2006

Living with pottery: Ethnoarchaeology among the Gamo of southwest Ethiopia

John W. Arthur
arthurj@mail.usf.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digital.usfsp.edu/fac_publications

Part of the Anthropology Commons

Recommended Citation


This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Scholarly Works at Digital USFSP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital USFSP.
Living with Pottery
Ethnoarchaeology among the Gamo of Southwest Ethiopia

John W. Arthur

Foundations of Archaeological Inquiry
James M. Skibo, series editor

Anthropology / Archaeology

Although plastic and metal vessels offer significant advantages and have almost universally supplanted ceramics throughout the world, pottery fragments are one of the most ubiquitous artifacts in the archaeological record.

The southwestern region of Ethiopia is one of the few places in the world where locally made pottery is still the dominant choice for everyday domestic use. The Gamo people continue to produce and use pottery for transporting water, cooking, storing, and serving. Ethnoarchaeology undertaken in a society where people still use low-fired ceramics in daily life provides a powerful framework for archaeological inferences, especially since little behavioral information exists concerning the relationship between status, wealth, and household pottery.

Based on John Arthur’s extensive fieldwork, this study sheds light on some of the puzzles common to archaeology in any region. It also helps decipher evidence of inter- and intravillage social and economic organization and offers insight on markers for pottery-producing and nonproducing villages and socioeconomic variability.

John W. Arthur is assistant professor of anthropology at the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg.

Table of Contents:

List of Figures
List of Tables
Acknowledgments
Introduction

1. The Gamo
2. Pottery Procurement and Production
3. Pottery Distribution

4. Pottery Primary Use
5. Pottery Use-Life
6. Pottery Mending and Reuse
7. Pottery Discard
8. Gamo Pottery and Its Implications for Ethnoarchaeology and Archaeology

References
Index