, we presented our analytical framework and described the procedures for data collection, organization, and analysis based on the theoretical references presented earlier. It is in this part that we show how it is possible to apply metaphor analysis together with the apprehension of social values.

Finally, in the last section, we systematized the metaphors present in Matteo Sorvete Criativo's communication. Among the identified metaphors are worker, young, family, jewel, reward, and history. Our findings point to the understanding of the influence of social context on brand communication and demonstrate the importance of metaphor analysis and its relationship with the values of our time.

Brand metaphors as a means of discovering social traits

From being mere symbols of distinctiveness and ownership in ancient times, brands today are comprised of other factors. As such, they carry "the trends of their era and the sociocultural changes of the audience with whom they must maintain their dialogue" (Perez, 2004, p. 14). Therefore, as Carrera (2016) suggests, it seems undeniable that brands are creations characteristic of our time, and thus they help to produce and reflect our society.

Brands are part of society, and it is precisely because they are not isolated from what happens in the social sphere that brands have the potential to reflect what is valued at a given historical moment. Consequently, brands end up reproducing social trends, revealing the values of their time. Besides being the synthesis of a complex of meanings, brands also stand out for being present in almost all areas of social life. Over the last few years, they have multiplied in companies, markets, retail, and the media in general, which also contributes to increasing their influence in society by proposing a series of meanings through advertising strategies that mainly explore verbal and visual metaphors to convey something seductively and persuasively (Perez, 2004).

This scenario of the marked use of metaphors by brands may reflect a strategic trend of increasingly giving them humanized aspects, as this figure of speech is often used in communicational encounters of people in their everyday life and demonstrates the high degree of the inventiveness of analogies produced by humans.

According to Nascentes (1966), the origin of the word "metaphor" is Greek and means "transfer" or "transmission." This is based on the very concept proposed by Aristotle (1965), who stated that "metaphor is the transfer of a word that belongs to something else, or from genus to species, or from species to genus, or one species to another, or by analogy" (p. 83). The transfer of meaning from one word to another is the fundamental characteristic of the use of metaphor.

In addition to this fundamental definition, we rely on the perspective of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (2002), for whom the concepts that govern human thought are not mere intellectual matters. Based on this perspective, the authors argue that metaphors are not just figures of speech, but rather modes of thought that infiltrate everyday life. "Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (Lakoff & Johnson, 2002, p. 46). This means that the way we reflect on the world, our experiences, and our daily actions are guided by metaphors.

The authors use the metaphor "time is money" to explain how they act in our perception of life. In this case, it is possible to understand that we experience time as something that can be spent, wasted, budgeted, well or poorly invested, saved, or liquidated. The metaphorical association between time and money is recurrent in language "since we are using our everyday experiences with money, with limited resources and valuable goods, to conceptualize time" (Lakoff & Johnson, 2002, p. 51). Therefore, our routine experiences with these two things are similar. Hence, it is understandable that people associate time with money both in thought and language.

Through reflecting on the use of metaphors, according to Lakoff and Johnson (2002), we understand that both communication and thought are fundamentally constructed through metaphors. It is for this reason that we can identify in the use of metaphors the interpretive traces that individuals qualify the society in which they are inserted, as envisioned by the authors. After all, the metaphor "time is money," for example, is not an accidental association. It also reveals the values that circulate hegemonically in society. That is, it reveals which elements we value in everyday life - such as the accumulation of wealth - and how they guide our perception of reality - in this case, our perception of time.

Bringing this reflection to the world of brands, we understand that, with the strategy of humanizing them, metaphorization in marketing communication is increasingly frequent. Thus, just as it is done in everyday language, we see a way of understanding the values of society also through the metaphors used by the brands we consume. We believe that by looking at the content they produce, we can bring to light the values they defend, knowing that these, in some way, also reflect the values of our time.

It is worth noting that metaphors are not totalizing forms of thought. On the contrary, each social group, depending on its historical time, will create different metaphors to frame everyday life (Lakoff & Johnson, 2002). Therefore, different brands may express different values. However, we believe that being conditioned by the same capitalist mode of production (Marx, 2015), they are unlikely to offer values that are dissonant with the hegemonic structural and material conditions that allow them to exist.

