Authenticity & Tourism: Materialities, Perceptions, Experiences

Tourism Social Science Series

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Authenticity & Tourism: Materialities, Perceptions, Experiences

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This volume is dedicated to Professor Daniel Knudsen, our friend, our mentor, our favorite philosopher.

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Preface

October 2016. I am standing on a train platform in Bolzano-Bozen, in the heart of South Tyrol and gateway to the Italian Dolomites, having just spent three days at the "Authenticity & Tourism" workshop. Enjoying the ambiance of the variety of languages that surrounded me on that platform, an animated voice with familiar accent caught my ear: *Americans!* In most instances I would keep to myself, but hearing them mention "the folks back in Kentucky" drew me closer and I felt compelled to say hello and comment on the small world – me born and raised in southern Indiana, United States, running into people from the "Bluegrass" state in Italy.

When asked why I was in Bolzano, I said simply, "a conference", hoping not to have to talk about authenticity anymore, at least for a few days anyway.

Immediately, though, they asked for further details; "oh, well, um, on authenticity in tourism," I said.

"Oh! Really!," replied one man.

"That sounds interesting!," exclaimed his companion.

Then, the first man pushed, "like what about authenticity?", to which I responded, "well, the big question that is debated in my area of research is whether authenticity matters to tourists."

Thinking, hoping, this would sum it up and the train would arrive already. It, of course, only opened the can of worms ….

"Of course. Of course, it matters! It matters so much when *I'm* travelling", he started to explain.

I could not help myself, "oh yeah. So what types of things are you looking for when you travel? Authenticity in what sense?"

The man, and his two companions, paused for a moment of thinking before they started to mumble and get a bit tongue-tied, finally saying, "well, um, you know … the culture, stuff like that", as another spoke up, "right, the places and the people, and…", interrupted by another, "yeah, yeah, like that and history…."

Just then the train pulled into the station and through the noise and rush to get on board and find our seats, I did not see them again, which was fine. I was not especially in the mood to spend the next four hours to Munich discussing the issue (the past three days had been enough). As I settled into my seat, I jotted down notes on the encounter and chuckled. *Does authenticity matter?* Of course it does, but in ways no one has been able to fully pin down, not even the tourists who are out there searching for it. Perhaps that is what makes it so interesting for academics and for tourists − the chase.

This book has been inspired not by this moment alone, but innumerable moments like this: encounters with tourists through research, with fellow tourists while on holiday, and with myself reflexively questioning what I hope to find (and why I am sometimes disappointed with the reality). With a decade of research on the topic, I am only slightly further along in understanding this elusive concept, but just as eager to keep chasing it.

Jillian M. Rickly

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION
From Pseudo-Events to Authentic Experiences

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"Does authenticity even matter to tourists?" This was among the first questions disputed by scholars interested in theorizing the relations of tourism motivation and touristic experience. The inclusion of this concept into the earliest theories of tourism thus launched a set of debates that continue today and inspired research that has only further expanded the understanding of the multiplicitous ways in which authenticity is put into use in tourism. *Authenticity & Tourism: Materialities, Perceptions, Experiences* brings together contributions from authors who are actively engaged in authenticity research in a tourism context. In so doing, this book demonstrates the various trajectories research has taken toward understanding the significance of authenticity. In other words, these chapters support the many ways in which authenticity *does* matter.

Considering the ways authenticity matters to tourists and tourism practitioners, alike, means extending the interest in this concept beyond the question, what is authenticity? As Rickly-Boyd (2012a) suggests, inspired by the work of Bendix's (1997) work on heritage studies, while this question has been at the heart of much research, it also frequently

generates more arguments than solutions (Belhassen & Caton, 2006; Mkono, 2012). By attending, instead, to questions of how authenticity is used, who wants or needs authenticity and why, who authenticates, and what authenticity does, one is better equipped to move theory forward and address the ways in which authenticity matters. To set the stage for the chapters that follow, the discussion begins with a review of the various conceptualizations and theoretical approaches to the study of authenticity.

