

GIORGIO BUCCELLATI'S *CRITIQUE* AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPLANATION

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Abstract

This contribution takes Professor Giorgio Buccellati's recent book (2017) as a point of departure for discussion on several theoretical matters, and is meant as a token of my deep appreciation and admiration for this magnum opus of a great philologist turned great archaeologist. As they say, behind all great men there stands a great woman, and these lines double as a token of dear friendship and appreciation also for Marilyn.

Anyone concerned with the 'explanation' of cultural phenomena tries to formulate the necessary steps to proceed from observation, through perception, to understanding. Whether dealing with architecture, music, hand tools or anything else, what is sensed by our eyes, ears and touch is subjected to those steps, at least in our everyday idea of scientific procedure.

Giorgio Buccellati has recently served us with an impressive theoretical treatise that contains his ideas on what archaeologists do and should do in their desk work and in their field work in order to achieve an understanding of the meaning of the things we dig up in their contexts. This book constitutes a serious addition to archaeological thinking which deserves serious attention; the following lines are an attempt to enter the arena and take up some of our honoree's points.

The author paints a meticulous picture of how the archaeologist's activities might progress, and one of his tools to that end is his definition of "grammar": "...I use the term to refer to a formalized insight into the very life of an organism."¹ This formalized insight might be described as an evolved (as in structurally generated) patterning of cultural traits. "Grammar focuses on the inner dimension of a system (...) with an emphasis on its structural make-up", and: "Hermeneutics, on the other hand, focuses on the extra-referential dimension of a cultural system."² One might call this the "etic" side of explanation.

What we find in the ground is the material precipitate of a human culture. Especially when that culture is not ours, the links that we posit between objects and their meaning or function (Binford's "Middle Range Theory") are tenuous and uncertain;

Buccellati speaks of "broken tradition" in this context.³ The book is full of ideas on the possibilities and pitfalls of interpretation, and by isolating and naming various steps in our processes of interpretation, he strives to achieve a better-fitting approach to meaning and function, in short, to a more securely based understanding of material culture.

There exists a huge literature on understanding cultural traits in anthropology as well as in archaeology, both of general scope and for specific cases, and we cannot do justice to it here. Concerning the understanding of the various Mesopotamian cultures I have always been impressed by Landberger's term *Eigenbe-grifflichkeit*, which is a valuable term for an object of research on the meaning of cultural phenomena; but of course this term does not imply *impossibility* of understanding.⁴ In reflection on the interpretation of Mesopotamian and Syrian architecture one also has to deal with the possibilities of misinterpreting iconography which at first sight looks quite simple.⁵ What all these discussions have in common is our innate but frustrated quest for certainty – the best we can hope to achieve is unequivocal theories.

Without going into "the meaning of meaning",⁶ our common aim is to find the most probable function that an object or a constellation of objects had for the original maker and user. "Original" is a key-word here, because multi-functionality and later adaptation and adoption are of course ubiquitous cultural phenomena, and they in themselves pose a further problem for interpretation.⁷

¹ Buccellati 2017, 28. See also p. 52: "An archaeological grammar spells out a method of analysis into which all the individual techniques neatly fit so as to produce an organic and well-integrated record."

² Buccellati 2017, 24.

³ Buccellati 2017, 22f. and cf. 301.

⁴ Meijer 2009.

⁵ Meijer 2016.

⁶ Ogden, Richards 1923.

⁷ The "original" in this remark may lead to misunderstanding. It refers to the primary intention of the maker, who undoubtedly aims for a specific reception. That other receptions or 'meanings' can be read into his product by others is a different matter, whether we are talking about pots, architecture, or art. For

Attributing meaning “does not mean fabricating and projecting, but rather letting the object of study disclose what meaning was enshrined in it,”⁸ and to that end Buccellati devises his ‘grammar’: “...we build on the results of stratigraphic, typological and integrative analysis, but going one step further, for we look now for the deeper reasons that triggered those particular configurations that we have established on the basis of formal correlations.”⁹ Two approaches are considered useful for formalizing this grammar: *distribution* and *linking*, and “in both instances, it is the existence of patterning that is relevant for our question.”¹⁰ This interesting statement opens up a whole array of points for discussion, which I shall try to pick a few items out of.

