

# Research on Teaching Design and Technology of Art Archaeology under the Background of New Classification

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**Abstract.** Art archaeology is a new interdisciplinary subject. It has the characteristics of multiple disciplines, wide materials, scattered methods and thin foundation and so on. In recent decades, many scholars have conducted fruitful research, mainly focusing on the following points: the exploration of the discipline background, the discussion of the primary and secondary positions in Archaeology and Art, the discussion of the history and development prospects of Art archaeology in China, but the research on the teaching design and technology of Art archaeology is not much, including art archaeology skill, interdisciplinary and so on. This is also the first problem students who study Art archaeology are faced with.

**Key words:** Art Archaeology ; Design ; Methodology

## 1 Introduction

On September 14, 2022, the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council and the Ministry of Education issued the *Catalogue of Postgraduate Education Disciplines (2022)* (Hereinafter referred to as *Catalogue*) The *catalogue* is the fifth edition of disciplines of graduate education published in our country after 1983, 1990, 1997 and 2011 editions. It has 14 discipline categories, 117 first-level disciplines and 67 professional degree categories. Compared with the previous discipline directories, there are great changes in professional degree layout and discipline setting, which is of great significant guidance for degree and graduate education in our country.

## 2 Subject orientation and research methods

Art archaeology is a newly emerging discipline, which has only a history of more than 100 years and its development in China is also a matter of recent decades. Its subject background is put forward on the premise of the relatively mature development of archaeology and art. The research method of archaeology was officially introduced into our country at the beginning of the last century. Through more than 100 years of field excavation and research, it

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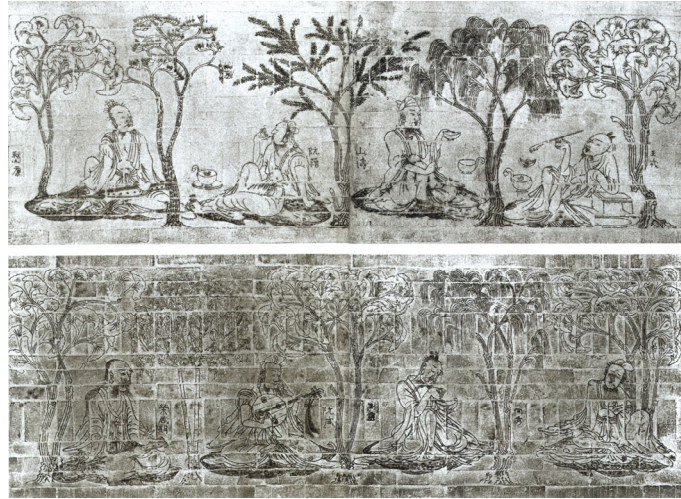
has developed into a more systematic and mature discipline, and its research results are also quite rich, laying a solid foundation for the archaeological cause of our country. In our country, the disciplines of art also has a development for many years. It was ascribed to the first-level disciplines under literature in the early years. Then under the efforts of a group of seniors such as Zhang Daoyi, it was promoted to the same category as literature and other disciplines. Art archaeology, as an interdisciplinary discipline, once its orientation was discussed by many scholars and a unified consensus has not been formed until now. Under the current discipline setting, both disciplines trend to let Art archaeology as their subordinate research, and many scholars have carried out beneficial exploration. This paper does not want to discuss the subject orientation of Art archaeology and the primary and secondary relationship between Art archaeology and Archaeology, but to connect Art archaeology with students' disciplinary background, to locate the research methods of Art archaeology based on students' learning background. And postgraduate students with the basis of undergraduate study of Archaeology or Art should also be different in the research method of Art archaeology.

