Postclassic Mesoamerica by appropriating imagery and symbolism associated with the elite art and architecture of the earlier Toltec polity (e.g., Umberger 1987). Aztec nobles also sought to establish genealogical connections with the Toltec ruling line (Gillespie 1989). In this article, Kristin De Lucia shifts the focus on appropriations of Toltec heritage from elite culture to pottery and the everyday domestic lives of commoners at the Postclassic site of Xaltocan in the Basin of Mexico. She moves away from representationalist perspectives to explore the ways in which Black-on-Orange pottery was entangled with and actively shaped social identities of people during the Early and Middle Postclassic periods, prior to the emergence of the Aztec Empire. Her analysis indicates that stylistic differences associated with Black-on-Orange ceramics resulted from active assertions of identity among producers and consumers and therefore represents a welcome alternative to perspectives based solely on political economy.

Early Postclassic Aztec I pottery was used by powerful political centers associated with a Toltec legacy. Rather than linked directly to the Toltec political center of Tula, which was not associated with the use of Aztec I ceramics, De Lucia views the concept of "Toltec" in the more generalized sense embraced by later Aztec peoples as associated with a "civilized" or urban identity, in contrast to the nomadic Chichimecs. The link between Aztec I pottery and even this more generalized notion of Toltec could be made more explicitly, however. The political centers that used Aztec I pottery were concentrated in the southern Basin of Mexico and included Chalco, Mixquic, and Culhuacan. Xaltocan was the only Aztec I–using political center in the northern Basin and the stark boundary in ceramic styles between Xaltocan and surrounding communities supports the link between ceramic styles and identity. By the Middle Postclassic the area of Aztec II–style Black-on-Orange pottery shifts to the central and eastern Basin, which De Lucia convincingly argues is linked to the rise of the Acolhua confederation and possible claims to Toltec heritage via ceramic styles. She suggests that the production and use of a distinct variant of Aztec II ceramics by many communities that had previously made and used Aztec I pottery could be an expression of resistance to Acolhua domination.

An important contribution of this article is the argument that everyday domestic pottery, as well as monumental art and architecture, was used to assert Toltec heritage in ways that both constituted a shared identity and legitimated political power and inequality. Although it is clear that Black-on-Orange ceramics were actively consumed by non-elites in ritual settings and in daily food consumption at Xaltocan, it would be helpful to know more about the production and distribution of these ceramics. To what extent were the production and exchange of Black-on-Orange pottery controlled by the nobility, perhaps in part as a strategy of ideological production? This scenario is argued by De Lucia for Aztec III pottery during the Late Postclassic, although it is unclear if it also pertains to the earlier examples of Aztec I and II ceramics. Alternatively, as argued by Forde (2016) for Late Postclassic Tututepec in Oaxaca, perhaps commoners had a range of choices in the ceramics that they consumed and actively selected pottery styles that reflected a concordance between commoner and elite ritual, cosmology, and ideology. Likewise, it would be interesting to consider the relationship of the domestic rituals in which Black-on-Orange ceramics were deployed relative to the ritual practices of institutionalized religions that served the interests of political and religious elites. Rather than focusing on a domination-resistance polarity, the ceramic data from Xaltocan could be used to consider how ceramics were entangled with the negotiation of political and religious relations among commoners and elites.

A potential fascinating inference that is touched on in the article is that ceramic styles actively shaped identity and politics both in their use in ritual and domestic contexts and as broken and discarded materials that littered the surface of Postclassic communities. The implication is that the material durability of discarded ceramics with outmoded styles still had the potential to inform the negotiation of politics and identity. Although this point is only briefly explored in the article, it is consistent with recent arguments for considering the ongoing significance of ruins, trash, and discarded things that, because of their durability, continue to affect people long after their time of primary use (Cameron 2002; Gordillo 2014; Hamann 2002, 2008; Hutson and Stanton 2007; Stanton and Magnoni 2008). De Lucia might explore the ways in which discarded pottery could have acted as agents of disruption by actualizing alternative pasts particularly at the Middle Postclassic communities that had previously made and used Aztec I pottery (see Olsen 2010:166–172). In this sense, the discarded sherds that littered the surface may have actualized a past in opposition to Acolhua domination.

Overall, the article by De Lucia is an important contribution to understanding the role of claims to Toltec heritage in later prehispanic Basin of Mexico polities. Her article demonstrates that common people as well as nobility participated in the appropriation of the Toltec past.