Finally, communication is based on the same conceptual system that we use to think and act, with the language being an important source of evidence of what this system is like. Thus, by looking at what brands communicate, we can reflect on the metaphors that govern our thinking and identify the values of the society we are part of.

It is important to note that in this research, we understand social values as cultural references that control intersubjective relations and, therefore, reveal rules, modes of conduct, and moral expectations (Coêlho & Corrêa, 2014). That is, values guide what is considered best to do in social life. Generally, "they are constituted from socially shared references, abstractions that materialize in everyday practices, in the interactions of individuals, and in discourses" (Coêlho & Corrêa, 2014, p. 201).

Articulating what has been said with Quéré's (2018) praxiological perspective, we understand that by looking at communication content, we can apprehend the set of discriminations used by subjects to distinguish what is hegemonically valued from what is not; what deserves to be honored, sought, and pursued about what does not. "Values can be applied to actions, situations, and states of affairs, which exist independently of human action" (Coêlho & Corrêa, 2014, p. 202).

Reaching this perspective that values are shared references that can be applied to things, it is possible to seek an understanding of how values are revealed in society. França's (2018) study on celebrities, for example, shows how it is possible to see in the objects of reality the values that guide life in society. "In this sense, it is in the action and performance of celebrities that we find what is valued (or repudiated) in a society. That is, it is in the experience of famous people that we can apprehend social values" (França, 2018, p. 06).

In our case, we understand that it would not be any different with brands, as they are also figures of reference just like celebrities. That is to say, a brand is also a synthesis of societal values because its self-representation considers the trends and configurations of the environment in which it is situated.

This approach to apprehending values through action is proposed by Joas (2000), who argues that the emergence of values should be investigated through the observation of individuals' practices. Social values do not exist solely as idealized entities but are materialized in everyday practices. For example, brands' communication about their identity attributes assumes that communication is a type of social action (Quéré, 2018).

In summary, traces of what is valued (or repudiated) in a society can be found in the discursive action of brands. That is to say, the social values that constitute contemporary society hegemonically can be apprehended in the contents expressed by brands at various touchpoints, understanding touchpoints as the places where brands have the chance to increase loyalty and awareness with their audiences (Wheeler, 2012).

These theoretical reflections underpin our research and provide a more critical and social framework for the study of brands. Our intention is not to analyze them from the point of view of marketing strategies but to understand what they say (and do not say) about social values through metaphors. Therefore, in addition to managerial and economic issues, we believe it is important to reflect on what brands express at their touchpoints since brand consumption goes beyond the products they identify. After all, "by using and consuming a certain product from a certain brand, we are positioning ourselves socially, declaring who we are, what we like, what we value, and so on" (Perez, 2004, p. 15).

Finally, we see brands as expressions that dialectically interfere in social life, reinforcing their values and proposing new ones. Therefore, achieving a deeper understanding of their meanings and implications is a challenge and a responsibility, as it also means understanding what society produces communicatively at a given time and the values that sustain it.

This research seeks to understand, through the verbal and nonverbal communication metaphors on Matteo Sorvetes Criativos' Instagram, emerging social values. First and foremost, it is essential to understand the company's history and how it has positioned itself in Cuiabá, which also justifies the choice of the brand as the object of study.

Methodological Procedures

Empirically, the research began with the gathering of Matteo Sorvete Criativo's history, using the content available on their digital touchpoints and news articles about the brand on news websites. By gathering the information, it was identified that Matteo started as a home-based business in 2016 and opened its first store in the capital city of Mato Grosso in 2017. Currently, the brand has six establishments: four in Cuiabá, one in Brasília, and one abroad.

