

# Responses to Replica (vs. Genuine) Touristic Experiences

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ABSTRACT

A growing trend in tourism is the use of replica experiences. Yet, consumers' responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences are mostly overlooked in the literature. In this paper, we propose that consumers' perceptions of authenticity of the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences mediate their responses to these experiences. We define three theoretically driven factors that influence the authenticity perceptions of consumers—experience characteristics (restricted experience vs. not restricted experience; within close vs. distant geographical proximity to the genuine) and a consumer characteristic (salient goal: collecting experiences vs. having fun/pleasure), which influence consumers' responses to replica and genuine touristic experiences. We found support for the proposed theory using two field studies from Egypt's Luxor Tutankhamun tomb and three experimental studies.

*Keywords: replica experience, genuine experience, authenticity, restrictions, collecting experiences, tourism management*

### **Introduction**

The number of visitors who travel to Europe whose main purpose in visiting is not commercial, but touristic, has increased to 713 million in 2018, with France being the leading touristic destination in the world, having approximately 83 million tourists every year (Roser, 2019). With interests spanning accommodation, food and beverage, and entertainment, tourists invest in different experiences in the various countries they visit. Consistently, there is an increasing demand for experiential consumption in general, as spending on experiences like travel, leisure, and foodservices are expected to rise to US\$8 trillion by 2030. McKinsey reports that from 2014 to 2016, consumer purchases of experiences greatly outpaced the consumption of goods or services (Coughlin 2018). In this research, we extend the previous literature on tourism and experiences as well as examine consumers' responses to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences. We first provide the research motivation.

A growing trend in tourism is replica experiences, which are the copies of the genuine experiences (e.g., Lascaux Caves in France, Altamira Caves in Spain, Ferrari cars in Ferrari Museum, UEFA Champions League trophies in Casa Milan). If “the search for authenticity is one of the cornerstones of contemporary marketing” (Brown, Kozinets, and Sherry, 2003, p.21), then how does the market size and the demand of consumers for replica touristic experiences increase (Dickinson, 2018)? Why would a consumer enjoy visiting a replica Ice Hotel or a replica Shanty Town knowing that they are not the genuine ones? Are there contexts in which

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consumers also have higher authenticity perceptions for replica touristic experiences and contexts in which consumers have lower authenticity perceptions for genuine touristic experiences?

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the conditions under which consumers have higher authenticity perceptions for the replica touristic experiences and contexts under which consumers have lower authenticity perceptions for the genuine touristic experiences. In doing so, we extend developments in the tourism, experiences and authenticity literature to develop hypotheses on the consumers' responses to replica and genuine touristic experiences. The paper's findings extend the literature in multiple ways. First, in a novel departure from past research on tourism and experiences, we focus on consumers' responses to replica touristic experiences. In doing so, this investigation's findings extend the literature on tourism and experiences by studying a category of experiences—replica touristic experiences—mostly unexplored in the literature. The findings indicate that when consumers perceive the replica touristic experience as authentic, then they can have more positive responses to the replica experiences. Second, our work is the first to show that consumers enjoy replica touristic experiences more than they enjoy the genuine touristic experiences—when the genuine touristic experiences have restrictions—which extends the nascent research on tourism, experiences and authenticity in a novel manner. A key implication from these findings is that consumers can find the replica touristic experiences to be more authentic and the genuine touristic experiences to be less authentic. Third, this investigation's findings identify conditions related to consumer characteristics and experience characteristics that moderate these effects. In doing so, we identify these constructs as key building blocks for developing a theory of consumers' responses to replica and genuine touristic experiences. Finally, our work shows that consumers enjoy replica

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touristic experiences less than they enjoy the genuine touristic experiences when collecting experiences (vs. having fun/pleasure) is their goal and when the replica touristic experiences are within distant (vs. close) proximity to the genuine, which further extends the research on tourism, experiences and authenticity in a novel manner.

### **Material and Methods**

#### *Authenticity*

Authenticity is a fluid construct (MacCannell, 1999; Rickly-Boyd, 2013) that has been debated in the tourism literature for a long time. In an attempt to differentiate between the different understandings of what authenticity is, Wang (1999) identified three conceptualisations of authenticity. The objectivist approach is related with the extent to which visited objects are original. It advocates for the pure, frozen, unaltered, original, made by locals (Chhabra, 2012; Zhu, 2012). According to this approach, an object is authentic if it is believed to be “the original” or “the real thing” (Culler, 1981, p. 132). However, the paradox of authenticity is that it includes more than just the true, the real, and the genuine (Carter, 2019).

Postmodernism and constructivism gave rise to existential authenticity in tourism research (Zhu, 2012), which is a sociocultural projection with different versions of authenticities regarding the same object (Wang, 1999, p. 352). According to constructivist view, things do not appear to be authentic because they are inherently authentic but because they are an “invention of tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983; Zhu, 2012) or constructed through negotiated meaning making, interpretation, and

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agreement (Bruner, 1994; Zhu, 2012). The postmodernist existentialist approach blurs the line between the fake and the real and it is considered as an alternative to objective authenticity (Wang, 1999). It supports a subjective version of authenticity and refers to one's state of mind and perceptions (Chhabra, 2012; Reisinger and Steiner, 2006). It is not objective as it is aroused through the dynamic interaction between the external world and the individual (Zhu, 2012). According to this view, authenticity is a projection of tourists' beliefs, expectations, preferences, and stereotyped images onto toured objects (Wang, 1999). These objects that may be considered as inauthentic or artificial by the experts may be perceived as authentic by the tourists (Zhu, 2012).

We base our investigations on the notion that each individual experiences authenticity differently and uses different cues to evaluate the authenticity of an object. It is relative, negotiable (Cohen, 1988), and contextually determined. Hence, consistent with previous research, we do not define authenticity only as objective but consider it as a projection of a consumer's own beliefs, expectations, preferences, and stereotyped images onto the products that s/he evaluates (Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Waller and Lea, 1999). Based on this definition of authenticity, we focus on consumers' perceptions of authenticity for touristic experiences and investigate conditions under which consumers perceive a replica touristic experience as more authentic and a genuine touristic experience as less authentic. Relatedly, we investigate enjoyment of the tourists and their intentions to engage in the experience as our key measures for their responses to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences.

