Despite the damage—both physical and representational—inflicted on Indigenous communities across the world by colonial powers over centuries, recent decades have seen a resurgence in approaches to Indigeneity across a variety of fields, from History and Anthropology to Literature and Indigenous Studies. Terms such as “Natives,” “Aboriginal,” “Indigenous,” or “First Nations” reflect the variety of contexts in which Indigeneity operates geographically, politically, philosophically, and literarily. In a contemporary climate of reconciliation between settler colonial nations and colonized indigenous peoples, Indigenous writers and critics are at the forefront of the conversation. Audra Simpson, a Mohawk scholar and professor of Anthropology at Columbia University, asks a question which frames our understanding of contemporary Indigeneity and the stakes of its representation: “How can reconciliation succeed if the wrongs against Indigenous people continue to go on?”

This special issue brings together scholars working across several fields (Literature, Anthropology, Indigenous Studies, History, Media and Visual Culture) with the primary goal of interrogating both contemporary and historical representations of Indigeneity across the world. While this is a relatively broad focus we purposefully propose, we hope to create cross-disciplinary conversations on the past, present, and future representations of Indigeneity from various theoretical and methodological frameworks (from formalist to feminist, deconstructionist, post- and de-colonial studies, historicist, queer, and other perspectives). Some of the potential topics may include, but are not limited to: history and representation of Indigeneity, comparative approaches to Indigeneity (Hemispheric or global), representing Indigenous trauma, contemporary Indigenous literature and other media, images of Indigeneity by or about Indigenous people, teaching Native and Indigenous literatures in global contexts, etc. Comparative essays are also highly encouraged.
Guest Editor: Cristina Stanciu, Virginia Commonwealth University
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