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De Lucia's major contribution is considering why stylistic changes in pottery occur in the first place. As archaeologists, we know that styles change through time, as battleship curves show, but rarely do we think about the reasons why these changes happen. Is it because artisans developed a new technology or innovation in design that fundamentally improved the product? Is it because new producers introduced a novel, desirable, and affordable style? Is it because new political leadership emerged, which made certain products more accessible? Or is it because consumers marked their allegiance with a new

regime by adopting newly introduced symbolism? De Lucia urges us to consider what it means when styles do not change. Staying with the same, she argues, is as equally an active choice as choosing to innovate and change. Rather than indicating unwillingness to innovate or backwardness, the choice to stay the course, she argues, is equally meaningful. It might indicate that a new style is unnecessary and undesirable, or it might indicate reluctance or active resistance on the part of consumers when faced with multiple market choices and political pressures. In other words, sameness and difference are both purposeful choices. De Lucia also effectively argues that designs and symbols in material culture "create" particular ideologies rather than simply "representing" them. That is, it is in everyday use and visibility (even when items litter the ground as trash) that such ideologies manifest, reinforce, and create meaning, bolstering particular identities.

The article documents ceramic change (and lack thereof) at Xaltocan, an Early Postclassic center in central Mexico, which by the Middle Postclassic was conquered by the rising Aztec Triple Alliance. De Lucia argues that prior to the Mexica Aztec arrival and conquest by the Triple Alliance, Xaltocan was one of several Early Postclassic centers whose inhabitants chose to use Aztec I pottery instead of the Mazapan Red-on-Buff pottery used by people living in contemporaneous sites nearby. Xaltocan, at this time, was a powerful center with multiple tribute-paying constituents, whose residents would have had access to various styles of pottery. The Aztec I pottery that they used is closely linked to eating/consumption practices (based on ceramic forms), and the symbolism on the pottery (flowers, solar designs) references sacred traditions having to do with cycles of time. De Lucia argues that elites and non-elites in Xaltocan chose Aztec I pottery in part to link themselves to the civilized/urban "Tollan" identity that Aztec I pottery had come to represent (even though Toltecs at Tula, themselves, never used it). Xaltocan's residents distinguished themselves from their neighbors by using Aztec I pottery—or producing a local variant of it—which served to link them to a particular politico-religious ideology associated with other powerful Early Postclassic centers. By doing so, Xaltocan's residents marked their "sameness" with exalted Early Postclassic centers and, at the same time, marked "difference" from their neighbors.

Where the case becomes more intriguing (and perhaps more tenuous) is in the discussion of the Middle Postclassic Aztec II period, when Xaltocan households consumed newly introduced Aztec II pottery in small but different proportions. Aztec II pottery was primarily produced and consumed at sites that had not been previous consumers of Aztec I pottery and strategically incorporated salient iconographic elements from Aztec I pottery that helped to legitimize rising and upstart elites. Xaltocan experienced an influx of new immigrants during this time, indicated by the growth and establishment of new houses across the site. The adoption and use of Aztec II pottery in Middle Postclassic households at Xaltocan varied. De Lucia argues that houses that had previously used Aztec I pottery (i.e., established families that were present during the Early Postclassic) only reluctantly used Aztec II pottery, while houses that were newly established (i.e., immigrants who were not present during the Early Postclassic) were largely the consumers of Aztec II pottery. To De Lucia, this indicates a socially varied landscape at Xaltocan, perhaps showing indifference in immigrants about choosing to use Aztec II pottery and a rejection by Early Postclassic residents (long-standing families) of Black-on-Orange pottery. To me, these differences raise more questions. I'm not convinced that the differences can only be explained by resistance or reluctance on the part of long-standing households. Perhaps, for example, those households with largely Aztec I users were comfortable with their wares and therefore opted for new ceramics that most closely matched what they had already been using and had grown accustomed to. Likewise, perhaps immigrant households, in needing to set up house, simply chose those styles that were most widely available or based their consumer choices on linkages to (or departures from) a particular tradition elsewhere. How can we be sure that the new households are immigrants rather than growth of the autochthonous population, whereby "new" houses were simply built by descendants of Early Postclassic families? De Lucia's reading is intriguing and worth considering, but I am not sure the ceramic data from Xaltocan are robust enough to eliminate all other possibilities.

By the time Aztec III pottery came to be dominant, the Tepanec Empire was expanding. The widespread production and use of Aztec III pottery and standardization in forms and motifs, with a clear connection to Aztec II pottery, are reflective of greater market integration and rising elite control over design, production, and distribution. De Lucia argues that what political economy models miss is that the continuity of Aztec III style with Aztec II was a strategic choice made by rising elites and producers during a time of much political upheaval. She argues that the design choices evident in Aztec III pottery helped the Mexica demonstrate their authority in central Mexico and served to legitimize their connections to Toltec heritage. It also suggests that commoners were increasingly dependent on elites as mediators of ritual. In other words, the choice of particular ceramic styles by producers and consumers cannot always be explained by economic practices and political machination alone. Although Aztec III households have not yet been excavated in Xaltocan, it would be interesting to see what data they would reveal.

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This is a richly provocative manuscript that attempts to demonstrate the agentive use of Aztec Black-on-Orange (BO) pottery, the predominant decorated type from the Postclassic pe-