

## *Chiasmi*

*The 16th Annual Harvard-Brown Graduate Student Conference in Italian Studies  
Harvard University, April 4-5, 2025*

### ***Elementi: Transformations and Metamorphoses***

On behalf of the graduate students of the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University and the Department of Italian Studies at Brown University, and in collaboration with the University of Warwick, UK, we are pleased to announce the sixteenth edition of Chiasmi—Graduate Student Conference in Italian Studies, to be held on April 4th and 5th 2025, at Harvard University, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

*Le stelle, il cielo et gli elementi a prova  
tutte lor arti et ogni extrema cura  
poser nel vivo lume, in cui Natura  
si specchia, e 'l Sol ch'altrove par non trova.*

Francesco Petrarca, *Canzoniere* 154.

What is an element? What are the elements of the discipline? The elements of style? Or even *the* elements? How do these interact with the production of knowledge, the understanding of the cosmos, the awareness of the self, or of our material and immaterial realities? How did the discovery of chemical elements alter our epistemological foundations? What are elementary assumptions we propagate as axioms?

This conference aims to establish how elements in all their iterations interact (and react) with the disciplines of Italian studies, whether from a scientific, literary, aesthetic, epistemic, or didactic perspective. How does Italian studies interact with the elemental, and how has the discipline been shaped by such a concept?

We are seeking papers that discuss not only the elements, but ideas and notions that disrupt our “elementary” thinking through transformations and metamorphoses. Out of the old is born the new, and out of the elemental comes the transformative, metamorphic power of the future, for both the field of Italian studies and the humanities more broadly.

We will have panels that will discuss elements in all their declinations, from medieval alchemy to contemporary discourses surrounding the environment. We are accepting contributions from a wide range of disciplines including, but not limited to Art History, Visual Arts, History, Literature, Philosophy, Cultural Studies, Architecture, Performance Studies, Gender and Queer Studies, Race

Studies, Environmental and Blue Humanities, and Film and Media Studies, as long as they are connected with the field of Italian culture.

Presentations should not exceed 20 minutes (approximately 8-10 pages of double-spaced text) and may be in English or Italian.

Please send an abstract (no longer than 300 words) with the title of your paper, your name, affiliation, contact information (including telephone and e-mail address), biographical note, and technical equipment needed as a Microsoft Word file attachment to [chiasmi@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:chiasmi@fas.harvard.edu).

Please format the subject line “[Last name]—Chiasmi 2025.”

**Submission deadline:** January 31, 2025, 23:59 EST.