

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



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Almost everyone's sense of time seems to have been affected by the pandemic. It was perhaps only to be expected that the days would roll into one when there was so little to break up the week. But more than that, these long spells of isolation and lockdown appear to have thrown months and even years of the past into disorder, too.

Our diaries may not brim with as many exciting things as they did in 1965, 2000, 2019, but for us philhellenes, 2021 should be a year to remember insofar as it marks both the bicentenary of the outbreak of the Greek Revolution, and the 2,500th anniversary of the battles of Thermopylae, Salamis and Artemisium (of 480 BC – remember, there was no 0 BC/AD, so the calculation is $479 + 2021 = 2500$).

While the War of Independence and its aftermath will be the special focus of our autumn issue (there are some brilliant events and lectures lined up – <https://21in21.co.uk/about/> and <https://www.greece2021.gr/en/> are good places to start), the Graeco-Persian wars of the fifth century BC form the backdrop to some of our leading articles in this spring edition.

On pages 14–18 Amelia Brown writes on the sadly overlooked statues, epitaphs and other memorials to those who fought at Thermopylae, the subject of her paper at a recent conference on the conflict supported by the Hellenic Society. Reflecting, at the beginning of her article, on the gathering of academics across several conti-

nents, Brown observes just how rich and multifarious have been the afterlives of this defining battle.

Meanwhile, David Stuttard shines a light on Cimon, son of Miltiades of Athens, who, he argues, was as instrumental as Themistocles in leading the Greeks to victory over the Persians at Salamis. Given how much he did to improve life in his city-state and fortify its people's spirit, it is a wonder that Cimon is so little spoken of today. Just why is he so overlooked? Our cover design offers a clue. And see pages 4–7 for Stuttard's answer.

Elsewhere in the issue, Michael Kwadwo Okyere Asante writes most movingly on the challenges of studying classics in Ghana (pages 37–39), Evripidis Konstantinidis describes a surprisingly busy year as a bookseller in Thessaloniki (pages 46–47) and Judith Herrin has us dreaming of Ravenna, the subject of her brilliant book, which this year won the Duff Cooper Prize (pages 31–32).

Speaking of books, we have a characteristically wide selection reviewed in the back half of the magazine, as well as a round-up of forthcoming and recent titles to look forward to. Our new regular slot, brought to you 'From the Archives' of the Hellenic Society by our Secretary, Fiona Haarer, even features a cameo from Oscar Wilde. Just don't ask me to remember which of these I read first. Enjoy the issue!

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