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ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF MANKIND (THE EXAMPLE OF THE ZHOUKOUDIAN MUSEUM IN CHINA)

The article analyzes archaeological research in China in the context of the impact on the cultural development of mankind on the example of the Zhoukoudian Museum. The interaction of archaeological research with sociocultural processes of society has been revealed. Special attention is paid to the analysis of the experience of Chinese scientists in the field of modern transformation of archaeological research for the sociocultural development of the population and encouraging more people to protect cultural heritage. The research of the location of Zhoukoudian allows to confidently assert that archaeology as a science which in the modern world has received significant technological development and is an integration knowledge of the prehistory of mankind has a direct impact on the cultural development of mankind. The methods used in the research make it possible to substantiate the prospects of interaction of archaeological processes with the cultural and historical development of society.

Key word: *archaeological research; culture; cultural development; Zhoukoudian Museum; mankind.*

Introduction

Nowadays, we can observe a critical moment of historical and cultural development of the world, as not individual countries, but all humanity feels on the verge of technogenic and environmental changes. In such conditions, the universal need to look closely at the past is inevitably growing in order to project its experience on present and future generations.

Given China's antiquity, considerable size, and ecological diversity of the country, we consider that archaeological research of its territory is an important contribution to our understanding of how societies develop and adapt in an appropriate sociocultural environment by interacting with each other.

The realities of the world that have developed in our time, led to the change in the minds of each person. Person's views have expanded within – from caring only of oneself to caring of the fate of humanity.

An inherent tendency of the modern world is everyone's awareness in the context of historical time, in the focus on sociocultural ideals and the possibility of their implementation, in terms of expanding the exchange of international experience. Significant sociocultural changes concerning almost all aspects of social life of different countries and peoples today raise the urgent question of international interaction and its role in studying the evolution of ethnic cultures and the development of global culture.

Since the opening of the Zhoukoudian archaeological complex¹ in 1918, archaeological research at the site has

not stopped (Andersson, 1919). Up until now, more than 400 academic books and articles have been published, which have made a huge contribution to the cultural development of mankind. The main part of the materials has an analytical basis. The research data of new publications is the result of hundreds of archaeological excavations and research conducted in China each year. The source base of the study was based on the works of International research as well as materials from the Zhoukoudian Museum and the UNESCO Internet resources.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the contextual impact of archaeological research on the process of cultural development of mankind on the example of the historical and archaeological complex of Zhoukoudian in China. Separately, an additional task was to analyze the implementation of archaeology as a project in the Zhoukoudian Site Museum.

Research methods

Methodological principles allow to reveal the essence and features of interaction of archaeological heritage with sociocultural development of mankind. Our work is based on a systematic approach as a methodological foundation of culture science. In the study, a functional method was used that allowed to reveal the meaning of the archaeological context in the process of human cultural development on the example of the historical and archaeological complex of Zhoukoudian as a sociocultural phenomenon because of the functions it implemented in society. For the implementation of this task, we have analyzed three aspects of culture: (1) substrate (artifacts); (2) social rela-

¹ Zhoukoudian is an area in China's Fanshan County in southwest Beijing, where the remains of fossils, now known

as *Homo erectus* (meaning "upright man"), were found in 1929.

tions (complex as a cultural institution; standardized means of behavior with the audience); (3) symbolic forms as an object of functional analysis.

Results and Discussion

The progressive development of mankind today requires the world community, on the one hand, to deeply master the cultural heritage and expand the exchange of vast cultural values between peoples, and on the other, to form the ability to go beyond the usual, conservative traditions and outdated ideas. It should be noted that the acquired knowledge in accordance with the contemporary understanding of history, world and national culture plays a significant role in solving these problems. Therefore, the dynamics of cultural values is revealed in the process of comparison, that is, their projection from the past to the present.

At the present time, the depth of the social request for the interpenetration of historical times is so strong that the established definition of "past – present" is easily transformed, turning into such value originality that contemporary man actively searches for the "horizons of memory", path from the content to the essence. The specificity of cultural evolution is primarily determined by evolving knowledge. That is, the leading idea of evolutionism is the straightforwardness of cultural progress with the obligatory requirement for each nation to go through all the necessary stages of development (*Zakovich, 2000*). We have the best opportunity to observe this process in China.

