

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 and interdisciplinary scholarship. The Pourdavoud Center intends to be a disciplinary home to stimulating intellectual encounters and exchanges for scholars working on ancient Iran and the ancient world, and will contribute to the development of collaborative research projects in such diverse areas as Assyriology, Biblical Studies, Central Asian Studies, Classics, Egyptology, ancient History, Indology, Sinology, and the Study of Religion.

PROGRAM OF IRANIAN STUDIES

The program of Iranian Studies at UCLA, established half a century ago, in 1963, is the largest and most comprehensive doctoral programs of its kind in the Americas. It covers the entire spectrum of Iranian studies across disciplines, linguistic boundaries, and periods. Among its distinctive strengths is the focus on Old and Middle Iranian philology, ancient Iranian history and religions, archaeology, as well as the study of classical and modern Persian literature. In addition, courses in Judeo-Persian literature and Baha'i history and religion are regularly read in the program.

THE EHSAN YARSHATER LECTURE SERIES

The Ehsan Yarshater Lecture Series are delivered by an outstanding scholar whose work has distinctively impacted the study of the Iranian Civilization. Each biennial lecture series consists of four to five lectures on a single theme that is subsequently elaborated and amplified into a monograph. The lectures represent original research and synthesis in all aspects of Iranian Studies, including archaeology and art history, as well as history, literature, the study of religions, and philosophy.

Event Details

The event is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is required. Seating is limited and will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

RSVP: Please visit

<https://pourdavoud.ucla.edu/event/biennial-ehsan-yarshater-lecture-series/>

UCLA Parking: All-day parking on campus is \$13. Parking structure 4 is recommended.

For more information, please email info@pourdavoud.ucla.edu

Pourdavoud Center for the Study of the Iranian World

358 & 360 Royce Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90095

UCLA



Pourdavoud Center
for the Study of the Iranian World

UCLA | March 2-11, 2020 | Fowler A222

The Biennial Ehsan Yarshater
Lecture Series

*Kith and Kin, Tribe, and
State in Ancient Iran*



A series of five lectures

By

Daniel T. Potts

Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology and History
Institute for the Study of the Ancient World
New York University

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Daniel T. Potts

Daniel Potts is Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology and History in the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World (ISAW) at New York University. He received his AB (1975) and PhD (1980) in Anthropology from Harvard University, specializing in Near Eastern archaeology. He taught previously at the Freie Universität Berlin (1981-86), the University of Copenhagen (1980-81, 1986-1991) and the University of Sydney (1991-2012), where he held the Edwin Cuthbert Hall Chair of Middle Eastern Archaeology. His main areas of interest are greater Iran, Mesopotamia, and the Persian Gulf, and as a field archaeologist he has conducted numerous excavations, among others in Iran and Turkey. He is a Corresponding Member of the German Archaeological Institute and ISMEO (Associazione Internazionale di Studi sul Mediterraneo e l'Oriente), and is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities.

Select Publications:

- *Oxford Handbook of Ancient Iran* (Editor). Oxford University Press. 2017.
- *The Archaeology of Elam: Formation and Transformation of an Ancient Iranian State*, Second Revised Edition. Cambridge University Press. 2016.
- *Nomadism in Iran: From Antiquity to the Modern Era*. Oxford University Press. 2014.
- *A Companion to the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East* (Editor). Wiley-Blackwell. 2012.
- *Mesopotamia, Iran and Arabia from the Seleucids to the Sasanians*. Routledge. 2010.
- *Excavations at Tepe Yahya, 1967-1975: The Third Millennium*. Peabody Museum Press. 2001.
- *Mesopotamian Civilization: The Material Foundations*. Cornell University Press. 1997.

Kith and Kin, Tribe, and State in Ancient Iran

UCLA | March 2-11, 2020 | Fowler A222

Synopsis

Kinship and the organization of family structure, both conceptually and corporeally, is a cornerstone of all societies. When studying ancient worlds, however, a nuanced understanding of kith and kinship practices can easily escape the modern scholar. Archaeological indication of kinship patterns is oftentimes either absent from an excavation, or, when such evidence does exist, is difficult to interpret. Textual evidence may proliferate from many ancient societies, but the tasks of deciphering and reconstructing the minutiae of family and community connections can be equally challenging. Such is the situation in ancient Iran. This series of lectures will investigate both archaeological and philological evidence for kith and kinship ties in a *longue durée* study on ancient Persia.

Money is to the West, What Kinship is to the Rest

The first lecture sets the scene by discussing why kinship is an important if often overlooked aspect of Iranian antiquity, presenting some key concepts in kinship analysis, and what some of the topics to be investigated over the course of the lectures concern.

Aspects of Kinship in Iranian Prehistory

The second lecture examines the use of ceramics to indicate group affinity; the proposition that ceramics may reflect patterns of marriage and residence within and between prehistoric communities; the interpretation of potters' marks; alleged social endogamy in prehistoric Iran; dowries in early Iranian society; and the 'tribe' in ancient Iran.

Problems in the Study of Elamite Kinship

The third lecture relies largely on evidence from Susa, first considering the nature of the site's population and then turning to filiation, descent, and the difference between classificatory and descriptive kinship terminology; the evidence of patronymics and propatronymics; descent and succession to high office; the avunculate and the significance of the 'sister's son'; matrilinearity; and the levirate.

Descent and Marriage in Achaemenid Iran

The fourth lecture begins by examining the use of *ethnos* and *genos* in Herodotus' discussion of Median and Persian 'tribes.' It then turns to the genealogy of Darius I; Xerxes' succession; Sisigambis' filiation and descent; cross-cousin and parallel-cousin marriage in the Achaemenid royal families; uncle-niece marriage; and brother-sister incest.

Feudalism and its Characteristics in Ancient Iran

The fifth and final lecture examines feudalism and vassalage as identified by various scholars in the Achaemenid, Arsacid, and Sasanian evidence. It considers the identification of leading individuals and families through the display of quasi-heraldic *tamgas* and, in particular, the problematic interpretation of those associated with Ardašār, Ardašār I, Šābūhr I, and several earlier Arsacid rulers, and it examines one particular case, illustrating the history of early modern Western engagement with Sasanian antiquities. It concludes by considering cognation and agnation in Sasanian succession, as part of the debate surrounding feudalism in ancient Iran.

Money is to the West, What Kinship is to the Rest

Introductory Remarks

M. Rahim Shayegan, Director, Pourdavoud Center, UCLA

Monday, March 2, 2020 | 4:00pm

Fowler A222

Aspects of Kinship in Iranian Prehistory

Wednesday, March 4, 2020 | 4:00pm

Fowler A222

Problems in the Study of Elamite Kinship

Friday, March 6, 2020 | 4:00pm

Fowler A222

Descent and Marriage in Achaemenid Iran

Monday, March 9, 2020 | 4:00pm

Fowler A222

Feudalism and its Characteristics in Ancient Iran

Wednesday, March 11, 2020 | 4:00pm

Fowler A222

Closing Remarks

Reception to follow the final lecture
on the Fowler Terrace