To my mind this patterning just referred to is just a perception by us, archaeologists, and it is not inherent in the material. This means that we shove the problem of interpretation up one stage, to the problem of classifying things into a pattern. “Observe!” the philosopher of science Karl Popper told his students one day, and they were baffled.¹¹ Observe what, how? Popper’s point was that any observation requires preceding observations and perceptions (in his terms “theories”) for us to work with it. The same sentiment is observable in art historian Erwin Panofsky’s remark that: “...the process of investigation seems to begin with observation. But both the observer of a natural phenomenon and the examiner of a record are not only confined to the limits of their range of vision and to the available material; in directing their attention to certain objects they obey, knowingly or not, a principle of pre-selection dictated by a theory in the case of a scientist and by a general historical conception in the case of a humanist.”¹²

Our perception of patterning is, in other words, something which rests on our experience of other patterning, and it may be valid or it may not be valid. Again, this depends on the classification that we impose, and it constitutes a once-removed problem of interpretation.

As archaeologists we are considering the material remains of human activities, and since we are all human, there will of course be many instances where our perception of patterning and its interpretation of

cultures might be “true”.¹³ The nasty question even in those circumstances is: “how true?” Consider the attribution of a religious character (“temple”) to the Uruk-period tripartite monumental buildings. This question, posed for instance by Ö. Tunca in his dissertation,¹⁴ has mostly been skirted in the literature, although at least bi-functionalism, e.g., as meeting halls for the elders of the community is quite possible. We know that Inanna was the main revered deity in Uruk at the time, but to which deities were the other tripartite building in Uruk dedicated, if she was perhaps “housed” in the Limestone Temple? And did the ruler, whom we know as a type from both iconography and texts, reside in building E? We might think so, since that monumental building is regularly patterned yet quite distinct from the others, suggesting a lofty function to us, conditioned as we are through our own history of palaces. Or was building E a *suq*-like market, or a caravanserai?

Answering such legitimate questions requires an *ad-hoc* differentiated mind-set (and background material) for each question separately. If we want to apply these, how are we to go about it? Our honoree suggests using his ‘grammar’, (that is, an established set of inner-referential rules), and his approach is more extensive than, but does remind one of, Panofsky’s three-stage analysis for iconography and iconology.¹⁵ I mention this, because Panofsky’s model can, I think, be fruitfully applied to much wider fields than the icon, up to and including archaeological finds in general, among which architecture certainly takes its place, as Krautheimer has so poignantly demonstrated.¹⁶ And on the road to establishing such grammar, Buccellati sometimes applies almost Wittgensteinian precision in defining his concepts, as for instance in his treatment of categorization. He writes: “What is important in this respect is to distinguish between definition as the act of defining on the one hand, and, on the other, definition of an already understood meaning.”¹⁷ The act of defining obviously entails imposing boundaries or limits, since definitions define – but in archaeology, if one takes it as a social science, definitions cannot be definite. I mean this in the sense of David Clarke when he discusses the distinction between monothetic and polythetic classification;¹⁸ for archaeological classification is predominantly polythetic: not every

instance Baxandall, in his discussion of Piero della Francesca’s *Resurrection* (Baxandall 2003, 117ff.) would include meanings that are read into an original work (of art) by the onlooker. In our case such an extension of ‘original meaning’ is counterproductive, for it constitutes the entirely different problem of reception in its wider social context.

⁸ Buccellati 2017, 324.

⁹ Buccellati 2017, 324.

¹⁰ Buccellati 2017, 328.

¹¹ <http://www.conspiracyanddemocracy.org/blog/observe/>.

¹² Panofsky 1955, 6.

¹³ Buccellati comes back to this on his p. 301, speaking of “the coherence of human experience across the ‘breakage’” (Buccellati 2017, 301).

¹⁴ Tunca 1984, xviii ff. and 199ff.

¹⁵ Panofsky 1972, 14f. Although the terms are different, they are often used interchangeably. I would prefer to see *iconology* as the discipline studying *iconography*.

