Relational Authenticity and Reconstructed Heritage Space: A Balance of Heritage Preservation, Tourism, and Urban Renewal in Luoyang Silk Road Dingding Gate

Xiaoyan Su 1,2, Gary Gordon Sigley 3 and Changqing Song 1,*

1 State Key Laboratory of Earth Surface Processes and Resource Ecology, Faculty of Geographical Science, Beijing Normal University, Beijing 100875, China; suxiaoyan_8012@bnu.edu.cn
2 Central Plains Economic Zone Smart Tourism Cooperative Innovation Center in Henan Province, School of Land and Tourism, Luoyang Normal University, Luoyang 471934, China
3 School of Human Geography, Faculty of Geographical Science, Beijing Normal University, Beijing 100875, China; gsigley@hotmail.com

* Correspondence: songcq@bnu.edu.cn

Received: 16 June 2020; Accepted: 13 July 2020; Published: 20 July 2020

Abstract: Authenticity is a controversial concept in heritage studies. This is particularly the case where the reconstruction of heritage spaces is carried out to facilitate multiple objectives, namely, preservation, tourism development and improving the quality of life of local residents. Based on a qualitative methodology with a case study approach, this paper uses participant observation, in-depth interviews and textual analysis to explore the varying perceptions of authenticity for a reconstructed heritage site from the point of view of heritage experts, tourists and local residents. We identify a form of ‘relational authenticity’. Using the Dingding Gate, part of the Luoyang World Heritage section of the Silk Road, this paper highlights the phenomenon of ‘reconstructed heritage space’ with the relational authenticity of different actors in the Chinese context. We argue that relational authenticity is embedded in the networks between people, place, and (re)materialized space, which is the assemblage of excavated original objects and reconstructed buildings and spaces. Relational authenticity is acquired through a rematerializing process engaged by actors, who focus on the material qualities, instead of material authenticity and originality, of the original excavated objects and later reconstructed space.

Keywords: relational authenticity; tourism; heritage reconstruction; Luoyang; Silk Road; Dingding Gate

1. Introduction

Authenticity is arguably one of the most debated topics in heritage studies. Two of the most well-known areas of discussion relates to the Venice Charter of 1964 and the adoption in 1972 of the UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (hereafter abbreviated as ‘the Convention’). In both cases, seemingly objective criteria are used to evaluate whether or not the artefacts or site in question can be designated as ‘authentic’ [1]. Reconstruction, other than for the purposes of structural preservation, is deemed inappropriate. However, the inclusion of a post-WW2 reconstructed Warsaw as World Heritage led to heated debates on the validity of authenticity criteria in the Venice Charter and Convention. As a result, the Convention subsequently adopted a stricter definition of authenticity [2]. Henceforth, the reconstruction of built heritage is considered as having little or no authenticity value and has been opposed by heritage experts and institutions.
Nonetheless, voices offering a counter position whereby reconstruction is considered a valid part of heritage work began to emerge. There are two main elements of this counter position. Firstly, the Venice Charter and Convention are biased towards Western views of authentic heritage [3,4]. Heritage approaches of non-Western contexts need to be reconsidered [5]. Secondly, the authorized approach ‘museumificates’ heritage by forcing the removal of local communities and/or severing local use of heritage spaces [6]. In response, the Nara Charter (1994) expands the definition of authenticity to include intangible aspects, such as ‘spirit’ and ‘feeling’ [7]. In turn, the UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) represents a shift from purely tangible criteria to a combination of tangible and intangible elements. Other factors, such as the destruction of heritage sites during war, also added to the view that heritage reconstruction should be reconsidered [8]. In this context, even the UNESCO World Heritage Committee has shifted its position on the validity of reconstruction projects [9–11].

Two approaches to heritage classification help clarify different views of authenticity and reconstructed heritage. The materialist approach focuses on the ‘objective’ elements of a monumental built heritage in which artefacts and sites are treated as part of a ‘heritage museum’. By contrast, the constructivist approach perceives authenticity as a social construction mediated through the gaze of the observer [12]. In combining these two approaches, Jones argues that ‘authenticity’ is a result of the relationships between people, place and objects [13]. Local residents may regard rebuilt heritage as having authentic meaning insofar as it emphasizes ongoing cultural connections and attachments to place. In turn, Holtorf modified the constructivist approach by developing the concept of ‘pastness’ [14]. In this context, despite lacking ‘materialist authenticity’, reconstructed heritage can exhibit an ‘age value’ that can create a relation to the past (‘pastness’). In short, both Jones and Holtorf demonstrate that rebuilt heritage is valid if we take ‘authentic’ to include meaningful connections between people and heritage space.

In this connection, in contemporary China the issue of ‘bringing to life’ its rich cultural heritage has become a major focus of government policy since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China convened in 2012 [15]. Reconstruction projects of material cultural heritage are taking place all across China. For instance, a number of heritage reconstruction projects have been launched in Luoyang to present its splendid past as the primary or secondary capital of thirteen Chinese dynasties covering a period of more than 1500 years. Not surprisingly, these projects have given rise to heated debates on the authenticity of such rebuilt heritage. The debates concern the construction of ‘protective cover buildings’ in situ over significant archeological remains. These buildings are similar to what Bruner calls “authentic reproductions” in North America [16]. The ‘protective cover’, however, as a simulation of a past structure, straddles a fine line between ‘protection’ on the one hand, and contravening the principle that no reconstruction should take place in situ.

In light of Jones’ approach to authenticity and Holtorf’s argument about pastness, we propose here that questions regarding the authenticity of cover buildings are more complicated than a binary of ‘authentic’ or ‘inauthentic’ might suggest. This paper takes one of these protective cover projects, the World Heritage of the Luoyang Silk Road Dingding Gate (LSDG), as a case study to explore how heritage experts, local residents and tourists variously perceive reconstructed heritage. The paper has three aims: (1) To explore how different actors perceive the authenticity of the reconstructed the LSDG heritage site; (2) to examine how different actors use such spaces; and (3) to conceptualize reconstructed heritage space by engaging with the concepts presented by Jones and Holtorf, and in turn, to develop the concept of ‘relational authenticity’. We argue that this form of ‘relational authenticity’ highlights the need to be cognizant of the intersecting programs of heritage preservation, urban renewal and tourism development. Achieving a balance between these three different agendas is one of the major challenges facing heritage preservation and urban development in contemporary China.
2. Literature Review

2.1. Authenticity and Reconstructions: Materialist and Constructivist Perspectives

Authenticity is a controversial concept in heritage and tourism studies [12,13,17–19]. Generally, the controversies concern materialist and constructivist perspectives. The former, which focuses on the original attributes inherent in the material substance of objects, monuments, and sites, has dominated heritage studies. According to this approach, ‘authentic’ criteria can be established to measure and test heritage conservation. By contrast, the constructivist perspective holds that authenticity does not solely lie in the tangible aspect of objects, but also depends on the experience of people in relation to those objects [12]. This perspective emphasizes the subjectivity of authenticity in regards to experience, emotion, attachment and identity [20].

Due to the global influence of the Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) [21], materialist authenticity dominates the heritage field. The AHD holds that there exists a ‘common sense assumption’ about heritage that refers to things that are “old, grand, monumental and aesthetically pleasing sites, buildings, places and artefacts” [21] (p. 11). Authenticity is, thus, held to objectively exist in the material aspects of heritage. As Foster and Jones note, “[w]ithin modernist discourses, authenticity has been firmly associated with original historic objects, and these discourses continue to hold sway in many heritage and museum contexts” [22] (p. 2). It follows that the AHD rejects the reconstruction of heritage insofar as this process disturbs the central claims to an authentic nature.

