But we must not be too judgmental about the moral of the stories in these cases. As we know, the morals of Aesop's fables were imposed by later generations and were not written in by Aesop himself. Or maybe we are dealing with an ironic moral like Washington Irving in "Rip Van Winkle" where the scolding wife is the antagonist of the tale and laziness triumphs. One would rather believe that the story is an invective against ambition and that the lazy man was so blessed precisely because he was not a greedy person.

To look at a different story with a definitive moral, we should move back to a conflict involving two animals, as in "Chapulín huan coyótli" or "El chapulín y el coyote." Here we have the grasshopper who seeks refuge during a rainstorm in his humble home of bull excrement, and a coyote comes by and tramples upon it. The grasshopper wants retribution from the coyote, but the coyote refuses to pay amends, saying that the grasshopper is so small that he won't be intimidated by him. The grasshopper proposes a series of physical tests to prove which is better and wins each test, but the coyote will not accept defeat. So an all-out war is declared between the grasshopper (along with his fellow insects the bees, the wasps, and the ants) and the coyote (who brings together the bigger animals like the donkey, the bull, and other coyotes). Needless to say, the coyote and the other animals are defeated again by the insects, which sting them until they plead for mercy. The coyote repairs the grasshopper's house and the grasshopper proposes that they should love each other and go before God for his blessing. The message here of nature living in harmony is a very indigenous one and something that modern people in general might learn from in this day and age of ecological deterioration.

In conclusion, this is a well-balanced work. The stories themselves live in harmony and complement the book's scholarly introduction. Neither one upstages the other but instead each speaks for itself without outside interference. The didactic use for these stories is also suggested, making the work useful as a textbook in a storytelling class. All in all, it is a wonderful contribution to the enterprise of saving indigenous traditions and languages in central Mexico.

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Social Change and the Evolution of Ceramic Production and Distribution in a Maya Community.

Dean E. Arnold's Social Change and the Evolution of Ceramic Production and Distribution in a Maya Community is a significant contribution to Mesoamerican ethnography and ethnoarchaeology. The work has much to offer scholars, graduate students, and advanced undergraduates with interests in Maya studies, ceramic technology, or the application of ethnographic analogies to challenging archaeological questions.
The book focuses on the Yucatec Maya community of Ticul, located approximately sixty miles south of Mérida in the Puuc region of Yucatán. Arnold began work in Ticul in 1965 and made nine subsequent trips to the community (not including a brief visit in 2002). Significantly, his study documents a shift in consumption from ceramics produced for local use to vessels primarily marketed to tourists following the rise of the Cancun-focused so-called "Maya Riviera" in the 1980s. Against this historical backdrop Arnold explores the effects of changes in social organization, the role of ecology, and impacts of a series of technological transformations on Ticul's potters.

This contribution to the scholarly literature on ceramic production and specialization possesses two great strengths. First, while explicitly setting out to address ethnoarchaeological issues, the program of research upon which the study is based was undertaken by a highly regarded cultural anthropologist. This contributes significantly to the work's validity, weight, and overall value to the discipline. Rather than reflecting the efforts of an archaeologist grappling with unfamiliar methods and data sets, the study presents research undertaken by an experienced anthropologist whose primary training lies in linguistics and ethnography. The study's longitudinal nature is also particularly noteworthy. While there is an increasing tendency for ethnographies to be based on single, relatively short stints of fieldwork, Arnold's research spans a virtually unprecedented 32-year period. This impressively diachronic approach is particularly appropriate considering Arnold's focus on shifting patterns in ceramic production systems. The long-term perspective he brings to bear on production practices in a single community and his ability to track changing patterns over multiple generations make this an example of ethnography (and ethnoarchaeology) at its best.

 Appropriately, the book's structure follows the behavioral chain of activities defining the ceramic-production process. It is divided into ten chapters: an introduction, eight topically focused chapters, and a conclusion. Chapters 2 through 8 each systematically address key components of ceramic production in Ticul: the population and organization of potters, demand and consumption, pottery distribution, clay procurement, temper procurement, pottery composition, forming technology, and firing. This organization is effective as the presentation builds logically on information presented in earlier sections. Each chapter assumes an explicitly diachronic perspective, considering issues of continuity and discontinuity in traditional ceramic production practices between 1965 and 1997.

Of particular note are the impressive qualitative and quantitative data sets that Arnold compiled during his time in the field. Utilizing a combination of participant observation, surveys, photography, and an ethnoscientific question/response approach (early in the research), Arnold constructed multiple databases that facilitated analysis and presentation of the information presented in the monograph. The first of these drew together the genealogical data he collected (reflecting 1,024 individuals and 287 nuclear families) and graphically represented intergenerational relationships between Ticul's potters. The second, a production-unit database, provided a mechanism for tracking individual potters and production units over the course of the 32-year study. The third, his so-called "potters database," represents a compilation of information for 451 community members who learned pottery making at some point during their lifetimes. As Arnold demonstrates, this information proved critical in determining factors potentially contributing to perpetuation of the craft.
While addressing multiple aspects of pottery production and distribution in Ticul from a quantitative perspective, Arnold's interest in and attention to the stories of individuals means that his research simultaneously incorporates a decidedly qualitative dimension. Arnold's long-term friendships with many of his informants and his status as a participant-observer allow him to develop usual insight into the range of challenges potters face when procuring and processing raw materials, and constructing, decorating, firing and distributing ceramics in a tropical setting. By documenting the everyday complexities of ceramic production, Arnold highlights the motivations, choices, and flexibility of his informants and is able to bring a very human element to issues that archaeologists usually only discuss in the most general of terms. A particularly valuable result of this approach is the extent to which it provides insight into the "ethnographic realities of pottery production" (pp. xxiv) and encourages archaeologists to consider more carefully how comparable technological constraints would almost certainly have operated in the past.

While Arnold dedicates a significant amount of energy to examining technological issues, he also explores the social embeddedness of pottery production in Ticul. Significantly, the breadth of his data sets allow him to assess a variety of factors (including demand, distribution, market, household-based production, fabrication techniques, raw materials, and religious beliefs) and to consider the role each plays in ceramic production over multiple generations. This aspect of the book has particularly important archaeological implications because Arnold is able to identify factors closely linked to perpetuation of potting that are relatively resistant to larger-scale social changes. Identification of this set of conservative factors presents a fresh perspective for archaeologists to approach issues of craft production during periods of political and economic dislocation. Arnold's findings should prove useful to Mayanists considering ceramic specialization and production during intervals such as the Terminal Classic period (A.D. 800-1000), which is typically associated with the so-called Classic Maya "collapse" in the southern lowlands. While ceramic production remains poorly understood during this period, archaeological attention to the categories Arnold explores will no doubt prove important in developing a better understanding of the transitions and transformations accompanying the northward reorientation of commerce characteristic of the Classic-to-Postclassic transition in the Maya area.

In addition to being a monograph that Maya ethnographers and archaeologists will certainly want to have on their shelves, Arnold's contribution is a potentially indispensable teaching resource. *Social Change and the Evolution of Ceramic Production and Distribution in a Maya Community* would be an excellent text to incorporate into a range of graduate-level courses, including Mesoamerican ethnography, ceramic technology, and/or ethnoarchaeological offerings.

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