

**Visitors' Perception Based Authenticity in Tourism
Development Project:
A Case Study of Xietang Old Street in Suzhou, China**

Thesis Presented to the Faculty of Architecture and Planning

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Urban Planning

Advisor: Lance Freeman

Reader: Weiping Wu

by Wen Cheng

May 2019

ABSTRACT

Within the in-depth development of culture-historical block tourism and the involvement of new capital, a new type of culture-historical block tourism has flourished in time. Unlike the traditional culture-historical blocks, these emerging culture-historical blocks are usually archaized blocks. There have been some debates about the relationship between these kinds of archaized blocks and tourism authenticity. It is evident that due to the characteristics of this kind of archaized culture-historical blocks, they lack authenticity. However, whether the authenticity could be perceived by the local residents or tourists still needs to be argued.

In this paper, it examined visitors' perception of authenticity at Xietang Old Street, an archaized project in Suzhou, China. The construction of many historical heritage sites raised the issue about authenticity in tourism. However, visitors' perceptions towards authenticity in this site continues to be mostly unknown. The study applied questionnaires and interviews to collect data from February 2019 to March 2019 at Xietang Old Street. Visitors were asked to rate the authenticity of many aspects of Xietang Old Street on a Likert-scale and to provide basic socio-economic information, motivations, and loyalty & satisfaction grade. Moreover, this paper studied the relationship among visitors' motivation, authenticity perception, and visitors' loyalty & satisfaction at Xietang Old Street. Based on both the qualitative and quantitative information, the study evaluates the Xietang Old Street as whether it is a successful commercial / tourism / authentic culture-historical site respectively.

The research defined the project as a successful commercial project in Suzhou. However, it cannot be regarded as a successful tourism project and authentic culture-historical site. All the site was reconstructed, and the authentic elements are hardly seen within the site. Although the visitors can perceive authenticity through the site, they are all based on the physical setting. It cannot be called an authentic culture-historical site, while it is successful among these archaized projects in China. The primary reason for this project is the full respect for the original site and original appearance. Since the old Xietang town was demolished, we should look upon it positively: without this project, the history or even the name of Xietang will be forgotten by the future generation forever. It is a good start point and there are lots of space improving this project. We can believe that Xietang Old Street can be more authentic in the future.

Keywords: archaized blocks; authenticity perception; visitors' motivation; visitors' loyalty & satisfaction; tourism development

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The completion of thesis would not have been possible without the contribution and support from the following people:

First, I am indebted to my advisor, Professor Lance Freeman and reader, Professor Weiping Wu for their help guiding me to do this research. I learned a great deal about how to do systematic research from Prof. Freeman. He taught me many skills for conducting research. Prof. Wu, whose is knowledgeable about Chinese urbanism and current situation, has also provided much constructive feedback throughout the process. Their direction and insightful comments were a fruitful contribution in the completion of this thesis.

Also, I want to thank my classmates, Boying Li, Qianyu Xiang, and Liying Zhang, who gave me inspiration and supports when I were stuck in changing and forming my thesis topic. They were instrumental in helping me to understand the critical concepts and mechanism of the topics discussed in this thesis. I also want to thank my friend, Xincen Xie, who helped me figure out the principle of Canonical Correlation Analysis and modelling. Without her patience and knowledge, I could not have finished the analysis as successfully.

I am grateful to the visitors who allocated their valuable holiday time to participate in the interviews. This thesis would never have been possible without their kindness and patience.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Bo Cheng and Suping Shi, and all of my dear relatives for supporting my thesis and education at Columbia. They gave me lots of love and supports during my master study in the United States.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....v
Table of Contents.....vi
List of Tables.....viii
List of Figures.....ix

Chapter 1

1 Introduction.....1
2 Literature Review.....7
 2.1 Definition of culture-historical block.....7
 2.2 Definition of archaized block.....8
 2.3 Authenticity theory.....9
 2.3.1 Definitions of authenticity and inauthenticity.....9
 2.3.2 Evolution of tourism authenticity.....10
 2.3.3 Relationship between object and subject.....15
 2.3.4 Meaning of coexistence of authenticity theories.....15
 2.4 Study on authenticity perception.....17
 2.4.1 Dimensions.....17
 2.4.2 Determinants / Factors.....17
 2.4.3 Authenticity perception effect factors.....20
 2.4.4 The relationship between motivation and authenticity perception.....22
 2.4.5 The relationship between visitors' loyalty & satisfaction and authenticity perception.....23
3 Background - Case study.....24
 3.1 History of Xietang Old Street.....24
 3.2 Project history and description.....27

Chapter 2

4 Methodology / Research design.....33
 4.1 General research design.....33
 4.2 Survey.....33

4.2.1	Survey design.....	33
4.2.2	Sample size and selection.....	36
4.2.3	Research model and hypothesis.....	37
4.2.4	Data collection.....	39
4.2.5	Data analysis.....	39
4.3	Interview.....	40
4.4	Observation.....	40
5	Findings.....	42
5.1	Survey.....	42
5.1.1	Descriptive data analysis.....	42
5.1.2	Canonical Correlation Analysis (CCA).....	48
5.2	Interview.....	51
5.3	Observation.....	53
Chapter 3		
6	Discussion: Planning implications.....	59
6.1	Perception based authenticity of Xietang Old Street.....	59
6.2	Common issues in archaized blocks development.....	60
6.3	Future development of archaized blocks.....	62
7	Limitations.....	64
8	Conclusion.....	66
Chapter 4		
9	Appendix A: Survey.....	69
	Appendix B: Survey measurements validation.....	72
	Appendix C: Interview questions.....	74
	Appendix D: Outcomes of CCA.....	75
10	Bibliography.....	77

List of Tables

Table 1	Theory evolution of tourism authenticity.....	11
Table 2	Determinants of visitors' authenticity perception by scholars.....	20
Table 3	Authenticity perception effect factors.....	21
Table 4	Key types and notions of authenticity in tourist.....	23
Table 5	Date dimension reduction for indicators.....	40
Table 6	Socioeconomic characteristics of respondents.....	43

List of Figures

Figure 1	Old view of Xietang Old Street.....	24
Figure 2	Old layout of Xietang Old Street.....	26
Figure 3	View of Xietang Old Street in the late 20th century.....	27
Figure 4	Location of Xietang Old Street.....	29
Figure 5	Project layout.....	30
Figure 6	View of Old Street Area.....	31
Figure 7	View of Exhibition Area.....	32
Figure 8	View of New Building Area.....	32
Figure 9	Model diagram.....	37
Figure 10	Frequency of visiting Xietang Old Street by different groups.....	44
Figure 11	Average score for authenticity perception (all respondents).....	46
Figure 12	Average score for authenticity perception (different groups).....	47
Figure 13	Relationships among motivation, authenticity perception, and loyalty & satisfaction in Xietang Old Street.....	51
Figure 14	Water network in Xietang Old Street.....	54
Figure 15	Linear street space and courtyard space.....	55
Figure 16	View of Suzhou garden style.....	56
Figure 17	Jiangnan style architecture and landscape.....	56
Figure 18	Old construction materials.....	57
Figure 19	Bronze statues showing old Xietang life.....	57
Figure 20	Activities in Xietang Old Street.....	58

CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

The existence and continuation of a city are continuously extended by the accumulation of history and culture. In the process of accelerating urbanization, culture-historical blocks have undergone varying degrees of transformation and destruction, which destroyed the texture, history, and culture of the city. Since the 20th century, China has entered a period of rapid development. Consequently, it has come with many sequelae left by the city's large-scale reconstruction. The old town area is often regarded as the focus of commercial development due to its location and density. Due to the policy reasons, many local governments have transformed the old town area into large-scale urban projects and transferred the development rights to real estate developers. Driven by commercial interests, the real estate developers often disregard the culture-historical values of the old buildings in the old town area during construction and demolish these cultural heritages without distinction. For instance, in the large-scale urban transformation, many Siheyuans in Beijing were destroyed, and some buildings from the Ming and Qing Dynasty were also relocated or demolished (Zhu 2005).

Protecting the culture-historical blocks is the continuation of the vitality of the city, the power of the city development and the soul of the city inheritance. In recent years, the protection and restoration of culture-historical blocks are increasingly valued by the city. These blocks are considered to be the root of urban cultural heritage and are endowed with new business elements. With the development of tourism and people's considerable attention to history and

culture, the protection of culture-historical blocks has increasingly regained an essential position in the development of tourism products since the 1980s. In 1982, China's State Council announced the first batch of national culture-historical cities (Wu and Tan 2014). When the State Council announced the second batch of national culture-historical cities in 1986, the concept of the culture-historical block was first officially proposed (Wu and Tan 2014). Such a protection system for the history and culture entities was improved continuously in the past 30 years. The determination of the protection system of culture-historical blocks has brought the protection of China's culture-historical heritage to a new level, marking the protection of China's culture-historical heritage towards a gradual improvement and maturity stage.

Currently, China's culture-historical blocks tourism has entered a period of vigorous development. Such culture-historical blocks are scattered throughout all the provinces and appear in almost all the historical cities. The main development form is commercial projects and commodity consumption, based on local history and culture. It sells local specialties and displays folk culture by preserving the original architecture and street style. The representatives of the culture-historical blocks are Tunxi Old Street in Anhui, Sanfang Qixiang in Fuzhou, and Pingjiang Road in Suzhou.

Nevertheless, the development of tourism in culture-historical blocks shows a similar development model, the homogeneity of tourism projects, the low aesthetic taste, and similar tourism experience. It not only demolishes the unique value of culture-historical districts and each city's personality but also cannot satisfy the tourists' experience expectations. Under the

social background of “thousands of the city shows the same”, the image of the city has become the most prominent victim.

Within the in-depth development of culture-historical block tourism and the involvement of new capital, a new type of culture-historical block tourism has flourished in time. Unlike the traditional culture-historical blocks, these emerging culture-historical blocks are usually archaized blocks, which is a kind of reproduction and reconstruction of the historical relics that have been ruined and damaged, depending on the modern technology and design concepts. The new round of cultural-themed real estate style blocks, featuring the demand for current consumer markets, the integration of urban industrial space renewal, and the recovery of cultural industries, is creating a new form of tourism space with an active attitude, on the basis of the conscious continuation of the original culture-historical heritage.

There have been some debates about the relationship between these kinds of archaized blocks and tourism authenticity: whether there is authenticity in these archaized culture-historical blocks? It is evident that due to the characteristics of this kind of archaized culture-historical blocks, they lack authenticity. However, whether the authenticity could be perceived by the local residents or tourists still needs to be argued. In addition, what are the relationships between the visitors' motivation, authenticity perception, and satisfaction & loyalty in such kind of archaized blocks is also valuable to research. There should be some similarities and differences about the

visitors' authenticity perception between the authentic culture-historical blocks and the archaized blocks.

The case study in this thesis: Xietang Old Street in Suzhou, China is a typical archaized block project. Different from the other stereotyped commercial antique blocks in other cities, Xietang Old Street once appeared in history. It has its own distinctive cultural essence and spiritual connotations for the Suzhou people. The reconstruction of Xietang Old Street aims at bringing the old street back and restoring the history of the prosperous historical block. It can say that the primary purpose of this project is commercial, and the second purpose is to recollect the history. When people visit this place, whether they would feel authentic about history and culture remains to be unknown. Therefore, it should be a new perspective to study the significance of the project regarding history and culture. Moreover, People's perception will also reflect the success of the project to some extent.

This thesis will analyze the relationship between tourism authenticity and archaized culture-historical block in China, focusing on the specific case study: Xietang Old Street in Suzhou. It will critically argue that whether there is authenticity in the historical replica style blocks based on tourists and local residents' perception even if all the landscape and buildings are built after the 21st century. Moreover, it will also reflect on the project itself to evaluate whether it is a successful project that surviving and bringing back the local history and culture, and how to create the authenticity experience for this kind of archaized culture-historical blocks.

Therefore, the research questions for this thesis are:

- Have the visitors' perception of the culture-historical block, Xietang Old Street, provided the experience of authenticity for tourists and local residents?
- What are the relationships between visitors' motivation, authenticity perception, and visitors' loyalty & satisfaction in Xietang Old Street?
- Can Xietang Old Street project be called a successful archaized culture-historical block project in Suzhou based on its way of shaping authenticity experience?

I focused on Xietang Old Street in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province, China, a typical archaized culture-historical block. I first analyzed literature in the authenticity theory. In the literature review part, the main argument is that the tourism authenticity could be perceived by visitors themselves even though this site is archaistic based on the existential authenticity theory, which is the foundation theory for this thesis. The other important point in the literature review is to study the previous authenticity perception research in tourism development. For instance, to study what are the valid measurements for an authenticity perception survey. After the literature review part, the research design will introduce the methodology and validity used for survey, interview, and observation. Through the outcome of surveys and interviews with local residents and tourists, I will first evaluate the authenticity of Xietang Old Street perceived by visitors and then study the relationship among tourists' motivation, authenticity perception, and satisfaction and loyalty. Finally, I will critically discuss this project and the similar projects in Suzhou and China, regarding whether this particular project is successful, will authenticity be perceived by the

visitors, and how to shape authenticity perception. The purpose of this study is to generate the findings of this research to make a more comprehensive and critical understanding of the (in)authenticity phenomenon in the cultural heritage tourism industry.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Definition of culture-historical block

The International Athens Conference in 1933 introduced and explained the culture-historical blocks, which was also the prototype of the culture-historical blocks concept (Martinez 2017).

The Athens Charter defined the culture-historical block as follows: “The area consisting of historical buildings and culture-historical sites is called the historical area” (Martinez 2017).

Subsequently, in the UNESCO meeting in Nairobi 1976 stated that “Considering that historic areas are part of the daily environment of human beings everywhere; The governments and the citizens of States in whose territory they are situated should deem it their duty to safeguard this heritage and integrate it into the social life of our times” (UNESCO 1976). In general, culture-historical blocks refer to the areas with historical features or historical events and play an indelible role in the inheritance of history and culture in the city.

