




Navigating the blue: Storytelling, poetics, and rhetoric in oceanic advertising


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Abstract

This paper explores the application of poetic rhetoric in sustainable tourism advertising and its profound impact on shaping perceptions and behaviors towards sustainability. By integrating classical rhetorical techniques with modern storytelling methods, advertisements can effectively promote ethical and sustainable practices. The advertisement “It’s not tourism. It’s futurism.” employs poetic and rhetorical elements to create a narrative that is visually striking and emotionally resonant. Ethos is established through connections with cultural traditions and images, pathos appeals to feelings of hope and responsibility, and logos presents rational arguments for adopting futurism as a new sustainable approach.

The discussion includes references to Jacques Cousteau’s visual narratives and Henry David Thoreau’s philosophical perspectives, enriching the approach to environmental communication. Cousteau’s films, such as “The Silent World” (1956) and “The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau” (1968-1976), use storytelling to evoke a sense of wonder and responsibility towards marine life. Thoreau’s “Walden” (1854) emphasizes introspection and a deep connection with nature, advocating for a more conscious and sustainable way of life.

Furthermore, the analysis of digital narrative in advertisements, particularly in the context of the Atlantic Ocean, underscores the importance of protecting marine resources for local and global economies. The narrative approach in advertising not only attracts tourists but also educates them about the significance of ocean conservation, ensuring a sustainable future for all.

The interdisciplinary approach combining literary theory, rhetoric, and advertising provides a comprehensive perspective on crafting effective narratives for environmental communication. As digital platforms continue to evolve, the integration of storytelling techniques in advertising will play a crucial role in advancing environmental communication and promoting a sustainable future.

Keywords: Environmental Communication; Ethical Alterity; Ocean Conservation; Poetic and Rhetoric; Storytelling.

“Ó mar salgado, quanto do teu sal/ São lágrimas de Portugal”

(“O salty sea, how much of your salt / Are tears of Portugal”)

Álvaro de Campos/Fernando Pessoa, in *Ode Marítima* (1997, p. 34)

1. Introduction

Language and narrative play fundamental roles in our understanding of the world and in shaping our identity. They are more than mere means of communication; they are essential components in the construction of meaning and in forming our perceptions of complex issues such as climate change and ocean sustainability. In the contemporary environmental context, narratives help elucidate and respond to ecological uncertainties, offering new perspectives on the impact of human actions on the environment and suggesting strategies to address these challenges. Adopting a qualitative, interpretative approach, this research, grounded in the articulation between critical discourse analysis, semiotic analysis, and narrative studies in advertising aims to



understand how the advertisement “*It’s not tourism. It’s futurism,*” promoted by Turismo de Portugal, constructs meaning and mobilizes affect around sustainable practices and ethical-environmental narratives.

Discourse analysis is approached from a Foucauldian perspective (Foucault, 1971), focusing on the relationship between knowledge, power, and the production of truths. It is complemented by insights from critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 2008), which enables the examination of how advertising discourses operate ideologically by establishing normative representations of the “good tourist” and the “sustainable future.”

Semiotic analysis is structured around the theories of Roland Barthes (1964, 1977) and Umberto Eco (1976), allowing for the interpretation of visual and textual signs involved in the symbolic construction of the campaign. Key concepts such as denotation, connotation, myth, and open reading are explored in conjunction with the theory of visual signs (Floch, 1990) and the view of advertising imagery as a vector of ideology (Williamson, 1978). The study also incorporates tools from narrative studies (Todorov, 1971; Ricœur, 1983; Escalas, 2004) to examine the dramatic structure of the piece, its discursive archetypes, and the way it articulates ecological time (future and responsibility) with aesthetic emotion. This approach highlights how advertising functions as a site for the production of meaning and ethical engagement with the natural world (Lazar, 2005; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006).

A model of methodological triangulation was chosen, in which each approach (discourse, semiotics, narrative) contributes to a dense reading of the campaign. The analysis also considers the specificity of the digital medium and the role of the viewer as a co-author in the construction of meaning (Jenkins, 2006; Ryan, 2007).