The ice cream shop claims to value offering a healthy, natural, and excellent quality product. Despite using an Italian technique to produce its ice creams (called gelatos and sorbettos), Matteo simultaneously defends its Cuiabá essence. In the analyzed material, it was verified that the brand's stores present an environment that simulates a backyard, a strategy justified with the premise that all customers feel welcomed by Cuiabá's hospitality (YouTube Matteo Sorvete Criativo, 2018). On its social media, the company positions itself with a youthful aspect, characterized by the frequent use of humor in its messages and innovation in recipe creations and promotional actions. In summary, the local flavor with the international technique and the traditional aspect of the point of sale with the inventiveness of social media content seem to be the paradoxical attributes defended by the brand.

After the initial impressions about the brand, we searched for the collection of material released by Matteo on its digital platforms. In this stage, we verified the existence of four digital touchpoints: Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and the website. However, since we defined the first semester of 2022 as the temporal scope of the research, we discarded the use of the content contained on Facebook and YouTube because they are outdated. Thus, for analysis purposes, we used the frequently updated Instagram profile (@mattesorvetecriativo).

It should be noted that the other platforms, mainly the website, served as a source of institutional information about the brand and to reinforce the metaphors we identified on Instagram.

After defining the digital touchpoints to be analyzed, we proceeded to search and collect the posts on Instagram that fit within the temporal scope of the research. At this point, we get at a total of 31 posts consisting of images and videos.

To organize our data collection, we used the screen capture feature for images and downloaded videos using a website resource (savefrom.net). The downloaded videos were saved in a folder in a web drive, while the posts and their respective captions were organized chronologically in a Google online document file.

After organizing the material, we initiated the analysis phase, aiming to identify the metaphors used by the brand and the social values associated with them. To achieve this, we created a table divided into five parts. The first column was filled with screenshots of the posts and videos. In the second column, we noted the presence of the metaphor and identified what it was. The third column indicated where the metaphor was present, whether in the caption text or the image. In the final column, we described the perceived values.

Based on the results obtained, we created the following table:

Table 1 Metaphors identified on Matteo's *Instagram*

Identified metaphor	Criteria	Number of *posts* in which the metaphor in question appears
Metaphor of the Worker	Use of service hours as a form of team commitment to result in good work	19
Metaphor of the Young	Use of memes and jokes to bring aspects of joviality in communication	9
Family Metaphor	Use of elements related to the house and retraction of the traditional Brazilian family or presentation of the brand as a family	8
Metaphor of the Jewel	Presentation of the ice cream on an acrylic support, with luminosity and focus only on it	8
Metaphor of Reward	Presentation of the ice cream as a final wish or because of the effort of the brand team	5
Metaphor of History	Use of tradition to make sense of the brand	1

It should be noted that, although the table contains quantitative data, they are only present at an informational level, since the focus of the research is on qualitative analysis. Overall, this table shows the six most recurrent metaphors in the analyzed posts from January 2022 to June 2022. Upon analyzing them, we noticed some common aspects among them, such as the metaphor of reward, which was combined with work. Its communication was present in the same posts where work was, as well as communicating similar values. On the other hand, the metaphor of youth is associated with family because, although it was possible to identify them separately, most of the time they appeared together.

It is worth noting that the presented table is the result of an analytical framework formulated from the theoretical references presented in this study. To do so, we were guided by the following questions: what are the metaphors identified explicitly and

implicitly in the Matteo Sorvete Criativo posts? What are the social values they reveal? And what do these values say about the moment we are in?

In addition to the references that guided the formulation of the presented questions, as the analyses were carried out, we felt the need to bring in other authors to help problematize the findings. For this, Ávila Oliveira, Áquila Oliveira, Naiana Silva (2015), Ana Cristina de Oliveira Lott (2017), Euler David de Siqueira, Denise da Costa (2021), Gisela Castro (2015), Marco Antônio Cirilo (2004), Michael Young (1994), and Antenor Nascentes (1966) were called upon. The authors were chosen based on references from readings of the research project participants.

That being said, we will now present our analyses organized according to each identified metaphor. We will follow the order of the table, as well as combine some metaphors when necessary.