¹⁶ Krautheimer 1942.

¹⁷ Buccellati 2017, 40.

¹⁸ Clarke 1978, 35ff.

member of a class need possess all the variables that define the class. Even in material things like pottery, one may define a 'beaker' as having specific measurements as against other measurements that define a 'goblet', but there will always be cases of doubt, when a 'beaklet' or a 'goblet' is excavated. This is because these definitions or rather classifications are devised and imposed by us, beforehand and not after the fact. Of course one might, after such a find, establish a new class, of beaklets or goblets, but this would soon lead to infinite regress with every new find that straddles the boundaries of the class-definition. As said above, classification is goal-oriented, *ad hoc* for every exercise, and a generally valid classification is not possible, and definitions, which are the main tools toward classification, are imprecise and only indicative in a general sort of way.¹⁹ Classification of things or phenomena helps us to manoeuvre through the world, but it is not inherent in those phenomena and should not be reified.

We go on to the next point. In section 5.2 Buccellati treats *emplacement* vs. *deposition*. At first sight this might remind one of Michael Schiffer's distinction between systemic and archaeological context, but this is not quite what is meant.²⁰ Here the author returns to the actual ground work of archaeology. Emplacement concerns, for instance, the abutment of walls. Yet from there archaeological practice should be subjected to sets of laws,²¹ where *emplacement* is the actual placement of things, and *deposition* concerns the archaeologist's interpretation of how the constellation of his finds came about. And these concepts should be properly defined, or rather framed into laws, in order to generate sound archaeological practice. What is inferred here is that on the basis of such laws we attain a surer base for interpreting our stratigraphy. Thus we are talking about interpretation and understanding - the understanding of forms, to be sure. In Panofsky's scheme we would be at the second step: this stage is his "secondary or conventional subject matter (...)", where the 'act of interpretation' is the "iconographical analysis", for which the 'equipment' in our case is the knowledge of and familiarity with the traces in the soil.²² It remains a subjective standard based on experience, and if turned into a law it means that the law is only useable within that subjective context.

After highly interesting sections on stratigraphic and typological analysis, constituting part II of the book, there follows a part III, called the *Reassembled*

Construct.²³ In its introduction, it says: "How can an overarching synthesis materialize out of the minute and intentionally atomistic congeries of observations that has been assembled from the physical data? It is a construct that reassembles the parts into a coherent whole and in doing so takes a variety of different shapes" (i.e. types of publication – DM). To my mind, here we arrive at the stage that in Panofsky's schema is termed "III, *Intrinsic meaning or content*, constituting the world of 'symbolical' values", where his 'act of interpretation' is iconological interpretation and the 'equipment for interpretation' is "*Synthetic intuition* (familiarity with the *essential tendencies of the human mind*), conditioned by personal psychology and '*Weltanschauung*.'" ²⁴ In both cases, it is naturally acknowledged that our conclusions depend on syntheses that may be deficient because of lack of sufficient data or mistakes in the (subjective) interpretation, or both.

It is in part V, "The Wider Frame", that we enter a more philosophical arena. "The archaeological construct is an intellectual construct par excellence, because the (stratigraphic) data are construed at the very moment they are both given and lost..."²⁵ In discussing these constructs Buccellati refers to Kant's philosophy, in particular to the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* with its transcendentalism and its *Sinnlichkeit* and *Verstand*.²⁶ The connection between the two, *senses* and *intellect*, is called *bracing* by Buccellati, "...and it is at the root of its applicability to our immediate interests."²⁷ The bracing is thus the necessary tie between Kant's sense and intellect, which Kant exposes as necessary for synthetic understanding in an interesting section that can be found in his *Kritik*:²⁸ "*Anstatt im Verstande und der Sinnlichkeit zwei ganz verschiedene Quellen von Vorstellungen zu suchen, die aber nur in Verknüpfung objektivgültig von Dingen urteilen könnten, hielt sich ein jeder dieser grossen Männer (Leibniz and Locke - DM) nur an eine von beiden, die sich ihrer Meinung nach unmittelbar auf Dinge an sich selbst bezöge, indessen dass die andere nichts tat, als die Vorstellungen der ersteren zu verwirren oder zu ordnen.*" This brace, Kant's *Veknüpung*, constitutes the necessary combination for as full an explanation and understanding as possible: that is Buccellati's point. This brace as a means to insight might perhaps be compared to Panofsky's "Corrective Principle of Interpretation," the "...insight into the manner in

¹⁹ Buccellati mourns this lack of precision (2017, 40), which he calls "a basic flaw in current archaeological discourse."

