

Mosaic of Hesperia: The History and Culture of Italy Before Empire

CUNY Graduate Center

Date: March 26, 2027

Keynote Speaker: TBD

In the early lines of the Aeneid, Virgil describes Italy as “.... a place that the Greeks named Hesperia, an ancient land, mighty in arms and wealthy in soil.” (1.530-1). And in Book 7, Virgil reveals a rich land full of languages, cultures, and people. In a time before Italy became the center of the Classical world, these cultures exemplify what makes the peninsula unique and set the stage for the Roman Empire. These distinct groups were not isolated; they were united with the wider Mediterranean through trade, colonization, religion, and even war.

This year, the Classics Department at the CUNY Graduate Center invites papers that explore Italy's cultural landscape from the Archaic Period through the Age of Augustus. A milieu that brought the Romans together with Etruscans, Italic tribes, Punic-speaking traders, and Greek colonists. We welcome papers that address, but are not limited to, the following themes:

- Material culture of the Mediterranean basin
- Religion and mystery cults
- Political relations involving early Italic cultures
- Languages and dialects
- Cultural connectivity
- Trade, migration, and warfare
- Classical Reception

Graduate students and advanced undergraduates specializing in the ancient world (Classical and Near Eastern Studies, history, archaeology, anthropology, religious studies, philosophy, comparative literature, etc.) are welcome to submit. We are especially interested in scholarship that employs interdisciplinary approaches to the ancient world.

Submission Guidelines

Presentations will be 15 minutes in length, followed by 5 minutes for questions.

Please submit abstracts of no more than 300 words (plus a select bibliography) in PDF format to cunyclassicsconference@gmail.com no later than Dec 8th. Decisions will be made anonymously. Kindly include your full name and affiliation in the body of your email.

For questions, please contact the co-organizers: Rebecca Tauscher (Rebecca.Tauscher80@gc.cuny.edu) and Jason Palladino (Jason.Palladino73@gc.cuny.edu)