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ARTICLE

Analyzing cultural tourism promotion on Instagram: a cross-cultural perspective

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ABSTRACT

A lack of cross-cultural research has been identified regarding cultural tourism promotion on social media. Using the dimensions of Collectivism-Individualism, Power Distance, and High-Context vs. Low-Context communication, we content analyze cultural value differences in Instagram posts promoting cultural tourism – published by the national tourism organizations of Chile, Portugal, USA, and Netherlands. In addition, an automated content analysis is conducted using the software LIWC2015 to examine linguistic differences between collectivist and individualist destinations' posts. Findings show that cultural tourism promotion on Instagram differs across cultures, highlighting the importance of adapting online content when addressing culturally distant markets.

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Introduction

Culture and history are among the most important resources for a destination to attract visitors and both fall within the scope of cultural tourism (Timothy, 2011). Researchers as well as practitioners argue that to capture the attention and interest of a broad public, marketers must link cultural attractions to an engaging narrative, while using information and communication technologies – like social media – to deliver their content and trigger interactions (Egberts & Bosma, 2014).

Popular social networking sites include Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, where destination marketing organizations, including national tourism organizations, post information on attractions and events, while inviting followers to share their own experience and opinion through images, videos or text (Hays et al., 2013; Roque & Raposo, 2016; Uşaklı et al., 2017). Among them, since its launch in 2010, Instagram has grown to become a popular photo-based platform for brand awareness (Ye et al., 2018) and cultural tourism promotion (Lazaridou et al., 2017).

Tourism promotion leads inevitably to challenges related to cultural differences (Egberts & Bosma, 2014), including the preference for certain product themes over others (e.g., focus on price vs. emotions) as well as communication styles (e.g., direct vs. indirect). In this regard, scholars argue that to design an effective international marketing strategy that resonates with the cultural background of a specific geographical market, it is important to investigate how the organizations from that area communicate online (Tsai & Men, 2012). This is relevant because, from a demand perspective, research shows that culture affects customer-brand relationship on social media (Hudson et al., 2016), visitor's interests (Hsu et al., 2015), and online purchase decisions (Goodrich & De Mooij, 2014) – highlighting the need to account for cultural differences with customized social media strategies (Tsai & Men, 2017). The recognition of the role of culture in online communication has sparked the birth of several studies on the analysis of cultural differences on the web from a supply viewpoint (Tigre Moura et al., 2016), including destination websites (Tigre Moura et al., 2014). In this regard, calls have been made for further research on visuals (Stepchenkova et al., 2014) and social media (Amaro & Duarte, 2017) from a cross-cultural perspective, because of the influence that these channels have on tourist's intentions (Molinillo et al., 2018). Furthermore, despite the relevance of cultural attractions for tourism destinations (UNWTO, 2018), there is a surprising lack of cross-cultural research addressing their online promotion, not to mention social media marketing.

Addressing this gap in the literature, the present research explores how cultural tourism is promoted on Instagram from a cross-cultural perspective, taking as reference the official accounts of the national tourism organization of four culturally different countries: Chile, United States, Netherlands, and Portugal. To achieve this objective, we first conducted a manual content analysis of cultural values expressed by Instagram posts promoting cultural tourism. More precisely, we analyzed post captions along the dimensions of Collectivism-

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Individualism, Power Distance (Hofstede et al., 2010), and High-Context vs. Low-Context communication (Hall, 1976); while post images were examined in terms of Collectivism-Individualism and mise en scene dimensions (Pan et al., 2014). Finally, using the Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) 2015 software (Pennebaker et al., 2015), we performed an automated content analysis of post captions to examine whether the Instagram posts from more collectivist destinations (Chile and Portugal) – following the theory by Hofstede et al. (2010) – differed from those published by more individualist ones (United States and Netherlands) along twelve LIWC2015 linguistic categories.

Literature review

Culture and cultural tourism

While there are more than one hundred definitions for the concept of culture (Kroeber & Klukhohn, 1952), they all share two common points: culture is a way of living built upon a system of shared meanings and it is conveyed from generation to generation through this very system (Danesi & Perron, 1999). Using a metaphor, Hofstede et al. (2010) describe culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group [...] from others" (p. 6). Cultural values constitute the core of this collective programming and they describe general predispositions to prefer certain ways of living over others. According to those scholars, cultures can be analyzed and compared at the national level along cultural dimensions: constructs that allow researchers to examine the relative position of countries in terms of cultural values.

Although the existence of national cultures has been criticized by scholars, who raise the issues of cultural heterogeneity and national divisions (Jones, 2007; Shiaq et al., 2011), research shows that countries can be reliably distinguished along a series of cultural values (Minkov & Hofstede, 2011). Furthermore, within the spectrum of cross-cultural theories (Minkov, 2011), we argue that the intelligibility and parsimony of Hofstede's model (Kirkman et al., 2006) make it particularly suitable for a quantitative content analysis of online communication. For this study, three cultural dimensions have been used – namely, Collectivism-Individualism (COL-IND), Power Distance (PD), and High-Context vs. Low-Context communication (HC-LC).

The dimension of COL-IND describes the level of interdependency among individuals. More precisely, in individualist societies people are expected to be self-reliant and as they grow up they learn about the importance of independence (as "I"); whereas collectivist societies assign the identity of the individual (as "we") to strong in-groups, like extended families and friends (Hofstede et al., 2010). Widely used by researchers to analyze the expression of cultural values in both visual and textual communication (e.g., Imada, 2010; Pineda et al., 2015), COL-IND differentiates messages reporting shared experiences (COL) from those focusing on independence and self-reliance (IND) (Tigre Moura et al., 2014).