Students with a background in the field of art should focus on the research results based on archaeology when studying art archaeology, so that their spiritual fields related to cultural relics, such as history, culture, religion, and folk customs, are included in the research field. From an artistic perspective, studying art archaeology has been extensively explored by many scholars in China, such as Xia Nai, Yang Hong, Liu Fengjun, and others. However, incorporating art archaeology into the category of art studies as an interdisciplinary discipline began in the 1920s when Mr. Zong Baihua taught about the common points of related art categories in China. Later, Mr. Zhang Daoyi in his article *Should Establish Art Studies* pointed out that: "In various aspects of art, such as music, art, drama (opera), quyi, film (television), dance, etc, comprehensive research should be carried out to explore their commonalities and elevate them from individual to general, so as to enter the humanities."<sup>[1]</sup>The teacher further discussed the issue of the discipline orientation of art archaeology. Professor Li Beilei from Southeast University said, "On the one hand, in-depth research in Art requires new discoveries in Archaeology, which will enable the comprehensive, accurate, and in-depth development of art research. The discovery and research of Archaeology sometimes change the scope of art history research. On the other hand, archaeology requires art to interpret and interpret the artistic nature and modeling characteristics of historical relics, promote the deepening of archaeological research, confirm the research theories and methods of archaeology, and expand the research perspective of archaeology."<sup>[2]</sup>In recent years, we have found that art archaeology research institutes are often established in professional art colleges, and many colleges offer courses in Art archaeology, even admitting graduate students in this field, such as the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, Nanjing Academy of Art, Shandong University, Shanghai University, etc. Among many universities that enroll graduate students in the field of Art archaeology, the courses offered have not formed a unified paradigm, and even all in different ways. Of course, in the decades of development of Art archaeology, many Chinese scholars have also made many beneficial explorations on graduate courses in the field of Art archaeology, and have achieved fruitful results. Mr. Yang Hong advocates studying Art archaeology based on archaeological research methods such as stratigraphy and typology, combined with ancient literature and related relics passed down from generation to generation. This research method is based on the research results of Archaeology, which is also the main method adopted by scholars with archaeological

backgrounds at present. It is similar to the "double evidence method" proposed by Wang Guowei. Mr. Liu Fengjun from Shandong University advocates that "The research method of Art archaeology is a comprehensive research method, which can be divided into basic research method and comprehensive research method. Basic research method refers to the regional division method, stratigraphic method, and type ranking method used in archaeology to organize and study relics and artifacts. In depth comprehensive research method refers to historical research method and art analysis research method that draws inspiration from art history." Unlike Mr. Yang Hong, it incorporates the current popular research methods in art studies. In addition, Professor Sun Changchu from Southeast University has introduced research methods from art anthropology and iconography. Zhou Xiaolu from Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts talked about the direction of cultivating graduate students majoring in art archaeology in colleges and the curriculum design for undergraduate students. The author has a relatively systematic experience in studying art and has participated in the forefront of archaeological field excavations for many years, combining the learning and working backgrounds of two disciplines. Therefore, I have a shallow understanding of the research methods of Art archaeology. Here, I propose a few immature ideas about the methodology of Art archaeology, in order to ask you.

## **2.1 Master several artistic skills**

Mr. Zhang Daoyi pointed out: " Art is a specialized knowledge that studies art practice, art phenomena and art rules, it is theoretical and academic, and has become a humanities discipline with systematic knowledge. If our activities and practice without art, we cannot talk about the knowledge of art; but if we just have the creation, design, performance and play of art, we also cannot establish Art." <sup>[3]</sup>Compared with Art archaeology, since the cultural relics we contact with are usually space works, and there were mostly corrosion-resistant materials such as masonry, copper, iron and paint before Sui and Tang Dynasties, so the artistic skills referred to here can be divided into performance skills and generative skills. Performance skills is the performance of cultural relics decorative patterns, style characteristics, such as seven sages of bamboo grove. The figure depicts the super-elegant image of the characters with lines, focusing on the expression of the spiritual temperament of the characters and the expression of metaphysics of the man. (Figure 1) The study of the performance techniques and skills of the northern tomb murals in the six dynasties requires the researcher to have a certain understanding of the painting. The generative skill refers to the material characteristics of cultural relics and its production process. Still take seven sages of bamboo grove as an example, the production of this brick is complicated, firstly, people need to engrave patterns on the uncooled green-pressing, and wait it dried, then use it to press the positive side, after drying, put it into the kiln after 800 degrees of high temperature firing. Because the firing process will produce different degrees of deformation, the interface between the brick and the brick is relatively rough, but the overall character image is still very vivid. Besides, such as the formation of bronzes and the generation of lacquerware require scholars of Art archaeology to master more systematic artistic skills.