²⁰ Schiffer 1972.

²¹ Buccellati 2017, 75ff.

²² Cf. Panofsky 1939=1972, 40-41.

²³ Buccellati 2017, 121ff.

²⁴ Panofsky 1972, 15.

²⁵ Buccellati 2017, 260.

²⁶ Buccellati 2017, 266.

²⁷ Buccellati 2017, 265.

²⁸ Kant 1787=1998, B 327.

which, under varying historical conditions, essential tendencies of the human mind were expressed by specific themes and concepts,”²⁹ for Panofsky’s *tendencies* seem to include both senses and reason. It is clear that this section in Buccellati’s book aims to establish a firm philosophical basis for the tenets used in the interpretation of archaeological finds, by comparing these tenets to Kant’s *a priori* concepts.

But to my mind, these *a priori* concepts might perhaps have some kind of validity in the contemplation of well-known human cultures on a *very general* level. Ultimately, however, any interpretation of phenomena in more unknown cultures must follow the track of harnessing subjective ideas into a well-formulated (i.e. unequivocal) theory which should then be tested against independent material. *A priori* concepts are hard to find in archaeology, as in any discipline concerned with human behavior. This is further underwritten by Buccellati’s remark “(...)that the archaeological data proper do not exist as concrete self-standing data. They are essentially ‘invented,’ in the sense of ‘discovered and conceptualized,’ by the excavator or the researcher.”³⁰

Thus we enter into hermeneutics. From p. 301 onward Buccellati recaps the notion of Archaeological Reason which he had already broached in his section 2.4.2. Overcoming the broken tradition (i.e. perception of a culture that is not one’s own) should involve “empathy/assent,” explained in section 16.9.1. And here we meet one of the key sections of the book. “We, as observers, (...) exclude ourselves as referents.” This comes down to an *etic* approach, but Buccellati calls it *epoché*.³¹ And an important sentence follows: “What *epoché* explicitly excludes in the social sciences, namely appropriation of experience, is instead the goal of the humanities.” But: “Not in the sense of modifying the observed system to suit one’s own point of view. Rather, objectivity remains the goal: it is the objectivity of inner-referentiality, defined grammatically. But it is a system retrieved archaeologically (i.e. retrieved across the gulf [of] a broken tradition), and hence re-appropriated hermeneutically in the observer’s experience.”³²

These quotes show that in Buccellati’s view archaeology is not a social science. But more importantly they show that our interpretation and explanation of the archaeological record, broken traditions or not, ultimately depend on empathy, that is, on ex-

plaining culture on the basis simply of the fact that we are all human. One could argue that such a stance in itself turns archaeology into a social science! And why should we exclude the social sciences from the humanities, other than because of perhaps misguided academic tradition?

In the above I have tried to highlight some of the points that struck me upon my first reading of this extremely rich and thought-provoking treatise. Parts of it made me think of Panofsky’s work, whose exposition of iconographical and iconological methods has, as said above, a much wider applicability beyond the visual. One wonders if not also the ideas of a language philosopher such as Searle (1978) might be taken into consideration, because he discusses the meaning of a sentence as needing a background of previous concepts, just like Popper and Panofsky – it is the same kind of patterning needing previous patterning that was mentioned above. Thoughts about language, pictures and archaeology come together here, for it seems that the concepts used to ‘elicit meaning’ all have a wider applicability beyond that of specific disciplines.

Not at all meant as a comprehensive review, my remarks may rather, I hope, in all their fallibility, function as a stepping stone for much more meditation by colleagues on what we archaeologists do and must do. In our honoree’s case, his thoughts are solidly rooted in his long experience of field work together with Marilyn, lastly in the important site of Tell Mozan/Urkish, and therefore all the more worthy of reflection!

