

Acknowledgments

This book began as a proposal for a twenty-minute talk. Michael Carrasco and Maline Werness-Rude were to be the co-chairs of a panel titled “Mesoamerican Ceramics: Form, Meaning, and Function” at the 101st Annual Conference of the College Art Association, held in New York City in 2013. I had just distributed my dissertation (on the narrativity of battle murals in Epiclassic Mesoamerica) to the committee and was waiting to defend it when the call for papers was announced in the spring of 2012. I wrote a short abstract for a paper that would analyze the hole in the Resurrection Plate in relation to the imagery painted on it. Because of the panel chairs’ desire for a temporal and geographic spread in presentations, my proposed talk was not accepted for inclusion. However, Michael and Maline liked my idea and asked me if I would be willing to develop it into a chapter for a volume that they were planning. I readily agreed and set to work, submitting my finished draft to them the following spring. When I had reached my word limit, however, I found that there was still much to be said. That was the point at which this book first began to take shape in my mind.

As I have come to learn, edited volumes sometimes get waylaid. While waiting on promised essays from several other contributors, the editors moved forward with getting the interest of a press and returned the papers that they had received—including mine—to their authors with extremely thoughtful and generous comments. I proceeded to

make revisions based on their feedback, resulting in a much-improved paper. While the Mesoamerican ceramics volume still remained unpublished, I now conceived of that essay as a short version of a much larger project on holes, cavities, and voids in Mesoamerican material culture. I began to apply for fellowships based on this project. My ideas and approach to the material were generally well received both by Mesoamericanists and by scholars specializing in other areas of art history and archaeology. The research and writing of this book were completed with the assistance of a Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship at New York University’s Institute of Fine Arts (2015–2016) and a Visiting Researcher Fellowship at the Sainsbury Research Unit for the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas at the University of East Anglia (fall 2018).

As I presented my work at conferences and invited lectures and discussed my ideas with colleagues, I received extremely helpful feedback and suggestions that have also significantly contributed to the resulting book. Various portions were presented at the Art Department of Reed College; the Columbia University Seminar in the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas; the DePaul University Department of the History of Art and Architecture; the Forum Transregionale Studien in Berlin; the Latino Cultural Center of the University of Illinois Chicago; the 40th Annual Mesoamerica Meetings Symposium at the University of Texas at Austin; the 106th Annual Conference of the College Art Association in Los Angeles; the 40th

Annual Midwest Conference on Mesoamerican Archaeology and Ethnohistory in Chicago; the 45th Annual Midwest Art History Society Conference in Indianapolis; the 11th Annual Meeting of the Theoretical Archaeology Group—North America in Gainesville; the 56th International Congress of Americanists in Salamanca; the World Art Research Seminar of the Sainsbury Center for Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia, Norwich; and the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at Cambridge University.

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