

# Study on the Authenticity of Intangible Cultural Heritage

## —Take Guangdong Nanhai Boluodan Temple Fair as an Example

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### Abstract

Authenticity is a difficult academic problem in the tourism. The authenticity of the cultural heritage represents the value and appeal of heritage. With the acceleration of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) tourism development, scholars have been calling for protecting the authenticity of ICH at the same time of the development of ICH. What is the authenticity of the content in the end and how to protect are lack of being studied. Thus, the aim of this study is to research through reviewing literatures and finding characteristics of ICH, to examine the means and differences of tourists' perception about the authenticity of ICH, so as to achieve the goal of protecting and developing ICH better. The study investigated tourists with the experience of visiting Bo Luo Dan Festival temple, and used SPSS to carry on the quota date statistical analysis. This study researched the main factors which affected the perceived of authenticity, and the relationship between the factors and satisfaction. The study got two core factors that had an impact on perceived authenticity, and told that there was a significant positive impact between the authenticity of ICH and the satisfaction of ICH tourism.

### Keywords

Intangible Cultural Heritage, Authenticity, Protection, Perceive

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### 1. Introduction

It is hard to protect the incorporeity, inheritance mechanism as well as the living environment of intangible cul-

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tural heritage (hereinafter referred to as the “ICH”). Many heritages are endangered, but the government invests a lot of money, which can only benefit the minority of heritage protection and inheritance. In this case, many enterprises pay attention to the economic value and travel value of ICH, and put forward the industrialization road of ICH tourism development. The ICH tourism development aims to seek the balance point of ICH development and protection, and use it moderately and reasonably without destroying its authenticity; and the ultimate goal is to be continued and inherited. The folk custom is developed deeply in the ICH tourism development, but also often doubted by the public, such as the commercialization of ancient towns and streets, the appearance of fakelore and the change of traditional religious rites’ connotation. In the process of tourism development, in order to attract tourists, ICH needs certain packaging and change, but it needs to be aware that the excessive packaging and catering will distort the nature of culture, and eventually lead to the loss of the ICH original cultural connotation, namely the so-called authenticity. The authenticity of ICH is the important basis to measure the effect of cultural heritage tourism development; therefore, taking ICH as the tourism resource and protecting its authenticity are worthy of further discussion. The ICH authenticity perception of tourists, as the main body of tourism activities, has reference value and guiding significance for ICH tourism development and protection.

This research expects to combine the ICH characteristics, puts forward the evaluation indexes that affect ICH authenticity, finds the core affecting factors through the perception difference of tourists, and finally verifies the relationship between ICH authenticity and ICH tourist satisfaction, in order to provide theoretical foundation for the ICH authenticity protection.

## 2. Literature Review

The word “Authenticity” comes from Greek, also translated as the truth, original nature, genuine instincts, reliability. Authenticity was originally used to describe the museum of art, and MacCannell (1973) [1] introduced the concept into the study on tourism motivation and experience for the first time. Pearce (1985) [2] and Waller (1998) [3] prove the tourists’ pursuit of authenticity from the psychological perspective. In the field of tourism resource development, the authenticity requires the historical and cultural heritage to highlight its history and tradition, namely the authenticity of tourism object. For the amusement theme parks, they can inspire visitors’ authenticity according to the psychological needs of tourists. The folk ICH, it is necessary to balance the authenticity of the subject and object, and hold the balance of tourism development. Halewood (2001) [4], Shepherd (2002) [5] and Waitt (2000) [6] have different opinions about tourism’s authenticity influence, and think that anything will lose authenticity as long as it is created for commercial purposes. But most scholars do not agree with this idea; Apostolakis (2003) [7] and Yeoman (2007) [8] think that authenticity is a guarantee the travel suppliers should provide; Cohen (1988) [9] presents that when the traditional culture is abandoned by the modernization, the business purposes can help keep the traditional culture and customs; Van der Borg *et al.* (1996) [10] believe that strengthening the authenticity of the local culture is good for the reconstruction of traditional culture and national identity. Gao Fang (2008) [11] takes the “Yunnan Reflections” as an example, and proposes that under the condition of cultural industrialization, the cultural commercialization is not opposite to the authenticity; instead they can promote each other. Ma Xiaojing (2006) [12] points out that if the tourism commercialization is controlled by the local people, the national tourism and cultural tourism can be the path to the national cultural renaissance.