*Replica Experiences: A Brief Overview*

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A common and growing trend in tourism, services, retail, and management is the development and marketing of replica experiences. The Eiffel Tower, Statue of Liberty, and Pyramids of Giza are among the many touristic attractions that have hundreds of replicas around the world. People can drive replica F1 cars at the replica museum of Ferrari, which is just a few meters away from the original Ferrari Museum. People can also hold the exact replica of the UEFA Champions League trophies that are in the Casa Milan, which also include the genuine trophies. Although replica tourism experiences are prevalent in tourism, tourism research is mostly silent on what these replica tourism experiences are and what motivates consumers to visit and enjoy these replica touristic experiences alongside genuine experiences.

In this research, we conceptualize replica experiences as the copies of the genuine. Although previous research does not systematically investigate different types of replica touristic experiences, results from some qualitative research give insights about different types of replica touristic experiences. Accordingly, some of the replica touristic experiences are the exact one-to-one copies of the genuine in the original location (e.g., the Lascaux caves in France, King Tutankhamun Tomb in Egypt) or in distant locations (e.g., Titanic Ship in China). These replica experiences are called as facsimile experiences because they are built to be made as real as possible. Some of the replica touristic experiences are semi-genuine, meaning that they include some parts that are genuine (e.g., visiting Royal Palaces in Europe that include some genuine and replica pieces; Chronis and Hampton, 2008). There are also copycat tourism experiences that are copies of the genuine with different sizes and different materials used in different locations than the genuine (e.g., Eiffel Tower in Berlin, Michelangelo's David in

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Philippines, Medieval Dining in New York; Cova and Cova, 2019). These replica experiences are copycat experiences as these are imitations of the genuine and are not made to be as real as possible as in the facsimile replica experiences. Finally, there are fictional replica experiences (Grayson and Martinec, 2004), where the genuine experience is fictional and simulated replica experiences (Salome, 2010), where the tourists do not engage in a real, physical experience but engage in a simulated experience of the genuine (see Table 1 for different types of replica experiences across different countries). In this research, we do not focus on the fictional and simulated replica experiences, as these experiences are either fictional or involve a different, simulated, not physically real, medium (e.g., simulators) that may influence the consumers' responses differently.

Table 1. A Review of Replica Experiences

Facsimile Experiences (original location)	Lascaux Caves	France
	Tutankhamun Tomb	Egypt
	Altamira Caves	Spain
Facsimile Experiences (different location)	Smithsonian museum 3D printed statues (i.e. Jefferson's)	US
	Titanic ship	China
	van Gogh ear	Germany
Semi-genuine Experiences	Gettysburg Pennsylvania war memorial	USA
	Replica Supermarine Spitfire aircraft	UK
	Replica Marco Polo ship	Canada
Copycat Experiences (different locations, different size, different material)	Eiffel tower	Hangzhou China, Berlin, India
	Paintings of da Vinci and Monet	Japan
	Taj Mahal	Bangladesh
	Michelangelo's David	Philippines, Uruguay
Fictional Experiences	Sherlock Holmes Experience	London
Simulated Experiences	Indoor lifestyle sports, ski domes	



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What makes consumers like and demand these replica touristic experiences?

Developments in authenticity literature partly help us address this question. Much work has tested perceptions of genuine and replica objects in the realm of art. Original pieces play an important role in people's lay concept of art (Bloom, 2004). For example, while an identical replica might be perceived as worthless, an original piece of artwork might be worth millions of dollars (Newman and Bloom, 2012). Original artwork can be valued because it represents the culmination of a creative endeavor. People assess artwork as the end point of performances. From this perspective, individuals' assessment of artwork depends on the processes that gave rise to its existence. The reasoning is that the original is different from the replica because the original represents the end point of a different performance that involves creativity. Developments in authenticity literature suggest that consumers will have fewer positive evaluations for the replica touristic experiences.

However, other evidence in the literature on authenticity suggests that consumers also appreciate replica touristic experiences. Consumers like staged authenticity to protect a fragile culture and community from being disturbed, because the replica acts as a substitute for the original and keeps consumers away from the fragile culture and community (Cohen, 1995; p. 16). Hence, replications for safety or health reasons are neither intrinsically bad nor immoral as there is no deception. For example, the genuine Lascaux Cave was closed for public visits as it was threatened to become ruined after receiving over thousands of daily visitors for many years, and now consumers can only visit the exact replica of the Lascaux Cave (Dickinson, 2018).

It is argued that consumers do not find authenticity in the fake as a whole, but rather they are able to discriminate, interpreting some elements as genuine, real, or true in

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their consumption experiences (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). Relatedly, a lack of genuineness also does not bother some types of consumers because of their ability to ignore the non-genuine parts and satisfice with an “as real as possible” experience. For example, some tourists look for signs or symbols of authenticity but not for the real authenticity (Culler, 1981). Consumers like to “feel that they are really consuming the past.” Nonetheless, in the context of ethnic themed restaurants, where consumers have the opportunity to connect to their heritage (Negra, 2002) and interact with foreign cultures and cuisines, it is argued that the “illusion of authenticity” is good enough. These arguments that are supported with mostly qualitative investigations suggest that consumers may also have positive evaluations for replica touristic experiences in certain contexts.

In general, given the preponderance of theoretical support for the more positive responses of consumers to genuine touristic experiences in the literature, we expect that consumers’ baseline responses to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences will be more positive. This is also supported with previous literature suggesting that there still is the view that the genuine is better than the copied or the modified versions (Bruner, 1994; Chhabra, 2012). In this paper, we propose that consumers’ perceptions of authenticity for the touristic experience will influence their responses to genuine and replica touristic experiences.

### *Experience Characteristic: Restrictions*

Evidence suggests that there are genuine and replica touristic attractions all around the world and in many cases, and for good reasons, genuine attractions are protected and preserved. While reasonable in many ways, these restrictions likely hamper visitors’ experience. For

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example, when tourists go to the Valley of Kings in Egypt to visit King Tutankhamun's tomb, one of the first announcements that they hear upon entering the cave that contains the tomb is an emphatic directive not to touch the tomb. They also learn that they cannot stand close to it, because it is cordoned off by velvet ropes. Indeed, visitors cannot even take a picture of the tomb for fear of damaging it. To add to the list, many times visitors learn that various sections of the cave are closed for restoration. Visitors face restrictions at numerous other attractions of rare or historical artifacts besides King Tutankhamun's tomb. To see the Paleolithic paintings in the Cave of Altamira means having to don special suits, masks, and shoes before entering the site. Even then, visitors can only stay — with a guided tour — for 37 minutes (Kassam, 2014). Nearby, a replica is easily accessible without the restrictions that the genuine has. Moreover, consumers are able to see many of the things that are not open to visit in the genuine experiences. While the genuine experiences are restricted in many cases, the replica experiences are augmented with things that consumers cannot experience with the genuine.