In recent years, some scholars have questioned materialist authenticity from a multiple stakeholder perspectives [23–26]. Researchers are now paying more critical attention to the community claims on authenticity [27,28]. These scholars argue that authenticity is a constructive concept based on different understandings, social settings, and cultural contexts [29–32]. Reconstructions, they argue, can produce ‘authenticity effects’ akin to those of the original [33]. Visitors are attracted to such heritage sites even when they know that they are not authentic in terms of the criteria of the materialist approach [34]. For instance, based on research conducted in a cultural theme park in China, Duan, Chan and Marafa conclude that “activity-related authenticity is more important to visitors than object-related authenticity” [35] (p. 321).

This is not to suggest that the original and material aspects of heritage are not important. On the contrary, this approach still argues for the careful preservation of material heritage. What it suggests, however, is that material aspects are not the sole determining factor in creating the experience of heritage authenticity [12,36].

2.2. Heritage Reconstruction and Relational Authenticity: Combining Materialist and Constructivist Approaches

In combining materialist and constructivist approaches, scholars have begun to explore authenticity in terms of relationships between heritage sites and people. Smith argues that the tangible aspects of heritage sites ‘play a mnemonic role’ and provide “background, setting, gravitas and, most importantly, a sense of occasion” for people engaging in identity-making in relation to a subjective notion of the past [21] (p. 46). For Smith, all heritage is intangible insofar as it is present forms of engagement that makes heritage meaningful [21] (p. 3). Jones, likewise, argues that authenticity is not embedded in the materiality of heritage sites, but is a relationship between people, objects, and place [13].

Following Jones, Holtorf develops the concept of ‘pastness’ to highlight the notion of age-value [14]. Pastness focuses on perceptions of heritage dependent on material clues-such as decay and disintegration-which could be conveyed in reconstructed heritage. ‘Pastness’ has three requirements, namely, material clues, audience expectations and a meaningful narrative connecting ‘then’ and ‘now’. Clearly, authenticity could be established between reconstructed heritage sites and people.

In summary, Smith, Jones and Holtorf note two dimensions of authenticity that are pertinent to this study, namely, material characteristics of heritage sites and the interactions of people with those heritage sites. We refer to this as a form of ‘relational authenticity’ which combines materialist
and constructivist approaches. This ‘relational authenticity’ could be found in reconstructed heritage spaces. We consider this from the perspective of heritage experts, local residents and tourists.

Firstly, many heritage experts consider reconstructed heritage as fake, “a culture of obsolescence” that might misdirect the public [37] (p. 613). However, only by professional conservation could the authenticity of heritage sites be maintained [38]. In examining the restoration of Glasgow Cathedral, Jones and Yarrow note that authenticity is produced by expert craftspersons using traditional skills [39]. Foster and Jones also indicate that the replica could ‘work’ like the original if the makers create it with “passion, creativity and craft” [22] (p. 1). Hence, reconstructions could be authenticated by association with the use of traditional materials and techniques by heritage experts.

Secondly, local residents view the reconstructions as ‘authentic’ from the perspective of place attachment. As Jones notes, even though local residents knew the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab was reconstructed, they nonetheless regarded the reconstruction as legitimate because of the affective bonds between the community and the heritage site [13]. As Foster and Jones further note:

“... historic replicas can be actively involved in the production and negotiation of authenticity. Like original historic objects, their authenticity is in part founded on the networks of relationships that they come to embody—relations with people, objects, and, importantly, places”
[22] (p. 2).

Local participation in heritage reconstruction is, thus, an important part of relational authenticity [13,39–42].

Finally, tourists experience the authenticity of reconstructed heritage from an interactive perspective [14,43–45]. For instance, heritage in theme parks, whether real or artificial, can be significant enough to produce “experiences of authenticity” [44] (p. 609). Hampp and Schwan note that about half of the visitors to a science museum in Germany felt that the replica carries the same meanings as the original [45] (p. 360).

2.3. Relational Authenticity of Heritage Reconstructions in China

In China, there has been difficulty in accepting the Western derived concept of authenticity. The primary reason for this is that there is no corresponding notion in Chinese [46]. Within the Chinese context, there existed quite different understandings on authenticity and distinct attitudes to reconstruction. For example, Chinese people paid more attention to authorized representations of ancient buildings rather than the material aspects [47]. In other words, the reconstruction of ancient buildings was uncontroversial throughout China’s long history [48] (pp. 40–41). Traditional Chinese architecture was mainly made of timber frames which were easily destroyed by fire, war and deterioration over time. Throughout dynastic history, it was common to destroy and/or build over the monuments and structures of the previous dynasty [49,50] (p. 22). A similar situation prevailed in Japan where the periodic reconstruction of old buildings, also typically composed of timber, is a well-established concept and practice [51] (p. 146).

However, beginning in the 1920s, when scholars who had studied architecture abroad returned to China, the dissemination of a Western AHD influenced the views of Chinese heritage experts on the authenticity of heritage reconstructions [52]. Liang Sicheng, one of China’s eminent heritage experts and advocate of the French Beaux-Arts architectural school, proposed “restoring the old as old” [53,54]. This follows the materialist approach in keeping the physical originality whilst differing from Ruskin’s position insofar that he rejected restoration that alters the original. Even after China joined the UNESCO Convention in 1985, this constructivist approach to reconstruction was still popular and continues to be influential [49,55]. Moreover, the authenticity criteria of the Convention have been criticized for excluding local communities [55–57]. In addressing these concerns, the affective links of local communities to heritage have gained attention [57]. More scholars advocate that heritage should focus on serving local people’s everyday quality of life [56,58–60]. This recognition of the intangible
aspect of authenticity partly reflects the popular attitudes towards authenticity prevailing in China which have not been totally displaced by the emergence of a Western derived AHD.

Nonetheless, how Chinese people understand the authenticity of reconstructed heritage needs further exploration. To this end, this paper aims to establish the notion of ‘relational authenticity’ in the context of reconstructed heritage. We argue that authenticity is embedded in the relational networks between people, the material quality of heritage objects, and their meaningful interactions. Here, ‘people’ includes heritage experts, local residents and tourists. Material quality (as an affective factor that links people to heritage) is a significant aspect of authenticity. However, the three groups of ‘people’ might have different perspectives on the material quality of the heritage objects. This provides the clues for answering the research question on the relational authenticity of reconstructed heritage in China, which will be explored through a case study of the Luoyang Silk Road Dingding Gate in the following section.

3. Case Study Background

The Luoyang Silk Road Dingding Gate (LSDG), part of the Silk Road World Heritage, is located in Luolong District of Luoyang City, Henan Province, China (Figure 1). Luoyang is a second-tier city covering an area of 15,230 square kilometers with a total population of 7.17 million (2019 data) [61]. Luoyang was the primary or secondary capital of thirteen dynasties covering a period of more than 1500 years, making it the dynastic capital with the longest history [62]. Due to its sheer longevity, although Luoyang is known as ‘one of the four ancient capitals’ of China, little remains in the way of above-ground tangible heritage. Instead, most of Luoyang’s heritage assets are underground relics and ruins. The presence of underground heritage has hindered Luoyang’s urban development since the discovery of ruins means that projects are halted until heritage approvals are issued [63,64] (pp. 45–54).