Matteo is a worker: the effort bringing results and rewards

The metaphor of the worker was frequently identified in the posts of Matteo Sorvete Criativo, particularly in those where the brand informs about off-hours service, demonstrates the meticulousness in the production process, or emphasizes the effort in maintaining good work. This metaphor is often combined with the metaphor of reward, in which the brand highlights that its results are the fruit of the team's hard work. The use of the word "perrengue" in a caption is an example of how the brand seeks to associate itself with the figure of the worker, demonstrating that it faces daily challenges, but that the results are the fruit of constant effort.

Figure 1 Working team
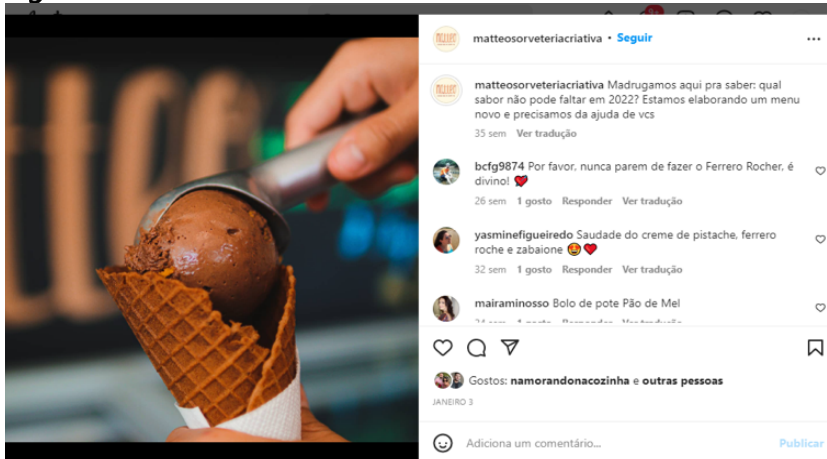

Source: Instagram Matteo, 2022. https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo[1]

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[1] Available at: https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo. Access on: 10 nov. 2022.

It was possible to discern that Matteo Sorvete Criativo seeks to convey the image of a hardworking individual, who places work on a pedestal where effort should be appreciated to achieve quality results. In other words, the social value that stands out is that of the subject who is always dedicated to doing the best work to be rewarded.

The valorization of work in contemporary society is evidenced by the figure of the individual who wakes up early, dedicates themselves with determination, produces excellent work, and when necessary, extends their working hours. Such characteristics were observed in the caption of the following post, where the brand claims to have started their workday very early to create a new menu.

Figure 2 The worker who dawns

Source: Instagram Matteo, 2022. https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo[2]

The romanticization of work creates a false belief that dedication and effort are enough to achieve success in life, however, such perspective is distant for a portion of the population.

> For hundreds of years, society has been a battlefield between two major principles - the principle of selection by family and the principle of selection by merit. Historical analysis indicates the inevitability of familial opposition to progress and the need for meritocracy (Young, 1994, p. 21).

Understanding the contemporary worker in society as proletarian - one who sells their labor to ensure their livelihood (Marx & Engels, 2015) - meritocracy, as a social value, plays the role of maintaining the current economic system, since the more the

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worker produces, the greater the surplus value[3] generated, contributing to increasing inequality between classes.

Thus, it is possible to observe the valorization of effort to justify the result as if the final reward were a strict product of individual merit. This leads us to question why merit is valued in a society with such social inequality. Why highlight the effort of Matteo's employees as if it were a spontaneous characteristic of theirs? These questions show us how the discourse of meritocracy imposes itself, even in a society that offers unequal opportunities to people. Therefore, the valorization of effort and the consequent devaluation of the worker only confirm the presence of surplus value in labor relations, a social fact that demonstrates how this form of exploitation is a shared value in our society in an apparently naturalized way (Coêlho & Corrêa, 2014).

Therefore, when a brand appropriates this type of communication, it does not necessarily mean that it is defending this situation, but rather that through these metaphors, it is possible to see the values that emerge from our society about work. Thus, it is possible to understand that meritocracy has been worshipped through our production system, capitalism. The naturalized discourses of the overvaluation of work - which, in essence, are the devaluation of the worker - are one of the factors that feed social inequality, perpetuating the maintenance of this system.