The cultural dimension of PD describes the relevance of hierarchy among individuals (Hofstede et al., 2010), with high PD societies expecting unequal distribution of power (vice versa for low PD). From a communication perspective, research suggests that members of high PD societies assign greater importance to hierarchies and opinions from authorities, including destination managers and celebrities, because of their social status (Tigre Moura et al., 2014; Winterich et al., 2018). Among the celebrities, social media influencers can act as third-party endorsers who shape audience attitudes towards a brand by publishing content directly on their own social networks (Freberg et al., 2011) and whose advice is considered as valuable (Khamis et al., 2017). Consequently, we argue that recommendations from influencers, destination marketing organizations and notorious travel guides can be classified as signs of high PD, together with status elements such as destination awards and references to luxury.

The cultural dimension of HC vs. LC communication, proposed by Hall (1976), differentiates communication styles depending on their reliance on the context – the unspoken part of a conversation – and how much information the interlocutors are expected to share (Hall, 1976). Scholars argue that HC communication is more indirect, reserved and understated, while LC communication tends to be more direct and open (Würtz, 2005). Social media marketing research suggests that the former is generally focusing on elements such as emotions and entertainment. On the other hand, LC communication is more explicit, with social media content emphasizing concrete, product-related characteristics, like (price) discounts (Choi et al., 2018; Men & Tsai, 2012).

All these cultural dimensions appear to be connected. More precisely, scholars indicate that IND is negatively correlated with PD, whereas COL is positively correlated (Hofstede et al., 2010). In addition, HC and LC communication styles are reported as being more predominant among collectivist and individualist societies respectively (Y. Kim et al., 2011; Würtz, 2005). Within the context of the present research, following Hofstede et al.'s (2010) and Hall's theories and scores (Hall, 1976; Van Everdingen & Waarts, 2003) (table 1), Chile and Portugal are described as relatively collectivist, high PD national cultures, with a preference for HC

Table 1. Hofstede's and Hall's cultural dimension scores.

Culture	Collectivism/ Individualism	Power Distance	High-Context/Low-Context Communication[a]
Chile	20	63	81
Portugal	27	61	87
USA	91	40	19
Netherlands	80	38	37

[a]Scores adapted from Van Everdingen and Waarts (2003) to the same scale (0–100) of Hofstede et al.'s (2010) scores.

communication; whereas USA and the Netherlands are reported as relatively individualist, low PD cultures, with a preference for LC communication.

Qualitative research suggests that the expression of cultural values in tourism visuals is related to mise en scene dimensions, such as shot composition (number of people in a picture), angle and scale (Mele & Lobinger, 2018). As argued by Mele and Lobinger (2018), in terms of shot scale and composition, a prototypical example of Individualism consists of a picture showing a single subject positioned far from the viewer (long shot), as it reinforces the idea of the independence; while increased proximity (e.g., close-up shot) with multiple subjects (e.g., a family) can emphasize closeness and togetherness – which relate to Collectivism. Shot angle arguably conveys information on power relations: a low angle, with the camera pointed upwards, is likely to empower the subject of the picture in the mind of the viewer (Van Rompay et al., 2012); a high angle, with the camera pointed downwards, can lead instead to disempowerment perceptions (Bell & Milic, 2002); while an eye (horizontal) angle generally represents equality between the subject of the picture and viewer (Lin, 2008).

Cultural values as well as the other layers of culture – that is, rituals, heroes, and symbols (Hofstede et al., 2010) – are influenced by as well as constitute the cultural resources of a destination, meaning its intangible, tangible and natural heritage (Bonn et al., 2007), in addition to local lifestyle and contemporary art expressions; offering visitors a wide range of experiences, whether aesthetic, emotional, intellectual or psychological (Stebbins, 1996). In this regard, cultural tourism can be defined as a "special interest travel where the culture of a host country is an important factor in attracting tourists" (Reisinger, 1994, p. 24). Consequently, from a supply perspective, cultural and heritage tourism can be considered as interchangeable terms. In fact, Timothy (2011) argues that even contemporary art and living cultures are an important component of heritage, as they are built upon (recent or remote) past social values and they become somehow "historical" from the moment of their creation. Lastly, despite the global relevance of this phenomenon, there is a lack of cross-cultural research addressing its online promotion.

Cultural differences in online tourism promotion

From a supply perspective, the influence of culture in website design and content has been highlighted by several studies (Tigre Moura et al., 2016), which have also addressed corporate communication on social media (e.g., Chatzithomas et al., 2014; Men & Tsai, 2012). For example, research by Riskos et al. (2017) investigates cultural differences in Facebook posts published by British and Greek companies for their respective domestic audience. Results suggest that messages are country specific: corporate posts from Greece are more emotional and contain fewer informational cues than British posts. In addition, findings indicate that informational posts (vs. non-informational) in UK receive more "likes" from the domestic audience, whereas the opposite is observed for Greek Facebook posts – suggesting that cultural differences are a relevant object of research for their role in communication dynamics.