These tensions between conservation and development are reflected in the adoption of three different development models [65]. The first model (1949 to 1978) involved “establishing a new urban area far from the old city” where relics of the Eastern Zhou and Sui and Tang dynasties were found [66].
In the second model, formed in the early 1980s, urban construction projects were only permitted to proceed after satisfactory completion of heritage administration archeological surveys [67] (p. 17). This regulatory approach was effective in protecting underground heritage, but it significantly hindered urban development. The third model, aiming to resolve this development-preservation predicament, put aside twenty-two square kilometers especially for conserving the southern part of the Capital Area of the Sui and Tang Dynasties of Luoyang (CASTDL) where the LSDG is located [68] (p. 34) (see Figure 1). A new urban district, Southern Luoyang District, was established. This twenty-two square kilometer district where the LSDG is located, linking the old urban area and the Luolong District, has been planned as a large-scale green space conservation area. This conservation area where urban construction has given way to heritage protection and simulation represents the enactment of Luoyang’s heritage plan. Some heritage projects were documented in the ‘fourth city plan’ of Luoyang covering the period 2008 to 2020. Alongside the Luo River, which runs through the heart of Luoyang city center, are located the rare ruins of the ancient capitals from the Xia, Shang, Zhou, Han and Wei, and Sui and Tang dynasties. These are collectively known as the ruins of the ‘Assembly of Five Capitals (Wudu guanluo)’. These ruins were officially designated as the Luoyang Section of National Great Ruins in 2005. This provides Luoyang with an opportunity to explore new protection approaches for its underground relics, in which some significant archeological sites have been selected to be ‘presented’ on the original site through a ‘protective cover’.

The Dingding Gate, one of the ‘presentation sites’, was the south gate of the outer city of CASTDL for a period of 530 years in six dynasties, including the Sui, Tang, Later Liang, Later Tang, Later Zhou, and Northern Song dynasties [69,70] (p. 844). It was excavated in 1997 and again in 2007. According to the 1997 excavation, the Dingding Gate site was a three-entranceway complex of earthen ruins, which spanned four historical periods, the early middle Tang, the late middle Tang, the period between the Tang and Northern Song dynasties, and the Northern Song period [71,72]. The characteristics of the layout over these four periods vary. In terms of the quantity of excavated relics, those from the Tang dynasty are the most numerous. The remains from the early middle Tang include traces of pier platforms, three entranceways, partition walls, side corridors, ramps, watchtowers, and culverts, as indicated in Figure 2. In the 2007 excavation, significant artefacts relating to the Silk Road were found, including rutted wheel tracks, human footprints and camel hoof prints. The heritage value of the Dingding Gate site rests on the claim that it was the imperial gate of the Sui and Tang dynasties with close material connections to the Silk Road. Its remains provide significant evidence to explore the architectural skills, layout, aesthetics, and traditional culture of the ancient capitals of China [73].

Together with historical records, the LSDG was recognized as the eastern origin of the Silk Road from the seventh to tenth centuries. The LSDG was subsequently included as one of the sites of the 2014 UNESCO World Heritage Silk Roads: The Routes Network of Chang’an-Tian Shan Corridor. The World Heritage area covers 91.3 hectares, including the Dingding Gate, Tian Street, Mingjiao Fang, Ningren Fang, Tian Street, and moat remains [74] (p. 60). ‘Fang’, also called ‘Lifang’, refers to an enclosed city residential unit in some dynasties. In 2009, in order to conserve and simulate the legacy of the LSDG the ‘Museum of the Site of the Dingding Gate (MSDG)’ was constructed as a ‘protective cover building’ over the archeological remains (Figure 3). This structure was designed to simulate the Dingding Gate of the Tang Dynasty in line with historical records, archeological observations and Dunhuang frescoes [70] (p. 844). It is steel-structured architecture consisting of three layers with one underground and two overground. The entire construction area covers 12,616 square meters. The color scheme of red and cyan was adopted, which were the popular colors of imperial gates in the Tang dynasty. The ruins of the gate are presented in the underground section, as indicated in Figure 4. Given that this reconstruction violates the regulations that explicitly prohibit such reconstructions, this project was especially approved by the National Cultural Heritage Administration [74] (pp. 87–88).

It is for this reason that the LSDG is regarded as both innovative and controversial. It may become a model for other sites across a rapidly urbanizing China, one that is seeking to express new confidence
in the past as it continues to rapidly modernize and seek a balance between heritage preservation, urban renewal and tourism development.

Figure 2. Plan of the Dingding Gate site in the early middle Tang period (upper, west section; lower, east section) [72].

Figure 3. The museum of the site of the Dingding Gate (by the author).

The museum has a dual function as both a protective cover for the relics of the LSDG and as a spatial representation to simulate the heritage of the Dingding Gate. In addition to the museum, there are other reconstructed spaces, including a reconstructed moat, Front Square (FS, the area in front of the Dingding Gate), Tianjie Street and two street blocks, greenbelts, city walls, and wall remnants (Figure 5). South of the FS, a large plaza, the Dingding Gate Plaza (DGP), was constructed by the
Luoyang government and a commercial property developer. The property developer also constructed the adjoining residential community called the ‘International City of Empire Capital (ICEC)’ (see Figure 6).

**Figure 4.** The underground section of the museum of the site of the Dingding Gate (by the author).

**Figure 5.** The reconstructed spaces of the LSDG (by the author).
The DGP and reconstructed spaces are rendered in the Tang style [75,76]. It is precisely the cosmopolitanism and grandeur of the Tang Dynasty that the government wishes to project, a style that accords with the ambitions of the policy of Belt and Road and the revival of the Silk Road as an expression of geocultural power [77,78]. By way of example a large bronze ding, called the ‘Luoyang Ding’ (see Figure 7), was placed in the center of the DGP to represent the significance of the Dingding Gate in Chinese history. A ‘ding’ is a bronze ritual vessel that was the symbol of dynastic authority and the ‘mandate of heaven’. Indeed the ‘Dingding’ of ‘Dingding Gate’ refers to the act of ‘establishing the ding’ and thereby the legitimacy of the ruling house.

With regards to the original inhabitants, during the reconstruction, two villages and six village township enterprises were relocated [74] (p. 87). The villagers were moved to a newly-constructed community, Longtai, which is five minutes’ walk from the DGP. The original residents were then joined by the new residents of the ICEC. The local users of the LSDG are, thus, mainly residents from ICEC and Longtai. Whilst residents from Longtai were villagers, those residential areas built as part of the ICEC are now home to people from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Most of the new residents are local Luoyang people or from other parts of Henan.
4. Methodology and Data Collection

This paper adopts the constructivist paradigm and case study approach as the methodology. Constructivism maintains a relativist ontology and considers that the world is constructed of multiple and dynamic realities [79]. Different social groups have different interpretations of the same social reality [80] (p. 110) [81] (p. 125). This suggests that object authenticity is perceived diversely by different social groups. A case study with qualitative explorations is an appropriate approach in the use of the constructivist paradigm [82]. To achieve this result, this paper uses four kinds of data: Documentation, archival records, participant observation, and in-depth interviews. The documents and archival records include official documents, newspaper articles, academic papers, and tourist comments from online visitor evaluation sites.

