

# EDITORIAL



Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York, Rogers Fund, 1917

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**T**hese variants have really given Greek a bad name. Curse Delta! Curse Omicron! On the one hand, we should be pleased that many more people are now familiar with the Greek alphabet. On the other, the ostensible omission of letters – what ever happened to Xi? – is hardly helpful for those who seek to extract some educational benefit from the mutation of the virus.

If, by some miracle, this alphabet cuts off before the end, Greek learners can celebrate by carrying on down to Omega much more pleasurably through the pages of *The Cambridge Greek Lexicon*. As Editor-in-Chief James Diggle explains on p. 5, the new two-volume edition was 23 years in the making, and differs from its predecessor, Liddell and Scott, in a number of significant ways. It is certainly refreshing to find editors prepared to call a spade a spade – and, for that matter, to employ the f-word where necessary.


Speaking of colourful characters, Aristotle Onassis is resurrected this year by Anthony Skordi in his hit one-man show *Off-Broadway*. It is a pleasure to publish Skordi's account (p. 40) of what drew him to Onassis in the first place, and to learn how his own Greek Cypriot heritage inspires him in his life.

Elsewhere in this issue, Zenia Duell (p. 19) considers the ancient

site at Qaryat al Faw and its connections across Arabia and the Mediterranean. Its excavation was not only significant in itself, she argues, but key to unlocking the field of pre-Islamic archaeology. Altan Mardin (p. 9) joins the Sardis Expedition to report on the restorations of an astonishing late-Roman synagogue. And Alice Dunn (p. 39) explores the interior redesign of the Prime Minister's residence in Athens – no peeling gold wallpaper here.

As we're going into spring, we are pleased to be publishing a range of travel articles, too, to whet your appetite. Whether you fancy Boeotia or Corfu Town, the high culture of Sparta or the delights of Delos, or a trip along the trail of Greek folk songs (see Joshua Barley's essay on p. 43), you'll find inspiration in these pages – as well as our recommended books to take with you.

We dedicate this issue to the memory of Gina Coulthard, production editor of *ARGO*, who very sadly passed away in February. We shall all miss working with her and express our gratitude for the brilliant work she did on the journal over the years.

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