

ABOUT THE POURDAVOUD CENTER

Established in 2017 as the premier research center for the study of ancient Iran, the mission of the Pourdavoud Center for the Study of the Iranian World is to engage in transformative research on all aspects of Iranian antiquity, including its reception in the medieval and modern periods, by expanding on the traditional domains of Old Iranian studies and promoting cross-cultural interdisciplinary scholarship.

The Pourdavoud Center operates as disciplinary home to stimulating intellectual encounters and exchanges for scholars working on ancient Iran and the ancient world, and contributes to the development of collaborative research projects in such diverse areas as Art History, Assyriology, Biblical Studies, Central Asian studies, Classics, Egyptology, ancient History, Indology, Near Eastern and Levantine Archaeology, Sinology, and the Study of Religion.

Event Details

Advanced registration is requested.

For more information and to RSVP, please visit:
<http://pourdavoud.ucla.edu/events/ehsan-yarshater/>

Parking: Parking is \$12 at **Lot 2** on the corner of Hilgard and Westholme Ave.
Parking attendants will be available at the gate.

For more information

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Pourdavoud Center for the Study of the Iranian World

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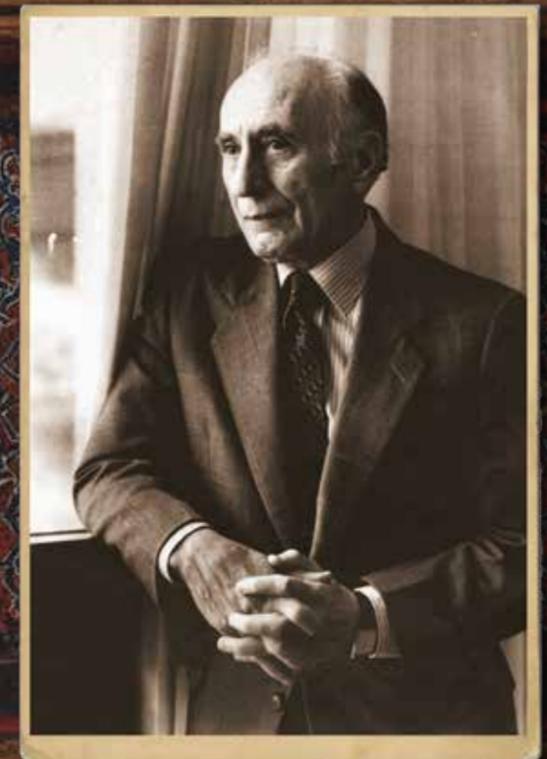
UCLA



Pourdavoud Center
for the Study of the Iranian World

Ehsan Yarshater

A Homage



November 19, 2018 | 4:00-8:30 p.m.

UCLA Faculty Center, California Room



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4:00–4:15

Refreshments

4:15–4:30

Introductions

M. Rahim Shayegan (University of California, Los Angeles)

4:30–4:55

Ehsan Yarshater's Career – An Overview

Rudi Matthee (University of Delaware)

4:55–5:20

Ehsan Yarshater and the Study of Iranian Dialects and National History

Prods Oktor Skjærø (Harvard University)

5:20–5:45

Break

5:45–6:10

Ehsan Yarshater and Persian Poetry

Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak (University of California, Los Angeles)

6:10–6:35

Whither Encyclopædia Iranica

Elton Daniel (Columbia University)

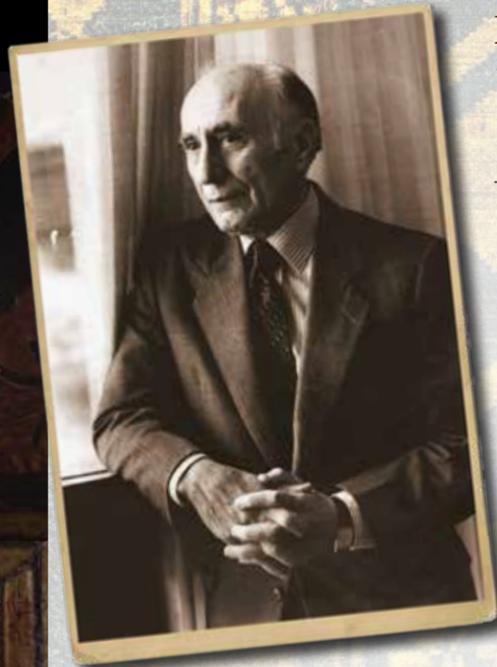
6:35–7:00

The Persian Heritage Foundation – The Road Ahead

Ali Gheissari (University of San Diego)