The fieldwork was conducted from July 2018 to June 2020, and includes observations of the material features of the reconstructed cover buildings and the everyday activities of local residents. The fieldwork included participation in resident activities that take place daily in the FS and DGP, such as plaza dancing, singing opera and practicing Taiji. The observations of everyday activities and spatial-cultural preferences of local residents helped us to understand their views on the authenticity of reconstructed heritage spaces.

The in-depth interviews provided information on the opinions of interviewees [83] (p. 219). The material gathered from the interviews constitutes a significant body of multiple authenticity perspectives. Interviews were conducted with twenty-six local residents (Table 1), fifteen tourists (Table 2), and three heritage experts and three managers. The three heritage experts included one local expert, one archeologist, and one planner of the cover building. The three managers came from the local Luoyang Heritage Bureau, Managerial Office of the CASTDL, and the Museum of the Dingding Gate. Interviews with local residents and tourists lasted about one hour and involved such topics as how they think about their connections to Dingding Gate heritage, thereby providing impressions on the authenticity of the reconstructed LSDG heritage site. Topics covered in the interviews with the heritage experts included how they understand the authenticity of the LSDG and their roles as experts in relation to heritage issues. The interviews with the three managers covered how they implemented the heritage criteria in the Dingding Gate project and their views on the ‘authenticity’ of LSDG. Interview data from the experts and managers were compared with the arguments presented in newspapers, articles, and other documents. Interview data from tourists were cross-checked and compared with tourist comments from the online visitor rating platforms.

Table 1. Profile of respondents (residents).

| Characteristic                  | Number of Respondents |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Gender                         |                       |
| Male                           | 12                    |
| Female                         | 14                    |
| Age                            |                       |
| 20–29                          | 3                     |
| 30–49                          | 9                     |
| 50 and above                   | 14                    |
| Education                      |                       |
| Primary school or under        | 6                     |
| Middle to High school          | 9                     |
| University or above            | 11                    |
| Occupation                     |                       |
| Nearby vendors                 | 2                     |
| Employment elsewhere           | 11                    |
| Retired or unemployed          | 13                    |
| Dwelling places                |                       |
| Longtai community              | 5                     |
| ICEC community                 | 15                    |
| Other nearby communities       | 6                     |
Table 2. Profile of respondents (tourists).

| Characteristic                                | Number of Respondents |
|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Gender                                        |                        |
| Male                                          | 8                      |
| Female                                        | 7                      |
| Age                                           |                        |
| 20–29                                         | 4                      |
| 30–49                                         | 6                      |
| 50 and above                                  | 5                      |
| Education                                     |                        |
| Primary school or under                       | 2                      |
| Middle to High school                         | 5                      |
| University or above                           | 8                      |
| Occupation                                    |                        |
| Employment in government-related institutions | 6                      |
| Employment in private company                 | 4                      |
| Retired or unemployed                         | 5                      |
| Dwelling places                               |                        |
| Counties in Luoyang, Henan                    | 7                      |
| Beyond Luoyang, Henan                         | 4                      |
| Other provinces                               | 4                      |

5. Results

This section presents the results from the collected data in line with the aims of this paper. The first part examines the conceived authenticity of heritage experts from the perspective of a Chinese AHD. The second part presents the experienced authenticity of the LSDG from the perspective of tourists. The third part presents the perceived authenticity of the LSDG from the perspective of local residents.

5.1. The Conceived Authenticity of Heritage Experts and Managers

Heritage experts and managers are influential agents who are expected to provide an authorized understanding of the LSDG. They emphasize the authenticity of the LSDG from four aspects: Archeological remains, location, authentic evidence connected to the Silk Road, and the simulated environment.

Firstly, the archeological remains in the museum are ‘original’ evidence of historical significance. One expert said:

“We excavated the Dingding Gate twice [in 1975 and 1997] and found many ‘valuable’ and ‘authentic’ Gate remains in the early flourishing period of the Tang Dynasty, including three gateways (mendao), gate piers (duntai), horse staircase (madao), and other relics . . . All the relics in the museum are genuine remains. That is, all these relics ‘really’ existed in the past, about 1500 years ago.”

Another expert talked about the historical records of the Gate:

“. . . in line with historical records, the ruler who ordered the Gate construction and passed through it first was of the Emperor Suiyang. At that time it was named ‘Jianguo Gate’. You might know the meaning of Jianguo is ‘to build the nation’, very important . . . Later it was expanded and renamed ‘Dingding Gate’ in the Tang Dynasty, a very grand name . . . it continued to exist for a long time, and much was [subsequently] lost, but it still remained something to us . . .”

Clearly, the accurate historical records and recently excavated relics confirm the authenticity of the LSDG from a materialist perspective. By contrast, being familiar with heritage regulations, the heritage managers paid more attention to authenticity standards and their implementation. One manager said:
The authenticity of the Gate is not like that in other heritage sites like the Longmen Grottoes. You will see that there are many ‘original’ statues in Longmen while the remains of the Dingding Gate are much less by comparison. Well, they are different kinds of heritage . . . Longmen as a whole is a World Heritage site, while Dingding Gate is just one spot on the Silk Road. There are thirty-three points like this in the Silk Road. The Silk Road is a new category of heritage and its authenticity is not focused on every point but the overall integrity . . .

Putting the authenticity standards as first and visitor experiences as second, one manager talked about the visuality of the Gate:

“. . . many tourists don’t understand the Gate and felt that we should construct more attractions. They don’t know that as part of World Heritage its authenticity is strictly controlled. For example, we can’t construct tourist attractions to the area of ‘Tianjie Street and two blocks’. This area is within the first-controlled heritage area. So instead we constructed a short earth wall as the symbol of the ancient one that divided the blocks. It could provide a space for you to imagine the past scene.”

Secondly, the design of the reconstructed Tang style ‘protective cover’ is an ‘authentic reproduction’ in line with historical records and excavated relics. The experts said this was a new approach to presently lost heritage. As one expert noted:

“Although we have found many historical records on the Dingding Gate, many are about its functions and what transpired there. Those about architectural design are very limited . . . when constructing the cover building, we referred to records about the Gate from that time, such as the Dunhuang frescoes, in the Yingzao Fashi. Yingzao Fashi is the greatest architectural book in Chinese history. It was written in the Song Dynasty, just after Tang . . . We also considered the design of recently excavated gate relics which were constructed during the Tang Dynasty. The design of the protective cover building was deduced from the excavated relics and historical records . . . The craftsmanship, materials and colors of the buildings also match those of that time . . . Hence the process was very scientific and accurate . . . Yes, the cover building is not original, but we conclude that it is very similar to the original.”

Thirdly, the camel hoof prints discovered in front of the ‘protective cover’ museum are ‘authentic evidence’ for the Silk Road. Almost all the interviewed experts and managers mentioned the camel prints (Figure 8). One interviewee said proudly, “Luoyang was the eastern starting point of the Silk Road from the 7th to 10th centuries for which the camel prints provide valuable evidence . . . Xi’an was also a starting point but in a different historical period.” When asked how to view the authenticity of the camel prints, one expert replied:

“The value of the excavated camel prints is tremendous. We have to consider their protection as a priority. We chose the method of ‘ground simulation’. That is, after collecting information on the excavated prints, they were recovered in order to protect them. At the same time, we used artificial soil to make a copy of the prints which was then placed on top [of the reburied remnants]. The artificial soil has now settled and is same [in appearance] as the original.”