The formation of archaeology as a science on a global scale can be considered only from the second half of the 19th century. Until this time, certain items of material culture from China had appeared in the West and were classified as antiques or museum exhibits. It is during this period that excavations that in one way or another were related to the prehistory of mankind acquired the value of archaeological research of ancient cultures, which fully reflected certain stages of formation and development of those ethnic, anthropological, and linguistic communities that were observed within the inhabited territories (*Derevianko, 2016*). It should be noted that the defining criterion of archaeology as a science is the ability to correctly apply the obtained archaeological facts, using them to build a real picture of ethnocultural, linguistic and political history of ethnic groups and civilizations. In China, archaeology as an academic discipline has almost 100 years of history. In the 1920s and 1930s, foreign scientists such as Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Amadeus Grabau, Roy Chapman, Andrews and Davidson Black arrived in China to search for the first human fossils (*Swinton, 1976; Sawyer, Deak, 2008*). With the discovery of Peking Man, they made China one of the most popular places to study paleontology and popularized the evolutionary Asiancentric theory that stated that China was the beginning of human civilization, as mentioned in the work by Hsiao-pei Yen (*2012*).

We should note that from the second half of the 20th century, the hypothesis about the Central Asian center of human origin is considered obsolete, which was also determined by V.E. Larichev (*1969: 314-381; 1972: 35-37*). Nowadays, information about archaeological finds in China is no longer as sensational as before, when A.V. Grabo, speaking at a meeting of the Geological Society of China on December 5, 1927, reported on the discovery of the first synanthropic tooth in Zhoukoudian (*Kuchera, 1977*). China very early found itself at the center of con-

trovery over the initial stages in the human formation, human material and spiritual culture. A prerequisite for this was the find in the Zhoukoudian cave, which provided the opportunity to talk about the existence of not only human labor tools, but its transition to unity, which, as a result, led to the development of the human line of evolution in the direction of the modern, independent genus *Homo Sapiens*.

Based on this, it is impossible to reject the huge influence of China's early archaeological finds on cultural evolution both in Chinese and in the world culture. After the formation of China, the study of China's prehistory through archaeological research of Paleolithic sites is of a great importance. If in the period before 1949, a little more than ten monuments of the Paleolithic had been known, then during the first decade of the existence of China, Chinese scientists discovered more than two hundred new finds associated with primates and primitive man, as evidenced by the scientific works of Xin Zhongguo (1961); Wenzhong Pei, Rukang Wu, Lanpo Jia, Mingzhen Zhou, Xianting Liu, Zeyi Wang (1958); Wu Rukang and Jia Lanpo (1994); Guo Mozho (1955); Xia Nai (1964); Mo Zhi (1961), Jia Lanpo, Wang Jieyi, Wang Jian (1962); Jia Lanpo, Wang Jian (1962); N.N.Cheboksarov, S.I.Brook, R.F. Its, G.G.Stratanovich (1965), A.A. Guber, Y.V.Maretin, D.D.Tumarkin, N.N.Cheboksarov (1966), Kahlke H.D.(1961), Yan Yin (1964), Wenzhong Pei (1962), etcl. The findings of Chinese scientists on the discovery of Peking Man and the study of its fossils are the result of how they imagined their ancient past and its ties to the present.

In order that understand the origins of world cultural evolution and the factors influencing its transformation, it is necessary to focus on facts. In our opinion, archaeology is the fundamental science that, based on specific facts, is able to study the history of mankind and identify the laws and patterns by which the culture had evolved.

In our opinion, it is important to determine that the process of studying the cultural evolution of mankind through the accumulation of artifacts, their research and transmission of the cultural code starts with the beginning of archaeological explorations. Cultural communications began with the advent of the first tools – nucleus, choppers, etc., and fixation of the process of cultural development, its transfer to the next generations is derived from with the beginning of archaeological research. Gordon Childe, one of the famous archaeologists in Western Europe, notes that archaeology is a progressive science that studies technical processes, starting with the shredding of flint and polishing the bone, ending with the design of cyclotron or the production of plastic masses, all together and each process separately; is a practical application of science, that is, systematized cognition of the outside world, which is in constant motion (*Childe, 1949*).

Nowadays, the modern world is moving forward according to the conditions created by time. That is, there is an integration of the previous historical period into the today's reality. The component of history is its transformation. People not only like to watch things changing over time, they also want to be active participants of the process. It is passion for transformation that should be seen in the context of the huge surge in archaeological discoveries over the past three decades.

It should be noted that in order to choose the right direction of studying the process of evolution of cultural development of mankind, it is necessary to understand in

detail the historical past. In this regard, according to the author, archeology as a science based on concrete facts reveals the trends and ways of human development aimed at progress, using technology as a tool. In fact, archeology is a kind of history of human activity, provided that this activity once gave rise to concrete results and left obvious cultural artifacts. Archeology has made significant changes in historical science, a hundred times expanding the spatial horizon, increasing the perspective of the past, has made changes in the scope and content of historical science, which, in turn, has affected the cultural integration of mankind (Childe, 1949).