For cultural tourism products or destinations based on humanity, tourists’ perceived value is mainly from the recognition of cultural tourism products authenticity, and tourists’ authenticity perception of cultural tourism products is a dimension to assess the perceived value. McIntosh (1999) [13] thinks that in the process of appreciating the historical heritage, tourists’ “authenticity” perception is influenced by the gender, income, education level, living standard, social status and early visiting experience. Liao Renjing (2009) [14] takes Nanjing Confucius Temple as an example, and studies the scenic spot “authenticity” that aims to meet the tourists’ needs of historical cultural and commercial consumption from the perspective of tourists. Tian Meirong and Bao Jigang (2005) [15] analyze the tourist satisfaction from the perspective of authenticity. Feng Shuhua and Sha Run (2007) [16] establish the “authenticity-satisfactory” evaluation model from the perspective of tourism perception. Gao Yan (2007) [17] verifies that the perception difference has certain positive or negative influence on the tourist satisfaction.

Foreign research shows that the authenticity is the core value of cultural heritage. The authenticity has special meaning for the development and protection of cultural heritage. At present, scholars study the ICH authenticity

mainly from the perspective of concept, and put forward protection concepts. Domestic research begins to use empirical analysis to study the perception of cultural heritage authenticity, but there is not much research result of the ICH authenticity perception, and there is even little research on the ICH authenticity protection through the perception.

### 3. Empirical Study

#### 3.1. Research Case

Guangdong Nanhai Boluodan is the unique traditional folk festival in Guangzhou and even the Pearl River Delta Region, which is the biggest local folk temple fair, as well as the only sea sacrifice activity, containing the most representative folk cultural elements in Guangzhou. In June 2011, the State Council announced the third batch of national intangible cultural heritage list, and Boluodan was selected as the state-level folk ICH project. In the annual Boluodan period, the surrounding villagers pray for peace according to the ancient folk traditions and customs. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of villagers and devout men and women in the Pearl River Delta Region come to Nanhai Temple, bless, sightseeing and go shopping. But only building the temple fair into a tourist project but ignoring the spiritual construction deviate from the original idea of building Guangdong well-known cultural project. The successful ICH development can both satisfy tourists' visual and auditory needs, but it should also pay attention to the cultural atmosphere building. So Boluodan is selected as the research object of empirical study.

#### 3.2. The Selection of Tourists' Perception Index

The concept of ICH authenticity has no unified standard. To facilitate the operation, integrate a number of research results at home and abroad, this study adopts the authenticity connotation of three heritages: 1) the objective authenticity involves the architectural style, architectural image perception, unique internal design of local and street, especially the authenticity perception of natural crafts; 2) the constructive authenticity refers to the tourists' faith expectation, preferences, image and consciousness; 3) the existence focuses on tourism subject, including the tourists' feelings and emotions, such as the unique spiritual experience and the understanding of history and culture. Based on the three aspects, analyze the influence factors of Boluodan (see [Table 1](#)).

#### 3.3. Research Design and Field Investigation

The study design, through the questionnaire survey of tourists' authenticity perception of Boluodan Temple Fair, assesses the development effect of Boluodan Temple Fair, thus offering opinions and suggestions for the development and protection of Boluodan Temple Fair. The first part of the questionnaire understands tourists' experience, expectations and motivation of Boluodan. The second part uses Likert 5 subscales to measure the visitors' perception degree of authenticity; 1 means completely disagree, 2 means agree a little; 3 means whatever; 4 means agree much and 5 means completely agree. The third part collects tourists' gender, age, education, occupation, income and population characteristic information. The research adopts the one-to-one filling, extracts appropriate proportion according to the visitor flow during Boluodan Temple Fair, and conducts field survey. There are a total of 600 questionnaires, and 565 valid questionnaires from the effective rate of 94.2%.

