

Public Archaeology and Museum: A Humanistic Education

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, museum education has become a popular way, not only the various public education activities of the museum, but also the opening of archaeological sites for public participation. And this kind of education not only improves the humanities education, but also improves the degree of public participation in archaeology, making archaeology public. In this context, explore the possibility of collaboration between public archaeology and museums, and the diversity of humanistic education.

KEYWORDS: public archaeology, museum education, humanities education, educational diversity, archaeological teaching methods

1. Introduction

This research hopes to explore the possibility of public archaeology and museum education from three aspects. The first is the public opening of archaeological sites, the second is museum teaching, and the second is the diversity of humanities education. In recent years, archaeology has gradually entered people's vision. As a discipline with a humanistic background, public archaeology has also been used as a research and method. Many archaeological sites have begun to be opened to the public to conduct public education activities to let the public understand history and culture. At the same time, the site of the archaeological excavation was shown to the public, so that the archaeological work is no longer in the ivory tower.

Museum education has also been incorporated into the public education plans of various museums, combined with art and humanities. For example, in some museums, lectures or guided tours are held regularly, which is also a way of education. Curiosity is important to learning. Learning is actually a public activity. The museum shows the physical and spatial nature of the transitional moment of curiosity (Yun, 2018, p.480). As a composite space, the museum can use its unique sense of space to create a learning atmosphere.

Humanities education is actually a kind of compound education, which not only cares about the skills education of students and the public, but also guides through the humanities, and carries out diversified and interdisciplinary education. It is no longer dedicated to general subject classification, but to guide students and the public to understand the world and society, as well as our culture and history.

2. Public Archaeology and Education

When archaeology no longer resides in the ivory tower, public archaeology has played its greatest role. According to a study by Bonacchi (2018), "Public archaeology is not Minerva's owl and cannot just fly at dusk. If we want to make a difference, we should seek multi-dimensional and coordinated types of societal engagement: from education practice to policy and communication."(p.1661). Educational practice is an important part of public archaeology, because the goal of public archaeology is to convey knowledge and information to the public, and education is the best medium. The most common practice we can see now is to open archaeological sites to the public, rather than ordinary lectures. Because archaeological sites can express information more intuitively and can create a sense of experience for the public, especially the younger public.

Calendar of Events

Open Days at the Archaeological Site of Esquerda



This Event is part of European Archaeology Days

Date:
Friday, June 19, 2020 - Sunday, June 21, 2020

Kind of Event:
Guided Tour

Organised by:
Jaciment Arqueològic L'Esquerda (ES)

Country:
Spain

Website:
www.lesquerda.cat

Era(s):
Early Middle Ages

Open days

During the European Archaeology Days you can visit the Museum. The permanent exhibition, which opened in December 2019, shows the evolution of the excavations, with a series of audiovisual tutorials that allow you to see the evolution of the site throughout history.

Some items cannot be used due to the COVID-19 (headphones, touch screens). But you can make a quiet visit and in a safe environment.

Figure 1: Archaeological Site Open Day (Open Days at the Archaeological Site of Esquerda | EXARC, n.d.)

Another important point about education and public archaeology is that archaeology is the subject of excavating human history, although there are now more pioneering and diversified archaeology, such as future archaeology. But in the traditional sense, public archaeology can enhance history education because it can provide contextual teaching. This is a kind of experiential learning for the public, and for the young public, it can increase their interest in learning and induce their curiosity and interest in learning about history.

In addition to opening up archaeological sites, the combination of public archaeology and education can also be reflected in technological changes. As we have entered the digital and technological society and the world is still trapped in COVID-19, online education has become the key. The public archaeology is reflected in the opening of online exhibitions in the museum, which is online through immersive technology, which not only increases the number of views, but also presents archaeological exhibitions to the public through new technologies, making it easier for young people accept.



Figure 2: Online archaeological exhibition (Lawson Exhibit 1950, n.d.)

3. Museum Education and Humanities

Museum education is usually embodied in the museum itself, or museum education is spatial, because it is usually carried out in museums. Phenomenological method is the center of perceiving the world and the basic premise of museum space experience (Simonsson, 2014). A museum is a space with a variety of resources and equipment. For example, a general museum is equipped with an audio-visual room, a study room, and even a library. For example, the Queen Sofia National Museum Art Centre in Spain has its own library, and its buildings and spaces have become part of the urban landscape.



Figure 3: The Museo Reina Sofía Library (Library and Documentation Centre | Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, n.d.)

Museum education is also reflected in public activities. Raise people's cognition and knowledge by conducting open lecture activities to the public, such as archeology, art, music, etc. The National Archaeological Museum (MAN) in Spain has set up a special education program and provides a virtual teaching platform for the public. According to the museum's explanation, the virtual classroom is an educational multi-platform platform for teachers and schoolchildren, aiming to use the museum's collections as a learning tool in school plans (MAN, n.d.).



Figure 4: Virtual Classroom (MAN) (MAN, n.d.)

For the above education methods, some museums also use experiential teaching methods to spread and share knowledge in collaboration with the public through drama, performance art and other methods. The Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum in Spain conducts theater activities in the museum. Through different methods to educate and transfer knowledge, and through the spatial nature of the museum, so that the public diversified understanding of exhibitions, culture and art.

Activities /

The Storyteller on the Roof. **Performance of folk tales from the Jewish tradition**

Theatre. Saturdays 14, 21 and 28 April 2012

Saturdays 14, 21 and 28 April 2012 at 9pm and 10.15pm, visitors to *Chagall* exhibition found an intriguing character waiting for them as they left the exhibition. This was Chagall's beloved Uncle Neuch, a cattle merchant whose artistic temperament on occasions led him to play the violin on the roof, according to Chagall's own account. The actor Fernando González Herrero brought Uncle Neuch to life, offering visitors a selection of stories from the Russian and Jewish folk culture that so inspired the work of Chagall.

Figure 5: Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum (“The Storyteller on the Roof. Performance of folk tales from the Jewish tradition,” n.d.)

4. The diversity of humanities education

The diversity of humanities education is actually the diversification of educational methods. Just like museum education and the opening of sites, our educational location should not be limited to schools and institutions, but popular. To achieve the diversity of humanistic education, various public spaces must be used favorably. The essence of education is to spread knowledge, while the essence of humanistic education lies in humanity, which makes humanity more complete.

Public archaeology and museums are not only the sharing of history but also the spread of humanism. In recent years, more private museums have appeared on our city map. In fact, galleries, museums, art centers, theaters, etc., as humanistic spaces, can all be places for humanistic education. Once we realize this unique spatiality, humanistic education will be everywhere, and public education will be richer.

Humanities education in the digital and technological age requires more network. Although we have been implementing online teaching many years ago, COVID-19 has made online education more perfect. Not only schools offer online courses, but various museums and institutions also organize online courses. Lectures and even online tours, or the development of smartphone apps, make the spread more widespread. The diversity of humanities education will rely more on smart technology and the network society now and in the future.

5. Conclusion

This research explores the diversity of humanistic education through public archaeology and museums. Humanistic education is necessary and important, not only in traditional media and space, but in the present and future, the integration of humanistic education and the network society will be closer. We must be aware of such educational trends and technological changes, so as to truly realize humanistic education offline and online and create a common future that belongs to all human beings and communities.

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