So being, this article explores how engaging with narratives and their interpretation can train the public to accept and embrace ecological uncertainty as a central dimension of the current experience. The importance of narrative is discussed here with a focus on the construction of personal and collective identity, as well as social and cultural values, particularly in how digital narratives employ rhetoric and poetics to enhance advertising storytelling. The aim is to illustrate how advertising can foster greater empathy and collective awareness. This approach incorporates the concepts of Alexander von Humboldt, advocating a holistic view of the universe and emphasizing the interconnection of all elements—a perspective particularly relevant for sustainable tourism in the outermost regions of the European Union. These regions, notably vulnerable to the dynamics of tourism exploitation, require an approach that promotes sustainability and environmental awareness. In this context, we will draw on narrative texts (*Ode Marítima* (1915) by Álvaro de Campos/F. Pessoa, *Walden* (1854) by H. Thoreau, *Journey to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent* (1814) by A. Humboldt) and two audiovisual texts, one a documentary film (*The Silent World* by Jacques Cousteau (1956)) and the other an advertisement (*It’s not tourism. It’s futurism.* (2023)), from which we will conduct a detailed analysis, evaluating their effectiveness in promoting ocean sustainability through the creation of an authentic narrative. This analysis is guided by Aristotle’s rhetorical principles and the concepts of greenwashing and colorwashing discussed by John Elkington. The article aims to demonstrate how digital narrative can avoid deceptive practices and foster greater environmental awareness and responsibility, particularly oceanic, considered from the perspective of Portuguese maritime identity.

2. Language and Identity

2.1. I versus Thou, Becoming We

How can I conjure images in the mind of another? How can I evoke the past or project the future? Or, how can I compel others to do so? Is it sufficient merely to emit sounds? Chomsky posits that human language relies on a specific cerebral module that serves as the locus of generative grammar¹ (2002, p. 14). Accordingly, language would be inconceivable without the cognitive faculties localized in Broca’s and Wernicke’s areas². Conversely, Pinker (2008) contends that language is an instinct genetically encoded and activated through learning, akin to

¹ Universal generative grammar constitutes an underlying structure common to all human languages, signifying an innate, pre-programmed knowledge of fundamental linguistic structures.” (Chomsky, 2002, p. 27)

² Regions situated within the left hemisphere of the brain” (Chomsky, 2002, p. 27).



other human cognitive and motor functions. While language is inherently genetic, individual languages are cultural artifacts that express and are expressed through symbols of identity and recognition.

Language articulates and constructs subjectivity through the use of the pronoun “I,” which delineates the distinction between the individual (the subject) and “thou” (not-I), thus generating a sense of identity (Benveniste, 1958, p. 253). Lacan asserts that entry into the symbolic order of language is crucial for the formation of the subject (and subjectivity), shaping perception and comprehension of the world (Lacan, 2002, p. 13). Thus, language is defined by the capacity to name. As an intrinsic element of human nature, language is not merely an instrument in the broad sense but is integral to human nature itself—we cannot conceive of humanity preceding language any more than we can envisage humanity inventing language at a discrete moment in time (Benveniste, 1958, p. 254).

Language is indispensable in the constitution of both personal and social identity, perpetually shaping personal and collective narratives. That is, personal narratives, embedded within broader cultural frameworks, illustrate how language forges the connection between the individual and the collective, establishing itself as essential for understanding identity and constructing social cohesion.

2.2. Language and Narrative

Derived from the Latin *narrare* (to know), the term “narrative” invokes the concept of sharing (Meadows, 2003, p. 190). We share narratives to transmit culture, values, information, and knowledge across generations. In this manner, language emerges as a social and cultural construct; thus, we engage in the exchange of narratives as a means of seeking and ascribing meaning to our existence (Eco, 1974). Narratives act as conduits for meaning and emotion, enabling the profound and nuanced articulation and comprehension of human emotions, thereby intertwining individual experience with the collective and cultural (Nussbaum, 2001, p. 5). Aristotle characterized narrative as a sequence of actions conveyed through various mediums such as literature or theatre (Aristotle, 1997, 1450a) and, in contemporary times, through digital media. Michael Polanyi introduced the concept of tacit knowledge, frequently conveyed through narratives, which encapsulates experiences and practices not easily rendered through technical or scientific descriptions (Polanyi, 1966, p. 4).