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²⁹ Panofsky 1939=1972, 15 schema.

³⁰ Buccellati 2017, 300.

³¹ Buccellati 2017, 348f.

³² Buccellati 2017, 349. These sentences suggest that once rules (“grammar”) have been agreed upon, objectivity is guaranteed. However, this disregards the fact that the rules are derived from (archaeological) experience which is not at all objectively achieved.

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ADDENDUM

BETWEEN SYRIA AND THE HIGHLANDS

*STUDIES IN HONOR OF
GIORGIO BUCCELLATI & MARILYN KELLY-BUCCELLATI*

STEFANO VALENTINI - GUIDO GUARDUCCI
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BETWEEN SYRIA AND THE HIGHLANDS

*STUDIES IN HONOR OF
GIORGIO BUCCELLATI & MARILYN KELLY-BUCCELLATI*

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Bibliographical Reference: VALENTINI, S., GUARDUCCI, G. (Eds), *Between Syria and the Highlands. Studies in Honor of Giorgio Buccellati and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati*, Studies on the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean (SANEM 3), Arbor Sapientiae Editore, Roma 2019.

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Via Bernardo Barbiellini Amidei, 80
www.arborsapientiae.com
00168 Roma (Italia) Tel. 06-887567202
info@arborsapientiae.com
redazione@arborsapientiae.com
ISBN: 978-88-31341-01-1



Nippur, 1966.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Festschrift would not have been possible without the participation and collaboration of the authors and their fine contributions. Thank you all for your support and involvement.

We are greatly in debt to Federico Buccellati, who immediately and enthusiastically welcomed our project, and subsequently assisted us during every stage of the production of this book. It was a great pleasure to work with him. Thank you, Federico, for your support and suggestions. You are by all means the third curator of this volume.

We also would like to thank Arbor Sapientiae, the publishing house, and in particular, Maria Elisa Garcia Barraco, the Editor in Chief, who accepted to create this project with great enthusiasm.

Finally, our gratitude goes out to our close collaborator, Valentina Santini, for providing us advice and assistance during all the development steps of the project, in particular for the editing and the revision of the manuscripts.

Thank you all!

Stefano Valentini & Guido Guarducci

FOREWORD

STEFANO VALENTINI - GUIDO GUARDUCCI

Since the first time I met them at Tell Mozan in Syria, I think it was the Summer 1993, Marilyn and Giorgio have been a constant presence for me, not only in the field of archaeology, but also, and perhaps above all, from a human point of view. When I worked at Tell Barri under the direction of Paolo Emilio Pecorella, until 2005, we always met in Jezirah, every summer, during the excavation campaigns. It was precisely that year, on the tragic death of my Professor, that my relationship with Marilyn and Giorgio became elective. In those dramatic days, I was able to appreciate their affection, their great friendship, their human depth. In the following years, despite the physical distance and the vicissitudes of life, which unfortunately brought us elsewhere from Syria, I always felt them close to me. Whenever I asked them for advice, an opinion, they have always shown me their sincere closeness, with those manners that are so courteous and affable. Of Marilyn and Giorgio, I have always appreciated their empathy and their intellectual honesty, supported by an innate ability to communicate, share and involve the scientific community with the ultimate goal of giving life to an archeology full of humanity: made up of people and of faces, not only of pottery and of dust. Thanks to them, I gained the awareness that the archaeologist, wherever he is working, must also fulfill his task as cultural mediator: between the cultures of the past and those of the present, and between our Western culture and that of the countries that we host.

Long life to both!

