

Indigeneity and the Greco-Roman World: Modern and Ancient Responses

27th Annual UVA Classics Graduate Student Colloquium

Conducted in person at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, March 18, 2023

Keynote Speaker: Craig Williams (University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign)

The diverse, vibrant, and present indigenous communities of the Americas continue to maintain their survivance¹ in the face of European settler colonialism. Starting in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Ancient Greek and Latin played a role in the forced religious and cultural conversion of indigenous peoples. Nevertheless, as Craig Williams has recently discussed,² Native students of Greek and Latin have acted as multilingual and cross-cultural mediators and have used these languages to assert their indigeneity, even in spaces designed to erase it. Several studies show how indigenous peoples engaged with Greco-Roman antiquity. For example, Andrew Laird's forthcoming *Aztec Latin* calls attention to Nahua writers of Latin and the Renaissance humanist tradition in Mexico.³ The recent *Brill's Companion to Classics in the Early Americas* examines the Classical tradition as both an instrument of colonialism and a prominent facet of indigenous intellectualism.⁴ In addition, several recent conferences and panels have addressed indigeneity and Classics, such as the "Indigenizing the Classics" panel at the 2019 CAC-SCEC and "Colonial Encounters: Latin in the Early Americas" at the 2022 CAMWS meeting.

This dialogue has much resonance for the direct study of the multilingual and multicultural Ancient Mediterranean world. Indigenous Studies can help us reconsider ancient conceptions of race, ethnicity, and autochthony. Indigenous perspectives can help us deconstruct the Hellenic- and Romanocentric bent of our historical sources and of modern analyses. For this conference, we seek papers on indigenous reception of the Classics and papers that endeavor to indigenize Greco-Roman antiquity. We welcome submissions from Classical Studies as well as from related fields, such as History, Art and Archaeology, Environmental Studies, Women and Gender Studies, Linguistics, Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Indigenous Studies. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Ancient ethnography and concepts of indigeneity
- Postcolonial analysis of Classical texts and material culture
- Environmental humanities, ecocriticism, and indigenous land stewardship
- Indigenist readings of Greco-Roman literature
- Indigenous literature in Greek and Latin
- Modern reception of the Classics by indigenous peoples
- Comparative antiquities, comparative mythology and anthropology
- Innovations in Classical pedagogy and the Indigenization of the Classics

Papers should be 20 minutes in length. Please send abstracts of no more than 300 words (excluding bibliography) to Zachary Haines (scd2nb@virginia.edu) by February 14, 2023. Any questions may be addressed to the colloquium organizers, Carl Hamilton (cdh5cu@virginia.edu) and Evan Brubaker (elb5dk@virginia.edu).

¹ Vizenor, G. 1998. *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence*. Lincoln (p.15).

² Williams, C. A. 2022. "The Latin Language and Native Survivance in North America." *American Journal of Philology*, 143.2: 219-246.

³ Laird, A. Forthcoming. *Aztec Latin: Renaissance Learning and Nahuatl Traditions in Early Colonial Mexico*. Oxford.

⁴ Feile Tomes, M., A.J. Goldwyn, and M. Duquès eds. 2021. *Brill's Companion to Classics in the Early Americas*. Leiden.