How do the restrictions (i.e., constraints on full experience) in the genuine touristic experiences, and augmentation (i.e., additions to the full experience) in the replica touristic experiences, influence consumers' authenticity perceptions for the genuine and replica touristic experiences? Wang (1999) suggests that tourism enables people to move away from the constraints of daily life, in which the societal constraints are suspended for a period of time. There is also evidence that agency and the desire of consumers to achieve mastery over their environment is important for consumers' perceptions of authenticity (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). Perceived control refers to an individual's beliefs that s/he can exert influence on behaviors as well as the external

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environment (Langer, 1975) and it influences individual well-being. Consumers desire personal freedom over consumption choices and they prefer objects and experiences that help them to realize those goals. When the object or the experience does not let the consumer make informed decisions, then they perceive these objects and experiences as less authentic (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). Following this argument, it stands to reason that restrictions—constraints that limit consumers to fully engage in an experience—will influence consumers’ perceptions of mastery over their environment and hence their authenticity perceptions.

Applying these arguments and integrating developments in the authenticity, restrictions, and experiences literature, we hypothesize that restrictions will have a negative influence on authenticity perceptions for the genuine touristic experiences. Restrictions will hurt authenticity perceptions for the genuine touristic experiences more than the authenticity perceptions for the replica touristic experiences. Since consumers will not expect as much authenticity for replica touristic experiences as they do for genuine touristic experiences, then restrictions will not negatively hurt authenticity perceptions for the replica touristic experiences as much as they do for the genuine touristic experiences. This suggests that the responses of consumers to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences will be more negative when the experiences have restrictions. However, when there are no restrictions, genuine (vs. replica) touristic experience will be perceived as more authentic and consumers will have more positive responses to a genuine (vs. replica) touristic experience. Hence, we propose H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>1a</sub>, and H<sub>1b</sub>.

H<sub>1</sub>: Restrictions of the touristic experience moderate the effect of genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences on consumers’ perceptions of authenticity.

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H<sub>1a</sub>: When the touristic experience is restricted, consumers' perceptions of authenticity will be lower for genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences, which will result with more negative responses to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences.

H<sub>1b</sub>: When the touristic experience is unrestricted, consumers' perceptions of authenticity will be higher for genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences, which will result with more positive responses to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences.

### *Experience Characteristic: Geographical Proximity to the Genuine*

In many cases, it is not possible to experience the genuine anymore for various reasons. For example, people are not able to visit the Lascaux Caves anymore and have only the option to visit the replica Lascaux Caves, which is within close proximity to the original Lascaux Caves. Similarly, even though people can drive replica F1 cars at the replica museum of Ferrari, which is just a few meters away from the original Ferrari Museum, they are not allowed to have the same experience with genuine F1 cars. When the genuine is not available to be experienced anymore, how will consumers respond to the replica touristic experience that is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine?

There is evidence that people can perceive the differences between a genuine thing and a replicated thing whose physical manifestations are close in appearance to the genuine (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). The desire to feel connected leads people to perceive things that resemble the genuine as authentic (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). Consumers enjoy being connected to important others, to communities, places, cultures, and societies. Being able to relate to others, cultures, times, places, and communities influences consumers' perceptions of authenticity.

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People look for markers that contain key information about the genuine (MacCannell, 1976). For example, in a survey conducted with the visitors of the Sherlock Holmes museum, Grayson and Martinec (2004) showed that the more a site feature is perceived as being iconic with fictional accounts of the site inhabitant or his era (e.g., stories or films about Sherlock Holmes show similar things), iconic with old things (e.g., the experience looked as if it was made a long time ago), or iconic with historical accounts of the site inhabitant or his era (e.g., historical documents also describe the same kind of an experience), then the more the site feature will be perceived as authentic. With semiotic practices, tourists are able to interpret whether and to what degree a marker shares some key information with the sight (Chen, 2015). Accordingly, Cohen-Aharoni (2017) shows that although the Temple of Jerusalem does not exist anymore, the Western Wall Heritage Tunnels, the Temple Institute, and the Davidson Centre, which are the three sites within close geographical proximity to the Temple Mount are able to claim authenticity with adjusted tour performance.

Integrating developments in authenticity, geographical proximity, and experiences literature, we suggest that geographical proximity to the genuine is one experience characteristic that will influence consumers' authenticity perceptions. Replica touristic experiences that are geographically close (vs. distant) to the genuine touristic experience, when the genuine is not available anymore, will be perceived as more authentic since these experiences will let consumers connect with the genuine experience and will serve as markers for the genuine experience. Specifically, we hypothesize that consumers' responses to the replica touristic experiences, when the genuine is not available to be fully experienced, will depend on the geographical proximity of the replica to the genuine. We predict that when the genuine is not available to be experienced, consumers will respond more favourably to replica touristic

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experiences that are geographically within close (vs. distant) proximity to the genuine because they will be perceived as more authentic. Hence, we propose H<sub>2</sub>.

H<sub>2</sub>: Geographical proximity moderates the effect of replica touristic experiences on consumers' perceptions of authenticity. When the replica touristic experience is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine, consumers will have higher perceptions of authenticity, which will result with more positive responses to the replica touristic experience.

### *Consumer-Related Characteristics: Collecting Experiences vs. Having Fun/Pleasure*

Even when the genuine is still available to experience, consumers visit the replica Eiffel Tower, Statue of Liberty, Pyramids of Giza or an ethnic restaurant in metropolitan cities like New York and London. Why would consumers engage in and enjoy these touristic experiences when there is still the genuine available?

One major goal that consumers have, which can influence their authenticity perceptions, is the goal of collecting experiences to form an experiential CV (Keinan and Kivetz, 2010). The goal of collecting experiences involves actively and selectively engaging in experiences that are memorable and not identical. These experiences are once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel. For example, spending New Year's Eve at Times Square is one of those collectible experiences that are once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel. However, for most of the time, consumers engage in experiences with the goal of having fun and pleasure (Higgins, 2006) instead of collecting experiences. When consumers have the goal of having fun and pleasure, they engage in activities that

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enhance positive experiences and behaviors that decrease negative experiences (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982).