The essence of culture can be understood only through the activities of each individual, society and peoples inhabiting our planet. Culture cannot exist apart from human. At the same time, there is no society, no social group, no person without culture. The culture develops the spiritual world of a man, his or her essence, i.e., national character, abilities, needs, worldview, knowledge, skills, social feelings (Zakovih, 2000). Thus, human development occurs along with the development of sociocultural processes, based on archaeological heritage. Therefore, the relevance of culture lies in the immediate, living process in which something is born, gains strength, flourishes, and then freezes or disappears altogether. Therefore, the relevance of archeology in the context of cultural development of mankind is to study the patterns of cultural and historical process and features of national cultures thought the use of scientific concepts and categories. Chinese culture is a multifaceted model of the historical process, the law of development of which is heredity. Like any culture, Chinese culture is both traditional and innovative. It is the unity of the locations that allows archeology to distinguish certain stages and periods, even entire epochs of culture development. The heritage of this long intellectual history forms a significant sociocultural base in contemporary China. Considering the topic of our research, we should note that the concept of archaeological context comes from careful fixation of the source of the material, including the position and unification of the finds in the cultural layer. However, this concept is much more than just the location of the find since it includes chronological and spatial ties. The context also includes an assessment of how the find got into this situation and what happened to it after its original owner left it. Taking into account the context allows understanding the features of the findings. According to the author, for the study of this topic, an appropriate object is the historical and archaeological complex of Zhoukoudian as the best example of reproducing the primitive way of life in the early period of human existence, namely 700-400 thousand years ago, in the average period (400-300 thousand years ago), and finally, in the last period (300-200 thousand years ago), which makes it possible to track all stages of human evolutionary development, including cultural development, in combination with effective demonstration how contemporary multidisciplinary studies can test hypotheses.

Zhoukoudian's location is not only evidence of the existence of prehistoric human communities on the Asian continent, it also perfectly illustrates the whole process of evolution, including cultural evolution. That is why the relay of the Olympic torch of the 29th Olympic Games in Beijing symbolically originated in Zhoukoudian not only because the Peking Man was one of the first hominids to use fire, but was also seen as a common ancestor of Chinese people. Thus, the route from Zhoukoudian to the

national stadium "Bird's Nest", the main arena of the games, symbolized the long path of the "Chinese" from their prehistoric origin to a recognized place as a great nation in the world community (Yen, 2012).

In 1987, UNESCO officially declared the site a "cultural heritage of the world" and a common treasure not only of China but of all mankind. According to the number of found materials, the location of Zhoukoudian is the richest of the ancient human sites found in the world. The significance of the findings on the location of Zhoukoudian is difficult to overestimate, as Zhoukoudian revealed to the world a picture of human life at the earliest stage of its development and occupies a strong position in the study of paleoanthropology of the modern world. Scientific and archaeological research at this site, which is located 42 kilometers southwest of Beijing, continues today. Before that time, the remains of the Peking Man (*Sinanthropus pekinensis*) along with various objects, as well as the remains of the Early modern human (*Homo sapiens*), numerous cultural artifacts that have had a mixed impact on the cultural transformation of the Chinese people and the world have been found at Zhoukoudian. The geological age of the site varies from the Early Pleistocene to the Late Pleistocene. The Zhoukoudian site is a treasure trove of human fossils and a multidisciplinary integrated research base in the fields of paleoanthropology, archeology, paleontology, stratigraphy, chronology, environmental science and karstology.

Based on archaeological research on the location of Zhoukoudian, analysis of fossils found in the cave, it is possible to restore the general natural and cultural environment in which synanthropes lived. The emergence of the most ancient human who consciously made the first tools, marks the beginning of a new, most dynamic form of existence of matter, i.e., cultural evolution, which occurs through the transmission of accumulated information from one generation to another. A large amount of work has been done on the territory of the museum and numerous valuable discoveries have been made that have enriched the knowledge of China's past. For the Chinese, the interest in the history and culture of their homeland, including its oldest part, which was established solely on archaeological evidence, has a different nature, meaning and scale, as well as a very different tradition.

Along with this, archeology in China is not only science. In modern conditions, its transformation into a cultural project takes place. Researching the location of Zhoukoudian allows us to confidently say that archeology can be presented in the form of a project that functionally demonstrates the result, encourages the discovery of new questions and the acquisition and demonstration of new knowledge through modern integrated methods and forms for cultural development. In 2015, the Zhoukoudian Museum, combining the rescue operations of the site and the excavations of the Monkey's Cave, launched a special event called "Experience of archaeological excavations at zero distance". Spectators can visit the site of archeological excavations in the cave and communicate with archaeologists to better understand the life and culture of ancient people. The main purpose of the event is to encourage more people to protect cultural heritage.