3. Oceanic Identity: We in the Midst of the Atlantic

In Ode Marítima, Fernando Pessoa exalts the grandeur and adventurous spirit of the Portuguese navigators, encapsulating Portugal’s profound connection to the sea—a bond that not only reflects the nation’s identity but now also calls for the integration of environmental responsibility. Portugal’s history is inextricably linked to the oceans, from the early explorers to contemporary sustainability initiatives. While Prince Henry the Navigator was instrumental in initiating the Age of Discovery, promoting expansion into the Atlantic alongside the exploration of the African coast, thereby establishing Portugal as a global maritime power (Marques, 1976, p. 112), this was achieved from a strategically significant geographical position, with Cape Roca, the westernmost point of Europe, playing a crucial role in maritime explorations, allowing Portuguese navigators to open new sea routes and expand global trade (Rosas, 2010, p. 45). The maritime adventure was not merely territorial expansion but also cultural expansion, introducing new influences and a global perspective that continues to define Portugal today (Cidade, 1983, p. 78). This paradigm-shifting philosophy must now center on fostering a culture of ocean sustainability driven by environmental consciousness.

Portugal possesses a natural vocation to lead in the defense of the oceans, particularly in the Atlantic. Just as it was once our mission to explore and safeguard the seas, it is now our responsibility to ensure that the vast resources of our Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) are utilized sustainably and ethically, thereby honoring the legacy of our navigators and ensuring the preservation of marine ecosystems for future generations, with a particular emphasis on recognizing the importance of the outermost regions³.

³ Outermost Regions and Sustainability



4. Advertising in Environmental Communication: The Role of Narrative in Promoting Oceanic Sustainability

4.1. Narrative and Climate Change

Narrative aids us in confronting the unknowable; thus, climate change may find equilibrium through narrative, as it presents us with the radical challenge of our existence, affecting all human societies and non-human species. Engagement with digital narratives facilitates the acceptance and embrace of ecological uncertainty as a fundamental dimension of our present experience (Herman & Vervaeck, 2017, p. 47), given that narrative involves an ongoing process of circulating and negotiating meanings, reflecting new understandings and perspectives (Herman & Vervaeck, 2017, p. 34). Climate change represents a multifaceted challenge encompassing phenomena such as a polar ice melt, ocean acidification, and biodiversity loss. Its narrative formulation can influence public understanding and response. In this context, the so-called second ecocriticism examines the relationship between literature and the environment, exploring the interaction between nature and human culture, thereby elucidating how literature addresses environmental issues and reflects cultural perceptions of nature (Buell, 2005, p. 30). This approach demonstrates how narratives can shape our perception of ecological issues. The ecological crisis reveals the interdependence of all ecosystem elements, forming a network that should be reflected in the narratives representing it (Morton, 2010, p. 28). In other words, within the contemporary environmental context, narratives elucidate and respond to ecological uncertainties, offering new perspectives on the impact of human actions on the environment and suggesting strategies to address these challenges. Stories that illustrate local impacts of climate change and depict how communities confront these challenges can raise public awareness of the urgency to act and foster greater engagement with environmental issues, as storytelling involves a continuous process of circulating and negotiating meanings, reflecting new understandings and perspectives (Herman & Vervaeck, 2005, p. 34).

