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Exploring travel blogs on tourism and landscape heritage: representations of the Swiss Alps

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ABSTRACT

Alpine tourism is one of the most popular forms of travel. Despite the prominence of information and communication technology in shaping travel perceptions and behaviour, a research gap has been identified concerning how this phenomenon is represented online. By taking the case of Alpine tourism in Switzerland, in this qualitative research we use a thematic content analysis to investigate themes and narratives about Alpine landscape and tourism in 158 blog posts. Findings show, first, that Alpine tourism representations can be grouped into six themes: Accessible Mountains, Captured Landscapes, Isolated Land, Healing Place, Cultural Discovery, and Natural Heritage. Second, representational narratives that can be ascribed to the Authorised Heritage Discourse appear to coexist with counter-narratives where the purely visual and aesthetic aspects of the Alps are combined with critical, experiential, and cultural elements. Research implications include the role of visual experiences in heritage representation and commodification, and the importance of integrating blogs in mountain tourism destination websites.

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Mountain tourism; Alpine landscape; Travel blogs; Thematic content analysis; Authorised heritage discourse

Introduction

Alpine tourism is defined in this research as the ensemble of tourism activities taking place in the European Alps (Weiermair & Bayer, 2016). This region includes parts of Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, and Switzerland, with 7.58 million tourist beds and 508 million overnight stays (as of 2017) (BAK, 2018), making it one of the most popular locations in Europe (European Environment Agency, 2016). Yet, destinations in the Swiss Alps, like many European mountain areas, have witnessed a decline in overnight stays during summer months because of the competition from well-marketed, large tourism resorts or more accessible beach locations (Klimmek & Doctor, 2018).

In addition, snow decline due to global warming has also been jeopardising winter activities, highlighting mountain resorts' need for experience diversification (Koenig & Abegg, 1997). In this regard, listening to visitors' perceptions and narratives on travel blogs about a destination can be a powerful way for tourism marketers to co-create valuable and meaningful experiences (Martin & Ren, 2020). User-generated content (UGC) published on online platforms, like travel blogs, may not only perpetuate existing narratives (Hodsdon, 2021), but it can also develop

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alternative stories and perceptions within the heritage discourse (e.g. Irimiás & Volo, 2018). Counter-narratives have the potential to contest dominant, partial images of landscapes and cultures that justify their exploitation for tourism purposes and enhance climate change. In this regard, research indicates that UGC can be used to raise awareness about issues like sustainability as well as promote responsible behaviour among tourists (Sultan et al., 2021).

Dominant narratives are part of the so-called ‘authorised heritage discourse’ (AHD) (Smith, 2006). This concept was developed in the field of critical heritage studies, with the aim of scrutinising heritage as a mean and product of power dynamics, which legitimize the dominance of expert-based values. Due to its natural appearance, landscape can be used to strengthen national identities and create a common ground in areas that are originally disputed by different population groups – which could be the case with Canada and Switzerland, for example. In this process, nature and landscape are described as something pristine, ‘portraying humans mainly as the destroyers of paradise’ (Renes, 2022, p. 22), and leaving out ‘alternative’ interpretations of natural and cultural heritage.

Tourism research has addressed mountain areas from a variety of perspectives, including climate change and sustainable development (Río-Rama et al., 2019). Despite the influence of information and communication technologies on travel perceptions and behaviour (Molinillo et al., 2018), a lack of communication studies has been identified concerning tourists’ narratives about mountainous locations and landscapes as unique cultural and natural resources. Furthermore, no study so far has analysed the existence of user-generated narratives that go beyond the material-centred AHD (Smith, 2006), privileging meaningful experiences with locals and co-creation over heritage aesthetics and monumentality (Ross & Saxena, 2019).

Consequently, to address this research gap, in the present study we employ a qualitative, thematic analysis (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014) to identify the main narratives about Alpine tourism and landscape in travel blogs, taking the case of the Swiss Alps. Leveraging on an extensive literature review, these narratives are grouped within themes and discussed with respect to their position within or outside the AHD.

The Swiss Alps form a relevant case study for multiple reasons. First, they are among the most popular attractions since the beginning of tourism in the Western world (Hansen, 1995). Second, outdoor activities are part of an unprecedented online marketing campaign to relaunch Swiss tourism as a response to the Covid-19 crisis (Switzerland Tourism, 2020a). Third, the Alps and their landscapes constitute a symbol of national identity for Switzerland (Zimmer, 1998). The Alps thus have a rich history as a tourist destination, with a vast array of research and media coverage. This allows us to study the ways in which travel blogs by users align with and differ from these longstanding narratives.

The present study contributes, first, to the literature on mountain tourism from a demand perspective, by exploring Alpine tourism narratives communicated by travel bloggers, who have the power to influence destination image and prospective travellers’ opinions (Gholamhosseinzadeh et al., 2021). Second, by identifying the main Alpine tourism themes, the present research further expands the recent literature on the reproduction of the AHD, concerning the coherence or dissonance of travel narratives on social media with respect to ‘mainstream’ views on heritage and landscape (Hodsdon, 2021; Taylor & Gibson, 2017). Third, it contributes to the literature on the AHD and sustainability (e.g. Yan, 2015), by exploring whether (tourism-related) socio-economic and environmental aspects are discussed in bloggers’ narratives – thus, going beyond the static view on natural and cultural heritage, which characterises the AHD (Smith, 2006). Finally, through the qualitative analysis of blog posts, we aim at expanding knowledge about tourists’ perspectives on mountain landscapes and their representation (Ding et al., 2021).

Literature review

Mountain tourism and heritage landscape: a visitor perspective

Mountain tourism can be defined as ‘any tourism activity occurring in mountain areas’ (Hull, 2016, p. 26), including leisure, sports, and cultural activities concerning tangible and intangible heritage,

like attending traditional events. A study elaborated by del Río-Rama et al. (2019) provides an overview of the literature on mountain tourism in Europe and describes this phenomenon as an emerging research topic.

Mountain tourism has been identified as an appealing opportunity in a post COVID-19 scenario, when people want to escape from busy cities, and they seek places they associate with a healthy lifestyle, relaxation, and purity (Seraphin & Dosquet, 2020). Research indicates that strengths of mountain areas include the availability of winter sports, pristine natural environment, and local food (Giachino et al., 2019), alongside the possibility of experiencing cultural, spiritual, and recreational benefits, especially in summer farms (Pachoud et al., 2020).