Research suggests that online tourism promotion is not culturally neutral either (Mele & Cantoni, 2017) and it should account for cultural nuances (Jiang et al., 2020). For instance, a study by Tigre Moura et al. (2014) content analyzed the depiction of local cultural values on 46 Chinese, 36 Indian and 48 New Zealand destination websites, showing how these differed in terms of COL (e.g., content emphasizing community relations) and LC communication (e.g., hard-sell approach). Other studies report cultural differences in terms of IND-COL and HC-LC communication between Eastern and Western websites of medical tourism companies (Frederick & Gan, 2015); similarly, travel blogs from the same regions are also found to differ in terms of social identity, from the focus on others (collectivist cue) to the blogger's experience (individualist cue) at the destination (Lee & Gretzel, 2014).

For what concerns cultural tourism, a phenomenon that is perceived as individual enough to deserve its own marketing scheme (Timothy & Boyd, 2006), there is surprisingly little research adopting a cross-cultural perspective. Cross-cultural differences have been either addressed from a demand viewpoint, to investigate behavioral intentions to adopt augmented reality at heritage sites (Jung et al., 2018), or in terms of website promotion from a qualitative standpoint (Mele & Cantoni, 2018, 2017). Yet, so far there has not been an empirical investigation of cultural differences in (heritage) tourism promotion on social media.

While culture and cultural values seem to pervade online communication, it may not be the case for tourism marketing on social media. Among them, Instagram is arguably the most successful platform in terms of user engagement (Uşaklı et al., 2017), functioning as a platform for multimodal travel writing with images, videos, and text (Smith, 2018). On the one side, destination marketing organizations can convey (consciously or unconsciously) the cultural values of the host country when selecting and publishing multimedia content to promote cultural experiences on their Instagram accounts. On the other side, research shows that Instagram is populated by self-oriented posts, following motives such as self-expression and escapism (Lee et al., 2015) within an overall individualist orientation (Ekman & Widholm, 2017). Given the relation among the cultural dimensions explained above and the presence of these contrasting influences that could affect the promotion of cultural tourism, we propose the following research question:

> *RQ1*: Within the cultural tourism promotion by the national tourism organizations of Chile, Portugal, USA, and the Netherlands, do Instagram images and captions reflect the cultural values of the host country?

Lastly, since the expression of cultural values may be connected to certain mise en scene attributes in tourism pictures (see previous section), we propose an additional research question:

> *RQ2*: Is there a relationship between the occurrence of COL-IND cultural values and specific mise en scene attributes? Can these differences be explained from a cultural viewpoint?

To answer these research questions, the present study builds upon the research by Tigre Moura et al. (2014), for the operationalization of the cultural dimensions, in combination with previous studies on visual content analysis in the tourism domain (Mele & Lobinger, 2018; Pan et al., 2014).

Methodology

The present research investigated whether official heritage tourism promotion on Instagram varied along cultural dimensions, by taking the case of the national tourism organizations of Chile, Portugal, USA, and the Netherlands. To achieve this objective, first, a manual content analysis allowed the examination of cultural values conveyed by post image (in terms of COL-IND) and post caption (in terms of COL-IND, PD, and HC-LC). Second, an automated analysis of post captions was performed to observe whether cultural differences existed between posts published by COL destinations (Chile and Portugal) and IND destinations (USA and Netherlands) along a series of linguistic categories provided by the software LIWC2015. The two analyses are detailed below.

The research question, design, sample size and analysis plan were pre-registered before data collection on November 14 2019 (https://aspredicted.org/53hc7.pdf).

Manual content analysis

A manual content analysis was employed to examine cultural value differences in official heritage tourism promotion on Instagram along the dimensions of COL-IND, PD, and HC-LC. A manual quantitative content analysis was considered the most appropriate technique, because it allowed to code both textual (caption) and visual content (images) into categories, and to analyze their frequency of occurrence across samples. In addition, human coding was chosen for this part of the research because of its ability to capture content nuances and because of its use in previous tourism studies investigating cultural differences on the web (Lee & Gretzel, 2014; Tigre Moura et al., 2014).

The definition of the sample started from the preliminary identification of national tourism organizations (NTO) as official communication sources. These are destination marketing organizations that oversee tourism development and promotion at the national level (Pike, 2011). Among their functions, NTO marketing teams are supposed to collaborate with regional and local stakeholders to select products and services to be promoted on their channels (Blumberg, 2005), which include websites and social networks. In other words, their objective is to match internal resources with marketing opportunities (Pike & Page, 2014), communicate a unique national identity (Hallett & Kaplan-Weinger, 2010), while representing the "face" of the country as a tourism destination for both domestic and international visitors (Mele & Cantoni, 2017). For the scope of this research, given their authority and function, NTOs were considered appropriate communication sources to investigate the culture of a national destination – that is, its cultural attractions as well as its cultural orientation.

Instagram posts were considered as the unit of analysis. The sample was retrieved from the official international accounts of NTOs of four countries: Chile (@chiletravel), Portugal (@visitportugal), USA (@visittheusa), and the Netherlands (@visit_holland). The selection of these destinations was based on the following criteria: (1) the strong cultural difference of the respective countries along Hofstede et al.'s (2010) and Hall's

(1976) cultural dimensions (table 1); (2) their active Instagram accounts (> 2000 posts); and (3) the presence of photographs showing people – as several NTO accounts did not portray any and having people in the frame was an important precondition to identify COL-IND cues, as described in the operationalization of the dimension in previous studies (Hamid, 2017; Tigre Moura et al., 2014). A preliminary analysis of the destinations' websites revealed that the chosen NTOs had only one official Instagram account, the international one in English – except for Chile, which had also a domestic account (@chile_estuyo), with less followers and less published posts. Therefore, to ensure the comparability of sampled posts from the respective destinations, the international Instagram account of the Chilean NTO (@chiletravel) was selected for the analysis. Within the total sample, the few captions that were only available in Spanish and Portuguese – published by the Chilean and Portuguese NTO respectively – were translated by the main coder, who had knowledge of both languages. Finally, as previous tourism research had already shown that local cultural values could be reflected by web content meant for an English-speaking audience (Tigre Moura et al., 2014), the selection of these (international) Instagram accounts was deemed acceptable to compare the NTOs in terms of cultural orientation.