### 4. Statistical Analysis

According to the survey of tourists' authenticity perception of Boluodan Temple Fair, the author adopts SPSS 19.0 as the statistical software and handles the measurement data.

**Table 1.** Influence factors of Boluodan.

No.	Item	No.	Item	No.	Item
1	Historical site	5	Boluozone	9	Commercialization
2	Surrounding scene	6	Special performance	10	History legend
3	Craftsmanship	7	Detailed publicity material	11	Religion and spirit
4	The lack of Boluoji's characteristics	8	Atmosphere	12	ICH title

### 4.1. Sample Feature Analysis

This research questionnaire collects 565 valid questionnaires. The data statistical results show the moderate sex ratio. There are more visitors aged 21 to 50 with a total of 76.3%; there are more students, administrative departments' staffs and company employees; there is more wage-earning class; there are more people with education of high school to undergraduate. Visitors of Boluodan Temple Fair are mainly residents in Guangzhou and the Pearl River Delta, as well as the strangers working there.

The blessing is the main purpose of tourists visiting Boluodan Temple Fair; experiencing folk custom and relaxing are the second purpose; buying traditional arts and crafts and gathering is also one of the purposes. From the perspective of tourism, made 80% of visitors travel together with families and friends, and individuals and those with the units account for less. First-time visitors account for 61.4% and those for more than three times account for 16.6%.

From the perspective of the tourist perception and understanding, tourists understand Boluodan Temple Fair from relatives and friends, past experiences and television publicity, followed by books and newspapers and network information. Those through the travel brochure account for less. 9.2% of visitors know much about Boluodan, 61.4% know a little and 29% don't know it.

### 4.2. Impact Analysis of Population Characteristic Variable on Boluodan Authenticity Perception

According to Boluodan tourists' gender, age, income, education level and occupation difference, analyze the historical site, surrounding scenery, promotional materials, Boluoji technology, new material, performance, atmosphere, commercialization, history and legends understanding, religion and spirit, ICH variables and obtain the following results by data analysis:

1) Tourists' gender has great influence on the perception of Boluodan

Through different gender tourists for Boluodan authenticity perception of the average (mean) analysis, men and women tourists for the Nanhai Temple historical authenticity (male mean = 4.02, female mean = 3.88), folk performances of traditional (male mean = 3.83, female mean = 3.79), and the overall evaluation of Boluodan (mean = 3.77, female mean = 3.72), all aspects' authenticity perception is generally higher. By independent samples T test, observe the male and female tourists' inspection index, and find that in terms of perception of the surrounding landscape, men and women have significant differences at P = 0.001 level, and no great differences in other aspects of authenticity perception (Table 2).

2) People in different age grades has different authenticity perception for Boluodan

Because of the different degree of knowledge of history and culture and tourism purposes, 21 - 34 age tourists and 35 - 50 age tourists, in terms of authenticity perception of historical sites exist a significant difference. Authenticity perception in the surrounding scenery, 21 - 34 age groups of tourists to the scenic surroundings of the