AUTHENTICITY AND TOURISM STUDIES

It was Boorstin's (1961) interpretation of tourism as comprised of pseudo-events that first brought authenticity into the realm of theory. His portrayal was, arguably, harsh, elitist, and overtly pessimistic, as he asserted that the "mass hordes" of tourists, later deemed *turistas vulgaris* by Löfgren (1999, p. 264), who descend upon destinations, are driven by the inauthenticity of their everyday lives. As such, the staged encountered authenticity is complicit in justifying their own alienation. Boorstin understood tourists as distinct from travelers who are willing to put in effort as they travel, in accordance with the French root of the word *travail*, whereas tourists bring with them expectations that hosts will cater to their needs. Thus, MacCannell's (1973, 1976, 1999) articulation of the role of "staged authenticity" was a reaction to more than an analytical perspective; it was also an interrogation of the ways in which researchers viewed tourists. His work shifted the focus from the tourist as an Other, a faceless mass, to tourism as ritual in which we all partake. In particular, he suggested a Marxist interpretation in which tourists engage in the modern ritual of sightseeing and seek the authentic as an antidote to their alienated, everyday lives. "Staged authenticity" does not simply fool the uneducated tourist, but is the product of sophisticated marketing, cultural (mis)perceptions, and the desire of all alienated subjects to view something "real".

Despite their disparate interpretations, what MacCannell and Boorstin, as well as many others (Cohen, 1979a, 1988; Pearce & Moscardo, 1986; Redfoot, 1984), have uncovered in researching authenticity and tourism is that the issue is not simply the need to determine the meaning of authenticity. Rather, it is put to use as a means to communicate a multitude of associations: a measure of quality, cultural perceptions, desire, motivation and expectation, an experience, and personal identity politics. Thus, Wang's (1999) survey of the field provides a useful set of theoretical perspectives from which to understand the way researchers have

approached the concept: objectivism, constructivism, postmodernism, and existentialism. Nevertheless, more recent research pushes beyond these boundaries toward psychological and performative interpretations, as well as the relationality of these approaches.

Objective Authenticity

As a "museum-linked usage", objective authenticity focuses primarily on the genuineness of objects, artifacts, and structures (Wang, 1999, p. 213; see also Chhabra, 2008; Gable & Handler, 1996; Handler, 1986; Trilling, 1972). Accordingly, it engages the following synonyms of authenticity: original, genuine, and real, such that no copy could ever be authentic. This approach to authenticity reifies the power relations of so-called "experts", as authenticity that must be certified, measured, evaluated, approved, and so forth (Barthel, 1996; Chhabra, 2008; Kidd, 2011; Coomansingh, Chapter 6; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Vidon, Chapter 13). For example, Barthel (1996) uses an objectivist perspective in her analyses of historic sites, determining authenticity based on the originality of the site, its structures, and its social context. Thus, Chhabra (2012) observes that while objectivist notions are most prominent in heritage tourism, in this context complexities regarding the means of authentication have been insufficiently developed and thus remain controversial. In other words, those who utilize objectivist perspectives are encouraged to ask questions of who authenticates and for whom is authenticity employed?

While this is an object-related approach to authenticity, Wang (1999) observes that some have attempted to draw a connection between the epistemological experience of the tourism object and the tourist's experience (Waitt, 2000). Indeed, Boorstin (1961) made just such a claim, that an inauthentic object yields an inauthentic experience, when he theorized that tourists seek pseudo-events to justify the inauthenticity of their everyday lives. However, research into perceptions of authenticity has suggested tourism experiences have little or no relation to the originality of the objects toured and constructivist perspectives are particularly useful for elucidating these relationships.

Constructive Authenticity

A constructivist approach works from the premise that "tourists are indeed in search of authenticity; however, what they quest for is not objective authenticity but *symbolic* authenticity" (Culler, 1981; Wang, 1999, p. 217).