**Figure 1** seven sages of bamboo grove

## **2.2 Integrated research methods of the two disciplines**

Professor Cao Yiqiang From the China Academy of Art said: “ If the history of art emphasizes the value and appreciation of objects, it is easy to fall into the mire of subjectivism, and if Archaeology can correct the bias of the former by eliminating personal interests and focusing on objective evidence, but archaeology is easy to ignore the life value of art, and the history of art can also correct its mistakes. ”<sup>[4]</sup> Art archaeology was advocated by scholars who have archaeology knowledge, and its object is based on archaeological excavations to carry out. Thus, the study of Art archaeology should be based on archaeological excavations, through the physical rise to the height of spirit and sociology, folklore, religion, art and other disciplines to form an interdisciplinary discipline. Compared with students with art knowledge, the cultural relic excavated by archaeology should be raised from the description, dating, protection and other studies to the height of the related social characteristics, religious beliefs, artistic styles, typology and art, such as style comparison and pattern and artistic conception. Synthetical archaeology of stratigraphy, typology and art comparison and pattern, artistic conception and other research methods, artistic conception is the highest state of Chinese art, including unearthed cultural relics(now called artworks, cultural relics, article for amusement). “Artistic conception is the highest requirement and ultimate ideal of Chinese landscape painting. Artistic conception is not only the Chinese landscape painting, but also the highest category of all Chinese art.”<sup>[5]</sup>Admittedly, many experts have published quite insightful results on the subject of Art archaeology, and there are no more details here.

### **2.2.1 Collect first-hand materials extensively**

**Awareness of problem** For graduate students majoring in Art archaeology, they need to have a awareness of problem , that is, when discovering valuable cultural relics, they should thoroughly investigate their source, time, location, etc. If several ancient ceramic fragments are found on the roadside debris pile, attention should be paid to the surrounding cultural relics and the source of the soil pile should be identified. This is a necessary awareness for the

cultural relics department during field investigations and is more practical for students. In addition, cultural relics with significant research value can also be found in major antique trading markets, and it is advisable to inquire about their relevant background as much as possible. Although their accuracy may be controversial, they can still be used for comparison.

**Participate in archaeological excavations** It is necessary for many art schools and related archaeological colleges to form joint archaeological teams with teachers and students, archaeological research institutes, museums, and other departments, so that students majoring in art archaeology have the opportunity to personally participate in the field of archaeology. For many years, the School of Archaeology and Cultural Heritage at Peking University has been cooperating with the Jingdezhen Institute of Archaeology to participate in the archaeological excavation of the Imperial Kiln Factory, providing students with a firsthand experience, which is of great significance for students majoring in art archaeology.

**Detailed excavation of cultural relics** Archaeological excavated cultural relics are usually entrusted to museums for safekeeping. For example, if a cultural relic is found in a museum that is of the type you are concerned about, it is not enough to only take photos to complete the task, but also to learn about the relevant information of the cultural relic. The following methods are often used, such as oral inquiry, purchasing records, and searching for excavation reports. For example, the Jiangning Museum in Nanjing has a celadon jar with a dragon head from the Eastern Wu period (Figure 2), which is placed in the center of the Jiangning Hall. When discussing this object, the interpreter will also focus on it, but her introduction is limited to the level of cultural relics, excavation time, and characteristics of the vessel. But for graduate students in Art archaeology, they cannot stay at the level of surface features of cultural relics. They should explore the cultural heights reflected in cultural relics, such as art and religion. The reason why this cultural relic is designated as a national first-class cultural relic is mainly because the jar is decorated with a dragon head. Usually, this type of artifact is mostly a sheep head, tiger head, or chicken head, and the dragon head is extremely rare. Dragon and tiger represent the gods of the East and West in the "Four Gods", respectively. Along with this tomb, a "land purchase voucher" deeply influenced by Taoism was unearthed. The voucher clearly records the year "Jianheng Year", indicating that the tomb was built during the Eastern Wu period and was deeply influenced by Taoist funeral customs. This is of great significance for us to study the influence of Taoist thought during the Eastern Wu period on funeral customs. In addition, the investigation of the Dragon Head Jar can also be related to the study of the location of the capital city of Eastern Wu. Volume 2 of *Jiankang Records* cites *Wu Lu*, which states that "Liu Bei once sent Zhuge Liang to the capital to observe the Moling Shanfu and said, 'Zhongshan Dragon curling, Stone Tiger crouch, this is the residence of the emperor.'" The shape like Dragon curling and tiger crouching are the main features of Nanjing's terrain, and the current eastern and western main roads are named after Longxi and Huju, respectively. " Foreign scholars also pay attention to the space environment phenomenon of unearthed artifacts, such as James Deetz, who studied the relationship between pottery patterns and living surfaces in prehistoric Indian settlements in North .<sup>[6]</sup>



