

ΕΘΝΙΚΟ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΠΟΔΙΣΤΡΙΑΚΟ  
ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ  
ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΚΗ ΣΧΟΛΗ  
ΤΜΗΜΑ ΦΙΛΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ  
ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟΥΠΟΛΗ  
ΑΝΩ ΙΛΙΣΙΑ – 157 84 ΑΘΗΝΑ



NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN  
UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS  
SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY  
FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY  
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**DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS  
RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM SERIES 2023-2024  
INVITATION**

**When:** Monday 22 April 2024, at 12.00 and Tuesday 23 April 2024, at 13.00.

The Department of Classics, Faculty of Philology  
invites you to two lectures by

**Dr Thomas Kuhn-Treichel**  
Postdoctoral Researcher at the University of Heidelberg

entitled

- **Loosening knees and heart: body and emotion from Homer to Plato,  
Part One: The Homeric epics  
(22.04.2024, School of Philosophy, room 209)**
- **Loosening knees and heart: body and emotion from Homer to Plato,  
Part Two: From Hesiod to Plato  
(23.04.2024, School of Philosophy, Library Auditorium)**

Both lectures will be delivered in English.

Professor Amphilochos Papathomas  
Head of the Department of Classics

For further information please contact the colloquium series organizers:

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## Dr Thomas Kuhn-Treichel

### Loosening knees and heart: body and emotion from Homer to Plato

#### 1. The Homeric epics

‘And at once, her knees and the dear heart were loosened’ (τῆς δ’ αὐτοῦ λύτο γούνατα καὶ φίλον ἦτορ): the formula, with slight variations, occurs several times in the Homeric epics, especially when characters are shocked by negative or positive events, but is often overread because it appears so stereotyped. This talk argues that these and similar expressions of dissolving, far from being mere filling material, allow us deep insights into notions of the body and of emotion in the Homeric epics, which often differ from our concepts, but can be elucidated by modern neurobiology. An outlook on the Hebrew Bible will show that some of the peculiarities are paralleled in other contemporary cultures.

#### 2. From Hesiod to Plato

After Homer, the idea of dissolving the body is most prominently associated with the effects of love and desire. After Hesiod, early Greek lyric (e.g., Archilochus, Sappho and Pindar) take up and develop the idea; one of their innovations is that they tend to use the expressions in a (more) metaphorical way, e.g. by speaking of melting. This tendency bespeaks a change in notions of the body, which is now more often seen in opposition to the mind or the soul. The development climaxes in Plato, who takes up the poetic image of dissolving in a new, philosophical sense when describing *eros* in the *Phaedrus*.