Fourthly, the reconstructed environment is simulated to represent the Tang Dynasty, including an artificial lake, Lifang area and Dingding Plaza. As one expert said,

“We tried to recover the past scene of [the] Dingding Gate in line with excavated information. For example, the lake, the east wall beside the museum, and the [front] square”. One manager mentioned the integrity standard of heritage, “The integrity is also required . . . it would be very strange if we just recovered the gate and didn’t regard the nearby environment. A harmonious environment is important. You might see that there are many Tang-styled symbols in the plaza . . . ”
5.2. The Experienced Authenticity of Tourists

The research identified 104 online visitor comments on the LSDG, of which 98 comments were analyzed. These comments were derived from three different tourism evaluation platforms: Mafengwo, Ctrip (Xiecheng), and Dianping. The average evaluation mark on the three platforms ranges from 80 to 100 (the full mark is 100). Generally, most tourists paid attention to the overall materialist aspects of the LSDG, in particular the settings, the cover buildings and the relics. However, they do not care much about matters of materialist authenticity. In terms of positive aspects, they expressed their imagining of the past by discussing the grandness of the buildings and the modest scale of the archeological remains. For example, one tourist commented online,

“There are many ancient things in the museum. Very grand, the gate relic of Luoyang … Worthy to see … [and] to recall how splendid Luoyang was in the great Tang Dynasty … I felt that I was suddenly transported back to the Tang.”

At the same time, they expressed their deep disappointment in the lack of materialist presentations and interactive features. For example, one visitor commented, “The gate ticket is 30 RMB and yet there is nothing [in the museum] … Nothing to see … It’s nothing more than a swindle … “

To some extent, the fieldwork data backed up the online comments. When observing the tourist behavior in the museum complaints from the tourists could be overheard, such as, “there is nothing to see” or “this isn’t fun at all”. The interviewed tourists also noted that the presented information and structure were too limited to impress them. Compared to the online comments, the interview data revealed more detail about likes and dislikes. It was, thus, possible to observe and ask more detailed questions about their experiences on the authenticity of the site.

In short, tourists experienced the authenticity of the LSDG in terms of materialist objects and authorized heritage status. Tourists focused on the materialist objects, both the reconstructed cover buildings and the excavated objects. Tourists knew that the cover buildings were newly constructed. However, they were not concerned about their lack of originality. As one tourist said,

“I knew the Gate was just a protective cover building, but it doesn’t matter … There are many reconstructed ancient buildings, who cares whether they are original or later reconstructions? They are very ornate and appealing … I think the significance is that these buildings tell us the accurate location of the Dingding Gate and what happened in the past.”

There were also tourists who didn’t recognize that the cover buildings were newly constructed. For instance, one tourist commented that, “these ancient buildings look great and I like them … [They] are much better than modern buildings, they are our heritage and we should protect them well.”
Only one tourist expressed a concern that the cover buildings were inappropriate. He said, “They are not ancient buildings, but artificial ones. There are too many these kinds of buildings [and this is] not good. They will confuse our consciousness about ‘true and false’. I like true heritage and really hate this kind of ‘reconstruction’. It’s like being cheated”. Clearly, the tourist comments focus on the aesthetically pleasing nature of the cover buildings from the perspective of a materialist view which in turn provides them with a material space to link to a perception of the past.

As for the authenticity of the excavated relics displayed in the cover buildings, tourists expressed different attitudes and opinions. Five tourists expressed their great interest in the relics. For example, one said,

“The inner environment is full of a sense of history. The excavated Gate relics are great as they are the real evidence of history. The Gate saw many historical events. I feel very lucky that I can walk among the relics, just like travelling through history.”

When asked to talk more about the historical events he knows, the tourist replied, “I know this Gate was the formal gate of outer Luoyang city in the past. It was constructed in the Sui dynasty and Sui Yangdi was the first emperor to pass through. You know, the opinions about Sui Yangdi are not good, yet he really implemented lots of good projects bequeathed to us, such as the Grand Canal of the Sui and Tang Dynasties.” The other four tourists also expressed their interest in the Gate and knew a lot about its history.

However, there are also tourists whose experiences on the authenticity of the site are negative. For example, one said, “These are just piles of dust, nothing to see at all. Very boring travel. [By contrast] I went to Luoyang Museum yesterday. There are many interesting objects there. I also went to Mingtang and Tiantang [another cover building project in Luoyang stimulating the palace of Wu Zetian from the Tang] and had a great time, much more interesting than here.” When asked if they knew about the history of the Dingding Gate, most replied that they only knew it was a significant gate in the past. For example, one said, “I heard that it was a kind of heritage, world level. It was a very significant gate in the past. Nonetheless, these relics are really not interesting to see and have fun with.” Another tourist informed us that, “My friend told me Dingding Gate was precious heritage, very worthy to see. However I felt it was just average, not planned well. The information was not presented well either, for it was just static presentation, not interactive, not impressive. As a tourist site, it should be more interesting, good to see and entertaining”. Clearly, most tourists do not know about the limiting protection regulations associated with World Heritage status.

5.3. Perceived Authenticity of Local Residents

Local residents also paid attention to the material aspects of the LSDG, but in a quite different way. They do not care much for the excavated relics and cover buildings, but pay more attention to nearby public spaces. Their perceptions of the authenticity link more to their everyday life. These spaces, designed to resemble the past scenes, were reconstructed in the controlled-area in line with the integrity standard of World Heritage regulations. Many of the local residents were clear that the ‘protective cover’ and these public spaces are reconstructions. They approved of the reconstruction and expressed the idea that it provided a focus for strengthening local community identity. Hence, they know it is ‘fake’, but it still meets with their approval. The project has impacted their community in positive ways.

Firstly, local residents experienced genuine community life at the public spaces, in particular at the DGP and FS (see Figure 9). For example, one elderly resident said:

“This square was constructed last year [2018]. Before that, I usually stayed at home with nothing to do. I felt lonely and didn’t have friends at that time. You know, people living in ICEC community come from diverse areas and backgrounds. We didn’t know each other before, even though we lived cheek by jowl. But now I’ve made some friends here. We come to the plaza and square almost every day, for walking, taking exercise, and sometimes dancing or singing together. The plaza and square are [now] really important for our life.”
Secondly, local residents expressed pride in living in such a historical place. They acknowledged the reconstructions of the Dingding Gate as meaningful. With regards to residents of higher education background, everyone knows that Luoyang has an ancient history, but there was previously no way to see or express this other than a few ruins. Some residents stated that the rebuilding of structures, such as the Dingding Gate, provided a feeling of an ancient Luoyang. For example, one resident said “I know this [the cover building] is fake, but it looks good. If we went to an archeological pit [to search for a trace of the past] we only see an ugly pile of dirt . . . I take pride in being from Luoyang, and I hope we could recover more ancient buildings . . . This can also improve our cultural self-confidence.” Another interviewee resident stated that, the “Dingding Gate was the formal north gate of Luoyang in the Tang Dynasty. The reconstructed gate doesn’t seem very imposing. I thought the Dingding Gate should be more splendid and glorious.” Local residents noted that the Dingding Gate truly existed in this location, and they took pride in being from Luoyang.

