

# Analysis of Archaeology General Courses in Colleges and Universities

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**Abstract:** In the present era, archaeology is facing the change of "from closed to open, from ivory tower to public popularization". To attach importance to public archaeology, to carry out education courses on public archaeology, and to let educational archaeology play an important role as a component of public archaeology is not only necessary for the development of archaeology itself, but also to undertake the important historical mission of carrying forward the fine traditional Chinese culture and enhancing cultural confidence. General education is the main body of practical general education. General Archaeology education refers to non-major archaeological education, namely general archaeology courses for undergraduates majoring in non-archaeology and culture. It is hoped that through the form of general education, non-major students can understand the basic knowledge of archaeology, have a preliminary understanding of Chinese archaeology, and give play to the social role of archaeology: We will carry forward fine traditional Chinese culture and enhance our cultural confidence.

**Keywords:** Public archaeological education, College general studies, General education.

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## 1. General Education Curriculum System in Our Country

After the founding of the People's Republic of China, like many other aspects such as politics and economy, culture and education were also learning from the Soviet Union, and "specialization" became the most important synonym for higher education in China. This kind of professional education at that time provided talents in urgent need for our socialist construction. With the development of society and science and technology, the ills of excessively specialized higher education in our country began to appear gradually, and the trained talents base is weaker and the quality is worse. Unable to adapt to social changes [Li, Yang & Sun 2001], colleges and universities have gradually realized that the task of talent training lies in making college students have the foundation and quality to become experts. The goal of cultivating talents has changed from general education to specialized education.

After the Third Plenary Session of the 11th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the ideological, political and organizational work was carried out one after another, and order was gradually restored in the field of higher education, with the development of subject education and curriculum education. By the mid-1980s, the reform of cultural quality education began, which is the predecessor of the current college general education. During this period, the Ministry of Education issued a series of laws and policies related to the implementation of higher education general courses. The Higher Education Law promulgated by the state in 1998 formally put forward the requirements for the reform of university disciplines and general courses in the form of legislation. Since then, general education curriculum, as an exotica, has taken a firm hold in our country's higher education system.

General education curriculum is the main body of practical general education. Curriculum is the heart of education. It is the carrier that transforms educational thoughts, concepts, objectives and purposes into educational time. There is a profound social background and philosophical foundation

behind curriculum. If general education is a kind of educational idea and the value target of education, general education is the carrier to practice this idea.

General education is not only an idea of university, but also a mode of talent cultivation. The goal is to develop the whole person, a person with a broad vision, a broad sense of understanding, a liberal spirit and a beautiful sensibility, not just a specialized person. Under the model of general education, students need to have a comprehensive and comprehensive understanding of the state of human knowledge, including the basic viewpoints, ways of thinking and historical development trends in major knowledge fields, and rationally choose or form their own major direction on the basis of basic knowledge and educational experience. Through comprehensive learning methods, students can form a broad, solid professional foundation and reasonable knowledge and ability structure. At the same time, they can understand and understand important issues in contemporary society, and develop comprehensive personality quality and broad knowledge vision. [Chen Xiangming, 2006] Therefore, the concrete embodiment of cultural quality education of general education.

## 2. General Courses and University Public Archaeology

"Archaeology is an important work to display and build the history of the Chinese nation and the treasures of Chinese civilization. You can't understand history without archaeology." More importantly, it will provide strong support for carrying forward fine traditional Chinese culture and enhancing cultural confidence.

In the early 1970s, western Archaeology regarded the relationship between archaeology, society and the Public as an important research direction, and thus initiated the topic of Public Archaeology. The term Public Archaeology was first widely applied in archaeology in McGimsey's 1972 work of the same name. The practice of public archaeology in Europe and America has greatly improved the public's awareness of the protection of archaeological resources and their

enthusiasm for active participation. At the same time, it improves the ability of government agencies to protect heritage resources. Nick Merriman, in his edited book *Public Archaeology*, systematically discusses the generation and development of public archaeology in the West.