4.2. The Role of Advertising Narrative in Promoting Sustainability: The Atlantic at Our Feet

Advertising plays a crucial role in advocating for environmental practices and values. Through strategic narratives, color schemes, and rhetoric, advertising campaigns shape perceptions and behaviors regarding environmental issues. Narrative emotionally engages the audience, making the message more memorable and inspiring (Aristotle, 1997, p. 1450a). Ethical appeals build brand credibility, demonstrating a genuine commitment to environmental issues. Narratives that establish emotional connections and utilize evocative imagery and video are thus effective. Incorporating characters and poetic metaphors can help illustrate complex concepts in an accessible manner. From the perspective of classical rhetoric, narrative employs message, conflict, characters, and plot. The combination of rhetoric and poetics encourages the exploration of new narrative methods, aligning with creative capacities. Poetics refers to the creation of meaning through artistic narrative forms, used to emotionally engage viewers. Presenting data and statistics that validate brands' environmental claims and demonstrating a genuine commitment to sustainability through concrete actions are crucial logical and ethical approaches. Such narratives help forge an emotional bond with the audience, making environmental issues more tangible and urgent. From a classical rhetorical perspective, storytelling utilizes four key narrative concepts:

The term "outermost regions" was introduced by the European Union (EU) to designate specific areas that, although part of EU Member States, face unique challenges due to their geographically isolated locations and distinctive characteristics. These regions include, for instance, the Canary Islands (Spain), Madeira and the Azores (Portugal), and the French overseas departments such as French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Réunion, and Mayotte (European Union, 2023). Situated at considerable distances from the European mainland, these regions encounter significant economic and social difficulties stemming from their insularity, climate, topography, and other natural limitations. To mitigate these challenges, the European Union provides additional support through cohesion policies, structural funds, and other initiatives aimed at promoting socio-economic development and reducing disparities relative to the European continent. Article 349 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) is particularly pertinent in this context, emphasizing the need for tailored approaches that account for these regions' specificities. By fostering sustainable policies and practices, these regions can serve as inspiring models for addressing environmental challenges in diverse contexts. Promoting sustainable practices in these areas not only benefits the outermost regions themselves but also contributes to environmental resilience and social cohesion across the European Union. available <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/>.



message, conflict, characters, and plot. Rhetorical and poetic techniques are not merely theoretical; they have clear practical applications in developing effective and engaging advertising campaigns. Advertising narrative aims to integrate these techniques, promoting a sustainability-focused approach that creatively, effectively, and ethically addresses market challenges while maintaining a holistic perspective. Rhetoric provides tools for structuring compelling and engaging arguments, while poetics allows for the incorporation of elements such as ethos (credibility), pathos (emotion), and logos (reason), thus enhancing the persuasive power of a campaign. The combination of rhetoric and poetics encourages the exploration of new storytelling methods. In essence, narrative is the art of telling stories with engaging, immersive, and memorable messages. By employing elements of rhetoric (the art of persuasion) and poetics (emotional meaning-making), narrative aims to convey persuasive and memorable messages. Incorporating poetic elements (creative use of language and symbolic imagery) and rhetoric (argumentative persuasion and narrative construction), advertising achieves ethical and sustainability goals, particularly in messages aimed at social and environmental awareness. The concept of “greenwashing” refers to the practice of exaggerating or falsely promoting environmental initiatives to attract sustainability-conscious consumers.

Environmental advertising has emerged as an interdisciplinary field that brings together communication, ecology, and marketing to promote sustainable behaviours and values. According to Peattie and Crane (2005), environmental communication faces the challenge of avoiding *greenwashing*—superficial practices that simulate environmental responsibility without genuine commitment. It is therefore essential to develop campaigns that combine authenticity with impact, reinforcing public trust in the conveyed message. Digital storytelling, in turn, constitutes a powerful tool for constructing compelling and emotionally resonant narratives capable of influencing perceptions and behaviours (Pulizzi, 2012; Lambert, 2013). The literature highlights that the use of narrative elements such as *ethos*, *pathos*, and *logos* is central to establishing an empathetic connection between audiences and environmental issues (Fisher, 1987; Escalas, 2004). Moreover, the integration of digital media allows for interactivity and immersion, thereby amplifying both the reach and the effectiveness of the message (Jenkins, 2006). With regard to sustainable communication practices, scholars such as Del Rio-González (2018) and Muralidharan et al. (2011) underscore the importance of transparency, ethics, and community engagement in ensuring that advertising campaigns do more than inform—that they also inspire concrete and lasting action. Sustainable communication must move beyond mere dissemination, fostering relationships of ecological co-responsibility with audiences (Peña & Medina, 2018). On the other hand, the literature also warns of the risks of instrumentalising environmental communication, particularly when driven by commercial interests that compromise the authenticity of the message (TerraChoice, 2007; Lyon & Montgomery, 2015). This scenario underscores the imperative to develop critical and reflective approaches that assess not only the content but also the context and reception of sustainable narratives. In sum, the study of environmental communication practices reveals a dynamic field in which effectiveness depends on the interplay between conceptual rigour, narrative creativity, and ethical commitment. This review underpins the analysis presented in the current work, which aims to demonstrate how advertising can function as an agent of cultural and environmental transformation—especially through the strategic use of poetics and rhetoric in the context of sustainable tourism.