Thirdly, native residents saw the reconstruction of the Dingding Gate as a manifestation of historical progress. Some residents are ‘natives’ who lived in villages nearby the DGS and then were relocated to Longtai community. These residents usually walked to the gate area and recalled the days gone by. They hold that the current reconstructed environment as much better than that which existed before. As one woman said:

“ . . . it was shabby here in the past and now it is very different. It is much cleaner. The buildings are good-looking and the square is big. The environment is much better now. I usually walk to the big area behind of Gate (Tianjie Street and two blocks) with my friends and sometimes pick wild vegetables there like before. It’s a really good experience.”
Figure 9. Community life at the Dingding Gate Plaza (DGP) (by the author).

Figure 10. Plaza dancing at DGP (by the author).

When asked if she went to the museum, she replied, “Of course. When it was first opened, I went in, but there is nothing to see except dirt . . . I was told the excavated things were very precious, but they were not very attractive to me. So I went in it just once, although the Gatekeeper was our villager and now we live in Longtai community [entry for registered locals is free of charge]”. One interviewee talked about her experience on the relocation:

“When I was told to relocate to other place to live, I was sad and afraid of the future life. At first I was not very adaptable to apartment living, you know, it’s different from village life, but gradually I felt better . . . Almost all our villagers live in Longtai community and meet every day just like before . . . We usually take a stroll together after dinner, or sometimes join in the plaza dancing.”

Hence, these ‘native’ residents experienced the improvement of the environment from the viewpoint of their living and leisure conditions, whilst they are neither interested in the relics nor do they understand its significance to the Silk Road.

6. Concluding Discussion

The three groups of people examined here–heritage experts and managers, local residents and tourists–all place attention on the material aspects of the gate even though their perceptions of the authenticity of the reconstructed material spaces differ. We refer to this as a form of ‘relational authenticity’. Heritage experts prioritize the material authenticity of the LSDG in terms of the excavated objects, authentic evidence linking the site to the Silk Road, and the simulated environment that is the outcome of the restoration project. The first two kinds of material authenticity are original objects and sites that existed in the location. The third one, the simulated environment, combines constructivist and materialist authenticity in that the camel prints as material objects have existed for a long time whilst the Silk Road itself is a more recent concept. The heritage experts approve of the reconstructed heritage on the condition that it accord with historical records and the materials and techniques mirror as closely, and as pragmatically, as possible with the original conditions. Clearly, what the heritage experts emphasize is the rematerialized features of the reconstructed spaces. This confirms with
Holtorf’s attention to the ‘material clues’ of ‘pastness’ and Jones’ interest in the ‘material qualities’ of the copies [13,14,22,43].

The experienced authenticity of the tourists relates to the reconstructed ‘protective cover building’, excavated objects, history and authorized heritage status. Based on object visuality [17,18], tourists directed their satisfaction and aesthetic appreciation towards the cover buildings rather than the excavated ruins and objects. Furthermore, most tourists we surveyed are aware that the LSDG acquired World Heritage status. They can cite some of the relevant historical stories and anecdotes about the Gate. Some, however, expressed their disappointment in the lack of evocative objects and absence of ‘entertaining features’. As Jones suggested, experiential authenticity exists in “evoking symbolism and stories” [13]. This is also what Holtorf emphasized in the power of narrative, which should be designed to meet the audiences’ expectations of ‘pastness’ [14]. There is also no doubt an important element here of how tourists expect to be ‘entertained’ rather than just ‘educated’, a balance that all World Heritage sites are trying to address. Hence, in this case, relational authenticity could only be acquired through the active interactions of actors with the (re)materialized objects. We suggest that if the (re)materialized qualities meet their imaginative expectations of the past, they regard such features as authentic no matter whether they are from the past or as contemporary reconstructions.

Local residents, perceived authenticity more in terms of the reconstructed public spaces, like the plaza and square, which fulfills their needs for community life and place identity. Seeing the spatial change of the LSDG, they know it was reconstructed. However, they also display a feeling for the historical significance of the heritage site. By comparison to tourists, local residents seldom enter the cover building and regard the excavated objects as neither ‘good looking’ nor ‘useful’ to their life. Their authenticity perceptions depend more on the reconstructed environment and its meanings to the local community. Hence local residents’ authentic perceptions are more linked to the functions of reconstructed heritage for their daily life. Here we can see how the reconstruction of the site has also attempted to achieve the objectives of urban renewal by providing public and green spaces for local residents to enjoy, and which in turn are important for physical and mental wellbeing the maintenance of which is a primary concern of the local government and is part of the broader governmental project of ‘Healthy China 2030’.

In regarding the reconstructed heritage space in the LSDG as an assemblage of excavated original objects and reconstructed spaces, we identify a kind of ‘relational authenticity’ existing in the interconnections of people, place, and (re)materialized spaces. Borrowing from the arguments of Jones and Holtorf who combine the constructivist and materialist approaches [13,14], relational authenticity is acquired through a rematerializing process engaged by actors, who focus on the material qualities, instead of material authenticity and originality, of the excavated objects and reconstructed space. The tangible quality of rematerialized spaces connects to the actors’ perceptions of authenticity. For experts, the material qualities relate to originality, location and historical records, which evoke an authorized sense of authenticity. For tourists, the authenticity is more connected to the reconstructed heritage spaces and their relevant social activities. For experts and tourists, material qualities are evocative agents to verify historical records/stories and heritage status, and thus, produce relational authenticity. Local residents, however, view material qualities more related to functional aspects of the reconstructed heritage space.

From another angle, we can see that in the case of a project like the LSDG it represents the complex intersection of three agendas: Conservation, tourism, and urban renewal. The project has attempted to cater to all three. This, in fact, is a scenario that is being repeated across China as it continues to go through a process of rapid urbanization, the expansion of the tourism and leisure industries, and the push towards rediscovering and promoting China’s cultural heritage. In our analysis here does this mean that the views of the three different groups of people are equivalent? Of course not. The opinions of heritage experts and managers must be respected as essential elements in furthering sustainable heritage preservation. At the same time, the needs of local residents must also be considered, and the importance of developing tourism for the local economy is crucial. In this paper, we have attempted to
present how these different groups conceive of the ‘authenticity’ of the LSDG site through the ways the site is perceived and utilized. Finding a means to balance the goals of heritage preservation, tourism, and urban renewal and economic development is the major challenge facing China’s current stage of overall development. Therefore, we see our paper as providing a modest contribution, but one that needs more attention and research.

Author Contributions: X.S., Writing, revising, and investigation; G.G.S., Proofreading and revising; C.S., Supervision. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: Program for Science & Technology Innovation Talents in Universities of Henan Province (19HASTIT030); Program for Teaching Reform and Practice of Higher Education in Henan Province(2019SJGLX394); Program for Humanities and Social Science of Henan Provincial Education Department(2017-ZZJH-368).