**Figure 2** A celadon jar with a dragon head

Passing Through Eyes and using by Hands In most cases, cultural relics in museums can only be seen on their front and side, while the bottom and back are relatively hidden. The main purpose of this is to protect cultural relics. However, for scholars engaged in Art archaeology, it is necessary to comprehensively grasp the complete information of cultural relics for research purposes. Therefore, being able to "get started" is of positive significance. Scholars can apply for a comprehensive understanding through normal channels, but of course, this is quite difficult. But in many private museums and collectors, it is still best to get started. In academia, there is often a misconception that archaeologists must be proficient in cultural relic identification, but in fact, this is not the case. Archaeologists have rich experience in archaeological excavations, with a focus on organizing, protecting, and explaining cultural relics. However, there is limited research on the authenticity, evolution, and cultural connotations of cultural relics. Therefore, a large number of students in the field of Art archaeology often specialize in developing fiery eyes through the practice of passing through the eyes. There are several professors from Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute who take their graduate students to Guishi (antique market) to buy something every Monday (Figure 3). Even if students don't buy, they are exposed to a lot of information, which gives them a clearer understanding of ceramic history and appraisal.



**Figure 3** Jingdezhen antique market

### **2.2.2 Drawing inspiration from traditional "Art archaeology"**

Art archaeology is a foreign term that has only been introduced to China in recent decades. Conversely, academic research related to it in China has a long history. Under the trend of "valuing the Tao but not the tools", Chinese scholars mostly focus on exploring the personality cultivation and life realm of artists, and do not pay much attention to the research of artistic works. There is also little consideration for the cultural relics discovered in Archaeology. Even so, the study of epigraphy in China has had a significant impact on the history of art

development, and the achievements of epigraphy also have important reference significance for our study of Art archaeology. Professor Sun Changchu from Southeast University said, "The description of Han portrait stones by epigraphers mainly focuses on the inscriptions on the edges of the portraits, rather than the images themselves. The writing and research on characters cast or engraved on bronze or stone carvings should explore the originality of production, supplement the decline of classics, correct the fallacies of various Confucians, and supplement and correct the gaps in ancient literature and historical facts. There is a lack of research on the concept of artistic style, the laws and influences of artistic development, and only focus on seeing them as symbols of auspiciousness or symbols of Confucian etiquette. This should be influenced by the philosophical trend of ancient China's emphasis on the way but not on the tools."<sup>[7]</sup>For the reference and absorption of achievements in epigraphy, it can provide assistance when we involve the relative and absolute ages of cultural relics, as well as direct and indirect historical materials in the study of Art archaeology.

### **2.2.3 Referring to foreign research methods**

In recent years, some research articles on Chinese art archaeology have been published abroad, most of whom have a background in archaeology or experience working in museums. They use Western research perspectives to study ancient Chinese art and have achieved positive results. These achievements also have important reference significance for graduate students in Art archaeology in China. After discovering painted pottery in Henan and Gansu provinces in 1920, Johan Gunnar Andersson pointed out that Chinese prehistoric painted pottery was similar to those of Central Asia and Eastern Europe.<sup>[8]</sup>Mr. Zhang Guangzhi said, "Exploring the relationship between cultural and social change patterns in world history and China's rich historical materials. In other words, it is to use the model of world history to explain major historical changes to examine the changes in prehistoric and ancient Chinese history."<sup>[9]</sup>

## **3 Conclusion**

Art archaeology is an emerging discipline that is established on the basis of archaeology and conducts interdisciplinary research with disciplines such as art, sociology, folklore, and religion. It involves a variety of research methods, and students born from different disciplinary backgrounds have different entry points, which is also the charm of this discipline. The above mentioned methods are only a few of my experiences that I have encountered in my learning and work. In practical work and learning, due to the different research directions and focuses of each individual, the methods and approaches adopted should also have a tendency to choose the corresponding methods and related interdisciplinary fields according to the research direction. In addition, art archaeology is not a simple addition of art and archaeology, but rather the use of China's disciplinary background to elaborate on Chinese culture, rather than relying on Western disciplinary background to study academic issues in China. This is also a phenomenon that Mr. Zhang Daoyi has emphasized multiple times in recent years and is currently quite prominent.

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