

**CfP: Keeping it in the Family? Exploring familial tension and rupture in the ancient & early-medieval Mediterranean (Postgraduate and ECR Conference)**

**24-25th April 2019, University of Reading**

confirmed keynotes: Prof. Edith Hall (KCL) & Prof. Kate Cooper (RHUL)

Family is a significant aspect of human interaction in the ancient world, shaping both public and private spheres. As a social unit the family is often taken for granted; but the boundaries, duties and expectations of familial relationships are not always clear, constant or consistent. These boundaries are often best understood through the moments when the family comes under pressure; when someone does not behave as expected or there is a break in the family line. Through examining these moments of crisis, we can analyse the underlying expectations that society had of the family in these eras.

Family studies has attracted attention from a broad range of disciplines and we want to build on this by inviting scholars with an interest in the ancient and early-medieval Mediterranean to join us and explore ways of approaching and interpreting tensions inside and on the edges of the family.

Suggested themes:

- Interaction between familial structures and social and political structures
- Tension between familial and social relations (enslaved parents, children, partners; citizens and non-citizens within the family; etc)
- In and out: tension at the boundaries of familial structures and relationships (adoption, disownment, marriage, divorce, concubinage)
- Taboos, intermarriage and the construction of good and bad interaction within the family
- Contesting and constructing legitimacy and illegitimacy
- Succession, heirship and inheritance
- Family law, disputes and legislation as plot devices in literature
- Visual and material representations of familial association or disassociation

We want this conference to bring together postgraduates and early-career researchers from a broad range of geographical, chronological and disciplinary areas. Accordingly, the suggestions above are not binding and we welcome any paper that addresses the titular theme.

We will endeavour to ensure this conference is as accessible and representative as possible. If you have any access concerns, or would require any further additional support to present, then please include this information in a separate attachment and we will contact you in confidence if your abstract is selected in anonymous review.

Abstracts of 300-350 words for a 20-minute paper should be sent as a PDF to [readingancientfamily2019@gmail.com](mailto:readingancientfamily2019@gmail.com) by 15/10/2018. Please include your name, university affiliation, programme and year of study (if applicable) in the body of your email and not in the abstract. To ensure that all papers can be understood by as many participants as possible, we request that abstracts and papers are in English.

Becca Grose, Doukissa Kamini, Rebecca Rusk (PhD students at the University of Reading)