In addition to the features reported above, research highlights other factors that make mountain tourism appealing to the public, such as educational experiences and spectacular landscapes – both requiring good quality infrastructure and accessibility to be enjoyed by tourists (Tampakis et al., 2019). Within the context of the present research, a landscape can be defined as a combination of natural and human-shaped elements as well as landscape attributes and features (e.g. a waterfall) (Beza, 2010); while landscape heritage broadly refers to ‘landscapes of scenic and cultural as well as scientific value’ (Zube & Pitt, 1981, p. 70). In this regard, Beza (2010) states that mountain landscapes can hold a symbolic and aesthetic value for tourists who seek qualities like scenic beauty, fresh air, and varied forests. Furthermore, landscape richness is arguably a key factor for the development of mountain tourism (Ding et al., 2021).

Addressing landscape features, research indicates that lakes, rivers, and mountains in natural areas can hold cultural significance for locals; a characteristic that can be overlooked in marketing activities by tourism organisations, favouring scenic qualities instead. In this regard, Carr (2008) explains that these cultural landscapes result from ‘people’s relationships to the natural areas within which they live or move’ (p. 36). While there is a growing acknowledgement concerning the economic and social importance of cultural and heritage landscapes, tourists may have little awareness about their cultural and symbolic value. Thus, this ‘geographical consciousness’ – which includes visitors’ experience of ‘places, spaces, and landscapes’ (Li, 2000, p. 863) – can be improved by signalling or discussing landscapes’ cultural importance with tourists (Carr, 2008). These observations go in accordance with the arguments raised by Buckley et al. (2008), who state tourists can view the landscape and culture of a particular place as a single item or two co-located entities, where only one represents the primary attraction – thus, giving the possibility of experiencing landscape without culture (or vice versa). According to the scholars, the existence of cultural landscapes is important because, on the one side, they represent appealing destinations for tourists, combining aesthetics with culture – thus, they should be promoted as such by tourism destinations. On the other side, cultural landscapes provide locals with the possibility to preserve and profit from their heritage, which in turn reaffirms their territorial and cultural identities. Furthermore, the literature shows that cultural values and symbols attached to landscape depend, in fact, on the ‘eye of the beholder’, who can capture *representations* of places through various modalities, like movies, maps, and blogs (Gyimóthy, 2018) – which is what Adams and Jansson (2012, p. 306) define as ‘places in communication’. At the same time, it is also possible to observe changes to ‘communication in places’ – that is, *textures* – when communicative representations (e.g. blogs) affect the production and consumption of commodified places. An example of this is the effect of Bollywood culture on the experience of Indian tourists of the Swiss Alps – in locations depicted in film shootings – and the change in the Swiss foodscape in Interlaken, which (now) offers Asian street food alongside traditional dishes (Gyimóthy, 2018).

Tourism discourses and narratives about heritage

Heritage can be defined as ‘the present-day use of the past’ (Timothy & Boyd, 2006, p. 2), and it includes both tangible and intangible features of the cultural spectrum as well as natural heritage. According to Smith (2006), heritage can also be viewed as a discourse concerned about the

construction of identity based on the social, psychological, and historical bonds with heritage places. Within the present research, the concept of *discourse* refers to a set of meanings from text or talk (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2016) as well as to the cultural background and knowledge that people use to organise, frame, and communicate about the world (Smith, 2006); while the concept of *narrative* refers to a specific discursive activity characterised by text sequences – that is, a storyline (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2016).

Smith (2006) argues that there is a predominant Western discourse about heritage that can be defined as ‘authorised heritage discourse’ (AHD, p. 4) that views materiality, monumentality, and aesthetics as key components of heritage. This discourse originates from field experts (e.g. travel guides or tourism authorities) and, in light of its perceived professionalism and / or popularity, it tends to overshadow alternative discourses about heritage and present meanings. For instance, research by Ross and Saxena (2019) shows how tour guides in Évora (Portugal) encourage an alternative counter-discourse to the AHD by drawing the attention away from the materiality of the cultural attraction to talk about individual memories and understanding of heritage.

Dominant narratives connected with the AHD can be challenged through social media and other web platforms that allow people to create and share their own self-authored narratives about heritage and landscape. While these channels do not imply the construction of alternative understandings of heritage, they represent an opportunity for content creators to promote new perspectives (Taylor & Gibson, 2017). In this regard, we can infer that the multimodality that characterises travel websites (Krisjanous, 2016), like blogs, can be a way through which travellers can express themselves beyond the purely visual, representational culture that is at the basis of the AHD – that is why so much importance is assigned to aesthetics, for example – and provide an account of experiential aspects of heritage (Watson, 2013). According to Watson (2013), the engagement that derives from direct experience, combined with visual attributes, can be a potential venue for ‘exchange and mingling of meaning rather than a simple one-way transmission’ (p. 106).

In addition to the characteristics of the AHD described above, Smith (2006) argues that these discourses use heritage and landscape to build a cohesive national identity and narratives. The concept of landscape itself has a long history. Particularly in cultural geography, it is a central concept to the field. It is often used and praised for its integrative character, meaning that the landscape context brings together aspects of the world around us that address visual and representative aspects, questions of government and planning, as well as notions of landscape as lived-in places by communities (Cosgrove & Daniels, 1988; Olwig, 2022).

Since the early modern period, landscapes have been used to reinforce a sense of belonging toward a nation, through the association of collective identity with natural surroundings (Watson, 2013). For example, landscapes were appropriated in music, like national anthems, and the depiction of landscape in paintings has also led to preservation of particular areas as quintessential representations of the nation (Renes, 2022). In this regard, Zimmer (1998) reports how Switzerland has historically used the Alps and the Alpine landscape as a national symbol in the construction of a Swiss identity. The idea of natural landscape as a central point of reference offered a more feasible resource than culture, as the cultural diversity within the territory did not suit the nineteenth-century nation-state ideal (Renes, 2022). Thus, landscapes and their representations can be viewed as mirrors of national ‘virtues’, like freedom and independence. As described by Kaufmann and Zimmer (1998), in the late eighteenth century, the Alps lost their status as something ‘monstrous’ and, thanks to the aid of painters, poets, and writers, became a (masculine) symbol of the sublime. Particularly through Rousseau and Schiller’s romantic views on Switzerland, Alpine societies stimulated the love for ‘primitive’ nature and the idea of the purification effect of mountains on Swiss people. During the twentieth century, tourist promotion became an important vehicle for the spread of this particular image of Switzerland, merging ideas about the Swiss nation, its quintessential mountain landscape, and the valuation of the Alps as a place of adventure, recuperation (healing), and escape from an industrial world (Barton, 2008; Girardin, 2016). Hiking in the wilderness is often also seen as a form of self-discovery, already mentioned by Henri David Thoreau in the 1850s

(Berg, 2015). Highly impactful for tourism in Switzerland, and in other European destinations, were Baedeker's (1863) 'Handbook for travellers' (Koshar, 1998) and a powerful railway system that made mountain areas more accessible to the public (Zimmer, 1998).