Integrating developments in the authenticity, consumer goals, and experiences literature, we suggest that the consumer goal of having collectible experiences (vs. having fun/pleasure) will influence consumers' authenticity perceptions. When consumers have the goal of collecting experiences, they will look for once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel touristic experiences, which are inherent in genuine experiences. Hence, consumers will have more positive responses to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences when they have the goal of collecting experiences. However, when consumers have the goal of having fun and pleasure, authenticity perceptions will not be salient. Replica and genuine touristic experiences can equally satisfy the goal of having fun and pleasure and consequently consumers can have similar responses to genuine and replica touristic experiences. Hence, we propose H<sub>3</sub>, H<sub>3a</sub>, and H<sub>3b</sub>:

H<sub>3</sub>: Goal of collecting experiences (vs. having fun/pleasure) moderates the effect of genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences on consumers' perceptions of authenticity.

H<sub>3a</sub>: When the goal is collecting experiences, consumers' perceptions of authenticity for the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experience will be higher, which will result with more positive responses to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences.

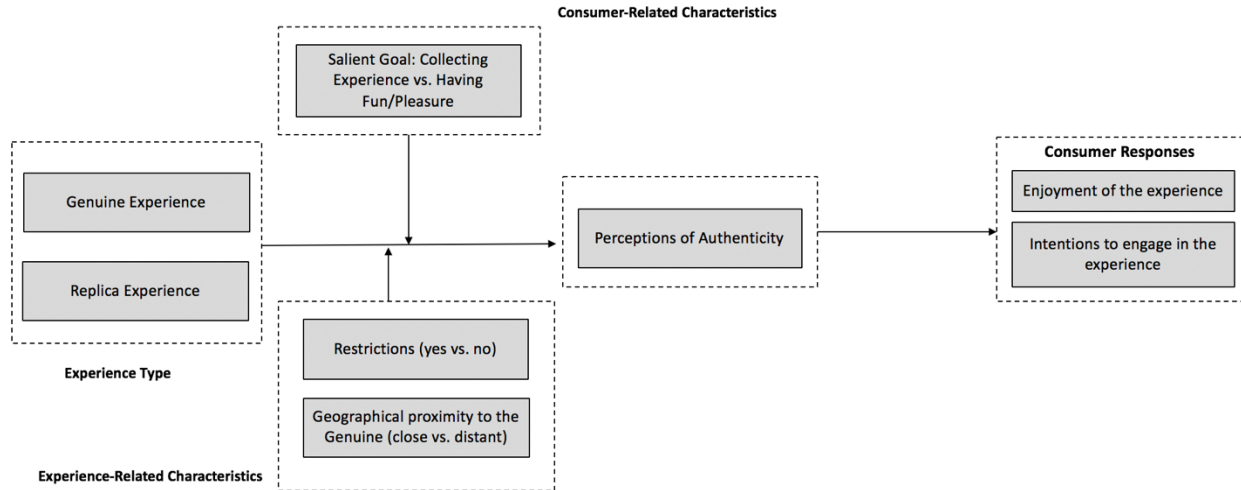
H<sub>3b</sub>: When the goal is to have fun/pleasure, consumers' perceptions of authenticity for the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experience will not be different, which will result with no difference in responses to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences.

We provide the conceptual framework of the paper in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



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### *Study 1a– Field Study in King Tutankhamun Tomb in Luxor, Egypt*

In study 1a, we had participants who visited both the replica and the genuine tomb of King Tutankhamun. In its natural context, the genuine tomb has a glass cover to prevent the tomb from the visitors’ interaction. However, in the replica tomb there is no glass cover. Furthermore, because of conservation reasons, many of the original pieces in the original tomb are either not displayed or are protected with curtains and glass covers. In the replica tomb, one can also see the replicas of the original pieces that are not displayed in the original tomb.

*Participants.* A global market research company conducted the study. Within our budget, we asked the research company to recruit seventy-five people who visited both the replica and the genuine King Tutankhamun tomb in Luxor, Egypt (37 female; 70% aged between 18 and 40).

Two researchers of a global market research company recruited participants at exit gates. As visitors left either the replica or the genuine tomb, they were asked whether

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they had visited both tombs and whether they would like to participate in a study about their experience voluntarily. Each participant completed the study separately.

*Procedure.* Participants first completed a survey about their perceptions of the replica and the genuine tomb. They completed the same set of questions for both the replica and the genuine experience separately. As our dependent variable, participants completed an enjoyment measure that included the extent to which the participants agreed that they found the experience enjoyable; interesting; found the experience to be a good one; outstanding; it was worth it to engage in the experience; liked the experience; were satisfied with the experience; were involved in the experience (adapted from Diehl, Zauberman, and Barasch, 2016; Keinan and Kivetz 2010), all on 7-point scales (1 = not at all and 7 = very much; all items were averaged). These items formed our measure of enjoyment of the experience for the replica ( $\alpha = .91$ ) and the genuine ( $\alpha = .95$ ) experiences.

Participants also indicated the extent to which they found the experience authentic on a 7-point scale (1 = not at all and 7 = very much). Finally, participants indicated their age and gender.

*Results and Discussion.* A one-way within-subjects ANOVA analysis showed that participants who visited both the restricted genuine tomb and the unrestricted replica tomb enjoyed the replica experience more than the genuine experience ( $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 6.21$ ,  $SD = 1.04$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.84$ ,  $SD = .82$ ;  $F(1,74) = 7.59$ ,  $p = .007$ ).

We next tested our hypotheses that consumers' responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences will be mediated by their perceptions of authenticity. A one-way within-subjects ANOVA analysis showed that participants who visited both the restricted genuine tomb and the

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unrestricted and augmented replica tomb found the replica (vs. genuine) experience as more authentic ( $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 6.37$ ,  $SD = .91$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.71$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ;  $F(1,74) = 15.64$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

In order to test for the mediation hypothesis, we followed the recommendations of Montaya and Hayes (2017), which extend the model of Judd et al. (2001), and tests mediation with designs where participants are measured on a dependent variable and a mediator in two different circumstances, as in our study. We used MEMORE Macro Model 1 (Montaya and Hayes 2017). The 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals (CIs) revealed a significant indirect effect via perceptions of authenticity ( $\beta = -.151$ , 95% CI: [-.295, -.045]).

Although study 1a supported our prediction, this study had two weaknesses. First, the researchers did not record the order of the visits by the participants, in which the order of the visits may influence the results. Second, the researchers also did not have a record in front of which tomb the researchers met the respondents, which may also potentially influence the results. Hence, in study 1b, we conducted the study with participants who visited only the replica or the genuine tomb.