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References and Notes

1. Jokilehto, J. Considerations on authenticity and integrity in World Heritage Context. City Time 2006, 2, 1–14.
2. Cameron, C. From Warsaw to Mostar: The World Heritage Committee and Authenticity. Assoc. Preserv. Technol. Bull. 2008, 39, 19–24.
3. Winter, T. Beyond Eurocentrism? Heritage conservation and the politics of difference. Int. J. Herit. Stud. 2014, 20, 123–137. [CrossRef]
4. Byrne, D. Western hegemony in archaeological heritage management. Hist. Anthropol. 1991, 5, 269–276. [CrossRef]
5. Zhu, Y. Uses of the past: Negotiating heritage in Xi’an. Int. J. Herit. Stud. 2018, 24, 181–192. [CrossRef]
6. Su, X. Reconstructing tradition: Heritage authentication and tourism-related commodification of the Ancient City of Pingyao. Sustainability 2018, 10, 670. [CrossRef]
7. Assi, E. Searching for the concept of authenticity: Implementation guidelines. J. Archit. Guidel. 2000, 6, 60–69. [CrossRef]
8. Khalaf, R.W. A viewpoint on the reconstruction of destroyed UNESCO Cultural World Heritage Sites. Int. J. Herit. Stud. 2017, 23, 261–274. [CrossRef]
9. Bold, J.; Pickard, R. Reconstructing Europe: The need for guidelines. Hist. Environ. Policy Pract. 2013, 4, 105–128. [CrossRef]
10. Pendlebury, J.; Short, M.; While, A. Urban World Heritage Sites and the problem of authenticity. Cities 2009, 26, 349–358. [CrossRef]
11. Jokilehto, J. Reconstruction in the World Heritage context. In Conservation-Reconstruction: Small Historic Centres Conservation in the Midst of Change; Crisan, R., Fiorani, D., Kealy, L., Musso, S.F., Eds.; European Association for Architectural Education: Hasselt, Belgium, 2015; pp. 513–524.
12. Wang, N. Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience. Ann. Tour. Res. 1999, 26, 349–370. [CrossRef]
13. Jones, S. Negotiating authentic objects and authentic selves. J. Mater. Cult. 2010, 15, 181–203. [CrossRef]
14. Holtorf, C. On Pastness: A reconsideration of materiality in archaeological object authenticity. Anthropol. Q. 2013, 86, 427–443. [CrossRef]
15. Dai, B. The era of integration of culture and tourism: Big Data, commercialization, and good life. People Tribune 2019, 11, 6–15.
16. Bruner, E.M. Abraham Lincoln as authentic reproduction: A critique of postmodernism. Am. Anthropol. 1994, 96, 397–415. [CrossRef]
17. Zhu, Y. Performing heritage: Rethinking authenticity in tourism. Ann. Tour. Res. 2012, 39, 1495–1513. [CrossRef]
18. Cohen, E.; Cohen, S.A. Authentication: Hot and cool. Ann. Tour. Res. 2012, 39, 1295–1314. [CrossRef]
19. Paddock, C.; Schofield, J. Authenticity and adaptation: The Mongol Ger as a contemporary heritage paradox. Int. J. Herit. Stud. 2017, 23, 347–361. [CrossRef]
20. Su, J. Conceptualising the subjective authenticity of intangible cultural heritage. Int. J. Herit. Stud. 2018, 24, 919–937. [CrossRef]
21. Smith, L. Uses of Heritage; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2006.
22. Foster, S.M.; Jones, S. Concrete and non-concrete: Exploring the contemporary authenticity of historic replicas through an ethnographic study of the St John’s Cross replica, Iona. *Int. J. Herit. Stud.* 2019, 25, 1169–1180. [CrossRef]

23. Smith, L.; Waterton, E. *Heritage, Communities and Archaeology*; Duckworth: London, UK, 2009.

24. Stovel, H. Effective use of authenticity and integrity as World Heritage qualifying conditions. *City Time* 2007, 2, 21–36.

25. Ashley, C.; Bouakaze-Khan, D. Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Conserv. Manag. Archaeol. Sites* 2015, 13, 95–102. [CrossRef]

26. Su, X. Reconstruction of Tradition: Modernity, Tourism and Shaolin Martial Arts in the Shaolin Scenic Area, China. *Int. J. Hist. Sport* 2016, 33, 1–17. [CrossRef]

27. Waterton, E.; Smith, L. The recognition and misrecognition of community heritage. *Int. J. Herit. Stud.* 2010, 16, 4–15. [CrossRef]

28. Deacon, H.; Smeets, R. Authenticity, value and community involvement in heritage management under the World Heritage and Intangible Heritage Conventions. *Herit. Soc.* 2013, 6, 129–143. [CrossRef]

29. Cohen, E. Authenticity and commoditization in tourism. *Ann. Tour. Res.* 1988, 15, 371–386. [CrossRef]

30. Hughes, G. Authenticity in tourism. *Ann. Tour. Res.* 1995, 22, 781–803. [CrossRef]

31. Starn, R. Authenticity and historic preservation: Towards an authentic history. *Hist. Hum. Sci.* 2002, 15, 1–16. [CrossRef]

32. Reisinger, Y.; Carol, J. Steiner. Reconceptualizing object authenticity. *Ann. Tour. Res.* 2006, 33, 65–86. [CrossRef]

33. Holtorf, C. *From Stonehenge to Las Vegas: Archaeology as Popular Culture*; Altamira Press: Walnut Creek, CA, USA, 2015.

34. Young, L. ‘Magic objects/modern objects: Heroes’ house museums. In *The Thing about Museums. Objects and Experience, Representation and Contestation*; Dudley, S.H., Barnes, A.J., Binnie, J., Petrov, J., Walklate, J., Eds.; Routledge: London, UK; New York, NY, USA, 2012; pp. 143–158.

35. Duan, X.; Chan, C.; Marafa, L.M. Does authenticity exist in cultural theme parks? A case study of millennium city park in Henan, China. *J. Tour. Cult. Chang.* 2019, 17, 321–338. [CrossRef]

36. Waitt, G. Consuming heritage: Perceived historical authenticity. *Ann. Tour. Res.* 2000, 27, 835–862. [CrossRef]

37. Kamash, Z. ‘Postcard to Palmyra’: Bringing the public into debates over post-conflict reconstruction in the Middle East. *World Archaeol.* 2017, 49, 608–622. [CrossRef]

38. Ruskin, J. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*; Wiley: New York, NY, USA, 1865.

39. Jones, S.; Yarrow, T. Crafting authenticity: An ethnography of conservation practice. *J. Mater. Cult.* 2013, 18, 3–26. [CrossRef]

40. Labadi, S. World Heritage, authenticity and post-Authenticity: International and national perspectives. In *Heritage and Globalization*; Labadi, S., Long, C., Eds.; Taylor & Francis: Oxford, UK, 2010; pp. 66–84.

41. Lindholm, C. *Culture and Authenticity*; Blackwell: Oxford, UK, 2008.

42. Cole, S. Beyond authenticity and commodification. *Ann. Tour. Res.* 2007, 34, 943–960. [CrossRef]

43. Holtorf, C. *The Presence of Pastness: Themed Environments and Beyond*; Themed Environments in Transcultural Perspective; Schlehe, J., Uike-Bormann, M., Oesterle, C., Hochbruck, W., Eds.; Transcript Verlag: Bielefeld, Germany, 2010; pp. 23–40.

44. McIntosh, A.J.; Richard, C.; Prentice, R.C. Affirming authenticity: Consuming cultural heritage. *Ann. Tour. Res.* 1999, 26, 589–612. [CrossRef]

45. Hampp, C.; Schwan, S. Perception and evaluation of authentic objects: Findings from a visitor study. *Mus. Manag. Curatorship* 2014, 29, 349–367. [CrossRef]

46. Zhu, Y. Authenticity and heritage conservation in China: Translation, interpretation, practices. In *Authenticity in Architectural Heritage Conservation: Discourses, Opinions, Experiences in Europe, South and East Asia*; Weiler, K., Gutschow, N., Eds.; Springer International Publishing: Cham, Switzerland, 2017; pp. 187–200.