Research indicates that embedded narratives in the AHD assign to landscapes two fundamental roles: the pastoral and the wilderness. The first is rooted in the European romantic imaginary, with landscapes as bucolic and nostalgic places. The wilderness role is about viewing nature as opposite to culture – that is, human-made – and it implies the importance of minimising human presence (e.g. farms in the Alps) in the protection of the natural (Egberts & Riesto, 2021). Digital technologies remediate these perceptions of landscapes for online visitors as well as people who experience them while walking or mountaineering (Jacobs et al., 2019); or, as Stinson (2017, p. 174) puts it: 'in this new era of virtual nature, outdoor recreation occurs as much in the statusphere and blogosphere as it does in the biosphere'. While there are tourism studies that mention the AHD in relation to heritage or landscape (e.g. Egberts & Melgers, 2018; Ross & Saxena, 2019; van Deursen & Raaphorst, 2014; Watson, 2013), a research gap has been identified concerning whether and how this discourse is reproduced online, and whether alternative narratives are constructed and shared by travellers.

Methodology

The case of the Swiss Alps

To identify the main narratives about Alpine tourism and landscape heritage in travel blogs, this study takes the case of the Swiss Alps, which cover two thirds of Switzerland (Figure 1). The Swiss Alps are characterised by a rich ecosystem and a surface dedicated to agriculture (including summer pasture), which varies depending on the canton (Bergier, 2013).

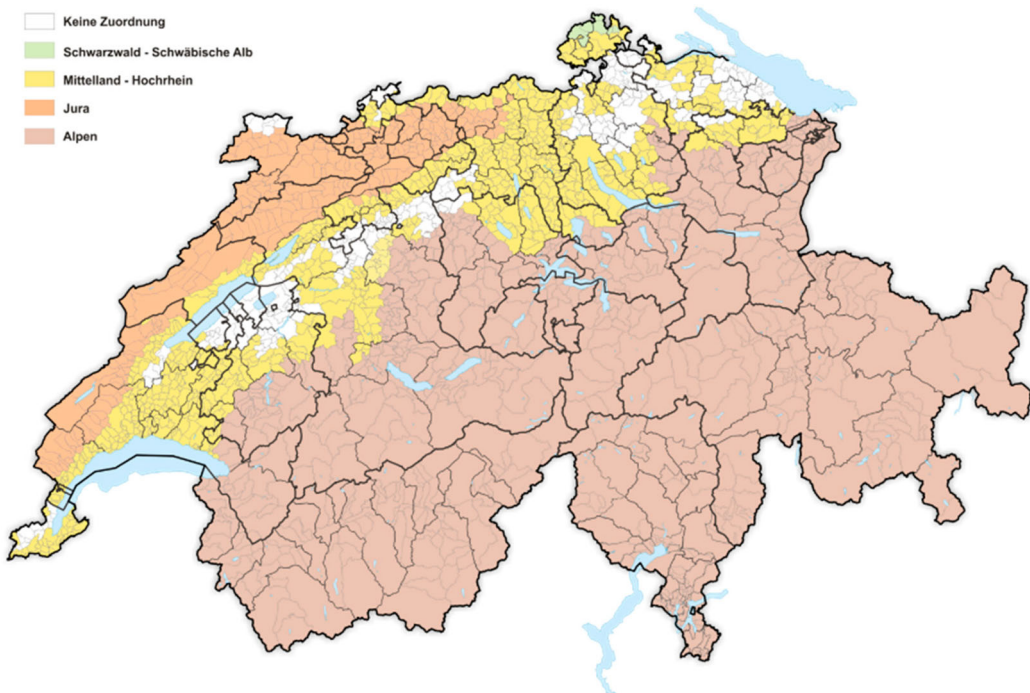


Figure 1. Von Tschubby (2022). Swiss mountain area regions. Retrieved from <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=113479738>.

Mountainous areas represent the most important attractions in Switzerland. During the summer, hikers are attracted to Alpine peaks and glaciers, while during winter, tourists experience snow-related sports, like skiing. Yet, Swiss authorities report that climate change has negatively affected winter activities. These changes have brought attention to the importance of preserving landscapes as well as promoting responsible and sustainable tourism, which represents the main source of income in almost all Swiss mountain regions (Confédération suisse, 2017).

Thematic analysis

To identify the main narratives concerning Alpine tourism and landscape, we conducted a qualitative thematic analysis of blog posts written by travellers who visited the Swiss Alps. Thematic analysis is a data reduction and investigation strategy by which content is categorised, resummed, and reported in a way that conveys the most important concepts within the sample. Differently from coding categories that precede a quantitative content analysis, these themes contain a rich internal structure made of narratives, beliefs, or arguments. Furthermore, a thematic analysis retains the connection between categories and their original context, minimising the phenomenon of decontextualization that occurs through coding (Maxwell & Chmiel, 2014). As a qualitative method, thematic analysis allows researchers to capture how people view and interpret their experiences by identifying themes in data (Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016). This inductive method had been already employed in previous tourism research, like the study by Martin and Ren (2020), who used it to identify the main themes and narratives about Greenland expressed by Chinese adventure tourists in their online blogs. Consequently, thematic content analysis was considered suitable to identify and group narratives, as well as capture their relation to the AHD or alternative discourses.

Blog posts selection and data collection

Travel blogs can be defined as an ‘important form of digitised word-of-mouth communication’ (Pan et al., 2007, p. 36) that consists of frequently updated, reverse-chronological website entries (posts) including textual content, images, and videos. Travellers use this channel as an online diary or journal to narrate about themselves and their tourism experience (Lee & Gretzel, 2014). Travel blogs can use popular social networks, like Pinterest, to reach a broad audience and gain page traffic (Madriz & Tejedor, 2020).

Following our research objective, we established a set of criteria for blog entries selection. First, only blog posts that addressed Alpine tourism experiences in Switzerland were to be included in the dataset. Second, we selected blog posts written in Italian, French, and German, as these three are the most spoken languages in Switzerland – where domestic tourism has the highest number of overnight stays – as well as in priority tourism markets (Switzerland Tourism, 2020). Third, we only selected posts from blogs that appeared in the first result page of Google, using the following broad match queries (reported here in English): ‘blog Swiss Alps’ and ‘blog vacation Swiss Alps’. Blogs were exclusively selected from the first result page because Google ranks are an important indicator of content quality and click popularity (Pan, 2015). Finally, blogs written by tourism organisations and other companies were excluded because of the clear influence that their business goals would exert on published content. After having identified all suitable, high-ranking blog posts, we used the internal search engine of the blogs and their tags to find other posts about Alpine tourism in Switzerland (within the same blogs). Given the data-driven, qualitative nature of this study, we decided that the analysis of the newest 10 entries per blog could be sufficient to reach the saturation of themes (categories).

