



POURDAVOUD CENTER LECTURE SERIES



TRANSMILLENNIAL
ECOLOGIES OF IRANIAN
RELIGION AND IDENTITY

JANUARY 9, 2019 | 5:00 P.M. | 306 ROYCE HALL

MATTHEW CANEPA
(UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE/GETTY SCHOLAR)

This lecture explores continuities and changes in the formation of religious sites, structures, and practices in Persia and the wider ancient Iranian world. By ‘ecology’ this lecture focuses both on religion in the natural environment and, in a more metaphorical sense, the relationship of religious activities and sites to their physical surroundings across millennia. It considers the lingering impact and transformation of Persian heritage as well as Pārsa’s deeper Elamite history by briefly surveying problems in defining Iranian sacred architecture, and then focusing on the introduction of new types of religious architecture and simultaneous persistence of open-air sanctuaries and ritual activities at natural phenomena. This lecture, and the book from which it draws, investigates how traditions of Iranian identity and kingship developed. It emphasizes that, instead of naturally replicating traditions, most continuities in Persian kingship resulted from the active efforts and choices of sovereigns to curate or even fabricate them in response to contemporary struggles to gain legitimacy and dominance.

SPEAKER



Matthew P. Canepa
(PhD, University of Chicago) is Professor of Art History and Elahé Omidyar Mir-Djalali Presidential Chair in Art History and Archaeology of Ancient Iran at

University of California, Irvine. His research focuses on the intersection of art, ritual, and power in the eastern Mediterranean, Persia, and the wider Iranian world. Professor Canepa’s most recent book is entitled *The Iranian Expanse: Transforming Royal Identity through Landscape, Architecture, and the Built Environment (550 BCE – 642 CE)* (University of California Press, 2018). It is a large-scale study of the transformation of Iranian cosmologies, landscapes, and architecture from the height of the Achaemenids to the coming of Islam.

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 inter-disciplinary scholarship.

Advanced registration is requested. For more information and to RSVP, please click [here](#).

Self-pay parking in Structure 4 is recommended.
Light refreshments will be served.