Matteo is family and young: two metaphors that communicate together

The metaphorical transfer to the image of family, referring to notions of home, collectivity, and what is considered the traditional Brazilian family, characterized as white, heteronormative, middle-class, and with children, is recurrent in contemporary advertising communication, also being used to refer to the work team. Such a metaphor is evidenced in the brand's proposal to include a backyard in all its physical touchpoints, to celebrate the idea of a reunion. On the other hand, the metaphor of the young is employed in advertising communication to bring aspects of contemporaneity, and use of memes and popular languages for the young audience, as illustrated in the image and caption presented.
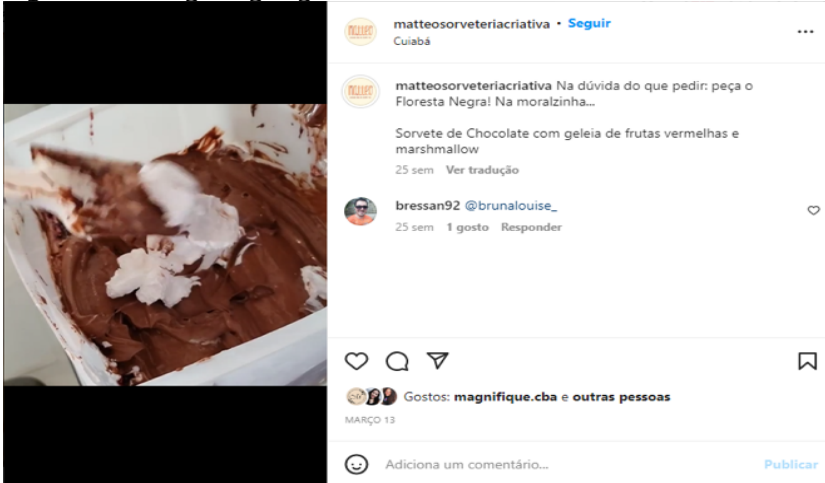
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[3] According to Marx (2013), surplus value is the disparity between the value of the wage paid and the value of what is produced by labor.

Figure 3 The portrait of the young family

Source: *Instagram* Matteo, 2022. https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo[4]

Figure 4 Young language

Source: *Instagram* Matteo, 2022. https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo[5]

Additionally, it is possible to perceive that the brand portrays a traditional family without losing its celebration of youthfulness, whether in its visual representation or its communication through slang and memes. We did not identify any elderly individuals in the images disseminated by Matteo. Even in situations where this could happen, such as Mother's Day, for instance, a photo of a woman with young characteristics is still used.

Matteo presents a young family in moments when the brand wants to highlight the idea of gathering, celebration, and even its work team. When we come across expressions like "Sabadamos", "Na moralzinha", or "I'm not even an internet coach, but I swear the result will be big", we can infer that they are directed toward very specific audiences, theoretically, like young people or those who know the language of internet memes.

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[4] Available at: https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo. Access on: 10 nov. 2022.
[5] Available at: https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo. Access on: 10 nov. 2022.

With the examples of the figures above, we can notice the valorization of communication with a particular audience that, theoretically, understands the latest expressions in the digital medium. That is, the comprehension of what is being said depends on cultural background, social reality, and mainly, in our view, on age range, since young people, at first, have a greater ease to follow these linguistic transformations proposed by digital communication.

However, even though there is a predominance of young language from brands on social media, the so-called "elderly" has commercial aspirations that should not be disregarded (Cirilo, 2004). At this moment, we are not discussing Matteo's age-range communication strategies but rather reflecting on what the valorization of predominantly young language reveals about our society. Although aging is a natural process, there is still a refusal in society towards it. "This refusal of aging is the result of a trend in which people believe that aging means being sick or inactive" (Cirilo, 2004, p. 33). Although the virtual environment is a broad space where everyone can access brands, there is still the perception that it is a place for the young. This happens because it is easier to communicate with millennials[6], who are more adept at the novelties of this medium.