Data collection started in September 2021. Using these criteria, we were at first able to identify a total of 19 blogs. Yet, following a study by Krisjanous (2016), who analysed discourses in dark tourism using a sample of 25 websites, we decided to increase our pool of travel blogs by searching for

them on the popular social network Pinterest (Gretzel, 2021). This led to a total of 29 suitable blogs with entries addressing Alpine tourism in Switzerland. After selecting a maximum of 10 entries per blog, we obtained a final sample of 158 blog posts ($M = 5.41$, $SD = 3.21$), which represented our unit of analysis (Appendix, Table A1). The time range covered by the sampled blog posts went from 2021 back to 2012. The total sample size was considered satisfactory for two reasons. First, sample size was larger than what was used in similar qualitative research about tourism themes and narratives (Martin & Ren, 2020), which we took as reference. Second, category saturation was reached after analysing approximately 30% of the sample. The rest of the dataset provided additional examples of narratives used by travel bloggers.

Two coders analysed the final sample according to their respective language proficiency: one researcher analysed content from the blog posts in Italian ($n = 18$) and French ($n = 64$), while the other analysed those in German ($n = 76$). The identification of themes went through five stages, which were adapted from those developed by Braun and Clarke (2013) for thematic analysis of interview data. First, the two coders immersed themselves in travel blog content, to familiarise with it and take notes on potential categories – also with respect to the literature on mountain tourism, landscape, and the AHD. Second, an initial list of codes was identified manually (e.g. a picture showing a Swiss train was coded as ‘transportation means’). These were not yet themes; instead, they served to organise data in meaningful units, which were then grouped into broader themes during the third stage. For example, textual and visual content highlighting or discussing elements like price accessibility, bridges, and transportation means were grouped under the theme ‘Accessible Mountains’. Finally, after reviewing the themes (stage four), which emerged from the inductive analysis of travel blog posts, a discussion was done between the coders to define and name them, during stage five. The sixth and last stage consisted in reporting the themes that emerged from the analysed blog posts, reflecting on their relationship with the AHD.

As thematic analysis is a qualitative method, we adopted specific strategies to increase result credibility and transferability, which correspond to the quantitative research criteria of internal and external validity (Riger & Sigurvinsdottir, 2016). More precisely, following Denzin (2014), we aimed at increasing credibility, first, by triangulating themes with the literature and industry reports or travel guides from tourism providers. Second, we performed persistent observation by going beyond the sample required for category (theme) saturation and analysing all the sampled blog posts. Finally, to improve findings transferability, we wrote thick descriptions to report and interpret identified themes. As stated by Guba (1981), providing adequate information about the research context can help readers understand the degree of similarity (fittingness) between the analysed case and other research contexts, to which the research could be linked.

Findings

Following the stages of thematic analysis reported by Braun and Clarke (2013), what follows is the presentation and interpretation of the six themes identified through the qualitative analysis of travel blog content. The possible presence of dominant – referring to AHD – and alternative discourses in the identified themes is identified in Table 1.

Accessible mountains

This theme refers to multimedia content highlighting information accessibility in Alpine areas, as well as price and physical accessibility, including the transportation system. In addition to providing indications about Swiss national languages – that is, French, German, Italian, and Romansch – bloggers often referred to the usefulness and omnipresence of signposts along mountain paths, which provided directions for points of interest and distance in time. These were reported not only using textual content, but also photographs with foreground shots of signposts (in a close-up) showing the Alpine landscape in the background.

Table 1. Resume of dominant and alternative discourses in identified themes about Alpine tourism.

| | Dominant discourses ^a | Alternative discourses |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Accessible Mountains | Accessible and cinematic landscape to be observed during a train ride. | |
| Captured Landscapes | Romantic representations of the Alps, where people are absent. | |
| Isolated Land | Alpine areas perceived as small, isolated locations that are out of time. | |
| Healing Place | Alpine locations as places for healing. | |
| Cultural Discovery | | Everyday life in the Alps, interaction with locals and discovery of local culture(s). |
| Natural Heritage | | Human impact on the Alpine environment and ecotourism for local communities. |

^aCells are left empty when no dominant or alternative discourse is found in the identified theme.

Within the present research context, this theme exemplifies the perceived accessibility of Alpine areas, which have changed from something ‘monstrous’ and inaccessible (Kaufmann & Zimmer, 1998) to an appealing tourist attraction with roads and other facilities (Allan, 1986). In this regard, Allan (1986) explains that while physical barriers have been removed by technology, it is rather lowlanders (not technology) that have been preserving the mountain landscape, as a treasure that needs to be ‘revered by humans’ (p. 187) and passed on to future generations; a set of values that originates largely from Rousseau and the later Romanticists. Furthermore, the ‘Accessible Mountains’ theme contains reference to Adams and Jansson’s (2012) destination textures, represented by the captured signposts that shape the experience of mountain tourists in Switzerland.

For what concerns price accessibility, some bloggers mentioned the relatively high costs of travelling in Switzerland. These opinions were often matched with counterarguments describing landscape beauty, the renowned Swiss transportation efficiency and the availability of free activities, like hiking. We report here an extract concerning price accessibility:

Personal opinion: the train in Switzerland is expensive (very expensive) but it is really a great way to travel! Overall trains and buses are punctual (we are not Swiss for nothing after all). And frankly there are journeys that are simply magical in terms of points of view [...]. (Fabienne & Benoit, 2023a. Translated from French)

The train ride as a destination appears to be a significant feature in travel blogs, which taps into the tradition of exploring the Swiss Alps by rail, as the early Baedeker (1863) guides indicate. Experiencing the mountainous landscape through train windows makes this vehicle the frame of the panorama. In mobility studies, trains are recognised to then function as a cinematic experience of the landscape, in which the trains playfully interact with the locations they halt at (Roy & Hanam, 2013). Moreover, the train itself functions as a landscape asset:

Make sure you have a seat on the left in the direction of travel and watch out that you do not press your nose flat to the window for the next forty minutes. The vistas in the Trient gorge as well as the panorama on the Mont Blanc Massif is namely a class of its own. (Anita, 2021. Translated from German)

Captured landscapes

Drawing from the concept of ‘tourist gaze’ (Urry & Larsen, 2011), the ‘Captured Landscapes’ theme refers to blog content that applies cultural frames to the Alpine landscape and objectifies it through postcard-like visuals – *captured* through a camera – with descriptions highlighting its out-of-time characteristics. In this sense, the thematic analysis highlighted the semiotic activity of bloggers, who were searching for signs that would represent the ‘Swiss essence’ or ‘Swissness’. We found that the latter was largely identified in the Alpine landscape, which historically played a major role in providing a symbol for the national identity of Switzerland (Zimmer, 1998).