As a country with a rich history and culture, the culture-historical block is an indispensable part of China’s cultural heritage. The culture-historical blocks can reproduce the scenes and styles of life in a particular historical period and reflect the socio-economic structure or culture at that time through the buildings, layout, and other bearers of the block. Therefore, the protection of culture-historical blocks has significant value and significance for the continuation of history and culture. The proper protection of culture-historical blocks not only preserves the cultural heritage of China’s characteristics but also promotes the traditional characteristic culture. The most important thing is that the protection of culture-historical blocks can enhance the recognition and

satisfaction of domestic and international tourists to increase the tourism revenue and maximize the role of tourism in local economic development.

2.2 Definition of archaized block

The archaized block is a unique form of culture-historical blocks. It contains almost all the elements in the culture-historical block, including cultural relics, historical features, historical buildings, historical environment, etc. The most significant difference between it and the culture-historical block is that the renovation part of this block far exceeds the original historical part through modern technology, which makes it can only be defined as an archaized block (Fan 2016). At the same time, the focus of the archaized block is counterfeiting (Fan 2016). In a broad sense, it includes both he repaired and renovated existing culture-historical blocks and completed new construction of the antique form blocks (Fan 2016).

The preservation of culture-historical blocks and construction of archaized blocks are quite popular and common in the Chinese cities. There are mainly four types of archaized blocks in China: the first category is entirely artificial and fabricated (Fan 2016). There is no corresponding substantively in terms of time and space extension but is simply imitated or borrowed from the ancient architectural and block layout of a particular period, only relying on the historical legacy (Fan 2016). The examples are Gubei Water Town (WTown) in Beijing and Wumen Block in Suzhou. The second category is the new construction based on the already disappearing architecture and sites. This kind of block aims to recall history and culture. The third category is to restore and subsequent process of the existing historical relics and retain the

original appearance of the culture-historical blocks, which can be attributed to the reconstruction of archaized blocks in the old way, such as Shikukou Block in Shanghai Xintiandi (Fan 2016).

The fourth category is to expand the block according to the original existing historical architecture and block, and the new part has a high degree of reduction. The examples can be Jinli Street and Kuanzhai Alley in Chengdu.

2.3 Authenticity theory

2.3.1 Definitions of authenticity and inauthenticity

“Authenticity” is originated from the Greek: “Authentes” (Zhou et al. 2018). Because this term grown ambiguous and is used in multiple usage and context, the true nature of this concept is different from defining. Authenticity was first used in museum’s art exhibits to state that everything in reality and its price and value are matched (Zhou et al. 2018). When a visitor enters an exhibition hall and sees the real object, he will conclude that the price of this object is so high, then it must be real and exist. Later, with the advent of modern tourism, this concept was introduced and extended into the tourism industry. Scholars and tourism critics began the discussion of the relationship between tourism and authenticity.

In the beginning, there are two major factions of the relationship between authenticity and tourism in the academic world. One is the “negative fraction” represented by the American historian Boorstin (1961). They believe that the phenomenon in tourism activities is an unreal “pseudo-event” (Nicolaidis 2014). What the tourists have experienced is a pre-designed and distorted tourism experience prepared by the tourism operators. The other one is the “active

fraction” represented by the American sociologist MacCannell, and they believe that the authenticity of tourism indeed exists (MacCannell 1973). The primary purpose for tourists to participate in tourism activities is to find the true nature. No matter how this authenticity is expressed, it is real for the participators themselves. Even the materialized human labor is the real performance of tourism practitioners (Nicolaidis 2014).

2.3.2 Evolution of tourism authenticity

With the development of tourism, the theory evolution of authenticity in this field can be divided into four stages of development: objectivism, constructivism, postmodernism, and existentialism (see Table 1). The first stage is the objective authenticity represented by Boorstin (1961) and MacCannell(1973). It is believed that the experience in tourism comes from the experience of the original attraction to the tourists, and most of these original attractions are not processed and remain true. The second stage is the constructive authenticity, represented by Bruner (1994), Cohen (1995), Hobsbawm & Ranger (1983), and Culler (1981). It stated that tourism authenticity is a symbolic authenticity that combining expectation, imagination, and preference of both the tourism operators and tourists (Wang 1999). In fact, constructive authenticity is highly subjective and is constructed by varied emotions (Wang 1999). The third stage is postmodernism authenticity, raised by Eco (1986) and Baudrillard (1983). They do not rely on the real existence of the original works but pursue a kind of hyperreality and realistic tourism phenomenon (Wang 1999). The fourth stage is the existential authenticity proposed by Wang

(1999), which is based more on the true self-experience of the tourists instead of the original object.

	Objective Authenticity	Constructive Authenticity	Postmodernism Authenticity	Existential Authenticity
Study Object	Tourism objects	The construction of tourism objects and what kinds of objects are of interest to tourists	True and false boundaries	The feeling of tourism subjects
Representative Scholars	Boorstin (1964), MacCannell (1973)	Bruner (1994), Cohen (1995), Culler (1981)	Eco (1986), Baudrillard (1983)	Wang (1999), Steiner & Reisinger (2006)
Main Arguments	Authenticity is an inherent feature of a tourism object that can be measured by an absolute standard.	Authenticity is a concept of social construction, which is changeable.	There is no strict limit between true and false.	Visitors look for authentic feelings between individual content and individuals, even if the object is fake.
Limitations	Confined to the tourism object and simplify the authenticity concept.	Difficult to grasp the degrees between commercialization and authenticity.	Completely neglect the concept of authenticity.	Neglect the tourism object, which is not conducive to the sustainable development of the tourism industry.

Table 1. Theory evolution of tourism authenticity

- Stage 1: Objective Authenticity

The first scholar to study objective authenticity is Boorstin. In his view, all the tourists have old-fashioned views, so they would somewhat be attracted by some staged performance, for instance, the unreal and commercial tourism projects or imitations (Zhou et al. 2018). Since the early tourists are mostly sightseers, they cannot experience the authentic foreign countries during the tours but are limited to a homogenous and standardized travel experience (Zhou et al. 2018). MacCannell (1973) agreed with Boorstin's standardized travel experience for the tourists, but only if the tourists are lack of the opportunity to explore authentic tourism at that time, and they are more likely to make authentic tourism as their own desire (Zhu 2012).

However, there is a common doubt for both Boorstin and MacCannell: due to the lack of professional knowledge of most tourists and the staged authenticity of the destinations, tourists may not be able to experience the authenticity of foreign cultures. In general, on both sides, the objective authenticity is the authenticity for the objective tourists, which can be measured by specific criteria. The tourists' pursuit of objective authenticity is not only one of the motivations for tourists but also brings additional benefits to the tourism industry (Zhu 2012).

- Stage II: Constructive Authenticity

The constructive authenticity is the product of social-constructed concept. That is, constructive authenticity projects onto the tourism products, and the product reflects the image, expectation, preference and even power of the tourists and tourism operators (Zhou et al. 2018). From this perspective, authenticity and inauthenticity are the results of how individuals understand objective products and experiences, which is also to say that the basis for constructive

authenticity is that society and individuals are based on the experience of the individuals to judge the authenticity (Zhou et al. 2018). Subsequently, Prentice's theory of learning authenticity is similar to constructive authenticity (Prentice 2001). The core view is that tourists can correct their personal opinions in the process of tourism according to the subjective opinions of experts (Nicolaidis 2014). Thus, this kind of authenticity has become the product of a large number of individual and social influences.

Then, Cohen questioned the theory of staged authenticity theory. He thought that it was too far-fetched to accept MacCannell's view that "all tourists are pursuing a real experience" (Shi 2013). In his article, Cohen stated that putting all tourists on the same level and the same purpose is too simplistic (Shi 2013). In order to prove his point of view, Cohen divided the visitor experience into five models, and different experience models are related to the travel motivation of tourists (Shi 2013). Studies have shown that tourists' tourism motivations are not all about the pursuit of authenticity (Zhou et al. 2018). Based on the above research, Cohen proposed constructive authenticity, which is constructed by society and has attributes such as autonomy, negotiability, and volatility (Zhou et al. 2018).

- Stage III: Postmodern Authenticity

The postmodern authenticity considers the existence of fragmentation, defects, and ambiguity in authenticity, and allows different types of entities and different perspectives to accept authenticity. Postmodernists also question the pursuit of authenticity as a tourist. They thought for postmodern travelers, some tourists may pursue and enjoy unreal experiences. The opinions

of postmodernist could be understood through surreal and phantom. Surreal is a simulation experience and can satisfy the pursuit of truth for the tourists (Eco 1986). Phantoms can be added to the surreal features (Rickly and Vidon 2018). The definition of the above concepts is based on the recognition of the concept of postmodern authenticity: there is no origin, but only a simulation of reality. The postmodernism approach explains why tourists pursue inauthenticity: tourism is able to provide a better and more intensive travel experience (Rickly and Vidon 2018). Cohen (1995) pointed out that tourists who have the travel purpose of enjoyment are more inclined to accept the staged authenticity rather than the authenticity of the object. Moreover, tourists are more satisfied with modern facilities with culture-historical characteristics (Nicolaidis 2014). Bolz (1998) believed that surreal and phantom are not all deceiving, but they are the most attractive to tourists.

- Stage IV: Existential Authenticity

Wang (1999) defined a clear distinction between objective authenticity and existential authenticity. He believed that authenticity is a certain state related to the ongoing activities, not the authenticity of the evaluation of tourists' objects (Wang 1999). The existential authenticity can be divided into two dimensions: bodily feelings and self-making (Wang 1999). When tourists spend a wonderful time or when they actively participate in the travel experience, this reflects the authenticity of the self-directed and activity-related reality (Wang 1999). Hold the same view as Wang, Reisinger and Steiner (2006) argued that the definitions of objective authenticity and existential authenticity are entirely different and cannot be studied simultaneously. However,

slightly different from Wang's point of view, Reisinger and Steiner (2006) believed that existential authenticity is a self-experience oriented, temporary, and unsustainable. All the true feelings are always changing at all the time.

2.3.3 Relationship between object and subject

Based on the four stages of authenticity development, the process of change is gradually formed: from objective authenticity to subjective authenticity to the combination of subject and object. It also develops from a single perspective to a rational perspective: Boorstin and MacKinnell's objectivism captures the roots of entity development and lays the foundation for the emergence of constructivism and postmodernism. Wang proposed a more scientific explanation that the form of tourism authenticity contains the elements of original product objectivism, the emotions of the tourists themselves, and even a family role between those two. That is to say, authenticity has three levels: object, subject, and home (Ram, Bjork, and Weidenfeld 2016).

2.3.4 Meaning of coexistence of authenticity theories

Although the process of development of tourism authenticity research involves criticism among various theories, and it is difficult to reach consensus; the scholars have gradually discovered that the concept of authenticity is not a static, objective, and fixed standard. All these authenticity concepts could coexist in tourism research. From the rich literature review, it is learned that different interest groups related to tourism events have differences in the perception of tourism authenticity. According to Zhang et al. (2008), they found that the

government, residents, tourists, and researchers all have considerable differences in the evaluation of the authenticity of the culture-historical block.

The original intention of the government to establish the authenticity evaluation standard is to maintain the objective authenticity of the tourists (Zhang 2011). However, due to its weak operability, some relevant evaluation standards tend to encourage heritage protection (Zhang 2011). This change in the standard bias reflects the government's compromise on constructive authenticity (Zhang 2011). The understanding of the authenticity of tourists is symbolic and depends on the judgment of true and false by comparing the scenes seen and impressions in mind (Zhang 2011). At the same time, the study also shows that the tourists themselves do not care about the objective authenticity (Zhang 2011). The understanding of authenticity is often symbolized just because of their limited ability of judgment (Zhang 2011). In the analysis of the local residents, we can see that although they subconsciously believe that all their actions are authentic, it is actually difficult to judge whether their behavior is true (Zhang 2011). Driven by the interest motivation and modernization, the local residents have in fact abandoned the authenticity of the self and become part of the authenticity of the construction of the tourist source (Zhang 2011).

It is obvious that different stakeholders have different understandings of tourism authenticity. Moreover, with the dynamic development of the authenticity theory, the object in tourism is also constantly changing over time. Therefore, the concept of authenticity and related theories that need to be used in tourism research should be flexible and dynamic according to the local

context. In this study, we assume that the Xietang Old Street is lack of authenticity since it is archaized. Nevertheless, it could have the perception base authenticity according to different subjective and objective bodies.

2.4 Study on authenticity perception

As a research hotspot, authenticity has attracted extensive attention from scholars around the world. Since this thesis will study the relationship between authenticity and people's perception, I will then focus on the literature about authenticity and perception research. In China, the tourism authenticity and people's perception is divided into single subject perception research and multi-subject perception research. The single subject study involves selecting one of the stakeholders for their perceptual research, such as government, residents, or government (Dai 2012). The multi-subjects study refers to the selection of two or more interest groups from the government, local residents, tourists, tourism operators, or experts (Dai 2012).

2.4.1 Dimensions

At present, the research on the dimension of authenticity perception can be divided into different perspectives according to the four different theoretical definitions. Moreover, whether the division of the authenticity theory has a direct effect on the development of tourism is also difficult to determine by a single standard. Therefore, the study of the authenticity theory should be based on the differences of each case study or the specific research need.