An a priori power analysis was conducted using the software G*Power (Faul et al., 2007), which indicated a grand total sample size of 1742 units to reach 90% power with a small effect size ($w = 0.1$) for chi-square tests. The final posts (436 for each account) were selected in chronological order starting from November 2019 backwards and covered a time range of two years (2019–18), except for USA (2019–16). Those posts that did not show a cultural attraction in the picture or contained videos (805 in total) were excluded, as their analysis was beyond the research scope. Table 2 provides a detailed description of what was considered as cultural attraction.

In the manual content analysis, we used the Instagram post image and caption as separate units of data collection. Given the focus on cultural tourism and the fact that Instagram is a photo-based social network, only posts with photographs showing cultural attractions were considered for the analysis. In addition, if a post had a slideshow, only the first image promoting a cultural attraction was selected – as it was likely to get more (visitors') views than subsequent pictures. Finally, official reposts were included in the sample, as they must have been considered as appropriate by the NTO marketing team and excluding them would have generated an incomplete view of the cultural experiences offered by the destination.

Apart from the cultural dimensions, also the image mise en scene was considered – that is, the distribution of all elements within the frame of a picture (table 3). Indeed, photographs are composed by content as well as framing (mise en scene) and both contribute to the creation of meaning (Mele & Lobinger, 2018). Addressing this topic, Neuendorf (2017) identifies two types of content with respect to its appearance: manifest and latent content – also referred to as the denotative and connotative parts of a message. Within the context of this research, the first describes all the elements that are physically observable (mise en scene), whereas the second is composed by the subtler ones (cultural values).

The operationalization of mise en scene dimensions was first developed from existing research (Bordwell & Thompson, 2013; Pan et al., 2014) and then refined with a preliminary analysis on tourism Instagram posts; the same process was followed for the operationalization of cultural dimensions, which was based on previous studies (Mele & Lobinger, 2018; Tigre Moura et al., 2014) to ensure its validity to reflect these complex constructs. The most important decision that followed this step was to analyze PD and HC-LC values only for post captions. This was decided because in most cases it was not possible to understand whether a picture was showing a celebrity or a common visitor. Similarly, HC-LC communication appeared to be more appropriate for text rather than images.

In terms of coding (table 3), both pictures and captions could convey simultaneously multiple cultural values. Yet, a piece of content could not be coded both as collectivist and individualist (same for HC-LC). The expression of cultural values was measured with

Table 2. Description of cultural attraction.

Cultural attraction[a]	Description	Source
Intangible heritage	Handicrafts, gastronomy, traditional festivals and music, oral traditions, religions.	(UNWTO, 2018)
Tangible heritage	Movable heritage, national and world heritage sites, historic places, and buildings.	
Natural heritage	Protected fauna, flora, and rural environment. National, regional, and local parks of unique value.	(Timothy & Boyd, 2003)
Contemporary art and architecture	Temporary and permanent art installations. Contemporary music, design, and art festivals. Infrastructure with unique architectural value.	(Timothy, 2011)
Local lifestyle	Local people's customs and living culture.	

[a]Division among cultural attractions only for explanatory purpose.

Table 3. Description of image and text dimensions.

Unit	Dimension	Description[a]	Coding Value
Image	COLIND	*Collectivism*: A group of people, family, children, or couple. A compact crowd. If these subjects are in the foreground and single individuals are in the background, then the foreground has priority. If priority cannot be established, then None = 0. *Individualism*: Single person or (unrelated) sparse subjects. If these subjects are in the foreground and groups are in the background, then the foreground has priority. If priority cannot be established, then None = 0.	COL = 1, IND = 2, None = 0
	Composition	Number of people in the picture.	One = 1, Two = 2, Three = 3, Four or more = 4, None = 0
	Angle	*Low Angle*: The frame is below the subject (looking up). *Eye Angle*: The frame is at the same level of the subject. *High Angle*: The frame is above the subject (looking down). *Bird's Eye Angle*: 40- to 90-degrree elevated shot above the subject (looking down).	Low = 0, Eye = 1, High = 2, Bird's Eye = 3
	Scale	*Extremely Long Scale*: The human figure is lost or tiny. This is the framing for landscapes and city vistas. *Long Scale*: Subjects are more prominent, but the background still dominates. *Medium Long Scale*: Subjects in full or from knees up. A balance between human figures and surroundings. *Medium Scale*: Subjects from waist up. Gesture and expression are more visible. The surrounding is less important. *Medium Close-Up Scale*: Body from chest up, almost occupying the height of the frame. Scarcely visible background. *Close-Up Scale*: Body part.	Extremely Long = 0, Long = 1, Medium Long = 2, Medium = 3, Medium Close-Up = 4, Close-Up = 5
Caption	COLIND	*Collectivism*: Overall emphasis on shared experiences. Family metaphors. Collective actions and events. Community feelings. *Individualism*: Overall emphasis on independence, freedom and escape. Individual experiences.	COL = 1, IND = 2, None = 0
	PD	*Power Distance*: Recommendation from the NTO formulated as an order or with top priority. Recommendation from influencers (≥ 10k followers) and notorious travel guides. Emphasis on awards, power and social status, including metaphorical expressions.	High PD = 1, Low PD = 0
	HCLC	*High Context*: Overall emphasis on feelings, entertainment, and games. *Low Context*: Overall emphasis on facts, figures, lists. Focus on quantity.	HC = 1, LC = 2

[a]Edited to save space.

a binary categorical variable as done in prior research (Hamid, 2017; Riskos et al., 2017). Categorical variables were also used to report mise en scene attributes. A picture could be a long scale shot (with a visible subject, but dominating background), have a high-level angle (with the viewer "looking down" at the subject), and one person in terms of composition. Yet, the sub-levels of each mise en scene dimension were mutually exclusive – that is, for example, a picture could not have both a high and low angle.