Confirming Urry and Larsen's (2011) argument about the *absence* of people from photographed landscapes, freestanding mountain huts were the only reference to human intervention in these pictures. In the text, bloggers appeared to value this repertoire of images for their picturesque and pastoral characteristics. Indeed, they often quoted how these pictures seemed to come directly from a guidebook or resemble the famous postcard images of Switzerland – thus reproducing the popular discourses about the Alps and Alpine landscape that constitute the AHD:

On windless days the Piz Beverin is reflected in the wonderfully beautiful Pacumin Lake: a real postcard theme!. (Anke, 2017. Translated from German)

Through the content analysis we observed that landscape pictures were often the most prominent ones inside blog posts – as they were positioned in the top-half of the page. This finding goes in accordance with Urry and Larsen (2011), who stated that landscapes acquired an out-of-the-ordinary characteristic in tourists' minds, attracting their gaze. The subject of landscape pictures included the iconic Matterhorn, valleys with wooden huts and churches, lakes with mountains in the background, and glaciers. It was observed that most of these pictures were characterised by the *absence* of people and signs of modernity, portraying Switzerland as an idyllic, uncontaminated place. These representations – namely, spaces in communication (Kaufmann & Zimmer, 1998) – corresponded to the idyllic beauty of the Swiss Alpine landscape promoted by Swiss authorities on their website (Confédération suisse, 2017). What follows is an extract highlighting the idyllic, fairy-tale qualities of Switzerland:

There is hardly a speck of earth in Switzerland that would not lend itself as a fantastic holiday destination. Wherever one looks, everywhere the fairy-tale beautiful valleys, towering hills, and majestic alpine peaks, mesmerizingly, gracefully glistening lakes, wide rivers and splashing creeks alternate in the landscape. (Biggi & Flo, 2022. Translated from German)

This finding goes in accordance with the concept of tourism photography 'time machine', which freezes landscapes in a chocolate-box view (Waite & Head, 2002) where there is no room for contemporary-looking humans and modernity (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Furthermore, we observed that when the blogger was portrayed in the landscape picture, there was often a reproduction of the 'promontory witness' motif (Figure 2), which showed a 'small and indomitable figure standing fearless against the epic scale of nature' (Smith, 2018, p. 180). As reported by Smith (2018), this iconicity is shown in paintings by Romantics, like Caspar David Friedrich's 'Wonderer above the Sea of Fog' (Figure 3), in which a lonesome man gazes over misty mountain tops, seemingly dominating the landscape as well as being diminished by it (Gaddis, 2004).

Additional salient content pertaining to the 'Captured Landscapes' theme included frequent photographs of cows and signposts as symbolic elements of the Alpine landscape, and ad-hoc sections in which bloggers provided textual indications on where to stop to take pictures. These suggestions arguably fall within 'the circle of representation' of a tourism destination elaborated by Jenkins (2003), where bloggers (as destination ambassadors) project a specific image of a place through photographs, which may in turn inspire travellers to go there and take similar pictures to be then shared among their friends and relatives as proof of visit. Afterwards, these people may reproduce those pictures themselves and influence the perceived image held by other prospective travellers, thus perpetuating the circle of representation.

The qualitative analysis of textual content also revealed bloggers' interest in the colour blue, especially for what concerns lakes and rivers, making it an important and expected component of the Swiss idyllic landscape. In this regard, in the Western world this colour symbolises a summer imaginary comprising feelings of excitement and escape from the dull everyday life (Cordeiro, 2015), which could have been arguably transposed to this Alpine context:

These little lakes are clearly not as well-known as Lake Cauma or Cresta, but frankly they do not have much to envy them. The colour of the water is a little less 'blue' (can you say this??? Ahah) but on the other hand the setting is simply idyllic. (Fabienne & Benoit, 2023b. Translated from French)



Figure 2. Margot & Julien (2020). Grindelwald. Switzerland. Retrieved from <https://hellotravelersblog.com/12-lieux-incontournables-en-suisse/>

Isolated land

Making a direct reference to the concept of ‘islandness’ (Baldacchino, 2018), in this theme we categorised content that described Alpine tourism as an adventurous activity as well as an opportunity to escape to a relatively small and isolated location, characterised by a world of its own. Indeed, the term ‘islandness’ refers to ‘the emergent distinctiveness or essence of islands’ (Baldacchino, 2018, p. xxv), which – in a metaphorical sense – does not need to refer exclusively to locations surrounded by water; instead, people can experience ‘islandness’ in locations that are bounded by a natural element, like mountains. In the experience reported by bloggers, we identified all ‘islandness’ attributes described by Baldacchino (2018), which were boundedness, isolation, smallness, fragmentation, and amplification by compression.

Indeed, travel blog content described Alpine areas as a world on their own – which is what ‘amplification by compression’ expresses, in brief – and an isolated location for travellers that wanted to escape the artificiality and confusion of modern civilisation (Richins et al., 2016), experiencing nature, personal relationships and development (Pfister, 2000). Indeed, dominant narratives depicted Alpine locations as remote and magical places:

Here it is not about breaking hiking records or to ‘collect’ mountain tops or tourist sights. It is about enjoying nature, letting your mind wander and recharging your batteries far away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. (Jana, 2021. Translated from German)

A short descent will take you to the heart of the village, where you will find something to warm up and eat [...] while admiring the famous Lac de Tanay, a real heaven of peace. The trees showing their beautiful autumn colours make this place truly magical!. (Boulby73, 2020. Translated from French)



Figure 3. Friederich, C., D. (1818). Wanderer above the Sea of Fog. Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg. Retrieved from <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1020146>.

The feeling of isolation and remoteness expressed by bloggers can arguably relate to the perception of Switzerland as a landlocked island, a place where people can go to distance themselves from the outside world (Bewes, 2012). Thus, the island as a narrative scene stands opposite to the outside, over-civilized world, and describes a fresh, untouched realm for visitors to explore, just like ‘The Swiss Family Robinson’ (1812) that lands on a deserted island after a shipwreck (Vandermeersche & Soetaert, 2012). Examples of bloggers’ view of the Swiss Alpine areas as isolated and primordial areas were found in textual entries like these:

Do not miss the quiet walk to the Creux de Champs, an hour from the village [*Les Diablerets*] and another waterfall from another era ... we would feel like in the Jurassic!. (Bestjobsblog, 2015. Translated from French)

Our guide [...] lit a wood fire and prepared an excellent dinner from local products. It was excellent and we really had the feeling of being isolated, cut off from the world, for an evening. (Amoureux du Monde, 2019. Translated from French)

Other multimedia content that we categorised in the ‘Isolated Land’ theme included narratives that referred to the attributes of boundedness, smallness, and fragmentation. Boundedness is arguably the most important attribute for an ‘island’ experience, and it refers to the encirclement of a location by a natural medium, like mountains or water (Baldacchino, 2018). As shown in the example below, our thematic analysis revealed that this characteristic had an effect on travellers’ experience, who felt both fear and fascination when gazing on locations bounded by mountains; a combination of feelings that can occur when confronting a sublime landscape (Thorgeirsdottir, 2010):

The village is located in the heart of an absolutely incredible valley, sculpted by glaciers over the centuries. On both sides, Lauterbrunnen is surrounded by huge rock walls that give off a strange feeling, between fear and fascination. (Margot & Julien, 2020. Translated from French)

Finally, we found narratives that referred to the attributes of smallness and fragmentation – meant here as the characteristic of having *distinct parts*. More precisely, bloggers referred to the possibility of exploring distinct cultures and natural landscapes, all to be witnessed in a relatively small country.