2.4.2 Determinants / Factors

From which aspects of tourists' perception of authenticity is one of the hotspots for scholars around the world. The following table summarizes the authenticity perception determinants commonly used by predecessors:

Author	Object of Study	Determinants of Visitors' Authenticity Perception
Chhabra, Healy, and Sills (2003)	Tourism products of cultural heritage (Flora Macdonald Scottish Highland Games)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highland dancing, Parade of Tartans, learning Scottish history, Highland Games setting, Scottish souvenirs, family gathering, interacting with your clan, family reunion.
McIntosh and Prentice (1999)	Industrial cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past overall lifestyle: what people's lives were like in the past, the hardships endured in the past, the standards of present-day life, comparisons; • Past industrial processes: the conditions, how hard people had to work, how skilled people were, health, technology, the significance of the industrial revolution; • Nostalgia/Personal memories: relived memories, could relate to a lot of things, thought about ancestors, everything seems realistic or authentic.
Waitt (2000)	Urban cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourists' attractions • Activities • Architecture
Kolar (2010)	Historical cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Object-based authenticity: the overall architecture and impression of the building; peculiarities about the interior design/furnishings, the way the site blends with the attractive landscape/scenery/historical ensemble/town, the information about the site and found it interesting; • Existential authenticity: special arrangements, events, concerts, celebrations connected to the site, during the visit I felt the related history, legends, and

		<p>historical personalities, I enjoyed the unique religious and spiritual experience, I like the calm and peaceful atmosphere during the visit, I felt connected with human history and civilization.</p>
Zhang (2008)	Antique town type cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape: overall street layout, street style, surrounding garden landscape, bridge and water scene, alley scene; • Architecture: architecture structure, architecture decoration, architecture style, interior furniture arrangement; • Retail: shop management style, shop design, shop operators, souvenir materials, souvenir characteristics, souvenir culture, souvenir types; • Local characteristics: the lifestyle of local residents, local residents' relationships, local residents' living habits, the local language, local culture and arts, local folk customs.
Feng and Sha (2007)	Ancient village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The authenticity of ancient architecture: history, architecture scale, the integrity of the core area, the simplicity of architectural decoration, the harmony of the residents' living environment; • Living culture: the retention rate of the original residents, the continuity of the original lifestyle, local residents' pride, local residents' support and participation; • Ancient village authenticity: overall authenticity, perception and expectations.
Liao, et al. (2009)	Historical block	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ancient history and culture • Retail: folk handicraft products, specialty snacks, various specialty stores, affordable goods.
Liu (2011)	Ethnic village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architecture: the architecture of minority nationalities, historical sites; • Local characteristics: local customs, festivals, religious beliefs, traditional skills, village atmosphere, handicrafts, special dishes, the lifestyle of local residents

Lin and Hu (2013)	Industrial cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architectural authenticity: history, architecture scale, the integrity of the preserved architecture, the simplicity of architectural decoration; • Industrial culture authenticity: retention rate of production equipment, authentic performances or demonstrations, visitor participation, the integrity of cultural history; • Industrial heritage authenticity: local connotation display, overall authenticity, perception and expectations, consistency of business and cultural goals.
-------------------	------------------------------	---

Table 2. Determinants of visitors' authenticity perception by scholars

As can be observed from Table 2, the tourists' authenticity perception determinants include architecture, attractions, activities/performances, aboriginal life, crafts, food, religious beliefs, cultural atmosphere, visitor participation, family, etc. In conclusion, the determinants are divided into the tourists' perception of the tourism object and the feeling of the tourists' themselves (the interaction within the individual or the group).

2.4.3 Authenticity perception effect factors

Tourists may have different perceptions of authenticity due to the influence of the objective conditions, such as gender, income, education level, place of residence, etc. (see Table 3).

Waller and Lea (1999) measured differences in the pursuit of authenticity between different classes and found that students scored higher than the average citizens. Kontogeorgopoulos

(2003) conducted a study of three groups of tourists (normal tourists, explorers, and

backpackers). The outcome shows that normal tourists were less interested in authenticity than

the other two groups (Kontogeorgopoulos 2003). Lu (2007) surveyed the community residents'

perception of authenticity of Jiuzhaigou song and dancing and concluded that the economic factors and cultural identity in Jiuzhaigou are the key factors affecting the residents' perception of the authenticity of song and dancing performance, and they show significant age differences. Liao, et al. (2009) found that the local residents pay more attention to the authenticity of the architectural landscape, while the temporary residents and the ecdemic visitors will feel the historical authenticity through the purchase of the special tourism souvenirs.

Author	Authenticity Perception Effect Factors
Waitt (2000)	Gender, income, education level, position in the lifecycle, place of residence, and previous visitation.
Kontogeorgopoulos (2003)	Motivations, expectations, and behaviors of individual tourists.
Waller and Lea (1999)	Social class.
Mkono (2013)	Nationality.
Liao (2009)	Place of residence.
Gao and Zheng (2010)	Age, income, and education level.
Lu (2007)	Age, economic factors, and cultural identity.

Table 3. Authenticity perception effect factors

Therefore, summarizing the results of literature, the effect factors affecting the perception of authenticity mainly include gender, age, income, education, pre-visit experience, visitors' expectations, participation, crafts, advertising materials. According to the research needs of this thesis, I select gender, age, education, occupation, number of visits as the effect factors of tourists' perception of authenticity.

2.4.4 The relationship between motivation and authenticity perception

In the culture-historical tourism, different types of tourists have a different emphasis on authenticity perception. The understanding of the tourists' tourism motivation can make it better understand the tourists' post-tour behavior (Poria, Butler, and Airey 2003). Cohen (1988) pointed out that for tourists with different motivations, authenticity has a set of continuous states from completely true to completely false. Therefore, judging tourism authenticity should depend on what subjective criteria the tourists take. Cohen (1988) conducted an authenticity perception study of tourists with different motivations such as existence, experiencing, leisure, and exploration. The results showed that tourists with different motivations have their own views on authenticity. For instance, the first two groups (seeking for existence and experiencing) have clearer criteria for the authenticity of the destination (Cohen 1988). Moreover, Kolar (2010) explicated differences between both types (object-based and existential) and notions of authenticity (input and output) (See Table 4). It is obvious that due to different expectations, the tourists tend to gain different experience according to their own perceptions. In general, the differences in visitors' perception of authenticity will be much significant for different tourism motivation.

	Input/Drive	Output/Experience
Object-based Authenticity	Desire to visit and see original sites/artifacts, purchase souvenirs.	Experience, knowledge and enjoyment ingenuine objects, arts and crafts.

Existential Authenticity	Interest in escaping everyday life and mass tourism, getting in touch with the true self, self-actualization.	Sense of enjoyment and escape, the experience of the true self in the context of a foreign place, time and culture.
---------------------------------	---	---

Table 4. Key types and notions of authenticity in tourist (Kolar 2010)

2.4.5 The relationship between visitors' loyalty & satisfaction and authenticity perception

Xu and Wang (2011) studied the relationship between authenticity perception and tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. The study results showed that firstly, the objective and constructive authenticity perception directly affects the visitors; satisfaction and indirectly affects their loyalty; secondly, the existential authenticity perception of tourists has a negative correlation with satisfaction and loyalty; thirdly, the postmodern authenticity perception has a negative influence on their satisfaction (Xu and Wang 2011). The postmodernist tourists do not care about the authenticity of the culture-historical blocks. Moreover, Xu and Wang (2011) found that objective authenticity dimension has the greatest contribution rate in the authenticity index and is the key to enhance the tourists' intention and behavior. However, constructive and existential authenticity are the direct factors to improve the tourists' satisfaction (Xu and Wang 2011).

3. BACKGROUND - CASE STUDY

3.1 History of Xietang Old Street

Xietang names found in literature as early as the Southern Song Chunyou years, which date back 760 years (SIPCTD 2015). The original Xietang Market was in the area of Wangmu Village (XTLJ 2012). During the Ming and Qing Dynasties, the market moved north of the Xietang River and a market town was formed (XTLJ 2012). In the Southern Song Dynasty, the Xietang town had consisted of a rich landscape of water and land passages. At the beginning of Qing Dynasty, due to commercial prosperity and an increasing population, the Xietang Market Town was divided into two parts by the Zhongtang River and is commonly known as North Xietang and South Xietang (XTLJ 2012). The concepts of North Xietang and South Xietang first appeared in the “Yuanhe County Records” in the Qing Dynasty in 1740 (XTLJ 2012). Xietang Old Street was the prosperous area of the South Xietang.

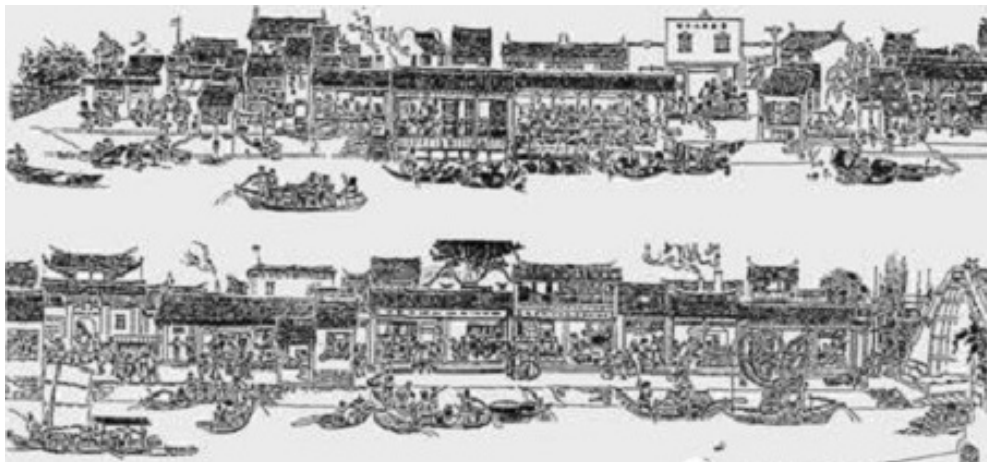


Figure 1. Old view of Xietang Old Street

North Xietang was destroyed in the war during the Qing Xianfeng years (XTLJ 2012). South Xietang was built on the Jinji Lake dam, and the economy kept growing. It formed a famous market street, which is located at the current Xietang Old Street site (XTLJ 2012). According to “Suzhou Old Street Records”, the Xietang Old Street was formed 0.93 miles to the east of Jinji Lake in the Qing Dynasty (XTLJ 2012). In the early years of the Republic of China, the Wu County government set up a township office in South Xietang (XTLJ 2012). The old street in the Republic era was originally without lanes, paved with gravel and stone, and covered with sheds (XTLJ 2012). It was about 0.12 miles long, and 6.5 to 9.8 feet wide (XTLJ 2012). Shops were arranged in the north and south sides of street, and there were anti-theft wooden fences at the east and west entrances, which were called “lane gates” (XTLJ 2012). The shops in Xietang Old Street used to be small businesses operated by single families. According to “Suzhou Ming Newspaper” in 1928, there were as many as 270 shops in Xietang Old Street, such as rice shops, silk shops, sauce shops, tea house, etc. (SIPCTD 2015). In 1930, the merchants of Xietang Old Street raised funds to build a bridge called “Weimin Bridge” so that the villagers on the southern bank of the Xietang River could go shopping in the old street, making the old street quite prosperous (XTLJ 2012).



Figure 2. Old layout of Xietang Old Street

In June 2005, a large-scale relocation was carried out in the Xietang area (SIPCTD 2015). Nevertheless, the central location of the Xietang Old Street in the South Xietang has never changed during the time. However, with the changes of time, the historical function and old-fashioned charm carried by the Xietang Old Street can no longer compare the modern cities. Due to various reasons, Xietang Old Street was ruined and demolished regrettably. To reproduce the culture-historical atmosphere of Xietang, the Xietang Old Street project was put on agenda by the Suzhou Industrial Park government.



Old shops



Old Street



Old Dock



Old Dock

Figure 3. View of Xietang Old Street in the late 20th century

3.2 Project history and description

Currently, the Xietang Old Street Project is one of the ten critical cultural projects of the Suzhou Industrial Park Cultural Prosperity Plans (XTLJ 2016). Xietang Old Street is rebuilt and operated by the Suzhou Industrial Park Commercial Tourism Development Co., Ltd (SIPCTD 2015). The new Xietang Old Street is aimed at this time-honored brand to remind people to remember what happened here in the past and recall the Jiangnan Water Village featuring cultural tourism. The nature of this project remains to be a mixed-use commercial project.

- Location Analysis

In the 21st century, Suzhou is one of the central cities in the Yangtze River Delta Economic Zone. It owns five administrative districts: Gusu District, Huqiu District, Wuzhong District, Xiangcheng District and Wujiang District, and four county-level cities: Kunshan, Changshu, Taicang, and Zhangjiagang. In May 1994, the Suzhou Industrial Park (SIP) was designated and under the Wuzhong administrative district. Xietang Old Street is located in SIP (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Location of Xietang Old Street

This project has 5 districts in total, officially constructed on January 2012 and all the phases are expected to be finished in 2020. It starts from the connecting sections of Nanshi Road, Xintang Road, and south to Xietang River (Figure 5). At the beginning of the planning, it has carried out an in-depth research of its historical evolution and customs, intended to build a mixed-use commercial tourism district through the planning and design of antique architecture, Suzhou style traditional gardens, green gardening, etc. The main branding strategy for Xietang Old Street is with regards to culture.