Narratives that expose greenwashing and highlight the need for transparency can help combat this practice and foster greater environmental responsibility. Similarly, “colorwashing” involves using colors associated with environmental issues without a genuine commitment to sustainable practices (Elkington, 1997, p. 155). Critical narratives can help inform the public about the difference between superficial marketing and concrete actions, encouraging more genuine engagement with sustainability. In contrast to the campaign “*It’s not tourism. It’s futourism.*”, a notorious example of greenwashing in the tourism sector occurred with the airline British Airways, which launched campaigns promoting its “green” initiatives to reduce carbon emissions. However, research revealed that, despite its advertising claims, the company continued to expand routes and increase flight frequency, thereby significantly contributing to environmental pollution (Gössling et al., 2019). Also we can mention a classic example of greenwashing in the tourism sector as the campaign by luxury resorts that promote

their properties as “eco-friendly” or “sustainable” without implementing concrete practices to support such claims. For instance, some resorts claim to protect local ecosystems and minimize environmental impacts, yet continue to overuse resources, generate significant amounts of waste, and exploit local communities without providing real benefits (Fifield, 2020). These campaigns create an illusory image of environmental responsibility, misleading consumers and weakening the credibility of sustainable communication. In contrast to such superficial practices, the *“It’s not tourism. It’s futourism.”* campaign stands out by employing a narrative that fosters empathy and ethical responsibility toward the ocean, portraying tourism as a conscious and sustainable activity capable of transforming the relationship between humans and nature. This dissonance between communication and actual practices illustrates how greenwashing can create a false perception of sustainability, undermining public trust and diminishing the real impact of environmental actions. Conversely, the *“It’s not tourism. It’s futourism.”* campaign adopts an integrated approach in which poetic and ethical narrative contributes to environmental awareness, promoting a form of tourism that respects and preserves the ocean as a collective heritage.

4.3. The Anthropocentric Narrative: The Ocean at Our Feet

The *“Ode Marítima”* evokes the necessity for a response imposed by the call of the seas, interpreted in the allegorical resurrection of past ghosts, with a poetic self alone at the quay, facing the seas, contemplating the arrival of a small black and white packet, and establishing an intricate web of circular identifications culminating in the evocation of the same packet, now clear and bright as if the oceanic crossing had liberated it through a catharsis. In this text, the sea emerges without anthropocentric mediation; it appears as landscape and place to be navigated, including no more than geographic coordinates. The sea brings and the sea takes away, emerging as a cathartic mediator. Conversely, in the documentary text *“The Silent World”* by Jacques Cousteau, based on *“Le Monde du Silence”* (1956), directed by Jacques-Yves Cousteau and Louis Malle, the sea is portrayed as a realm of underwater life. The film presents documentary images of marine fauna and flora, revealing a world previously unknown to the general public. The film uses naturalistic colors, highlighting the deep blues of the ocean and the vibrant hues of marine life. The underwater camera was a crucial tool for creating visual immersion in the aquatic environment. Cousteau’s figure, as an explorer, represents the human spirit of seeking the unknown, evoking themes of conquest, mastery of nature, and technological advancement, symbolizing the modern man who, with the aid of science, penetrates previously impenetrable realms. On one hand, there is evident respect and admiration for the beauty and complexity of marine life, but on the other hand, there are scenes that today may be interpreted as problematic, such as shark hunting, suggesting a relationship of domination over nature. Nevertheless, the film suggests an anthropocentric view of the world, where nature is seen primarily as an object of study and exploitation for human benefit.