Thanks to the museum, new generations of people have the opportunity to use the experience gained by the peoples who inhabited the territory of China (Yang, 2014). It is known that the social experience of previous generations cannot be passed on through genetic inheritance.

Culture reveals the social heredity of mankind and its memory is objectified in certain sign systems that can be observed in the museum expositions. In the future, the sociocultural experience of previous generations will be objectified and perceived by new generations. The information function of culture transmits, translates the accumulated social experience both “vertically” (from previous generations to new ones) and “horizontally” (the exchange of spiritual values between peoples), in this case, through the cultural artifacts of the exhibition. Today, there is no need for an individual to try everything personally from experience. The individual experience can be to some extent replaced by the results of the experience of the predecessors, obtained through archaeological research. Based on this, culture not only adapts a person to a particular natural and social environment, but also contributes to person’s socialization, acts as a motivator for the development of a person and humanity as a whole.

Conclusions

Based on the material presented, the author of the article notes that for a short time in China not only elements of new modern archaeology appeared, but also important discoveries were made that led to the discovery of the fact of the ancient human habitation in China in the key epochs of human history (Paleolithic and Neolithic), a vivid evidence of which are the results of numerous field and theoretical studies presented on the territory of the Zhoukoudian Museum. In the process of cultural and technical integration in China, the approach to the demonstration of historical and archaeological finds has changed. Great attention is paid to informing about the historical and cultural heritage through the interactive website of the museum, which is motivated by the challenge of modern realities of the world. Nowadays, the museum gives its audience the opportunity to attend an educational online course about the study of Zhoukoudian caves, the historical and cultural development of Peking Man, showing a large amount of convincing evidence. Traveling through the territory of Zhoukoudian, visitors have the opportunity to “look at” 700,000 years and feel the ancient civilization. The audience can simulate excavations in the simulated excavation area of the Zhoukoudian site guided by researchers, as well as clean and identify the fossils found to learn more about archaeological excavations and experience the difficulties of archaeology.

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АРХЕОЛОГІЧНІ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ В КОНТЕКСТІ КУЛЬТУРНОГО РОЗВИТКУ ЛЮДСТВА НА ПРИКЛАДІ МУЗЕЮ ЧЖОУКОУДЯНЬ НА ТЕРИТОРІЇ КИТАЮ

У статті проаналізовано археологічні дослідження на території Китаю в контексті впливу на культурний розвиток людства на прикладі музею Чжоукоудянь. Розкрито взаємодію археологічних досліджень з соціокультурними процесами суспільства. Особливу увагу приділено аналізу досвіду науковців Китаю в напрямку сучасної трансформації археологічних досліджень задля соціально-культурного розвитку населення та заохочення більшої кількості людей до захисту культурної спадщини. Дослідження місцезнаходження Чжоукоудянь дає можливість стверджувати, що археологія, як наука, що в сучасному світі отримала значний технологічний розвиток і являє собою інтеграційне знання про праісторію людства, має безпосередній вплив на культурний розвиток людської цивілізації. Використані методи дослідження дають можливість обґрунтувати перспективи взаємодії археологічних процесів з культурно-історичним

The Archaeological Site of Zhoukoudian is a national group for the preservation of key cultural relics, as well as a national popular scientific and educational base, the priority of which is scientific and educational work with young people as the future bearers of the state culture.

As China’s cultural heritage, Zhoukoudian is essential for the formation of self-awareness at the national level, as well as for the economic activities of the state in the field of tourism.

Analysis has shown that archaeology in modern conditions turns into a cultural project and this is clearly demonstrated by the Zhoukoudian complex.

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розвитком суспільства. Досліджено процес взаємодії соціальних зв'язків між історико-археологічною спадщиною та аудиторією, де історико-археологічний комплекс виступає як соціальний канал зв'язку. Також, показано, що археологічні артефакти в сучасному музейному просторі можуть бути представлені в форматі проєкту, який функціонально демонструє результат археологічних досліджень, заохочує до виявлення нових запитань та отримання і демонстрації нових знань за допомогою сучасних, інтегрованих методів та форм задля культурного розвитку людства. Розглянуто новаторські підходи щодо використання традиційних засобів демонстрації археологічних експонатів поряд з інтернет-технологіями, які дозволяють історико-археологічним комплексам (музеям) значно покращити роботу з аудиторією, а також зробити процес демонстрації археологічних артефактів більш цікавим, різноманітним та інтерактивним.

Ключові слова: археологічні дослідження; культура; культурний розвиток; Музей Чжоукоудянь; людство.

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