*Study 1b – Field Study in King Tutankhamun Tomb in Luxor, Egypt*

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*Participants.* The study was conducted by a global market research company. The research company collected data from seventy-seven people who visited only the genuine tomb (29 female; 75.4% aged between 18 and 50) and seventy-five people who visited only the replica tomb (37 female; 64% aged between 18 and 50). The number of participants in the study was based on the budget for this study.

Two researchers of the market research company recruited participants. As visitors left either the replica or the genuine tomb, they were asked whether they had visited only one tomb. Those who indicated that they had only visited one of the tombs were asked whether they would like to participate a study about their experience. The interviews were conducted separately.

*Procedure.* Participants first completed a survey of their perceptions about their experience in either the replica or the genuine tomb as in study 1a. These items formed our measure of enjoyment of the experience ( $\alpha = .93$ ). Participants also indicated the extent to which they found the experience authentic (1 = not at all and 7 = very much). Finally, participants indicated their age and gender.

*Results and Discussion.* An independent samples t-test analysis on participants' enjoyment of the experience showed that participants enjoyed the experience in the replica tomb, which is unrestricted and augmented, more than the experience in the genuine tomb, which is restricted ( $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 6.36$ ,  $SD = 1.02$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.92$ ,  $SD = .96$ ;  $t(150) = -2.73$ ,  $p = .007$ ).

We next tested our hypothesis that consumers' responses to replica (vs. genuine) experiences will be mediated by their perceptions of authenticity. An independent samples t-test analysis on participants' authenticity perceptions of the experience showed that participants found the unrestricted and augmented replica tomb experience as more authentic than the

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restricted genuine tomb experience ( $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 6.69$ ,  $SD = .79$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.60$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ;  $t(150) = -6.14$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

In order to test for the mediation hypothesis, we followed the recommendations of Preacher and Hayes (2004) who suggested using a bootstrapping procedure to compute a confidence interval around the indirect effect. We used PROCESS Macro Model 4 (Hayes and Preacher 2014). The 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals (CIs) revealed a significant indirect effect via perceptions of authenticity ( $\beta = .64$ , 95% CI: [.362, .927]).

Although studies 1a and 1b supported our prediction, one of the major limitations of these studies in the field is that we could not isolate the effect of restrictions on consumers' perceptions of enjoyment and authenticity from other possible confounds. While the genuine was restricted, the replica touristic experience was both unrestricted and augmented with features that tourists cannot experience in the genuine. Therefore, in study 1c, we replicated the results of studies 1a and 1b in a controlled experiment.

### *Study 1c – Jackson Randy Rhoads Art Gallery*

In study 1c, we randomly assigned participants to replica (vs. genuine) experiences condition and restrictions (vs. no restrictions) condition and measured participants' enjoyment of the experience and authenticity perceptions. We provide the stimuli for the study in the Supplementary Material.

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*Participants.* One hundred and one (60 female;  $M_{AGE} = 22.76$ ,  $SD = 3.52$ ) students from a European university participated in the experiment in exchange for a 2€ meal coupon. The study used a 2 (experience type: replica, genuine) x 2 (restrictions: yes, no) between-subjects design.

*Procedure.* The study took place in the art gallery of a major European University. Two research assistants, who were blind to the hypotheses, approached students and asked them their willingness to participate for a 2€ meal coupon.

Participants were randomly assigned to a 2 (experience type: replica, genuine) x 2 (restrictions: yes, no) between-subjects design. First, all participants were shown The Jackson Randy Rhoads electronic guitar (please see Supplementary Material). Participants were then randomly assigned to a replica (vs. genuine) touristic experience condition. Participants in the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experience condition read the following:

The Jackson Randy Rhoads is a model of electric guitar, originally commissioned by guitarist Randy Rhoads and produced by Jackson Guitars.

Vinnie Vincent, formerly of Kiss, was the first professional guitarist to be offered an early Rhoads guitar by Jackson after Rhoads' death, which Vincent used on the Kiss Creatures of the Night and Lick It Up tours from 1982 until 1984. Following Vincent's departure from Kiss, he modified the Rhoads V design by adding a second V at a slight rotation to the first such that it mimics a shadow. Jackson made at least 3 of these Vincent modified Rhoads Vs from 1985 to 1988 for Vincent, and about 25 others were custom ordered and sold. The design was later copied by Carvin, Ibanez and Washburn Guitars, all for Vinnie Vincent. This is the exact replica (original) of the guitar that Vinnie Vincent played.

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Participants in the restrictions condition were instructed not to touch or play the guitar. Moreover, the guitar was cordoned off, preventing participants from coming close to it. Participants in the no restrictions condition were allowed to approach, touch, and play the guitar.

Next, participants were given a set of questions to evaluate their experience with the guitar. Participants first completed an enjoyment measure that included the extent to which they agreed that they liked the experience; found the experience enjoyable; it was worth to engage in the experience; were not satisfied with the experience; did not find the experience to be a good one; found the experience outstanding; it was an involving experience; found the experience interesting, all on 7-point scales (1 = not at all and 7 = very much; after reverse coding some items, all were averaged;  $\alpha = .74$ ). These items formed our measure of enjoyment of the experience.

Participants then indicated the extent to which they found their experience authentic (1 = not at all and 7 = very much).<sup>1</sup> Finally, participants indicated their age and gender. At the end of the study, participants were debriefed and thanked.

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<sup>1</sup> As a manipulation check for the experience type, participants rated how genuine they found the experience (1 = not at all and 7 = very much) and the results show that participants who engaged in the experience with the genuine (vs. replica) guitar rated the experience as more genuine ( $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.40$ ,  $SD = .95$  vs.  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 3.07$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ ,  $t(99) = 9.02$ ,  $p < .001$ ). We also ran a separate study to test for the credibility of the scenarios used in the main study and whether participants in the restricted experience condition perceive the experience to be more restricted than participants in the unrestricted experience condition. One hundred and three (51 female;  $M = 39.53$ ,  $SD = 14.34$ ) adults participated in the study on MTurk in exchange for monetary compensation. An ANOVA on participants' perceptions that the experience is restricted revealed a significant effect of the condition,  $F(3,99) = 33.03$ ,  $p < .001$ . Participants in the genuine restricted,  $M = 6.19$ ,  $SD = 1.04$ , and replica restricted,  $M = 5.96$ ,  $SD = 1.10$ , conditions found the experience to be more restricted than participants in the genuine unrestricted,  $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = 1.68$ , and replica unrestricted,  $M = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 1.74$ , conditions. Moreover, an ANOVA on participants' perceptions of credibility of the scenarios did not reveal any significant effect of the condition,  $F(3, 99) = 2.05$ ,  $p = .11$ .