4.4. It’s Not Tourism. It’s Futourism. An Analysis of the Audiovisual Text

The *“It’s not tourism. It’s futourism.”* campaign, promoted by Turismo de Portugal and launched on December 31, 2023, is inscribed within the strategic framework of the Tourism Strategy 2027, positioning itself as a discursive and symbolic intervention aimed at the reconfiguration of contemporary tourism practices in light of ethical and environmental imperatives. Structured around twelve New Year’s resolutions, the campaign invokes the imaginary of the future as a shared horizon of responsibility, mobilizing a poetic and axiological narrative that addresses the tourist as an ethical subject and agent of transformation.

By employing rhetorical and aesthetic resources and drawing on semiotic anchors in the values of sustainability, territorial belonging, and ecological care, the initiative seeks to foster a paradigmatic shift in the ways tourism is experienced and represented, promoting more immersive, conscious, and respectful practices toward the natural and cultural diversity of destinations.

Although empirical data on the campaign’s direct behavioural impact is not yet available, its innovative narrative configuration, combined with broad dissemination across digital ecosystems, suggests a strong potential to influence audience attitudes and dispositions. In this sense, the campaign asserts itself as a performative

discursive device, capable of articulating symbolic, ethical, and affective dimensions, contributing to the emergence of a more responsible, situated, and ecologically committed mode of tourism.

The advertising narrative opens with the phrase “A new year has just begun,” followed by “A movement has already started.” Soon after, the phrase “Let me introduce” appears, followed by the word “FUTURISM” in uppercase letters, which is subsequently divided into “fu-turismo” and “fu-tourism.” These words are presented against a landscape of the Earth with an impressionistic touch, enveloped in green and blue tones that stand out among grey patches, possibly representing devastation. The voice-over and subtitles urge viewers not to confuse this movement with the Futurist aesthetic movement. The image transitions to a close-up of a dew drop sliding down a plant stem, while the voice-over explains that it is not an artistic movement, though it encompasses movement and art, specifically the art of going. The image shifts to a close-up of human skin, with text informing us that it contains the art of walking and also the art of change. This image is replaced by a wide aerial view of a landscape in light brown tones, showing sand and water in the same hue. The voice-over clarifies that we are witnessing the emergence of a movement advocating for correcting past mistakes, urging us to leave things as they are, but emphasizing that this is different from mere passivity. This information appears over a detailed image of a water droplet falling on sand, creating concentric waves. The image shifts to an interior view of the dome of a rotating monument, revealing that many will say it is just a journey. The voice-over asserts that futurism is a movement that breaks conventions while respecting traditions. The image returns to the slow-motion close-up of the droplet falling on the sand, now filling the screen with sand scattered by the droplet’s impact. The image merges into a close-up of sardines being grilled, evoking strong Portuguese iconography and traditions. The screen fills with a three-dimensional yellow pattern, allowing us to perceive the effect of a sunflower composed of an infinite number of sunflowers opening in motion, creating an iconographic allusion to the sun. The voice-over asserts that the movement will open so many horizons that we will realize it is not just a journey. The image transitions to the Marquês de Pombal roundabout in Lisbon, revealing nighttime traffic crossing the road. Subsequently, it shows a detailed shot of a child’s hand navigating a small fishing boat, with fingers intertwined in the water. The voice-over informs us that from now on, everything will be as it should. This final phrase is emphasized by a detailed image of water hitting the shore, intersecting with the shadow of a young person riding a bicycle. The voice-over states that it is an evolution to do things as they should be done and to be aware of our actions. It transitions to an underwater scene, now filmed from below, asserting that we now know how it is done and when to stop. It changes to a close-up of the human iris, asserting that it is a change of perspective, transitioning to a dirt path, informing us that we now understand the differences between roads and trails, between lamps and stars, while showing a starry night sky. Over the image of a lot of fish, it informs us that we now understand “the flock to the unexplored path,” as it is a movement with very simple rules: “if you are here, leave no trace; observe calmly with your heart and body.” This message is reinforced by a lighthouse illuminated at night, asserting that it is time to be alert and vigilant, thinking about the future of all of us. This message is further reinforced by the image of a dense forest highlighting the multiplicity of vegetation, emphasizing that we must save what can be saved. The image of small barefoot footprints in the sand, erased by an approaching wave, underscores the message that we are the only ones who can save what must be saved. The screen turns black, and the caption appears: “It’s not tourism. It’s futourism. Don’t be a tourist, be a futourist.”

