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***Between a rock and a hard place. Identifying statue bases from Hellenistic and Roman Athens***

**ABSTRACT**

From the Archaic to the Roman period, life-size statues of prominent individuals, gods and goddesses, heroes, and other mythological figures were set up around the cityscape of ancient Athens as a means to express ideological, religious, cultural, and societal values and agendas. However, many of these statues have not been preserved until today and instead, we have been left with their more-or-less fragmentary remains, including a large corpus of inscribed bases that once carried these statues. Though such bases provide an excellent starting point to identify individual statues, especially in the cases where bases have been preserved whole, a rather significant problem arises when we are dealing with inscribed fragments, as this fragmentary state can make it challenging even to determine what was once a statue base and what was not. This paper explores the ways through which we can identify inscribed statue bases from Hellenistic and Roman Athens, focussing specially on establishing a sound methodological framework in the context of my ongoing PhD project. The paper addresses the various types of inscriptions used for statue bases and, through different examples, highlights the problems that can emerge from their oftentimes fragmentary state when compared with other dedicatory or honorific inscriptions. Rather than letting such problems be a desistance, the paper focusses on how they can be used as guiding points in the further development of a statue base methodology. The paper concludes with a discussion of the criteria that can be instrumental in identifying inscribed statue bases.

The lecture takes place **Monday May 15, 2023 at 17h** (Athens time), at the Swedish Institute at Athens, Mitseon 9, and via Zoom.

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Warmly welcome!