After a preliminary training and discussion on the coding book, the first author of this study coded the full sample (n = 1744), while a second coder analyzed approximately 13% of all the posts (n = 229) to assess reliability. Cohen kappa was chosen as a conservative reliability coefficient, as it yields agreement beyond chance only and it is appropriate when using two coders for the analysis of categorical data (Neuendorf, 2017). This coefficient had been also used in previous studies that analyzed cultural differences on the web (e.g., Chun et al., 2015; Stepchenkova et al., 2014). The resulting Cohen kappa statistics for the cultural and mise en scene dimensions were the following: COL-IND for post image (0.92), COL-IND for post caption (0.62), PD (0.61), HC-LC (0.47), Composition (0.96), Angle (0.81), and Scale (0.75). Consequently, the strength of the agreement ranged from substantial (0.61–0.80) to almost perfect (0.81–1.00), except for the moderate agreement (0.41–-0.60) for HC-LC (Landis & Koch, 1977).

Automated content analysis

Automated content analysis describes a group of algorithms that employ probabilistic models to reveal the underlying themes within a corpus (Nunez-Mir et al., 2016). This method is particularly useful when examining large amounts of social media data to identify linguistic features (Van Atteveldt & Peng, 2018).

The purpose of this automated content analysis was to investigate whether COL destinations (Chile and Portugal) differed from IND ones (USA and Netherlands) in terms of linguistic categories, which were extrapolated from post captions using the software LIWC2015 – containing a dictionary with almost 6,400 words and approximately 90 output variables to capture cognitive, emotional and structural components of written text (Pennebaker et al., 2015). The main investigation focused on those 12 variables (table 4) that had

Table 4. Description of selected LIWC2015 linguistic categories.

Linguistic Categories	Description
1st person singular 1st person plural 3rd person singular 3rd person plural	"I", "she" and "he" relate to individual experiences (IND). "We" and "they" relate to collective experiences (COL).
Social Words	Keywords referring to the social sphere relate to collective experiences (COL).
Power Reward Focus	Keywords referring to "power" and "reward focus" relate to social status, recognition and power relationships (PD).
Word Count	Direct communication: little information left to context and interpretation lead to a higher word count (LC). Indirect communication: most of the information left to context and interpretation lead to a lower word count (HC).
Question Marks	Frequent use of question marks can be associated with indirect speech (HC).
Analytical Thinking	Higher numbers reflect a more formal, logical text (LC); lower numbers reflect narrative, informal text (HC).
Authentic	Higher numbers are associated with a more honest, direct text (LC); lower numbers suggest a more guarded discourse (HC).
Money	Frequent use of money-related words can be associated with direct, fact-based communication (LC).

a theoretical relationship with COL-IND (treated as a grouping variable) and its related dimensions PD and HC-LC.

The sample for the automated content analysis of Instagram post captions was the same one we used in the previous analysis (n = 1744). Before uploading the corpus for the automated analysis, frequent internet annotations (e.g., hashtags) were removed to improve the accuracy of the results. In addition, the first author translated the few post captions that were not originally written in English. The output of the automated content analysis (dimension scores) was then used as dependent variable in multiple ANOVAs to examine whether the continuous outcome (incl. means) could be explained by COL-IND differences between destination groups.

Results

Cultural dimensions and image mise en scene

Chi-square statistical tests were performed to analyze differences among the samples in terms of cultural values conveyed by Instagram posts promoting heritage tourism. More precisely, we wanted to observe whether post images and captions published by the destinations would differ along the selected cultural dimensions. Table 5 shows the actual count (N) of cultural cues, their percentage (%), and the corresponding adjusted residual. For example, USA had the highest percentage of images showing individualist cues (51.8%), while Chile (23.4%) and Portugal (22.5%) were the lowest.

The adjusted residuals of the chi-square test were used to compute the p-value of each comparison within a contingency table (MacDonald & Gardner, 2000). First, we obtained the chi-square value for each comparison by squaring the adjusted residual. Second, we calculated the p-value of each single relationship using the formula provided by SPSS (IBM, 2019), containing the chi-square value and one degree of freedom: p-value = SIG.CHISQ (chi-square, 1). This process was particularly useful because our analysis contained more than four comparisons and it was not clear whether all relationships were significant. Bonferroni post-hoc test (Bland & Altman, 1995) was then performed to control the overall Type 1 error rate.

The adjusted residuals also provided information on the direction of the relationship between the actual and expected count of cultural values within each destination. An adjusted residual value smaller than −1.96 indicated a negative relationship between two categorical values – namely, the actual count was significantly smaller than the expected count. A reversed conclusion applied to values greater than 1.96 (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2013).