7:00–8:30

Reception



Ehsan Yarshater

1920-2018

Hagop Kevorkian Professor Emeritus of Iranian Studies, Columbia University

Ehsan Yarshater was born in Hamadan on April 3, 1920. Growing up mostly in Tehran, he finished his secondary education at the top of his class, with this success earning him a scholarship to study at the Faculty of Literature and the Teacher's College of the University of Tehran. Upon graduation from the Teacher's College in 1941, he joined the service of the Ministry of Education as a teacher at Elmieh High School in Tehran. By 1944, he was appointed Deputy Director of the Preparatory

Educational College (*Danesh-sara-ye Moqaddamati*) in Tehran. While working in the field of education, he studied at the Faculty of Law and earned his B.A. In addition, he pursued the study of Persian literature at the University of Tehran, receiving a Doctorate in 1947. He then continued his studies in England after receiving a scholarship from the British Council. Under the tutelage of W.B. Henning, he studied Old and Middle Iranian Languages and received an M.A. in 1953. In 1960, he earned a second Ph.D. from the University of London by defending his dissertation, *Southern Tati Dialects*, during the meeting of the Congress of the Orientalists held in Moscow that year.

While working towards his second Doctorate, he founded The [Royal] Institute for Translation and Publication (*Bongab-e Tarjomeh va Nashr-e Ketab* - BTNK). Since its foundation in 1953 until the Islamic Revolution of 1979, the institute published over 500 volumes, encompassing three series (a Persian text series, a series on Iranian Studies, and a series of classic works translated into Persian), and general knowledge books intended to enrich the lives of a wide audience. The BTNK has been lauded as the most important publisher to come into being in Iran.

In 1953, Ehsan Yarshater was appointed first as an Assistant Professor of Persian Literature and the following year of Old Persian in the Faculty of Letters at the University of Tehran. In 1958, he was invited by Columbia University to serve as Visiting Associate Professor of Indo-Iranian for two years. In 1960, he succeeded Professor Ebrahim Pourdavoud as Professor of Ancient Iranian Culture at the University of Tehran. In 1961, he was invited back by Columbia University to occupy the newly founded Chair of Iranian Studies, endowed by Hagop Kevorkian, a well-known Armenian art collector. There, he was tasked with developing the field of Iranian Studies at Columbia University, which resulted in the founding of the Center for Iranian Studies at Columbia University in 1968.

Professor Yarshater authored several books and served as the Editor or General Editor of numerous scholarly works. His books include *Persian Poetry in the Second Half of the 15th Century* (in Persian, 1953), and *Southern Tati Dialects* (1970). He edited the third volume of *Cambridge History of Iran*, in two parts, covering the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanian periods (1983 and 1986), and *Persian Literature* (1988). He was the Founding General Editor of the Persian Text Series, the Persian Heritage Series, the Persian Studies Series, and the Modern Persian Literature Series. The annotated translation of Tabari's *History* in 40 volumes was completed under his General Editorship. He was also the Founding Editor of the *Encyclopædia Iranica*, arguably the world's most extensive scholarly, groundbreaking, and comprehensive reference work dedicated to the broad and inclusive study of all aspects of Iranian civilization in the Middle East, the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the Indian subcontinent, offering a comprehensive and detailed overview of its subject. He was also the Founding Editor of *A History of Persian Literature*, a 22-volume, authoritative survey designed to reflect the status and significance of Persian literature. It includes extensive, and carefully selected specimens of poetry and prose with translations and commentary by prominent scholars.

Professor Yarshater was an honorary member of Societas Iranologica Europaea and the Association for Iranian Studies, for which he served as President. He was also a life member of the American Institute of Iranian Studies. Lecture series in his name have been instituted at the University of London, the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of Paris, the University of Maryland, Yale University, and until 2005 at Harvard University. The Ehsan Yarshater Fellowship Fund at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Columbia University was established in 2012. In August 2018, Columbia University received a \$10 million gift from the Persian Heritage Foundation to endow the Ehsan Yarshater Center for Iranian Studies, ensuring the lasting legacy of his scholarship and vision for years to come.

Professor Ehsan Yarshater transformed Iranian studies, creating a legacy at Columbia University and worldwide that will continue to advance the scholarship and understanding of the histories, cultures, and accomplishments of Iranian peoples. He was truly endowed with a bold and broad academic vision, immense erudition, and unflinching determination.

He passed away on September 2, 2018 in Fresno, California at the age of 98. He is survived by his niece, Ms. Mojdeh Yarshater, and her husband, Mr. Tony Jebian.