Symbolic authenticity rejects a binary understanding of authenticity, and instead attends to the ways authenticity can be a judgment (Moscardo & Pearce, 1999), emergent (Cohen, 1988), contextual (Salamone, 1997), and can give rise to pluralistic interpretations (Bruner, 1994; DeLyser, 1999; Rickly-Boyd, 2012b). Bruner's (1994) work at the boyhood home of Abraham Lincoln is particularly illustrative of a constructivist approach, as it uncovers multiple meanings of the concept at work by both tourists and staff at this site — originality, genuineness, historical verisimilitude, and authority.

Semiotically, constructivism justifies authenticity based on stereotypical images, expectations, and cultural preferences (Culler, 1981; Silver, 1993), while also demonstrating the agency of individuals and stakeholder groups in defining it in sometimes conflicting ways (Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003; Crang, 1996; Evans-Pritchard, 1987; Lacy & Douglass, 2002; Metro-Roland, 2009; Moutela, Carreira, & Martínez-Roget, Chapter 7; Rickly-Boyd, 2013c; Wise & Farzin, Chapter 3). MacCannell's (1973, 1976, 1999) development of six stages of tourism interaction, based on Goffman's notion of social staging, engages a constructivist approach by demonstrating the use of staging, design, and atmospherics to encourage particular social interactions. In their comparison of literary tourism sites, Fawcett and Cormack (2001) focus on the use of staging to convey disparate histories related to the fictional story of *Anne of Green Gables* (similar cases in DeLyser, 2003; Halewood & Hannam, 2001; Salamone, 1997).

While Wang (1999) describes constructivist authenticity as an object-oriented perspective, Olsen (2002) suggests the incorporation of ritual and performance theory offers another means by which to understand experiential authenticity. Moreover, a constructivist perspective extends beyond perceptions to attend to touristic motivations and meaning-making processes (Bruner, 1994; Budruk, White, Woodrich, & Van Riper, 2008; DeLyser, 1999; Padilla, 2007; Rickly-Boyd, 2012b; Sims, 2009; Waller & Lea, 1998) and the ways broader cultural perceptions of what is "authentic" can emerge over time (Cohen, 1988). A useful illustration of emergent authenticity can be found in Disneyland Park in California, which has come to be recognized as the original, and thereby authentic, fantasy theme park of Walt Disney.

Postmodern Authenticity

The example of Disneyland also serves as illustration of the significance of the *in*authentic in some tourism environments. Postmodern perspectives on authenticity thus justify the *in*authenticity of tourism spaces — tourists seek

the inauthentic merely because it offers a better, more stimulating experience (Wang, 1999) − through the concepts of "hyperreality" and "simulacra", which assume that there is no original, only simulations of a real without a referent. The hyperreal is a simulated experience that fulfills the desire for the "real" (Eco, 1986), while simulacra is the increasing representation of the hyperreal with signs (Baudrillard, 1983; Lovell, Chapter 11). This can be extended to include the significance of souvenirs and photographs to the recollection of authentic moments of travel (Anastasiadou & Vettese, Chapter 10; Goss, 2004; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005; Rickly-Boyd, 2012a; Ruane, Quinn, & Flanagan, Chapter 9).

In the tourism context, Cohen (1995) suggests that in the "search for enjoyment", tourists may accept "staged authenticity" and atmospherics as a protective substitute for the "original". For example, zoos not only stage the enclosures of animals to mimic their natural environments, but the use of theming throughout walkways and "nature" sounds (birds, crickets, frogs, rain, and wind) on hidden speakers foster imaginative engagement for the visitor who may never travel to see these animals in their natural habitat. Indeed, Reisinger and Steiner contend, "authenticity is irrelevant to many tourists, who either do not value it, are suspicious of it, [or] are complicit in its cynical construction for commercial purposes" (2006, p. 66). However, the hyperreal and the simulacra are not always deceptive, but can also be seductive (Bolz, 1998, p. 1; Eco, 1986; Ritzer & Liska, 1997), as they draw the tourist's imagination into a fantasy experience that breaks from the everyday (Lovell, Chapter 11).

