

**Report of the Seventh Annual Meeting of Postgraduates in the Reception of the Ancient World (AMPRAW), at the University of Edinburgh in collaboration with the University of Glasgow and the University of St Andrews.**

AMPRAW, an important academic event both within and outside the UK, is an annual postgraduate conference centred on the reception and impact of the ancient world on modern thought and identities. This year, AMPRAW 2017 brought together 27 speakers from 8 different countries and 3 different continents in order to deliberate on and exchange views on the concept of “community”. The result was an exciting conference supported by no fewer than seven research bodies, including the SPHS.

Ranging from Philosophical approaches, to Nationalism and Drama, papers explored how definitions of community (geographical, artistic, intellectual, political, cultural and economic) have been shaped and complicated by classical works and/or how classical receptions have prompted and continue to prompt new insight into community groups. The variety of subjects created a remarkably interdisciplinary conference, with papers ranging across the Roman, Christian, Late Antique, Early Modern and contemporary period, covering Europe (Denmark, Ireland, Germany, Italy, France, Cyprus), Africa, and the Americas from the 18th-19th century.



Moreover, the conference was further enhanced by a career panel with Dr. Rachel Bryant-Davies (Durham University) and Dr. Katherine East (Newcastle University), members of the Classical Reception Studies Network, as well as a stimulating presentation from the well-known British playwright, Prof. Zinnie

Image 1. Professor Patrick Finglass’ key-note lecture on “Classical Reception and Classical Philology”

Harris. The three keynote speakers, Prof. Douglas Cairns (University of Edinburgh), Prof. Patrick Finglass (University of Bristol) and Emerita Prof. Lorna Hardwick (Open University-in absentia) explored different topics related to the concepts of “community” and “classical reception”.

The full range of abstracts can be accessed via the official conference website (<https://ampraw.wixsite.com/ampraw2017>), and demonstrates the great variety but, at the same time, the coherence of the program, focused around a central theme. After each paper, speakers and audience members engaged in stimulating discussions, exploring manifold definitions and interpretations of community – whether (for example) the literary community created between texts, authors and readers, the classically-inflected rhetoric that shores up modern political discourse, or the transient community of spectators and actors brought together in the performance of an ancient play. Before the end of the two days, a new “community” of senior and junior academics coming from different institutions had been formed!

These are some of the positive reviews we received:

“When I saw the final programme for AMPRAW 2017 I was very impressed, and even more humbled and delighted to have been selected to present at the conference. I thought that there was a great balance between speakers from different disciplines, institutions, and stages of their career, and this really helped me to think about my paper and research interests within a broader academic and professional context. I found the careers Q&A session on the second day particularly helpful. As often as such events occur, it was really useful to hear from individuals whose work and interests are so closely aligned with the theme of the conference-this helped me think about how I can develop my research projects in the future. One final note-AMPRAW 2017 had the BEST food of any conference I've been to so far! It's always important to keep your speakers and delegates well fed, and this certainly happened. :)”

“It has been a stimulating event, which has made my perspectives wider.”

“I think it was an excellent conference all-round...there were fantastic papers, by fantastic people, thanks to some fantastic organisers. This sets the bar for all future conferences: keep it up!”

Image 2. The smiling AMPRAW organising committee at the end of the conference.