Healing place

Alpine tourism and the pursuit of wellness share an inseparable history in Switzerland, as people seeking good air and healing from lung diseases also developed interests in mountaineering in the nineteenth century (Barton, 2008). It is therefore not surprising that this was the most common content that was encountered during the analysis of the sampled blogs across the three languages. We coded multimedia content that described a plethora of mountain activities, such as hiking, climbing, skiing, snowboarding, and experiences in Alpine wellness centres with natural springs. It appeared that while blog posts in German tended to focus on hiking, those written in French and Italian appeared to pay more attention to paragliding as an adventurous way of exploring the Alpine landscape. All the seasons and related activities were reported in the sampled blog posts, suggesting an all-year-round attractiveness of Swiss Alpine destinations for those interested in sports and wellness. Physical activities in the mountains were described in combination with feelings of excitement and self-reliance – in the case of extreme sports, for example – or personal health. These activities represented an opportunity to exercise and re-energise, while enjoying a vacation far from tourists and COVID-19-related risks:

Are you looking for a place to escape from the entire COVID chaos? What about the Advent trail in Sirmach? Walk for an hour through the wonderful forest and leave the everyday life behind. The forest is the ideal place to forget the crazy times and psychological pressure for a moment. (Reni, 2020. Translated from German)

These findings reflected what was reported by Seraphin and Dosquet (2020) on the attractiveness of mountain areas as a post-COVID-19 placebo, with tourists seeking good quality air and well-being in Alpine destinations after a period of lockdown. Even though this pandemic was new, Switzerland's image as a place of respiratory healing and adventure was reinforced and updated in the context of a new, worldwide pandemic.

Cultural discovery

Cultural encounters often recur in the blogs we studied. Authors narrate their experiences with heritage attractions, festivals, and gastronomy in Swiss Alpine areas. Expressed by visuals and textual content, cultural encounters were mainly found in blog posts written in French and Italian, while they were almost entirely absent in those written in German. For what concerns gastronomy, this finding could suggest a stronger interest for culinary experiences in French – and Italian-speaking audiences. In this regard, for example, France and Italy are the top two countries in the world for time spent eating and drinking daily (Statista, 2020). The influence of these bordering countries (France and Italy) on Switzerland (Presenza Svizzera, 2020) could be a reason for what we observed in the content analysis of blog posts written by both Swiss and international visitors. For what concerns blog posts written in German, we could speculate that the high popularity of hiking among Germans (Winter, 2018) was reflected in the sampled blog entries for the German-speaking audience, overshadowing other aspects of Alpine travel.

For what concerns gastronomy, bloggers often reported micro-stories concerning local dishes and food production (e.g. raclette and gruyere making), culinary events and traditions, and meaningful interactions with locals:

We arrive soon at the Gîte de l'Alpage de Dorbon [...] where a fire, a good tea and a homemade cake [...]. We are very well welcomed by the host couple, and we discuss life in the mountain pasture with them. [...] I notice a Breton flag, then a box of biscuits with a Henriot motif (the pottery maker in Quimper [*in Bretagne*]), then pancakes and galettes on the menu ... Surprising in the middle of the Swiss mountains. Obviously, there is an explanation: Géraldine is from Nantes. We definitely find Bretons everywhere!. (Laurène, 2023. Translated from French)

We find a place to camp, and we ask the farmer [...] if it bothers him that we set up our tent near his home. The farmer is extremely nice [...]. After having explained everything to us about his cows, he tells us that he doesn't mind at all if we pitch our tent by the lake. He also sells us a piece of Alpine cheese at the local price (Fabienne's Swiss German really helped us here 😊). (Fabienne & Benoit, 2020. Translated from French)

Presenting an example of alternative narratives, these extracts arguably showed the willingness of travel bloggers to go beyond the aesthetics and monumentality of Alpine locations to learn more about locals' everyday life in the Swiss Alps, even making connections between their own cultural background and that of the hosts (like in the case of the Bretons). Using the Swiss Alps to 'talk about other things', like everyday life in the mountain pasture, was described Ross and Saxena (2019, p. 10) as a way to consolidate alternative counter-discourses about heritage, running in parallel with the AHD. Narratives referring to the Swiss culture included information about the four national languages (Italian, French, German, and Romansch), natural and tangible heritage, UNESCO sites (e.g. Landwasser Viaduct), as well as cultural events involving the descent of the herds from the Alps and cow fights:

We surprise two Herens cows in the middle of a fight. These cows from Valais have the particularity of fighting naturally to determine the hierarchy of the herd. [...] Cow fights are organised in Valais, but seeing one in the middle of nature shows that this is only natural behaviour for this breed of cow. Interesting!. (Laurène, 2023. Translated from French)

The descent of the herds from the Alpine pastures, in French 'desalpage' becomes an occasion for a late summer event in some places like 'Etivaz'. The cows are dressed and decorated, and once in the valley they parade through the town streets welcomed by the population. (Luca, 2021. Translated from Italian)

During the qualitative analysis we could also observe that blog posts written in German contained fewer (specific) references to heritage in whatever form. Occasionally a World Heritage status was mentioned, or picturesque historic buildings were featured in images, but very little information was given – suggesting that these elements were perceived as a décor of the tourist experience:

And over the gorge appear small villages in front of the majestic high-alpine mountain scenery, like the mountain village Feldis. There is no better backdrop for switching off [...] your mobile phone, laptop and remote, and enjoy the simple life in and with the mountains. (Jana, 2021. Translated from German)

These findings differentiate the idea of the Swiss Alps as a 'transnational space' (Girardin, 2016), illustrating that culturally specific interests of visitors are mirrored in their representations of the landscapes they visit.