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*Results and Discussion.* An ANOVA analysis on participant's perceptions of authenticity of the experience revealed the predicted interaction effect of experience type and restrictions conditions,  $F(1, 97) = 11.47, p = .001$ . When the experience was restricted, participants found the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experience more authentic,  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 4.88, SD = 1.48$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 3.84, SD = 1.52, F(1, 97) = 8.50, p = .004$ . When the experience was not restricted, participants marginally found the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experience more authentic,  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 4.56, SD = 1.16$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.24, SD = .83, F(1, 97) = 3.53, p = .06$ .

An ANOVA analysis on participants' enjoyment of the experience revealed the predicted interaction effect of experience type and restrictions condition,  $F(1, 97) = 12.52, p = .001$ . When the experience was restricted, participants' responses to the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences were more negative,  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 5.01, SD = .79$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 4.41, SD = .86, F(1, 97) = 7.93, p = .006$ . When the experience was unrestricted, participants' responses to the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences were more positive,  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 5.32, SD = .71$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.79, SD = .71, F(1, 97) = 4.80, p = .031$ .

We next tested our prediction that perceptions of authenticity of the experience will mediate consumers' responses to the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences when these experiences are restricted (vs. not restricted). We used Process Macro Model 7 to test our prediction. We defined the experience type as the independent variable and the restrictions as the moderator in the model. The results supported our prediction. The indirect effect of replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences on consumers' responses to the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences was significant in both no restrictions condition, ( $\beta = .374$ ; 95% confidence interval [CI] = [.073, .738]) and restrictions condition, ( $\beta = -.244$ ; 95% confidence interval [CI] = [-.460,



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-.045]). Finally, the difference between conditional indirect effects was significant, (index = .618; 95% confidence interval [CI] = [.24, 1.07]).

The results of study 1c present some key findings. First, when experiences were restricted, participants' responses to the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences were more negative. Second, when experiences were unrestricted, participants' responses to the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences were more positive. Hence, in a baseline condition, as expected, participants enjoyed the genuine touristic experiences more than they enjoyed the replica touristic experiences. However, when these genuine touristic experiences were restricted, the restrictions hurt the authenticity perceptions of the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences more, leading to less enjoyment of genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences.

### *Study 2 – Royal Jewellery Experience*

In study 2, we examined our prediction that when the replica touristic experience is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine, consumers will have higher perceptions of authenticity, which will result with more positive responses to the replica touristic experience. We provide the stimuli for the study in the Supplementary Material.

*Participants.* Three hundred and two adults participated in the experiment on MTurk in exchange for 1 US dollar (170 female;  $M_{AGE} = 36.48$ ,  $SD = 11.78$ ).

*Procedure.* All participants first read that for over 600 years, the Vienna Hofburg was the residence for the Austrian sovereigns and visitors from all around the world visit

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Hofburg Palace in Vienna, in which they have the opportunity to visit the Imperial Apartments and the Royal Jewellery Collection of the Austrian sovereigns. Participants were informed that the Imperial Treasury is at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna and the treasury contains a valuable collection of secular and ecclesiastical treasures covering over a thousand years of European history. They were then informed that recently there has been a construction work at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna, Austria and the palace is temporarily not available for any more touristic visits.

Participants were then randomly assigned to the genuine (vs. replica) experience conditions, in which they were informed that the palace announced that genuine (replica) of the Royal Jewellery Collection of Austrian sovereigns will be open for visit in the Royal Museum. They were then randomly assigned to the close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine conditions, in which they were informed that Royal Museum is 1 km (vs. 100 km) away from the Hofburg Palace in Vienna<sup>2</sup>. In order for the participants to visualize the Royal Jewellery Collection of the Austrian sovereigns, participants were also provided with the image of a Royal Jewellery from the Royal Museum.

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<sup>2</sup> We ran a separate study to test for the manipulations and credibility of the scenarios used in the main study. Ninety-eight adults (48 female;  $M_{\text{age}} = 36.02$ ,  $SD = 11.37$ ) participated in the study oMTurk in exchange for monetary compensation.

As a manipulation check for the experience type, participants in the close genuine,  $M = 6.23$ ,  $SD = .99$ , and distant genuine,  $M = 6.25$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ , conditions found the experience as more genuine than participants in the close replica,  $M = 3.48$ ,  $SD = 2.58$ , and distant replica,  $M = 3.87$ ,  $SD = 2.10$ , conditions,  $F(3,94) = 16.79$ ,  $p < .001$ .

As a manipulation check for the geographical proximity of the experience to the genuine, participants in the close genuine,  $M = 5.38$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ , and close replica,  $M = 5.48$ ,  $SD = 1.30$ , conditions found the experience to be more close to the genuine than participants in the distant genuine,  $M = 4.33$ ,  $SD = 1.44$ , and distant replica,  $M = 3.74$ ,  $SD = 1.76$ , conditions,  $F(3,94) = 8.39$ ,  $p < .001$ .

An ANOVA on participants' perceptions of credibility of the scenarios did not reveal any significant effect of the condition,  $F(3, 94) = 1.28$ ,  $p = .29$ . Moreover, an ANOVA on ease of comprehension of the scenarios did not reveal any significant effect of the condition,  $F(3, 94) = .20$ ,  $p = .89$ .

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We then asked participants to indicate the extent to which they would enjoy the experience of seeing the Royal Jewellery Collection of the Austrian sovereigns if they were to visit Austria when the Hofburg Palace is under construction on a scale of 7-points (1 = not at all and 7 = very much). Next, participants indicated the extent to which they would find the experience authentic (1 = not at all and 7 = very much). Finally, participants provided their basic demographic information.

*Results and Discussion.* An ANOVA analysis on participants' authenticity perceptions of the experience revealed the predicted interaction effect of experience type and geographical proximity condition,  $F(1, 298) = 4.06, p = .045$ . Participants had higher authenticity perceptions for the replica experience when the experience is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine,  $M_{\text{CLOSE}} = 4.59, SD = 1.70$  vs.  $M_{\text{DISTANT}} = 3.91, SD = 1.68, F(1, 298) = 6.60, p = .001$ . Participants' perceptions of authenticity for the genuine experience did not differ when the experience is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine,  $M_{\text{CLOSE}} = 5.00, SD = 1.63$  vs.  $M_{\text{DISTANT}} = 5.08, SD = 1.49, F(1, 298) = .09, p = .77$ .