**Table 2.** Different gender tourists' perception of Boluodan.

Measurement project	Male	Female	T	P
Historical site	4.02	3.88	2.424	0.789
Surrounding scene	3.47	3.59	2.428	0.001
Detailed publicity material	3.62	3.60	-1.581	0.941
Craftsmanship	3.59	3.56	-1.585	0.787
Boluoji	3.40	3.35	0.278	0.292
Boluozong	3.68	3.65	0.278	0.347
Special performance	3.83	3.79	0.383	0.927
Atmosphere	3.91	3.87	0.780	0.982
Commercialization	3.76	3.78	0.326	0.405
History legend	3.45	3.48	0.326	0.572
Religion and spirit	3.25	3.30	0.631	0.166
ICH title	3.77	3.72	0.631	0.801

demand is higher. In terms of production technology of authenticity perception, over 65 tourists have a pretty good idea of the traditional process of Boluoji; 35 - 50, 51 - 64 age group the making craft of visitors think of the Boluoji from inheritance, the representative of the traditional culture; 21 - 34 age tourists don't know Boluoji and craftsmanship, they are not sure whether the traditional the process. In the aspect of the production process of new technology of Boluoji, 21 - 34 age tourists think the appropriate changing the material Boluoji is a sign of advancing with the times; while visitors under the age of 20 groups for students, they tend to keep the traditional production craft process. In terms of authenticity perception of Boluoji, under the age of 20, tourists don't think eating Boluozi in Boluodan is a reflection of tradition; 20 years of age or older tourists are agree that the taste of the brown has distinguishing feature very much, is the expression of the continuation of traditional customs. In terms of performance of the traditional perception, over 65 visitors to traditional folk toward the king, archaize offerings known such as the sea; tourists and 21, 34, 35 to 50 pages of traditional folk authenticity of cognition degree is not high. Religious and spiritual experiences, under the age of 20 visitors get to meet spiritual or religious, significantly higher than other age groups of tourists.

### 3) Different educational backgrounds cause different authenticity perception for Boluodan

In combination with single factor variance, and Pearson correlation coefficient with different degree of cultural tourists to Boluodan authenticity to study the difference of perception, different education degree of tourists in the traditional production process, performance characteristic, atmosphere, and commercialization and understand the history and legend, there is no significant difference. According to the calculation of Pearson correlation coefficient, the higher the level of education, the interest and understanding of cultural things ability increases, the clearer perception of the reality of the Nanhai Temple ( $\beta = 0.101^*$ ). Education level and is negatively related to religious and spiritual experience, namely with the increase of the level of education, the tourist facilities, the environment, also meet the requirements of the tourist commodities is higher, the religious and spiritual experience to meet the lower ( $\beta = -0.141^{**}$ ). On the question of whether Boluodan deserves the title of provincial intangible, negative correlation with cultural level ( $\beta = -0.095^*$ ). Mainly and tourists experience and the spirit of the cultural level, the tourists' satisfaction degree, spiritual experience indirectly reflect the cultural level, the higher the perception of things may be more in-depth, highlights for high school and technical secondary school and college and university culture level of significant differences between the tourists. Revisit directly reflect the degree of satisfaction, the cultural hierarchy levels showed a significant negative correlation with revisit ( $\beta = -0.173^{**}$ ), cultural degree is higher, lower tourists' satisfaction of Boluodan will be.

### 4) Different occupations cause different authenticity perception for Boluodan

Through the analysis of variance of the variables under different career multiple inspection, found that different professional authenticity perception of tourists in the craft tradition, atmosphere, whether to revisit or recommend friends to exist significant differences on the other part does not exist significant differences. Self-employed people in the authenticity of historical sites and the surrounding landscape perception of average evaluation, significantly lower than that of other professional groups. In production process of the traditional ways, retirees, evaluation of traditional process than in several other professional groups, and retired employees in the performance of the traditional, commercial, understanding history and legends, religious and spiritual experience, the posthumous title of authenticity perception level of average is among the highest in different occupations, shows the familiar retiree of traditional culture and nostalgia. However, retiree recognition of commercialization degree is higher than other occupational groups. In the actual interview, most of the retired people think under the impact of the modern western civilization, modern commercial makes the revival of traditional culture, they said about the commercialization of this, the same Cohen (1988) [9] put forward the point of view is consistent. Because retirees higher cultural awareness and spiritual experience, their willingness to revisit and recommend friends to come to the strongest. In terms of authenticity perception of new technology of Boluoji, farmers lower than other occupational groups, this is mainly because farmers are nearby villagers, even the production process of inheritance, new materials to make Boluoji more easy to make, at the same time, in their view, the Boluoji still exists, so they do not think the new material influence the authenticity of the Boluoji. The commercialization of the Boluodan Temple Fair introduces foreign shops more, less vested interests of local farmers, so their recognition of commercialization is the lowest among all occupational groups.

