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Medea in Performance

1500–2000



EDITED BY

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FOREWORD



The Archive of Performances of Greek and Roman Drama was founded in 1996 under the co-direction of Edith Hall and myself. This was made possible thanks to funding from the Leverhulme Trust; and this has in turn enabled us to obtain further support from the Arts and Humanities Research Board which will extend our activities until at least 2004. We are most grateful for the opportunity that these bodies have given the Archive to establish itself as the internationally recognized centre in this field of activity.

In July 1998, we organized a conference at Somerville College, Oxford, and selected *Medea* as its subject. It was first conceived as a relatively local event, though word got around and it became more international. We also had no prior intention of publishing the papers delivered over the two days. But in the event, they were (we believe) of such high quality and interest that we have coordinated their publication in this volume. All those papers delivered in 1998 are here except for that by Marina Warner, which was already committed elsewhere. We are delighted that two of those present at the conference but not giving papers, Margaret Reynolds and Mae Smethurst, have agreed to write special additional chapters.

We have several bodies to thank warmly for their support in making the Conference possible: the Principal and Fellows of Somerville College, the Gilbert Murray Trust, the Dover Fund of the Hellenic Society, and the Craven and Passmore Edwards Committees of Oxford University.

We are obliged to the European Humanities Research Centre and its *LEGENDA* publication series for including us; and we have much appreciated their high editorial standards. The completion of this book owes much to David Gowen, our full-time Researcher, to Pantelis Michelakis, our Research Fellow, and to Fiona Macintosh, who has recently, much to our delight, been recruited as a Senior Research Fellow of the Archive. We also thank Leofranc Holford-Strevens for

his outstanding work as copy-editor, and Astrid Voigt for invaluable assistance. I should like personally to take this opportunity to say how much the Medea adventure and the Archive in all its aspects owe to the energy and intellect of Edith Hall.

Tragedy does not shirk misfortune and mortality. Don Fowler, who died young in 1999, was a great supporter and is much missed. And we must not avert our eyes from the early death in a road accident of one of the participants in the Medea conference, Margaret Mezzabotta of the University of Cape Town. She was a keen advocate of the importance of Greek drama and of its influence in our times, and a fine citizen of the new South Africa.

O.T.

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