An ANOVA analysis on participants' perceptions of enjoyment of the experience revealed the predicted interaction effect of experience type and geographical proximity condition,  $F(1, 298) = 3.72, p = .055$ . Participants had higher perceptions of enjoyment of the replica experience when the experience is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine,  $M_{\text{CLOSE}} = 4.80, SD = 1.51$  vs.  $M_{\text{DISTANT}} = 4.13, SD = 1.72, F(1, 298) = 6.85, p = .009$ . Participants' perceptions of enjoyment of the genuine experience did not differ when the experience is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to

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the genuine,  $M_{\text{CLOSE}} = 5.16$ ,  $SD = 1.55$  vs.  $M_{\text{DISTANT}} = 5.20$ ,  $SD = 1.56$ ,  $F(1, 298) = .016$ ,  $p = .90$ .

We next tested our prediction that perceptions of the authenticity for the experience will mediate consumers' perceptions of enjoyment of the replica touristic experiences when the experience is within close (vs. distant) proximity to the genuine. We used Process Macro Model 7 to test our prediction. In the model, we defined the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experience as the independent variable and the geographical proximity as the moderator. The results supported our prediction. The indirect effect of replica (vs. genuine) touristic experience on consumers' perceptions of enjoyment of experience was significant when the experience was within distant proximity to the genuine, ( $\beta = -.66$ ; 95% confidence interval [CI] =  $[-.98, -.37]$ ) but not when the experience was within close geographical proximity to the genuine ( $\beta = -.23$ ; 95% confidence interval [CI] =  $[-.54, .07]$ ).

The results of this study supported our prediction that geographical proximity moderates the effect of replica touristic experiences on consumers' perceptions of authenticity. Specifically, when the replica experience is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine, consumers have higher perceptions of authenticity, which results with more positive responses to the replica experience.

### *Study 3 – Collecting Experiences/Fun*

In study 3, we tested our prediction that the goal of collecting experiences (vs. having fun/pleasure) moderates the effect of genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences on consumers' responses to these experiences.

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In this study, participants read about The Game of Thrones Ice Hotel which is made with real snow and ice (vs. artificial snow and ice). Participants were randomly assigned to having the goal of collecting experiences (vs. having fun/pleasure). We provide the stimuli for the study in the Supplementary Material.

*Participants.* Five hundred and four adults participated in the experiment on MTurk in exchange for 1 US dollar (302 female;  $M_{AGE} = 37.46$ ,  $SD = 12.28$ ). We have identified the participants to be from US before running the study.

*Procedure.* Participants were first randomly assigned to the salient goal conditions. Participants read that people engage in different activities for many reasons. Participants in the collecting experiences condition read that one of the reasons people engage in different activities is to have experiences that are once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel. Participants in the goal of having fun/pleasure condition read that one of the reasons people engage in different activities is to have fun/pleasure. They were then asked to write down an experience that came to their mind when they had the goal of having an experience that is once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel (vs. fun/pleasurable)<sup>3</sup>.

Participants were then instructed that they would be reading about an experience. Participants in the genuine (vs. replica) experience condition read about The Game of Thrones Ice (vs. Synthetic Ice) Hotel. The hotel is 120 miles above the Arctic Circle and is made of 20 million kilos of snow (vs. artificial snow) and 350,000 kilos of crystal-clear ice (vs. synthetic ice)

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<sup>3</sup> We have pretested the two salient goal conditions in a separate study. Results show that participants who wrote about an experience that came to their mind when they had the goal of having an experience that is once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel indicated that they were thinking more about having a once-in-a-lifetime, unique and novel experience at the moment than participants who wrote about an experience that came to their mind when they had the goal of having fun and pleasure,  $M_{FUN/PLEASURE} = 4.65$ ,  $SD = 1.97$  vs.  $M_{COLLECTINGEXPERIENCE} = 5.40$ ,  $SD = 1.72$ ,  $t(96) = -2.02$ ,  $p = .046$ .

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in honour of George RR Martin's saga. They were also provided with some images from the hotel that were the same across the two conditions.<sup>4</sup>

We then asked participants to indicate the extent to which they would be willing to visit the hotel (1 = not at all and 7 = very much). Next, participants indicated the extent to which they would find this experience authentic (1 = not at all and 7 = very much). Finally, participants provided their basic demographic information.

*Results and Discussion.* An ANOVA analysis on participants' authenticity perceptions of the experience revealed the predicted interaction effect of salient goal and experience type condition,  $F(1, 500) = 4.47, p = .035$ . Participants had lower authenticity perceptions for the replica (vs. genuine) when they had the goal of having an once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel experience,  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 5.22, SD = 1.84$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.74, SD = 1.55, F(1, 500) = 6.77, p = .010$ . Participants' authenticity perceptions did not differ for the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experience when they had the goal of having a fun/pleasurable experience,  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 5.82, SD = 1.47$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.75, SD = 1.45, F(1, 500) = .137, p = .711$ .

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<sup>4</sup> We have pretested the two conditions in a separate study. Results show that participants in the genuine (vs. replica) experience condition find the experience less fake,  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 3.65, SD = 1.77$  vs.  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 4.53, SD = 1.80, F(1, 98) = 6.01, p = .016$ . Participants in both conditions found visiting the Ice Hotel as an experience,  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.36, SD = 1.51$  vs.  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 5.36, SD = 1.54, F(1, 98) = .001, p = .979$ .

We also ran a separate study to test for the credibility of the scenarios used in the main study. Ninety-eight adults (50 female;  $M = 35.11, SD = 11.58$ ) participated the study on MTurk in exchange for monetary compensation. An independent samples t-test analysis on participants' perceived credibility of the experience information showed no perception of credibility difference between participants who received information about the replica ice hotel and participants who received information about the genuine ice hotel ( $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 5.20, SD = 1.40$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 4.92, SD = 1.70; t(96) = -.88, p = .38$ ).

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An ANOVA analysis on participants' intentions to engage in the experience revealed the predicted interaction effect of salient goal and experience type condition,  $F(1, 500) = 4.52, p = .034$ . Participants had lower intentions to visit the replica (vs. genuine) when they had the goal of having a once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel experience,  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 5.28, SD = 1.79$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.90, SD = 1.36, F(1, 500) = 8.38, p = .004$ . Participants' intentions to engage in the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experience did not differ when they had the goal of having a fun/pleasurable experience,  $M_{\text{REPLICA}} = 5.17, SD = 1.78$  vs.  $M_{\text{GENUINE}} = 5.15, SD = 1.80, F(1, 500) = .008, p = .928$ .