4.5. Poetic and Rhetoric in Advertising and Promoting Oceanic Sustainability

Poetic and rhetoric are fundamental techniques in advertising, allowing environmental messages to be communicated in an impactful and memorable manner. Jacques Cousteau’s underwater world utilized narrative techniques to capture the public’s imagination, presenting oceans as places of unexplored beauty and critical vulnerability. Integrating poetic rhetoric into ocean preservation, the advertisement “It’s not tourism. It’s futourism.” is aligned with Humboldt’s holistic thinking and Portugal’s maritime heritage, offering a powerful strategy for promoting environmental preservation and responsible tourism practices; furthermore, it highlights Jacques Cousteau’s impactful visual narratives and Thoreau’s thoughts on connecting with nature contributing to a richer and more engaging approach to environmental communication. Portugal’s Exclusive Economic Zone



(EEZ), by redefining the country's geostrategic position and asserting its responsibility over vast marine ecosystems, provides an ideal context for applying these poetic narratives and strengthening the conservation message. This focus is particularly relevant in the context of the Atlantic Ocean, where protecting marine resources becomes a priority to ensure the sustainability of economic activities and biodiversity preservation. Analyzing narrative in environmental advertising demonstrates its effectiveness in promoting sustainability and shaping perceptions and behaviors. Through narrative and rhetorical techniques, advertising campaigns can create powerful messages that inspire action and increase awareness about the importance of sustainability. In the context of the Atlantic Ocean, advertising can play a crucial role in promoting sustainable tourism, highlighting innovative practices, and addressing the complexities of cultural and environmental identity. The interdisciplinary approach combining literary theory, rhetoric, and advertising offers a comprehensive and rich perspective on crafting effective narratives for environmental communication. The examined advertising narrative uses visual, auditory, and narrative elements that support a Weberian reading, emphasizing the importance of interpretative analysis in understanding social phenomena (Weber, 1978, p. 20–25). The advertising text employs various rhetorical figures such as metaphors, personification, anaphora, oxymoron, symbolism, and parallelism, reinforcing the ad's message while observing the logical progression from presenting current issues to introducing "futourism" as a solution and concluding with a call to action, in line with narrative structures focusing on understanding the logical progression of the narrative (Propp, 1968, p. 25–30) in accordance with the concept of the monomyth (Campbell, 2008, p. 45–50). The text considers cultural, social, and environmental context, aligning the analysis with Humboldt's holistic perspective on nature and human activities, providing a relevant and consolidated ethical perspective, viewing the planet as the Other, through the lens of ethical alterity (Lévinas, 1961, p. 20–25). The analysis reveals the use of classical rhetorical theories and modern narrative methods, demonstrating how combining these approaches can promote sustainable practices. The text discusses how well-executed environmental advertising can influence perceptions and behaviors, promoting a sustainable future (Dewey, 1979, p. 40–45). Thoreau's reflections on nature in "Walden" emphasize the importance of living in harmony with the natural world. Thoreau's belief in the value of a simple and thoughtful existence supports the promotion of sustainable tourism practices that minimize environmental impact (Thoreau, 1854, p. 121).