As expected, the manual content analysis revealed that Chilean and Portuguese post images had a negative association with individualist cues (table 5). Yet, only USA posts showed higher scores for individualism, while the difference between expected and actual count for Dutch post images was not significant (p = 0.54). For what concerns COL, the sample did not show differences in terms of collectivist values for both Instagram images and captions. Concerning textual differences, the findings confirmed our expectations in terms of IND and HC-LC communication. Lastly, Chilean post captions scored lower on low-PD values and higher on high-PD values. Yet, the post captions from the other destinations did not differ on this dimension.

Additional chi-square tests were run to explore the relationship between COL-IND and image mise en scene (**Appendix**, table A.1). Bonferroni post-hoc tests (Bland & Altman, 1995) were conducted to control the overall Type 1 error rate. The most relevant results for each mise en scene dimension are outlined here; followed by the respective co-occurrence value and the adjusted residual. Most images that conveyed collectivist cues had a shot composition with four or more people (N = 150, adj. res. = 17.5). In terms of shot angle, collectivist (N = 12, adj. res. = −3.2) and individualist (N = 22, adj. res. = −5.1) cues had a negative relationship with bird's eye angle, while the relationships with the other angles were non-significant. Collectivist cues conveyed

Table 5. Cross-tabulation of cultural dimensions and destinations: chi-square test.

	Chile			USA			Netherlands			Portugal			χ^2 Test
Dimensions[a]	N	%	A. R.	N	%	A. R.	N	%	A. R.	N	%	A. R.	$\chi^{2,c}$ (df)
Images													
COL	73	16.7	−.6	75	17.2	−.3	81	18.6	.5	80	18.3	.4	126.376 (6)
IND	102	23.4	**−5.3**[b]	226	51.8	**9.2**	164	37.6	1.9	98	22.5	**−5.8**	
COL	132	30.3	−.7	125	28.7	−1.5	150	34.4	1.5	144	33.0	.7	128.366 (6)
IND	160	36.7	**−5.3**	265	60.8	**6.4**	238	54.6	**3.4**	167	38.3	**−4.5**	
LPD	271	62.2	**−3.7**	316	72.5	1.7	314	72.0	1.5	306	70.2	.5	14.172 (3)
HPD	165	37.8	**3.7**	120	27.5	−1.7	122	28.0	−1.5	130	29.8	−.5	
HC	299	68.6	**4.4**	223	51.1	**−4.2**	179	41.1	**−9.2**	340	78.0	**9.0**	151.095 (3)
LC	137	31.4	**−4.4**	213	48.9	**4.2**	257	58.9	**9.2**	96	22.0	**−9.0**	

[a]Value "None" for COL-IND (image and text) not reported.
[b]Adjusted residuals in bold = significant association ($p < 0.001$).
[c]$p < 0.005$.

by Instagram images were associated positively with medium-long shot scale (N = 67, adj. res. = 3.4). Finally, individualist cues were found to have a negative relationship with medium shot scale (N = 5, adj. res. = −6.3).

Linguistic analysis of captions

The objective of this part of the research was to investigate whether the destination's cultural background could predict variations in language use, which were known to be related to Hofstede et al.'s (2010) and Hall's (1976) cultural dimensions. The captions were analyzed using LIWC2015 software (Pennebaker et al., 2015). Multiple ANOVAs were conducted to compare the destination means for the 12 linguistic categories illustrated in table 4.

More precisely, for this analysis, Instagram post captions (n = 1744) were re-grouped with two dummy variables (with two levels each). Following Hofstede et al.'s (2010) and Hall's (1976) theories, the first variable was COL-IND: post captions from Chile and Portugal were categorized as collectivist, high PD and HC (represented by the level "COL"), whereas those from USA and the Netherlands were categorized as individualist, low PD and LC (represented by the level "IND").

To establish whether the linguistic differences could be attributed specifically to those cultural dimensions – represented by the two levels of the dummy variable COL-IND – the four destinations were also grouped in terms of geographical location: Americas and Europe. The two dummy variables (COL-IND and Geography) were then employed in multiple univariate models to analyze their main and interaction effects (COL-IND × Geography).

As show in table 6, multiple ANOVAs indicated significant relationships between COL-IND and four out of six linguistic categories: "I", "We", "They", and "Social." Unexpectedly, in two out of four cases ("I" and "Social"), Geography had a higher F-value than COL-IND. In addition, Geography was the only variable associated with the two PD-related categories, "Power" and "Reward." Lastly, no significant relationship was found on the linguistic category "3rd Person Singular".

As expected, the descriptive statistics (table 7) showed that the category (personal pronoun) "I" had a higher mean in individualist posts (vs. collectivist posts) promoting cultural heritage. Similarly, the category "They" and "Social" had lower means in the same posts (vs. collectivist posts). Contrary to our expectations, the category "We" had a higher mean in individualist posts – which was also confirmed by the interaction effect. In addition, the PD-related categories, "Power" and "Reward", had higher means for the posts published by US-America and Chile (vs. Netherlands and Portugal).

Six additional ANOVAs (table 8) revealed a significant relationship between COL-IND and the designated dependent variables related to the cultural dimension HC-LC. As expected, COL-IND had a higher F-value than the other independent variables – except for the linguistic category "Analytical Thinking", with whom Geography had a higher score than COL-IND.

As expected, descriptive statistics (table 9) showed that Instagram post captions classified as IND – hence, LC communication – had a higher mean for the linguistic categories "Word Count", "Authentic", and "Money", and a lower one for the category "Question Marks."