More than seductive, some argue that authenticity is a fantasy (Knudsen, Rickly, & Vidon, 2016; Vidon, 2017) or an abyss (Oakes, 2006) that will always remain just outside the tourist's grasp. This elusive quality has less to do "staged authenticity", but is instead situated in the human psyche that will never be satisfied with the immediate experience. Oakes (2006) observes of self-proclaimed "humanitarian" tourists fleeing a village in southern China, that rather than face ourselves through tourism in "Other" places, tourists will turn and run to the next "authentic" place, so certain that authenticity does, that it *must*, exist. Knudsen et al. (2016) further elaborate on this fantasy of authenticity as crucial to driving tourists' imaginations and the tourism industry, more broadly.

Existential Authenticity

Objective, constructive, and postmodern perspectives on authenticity are object-oriented, argues Wang (1999), thus leaving much underexamined in

terms of an activity-based understanding of authenticity. As a result, existential authenticity has received much academic attention in recent years (Belhassen, Caton, & Stewart, 2008; Buchmann, Moore, & Fisher, 2010; Kim & Jamal, 2007; Pons, 2003; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006b) as a means to investigate the experiential aspects of authenticity. Specifically, Wang (1999) identified four components of existential authenticity that have been further evidenced in numerous studies: intrapersonal (bodily feeling and self-making) and interpersonal (family ties and communitas) (see also Kim & Jamal, 2007; Rickly-Boyd, 2012c). These facets suggest the significance of feelings, emotions, sensations, relationships, and the intersubjective to a sense of authenticity.

Intrapersonal Authenticity. As one component of the intrapersonal dimension of existential authenticity, "bodily feelings" relate to central motivations and experiences of tourism (recreation, relaxation, adventure, rejuvenation, pleasure). For example, Cook (2010) highlights the importance of embodiment to existential authenticity in medical tourism. "Self-making" is the other component of intrapersonal authenticity (Wang, 1999). Tourism prioritizes attention to the self, which the constraints of daily routines and societal institutions often overwhelm, resulting in feelings of alienation (MacCannell, 1976, 1999). Thus, breaking from these norms, tourism can provide a structure in which individuals can act spontaneously, in line with their true feelings and authentic self. Oakes (2006) demonstrates the significance of self-making through cultural tourism by interrogating the disappointment of some American tourists to Miao villages in China, wherein they were greeted with exuberant commercial exchanges rather than as humanitarian guests.

Interpersonal Authenticity. The second dimension of existential authenticity is composed of family ties and *communitas* which emphasize intersubjectivity. Tourists do not just seek just an authentic Other, or a "true" self, but also desire authenticity with others (Wang, 1999, p. 364). This includes family-oriented experiences that reinforce such bonds (Haldrup & Larsen, 2003; Redfoot, 1984), companionship and friendship (Buchmann et al., 2010; Crang, 1996), as well as *communitas* or spontaneous, temporary, informal communities (Esposito, 2010; Turner, 1969; Wang, 1999).

According to Wang, an "'authentic self' involves a balance between two parts of one's Being: reason and emotion, self-constraint and spontaneity; Logos and Eros … inauthentic self arises when the balance between these two parts of being is broken down in such a way that rational factors

over-control non-rational factors" (1999, pp. 360−361). This understanding of the experience of authenticity has been developed from existentialism broadly, and Heidegger's theories generally, which argue that authenticity resides within the subject as a state of Being. Pearce and Moscardo (1986) were among the first scholars to suggest a Heideggerian perspective to authenticity, asserting that it can come from experiences with people and places, in accordance with Heidegger's concepts of self-actualization and *Dasein* (Turner & Manning, 1988). Importantly, this potential for existential authenticity is, arguably, the result of the liminal nature of tourism, which offers the tourist a break from their everyday (Brown, 2013; Graburn, 1989, 2004; Turner, 1973).

However, existential authenticity is not something that is realized or enduring, but is fleeting. As Steiner and Reisinger point out, "[b]ecause existential authenticity is experience-oriented, the existential self is transient, not enduring, and not conforming to a type. It changes from moment to moment" (2006b, p. 303). Therefore, Heidegger's (1996) three characteristics of authenticity (mineness, resoluteness, and situation) become important. According to Heidegger, existential authenticity happens in the rare experiences (situations) in which one recognizes the possibilities of the self (mineness) and acts with tenacity to claim one's potential (resoluteness), rather than embrace "thy-self".