Perhaps that is why the valorization of youthfulness and the little concern for the elderly audience are still recurrent, ignoring that this population, like any other person, has desires and needs, exposing ageism. We understand ageism as "prejudice based on age that causes discrimination against people seen as elderly and contributes to their marginalization and eventual social exclusion" (Castro, 2015, p. 4). This prejudice puts aside the desire for new learnings of this audience, which, despite being in a different routine, continues to live normally. After all, knowledge is not directly linked to age. By ignoring this fact, we reaffirm in a discriminatory manner the role of the elderly in our current society, as invalid and disposable.

## Matteo is a jewel: overvaluing food

Frequently, images and videos in this category resemble the traditional display of jewelry. The such resemblance is evidenced by the brightness of the ice creams, the top-down angle, and the use of acrylic support, which refer to jewelry exhibition practices. These techniques are employed to create a desire for the product even before consumption. As noted by Siqueira and Costa (2021), "even before it is ingested, the sweet treat begins its magic through the senses: displayed in the bakery's entrance windows, it

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[6] Word refers to the court of those born after the beginning of the 1980s until approximately the end of the century.

provokes those who enter the establishment or pass by on the sidewalks through visual contact" (p. 7). Similarly, Matteo seeks to awaken this desire by highlighting their ice cream as something precious, utilizing acrylic support in its display.

Figure 5 Ice cream as a jewel
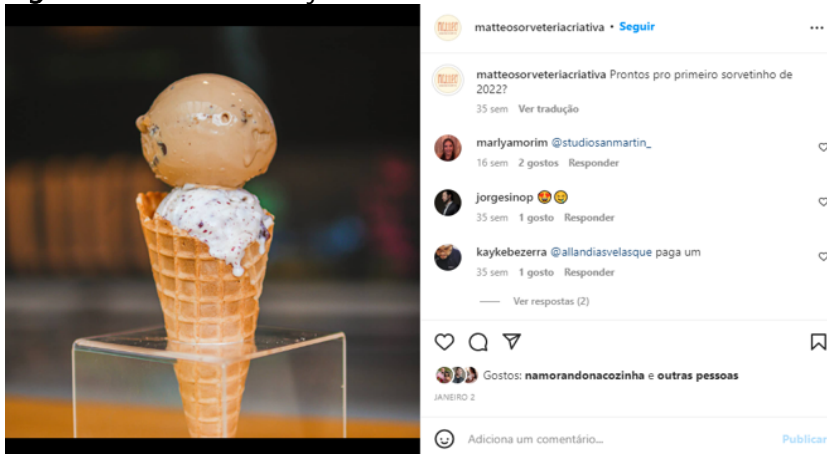
Source: *Instagram* Matteo, 2022. https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo[7]

The production of a jewel requires several meticulous processes to achieve its precious purpose, from mining to cutting and display. Similarly, Matteo explains the production of its ice creams with the same caution and attention to detail. The texts and images relate to the exclusive and traditional experience that customers will have when enjoying a product of valued production, with phases, handling, and carefully chosen ingredients to add even more value to the final result.

The jewel metaphor serves to transfer the sense of preciousness and exclusivity to the ice cream, which is not just a dessert or simple food, but a gastronomic experience through the combination of flavors, good ingredients, and refined production methods, thus elevating its value and highlighting it as a super-valued food.

However, the overvaluation of the food in question raises questions about modern society. How can there be such precious food when the country, according to UN data, is returning to the hunger map? How can an ice cream metaphorized as a jewel exist in the same city where residents queue at butcher shops to get bones, trying to secure at least a taste or some protein residue in their meals? (G1, 2022).

Through this, we can understand the moment we are in and see the social boundaries and abysses that food can reveal as a cultural object of value. While some may enjoy the privilege of eating something that resembles a jewel, others are left with the leftovers that remain.

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[7] Available at: https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo. Access on: 10 nov. 2022.

Through food, social and cultural relationships are created among people, starting from what is eaten, since certain foods are more highly regarded as aggregators than others, as sharing food brings people together, just as the place where that sharing occurs can also carry a certain symbolic value (Oliveira, Oliveira & Silva, 2015).

