



The PLATO Society of Los Angeles

2017 Milhaupt Symposium

Courage Among the Ruins

Protecting Cultural Heritage

Saturday April 1, 2017 9 am – 1 pm

Skirball Cultural Center

“We are our past, and caring for it is the responsibility we share, whether archaeologists or not.” –Giorgio Buccellati



Syrian Snapshot

The 2011 uprising against the Assad regime turned into a protracted conflict, one in which looting, fighting and religious extremism have laid waste to much of Syria's cultural heritage, particularly in Palmyra and Aleppo. However, this is not just a story of destruction and despair, but also one of growth and hope. Professors Giorgio Buccellati and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati will discuss their work at the site of Tell Mozan, ancient Urkesh, and how it has become a model of its kind, because it proposes an approach that meets the challenges of war and violence *before* they are posed.

Giorgio Buccellati is the Founding Director of the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA and Professor Emeritus of History and Near Eastern Languages and Cultures. **Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati** is Director of the Mozan/Urkesh Archaeological Project and Visiting Professor at the Cotsen Institute.

Practical Protection

What does the U.S. do to help protect cultural property during armed conflict? How does international law apply to the destruction in Syria—what works, what doesn't work and what are the gaps? What has been the response of the market nations to the ISIS looting of sites? What special legislation did the U.S. adopt last year to address the looting and destruction?

Professor **Patty Gerstenblith** is uniquely qualified to address these questions and more, as she has not only a PhD in Art History and Anthropology but also a J.D. degree. She has chaired almost every committee in the U.S. that deals with these issues—from the State Department's Cultural Property Advisory Committee, to the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield, to the Center for Art, Museum & Cultural Heritage Law.

Conserving China's Heritage

China has experienced great destruction and loss of its cultural heritage in modern times —either at the hands of foreign imperialists powers or from civil wars and domestic turmoils such as the Cultural Revolution. Now in a time of peace and prosperity, China has become more active than ever in the protection of its heritage and participation in worldwide initiatives on heritage preservation. It leads the world in UNESCO-designated world heritage sites. China is working with international partners to promote its arts and culture across the globe, like the recent exhibit at the Getty on the art of Dunhuang Caves. But issues of cultural patrimony and repatriation of antiquities taken illegally out of the country remain highly political both at home and abroad.

Sonya Lee is Associate Professor of Chinese Art and Visual Culture at USC. She has published widely on the material culture of Chinese Buddhism.

Stewards of the Arts

Current thinking about antiquity as a shared, yet fragile cultural heritage has altered the premises of acquiring and stewarding ancient art. In response, museums are advancing efforts to bridge the gaps over contested objects.

Claire Lyons, Curator of Antiquities at the J. Paul Getty Museum, will speak about provenance and the "lives of objects," including some new discoveries. She will also update us on conservation collaborations.

Tickets are \$20 online at Eventbrite or by check payable to The PLATO Society. Registration deadline is March 24.

Drop off checks or mail them to The PLATO Society, 1083 Gayley Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024, (310) 443-7676.

Program: 9:00– 9:30 Registration and coffee
9:30–11:00 *Syrian Snapshot & Practical Protection, Magnin Auditorium*
11:00–11:25 Coffee and muffin break
11:25–12:30 *Conserving China's Heritage & Stewards of the Arts*
12:30– 1:00 Question and answer session

Venue: Skirball Cultural Center 2701 North Sepulveda Boulevard Los Angeles, CA 90049