With the increasing attention paid to existential authenticity has come greater engagement with existentialist philosophies. Collectively, these challenge the basic assumptions upon which "existential authenticity" in tourism has been built and suggest that what one has more likely been examining are notions of authentic experience, rather than the existentially authentic (Brown, 2013; Savener & Franzidis, Chapter 14; Shepherd, 2015; Steiner & Reisinger, 2006b).

Authentication and the Performative Turn

While there are growing critiques of the way existential authenticity has been so broadly applied in research, this perspective has brought with it greater attention to the performative nature of tourism and the enactment of authenticity. This aligns with the performative turn in the social sciences, more broadly, which challenges essentialist understandings by attending to the ways meaning is performed, enacted, processual, and always becoming. Shaffer's (2004) autoethnographic study of performative authenticity in backpacking tourism offers rich, descriptive accounts

of the semiotic interactions among the materialities of backpacking culture (a backpack, a journal, and a budget guidebook) and their performative enactment toward identification as either a leisure backpacker or a cultural backpacker. Similarly, Senda-Cook (2012) sheds light on the role of embodiment to performing authenticity and a sense of belonging. Examining hiking practices and their interpretations by other hikers, she demonstrates that performances of authenticity are about how other people's behaviors are read and how this informs one's own individual practice.

Focusing on authenticity as something that tourists and practitioners *do* and authenticity as an *experience*, Knudsen and Waade's (2010b) edited volume of case studies demonstrates that existential authenticity should not be isolated as a type of authenticity, but rather phenomenological experiences and social constructionist meaning-making inform one another toward a performative notion of authentic experiences. By highlighting the processual aspect of authenticity, they also take up the social processes by which objects, sites, and encounters are authenticated (Gregorash, Chapter 9; Matos & Barbosa, Chapter 4; Pearce & Mohammadi, Chapter 5; Vidon, 2016, Chapter 13). This is a crucial and underexamined aspect of authenticity research, as it challenges the power structures by which authenticity is communicated.

Authentication is "the social process by which the authenticity of an attraction is confirmed" (Cohen & Cohen, 2012a, p. 1296). Inspired by Selwyn's (1996) "hot" and "cool" authenticity, Cohen and Cohen (2012a) use these distinctions in slightly different ways. They build from Selwyn's articulation of "hot" authenticity as social or emic and "cool" authenticity as scientific or etic, redirecting tourism discourse away from sociopsychological interests in experience and toward the social and political processes associated with each mode of authentication. Thus, authentication is about power relations. Xie's (2011) study of ethnic tourism in China examines the various stakeholders (tourists, communities, government officials, and businesses) that make claims to cultural attractions and use their social and/or political power to influence the construction of ethnic identity (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2005; Cohen, 2002; Coomansingh, Chapter 6; L'Espoir Decosta & Andéhn, Chapter 2; Vidon, 2016, Chapter 13; Wise & Farzin, Chapter 3).

Elaborating on the potential of "hot" and "cool" authentication, Cohen and Cohen (2012a) enlist performativity. So while "cool" authentication is associated with objective notions of authenticity, the act of deeming an object or site authentic is usually a formal or official performative declaration. Accreditations, approvals, and certifications are performed by experts

whose specialty knowledge and techniques work through evidence to support their claims. "Hot" authentication, however, relates more to existential and constructive authenticities, as it is emotion-based, felt, and informed by belief. This authentication must also be performed. However, it is the continual, reiterative, individual performances of worshippers or believers that authenticate the object/site. Thus, attending to authentication means asking the question: who authenticates? In so doing, such research extends the study of authenticity by engaging the performative to investigate the sociopolitical as well as emotional aspects of this concept and also addresses the broader question of who uses authenticity and why?