47. Yu, X. The heritage preservation system in ancient China. *J. Southeast Univ.* 2012, 14, 117–122.

48. Shepherd, J.R.; Yu, L. *Heritage Management, Tourism, and Governance in China: Managing the Past to Serve the Present*; Springer: New York, NY, USA, 2013.

49. Yu, K. China faces the challenge of World Heritage concept: Thoughts after the 28th World Heritage Convention. *J. Chin. Landsc. Archit.* 2004, 20, 68–70.
50. Elliott, J.S.; Shambaugh, D.L. *The Odyssey of China’s Imperial Art Treasures*; University of Washington Press: Seattle, WA, USA, 2005.

51. Kalman, H. *Heritage Planning: Principles and Process*; Routledge: London, UK, 2014.

52. Li, S.Q. Writing a modern Chinese architectural history: Liang Sicheng and Liang Qichao. *J. Archit. Educ.* 2002, 56, 35–45.

53. Lai, D. Composition and elements—Origins of Beaux-Arts and Liang Sicheng’s expressions on “Grammar and Vocabularies” within Chinese modern architecture. *Architecture 2009*, 142, 55–64.

54. Zhao, C. Losses and gains: A commentary on the impact of the University of Pennsylvania on Chinese academia in the 1920s. *Archit. J.* 2018, 599, 79–84.

55. Su, X. The uses of reconstructing heritage in China: Tourism, heritage authorization, and spatial transformation of the Shaolin Temple. *Sustainability 2019*, 11, 411. [CrossRef]

56. Shepherd, J.R. ‘It is my home. I will die here’: Tourism development and the politics of place in Lijiang, China. *Geogr. Ann.* 2012, 94, 31–45. [CrossRef]

57. Shepherd, J.R.; Yu, L.; Gu, H. Tourism, heritage, and sacred space: Wutai Shan, China. *Int. J. Herit. Tour.* 2012, 7, 145–161. [CrossRef]

58. Su, M.; Wall, G. Exploring the Shared Use of World Heritage Sites: Residents and Domestic Tourists’ Use and Perceptions of the Summer Palace in Beijing. *Int. J. Tour. Res.* 2014, 17, 591–601. [CrossRef]

59. Su, X. The Coordination between Great Heritage Relics and Region Development—Exploration based on Data from Luoyang Bureau of Statistics Website. Available online: http://www.lytjj.gov.cn/sitesources/lystjj/index/page_pc/tjyw/articlea5f60029409e4fd08976821a9a67f59d.html (accessed on 19 May 2020).

60. Qu, L.; Song, T. Dillemma and the way out: The conservation of Great Ruins. *Fudan J.* 2007, 5, 114–119.

61. Data from Luoyang Bureau of Statistics Website. Available online: http://www.lytjj.gov.cn/sitesources/lystjj/index/page_pc/tjyw/articlea5f60029409e4fd08976821a9a67f59d.html (accessed on 19 May 2020).

62. Note: The 13 dynasties include Xia(2070 BC-1600 BC), Shang(1600 BC-1046 BC), Western Zhou(1046 BC-771 BC), Eastern Zhou(770 BC-256 BC), Eastern Han(25-220), Cao Wei(213-266), Western Jin(266-316), Northern Wei(386-534), Sui(581-618), Tang(618-907), Song(960-1279), Yuan(1271-1368), Ming(1368-1644), and Qing(1644-1911).

63. Su, Y. Great Ruins protection and master plan of Luoyang city. *China Anc. City* 2016, 2, 66–72.

64. Chen, W. The Coordination between Great Heritage Relics and Region Development—Exploration based on the Master Plan of Sites of Han Chang’an City. Ph.D. Thesis, Northwest University, Xi’an, China, 2010.

65. Wang, M. The introduction of “Luoyang Models” for urban development and heritage protection. *Contemp. Econ.* 2010, 25, 48–49.

66. Yang, R.; Yang, J.; Zhong, Q.; Xie, J. Evaluations on the “Luoyang Mode”: Experiences and lessons of city planning and conservation of mega-sites. *Archit. J.* 2006, 459, 30–33.

67. Luoyang Cultural Heritage Administration. *Research and Protection of Luoyang National Great Ruins*; Cultural Relics Press: Beijing, China, 2009.

68. Zhao, Y. Study on Protective Utilization of Major Sites in the Process of Urban Renewal of Luoyang. Master’s Thesis, Huaqiao University, Quanzhou, China, 2013.

69. Wang, Z. Camel Bell of Silk Road to Luoyang—Visiting to the Dingding Gate Site of the Capital Area of the Sui and Tang Dynasties of Luoyang. *China Cultural Relics News.* 27 June 2014. Version 1–2. Available online: http://wenbozaixian.com/portal/ DigitPager/paperDetail/publishdate/2014-06-27/paperId/14411/id/77293 (accessed on 24 May 2020).

70. Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage. *Tracking on the Large Archeological Site Protection Scheme*; Cultural Relics Press: Beijing, China, 2016.

71. Tang Luoyang City Archaeological Team of the Institute of Archaeology of Chinese Academy of Social Science. Excavation Report on the Dingding Gate. *Acta Archaeol. Sin.* 2004, 1, 87–130.

72. Tang Luoyang City Archaeological Team of the Institute of Archaeology of Chinese Academy of Social Science. Excavation Report on the Dingding Gate. *Chin. Archaeol.* 2006, 6, 87–94.

73. Pang, L. Discussion on the application of authenticity principle in the protection and exhibition of city gate ruins: A case study of Danfeng Gate and Dingding Gate ruins. *J. Chifeng Univ.* 2017, 38, 67–70.

74. Liu, D. *Records of Twice World Heritage Applications in Luoyang*; Relics Publishing House: Beijing, China, 2014.

75. Zhu, W. The Dingding Gate Site of Sui and Tang Plaza of Luoyang—Heritage of Geographical and Cultural Spirit of Modern Chinese Design. *J. Fuzhou Univ.* 2012, 40, 634–639.
76. Li, D. There Will Add a New Landmark Eco-Cultural Square in the South of Museum of Dingding Gate. 
Luoyang Daily. 8 April 2018. Version 5. Available online: http://lyrb.lyd.com.cn/html2/2018-04/08/content_156682.htm (accessed on 27 May 2019).

77. Winter, T. Geocultural Power: China’s Quest to Revive the Silk Roads for the Twenty-First Century; University of Chicago Press: Chicago, IL, USA; London, UK, 2019.

78. Sigley, G. China’s Route Heritage: The Ancient Tea Horse Road of Southwest China; Routledge: London, UK, 2020.

79. Blaikie, N. Designing Social Research: The Logic of Anticipation; Polity Press: Cambridge, UK; Oxford, UK; Malden, MA, USA, 2000.

80. Bruner, J.S.; Austin, G.A. A Study of Thinking; Transaction Publishers: New Brunswick, NJ, USA, 1986.

81. Schwandt, T.A. Constructivist, Interpretivist Approaches to Human Inquiry. In Handbook of Qualitative Research; Denzin, N.K., Lincoln, Y.S., Eds.; Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 1994; pp. 118–137.

82. Cresswell, W.J. Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Traditions; Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 1998.

83. Matthews, B.; Ross, L. Research Methods: A Practical Guide for the Social Sciences; Pearson Education: Essex, UK, 2010.

© 2020 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).