We next tested our prediction that perceptions of the authenticity for the experience will mediate consumers' intention to engage in the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences when consumers have the goal of having once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel (vs. fun/pleasurable) experience. We used Process Macro Model 7 to test our prediction. In the model, we defined the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experience as the independent variable and the goal of collecting experiences (vs. having fun/pleasure) as the moderator. The results supported our prediction. The indirect effect of replica (vs. genuine) touristic experience on consumers' intentions to engage in this experience was significant when participants had the goal of having an once-in-a-lifetime, unique and novel experience, ( $\beta = -.21$ ; 95% confidence interval [CI] = [-.41, -.04]) but not when the participants had the goal of having a fun/pleasurable experience ( $\beta = .03$ ; 95% confidence interval [CI] = [-.12, .18]).

The results of study 3 supported our prediction that when consumers have the goal of collecting experiences, their responses to the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences are less positive. Interestingly, when consumers have the goal of having fun

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and pleasure, their responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences are not different.

### **General Discussion**

Replica touristic experiences, which are the copies of genuine touristic experiences, are growing dramatically in practice. Yet, there are few insights on consumers' responses to replica touristic experiences. Addressing this research gap, the present research examined under which conditions consumers have more favorable responses to replica touristic experiences and under which conditions consumers have less favorable responses to genuine touristic experiences.

### *Theoretical Contributions*

The paper's various findings contribute to the literature on experiences and authenticity theory.

*Authenticity.* Authenticity research has overlooked consumers' perceptions of authenticity for replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences. Our results indicate that when genuine touristic experiences are restricted, consumers have less favorable responses to genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences since these experiences elicit less authenticity. Furthermore, when the genuine is not available, consumers' responses to the replica touristic experiences are more favorable if the replica is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine. However, consumers' responses to the genuine touristic experiences can be more favorable if the consumers have the goal of collecting experiences. These findings extend the authenticity literature in tourism in a novel way by identifying factors that positively influence the



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authenticity perceptions of the replica touristic experiences and negatively influence the authenticity perceptions of the genuine touristic experiences. Future research that identifies conditions where consumers have more or less perceptions of authenticity, outside the realm of replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences, would be useful.

While consumers can engage in touristic experiences for different reasons, we demonstrated that consumers will have higher perceptions of authenticity for the genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences when they have the goal of collecting experiences. However, when consumers have the goal of having fun and pleasure, we showed that consumers' perceptions of authenticity are not different for the replica and genuine touristic experiences. This finding extends the previous research on authenticity by suggesting that while consumers might expect to have more enjoyment from genuine (vs. replica) touristic experience when they have the goal of collecting experience because of higher authenticity perceptions, their perceptions of authenticity from genuine (vs. replica) touristic experience may be equal when they have the goal of having fun and pleasure. Future research that examines other consumer goals that may influence consumers' perceptions of authenticity for replica and genuine touristic experiences might be useful.

*Experiences.* Past research on experiences has overlooked consumers' responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences. Our research on consumers' responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences addresses consumers' responses to an experience category that is becoming more common in tourism practice. Additional research on this issue will extend our work and the touristic experiences literature.

The findings of this research demonstrate that consumers may enjoy a facsimile replica touristic experience (e.g., replica King Tutankhamun tomb in Egypt) more than

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the genuine touristic experience (e.g., the genuine King Tutankhamun tomb in Egypt) when the experiences are restricted. Moreover, we demonstrate that consumers may have positive responses to copycat replica experiences as much as they do to genuine experiences when they have the goal of having fun and experiences. We believe that further research can extend our findings to fictional and simulated replica experiences and investigate motivations to engage in these replica experiences.

These findings also extend the literature on touristic experiences in a novel manner by showing when consumers will consider replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences as more enjoyable and when they intend to engage in these experiences. The moderation effects of context — the experience characteristics (restricted experience vs. not restricted experience; close vs. distant geographical proximity to the genuine) and the consumer characteristics (salient goal: collecting experiences vs. having fun/pleasure) identify three conditions where consumers' responses to the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences are more (vs. less) favorable. Further research on other factors that may affect consumers' perceptions of authenticity, and therefore their responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences, would be useful.

### *Managerial Implications and Limitations*

First, consumers' responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences suggest that when they perceive the experience as authentic, they can enjoy the replica touristic experiences more than they enjoy the genuine touristic experiences. This finding, which we anticipate will be surprising to tourism managers, suggests that tourism managers can develop more replica touristic experiences to attract consumers. This finding underscores the importance of

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communicating the genuineness of the touristic experience. However, this is not always the case, as specified by our moderators, which we discuss next.

Second, consumers' responses to replica touristic experiences are more favorable when the genuine is not available to be experienced and when the replica is within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine. This finding suggests that in situations where the genuine cannot be experienced anymore, it is better to have the replica touristic experiences within close (vs. distant) geographical proximity to the genuine.

Finally, the findings of this research show that when consumers have the goal of collecting experiences, their responses to the replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences are less positive. Interestingly, when consumers have the goal of having fun and pleasure, because they do not look for authenticity, their responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences are not different. We suggest that managers of replica touristic experiences will be better off if they communicate the fun and pleasure aspect of their experience rather than having once-in-a-lifetime, unique, and novel experiences.

Our research has some limitations that offer opportunities for further work. First, in this study of consumers' responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences, we do not investigate consumers' responses to fictional and simulated replica touristic experiences. We also do not compare how consumers may respond to different replica touristic experiences. Future research can extend the findings of this research and examine consumers' responses to fictional and simulated replica touristic experiences as well as investigate differences among the responses to different replica touristic experiences.

Second, for empirical testing, we used two field studies and one experimental study to test our prediction that restrictions of the touristic experience moderate the effect of genuine (vs.

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replica) touristic experiences on consumers' perceptions of authenticity. We have used two experimental studies to test our predictions that (2) geographical proximity moderates the effect of replica touristic experiences on consumers' perceptions of authenticity, and (3) goal of collecting experiences (vs. having fun/pleasure) moderates the effect of genuine (vs. replica) touristic experiences on consumers' perceptions of authenticity. Additional research can replicate these findings in the field.

In summary, we view this study as a useful first step in exploring responses to replica (vs. genuine) touristic experiences. We hope that this research stimulates further work on replica touristic experiences in influencing consumers' responses and tourism management.

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