



TRADITIONAL POTTERY MAKING
FROM THE ETHNOARCHAEOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW.
Scientific Research and Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage

10th to 12th June 2011, National Museum in Belgrade

Conference Conclusions

The First International Conference TRADITIONAL POTTERY MAKING FROM THE ETHNOARCHAEOLOGICAL POINT OF VIEW. Scientific Research and Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage brought together 28 experts from eight European countries. They presented 20 papers and three documentaries pinpointing the need for more frequent meetings on ethnoarchaeological topics.

Experts of various professional orientations (archaeology ethnology, anthropology, technology, art history, pottery making etc.) took part in the Conference. However, what brought them together was – pottery and common desire to understand how it was made / how it had been made / how it was used / how it had been used and what would happen to it once it was discarded. It has proved to be opportune to discuss these issues using different media like photographs and video-recording besides word of mouth as well as to apply a multidisciplinary approach.

Good service of multidisciplinary approach was noted at this Conference albeit certain terminological and problematic differences were raised. The question is: Do we understand one another? Also, would it contribute to better understanding if we cooperated more often, to a greater extent and more intensely? The answer is positive, of course, and it indicates the need to coordinate our activities in terms of terminology but also of methodology, to harmonize our activities in order to accomplish higher level of understanding in the future.

Conference pointed to the relevance of ethnoarchaeological researches as an indirect experiment, but also to the importance a well-founded and problem-focused archaeological experiment whilst highlighting in particular aspects of usage and discarding of utilitarian ceramics, which were only touched upon on this occasion.

The Conference also opened the floor for discussions related to theoretical aspects of ethnoarchaeology and ethno-archaeology, in particular of ceramics, in terms of establishing theoretical framework of researches including the presentation of ceramics as vital indicator of everyday life regardless of the time frame. This clearly manifested how under-represented these issues were.

Ethnoarchaeological researches display variety not only in terms of forms but also in terms of techniques and technologies of pottery making. Many differences as well as similarities led to the next question: What differences can be considered formal, when are they essential and how to differentiate between them? The answers belong to the basic tasks of ethnoarchaeology and conferences like this one are venues for finding them.

This time the issues of ceramics technology as part of intangible cultural heritage and protection of knowledge and skills were not discussed. This remains to be task of all of us who devote our time and researches to this field.

The next meeting will be held in Andalusia in 2013.