Stefano

It is for me a great honor to have curated together with Stefano this volume dedicated to Giorgio and Marilyn. I had the pleasure to meet them during the tragic event that took place at Tell Barri in 2005. Not only they were the first to visit us after the loss of our *Müdir*, Pamî, they stood next to us, consoling and cheering us up. Last but not least, we receive a huge crate of ice-cold beer from Tell Mozan. It may not appear as so, but that was a very special gift coming after a month of hard work and the loss of our professor, besides the rarity of such a commodity! Trust me when I say that all of us who were there, still remember that crate, almost as a symbol of solidarity for our grief, and the words of comfort expressed by Giorgio and Marilyn. That same year we went to visit their site and I was amazed by the welcoming atmosphere of the Mission House and greatly fascinated by the site of Urkesh that Giorgio, Federico and Marilyn thoroughly illustrated us. Thank you very much for your kind and fundamental support during those days. Finally, I would also like to deeply thank Giorgio for accepting since the very first day, back in 2010, to become a member of Scientific Committee of the newborn Center for Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Studies, CAMNES, as well as his and Marilyn's constant support in the following events that we organized. Thank you Giorgio, thank you Marilyn, for your remarkable academic and scientific effort and for your precious friendship.

Con affetto e stima,

Guido

GIORGIO BUCCELLATI & MARILYN KELLY-BUCCELLATI

Giorgio Buccellati and Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati have worked for many years in the Near East, especially in Syria, Iraq and Turkey. They are at present co-directors of the archaeological expedition to Tell Mozan/Urkish in North-Eastern Syria. They work closely together both in the field and on the publication reports from their excavations, of which five volumes, plus audio-visual presentations, have appeared so far. They lead an international staff comprising colleagues and students from the US, Europe, the Near East and Asia and have given joint lectures on the excavations, and workshops on methods used, at major archaeological centers around the world as well as holding positions as visiting professors in various European universities.

GIORGIO BUCCELLATI

Giorgio Buccellati studied at the Catholic University (Milan, Italy), Fordam University and received his Ph.D. from the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago. He is Research Professor in the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology at UCLA, and Professor Emeritus in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures and in the Department of History at UCLA. He founded the Institute of Archaeology at UCLA, of which he served as first director from 1973 until 1983 and where he is now Director of the Mesopotamian Lab. He is currently the Co-Director of the Urkish/Mozan Archaeological Project as well as Director of IIMAS – The International Institute for Mesopotamian Area Studies and Director of AVASA – Associazione per la Valorizzazione dell’Archeologia e della Storia Antica.

His research interests include the ancient languages, the literature, the religion, the archaeology and the history of Mesopotamia, as well as the theory of archaeology. His publications include site reports, text editions, linguistic and literary studies as well as on archaeological theory, historical monographs and essays on philosophy and spirituality. He has published a structural grammar of ancient Babylonian, two volumes on Mesopotamian civilization (on religion and politics; two more are forthcoming on literature as well as on art and architecture), a volume on archaeological theory dealing with the structural, digital and philosophical aspects of the archaeological record. He has authored two major scholarly websites on the archaeology of Urkish and on archaeological theory. As a Guggenheim Fellow, he has traveled to Syria to study modern ethnography and geography for a better understanding of the history of the ancient Amorites. In his field work, he has developed new approaches to the preservation and presentation of archaeological sites and to community archaeology. He has spearheaded the Urkish Extended Project, responding to the crisis of the war in Syria by maintaining a very active presence at the site.

MARILYN KELLY-BUCCELLATI

Professor Marilyn Kelly-Buccellati has been excavating and conducting research on the archaeology and art history of the ancient Near East for over 50 years. Her Ph.D. from the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago was on the third millennium B.C. in the Caucasus. She taught archaeology and art history in California State University, Los Angeles and is now Visiting Professor at the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology, UCLA.

She is Director of the Urkish/Mozan Archaeological Project, a site spanning the fourth to the second millennia BC which has provided crucial to our understanding of the history, art and architecture of northern Mesopotamia.

Her research interests include Syro-Mesopotamian seal iconography, ceramics, ancient identification markers, pre-history in the southern Caucasus. She has published many site reports based on work in Terqa and especially Mozan/Urkish, and is currently finishing a digital volume on the excavated ceramics from Urkish, to be published within the Urkish Global Record website. One of her important publications was on the function of the necromantic pit excavated in Urkish, unique in its monumentality and significance; her research on the seal impressions of the AP Palace has brought to light the artistic value of these objects as well as the complex royal court to which they give witness.