Consequently, LC captions (vs. HC) were more explicit in providing information about cultural products and services, including information about price. Differently, HC captions were more indirect and used more question marks to communicate with the audience. Lastly, LC captions (vs. HC) had a higher mean for "Analytical Thinking", suggesting a more logical, hierarchical textual structure. Yet, unexpectedly, the

Table 6. ANOVAs for COL-IND and PD linguistic categories.

	I		We		They		Social		Power		Reward	
	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2
COL-IND	4.818*	.003	66.995**	.037	12.892**	.007	5.358*	.003	2.860	.002	2.663	.002
Geo	10.703*	.006	51.888**	.029	.591	.000	89.018**	.049	7.351*	.004	6.048*	.003
COL-IND × Geo	3.535	.002	16.207**	.009	1.677	.001	1.959	.001	1.876	.001	.006	.000

Notes: non-significant values for "3rd Person Singular" not reported; df = 1; error df = 1740; * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.001.

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for COL-IND And PD linguistic categories – main effects.

	I		We		They		Social		Power		Reward	
	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
COL	.05	.02	.70	.08	.30	.03	7.30	.19	1.41	.08	1.97	.10
IND	.12	.02	1.60	.08	.13	.03	6.67	.19	1.61	.08	1.74	.10
Americas	.13	.02	.75	.08	.23	.03	5.69	.19	1.67	.08	2.03	.10
Europe	.03	.02	1.53	.08	.20	.03	8.27	.19	1.35	.08	1.68	.10

Table 8. ANOVAs for HC-LC linguistic categories.

	Word Count		Question Marks		Analytical Thinking		Authentic		Money	
	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2	F	η_p^2
COL-IND	315.372**	.153	61.231**	.034	27.717**	.016	68.631**	.038	13.535**	.008
Geo	56.676**	.032	47.256**	.026	201.628**	.104	2.113	.001	1.811	.001
COL-IND × Geo	295.431**	.145	29.626**	.017	9.203*	.005	6.417*	.004	.103	.000

Notes: df = 1; error df = 1740; * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.001.

Table 9. Descriptive statistics for HC-LC linguistic categories – main effects.

	Word Count		Question Marks		Analytical Thinking		Authentic		Money	
	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE	Mean	SE
COL	28.20	.68	1.59	.07	82.49	.68	35.46	1.10	.27	.04
IND	45.33	.68	.78	.07	87.57	.68	48.34	1.10	.48	.04
Americas	33.13	.68	.83	.07	91.87	.68	43.03	1.10	.33	.04
Europe	40.40	.68	1.54	.07	78.19	.68	40.77	1.10	.41	.04

orientation of the means was inverted when the geographical location (Americas vs. Europe) of the destinations was considered.

Conclusions

Overall, the findings of this exploratory research indicate that heritage tourism promotion on Instagram differs across culturally distant destinations. Data from the manual analysis of posts (table 5) published by four national tourism organizations revealed that images and captions differed in terms of emphasis on individualist values – namely, US-American and Dutch post captions (vs. Chilean and Portuguese) had a positive relationship and a higher frequency score on this dimension. A similar outcome was found for Instagram images – except for those from the Netherlands, which had a non-significant association with IND. Expectations were met also in terms of HC-LC communication: Chilean and Portuguese post captions privileged high-context cues, whereas US-American and Dutch posts presented a low-context communication style. Lastly, post captions from Chile had a positive association with PD, whereas, unexpectedly, the other destinations did not show any significant relationship with that dimension. In addition, the sampled posts did not differ in terms of emphasis on collectivist values. Presumably, this last outcome is due to the overall self-centered orientation of Instagram (see Section 2.2), where destinations can have opposite associations with individualist cues, but still show a relatively individualist orientation.

Data from the automated content analysis of post captions provided an additional perspective to the object of research by grouping the four countries according to their theorized cultural orientation (COL-IND) and geographical location (Americas vs. Europe). The mean scores of most linguistic categories confirmed our expectations in terms of COL-IND and HC-LC communication preferences – except for the category "We", which was frequently used in Dutch posts, and the "3rd person singular" (which did not show any significant association). In line with the manual analysis, cultural orientation did not predict a change in terms of PD-related variables, which appeared to be associated with the geographical location of the destinations.

This exploratory research analyzed not only which cultural cues were conveyed by Instagram pictures, but also *how* these were communicated. Mise en scene analysis revealed that those images categorized as collectivist were composed mostly by four or more people and had a positive association with medium-long shot scale; whereas images with individualist values had one person in the frame and a positive relationship with long shot scale, increasing the distance between the viewer and the subject. Following the literature on semiotic analysis and tourism visuals (Mele & Lobinger, 2018), this finding suggests that collectivist cues (vs. individualist cues) find their prototypical expression in pictures with a higher degree of perceived observer-subject proximity and interactivity. In the opposite direction, individualist cues like self-reliance and independence are conveyed by images that arguably isolate the subject from the observer. Finally, the lack of relationship between COL-IND (which is connected to PD) and high/low shot angle confirms what reported by Pan et al. (2014) on the preference of photographers for the use of a "neutral", eye-level camera angle to portray destinations – thus, overshadowing possible cultural differences.