### 5) Different income causes different authenticity perception for Boluodan

Traditional different tourists in the process of income, the authenticity of Boluozi awareness and participation in the next year or in the willingness to recommend friends to significant difference, there is no significant difference in other ways. According to Pearson correlation coefficient, the  $P = 0.01$  level, different income groups of Boluozi ( $\beta = 0.116^{**}$ ) there is a significant positive correlation, the authenticity of the perception

that with the increase of income, the higher the authenticity perception of Boluozong. According to field survey, the traditional production of Boluozong is about 3 times the price of other rice dumplings, high income represents the higher consumption ability, combining with the single factor analysis of variance, the outstanding performance for below 2000 income group with three other age difference of perception level, the higher the income, the more obvious differences. Under  $P = 0.05$  level, different income groups in detail of publicity materials ( $\beta = 0.092^*$ ), production industry of traditional authenticity perception ( $\beta = 0.106^*$ ), there is a significant positive correlation, as incomes have increased, detailed degree of publicity materials and Boluoji processing technology of traditional authenticity perception degree is higher. High income represents high-cultural level, to some extent in the process of the visit to the temple fair of publicity materials to introduce more attention, at the same time higher education make tourists interested in the tradition of Boluoji more.

### 4.3. Principal Component Analysis

After factor analysis for the first time, extract three common factors. But due to the third factor contains only the new technology of making Boluoji. Item number only level 2 or 1, affect the content validity, therefore the level and the item are deleted, and authenticity perception of 11 factors for a second factor analysis.

The bigger the KMO value is, the greater the common factors between variables are, the more suitable for factor analysis. The survey data of KMO value of 0.960, suitable for factor analysis (see **Table 3**).

In addition, from the Bartlett ball test chi-square value of 2736.124 (DOF for 55), reached a significant level, represents the correlation matrix of the female group, there is a common factor between suitable for factor analysis. Extraction factor based on eigenvalue is equal to 1, a total of two factors, the variation explained variance of 73.694%. In order to clearly understand each factor on the 2 kinds of common factors distribution, maximum variance orthogonal rotation factor matrix. After rotating the composition of the coefficient of the size of the said factors and obtain the correlation factors, the stronger the correlation coefficient, the greater the said. The extraction of factors should be considered after rotation factor load values at least those variables should be greater than 0.50.

It can be seen from **Table 4** that: extract 2 factors from 11 key elements, 2 factors overall explains 73.694% of variation in the data. Two factor analysis at the heart of the tourist authenticity perception influence factor,

**Table 3.** KMO and bartlett’s test.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sample degree		0.960
Bartlett’s test	Chi square distribution	2736.124
	DOF	55
	Significance	0.000

**Table 4.** Factor loading table after spindle.

Factor	Measurement project	Component	
		1	2
F1	<b>Religion and spirit</b>	0.870	
	<b>History legend</b>	0.860	
	<b>ICH title</b>	0.794	
	<b>Atmosphere</b>	0.789	
	<b>Historical site</b>	0.707	
	<b>Surrounding scene</b>	0.618	
	<b>Commercialization</b>	0.600	
F2	<b>Craftsmanship</b>		0.819
	<b>Boluozong</b>		0.815
	<b>Detailed publicity material</b>		0.591
	<b>Special performance</b>		0.584

Note: the table only contains the load above 0.5.



the factor 1 includes: religious and spiritual, understanding of history, legends, the posthumous title, atmosphere, historical sites attract, surrounding scenery and commercialization; factor 2 include: craft tradition, Boluozong, publicity materials and performance characteristic in detail and so on four elements.