With the cessation of excavations in Syria due to the war she has returned to the Republic of Georgia to work with the Italian team from the Ca’ Foscari University, Venice. This fieldwork activity lead her to curate an exhibit entitled “Georgia Paese d’oro e di fede. Identità e alterità nella storia di un popolo” on the archaeological and artistic heritage of the Republic of Georgia.

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MARINA PUCCI

Marina Pucci is a near eastern archaeologist, has a tenure track position at the Università degli studi di Firenze (Italy) and is research associate at the Oriental Institute in Chicago (USA). She completed her PhD at the FU-Berlin, has been working on the field since 1997 in Syria (Afis and Shech Hamad) and since 2011 in Turkey (Zincirli and Alalakh). She is PI in projects for the publication of long-dormant archaeological archives (German excavations in Zincirli and American excavations at Chatal Höyük).

MARCO RAMAZZOTTI

Marco Ramazzotti is researcher and professor of Archaeology and Art History of the Ancient Near East in the Sapienza University of Rome. He is director of the “Laboratory of the Analytical Archaeology and Artificial Adaptive Systems” (LAA&AAS), co-director of the “Atlas of the Ancient Near East” (AANE) and member of the directive committee of the Journal “Scienze dell’Antichità” at Sapienza Department of Classics. He combines researches on the relationships among Analytical Archaeology, Artificial Intelligence and Natural Computing and historical-artistic, semiotic and cognitive analysis of the ancient Syrian, Mesopotamian and Arabian cultural milieu. Since the 90s he has participated in many archaeological excavations, prospections, surveys, and restoration field projects in the Western Asia and Africa. In Syria, he has been the field director of excavations and coordinated different interdisciplinary scientific teams for the planning and opening of the Ebla (Tell Mardikh) Archaeological Park.

OLIVIER ROUAULT

Olivier Rouault, Honorary Professor of Near Eastern Archaeology in Lyon2 University, France, began his career as researcher at Collège de France and member of the team in charge of the publication of the Mari Archives. He started archaeological research with G. and M. Buccellati in Terqa (Syria). On 1989 he took on the direction of the mission, enlarging the research to all the Terqa region. Since 2010, he opened, with M. G. Masetti-Rouault a new archaeological project in Qasr Shemamok, ancient Kilizi (Iraqi Kurdistan).

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MONICA L. SMITH

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YUKIKO TONOIKE

Associate Research Scientist, Yale University, Yukiko Tonoike received her PhD from Yale University in 2009. She specializes in archaeometric approaches to ceramic analysis, particularly petrographic analysis of Near Eastern ceramics. She has excavated in Turkey, as well as Ecuador, Guatemala, and the US. She is currently working on the analysis of the ceramics from the Yale University surveys of the Middle Khabur River region in Syria.

MARIE C. TRÉMOUILLE

Marie Claude Trémouille is a philologist whose research mainly focuses on the Culture of the Hittites, the Hurrians and the Urartians. His primary interests concern the history and religion of those peoples, who lived in the Eastern Near East between the third and first millennium BC.

One of his specific research programs is dedicated to the region called in the Hittite texts "Kizzuwatna country", that is today's flat Cilicia. She also carries out specific studies of onomastics, lexicography and toponymy, as well as on important deities such as Hebat, Šarrumma or Haldi.

She collaborated on the Hethitische Forschungen project of the Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur of Mainz, with the publication of two volumes of copies of tablets from Boghazköy (the ancient Hittite capital Hattusa)

She was acting director of the Institute of studies on the Civilizations of the Aegean and the Near East (ICEVO) of the CNR; today she is a member of ISMEO.

AGNESE VACCA

Agnese Vacca (PhD) is an archaeologist of the ancient Near East. She conducted research in Syria and Iraq since 2005, as field archaeologist and ceramic specialist. She is deputy-director of the Italian Expedition in the Erbil Plain (MAIPE, Iraqi Kurdistan) of the University of Milan. Her research interests focus on 4th and 3rd millennium BC urbanizations; the definition of local chronologies; social complexity and material culture; technology and ancient economies.

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