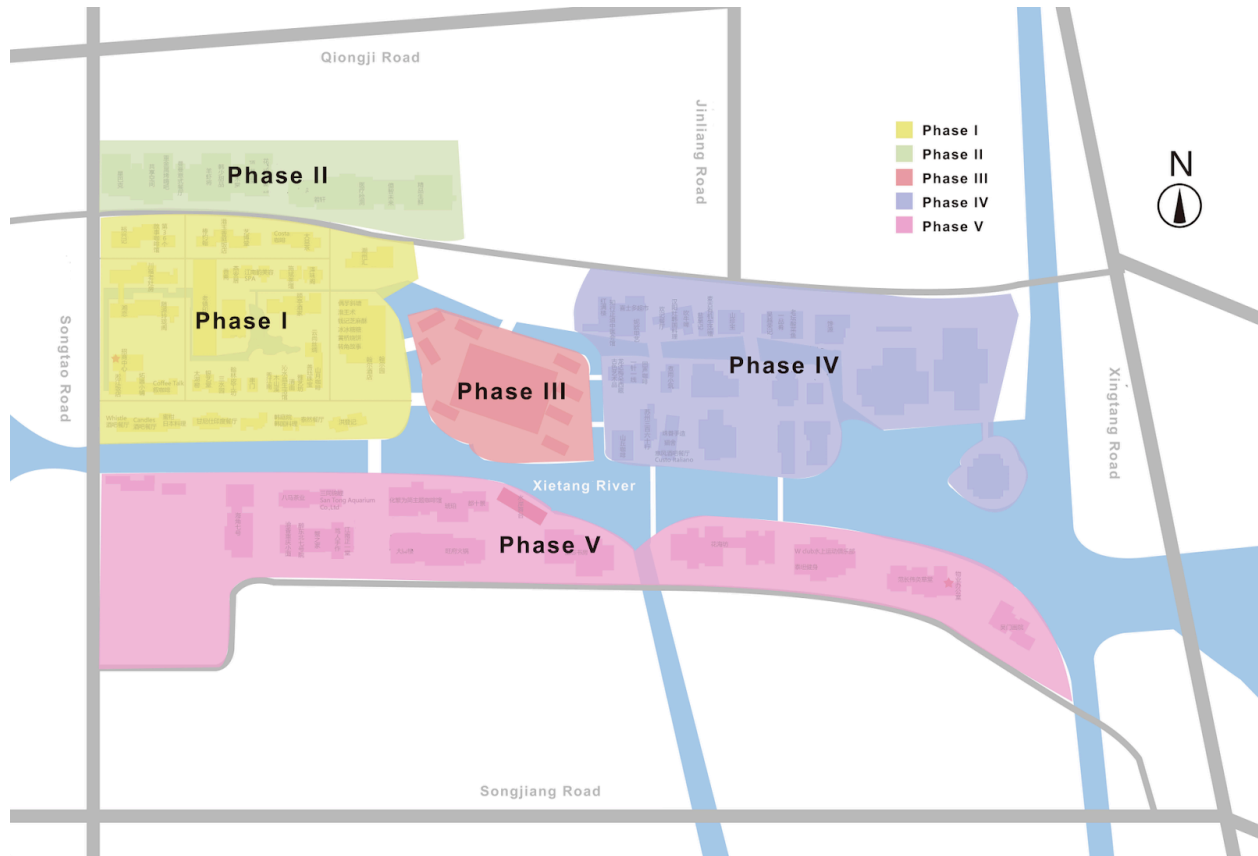


Figure 5. Project layout

- Function Division

Since the previous water and block system no longer exists, the developer had taken advantage of the riverside landscape to form three functional areas: old street area, exhibition area, and new building area (XTLJ 2016). Besides, the essential cultural scenes of the Xietang Old Street was restored according to the available data and documents, forming the original fishbone-shaped street pattern (XTLJ 2016). At the same time, it would also rebuild the old houses, old brands, and old attractions of the original Xietang Old Street. The cultural concept was consistent regardless of the previous planning process or the later investment operation. The completion of Xietang Old Street was filled with hand workshops, art studios, museums, old

brand stores, and other cultural economies new business, and inherits and displays the culture of old Suzhou.

Old Street Area

The Old Street Area is along the banks of the Xietang River in the west. The whole area uses the Xietang River as the axis to reproduce the spatial pattern of the Xietang Old Town. It reappears the phenomenon of symbiosis between the old town and river. Moreover, on the basis of the texture of the old town, the new plan integrates and reconstructs the spatial form and forms the historical block into three layers with the streets/lanes: old street, riverside commerce, and the garden landscape.



Figure 6. View of Old Street Area

Exhibition Area

The Exhibition Area is located in the middle of the Xietang River. The main functions are cultural display, artistic creation, and large-scale activities to combine with the inheritance and innovative ideas of Suzhou's intangible cultural heritage. It forms three large functional blocks: art center, cultural display, and arts & crafts.



Figure 7. View of Exhibition Area

New Building Area

The New Building Area is in the eastern part of the whole project. It also forms with a three-part layout: the commercial street in the north, the clubhouse area in the middle, and the waterfront street in the south. As for the clubhouses, all of these are designed following the Jiangnan courtyard style and lined with rivers. This area should be the most modern area in this project and should be regarded as the value-added area for the modern business.



Figure 8. View of New Building Area

CHAPTER 2

4. METHODOLOGY / RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 General research design

The study methodology will be a mixed method research. The research method used in this thesis is primarily based on the survey method, supplemented by the interview and observation method. Firstly, the whole study procedures will be based on the retrospective documents (the context, project review, and past collected secondary documents). Rich literature review and studies about the authenticity theory that have done as well as the history of the site will be studied. Secondly, both quantitative (such as the survey data) and qualitative (interview with the visitors including both Suzhou residents and tourists; observation) data will be studied to get people's perception about the authenticity of this project and this project itself. Thirdly, face-to-face deep interviews would be used with a range of visitors. 7 people from the visitors who have taken the survey will be randomly selected to do the interview after asking their own willing.

4.2 Survey

4.2.1 Survey design

Based on the existing study and literature and previous interview with the tourists, this thesis developed a research survey on the relationship among motivation, authenticity perception, and visitor loyalty & satisfaction. There are three main parts of the survey: tourism motivation, authenticity perception, and visitors' loyalty & satisfaction.

The survey is divided into two parts, including four subsections in the first part (See Appendix A). The first part is about the model-related variables - the measurement scale of visitors' motivation, authenticity perception, and visitors' loyalty & satisfaction. All the variables are measured using the 5-point Likert scale, with 1 being "very disagree/unimportant" and 5 being "very agree/important". The second part is the demographic characteristics of the sample, including gender, age, occupation, education level, etc. As introduced in the literature review part, all the indicators/determinants are designed based on the previous scholars' research to provide validation (See Appendix B).

- Visitor motivation

Within the tourist motivation section, there are two kinds of motivation variables: individual basic motivation and cultural motivation. With regard to the basic motivations of tourists visiting culture-historical blocks, I used the typological measurement clauses recommended by Middleton, Fyall, and Morgon (2009), including seeking relaxation, discovering new places and new things, enhancing knowledge, and spending time with family and friend (#1-4 in survey).

Regarding the cultural motivation of tourists, I used the measurement terms proposed by Swarbrooke (1999) and McKercher and Cros (2002), such as visiting culture-historical attractions, experiencing the real life of the local residents, etc. (#5-8 in survey).

- Authenticity perception

In order to better measure the authenticity perception indicators, only two types of authenticity perception which can easily be assessed will be considered, namely object-based authenticity and existential authenticity.

As for the object-based authenticity, we will not distinguish whether it is objective authenticity or constructive authenticity. Object-based authenticity is a dynamic process and also has different levels of degree. For example, the historical commercial reproductions are authentic as long as they are recognized by tourists (Poria, Butler, and Airey 2003). Many tourists can also find authenticity from the commercialization of history, relics, and culture (Waitt 2000). Therefore, the object-based authenticity contains both objective authenticity and constructive authenticity. What the object-based authenticity concerned is the physical reality, such as building, street layout, landscape design, tourist souvenirs, and other material-based tourism attractions. It refers to #9-14 in the survey.

As for the existential authenticity, it includes intra-personal authenticity and inter-personal authenticity (Wang 1999). The elements of existential authenticity are related to the feelings, emotions, and experiences of a particular site, such as a unique spiritual experience, the intention of understanding history, and feeling of communication with human history and civilization (Naoi 2004). It is mainly caused by activity-related authenticity, for example, cultural activities, gaining knowledge of historical events or figures, religious atmosphere, etc. When referred to the survey design, they are #15-20.

- Visitors' loyalty & satisfaction

The visitors' loyalty & satisfaction indicators refer to the empirical research of many scholars, using the willingness to recommend and willingness to revisit. In this survey design, I used the terms in Kolar (2010) and Gallarza, Saura, and Garcia (2006) about the visitors' loyalty and satisfaction. They are #26-31 in the survey.

4.2.2 Sample Size and Selection

This qualitative study was based mainly on convenience sampling (e.g. in terms of intercepting the tourists for survey and interviews). With ethical considerations, respondents were invited to participate voluntarily in the study and they were asked to sign a consent form prior to the interview. In choosing respondents, the researcher asked potential respondents within the Xietang Old Street site, introduced herself and provided them with the reason for survey. Two general types of visitors were selected in the study: Suzhou residents and tourists from the other cities.

As for the sample size, it is determined based on the similar former studies. According to the former studies by Dai (2012) and Liu (2011). Both studies conducted survey under the sample size of 200. Therefore, my study is also aimed at 200 sample size. The qualitative statistics will be 5-10 interviewees enrolled into the study. Researchers will ask each interviewee whether they are willing to take the additional interview. The interviewees will be simply based on the time order, which is that I will ask from the first interviewee about the willing of taking the interview.

4.2.3 Research model and hypothesis

Studying the relationship among tourists' motivation, authenticity perception, and visitors' loyalty & satisfaction is of the great significance of the development and evaluation of the archaized block projects in the tourism industry. Since the particularity of Xietang Old Street, although it is not an authentic culture-historical block, under proper development strategy, operation and management, its authenticity could be perceived by the visitors to some extent. As discussed before, according to different subjects' perceived perspectives, the visitors might still feel authenticity even if they know the nature of the projects.

Based on the literature review and previous studies, a research model and indicator system is constructed for this thesis (Kolar and Zbkar 2010) (See Figure 9). In this model, the tourists' motivation includes both basic tourism motivation and cultural motivation indicators.

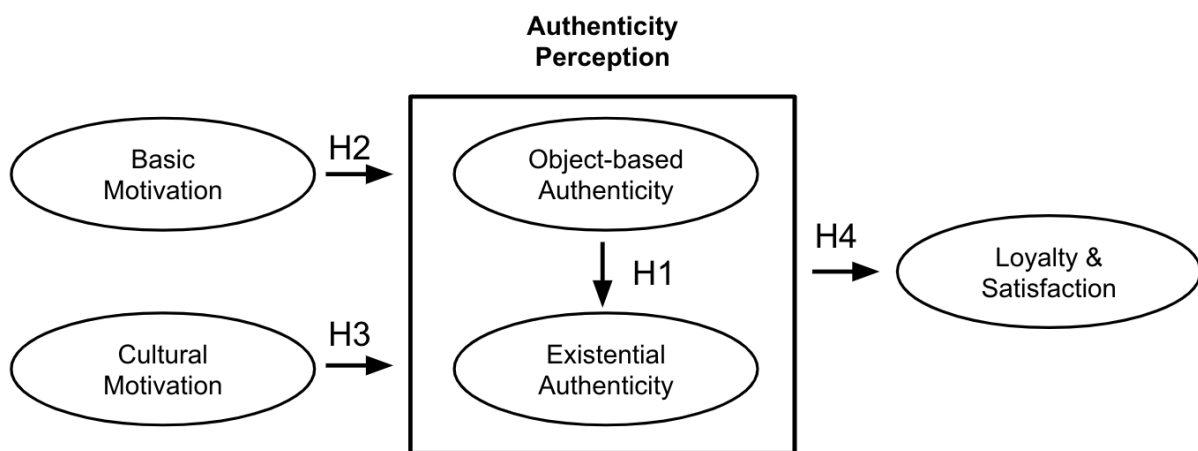


Figure 9. Model diagram

In this model, I propose four hypotheses to study the correlation among tourists' motivation, authenticity perception, and visitors' loyalty & satisfaction:

- Relationship between object-based authenticity and existential authenticity

Although Wang (1999), the proposer of existential authenticity, believed that the object-based authenticity is completely irrelevant to existential authenticity, Kolar and Zabkar (2010) thought that the managers could actively influence the experience of tourists by providing entities such as authentic art. Zhao and Li (2012) believed that in the context of tourism, existential authenticity can never be irrelevant to tourism objects. Only when the object-based authenticity has influence in the existential authenticity, the marketing strategies proposed by the tourism operators are necessary and have room to improve. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is proposed as below:

- H1: Object-based authenticity significantly positively affects existential authenticity

- Relationship between motivation and authenticity

The relationship between motivation and authenticity has been discussed in section 2.4.4. Motivation will affect people's expectations. According to Chhabra, Healy, and Sills (2003), the highly engaged and historically interested tourists can perceive a higher level of authenticity.

Based on this, hypothesis 2 & 3 are proposed as below:

- H2: Tourists' basic motivation significantly negatively affects authenticity perception.
- H3: Tourists' cultural motivation significantly positively affects authenticity perception.

- Relationship between visitors' loyalty & satisfaction and authenticity

The relationship between visitors' loyalty & satisfaction and authenticity has also been discussed in section 2.4.5. Therefore, hypothesis 4 is proposed as below:

- H4: Authenticity perception significantly positively affects visitors' loyalty & satisfaction

4.2.4 Data collection

From February to March 2019, the survey was distributed in Xietang Old Street, Suzhou. A total of 250 questionnaires were distributed, 230 were returned, and 230 valid questionnaires were received. The recovery rate of the questionnaire was 92%, and so was the effective questionnaire rate.

4.2.5 Data analysis

- Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics mainly refers to the values, such as mean, percentage, and standard deviation, to understand the distribution and structure of the sample under investigation. The indicators that need to be descriptive statistical analysis in this study are gender, age, education level, occupation, identity, number of visits; authenticity perception. The analysis software is SPSS v18.

- Canonical Correlation Analysis

Canonical Correlation Analysis is used to study the correlation between a set of X and a set of Y data. It uses the principle of principal component analysis (PCA) idea, combined with the

correlation between variables in each set, to find one or a few typical variables to represent and replace the original set of variables. Therefore, it is a method for data dimension reduction.

According to the survey design, indicators can be merged into a larger set to study canonical correlation (See Table 5). The analysis software is SPSS v18.