The overvaluation of food is strongly influenced by social media (Oliveira, Oliveira, & Silva, 2015). Places where food is sold and consumed can be considered "Instagrammable", that is, aesthetically beautiful enough to become content for Instagram, a platform that values images as central content. Thus, the representation of dietary habits on social media is a way to understand the value that society attributes to food, since "the popularization of digital media will have repercussions on the symbolic construction of food and the act of eating" (Oliveira, Oliveira, & Silva, 2015, p. 03).

By glorifying food based on its supposed tradition, the brand seeks to attract a specific audience. Considering that metaphors are not only guides for our thoughts but also govern our daily activities in the most trivial details (Lakoff & Johnson, 2002) and that social values are revealed by what we prioritize at a given moment (França, 2018), it is possible to affirm that the deification of food is a way of reaffirming a certain social status and creating distances between layers of the population. Having the experience of consuming the ice cream in question is seen as a privilege that confirms the valuation of a certain superior economic position, reinforcing the idea of belonging to a privileged group.

Matteo embodies history: cuiabana tradition with Italian traits

The metaphor of history is often employed by brands seeking to confer meaning to their trajectory or elucidate their roots, as the use of the past is commonly strategically mobilized in the construction of authority. In the case of Matteo, references to tradition are frequently found on its website. On Instagram, the use of this metaphor was observed in the description of the ice cream scooper, as evidenced in the image and caption in question.

Figure 6 History and tradition

Source: *Instagram* Matteo, 2022. https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo[8]

The image presents us with the story of an item that is important to the brand. In this regard, Siqueira and Costa (2021) contribute by stating that:

> The growing appreciation of the past, as well as the traditional and authentic aspects of social media, reveals important aspects of the construction of affective memory, subjectivity and contributes to the fabrication of the cultural heritage imaginary of a region and its time (p. 02).

In the case of the brand in question, with regards to tradition and authenticity, the company positions itself as one that advocates for pride in being from Cuiabá, the use of natural ingredients, and Brazilian raw materials. This is also combined with the use of Italian manufacturing techniques, which is reflected in its name. According to the brand's website, "the name Matteo came from history: Marco Polo's [the navigator] uncle, Matteo Polo, along with his brother and nephew, was the one who introduced Chinese ice cream to Italy" with ingredients such as snow, rice milk, honey, and fruit, which soon after, in Italy, incorporated cream and cow's milk.

From the brand's discursive positioning, there is an attempt to unite two cultures: Cuiabá and Italian, which evidences a very common trait of Brazilian society: the little value placed on what is uniquely national. Given this, we ask why we still cannot defend the creation of entirely national products without having to rely on some international, more precisely European or North American, characteristics to validate it as something of quality. This can be seen when the brand emphasizes: "Here in Cuiabá, we are in search of an international standard product" (Matteo, 2022). The phrase suggests the idea that there is no standard of Cuiabá quality.

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[8] Available in: https://www.instagram.com/matterosorvetecriativo. Access in: 10 nov. 2022.

Globalization suggests that countries are interconnected in economic, social, political, cultural, religious, and legal aspects. Despite this being its intention, in practice, it is possible to see the hegemony of European and North American countries. Hence, there is a common overvaluing of what comes from outside, as the premise is that if a country is developed, its products will also be. This is an attempt that reveals how much social values are still colonized by international culture, to the point where what is characterized as national is seen as inferior to what comes from outside. Lott (2017) explains that this perception is a consequence of globalization, as it is a new form of colonialism that establishes relations of power, domination, and subordination.

In summary, we are subordinated to countries that dominate the global economy, with a history of slavery, and theft of ancestry, culture, and products. Nevertheless, we still cannot disconnect ourselves from the overvaluing of what comes from outside and understand the potential and importance that national production can have within our country, both socially and economically.

In conclusion, based on the general impressions of our research, we offer our final considerations.