Relationality of Authenticity

There are multiple ontological and epistemological perspectives on authenticity, and in tourism studies few researchers use only one paradigm. This has much to do with the fact that one perspective can rarely account for the dynamics of tourism marketing, the politics of representation, and motivation and experience. Indeed, MacCannell's (1973, 1976, 1999) germinal theory of "staged authenticity" employed objectivist, constructivist, and postmodern understandings of the concept (Lau, 2010). MacCannell (1976, 1999) observes that tourists seek out authentic experiences, but in this quest for authenticity they more often encounter "staged authenticity". Moreover, using a semiotic approach to elaborate on the relationship of a marker or sign to authenticating experience, he highlights the way "truth markers" are put to use in touristic discourse and contribute to a socially constructed understandings.

Further conceptualizations have been employed in efforts to understand the relationality of authenticity. In working to appreciate the socioreligious and sociospatial elements of existentially authentic experiences, Belhassen et al. (2008) developed the concept of "theoplacity" to elucidate the relations among authenticity, place, and religious belief for spiritually inspired tourists of the Holy Land. Theoplacity thus captures the researchers' findings that, "pilgrims' experiences of existential authenticity are the result of socially constructed understandings about the places they are touring and the actions they are undertaking in those places, combined with their own direct, empirical encounters" (2008, p. 685). Rickly-Boyd (2012a), however, returns to the work of cultural Marxist Walter Benjamin and his concept of aura to build a framework for understanding the relationality of objective, constructive, and experiential aspects of authenticity.

Aura, as Benjamin defined it, is the experience between the viewer and the object, and as such, changes based on sociospatial context (see also Szmigin, Bengry-Howell, Morey, Griffin, & Riley, 2017). In this way, aura accounts for the fact that experience is not predetermined, nor is it static, but rather experiences of authenticity are unique, incorporating materiality, perception, atmosphere, place, and many other factors.

More recent research, including most chapters in this book, engages multiple perspectives as a means to illustrate the relationality of factors that contribute to touristic experience (Andriotis, 2011; Belhassen et al., 2008; Buchmann et al., 2010; Chronis & Hampton, 2008; Cook, 2010; DeLyser, 1999; Gable & Handler, 1996; Handler & Saxton, 1988; Heynen, 2006; Kim & Jamal, 2007; Noy, 2004a; Obenour, 2004; Rickly-Boyd, 2013b). Thus, as Rickly-Boyd argues, there "is a strong interaction between object, site, and experience; they are not mutually exclusive" (2012a, p. 274), which is why authenticity can function simultaneously a measurement, representation, experience, and feeling.

Alienation

While authenticity has historically received more attention in the field, its dialectic, alienation, has been treated as "authenticity's forgotten cousin" (Rickly-Boyd, 2013a). Xue, Manuel-Navarrete, and Buzinde (2014) elaborate on different perspectives of alienation at work in tourism (production, consumption, and existential), and in so doing suggest there is increasing inclusion of alienation in research. However, this unequal attention has resulted in the undertheorization of the relations of alienation to marketing and touristic motivation and experience, despite the fact that alienation is significant to notions of desire and fantasy (Knudsen et al., 2016; Vidon, 2017).

It is worth noting that some of the earlier theories of tourism that incorporated authenticity also spoke of the role of alienation as a push factor (Dann, 1977) in the need for escape and recreation (Cohen, 1979a) or toward the ritual aspects of tourism (MacCannell, 1976, 1999). However, this engagement with both authenticity and alienation has not been carried forward into contemporary research, with a few notable exceptions (Kirillova, Lehto, & Cai, 2017; Knudsen et al., 2016; Maoz, 2006a; Redfoot, 1984; Rickly-Boyd, 2013a; Savener & Franzidis, Chapter 14; Turner & Manning, 1988; Vidon, 2017, Chapter 13; Xue et al., 2014). These works demonstrate the ways feelings of alienation at home motivate a desire for travel, escape, adventure, and/or authenticity. Without

attending to the dialectic of authenticity, much research is missing an opportunity to more deeply investigate the drivers of tourism, the role of the fantasy of authenticity (Knudsen et al., 2016; Vidon, 2017), and the ways experiences of authenticity impact lifestyle choices upon returning home (Kirillova & Lehto, 2015; Maoz, 2006a).