Survey Number	Set Y1
#1-4	Basic motivation
#5-8	Cultural motivation
#9-14	Object-based authenticity
#15-20	Existential authenticity
#26-31	Loyalty & satisfactions

Table 5. Data dimension reduction for indicators

4.3 Interview

Interviews are supplement information to the whole study. The purpose of the interviews is to understand an individual's perception of Xietang Old Street based on their own feelings and activities. The format of the interview is a semi-structured interview model to guide interviewees during the process. According to the immediate response, more conversation and appropriate questioning were carried out rather than the prepared interview questions (See Appendix C). 7 interviewees were randomly selected based on their own willingness. All the interviews were conducted after the survey and took about 30 minutes for each interviewee.

4.4 Observation

Observation refers to a method of researcher to collect and record information about the research subject through direct observation of the physical components or the behavior of the events. In this thesis study, the researcher will be viewed as a participant to feel the authenticity of architecture, landscape, layout, activities, cultural events of Xietang Old Street when visiting.

5. FINDINGS

5.1 Survey

5.1.1 Descriptive data analysis

The survey outcome shows that the number of male and female samples were 120 and 110 respectively, accounting for 52.17% and 47.83%. The gender ratio is balanced. As for the age structure, the sample size for each age group are 0-18 (0.43%), 18-25 (12.61%), 26-30 (5.22%), 31-40 (23.91%), 41-50 (40%), 51-60 (9.13%), and above 60 (8.7%). The major age group would visit Xietang Old Street are aged between 41 and 50, who are middle-aged people. The number of visitors with college education or above reached 161, account for 70%. This shows that the quality of visitors coming to Xietang Old Street is high. In terms of the occupation, 43% of the respondents are from the company employees. And the second largest proportion is from the government and public institution, which accounts for 14.8%. The third largest proportion is students (9.6%). The remaining respondents work as the private business owner, freelancers, scholars, retirees and the other respectively.

Variable	Categories	Frequency
Gender	Female	47.8%
	Male	52.2%
Age	Under 18	0.4%
	18-25	12.6%
	26-30	5.2%

	31-40	23.9%
	41-50	40.0%
	51-60	9.1%
	Above 60	8.7%
Education level	High school and below	12.2%
	Junior College	17.8%
	Undergraduate	49.1%
	Graduate and above	20.9%

Table 6. Socioeconomic characteristics of respondents

Since Xietang Old Street is for commercial usage, there are no residents within this block. Thus, all the respondents will be regarded as visitors, including both Suzhou residents and tourists. In the total of 230 respondents, 21 visitors (9.13%) are living in Suzhou Industrial Park. This group of visitors can be regarded as nearby residents. 58 respondents (25.22%) are from the other districts of Suzhou. 151 visitors (65.65%) are from the other provinces in China. The data shows that the major visitors attracted by Xietang Old Street are not from the local. It shows that this project has certain popularity for the tourists coming to Suzhou. Within the tourists from the other provinces, 30 are from Shanghai. 32 people are original from Jiangsu Province. It indicates that the majority of the visitors are within this province and the adjacent Shanghai municipality.

More than half of the respondents (51.3%) have only come to Xietang Old Street once. 39 respondents (16.96%) have been here for more than 5 times. To be more detailed, 88.1% of people who have only come to this site one time are tourists from the other cities. For those who have visited for more than 5 times, 35.9% of them are nearby residents living in Suzhou Industrial Park; and 89.8% of them are living in Suzhou.

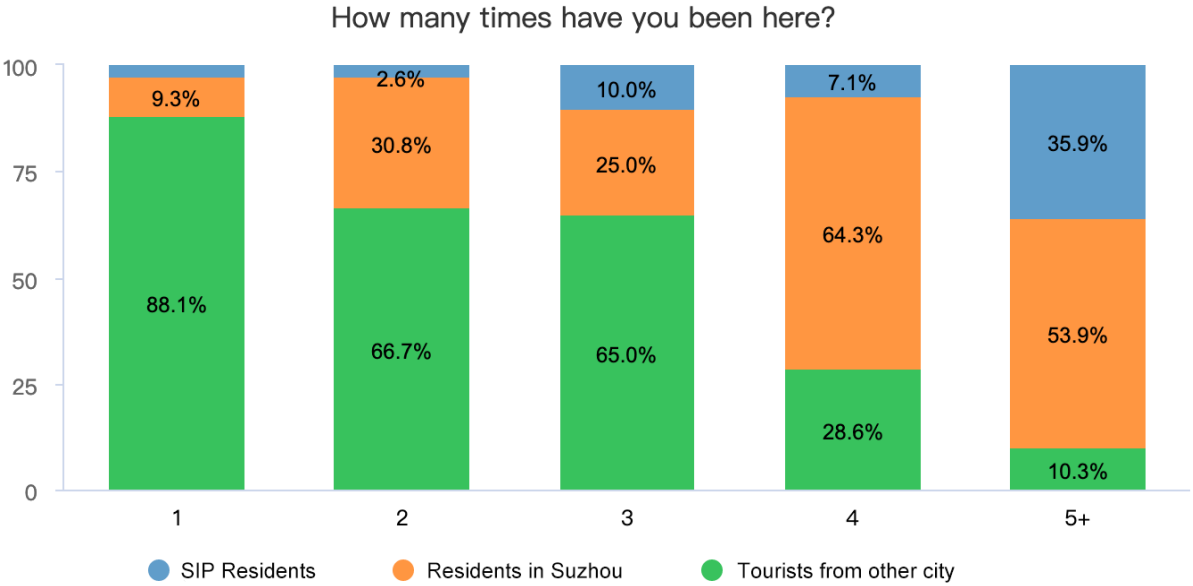


Figure 10. Frequency of visiting Xietang Old Street by different groups

Since the study focus is the perception-based authenticity from the visitors. All the indicators about the perception-based authenticity will be analyzed to show which aspect of Xietang Old Street feels the most authentic according to the visitors.

Among all the authenticity indicators, the architectural style of Xietang Old Street ranked the highest. The second place is the landscape of the block such as Suzhou garden view, arch bridge, alleys, etc. When visiting this place, the construction of these physical settlements is

really impressive. Although it is an archaized block, all the buildings and landscape try to restore an authentic Suzhou garden block. Many buildings were designed and built deliberately old-fashioned. Maybe this kind of design does not comply with the market atmosphere in Xietang Old Market, however from the data, it shows that people really enjoy this kind of Suzhou style design.

The lowest two indicators are the local cultural events and local residents' real life. It can be understood due to its special context. Xietang Old Street has established many cultural events such as lantern festival. However, they are only meant to a certain period of time or a certain day. During the survey period, there are no special events held in Xietang Old Street. So, the visitors cannot participate in the local cultural events. As emphasized before, Xietang Old Street is totally a commercial project which does not include any residential usage. Therefore, there are no local residents live in this area, and correspondingly, there are none expression of the local residents' real life. The only representation could be the bronze status in the block, showing the ancient market scene of the Xietang Old Market.

When comparing the object-based authenticity and existential authenticity indicators, the average scores for object-based authenticity are higher than existential authenticity. This point indicates that the physical authenticity structure of Xietang Old Street project is successful. It constructed the traditional Suzhou style block and brought back the old environment. However, because of the inability of participants involving in the experience of the culture-historical block, tourists are mostly lounging around without specific cultural purpose. In general, all the scores

for authenticity perception is higher than 3. It indicates that most of the visitors are satisfied with the Xietang Old Street and they can perceive authenticity from this archaized block more or less.

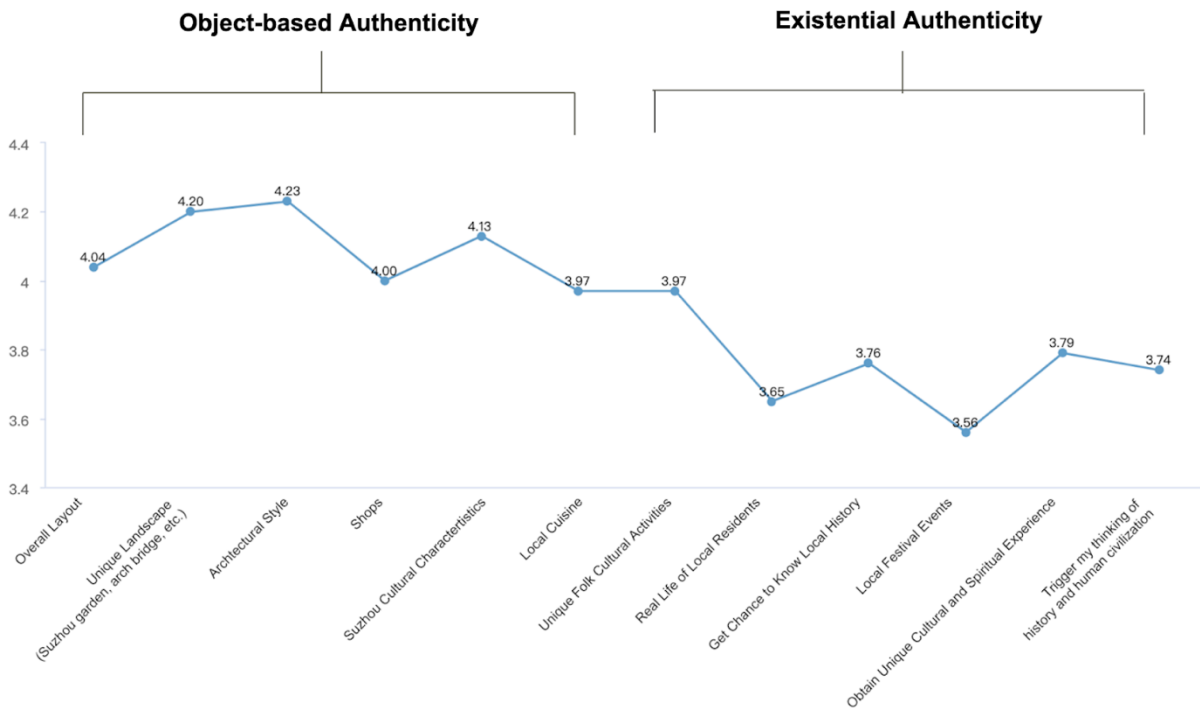


Figure 11. Average score for authenticity perception (all respondents)

Since there are two target groups for this survey: Suzhou residents and tourists. Within the Suzhou residents, they are also divided into two groups: one is SIP residents, another is Suzhou residents from the other districts. Their authenticity perceptions will also be studied separately. From Figure 12, It can be seen that the general authenticity scores for SIP residents are lower than that of Suzhou residents and tourists from other cities. The reason for this distinctiveness might be that the SIP residents are more familiar with the history of old Xietang town and development of Xietang Old Street project. For them, this project is more like a

commercial project instead of an authentic culture-historical project. The scores of Suzhou residents and tourists from other cities are similar while the tourists' scores are slightly lower than that of the Suzhou residents. The reason for that might be the expectation of the tourists will be higher than the Suzhou residents. Xietang Old Street would just be a destination for leisure for the Suzhou residents. There are few cultural motivations for the Suzhou residents. However, as for the tourists, they might come to Xietang Old Street with certain purpose. Since Xietang Old Street is an archaized street, which cannot be compared with the other more famous historical blocks in Suzhou such as Pingjiang Road and Shantang Street, the tourists might feel inauthentic about the block under this circumstance.

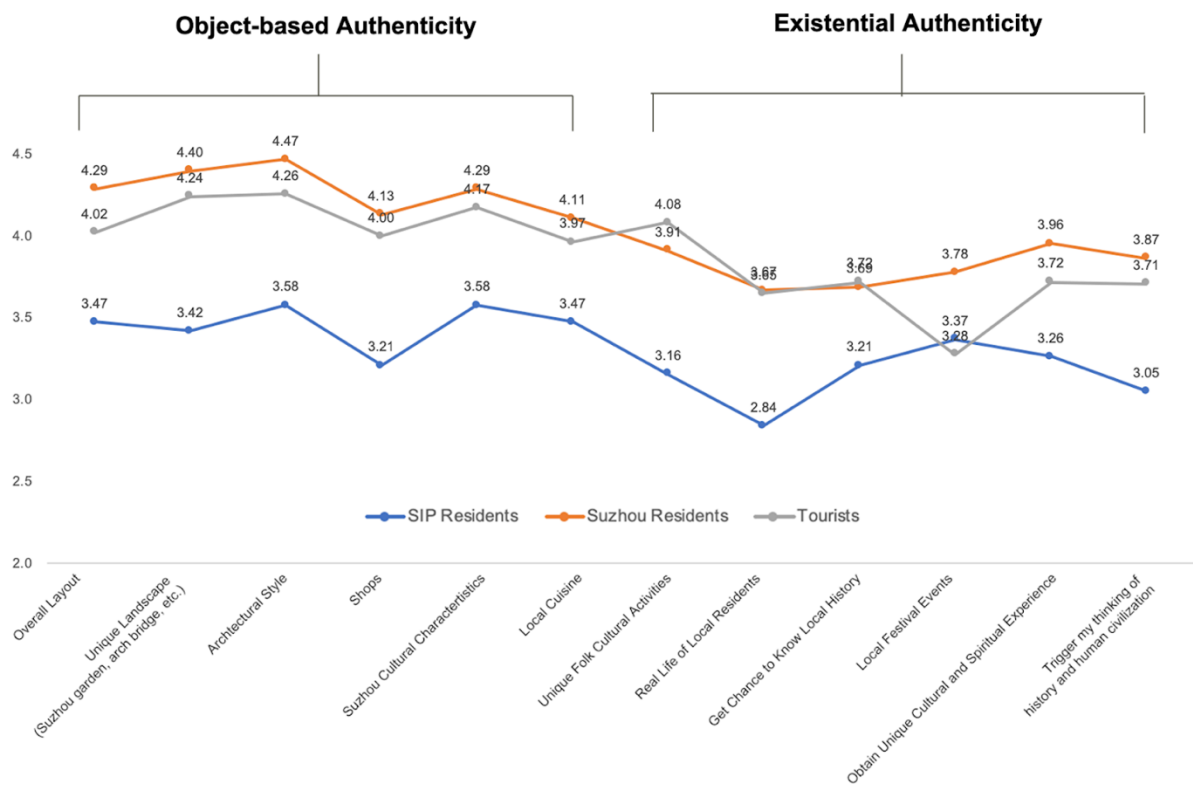


Figure 12. Average score for authenticity perception (different groups)

Except for the above authenticity perception indicators, several more indicators regarding people's opinions of Xietang Old Street were also surveyed. 71.74% of the respondents think this block is very commercial. 68.25% of the respondents know that Xietang Old Street is an archaized block. The other 31.75% of people do not know that. 49.57% of the respondents know this project very well, such as its project background, construction year and so on. 50.03% of the respondents know nothing about the project before coming. 46.96% of the respondents hold the view that there are many fake tourist attractions in this block. While 53.04% do not think that.