The present study has multiple theoretical implications. First, it indicates that cultural values permeate cultural tourism promotion on Instagram both at the visual (image) and textual (caption) level, extending previous literature on the topic of cross-cultural differences in online communication (Tigre Moura et al., 2016), social media (Goodrich & De Mooij, 2014), and travel photography (Pan et al., 2014). The reflection of cultural differences can be a result of the specific cultural context in which the (Instagram) content strategy of the sampled NTOs is nested – a factor that has already been found to influence online communication preferences among web designers (H. Kim et al., 2009). This argument is also in line with previous research on corporate communication, stating that cultural value differences are reflected by official content published on social networks (Tsai & Men, 2012).

More importantly, following our findings, the influence of cultural orientations on a popular social network like Instagram also suggests that – while removing physical distance – tourism promotion is not characterized by a homogeneous culture. On the one side, this contributes to the cultural richness of a destination and its heritage. On the other side, the identification of cultural orientations in our sample seem to indicate the persistence of cultural (value) preferences to the globalization of heritage tourism promotion on social media and, consequently, the importance of accounting for them in marketing strategies (Goodrich & De Mooij, 2014). Indeed, also experimental research indicates that culturally adapted social media content is more persuasive than culturally incongruent (standardized) messages (Sung et al., 2020).

Finally, as the main and interaction effects of geographical location suggest (see Section 4.2), certain content preferences can be also predicted by a combination of factors rather than cultural orientations alone, like the co-existence of a Pan-European culture (Hornikx & De Groot, 2017) or the use of benchmarking to elaborate online messages that are similar to those published by cutting-edge competitors within the same region (e.g., Americas) (Hays et al., 2013).

From a managerial perspective, our findings show that cultural tourism promotion on Instagram is not "neutral". In fact, it largely reflects the theorized cultural differences among destinations. In this regard, we argue that it is important for destination marketers to be aware of the cultural cues they are conveying through their activity on Instagram, even when this takes inspiration from successful competitors within the same region. From this awareness stage, the NTO can then decide whether to maintain the cultural orientation of the destination or to adapt to the cultural background of a specific audience. In this regard, cultural adaptation is a practice that appears to be useful for the success of online marketing in tourism, and it should be considered when addressing key international markets that are geographically and culturally distant (Mele & Cantoni, 2017). Following our operationalization, destination marketers could conduct paid campaigns directed to key audiences on Instagram, with A/B tests that include culture-based contrasts, especially in terms of Individualism vs. Collectivism and High-Context vs. Low-Context communication. In addition to these cultural themes, the selection of travel pictures for the promotion of the destination could also account for image mise en scene, to project specific experiences to live while visiting cultural attractions – such as a series of long shots of solo travelers to promote escape and self-reliance for more individualist audiences.

In conclusion, limitations of this exploratory study include, first, the moderate agreement among coders for HC-LC communication – even though it is still an acceptable value (e.g., Döring et al., 2016), it should be regarded as tentative and conclusions on this dimension should be considered with caution. On the other side, despite the moderate agreement, we also argue that findings from the automated content analysis provide further support to the presence of cultural differences in terms of HC-LC communication in Instagram post captions. Nevertheless, future improvements of the operationalization of this category are recommended. Second,

the main coder was not blind to the conditions of the research and analyzed both cultural values and mise en scene dimensions. Third, the choice of international Instagram accounts may also represent a limitation – although results suggest that it does not affect the relative cultural difference in heritage tourism promotion. Finally, future research could combine content analysis with interviews to shed light on the production context of Instagram posts and the role of cultural differences (vs. individual preferences).

Apart from addressing these elements, future experimental research should test the effects of culturally adapted Instagram messages (following our framework) on variables such as ad liking and persuasiveness. Furthermore, future studies should consider additional cultural constructs, also in the light of the criticism addressing Hofstede's theory of national cultures (Jones, 2007). It would be also interesting to include social media content from popular Eastern destinations, like China, allowing a broader generalization of the findings. Finally, while the findings of this research are in line with previous studies showing the reflection of cultural values in online communication, future research should consider a larger number of social media accounts from multiple tourism destinations – to further explore the relationship between cultural orientation and tourism promotion on social networks.

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Appendix

Table A.1. Cross-tabulation of COL-IND and mise en scene: chi-square test.

	COL[a] (img)			IND (img)			χ^2 Test
	N	% (COL)	A. R.[b]	N	% (IND)	A. R.[b]	$\chi^{2,c}$ (df)
Composition							2093.356(8)
None	11	3.6	**−15.8**	7	1.2	**−25.8**	
1 Person	27	8.7	**−9.0**	477	80.8	**33.0**	
2 People	92	29.8	**16.4**	31	5.3	**−2.6**	
3 People	29	9.4	**8.2**	12	2.0	−1.1	
4+ People	150	48.5	**17.5**	63	10.7	**−4.1**	
Angle							52.902(6)
Low	99	32.0	1.2	175	29.7	.4	
Eye level	129	41.7	.4	252	42.7	1.2	
High	69	22.3	.3	141	23.9	1.6	
Bird's Eye	12	3.9	**−3.2**	22	3.7	**−5.1**	
Scale							167.376(10)
Extremely long	75	24.3	**−4.4**	168	28.5	**−4.1**	
Long	140	45.3	2.0	329	55.8	**9.4**	
Medium Long	67	21.7	**3.4**	75	12.7	−2.2	
Medium	16	5.2	−.5	5	0.8	**−6.3**	
Medium Close-Up	6	1.9	1.7	3	0.5	−1.5	
Close-Up	5	1.6	−.9	10	1.7	−1.3	

[a]Value "None" for COL-IND (image) not reported.
[b]Adjusted residuals in bold = significant association ($p \leq 0.001$).
[c]$p < 0.001$.