Natural heritage

The Swiss Alps have been romanticised for the ideal natural surroundings they offer since the emergence of tourism, which still echoes in today's dominant narratives (Barsham & Hitchcock, 2012). With growing tourism flows, the care for this natural heritage and its sustainability also grew. The blogs we studied represent these interests and concerns in the form of flora and fauna, farm animals, and discourses related to environmental, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability. While narratives related to the environment were common across the blog posts in the three languages, we found textual references to sustainability mostly in blog entries written in French and Italian, signalling a wider interest concerning Alpine tourism and landscape. For example, two bloggers

reported their experience of a cultural hike in Verbier, where they went for a photographic exposition on the marriage between art and ecology; an event that made them reflect on the human impact on the environment:

[*This is*] A route where you can reflect, while hiking, on the message sent by all these contemporary photos placed on either side of shelters. Reflection on the environment, ecology, technologies, and the impact of man on the planet in its broadest sense, while realizing even more how lucky we are to be in the middle of such a preserved [*Alpine*] landscape. (Franck et Richard, 2016. Translated from French)

We also found blog posts referring to the impact of tourism on local communities. For example, an Italian blogger suggested to his readers and prospective travellers to visit those Alpine villages that had not been transformed yet by mass tourism, keeping local traditions and infrastructure; whereas a blog post in French described the initiative of the Swiss municipality of Saint Martin to relaunch agritourism in an effort to revitalise local communities as well as incentivise the exchange between hosts and guests, while preserving Alpine heritage. Extracts concerning these aspects are reported here:

Just over 200 km from Turin [...] we get to [...] welcoming tourist resorts that have married modernity while remaining strongly anchored to the typical traditions of mountain villages. Indeed, these are 'living' villages [*in the Canton of Vaud*] where people from the region live, including farmers, where there are still old chalets and traditional houses. (Luca, 2020. Translated from Italian)

For a long time, this plateau [*Ossona*] was inhabited only by the elderly. [...] In the 1990s, the municipality of Saint Martin planned to relaunch an agricultural activity on the plateau, while respecting this exceptional [*Alpine*] heritage and promoting sustainable tourism. [...] The Ossona project, beyond its agrotourism character, aims at revitalising a territory, creating social ties, allowing the inhabitants of Saint Martin to reclaim this part of the municipality. (Laura, 2021b. Translated from French)

These two blog entries provided an example of the interest of travellers in tourism activities that support local communities, while providing an enjoyable experience to visitors who can truly engage with locals. According to Kolb (2017) an increasing number of travellers seeks experiences that connect them with local people and culture. As opposite, the scholar argues that mass tourism focuses exclusively on the destination offer, while disregarding meaningful contacts with locals – eventually harming the community in the area because of tourism flow congestions and uneven economic benefits.

In addition to blog entries reporting the possibility of combining environmental sustainability with comfort in Alpine hotels, our investigation revealed several bloggers expressing concerns regarding glacial melting because of climate change:

We can easily imagine the time when the Rhône Valley was just a glacial valley and above all, we feel very humbled in the face of this thousand-year-old ice that recedes each year, blackened by human activity and forced to retreat. In the photo, you can clearly see the demarcation between vegetal and mineral, which shows how far the glacier rose before [...]. (Audrey, 2016. Translated from French)

Shifting the focus from environmental sustainability to nature, one blogger reported her experience of a natural concert of sounds during what she described as a 'musical hike' with her family in the Swiss mountains:

We could not have dreamed better for a picnic break. The stream becomes an open-air musical instrument for [*my son*] Hélio. [...] This mineral and aquatic melody punctuates our lunch, made of local cold meat (the famous Valais plate) and cheese. I let myself be lulled gently by this atmosphere, warmed by sun rays. (Laura, 2021a. Translated from French)

To conclude, as in the theme 'Cultural Discovery', also in this case we identified narratives that went beyond the monumentality and aesthetics of the Swiss Alps, generating alternative discourses to the *visual-centred* AHD in favour of an *experiential* approach to Alpine heritage and culture. The use of Alpine landscape as a source of inspiration for narratives on sustainable tourism; the focus on intangible features, like the soundscape; and bloggers describing experiences with local

communities; these are all examples of a multiplicity of ways in which Alpine tourism can be experienced and communicated by tourists online.

Discussion and conclusion

Overall, research findings show that travel blog narratives about Alpine tourism and landscape heritage revolve around six themes: Accessible Mountains, Captured Landscapes, Isolated Land, Healing Place, Cultural Discovery, and Natural Heritage. The Swiss Alpine landscape – which includes the Matterhorn, for example – is described as unique by travel bloggers, and this search for uniqueness goes in accordance with what reported by Urry and Larsen (2011) on the object of the tourist gaze. Furthermore, results indicate the presence of narratives that draw from the AHD, with multimedia content expressing the search for symbols that would represent the ‘Swiss essence’ or ‘Swissness’ as well as a perception of the Alps as an out-of-time distant place. Research indicates that this idealised imaginary of Alpine areas, characterised by empty landscapes, the absence of people and time, is often conveyed through social media posts published by DMOs and visitors alike, who depict timeless environments meant for relaxation and escape (Biscardi, 2019, november). This circle of representation rewards the public measures taken to support the conservation of Alpine regions and landscape in Switzerland – where the Alps have acquired throughout the years an affective, national, aesthetic, and cultural value that almost detaches them from the actual territory (Debarbieux, 2013).

The identified interest of travel bloggers in the Swiss landscape is arguably a reflection of a broader tourist demand concerning nature and wilderness – an important resource for those who seek adventures, mental and physical experiences away from urbanised environments (Nash, 2001; Talbot, 1998). The fact that visitors direct their interest and romanticised gaze toward nature matters because the tourist industry can play an instrumental role in incentivising the preservation of the natural environment, which could be instead exploited and altered by the energy industry, for example (Karlsdóttir, 2013). Nonetheless, as argued by Karlsdóttir (2013), the destination experience and the natural environment can also be damaged if too many visitors start arriving attracted by a ‘picturesque landscape scenery’ (p. 147) and its accessibility.

The analysis also reveals the presence of counter-narratives where the purely visual and aesthetic aspects of the Alps and Alpine heritage are combined with experiential and multisensory elements, where an ‘exchange or mingling of meaning’ (Watson, 2013, p. 106) occurs between visitors and locals. In this case, travel bloggers also provide reflections on the human impact on the environment, and the role of sustainability to preserve Alpine heritage and support local communities. Within these narratives, we also find reference to cultural diversity and traditions as well as intangible aspects of Alpine heritage, like its soundscape. This can be defined as an ‘acoustic environment perceived or experienced and/or understood by a person or people’ (ISO, 2014). In this regard, destinations’ soundscapes have been identified by scholars as an important attractor that can enrich the tourism experience in combination with landscape (He et al., 2018).