Nevertheless, it could be argued that this is a moment of sea change. Only time will tell, but most recently scholars seem to be delving into these issues in growing numbers. Kirillova et al. (2017, p. 9), for example, focus on the role of the feeling of anxiety to the existential predicament, as it figures into motivation, suggesting that this anxiety "functions as a springboard for existential authenticity", or at least attempts to reconcile existential givens in life with one's desired pursuits. Similarly, Vidon and Rickly (2018) observe the relations of anxiety and motivation among hikers and rock climbers. In these cases, anxiety is described as the embodied experience of alienation, which motivates particular touristic pursuits of authentic experiences in wilderness and on the rock face.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

This book is composed of four parts, organized by themes derived from popular trends in authenticity research from the field of tourism more broadly. It begins with "Marketing Maneuvers", a series of chapters that engage with marketing debates. L'Espoir Decosta and Andéhn theorize destinations as tourism product mythologies that work to *implace* experiential authenticity through product-origin narratives. Following this, Wise and Farzin evaluate the processes of authentication within the user-generated, social media marketing platform of the "See you in Iran" Facebook page. Matos and Barbosa consider the collaborative potential of experience marketing literature and authenticity research through a case of cacao farms in Brazil.

Next is the theme of "Culture (Mis)Interpretations" in which the authors demonstrate, through a variety of cases, the constructive nature of authenticity and the challenges of authenticating cultural heritage. Pearce and Mohammadi begin this section with an examination of the authentication practices of tourists to the Romeo and Juliet attraction in Verona, Italy, which highlights the multifarious ways tourists engage with and make meaning at the site. Coomansingh unravels the rich history of the steelpan instrument in the Caribbean, detailing its globally infused heritage and current international debates on its authenticity. Moutela, Carreira, and

Martínez-Roget interrogate the multiple stakeholder perspectives on the value of authenticity, particularly with respect to sustainability initiatives and the resilience of rural tourism in Portugal.

Chapters in the third theme, "Technological Interventions", revisit technological trends in tourism as well as push forward debates about the potential for authenticity in souvenirs, photographs, and simulated tourism experiences. Ruane, Quinn, and Flanagan focus on touristic photography practices in Ireland, more generally, and the theoretical relations of photographic representation to experiences of place. Gregorash presents a novel methodology that combines photo-elicitation techniques with food-elicitation to yield interesting findings on the ways food experiences are integrated into authentic tourism experiences. Anastasiadou and Vettese build from existing theories of souvenirs to raise questions regarding the rise in 3D printing and the potential implications this type of souvenir personalization may have on perceptions of authenticity. Finally, Lovell dives deep into the themes of hyperreality and simulacra with a case study of light shows. She focuses on the postmodern aspects of authenticity, or rather, the significance of the inauthentic, to producing authentic experiences.

In the final theme, "Theoretical Inquiries", authors challenge current theoretical constructs related to authenticity and raise key questions for future research endeavors. To begin, Nowaczek and Mehta interrogate the practical roots of ecotourism, calling into question the incongruence of consumptive practices, such as hunting and fishing, to the authentic experiences promised by ecotourism. Vidon explores the relationship of the concepts of authenticity and wilderness, uncovering their often relational usage, particularly in the context of power and politics. Finally, Savener and Franzidis conclude the collection with a challenge to the current understanding of authenticity. The authors explore the elusive nature of authenticity and theorize the challenge this concept, as Western, capitalist, and highly privileged, will pose for future research.

The Afterword comes from Knudsen, who reflects on these chapters and relates them to new developments in tourism studies of authenticity, namely, psychoanalytic theories of alienation, fantasy, and desire. That this book is both dedicated to Professor Knudsen and that he writes the Afterword is no coincidence. That he inspired the editors to venture down the road of authenticity discourse in tourism studies many years ago, and has continued to write on the topic since, has provided him a particularly fitting vantage point from which to reflect on the ways the study of authenticity has developed over this time.