5. Conclusion: The Holistic Narrative: Becoming One with the Oceans

Cousteau's vision, thus, reflects an anthropocentric perspective on nature, which diverges from the current paradigm necessitated by climatic changes and resonates with Humboldt's philosophy articulated in his work *Personal Narrative of Travels to the Equinoctial Regions of the New Continent* (1814). Humboldt's work advocates for the interconnectedness of natural elements and emphasizes the importance of a holistic view of the environment. In essence, understanding natural systems requires an integrated approach that acknowledges the interdependence of various environmental components (Humboldt, 1805, p. 29). Additionally, Thoreau offers a supplementary perspective on the relationship between humans and nature, advocating for introspection and a direct connection with the environment as a means to foster a more conscious and sustainable way of life. This perspective complements the poetic narrative in advertising aimed at fostering a more sustainable oceanic consciousness, reinforcing the necessity for a deeper and more respectful engagement with the environment (Thoreau, 1854, p. 121). It supports the notion that protecting the oceans is crucial for the overall health of the planet and can be effectively communicated through poetic narratives in advertising.

To achieve this, we invoke Emmanuel Lévinas's concept of ethical alterity, which adds a moral dimension to the necessity of ocean sustainability, underscoring the responsibility to care for the environment. Lévinas argues that ethics begins with the responsibility for the Other, extending this responsibility to our relationship with the natural environment. This ethical approach encourages a relationship of respect and consideration for the impacts of our activities on the oceans, reinforcing the importance of adopting practices that are not only environmentally sustainable but also ethically responsible (Lévinas, 1985, p. 75). The concept of ethical alterity emphasizes ethical responsibility towards the Other, seen not merely as an individual but as a presence demanding an ethical response. For Lévinas, true ethics emerge in the relation with the Other, where the self is

continually called to respond to the alterity of the Other in a responsible and sensitive manner (Lévinas, 1969, p. 43). Integrating ethical alterity into messages about the urgency of ocean preservation involves recognizing the responsibility to care for the environment. By adopting ethical alterity, our actions are perceived not merely as an environmental obligation but as a moral imperative that requires a genuine response to the needs and dignity of the Others.

Persuasive, culturally relevant, and socially responsible advertising messages promote sustainable environmental attitudes. Companies committed to ethical advertising provide clear and detailed information about their sustainable practices. We draw upon Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's (1958) concept of the audience to propose a new vector that also redirects focus on the audience. Thus, the intertwining of rhetoric and poetics in advertising narratives acquires a new dimension by considering argumentative theory with a persuasive point of escape—implying both practical rationality and social context, recognizing the values and beliefs of both the audience and the narrative producers (Durand, 1987). Storytelling is committed to consent (or suspension of disbelief) and the presumption of rationality (Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1958). It is crucial not to confuse argumentation with manipulation; individuals have the right to be persuaded through reasonable and legitimate arguments, consenting to a holistic understanding of argumentation and its application across various social and cultural contexts.

Advertising not only sells products but also ethical and sustainable values, contributing to the creation of a more just and equitable society. By combining elements of rhetoric and poetics, it is possible to craft narratives that not only persuade but also educate and raise awareness about sustainability issues. Storytelling revitalizes the Aristotelian classical tradition of catharsis, allowing for social and cultural purification of emotions. The information society, characterized by digital proliferation and ubiquitous access to information, has introduced new forms of storytelling through diverse and interconnected platforms, shaping not only the economy but also social and cultural structures (Castells, 1996).

We have used the advertisement “It’s not tourism. It’s futurism.” as a starting point, evaluating its effectiveness in promoting sustainability in tourism through an authentic narrative guided by Aristotle’s rhetorical principles. Additionally, we examined how digital narratives can avoid deceptive practices and foster greater awareness of greenwashing and colorwashing concepts discussed by John Elkington. We also considered Humboldt’s concepts and his advocacy for a holistic view of the universe, emphasizing the connection between all environmental elements in order to propose a new point of view which considers nature and seas as an Other under the ethical alterity of Lévinas philosophy compassing with Thoreau’s thought. This perspective is deemed particularly relevant for advocating sustainable tourism in the seas, and specifically in the Atlantic Ocean, which defines the environment of Portugal’s outermost regions.

As digital platforms continue to evolve, the integration of narrative techniques in advertising will play a crucial role in advancing environmental communication and promoting a sustainable future.

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