The present study has three main theoretical implications. First, it contributes to the literature on visual consumption in tourism (Jansson, 2006), by identifying the interest that travel bloggers have for the photographic experience of the Swiss Alps and their aesthetic qualities. While this contributes to the visual commodification of landscape heritage, it is argued that the tourist imaginaries extracted from the sampled travel blogs – written in French, Italian, and German – reflect the (European) romantic imagination of Alpine destinations, as a space for meditation, relaxation as well as physically demanding outdoor activities. Therefore, drawing from Karlsdóttir (2013), we argue that these *representations* actively encourage a type of nature-based tourism that can incentivise the preservation of the unique landscape heritage in Switzerland, instead of promoting activities that signify more urban (and less sustainable) practices such as shopping and romantic spectacles – like in the case of Asian tourists with Bollywood imaginaries of Switzerland (Gyimóthy, 2018).

Second, our findings contribute to the broader literature on mountain tourism and nature tourism – of which the former is part – by identifying online themes and narratives about Alpine experiences and landscape. More precisely, this study extends previous research that focused on a single theme concerning landscapes (Sulaiman, 2016) or multiple themes related to health and wellness travel in the mountains (Hull, 2016). Our findings show that travel blogs about Alpine tourism aim at satisfying the ensemble of functional, social, aesthetic, and hedonic needs that drive information search in tourism (Vogt et al., 1994). This is achieved by communicating about Alpine tourism and landscape through one or multiple themes, as well as by giving space to the narration of the self through the expression of feelings and emotions.

Finally, the present findings extend the knowledge about AHD in tourism (e.g. Egberts & Melgers, 2018; Ross & Saxena, 2019; van Deursen & Raaphorst, 2014; Watson, 2013). Indeed, our study contributes to the analysis of AHD in mountain tourism and indicates the existence of counter-narratives that highlight the *experiential* and socio-cultural side of Alpine heritage. These co-exist with narratives that show the pursuit of those *representational* elements, like national symbols and aesthetics, that have been identified by scholars as important components of AHD (Smith, 2006; Watson, 2013). In this regard, our findings indicate that within the realm of online communication, these (counter-) discourses can originate from authorities, such as travel bloggers – who are perceived as experts in their field – as well as tourism organisations, travel guidebooks, or even novels (as in the case of ‘the Swiss Family Robinson’), and then be replicated via the tourist gaze (Urry & Larsen, 2011) within the circle of representation of a tourism destination (Jenkins, 2003). Therefore, the present findings extend previous research on AHD in tourism by showing that web 2.0 platforms, like travel blogs, can facilitate the creation of counter-narratives that run in parallel with those developed by official communication sources.

The present study has multiple managerial implications. First, while the visual experience of the picturesque Swiss landscape, depicted as a place for isolation and adventure, can directly or indirectly incentivise the preservation of the natural environment – as in the case of Iceland (Karlisdóttir, 2013) – destinations managers should also consider promoting Alpine locations as spaces for cultural encounters, thus embracing both visitor preferences and the local community (Gyimóthy, 2018). Second, analysed blog posts promoted experiences for all the seasons, confirming the argument of Klimek and Doctor (2018) on the importance of marketing Alpine regions beyond winter-only activities. Consequently, following our findings, we suggest tourism marketers publish content on social media and on their destination website to promote experiences for every season, from skiing to gastronomic and cultural festivals, hiking, and wellness. Given the interest of visitors in these experiences in mountain regions (Richins et al., 2016), we argue that Alpine destinations should actively listen to what travellers publish online and re-post or re-use their content within a perspective of experience co-creation. Second, in addition to providing information about Alpine points of interest in terms of their aesthetics, Alpine destination marketers should also integrate narrative content describing their socio-cultural and natural value. This type of content can be provided both in social media post captions and directly on site (e.g. temporary open-air expositions). Indeed, knowing more about a destination can increase travellers’ satisfaction and stimulate their imaginary about the place (Vogt et al., 1994). Finally, we suggest to tourism marketers in Alpine areas to include travel blog content in their destination website. This choice would leave room for a multiplicity of narratives that arguably reflect the diversity of the tourism experience, in the pursuit of both representational (visual) and experiential aspects of Alpine heritage.

This qualitative study has its limitations. First, sampled blogs about Alpine tourism in Switzerland were exclusively retrieved from the first-page results of Google and Pinterest. This choice might have introduced a selection bias for what concerns the identified themes and narratives. Yet, our findings matched and extended the nature-based interests and experiences in mountain settings identified by Richins et al. (2016). Second, the samples were found by using only German, French and Italian websites, which almost entirely excluded non-European perspectives on the Alps. Thirdly, the thematic content analysis was undertaken only by researchers from various

European backgrounds, thus narrowing the cultural perspective on the analysed content even further. Indeed, while an extensive number of resources from different countries were consulted to conduct the thematic analysis, a cultural bias might have still been introduced. In addition to addressing these limitations, future research could take a quantitative approach to investigate Alpine tourism themes by performing an analysis of social media content using machine learning. This analysis could use the themes identified in our study. Finally, to extend this and previous research about mountain tourism (Giachino et al., 2019), a future study could perform a quantitative analysis of online travel reviews to identify the relative importance of push and pull factors that lead tourists to visit Alpine areas.

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Appendix

Table A1. Sampled blogs and blog posts.

| Blog language | Blog URL | Number of posts |
|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| Italian | svizzeraunica.it | 9 |
| | luoghidavedere.it | 4 |
| | direzioneaeroporto.com | 4 |
| French | guide-goyav.com | 10 |
| | carnetdescapades.com | 6 |
| | hellotravelersblog.com | 3 |
| | novo-monde.com | 10 |
| | okvoyage.com | 1 |
| | amoureux-du-monde.com | 4 |
| | bestjobersblog.com | 10 |
| | arpenterlechemin.com | 2 |
| | lesglobeblogueurs.com | 3 |
| | onedayonetravel.com | 10 |
| | amoureuxvoyageux.com | 1 |
| madame-oreille.com | 4 | |

(Continued)

Table A1. Continued.

| Blog language | Blog URL | Number of posts |
|---------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| German | swissnomads.ch | 10 |
| | ueber-die-alpen.com | 1 |
| | sonne-wolken.de | 6 |
| | viel-unterwegs.de | 2 |
| | phototravellers.de | 3 |
| | moosearoundtheworld.de | 8 |
| | turnagain.de | 7 |
| | earlyhaver.com | 2 |
| | littlecity.ch | 4 |
| | wetraveltheworld.de | 7 |
| | steffistraumzeit.de | 2 |
| | ourswissexperience.com | 7 |
| | miriweber.ch | 10 |
| | travelita.ch | 7 |