



Seminar

ERIC CULLHED

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*Ancient Greek Dance Aesthetics
and the Dipylon Wine Jug*

Tuesday, 11 February, 2020, 2:15 p.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala
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S W E D I S H
C O L L E G I U M
for ADVANCED STUDY

ABOUT ERIC CULLHED

Eric Cullhed studied Greek and Latin philology at Stockholm University, Uppsala University and Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. He received his Ph.D. in Greek from Uppsala University in 2014, and was promoted to Associate Professor (Docent) at the same university in 2018.

Cullhed's Ph.D. thesis on the twelfth-century rhetorician Eustathios of Thessalonike's *Commentary on the Odyssey* received the Benzelius Award (Royal Society of Sciences, Uppsala) and the Westin Prize (Royal Society of the Humanities, Uppsala). He is continuing this work as co-general editor of *Eustathius* (Brill), which consists of a full online digitization of M. van der Valk's edition of Eustathios' *Commentary on the Iliad* (1971–1987) and a new print and digital edition of the *Commentary on the Odyssey*, including source apparatus and English translation. As a postdoctoral researcher he has also moved into new fields of research, publishing articles on ancient Homeric scholarship, Byzantine satire, Classical reception in Latin America, the history of classical scholarship, late antique Latin poetry and the history of the emotion *being moved*. In 2018 he was awarded the Oscar Prize by the board of Uppsala University.

As a SCAS Pro Futura Scientia Fellow, Cullhed will work with a research project analyzing and classifying thick aesthetic concepts in Greek and Roman criticism (broadly construed).

ABSTRACT

One of the oldest preserved Greek alphabetic inscriptions, the graffito on the Dipylon wine jug (IG I² 919, eighth century BCE), records an announcement in epic verse stating that the prize will be awarded to the dancer who dances *atalōtata*. What does this word reveal about the nature of this dance competition? Scholars have previously reached different conclusions. Some envision a contest in 'graceful' dancing, others in 'dynamic' free-style dancing, and yet others in erotically suggestive dancing. Re-examining the semantics and implications of the word *atalos* in Greek epic, I argue that it is used to pick out an aesthetic or artistic quality that is repeatedly praised in archaic texts: that of dancing with the carefree abandon of a child. In the process I reflect on methodological issues pertaining to the analysis of 'thick' (i.e. evaluative and descriptive) terms in historical research.