#### 4.4. Linear-Regression Analysis Based on the Tourists' Authenticity Perception Satisfaction

Establish two new variables F1 and F2 by the method of principal component analysis to reflect the tourists to the authenticity of sensory information. On this basis, in order to "next year will take part in or recommend friends to" as indicators of satisfaction, F1 and F2 as independent variables. Multiple linear regression was carried out on the degree of satisfaction. Establish tourist authenticity perception functional relations between the influencing factors and the degree of satisfaction, and verify the significance of each variable. By the fit of the model test results (Table 5), the regression model of Sig. The value is 0; shows that the model is significantly related. The adjusted R2 is 0.855, has high fitting degree. Fitting is presented in Table 6 are not standardized and the standardized regression coefficients (including the constant term), and through the T test method for fitting of test results, the Sig. The value is 0, has significant statistical significance, can build a linear model.

According to the non-standardized coefficient in Table 7, the regression results are available, and the linear relation of F1 and F2 and satisfaction is as follows:

$$Y = 1.144X_1 + 0.622X_2 + 3.237$$

Therefore, two common factors F1 and F2 have a positive influence on tourist satisfaction; the F1 class public factor's influence on the degree of satisfaction is 1.144, while that of F2 positive impact is 0.6222.

## 5. Conclusions

Authenticity of ICH has an important influence on the development of ICH as the tourism resource, and the authenticity the value and appeal of the heritage. To protect the heritage authenticity is a problem that is worthy of discussion, as well as one of the important ways to protect ICH. The research is based on the cognitive theory, combines the characteristics of ICH, and studies the protection of ICH by studying the approach and difference of tourists' cultural heritage authenticity perception.

The research takes the state-level ICH Boluodan Temple in Guangdong Province as an example, through the field survey of the Nanhai Boluodan Temple folk festival, uses SPSS19.0 to analyze the data, and finds that tourists' different gender, age, educational level, occupation and income have different influences on Boluodan authenticity perception. Through the principal component analysis, it can be seen that two core factors have

**Table 5.** Assessment of model fit.

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R square change	F change	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	0.925 <sup>a</sup>	0.856	0.855	0.536	0.856	883.751	2	297	0.000

**Table 6.** Analysis of variance table.

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	507.003	2	253.502	883.751	0.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	85.194	297	0.287		
	Total	592.197	299			

**Table 7.** Regression analysis results.

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% confidence interval for B		
	B	Std. error	Beta			Lower bound	Upper bound	
(Constant)	3.237	0.031		104.673	0.000	3.176	3.298	
1	F1	1.144	0.031	0.813	36.944	0.000	1.083	1.205
	F2	0.622	0.031	0.442	20.067	0.000	0.561	0.682

positive influences on tourist authenticity perception; factor 1 includes: religion and spirit, the understanding of history, legends, ICH title, atmosphere, historical sites, surrounding scenery and commercialization; factor 2 includes: craft tradition, Boluo zong, publicity materials and performance, etc.

Therefore, it can be seen that the tourists' perception of ICH authenticity not only contains the perception of heritage physical carrier, but also includes the perception of traditional culture heritage; in addition, the tourists' perception mainly comes from their own experience and knowledge, as well as the planning and arrangement of tourism project. So taking Nanhai Boluo Temple as a tourism resource can be designed and treated according to the general rule of tourists' perception, and its basis lies in that tourists' expectations, evaluation and attitude towards ICH will affect the tourist experience, affecting the tourists' satisfaction for folk ICH.

The study also needs more of ICH as examples to verify, and this research hopes that this conclusion can provide a theoretical basis for the authenticity protection of ICH.

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