Final Considerations

Through research and analysis of Matteo Sorvete Criativo's posts, we were able to identify the following metaphors: worker, youth, family, jewel, reward, and history. Starting the synthesis of results with the metaphor of the worker, we identified that it joins with the metaphor of the reward. This occurs when the brand wants to express that the effort of work is rewarded with good results. In this sense, the brand brings up meritocratic values based on the idea that merit comes from effort. This perspective ignores the fact that there are social factors that prevent some people, even if they work hard, from obtaining a fair reward. It is possible to see that our society still values meritocracy in a naturalized way. Apparently, this social value has been carried for years, despite the inconsistencies and inequalities of the society we live in.

Moreover, with our research, we were able to see the union of two metaphors that we understand to be complementary: family and youth. The brand often associates the celebration of gatherings with the narrative of "feeling at home" and working together as an expression of family. In its representation of family, the brand portrays it as a young family. Additionally, the brand explores current communication targeted at a specific audience composed of young people, reflecting a still latent prejudice in society, ageism. In short, this perspective values everything that is young as if only that is interesting, placing the elderly in a place of invalidity. In this way, the aspirations and needs of people

of advanced age are disregarded, whether in simple communication or even in representativeness.

The next metaphor, that of the jewel, is present in the way Matteo presents its products. The brand seeks to value the ice cream manufacturing processes and places them in a prominent position in its stores and social networks, for example, on an acrylic support. In our view, this situation highlights the social divides of contemporary society, where some groups are excluded from consumption, even in the way food is displayed.

Finally, it was possible to observe that the metaphor of history is an attempt to unite two cultures: Cuiabana and Italian. The brand defends its Cuiabana origins but often emphasizes Italian techniques, placing them at a high standard. This leaves room for the understanding that, in Matteo's eyes, the national is inferior to the international. Thus, relying on history and European tradition can be a way of creating authority.

After the conclusion of the analyses, we concluded that brands express the values of our time to a certain extent. This is because social values are shared by society, as Coêlho and Corrêa (2014) affirm. When brands are inserted in this context, it is natural that they seek to reflect the cultural traits that surround them. Therefore, our impressions of the Matteo Sorvete Criativo brand were not a direct judgment but rather a search for the social reflections present in it.

Furthermore, we concluded that our analysis proposal based on metaphors, based on the perspective of Lakoff and Johnson (2002), allowed us to understand brand communication beyond economic and marketing issues. This also contributes to a new perspective on studies of social values, by understanding how communication is influenced by the context in which it is inserted.

We acknowledge that the research presented here needs further investigation. Other metaphors may be found in other areas of contact, such as offline media, internal communication, and all other communication channels used by Matteo Sorvete Criativo. We hope that this initial endeavor will attract the interest of other researchers who may contribute to the advancement of this study, bringing forth more insights into brands and our society.

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RESUMO:
O presente estudo é uma proposta analítica tem como foco entender a relação entre metáforas e valores sociais. Teoricamente, compreendemos as metáforas como pensamentos inseridos em nosso cotidiano e que, portanto, podem revelar os valores de um tempo. Empiricamente, coletamos o conteúdo divulgado pela marca Matteo Sorvete Criativo em sua conta oficial no Instagram e, por meio de uma grade analítica qualitativa, identificamos as metáforas e valores presentes. Nossas conclusões indicam como as metáforas utilizadas pela marca (trabalhador, jovem, família, joia, recompensa e história) revelam os valores de uma sociedade capitalista, meritocrática, segregadora e globalizada.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Marcas; Metáforas; Valores sociais.

RESUMEN:
El presente estudio propone un análisis enfocado en entender la relación entre las metáforas y los valores sociales. Teóricamente, comprendemos las metáforas como pensamientos insertados en nuestro cotidiano y que, por tanto, pueden revelar los valores de una época. Empíricamente, hemos recopilado el contenido publicado por la marca Matteo Sorvete Criativo en su cuenta oficial de Instagram y, a través de una matriz analítica cualitativa, hemos identificado las metáforas y valores presentes. Nuestras conclusiones indican cómo las metáforas utilizadas por la marca (trabajador, joven, familia, joya, recompensa e historia) revelan los valores de una sociedad capitalista, meritocrática, segregadora y globalizada.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Marcas; Metáforas; Valores sociales.