

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
ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟΥΠΟΛΗ
ΑΝΩ ΙΛΙΣΙΑ - 157 84 ΑΘΗΝΑ

ΠΡΟΣΚΛΗΣΗ

Την Πέμπτη, **29 Οκτωβρίου 2015**, ώρα **12.00 το μεσημέρι**
στο Σπουδαστήριο Κλασικής Φιλολογίας,
θα γίνει στο πλαίσιο
των «Επιστημονικών Συναντήσεων»
του Τομέα Κλασικής Φιλολογίας η ομιλία
της Καθηγήτριας **Otta Wenskus**
(University of Innsbruck)
με θέμα:

“If humans were centaurs. Galen on science versus fiction”

Σας προσκαλούμε να παραστείτε.

Ο διευθυντής του Τομέα Κλασικής Φιλολογίας

Νικόλαος Γεωργαντζόγλου

Συντονιστές:

Γραμματική Κάρλα
gkarla@phil.uoa.gr
210-7277620

Ανδρέας Μιχαλόπουλος
amichalop@phil.uoa.gr
210-7277618

ABSTRACT

One of the things Nature can't do, according to Galen's excursus at the beginning of Book Three of *De Usu Partium*, is create centaurs. Galen's arguments are actually very good, and he presents them in three neat steps in the rhetorical figure called *concessio* and/or, depending on your point of view, a perfect example of apagogical reasoning. This is what it boils down to: centaurs couldn't come in to being; if they could come into being, it wouldn't be possible to feed them, and even if all those obstacles could be overcome, the one advantage of increased speed on even ground would be dwarfed by a lot of disadvantages. So, aren't you glad you're not centaurs?

Galen seems to have written some of this excursus tongue in cheek, but what makes this text really interesting is the fact that it seems to be the first extant Greek text which argues that all (not just some) myths are unreliable, complementing some passages of another famous treatise of Galen's, *De placitis Hippocratis et Platonis*. But that is not all. Galen is just one step away from writing fantastic fiction – he does ask the „what if“ questions which are a prerequisite for good fantastic literature. He seems to be the first who tried to imagine how it would feel like to be a centaur. And, by the way, is Galen trying to be funny, or isn't he? He is certainly imagining a series of ludicrous situations, and he does occasionally show a certain talent for comedy, e.g. in ch. 8 of *De praecognitione*, and the fact that our chapter is placed at the beginning of Book Three must count for something.