From these indicators, we can say that people's understanding of Xietang Old Street is not so clear and tends to be polarized. People who know this project before will have a more comprehensive understanding of this block, based on that they can provide a fairer evaluation of the authenticity of this block and will be influenced by the objective factors. Nevertheless, for those who do not know about this block, their perception of authenticity will mainly rely on their subjective feeling during the visit. However, in general, people's attitude to Xietang Old Street is accepted.

5.1.2 Canonical Correlation Analysis (CCA)

In order to further study the relationship among tourists' motivation, authenticity perception, and visitors' loyalty & satisfaction, the canonical correlation analysis was conducted. As explained before, CCA is used to study the correlation between a set of X and a set of Y data to reduce data dimension. This method is used for testing the hypotheses among sets of indicators.

- Relationship between object-based authenticity and existential authenticity

- H1: Object-based authenticity significantly positively affects existential authenticity

From Table 7 (See Appendix D), it can be seen that a total of 6 pairs of typical variables are extracted. The canonical correlation analysis shows that there are 6 canonical correlation coefficient values, of which 1 pair shows significances ($P < 0.05$), and the canonical correlation value is 0.851 (positive). The result indicates that there a significantly positive correlation between variables: object-based authenticity and existential authenticity. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was proved: Object-based authenticity significantly positively affects existential authenticity.

- Relationship between motivation and authenticity

- H2: Tourists' basic motivation significantly negatively affects authenticity perception.

From Table 8 (See Appendix D), it can be seen that a total of 4 pairs of typical variables are extracted. The canonical correlation analysis shows that there are 4 canonical correlation coefficient values, of which 2 pairs show significances ($P < 0.05$), and the canonical correlation value is 0.773 and 0.569 respectively (positive). The result indicates that there a significantly positive correlation between variables: tourists' basic motivation and authenticity perception. Therefore, hypothesis 2 was unproved: Tourists' basic motivation significantly does not negatively affect authenticity perception.

- H3: Tourists' cultural motivation significantly positively affects authenticity perception.

From Table 9 (See Appendix D), it can be seen that a total of 4 pairs of typical variables are extracted. The canonical correlation analysis shows that there are 4 canonical correlation coefficient values, of which 3 pairs show significances ($P < 0.05$), and the canonical correlation value is 0.803, 0.366, and 0.347 respectively (positive). The result indicates that there a significantly positive correlation between variables: tourists' cultural motivation and authenticity perception. Therefore, hypothesis 3 was proved: Tourists' cultural motivation significantly positively affects authenticity perception.

- Relationship between visitors' loyalty & satisfaction and authenticity
 - H4: Authenticity perception significantly positively affects visitors' loyalty & satisfaction

From Table 10 (See Appendix D), it can be seen that a total of 6 pairs of typical variables are extracted. The canonical correlation analysis shows that there are 4 canonical correlation coefficient values, of which 3 pairs show significances ($P < 0.05$), and the canonical correlation value is 0.874, 0.389, and 0.356 respectively (positive). The result indicates that there a significantly positive correlation between variables: tourists' cultural motivation and authenticity perception. Therefore, hypothesis 4 was proved: Authenticity perception significantly positively affects visitors' loyalty & satisfaction.

From the testing of the above hypotheses, we can make conclusion to the model diagram as below:

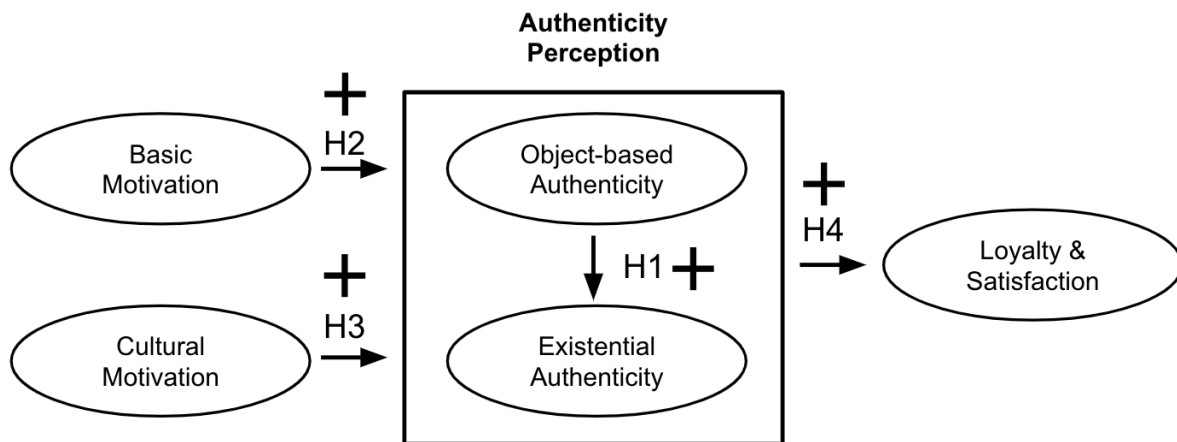


Figure 13. Relationships among motivation, authenticity perception, and loyalty & satisfaction in Xietang Old Street

5.2 Interview

Except for the survey, interviews were conducted to learn about the individual's opinions about Xietang Old Street and its authenticity. 7 interviewees were chosen randomly. Among them, 2 are SIP residents living nearby; 3 are Suzhou residents from the other districts; and 2 are tourists from the other cities in China. In general, each individual holds quite different opinions regarding the authenticity in Xietang Old Street, which is largely influenced by their own experiences. Several questions are prepared, and I obtained the following conclusions through content analysis:

- Have you felt the culture-historical authenticity when you visited the Xietang Old Street?
If so, please describe it specifically.

Among the 7 interviewees, 5 of them pointed out that the architectural style, landscape design, and layout have made them feel about the traditional Suzhou culture. Nevertheless, one of them said that as for authenticity, it is still doubtful. She can only feel the culture, but not the authentic historical atmosphere. Another interviewee said that there is no culture-historical atmosphere in Xietang Old Street. It should not be equivalent to the old Xietang Market. From this question, we can see that the object-based authenticity can be easily perceived by the visitors. But constructive authenticity is inconspicuous for visitors.

- Recently, the culture-historical block projects are very popular in China. What are the advantages and disadvantages of Xietang Old Street, as an archaized block, compared with other culture-historical blocks?

Among the 7 interviewees, as for the advantage of this archaized project, all the respondents praised its outdoor set and architectural facades. The scenery contains the historical memory during visiting. 4 people mentioned its position advantage. They pointed out it is the only one old street in Suzhou Industrial Park and also the nearest to Shanghai. Since the Suzhou Industrial Park is in overall modern style. The existence of Xietang Old Street has added a different image for this district.

As for the disadvantages, each interviewee has different opinions: 2 of them mentioned that Xietang Old Street is too commercial and can hardly feel its culture-historical atmosphere. 2 of them thought it is too far from the city center and other culture-historical attractions. Due to its historical unknown, few people will come here specifically for sightseeing.

- Can archaized projects take into account the commercial uses and culture-historical uses at the same time? Do you think Xietang Old Street is taking care of both purposes or more focusing on one of them?

All the interviewees believed that the archaized can take commercial purpose and culture-historical purpose at the same time. As for Xietang Old Street, 4 of them thought it has done both sides, while the remaining 3 thought it focus more on commercial use.

After the interview, it can be seen that everyone's opinion is different. It is hard to judge the authenticity of Xietang Old Street as a conclusion. Each interviewee's response could only be treated as a special case according to their own experience and perception, which verifying the constructive authenticity concept in the case.

5.3 Observation

Xietang Old Street is the junction of the river bank for merchants gathering historically. How to integrate these histories into the contemporary urban planning, and to combine the renewal and continuation of history and culture is the primary problem facing for the project design and operation.

- Water network, linear street space and courtyard space

The water network is not only the main component of the Jiangnan space's ecological environment, but also an important factor affecting the development and changes of the spatial pattern. The villages in water towns in Suzhou are built with water or surrounded by the water

system. Due to the presence of the water network and river channel, the waterfront area has a unique linear space texture. The manifestation is that the street follows the river and the buildings are built along the river, which creates a linear movement that conforms to the river (See Figure 14). Its formation and protrusion are repeated in parallel by water network, linear street space, and courtyard space, forming a linear construction relationship (See Figure 15). According to the research, the streets and water network of Xietang Old Market is an interchange system, including rivers, riverside streets, lanes, alleys, bridges, etc. In the new Xietang Old Street project, through the combing of the texture of the original river roads and the ruins, as well as the interweaving combination of different forms of public space, the whole plan restores the various space to recall the Xietang's old scenery. When walking in the block, people can easily perceive it is a Jiangnan style block.

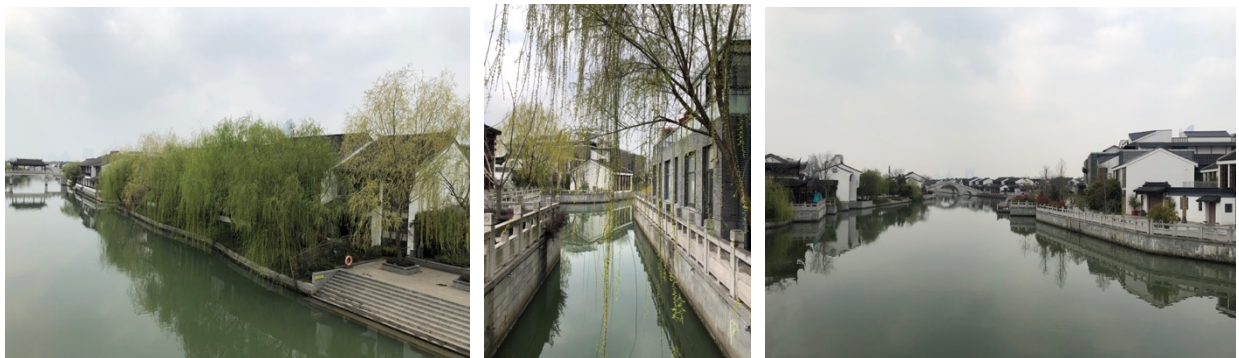


Figure 14. Water network in Xietang Old Street



Figure 15. Linear street space and courtyard space

The concept of a traditional courtyard refers to an open space defined by surrounding enclosing elements in a building or building complex. It plays a transitional role that combines various functional elements in the traditional dwelling and is also the center of family activities. The courtyard of the Jiangnan water town dwellings is realized by the hollow surrounded by the building entity and has the characteristics of the symmetry. In the design of Xietang Old Street, under the premise of the form of original buildings, it merged and reorganized the courtyards of different sizes, aiming at reproducing it in an orderly manner. The characteristics of the Suzhou style garden were adopted in the design of the courtyard and the old attractions, which evoke the vicissitudes and textures of the old street. Nevertheless, the overall courtyard design of Xietang Old Street tends to be more similar to the Suzhou garden style instead of the small courtyards for the common people, which seems to be exaggerated (See Figure 16).



Figure 16. View of Suzhou garden style

- Architecture and landscape

The unique features of the buildings in the Yangtze River area are that the walls are white and gray, and the wood is brown or brownish red. The overall hue is light and clean. Moreover, the traditional architectural symbols such as doors, lattice windows, and cornices varied. In Xietang Old Street, these traditional buildings and landscape symbols of Jiangnan water town are well selected, such as gray tiles, white walls, gray bricks, stone arch bridge, etc. (See Figure 17).



Figure 17. Jiangnan style architecture and landscape

In addition, Xietang Old Street project fully considers the “old” elements to show the historical style of the old Xietang Market. In the pavement of the Xietang Old Street, a large number of acquired materials from the old Xietang site were used (See Figure 18). There are many bronze

statues in this block to present the old market scene to the visitors, including tea house, wood shop, wheat shop, etc. (See Figure 19).



Figure 18. Old construction materials



Figure 19. Bronze statues showing old Xietang life

- Activities

During the visit, there are not enough cultural events in this block. There is a folk museum, but it is unopened (See Figure 20). There are not so many Suzhou style restaurants. The only two are noodle restaurants and merienda restaurants (See Figure 20). There are performers playing Suzhou Pingtan in the hotel lobby and one restaurant, but it can only be enjoyed by the guests (See Figure 20). From the author's own opinions, it is inauthentic regarding culture-historical events. All of these are commercial.



Figure 20. Activities in Xietang Old Street

(From left to right: left - the closed folk museum; middle - one of the Suzhou style restaurants; right - performers at the lobby of the hotel playing Suzhou Pingtan)

CHAPTER 3

6. DISCUSSION: PLANNING IMPLICATION

6.1 Perception base authenticity of Xietang Old Street

In recent years, under the guidance of constructive authenticity theory, some historical blocks have been reconstructed. After becoming a pure development model, these blocks have lost their original historical atmosphere, and full of re-created tourism resources. The integrity and continuity of history cannot be seen. Xietang Old Street is definitely one of them. But it also has differences. The original intention of Xietang Old Street project is to recall the history and scene of Xietang Old Market in Suzhou Industrial Park. If there is no this project, the site of Xietang might be used for the totally modern residential or commercial use, and the past of Xietang will surely be forgotten by the future generations.

