



News & Events

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California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California

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Stanford Professor To Talk On Ancient Peruvian Temple, Priests, Rituals

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Stanford Social Sciences Professor John Rick will examine the rituals of ancient Peruvian priests and a possible link to early cults in a multimedia presentation from 7 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 2, in the Rotunda (Room 213) in the Business Building on campus.

His talk, titled "Foundations of Ancient Authority: The Temples of Chavin de Huantar, Peru," will explore the 3,000-year-old monumental temple site high in the Peruvian Andes.

"The temple holds spectacular clues about how early priests were able to convince their followers of the priests' right to lead," Rick said. "Sound, light and mental manipulation seem to have been used in creating artificial ritual environments in which authority would appear not only reasonable, but natural and unavoidable. This seems to have been a time of exceptional human creativity in using early cults to transform human society toward the highly socially and politically differentiated world we know."

In his presentation, Rick will also talk about the elaborate convincing strategies - strategies that include traditions partly coming from long-standing customs of shamanism - used by the Chavin leaders in transforming their society.

The talk draws on 10 years of Rick's research of a number of excavation projects, and includes insights into the innovative application of modern digital technologies for analysis and visualization of the site.

The lecture is free and open to the public. For more information, call Cal Poly's Social Sciences Department at 756-2752.

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