The earliest beginning of public archaeology in China can be traced back to the excavation of the site of Yangshao Village in Henan Province in 1921, when there was corresponding practice of public archaeological display. This shows that public archaeological display developed synchronously with the birth of modern Chinese archaeology. [Gao Menghe & Yang Ying,2021]

In 1950, Mr. Su Bingqi published *How to Make Archaeology the People's Cause*, which for the first time put forward the idea that archaeology is the people's cause in China. [Su Bingqi 1950] He pointed out that the new direction of archaeology given by today's revolutionary situation is the public direction and the new task is to serve the people. At this time, Chinese archaeology has been promoted from spontaneous to conscious development stage, which marks the official beginning of the popularization of Chinese archaeology. In 1999, Mr. Su Bingqi published a *New Exploration of the Origin of Chinese Civilization*, which was praised by Mr. Zhang Zhongpei as "one of the most important efforts to root Chinese archaeology among the general public." In this golden Age of public archaeology in China, archaeological popular science books written by archaeologists, such as the *Ancient Inhabitants of Mainland China* by Mr. Jia Lanpo, *The Archaeological Spies*, written by Mr. Li Boqian and Mr. Xu Tianjin, and other books aimed at non-professionals, all contain the purpose of spreading archaeological knowledge to the public. At the same time, the appearance of site museum also marked that Chinese public archaeology has entered a new stage, and "interactive" public archaeology began to appear.

In the tide of the 21st century, the Internet has gradually changed the public's interpersonal communication mode, cognitive mode and thinking system, and at the same time it has broken the original knowledge acquisition mode, constructed a rich and diversified information context, and provided great convenience for the public to acquire new knowledge and exchange thinking ideas. More and more people choose the Internet as the most important information acquisition channel. Public archaeology, which keeps pace with *The Times*, also makes use of network resources to build. For example, the National Museum of China, the Palace Museum and the Henan Museum have built official websites for appointment, introduction and interaction. Active public archeologists, such as Xu Hong, Gao Menghe and Wang Renxiang, even opened private blogs to spread real archaeological information and ideas to the public.

Public archaeology is the best way to promote the popularization of archaeology, and the educational attribute of public archaeology is to build the link between "professional archaeology" and the common public events. To attach importance to public archaeology and carry out public archaeological education is not only the need of the development of archaeology itself, but also undertakes the important historical mission of carrying forward the fine traditional Chinese culture and enhancing cultural confidence. This is a new and sustainable impetus for public archaeology and talent development, which is still thriving.

At present, the practice of public archaeology in China mainly includes the following ways: first, media archaeology

represented by books, newspapers, films and new media, such as the CCTV program "If National Treasure Could Speak"; The second is educational archaeology represented by university general archaeology education, social lectures and archaeological site museum education. Archaeological Discovery and Chinese Civilization in Henan University is one of them. Third, the archeological activities represented by archeological summer camp and archeological exploration activities, such as "Huaxia ancient Music Exhibition and educational Activities" of Henan Museum; Fourth, archeological exhibitions, archeological exhibitions represented by the construction of site museums and site parks, including the Sanxingdui Museum, which is frequently "searched". [Gao Menghe,2016]

Educational archaeology, as an important part of public archaeology, aims to enable the public to learn about and participate in archaeology through schools, museums and other places, and gain the ability to read history and interpret archaeology critically, so as to better understand the relationship between the past and the present. [Jameson J H Jr.,2004]

Formal archaeological education in China began in the early 1950s when Peking University established the major of archaeology. In 2011, archaeology was separated from history and listed as a first-level discipline along with Chinese history and world history.

At first, archaeological education was mainly professional archaeological education, that is, the professional teaching of archaeology conducted by colleges and universities. The main purpose of archaeological education is to train professional researchers who can engage in archaeological work after graduation, especially those who can independently preside over field archaeological work. The syllabus and course design are related to archaeology for students majoring in archaeology, such as: Introduction to Archaeology, Archaeological Theory and Method, Xia and Shang Archaeology, Two-week archaeology, Science and technology archaeology, archaeological mapping, etc. The purpose is to expand students' knowledge, cultivate students' professional quality, innovation awareness and ability of archaeology, and cultivate excellent talents for the cause of archaeology.

General archaeology education refers to non-major archaeology education, that is, general archaeology courses offered to undergraduates who are not majoring in archaeology or cultural heritage. The purpose of such courses is neither to cultivate professional practitioners nor to popularize archaeology scientifically. [Wang Taiyi,2017] It is hoped that through the form of general education, non-major students can understand the basic knowledge of archaeology, so that students can have a preliminary understanding of Chinese archaeology, but also give play to the social role of archaeology: We will carry forward fine traditional Chinese culture and enhance our cultural confidence.

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