We should put the right mindset and expectation on this project, admitting it as a commercial project. We can admit that it is a successful commercial project in Suzhou. While at the same time, we should rationally analyze the authenticity that it tries to bring back. The whole project itself is inauthentic and it cannot be admitted as a successful tourism project. However, since authenticity could be perceived by the visitors, we can further study on the perception-based authenticity for this kind of archaized projects. In general, on one hand, Xietang Old Street is successful and authentic in the overall physical design and planning. It might not restore the Xietang Old Market one hundred percent, while it distinguishes itself well, as a traditional block, from the surroundings and also in Suzhou Industrial Park district. On the other hand, It still has a

long way to improve its culture-historical events and atmosphere to make this place more authentic and inherit the Suzhou culture.

6.2 Common issues in archaized blocks development

Since the 1990s in China, there is a counterfeit project fever in China to imitate the western architectural styles, which have aroused heated discussion. A number of new projects called Roman towns, Thames towns, and Florentine towns are built. At the moment of emphasizing the local cultural heritage, there has also emerged many archaized towns and blocks relying on local history and architectural style. They have become an important space carrier for demonstrating Chinese traditional culture and aesthetic spirit. However, in some places, regardless of the actual situation, the local government rushed to imitate and fought to create this kind of archaized towns. From its appearance, the small bridges, retro house, caved beams seem to be rich in culture, but in fact is lack of profound uniqueness. Many of them have been abandoned by the market.

These failed archaized blocks have not been able to achieve sustainable development, mainly for the following reasons. First, many of them just simply applied the model from other successful examples. And they do not have the chance to carefully study the unique natural mechanisms and resources of each project and location. For instance, one city has two similar Jiangnan style blocks, separated by less than ten miles, but with similar spatial pattern and functions. Second, there is a lack of deep exploration of history and culture. Some planners rely

solely on the fragmented online knowledge to do the plan and failed to dig into the local cultural resources. Third, some projects are unrealistic to operate and has a misunderstanding of the real needs and actual consumption power of the people. For example, in some areas where the population is not high, transportation is inconvenient, and public services are insufficient, it is difficult to support the tourism projects over here and will result in a number of unfinished projects.

When retrospect to Xietang Old Street, it is successful among these archaized projects around the country. The primary reason for this project should be the full respect for the original site and original appearance. It emphasized the “old” and reproduced the Jiangnan waterfront old street.

A series of old space is created:

- Old Street: On the original location of Xietang Old Market, the restoration and reconstruction were carried out according to the original texture. In the paving, it also utilized the traditional practices of the old street and recycled the original materials of the old street for paving construction.
- Old Dwelling: On the original site, the old houses were rebuilt such as Jinzhai, Youzhai and Zhengzhai.
- Old brand shops: A number of old shops in the original Xietang Old Market were restored, including Weiji Restaurant, Zhihetang Pharmacy, Yongdaxiang Silk Shop, Xiluxuan Tea House, etc.

- Old featured landscape: The traditional architecture and landscape such as pavilion were designed. The statues were also designed to recall the historical scene.

Xietang Old Street has tried its best to make the most of the available culture-historical resources. Although it also has shortcomings, the successful points could be learned from the other archaized projects in other places.

6.3 Future development of archaized blocks

There is a clear contradiction between the modern lifestyle and the functions of the culture-historical blocks. On the one hand, China's traditional wood-framed buildings are different from western brick buildings. After more than 100 years of aging and corrosion, the availability of this kind of material is greatly reduced. Under this context, the construction of the modern archaized projects has superiority. It can be better repaired and renewed under the modern technology.

The authenticity of social life is one of the premises and basic context of the authenticity protection of culture-historical blocks and must be fully respected and valued. Almost all the archaized projects would lose these characteristics due to reality and its nature. Nevertheless, just as discussed in this thesis, authenticity could be perceived from different subjects. Although the archaized projects do not have the chance to recur the authentic social life, some attractions or activities could be delivered to show the past social life, providing the chance for the visitors to gain the sense of the cultural significance.

The culture-historical block that is presented to us today is an accumulation of diachronic evolution and will continue in the future. It is the same for the archaized blocks. Although these archaized blocks are built in modern society, the most important thing for their sustainable development is to capture the culture-historical core and try best to preserve this intangible cultural heritage. Just take Xietang Old Street as an example, in another century, it can also be called an authentic culture-historical block. Therefore, the archaized blocks should adapt to the inner social needs, retain the true historical information, and continues the dynamic historical development, which truly reflects the real history from the past, the present to the future.

7. LIMITATIONS

Due to limited research level and realistic constrained conditions, this study still has certain limitation, including:

- Since the time period of the survey is mainly from February to March 2019, this time period concludes spring festival and there are not many tourists in Xietang Old Street. The sample is limited. Moreover, due to the time frame, I chose winter as the survey season. From the field interview, in different seasons, the group of tourists is different. So does the activities held by Xietang Old Street. The future research could comprehensively inspect the visitors around the year in order to get more comprehensive and accurate samples.
- This survey only focused on the visitors' perception of authenticity in Xietang Old Street, which includes only tourists and residents. It does not pay enough attention to the other relevant stakeholders, for instance, government officials, developers, merchants, and academic experts. A more comprehensive study of the relationship among the relevant stakeholders could provide a more scientific reference for the future development of such kind of archaized projects.
- This thesis only studies the relationship among tourism motivation, two types of authenticity perceptions, and tourists' loyalty & satisfaction. There are more complicated relationships among these three variables and even more indicators for authenticity. For instance, the relationship between authenticity perception and tourists' loyalty will also

be influenced by demographic variables. The CCA method cannot fully analyze relationships.

8. CONCLUSION

This thesis first evaluates the authenticity perception level of Xietang Old Street as an archaized project, then summarizes the relationship among authenticity perception, motivations, and visitors' loyalty and satisfaction, finally critically analyzes Xietang Old Street as a complete project.

As discussed before, since the nature of this project, Xietang Old Street does not have authenticity when regarding itself. However, according to different theories of authenticity and different objects and subjects, visitors can perceive authenticity from the project and tourism experience. After the survey outcome, interview, and observation, the authenticity can be perceived by visitors especially through architecture style, street layout, and landscape.

Nevertheless, the atmosphere and activities created in Xietang Old Street are not authentic to show the cultural history. People can easily grasp that the project is a commercial project in nature instead of an authentic historical site. There are no local residents, no characteristic festivals, no special events around this area. In general, the grade for object-based authenticity is higher than existential authenticity. The outcome shows that the physical setting and material-based tourism attractions are more authentic to the visitors in Xietang Old Street, when compared to the visitors' experiences of this site.

Moreover, different subjects will perceive authenticity differently according to their origin. The SIP residents, who living near this project, will regard it to be a less authentic site than the Suzhou residents and the tourists from other cities. As for the tourists from other cities, their

authenticity perception values are less than that of the Suzhou residents, which are due to their higher cultural motivations. As for the relationships among visitors' motivation, authenticity perception, and visitors' loyalty & satisfaction in Xietang Old Street, from the canonical correlation analysis, we found that 1. object-based authenticity significantly positively affects existential authenticity, which means the successful physical setting of Xietang Old Street will improve people's subjective experience in authenticity; 2. tourists' motivation significantly affects authenticity perception, which means people who are expecting a more authentic Xietang Old Street tend to subjective themselves into a more authentic atmosphere during visiting; 3. authenticity perception significantly positively affects visitors' loyalty & satisfaction, which means once the visitors perceive authenticity, they have a high chance to recommend and revisit this place.

Regarding the project itself, we can draw conclusion that it can be called a successful commercial project in Suzhou. However, it cannot be awarded as a successful tourism project and authentic culture-historical site. All the site was reconstructed, and the authentic elements are hardly seen within the site. Although the visitors can perceive authenticity through the site, they are all based on the physical setting, that is to say, the modern design and construction make this setting. The design and construction are also not authentic when compared to the other historical sites. But for this project, since the old Xietang town was demolished, we should look upon it positively: without this project, the history or even the name of Xietang will be forgotten by the future generation forever. The project survives the name and brand of Xietang

to some extent. We are unable to build a one hundred percent authentic historical site.

Therefore, it is a good start point and there are lots of space improving this project. We can believe that Xietang Old Street can be more authentic in the future.

Chapter 4

9. APPENDIX A: Survey

Research on inauthenticity in historical area

Hello,

I am a graduate student from Columbia University and I am evaluating tourism authenticity. The survey will only take 8 minutes to complete but your feedback would be invaluable to us. All your private information will be confidential.

Thank you again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Wen CHENG

Part 1. Motivation Survey

1 means the least level of agreement, 5 means the most

You are coming to this place for :						
1	Seek relaxation	1	2	3	4	5
2	Discover new places and new things	1	2	3	4	5
3	Enhance knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
4	Spend time with family and friends	1	2	3	4	5
5	Visit historical and cultural attractions	1	2	3	4	5
6	Experience the real life of the local residents	1	2	3	4	5
7	Understand local customs	1	2	3	4	5
8	Know the history and culture	1	2	3	4	5

Part 2. Authenticity Survey

1 means the least level of agreement, 5 means the most

When visiting this place :						
9	I was impressed by the overall layout of the historical district	1	2	3	4	5
10	I like the unique landscape of the district (garden view/ arch bridge/ alleys, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
11	I like the architectural style	1	2	3	4	5
12	I think the shop design is very local and unique	1	2	3	4	5
13	The district landscape fully reflects the cultural characteristics of Suzhou	1	2	3	4	5
14	I like the special dining in this district (Su cuisine, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
15	I have experienced the unique folk cultural activities of the district (Suzhou Pingtan, Juglans carving, Suzhou embroidery, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
16	I have observed/experienced the real life of local residents	1	2	3	4	5
17	I have chance to get to know the local history	1	2	3	4	5
18	I have attended the local festival events (Mid-autumn Lantern Festivals, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
19	I obtained the cultural and spiritual experience that is unique to the district	1	2	3	4	5
20	Came to this district have triggered my thoughts on history and human civilization	1	2	3	4	5
21	I thought the historical district is very commercial	1	2	3	4	5
22	I don't think there are local features in the district's tourism products	1	2	3	4	5
23	I know that the historical district is a modern imitation project	1	2	3	4	5
24	I think that the historical district has built many fake tourist	1	2	3	4	5

	attractions					
25	I know the development history of this project	1	2	3	4	5

Part 3. Tourist Satisfaction – Loyalty Survey

1 means the least level of agreement, 5 means the most

When visiting this historical street :						
26	The purpose of visiting this historical street has been realized	1	2	3	4	5
27	It is similar to the ideal historical street	1	2	3	4	5
28	I am very satisfied with this visiting	1	2	3	4	5
29	I would like to visit this place again	1	2	3	4	5
30	I would like to recommend this place to the others	1	2	3	4	5
31	I am willing to visit the nearby attractions	1	2	3	4	5

Part 4. Background

1	Your gender : <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other
2	What year were you born: _____
3	Education level : <input type="checkbox"/> High School and below <input type="checkbox"/> Junior College <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate and above
4	Your occupation type : <input type="checkbox"/> Employees of Public Institutions <input type="checkbox"/> Company employees <input type="checkbox"/> Business Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Freelancers <input type="checkbox"/> Scholars <input type="checkbox"/> Students <input type="checkbox"/> Retirees <input type="checkbox"/> Other
5	You are : <input type="checkbox"/> Residents in SIP <input type="checkbox"/> Residents in Suzhou (including students) <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist
6	How many times have you been to Xietang Old Street? (including this time) <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5+

This is the end of the survey. Thank you again for your participation and support!

9. APPENDIX B: Survey Measurements Validation

Number	Measurement/Determinants	Validation/Reference Sources
Motivation		
1	Seek relaxation	Middleton, Fyall, and Morgon(2009)
2	Discover new places and new things	
3	Enhance knowledge	
4	Spend time with family and friends	
5	Visit historical and cultural attractions	Swarbrooke (1999); McKercher and Cros (2002)
6	Experience the real life of the local residents	
7	Understand local customs	
8	Know the history and culture	
Object-based authenticity		
9	I was impressed by the overall layout of the historical district	Waitt (2000); Poria, Butler, and Airey (2003); Feng and Sha (2007); Zhang (2008); Middleton, Fyall, and Morgon(2009); Kolar and Zabkar (2010), etc.
10	I like the unique landscape of the district (garden view/ arch bridge/ alleys, etc.)	
11	I like the architectural style	
12	I think the shop design is very local and unique	
13	The district landscape fully reflects the cultural characteristics of Suzhou	
14	I like the special dining in this district (Su cuisine, etc.)	
Existential authenticity		

15	I have experienced the unique folk cultural activities of the district (Suzhou Pingtan, Juglans carving, Suzhou embroidery, etc.)	Wang (1999); Naoi (2004); Feng and Sha (2007); Kolar and Zabkar (2010)
16	I have observed/experienced the real life of local residents	
17	I have chance to get to know the local history	
18	I have attended the local festival events (Mid-autumn Lantern Festivals, etc.)	
19	I obtained the cultural and spiritual experience that is unique to the district	
20	Came to this district have triggered my thoughts on history and human civilization	
<i>Other authenticity perception questions</i>		
21	I thought the historical district is very commercial	Questions proposed by the author related to the specific project
22	I don't think there are local features in the district's tourism products	
23	I know that the historical district is a modern imitation project	
24	I think that the historical district has built many fake tourist attractions	
25	I know the development history of this project	
<i>Visitors' satisfaction - loyalty</i>		
26	The purpose of visiting this historical street has been realized	Gallarza, Saura, and Garcia (2006); Kolar and Zabkar (2010)
27	It is similar to the ideal historical street	
28	I am very satisfied with this visiting	
29	I would like to visit this place again	
30	I would like to recommend this place to the others	
31	I am willing to visit the nearby attractions	

9. APPENDIX C: Interview Questions

1. Recently, the culture-historical block projects are very popular in China. What are the advantages and disadvantages of Xietang Old Street, as an archaized block, compared with other culture-historical blocks?
2. In your mind, can archaized projects take into account the commercial uses and culture-historical uses at the same time? Do you think Xietang Old Street is taking care of both purposes or more focusing on one of them?
3. Have you felt the culture-historical authenticity when you visited the Xietang Old Street? If so, please describe it specifically.
4. In your mind, what are the differences among Pingjiang Road, Shantang Street, and Xietang Old Street (all three old streets in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province)?
5. As for yourself, do you support such archaized projects (Support, Neutral, Oppose)?
6. Do you think that the Xietang Old Street Project is successful in terms of two aspects: business and culture-historical authenticity? If successful, what do you think is the reason for its success? Is it because of the project successful operation or the ancient town IP hotspot in China?
7. What kind of tourism products/projects/activities do you want to add to Xietang Old Street? Or what can be improved here?

9. APPENDIX D: Outcomes of Canonical Correlation Analysis (CCA)

Canonical Correlation Pairs	Canonical Correlation Coefficiency	F	P
1	0.851	10.322	0.000*
2	0.297	1.343	0.122
3	0.212	0.802	0.684
4	0.092	0.291	0.977
5	0.055	0.182	0.948
6	0.015	0.051	0.821
*p<0.05 **p<0.01			

Table 7. Canonical Correlation Coefficiency and Significance (H1)

Canonical Correlation Pairs	Canonical Correlation Coefficiency	F	P
1	0.773	7.093	0.000**
2	0.569	3.153	0.000**
3	0.223	0.769	0.752
4	0.146	0.503	0.871
*p<0.05 **p<0.01			

Table 8. Canonical Correlation Coefficiency and Significance (H2)

Canonical Correlation Pairs	Canonical Correlation Coefficiency	F	P
1	0.803	7.006	0.000**
2	0.366	2.137	0.000**

3	0.347	1.935	0.009**
4	0.220	1.185	0.306
*p<0.05 **p<0.01			

Table 9. Canonical Correlation Coefficiency and Significance (H3)

Canonical Correlation Pairs	Canonical Correlation Coefficiency	F	P
1	0.874	6.617	0.000**
2	0.389	1.907	0.000**
3	0.356	1.713	0.004**
4	0.300	1.439	0.071
5	0.242	1.145	0.311
6	0.157	0.760	0.621
*p<0.05 **p<0.01			

Table 10. Canonical Correlation Coefficiency and Significance (H4)

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baudrillard, Jean. 1983. *Simulations*. New York: Semotext(e).
- Bolz, Nadia. 1998. The user-illusion of the world (1): On the meaning of design. *Mediamatic*. Retrieved from: <http://www.medimatic.net>
- Boorstin, Daniel. 1961. *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Bruner, Edward, M. 1994. "Abraham Lincoln as authentic reproduction: A critique of postmodernism." *American Anthropologist*, 96 (2): 397-415. https://www.jstor.org/stable/681680?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents
- Chhabra, Deepak., Robert Healy, and Erin Sills. 2003. "Staged authenticity and heritage tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30 (3): 702-719. <https://www.sciencedirect.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/science/article/pii/S0160738303000446>
- Cohen, Erik. 1988. "Authenticity and commoditization in tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 15 (3): 371-386. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/016073838890028X>
- Cohen, Erik. 1995. "Contemporary Tourism - Trends and Challenges: Sustainable Authenticity or Contrived Post-modernity?" In *Change in Tourism: People, Places, Processes*, Richard Butler, and Douglas Pearce, eds. pp. 12-29. London: Routledge.
- Culler, Jonathan. 1981. "Semiotics of Tourism." *American Journal of Semiotics*, 1: 127-140. <http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/culler1.pdf>
- Dai, Yongming. 2012. "The Tourists' Perception of the Ancient Village's Authenticity: the case of Xidi & Hongcun." Master diss., *Zhejiang University*.
- Eco, Umberto. 1986. *Travels in Hyperreality*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Fan, Yulong. 2016. "The significance of the construction of city image in the antique street: Taking Jinlin Street and Kuanzhai Alley as an example." Master diss., *Sichuan Agricultural University*.
- Feng, Shuhua. and Run Sha. 2007. "You Ke Dui Gu Cun Luo Lv You De Zhen Shi Xing Man Yi Du Ce Ping Mo Xing Chu Tan." [A tentative study on the evaluation model of tourists'

- perception of the authenticity & satisfaction in ancient village tour]. *Human Geography*, 22 (6): 85-89.
- Gallarza, Martina G., Irene Gil Saura, and Haydee Calderon Garcia. 2002. "Destination image: Towards a conceptual framework." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29 (1): 56-78.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0160738301000317>
- Gao, Yan., and Miao Zheng. 2010. "Feng Huang Gu Cheng Jing Guan Zhen Shi Xing Gan Zhi Bi Jiao Yan Jiu." [A comparative study on the authenticity perceptive of landscapes in Fenghuang Ancient City - Perspectives of Fenghuang Residents and Tourists]. *Tourism Tribune*, 25 (12): 44-52.
- Hobsbawm, Eric, and Terence Ranger. 1983. *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kolar, Tomaz., and Vesna Zabkar. 2010. "A consumer-based model of authenticity: an oxymoron or the foundation of cultural heritage marketing?" *Tourism Management*, 31: 652-664. <https://www-sciencedirect-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/science/article/pii/S0261517709001368>
- Kontogeorgopoulos, Nick. 2003. "Keeping up with the Joneses: Tourists, Travellers, and the Quest for Cultural Authenticity in Southern Thailand." *Tourist Studies*, 3 (2): 171-203.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1468797603041631>
- Liao, Renjing., Qian Li, Jie Zhang, Shaojing Lu, and Qiuyin Qi. 2009. "Du Shi Li Shi Jie Qu Zhen Shi Xing De You Qi Zhe Gan Zhi Yan Jiu - Yi Nan Jing Fu Zi Miao Wei Li." [Tourists' perceived study on the authenticity of urban historical blocks - taking Confucius Temple in Nanjing as an example]. *Tourism Tribune*, 24 (1): 55-60.
- Lin, Tao., and Jialing Hu. 2013. "Gong Ye Yi Chan Yuan Zhen Xing You Ke Gan Zhi De Yan Jiu Diao Cha: Case of Shanghai." [Study on the tourists' perception of the authenticity of Shanghai industrial heritage]. *Human Geography*, 4 (132): 114-119.
- Liu, Xiaoli. 2011. "The Tourists' Authenticity evaluation study of ethnic culture tourism: the case of Xishuangbanna Keno Cottage." Master diss., *Kunming University of Science and Technology*.
- Lu, Tianling. 2007. "She Qu Ju Min Dui Jiu Zhai Gou Min Zu Ge Wu Biao Yan De Zhen Shi Xing Ren Zhi." [Community Residents' Authenticity Perception of Jiuzhaigou Nationality Song and Dance Performance]. *Tourism Tribune*, 22 (10): 89-95.

- MacCannell, Dean. 1973. "Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Setting." *American Journal of Sociology*, 79 (3): 589-603.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/2776259>
- Martinez, Placido Gonzalez. 2017. "Urban authenticity at stake: A new framework for its definition from the perspective of heritage at the Shanghai Music Valley." *Cities*, 70: 55-64. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0264275117302056>
- McIntosh, Alison. J., and Richard Prentice. 1999. "Affirming authenticity: consuming cultural heritage." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26 (3): 589-612. <https://www.sciencedirect-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/science/article/pii/S0160738399000109>
- McKercher, Bob. and Hilary du Cros. 2002. *Cultural tourism: the partnership between tourism and cultural heritage management*. New York: Routledge.
- Middleton, Victor T. C., Alan Fyall, and Michael Morgon. 2009. *Marketing in travel and tourism*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Mkono, Muchazondida. 2013. "African and western tourists object authenticity quest?" *Annals of Tourism Research*, 41: 195-214.
- Naoi, Taketo. 2004. "Visitors' evolution of a historical district: the roles of authenticity and manipulation." *Tourism and hospitality research*, 5 (1): 45-63.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23743725>
- Nicolaidis, Angelo. 2014. "Authenticity and the tourist's search for Being." *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, 3 (1): 1-11.
http://www.ajhtl.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article_4_vol.3_1_2014.pdf
- Poria, Yaniv., Richard Butler, and David Airey. 2003. "The core of heritage tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 30 (1): 238-254. <https://www.sciencedirect-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/science/article/pii/S0160738302000646>
- Prentice, Richard. 2001. "Experiential cultural tourism museum and the marketing of the new romanticism of evoked authenticity." *Museum Management and Curatorship*. 19 (1): 5-26. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09647770100201901>
- Ram, Yael., Peter Bjork. and Adi Weidenfeld. 2016. "Authenticity and place attachment of major visitor attractions." *Tourism Management*, 52: 110-122.
<https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/touman/v52y2016icp110-122.html>

- Reisinger, Yvette. and Carol J. Steiner. 2006. "Reconceptualizing object authenticity." *Annals of Tourism Research*. 33 (1): 65-86.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0160738305000897>
- Rickly, Jillian M. and Elizabeth S. Vidon. 2018. "Introduction - From Pseudo-Events to Authentic Experiences." In *Authenticity & Tourism: Materialities, Perceptions, Experiences*, Rickly, Jillian M. and Elizabeth S. Vidon, eds. pp. 1-10. Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing.
- Shi, Xiaolin. 2013. "Visitor Perspectives of the Authenticity at a Heritage Destination: South Luogu Hutong in Beijing, China." *Open Access Theses*.
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/c828/aa58b4cbbdf116715a90395daa203888e9fd.pdf>
- SIPCTD. 2015. *Xiang Mu Jie Shao* [Project Introduction of Xietang Old Street]. Accessed 16 March 2019. <http://www.suzhouxtlj.com/xiangmujianjie-299.html>
- SIPCTD. 2015. *Xietang Yi Bian* [Anecdotes of Xietang]. Accessed 16 March 2019.
<http://www.suzhouxtlj.com/xietangyibian-306.html>
- Swarbrooke, John. 1999. *Sustainable Tourism Management*. Wallingford: CABI.
- UNESCO. 1976. *Recommendation concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas*. Accessed 16 March 2019. http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13133&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
- Waitt, Gordon. 2000. "Consuming heritage: perceived historical authenticity." *Annals of Tourism Research*. 27 (4): 835-862. <https://www.sciencedirect.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/science/article/pii/S0160738399001152>
- Waller, Jo., and Stephen, E.G. Lea. 1999. "Seeking the real Spain? Authenticity and motivation." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26 (1): 110-129.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0160738398000589>
- Wang, Ning. 1999. "Rethinking Authenticity in Tourism Experience." *Annals of Tourism Research*. 26 (2): 349-370.
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.470.7142&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Wu, Hao., and Wenyong Tan. 2014. "Urban Renewal in Historical Cities in China: Exploring Methods based on Urban Form Studies." *Athens Journal of Tourism*. 1 (3): 203-216.
<https://www.atiner.gr/journals/tourism/2014-1-3-3-Wu.pdf>

- XTLJ. 2012. *Xie Tang Lao Jie Li Shi* [History of Xietang Old Street]. Accessed 16 March 2019. <http://www.xtlj.cn/about/201208065.html>
- XTLJ. 2016. *Xie Tang Lao Jie Gui Hua* [Planning of Xietang Old Street]. Accessed 16 March 2019. <http://www.xtlj.cn/about/201208064.html>
- Xu, Wei., and Xinxin Wang. 2011. "Lv You Zhen Shi Xing Gan Zhi Ji Qi Yu You Ke Man Yi, Xing Wei Yi Xiang De Guan Xi - Yi Gu Cun Luo Lv You Wei Li." [A study on authentic perception of tourists and its impact on their satisfaction and behavioral intentions - A case of ancient village tour]. *Economic Management*, 33 (4): 111-117.
- Zhang, Chaozhi. 2008. "Yuan Zhen Xing Li Jie: Lv You Yu Yi Chan Bao Hu Shi Jiao De Yan Bian Yu Cha Yi." [Authenticity Understanding: between tourism and heritage perspective differences]. *Tourism Science*, 22 (1): 1-8.
- Zhang, Chaozhi., Ling Ma, Xiaoxiao Wang, Dezhen Yu. 2008. "Fu Hao Hua De Yuan Zhen Yu Yi Chan Di Shang Ye Hua - Ji Yu Wu Zhen Zhou Zhuang De An Li Yan Jiu." [Semiotic Authenticity and Commercialization Heritage Tourism Destinations: Based on a Case Study of Wuzhen and Zhouzhuang]. *Tourism Science*, 22 (5): 59-66.
- Zhang, Jing. 2011. "Lv You Ben Zhen Xing Gai Nian De Fa Zhan." [The development of tourism authenticity theory]. *Enterprises Forum*, 15: 129-131.
- Zhao, Hongmei. and Qinglei Li. 2012. "Hui Wang Zhen Shi Xing - Yi Ge Lv You Yan Jiu De Re Dian." [Review of Authenticity: A hot spot in tourism study]. *Tourism Tribune*, 27 (5): 13-22.
- Zhou, Qilou., Jie ZMmakinghang, Honglei Zhang, and Xiang Li. 2018. "Is all authenticity accepted by tourists and residents? The concept, dimensions and formation mechanism of negative authenticity." *Tourism Management*, 67: 59-70. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0261517717302868>
- Zhu, Bin. 2005. "Wo Guo Li Shi Wen Hua Ming Cheng Yu Li Shi Wen Hua Jie Qu, Cun Zhen Bao Hu De Li Fa Yu Shi Jian" [Legislation and practice of China's historical and cultural cities, villages, and blocks]. *The National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China*. Last modified February 20, 2006. http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/bmzz/jkww/2005-12/30/content_1383747.htm. Accessed: 16 March 2019.
- Zhu, Yujie. 2012. "Performing heritage: Rethinking authenticity in tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39 (3): 1495-1513. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0160738312000527>