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Medea and the Imagery of War

Medea has never been more popular. Twenty-five centuries after her first theater appearance, she is still wreaking bloody havoc across the stages of both America and Europe. For some reason the lethal lady from Colchis mesmerizes audiences. She seems to have captured the zeitgeist. In the recent past, versions of *Medea* have been performed in, among other places, Minneapolis, Pittsburgh, Harlem, Ontario, Dublin, London, Paris, Brooklyn, and Broadway. The vengeful and implacable infanticide has appeared in all sorts of guises—witch, goddess, proto-feminist, abandoned wife, woman wronged, foreigner, and outsider. The headline in a review in the *Wall Street Journal* (19 November 2002) of the sexually charged New York production reads "Updating Euripides with a chorus of Irish Housewives" and describes Medea's "inability to stop her body from melting into Jason's whenever he touches her." A recent London production of *Medea* is reviewed as a case in extremism—"a Medea that terrifies men and hypnotizes women." "Medea, the Musical" won an award in Los Angeles for an outstanding musical production. There have been African-American, Mexican, and Korean *Medeas*. There seems to be no end to *Medea*'s popularity. (For a discussion of current productions, see *American*.) Why has this play, some two and a half millennia after its first production, captured the American and European psyche?

To answer that question, we should examine why, in 1945, Robinson Jeffers decided to tackle the play, why Jeffers's adaptation became a Broadway success in 1947, and why now, in the first years of the twenty-first century, *Medea*, and, especially, Jeffers's version of it, is greeted with such acclamation. Relevant to these considerations are the historical events of 431 BCE that might have influenced Euripides to create and transform the legend of Jason and Medea. There are a number of possible reasons why Jeffers decided to do a translation of the Classical Greek drama.

The actress Judith Anderson had become keenly interested in Jeffers's work, especially after performing in his dramatic poem, *The Tower*

Jeffers Studies 7.1 (Spring 2003), 7–17.

Beyond Tragedy, based on Aeschylus's *Oresteia*. In 1941, Miss Anderson played the part of Clytemnestra in Carmel's Forest Theater. Jeffers, who attended three of her four performances, was impressed. "Miss Anderson's part in it was of course magnificent," Jeffers wrote, "and her desire to have it professionally staged remained unabated" (Bennett 219). However, the New York producers she approached were "naturally suspicious of a poem not primarily intended for acting, and written by an author unknown as a dramatist." Finally, one producer, Jed Harris, said he "was not willing to undertake 'The Tower' but, if she could get me to write a 'Medea,' he would consider it." Miss Anderson proposed the idea to Jeffers in 1945, and he promised to undertake the project. However, he stipulated "that I must be allowed large freedom of adaptation, because every Greek tragedy contains passages that would seem very dull, and others that would seem absurd . . . to a present-day audience" (Bennett 219). "The endeavor," Jeffers explained, "was to present Euripides' tragedy in a form and in poetry that might be interesting to an intelligent but not learned contemporary audience. . . . I tried to . . . emphasize the essential values of the play" (*SL* 310).

Jeffers acquiesced to Miss Anderson's request because he admired her acting ability, trusted her dramatic judgment, and felt he owed her a debt. He wrote the role of Medea for Miss Anderson. And he remained loyal to her. In 1948, when a disagreement between Miss Anderson and the Broadway producers of Jeffers's *Medea*, Robert Whitehead and Oliver Rea, led them to consider replacing her, the playwright sprang to her defense. He wrote to Whitehead and Rea, "I am not willing at this time to consent to any actress except Judith Anderson playing in America the title role of my adaptation of Medea . . . the play was written for Miss Anderson, and without her genius it might not have had any success . . ." (*SL* 309).

Euripides's Medea, as a character, fascinated Jeffers. For Jeffers and Anderson, and many others, the role of Medea is the *ne plus ultra* for a tragedienne. Within the Jeffers canon, she takes her place beside many passionate and strong-willed female characters. Tamar, California, Helen Thurso, Fayne Fraser, Claire, and Fera Cawdor come to mind. Behind all of them stands the image of Una, Jeffers's wife. Of Una, Jeffers wrote, "She is more like a woman in a Scotch ballad, passionate, untamed and rather heroic,—or like a falcon—than like any ordinary person" (*CP* 4: 392). Una, as Jeffers by this time had discovered, was, like Medea, fierce, jealous, and capable of violence.

"*Medea*," Jeffers declared, "is the portrait of a proud woman scorned; a loving woman, whose love, rejected and betrayed, turns terribly to hatred; a barbarian woman who triumphs over Greeks in their own country; a woman of such power and guile—which the Greeks admired,

remembering Odysseus—that she is able at last to stand alone against her husband and his friends and the whole city of Corinth, and overturn them" (Bennett 218). Jeffers also praised Euripides's ability to portray real women. Euripides "was interested in women and understood them, whereas Athenian custom kept them shut up, out of sight, and generally out of mind" (Bennett 217–18).

There were external factors that influenced Jeffers's decision to tackle the play. In 1945, when Jeffers was working on his adaptation, World War II was very much on his mind. The violent themes of *Medea* seemed appropriate. Jim Karman, in his *Poet of California*, mentions a "darkness in Jeffers' soul from which his portrait of Medea emerged," and finds "relevance of the play for modern times, where *Medea* represented the hate-filled violence of a war that had just claimed millions of innocent lives" (137). The work also helped Jeffers overcome writer's block. He was having difficulty addressing new themes. *Medea* redirected his energies; working with Euripides's text provided Jeffers with the aesthetic distance that he lacked in dealing directly with the events of World War II.

In addition, the prospect of translating a Greek drama challenged Jeffers. Although his own notes suggest that he used as reference the Alexander Harvey translation of the Greek text (a copy of Harvey's translation can be found in the Tor House Library Collection), he was able to consult the original. He had studied Greek. He was also impressed by excavations of prehistoric sites in Greece. In explaining how he came to write *Tower Beyond Tragedy*, for example, Jeffers wrote, "I think that photographs of the famous Lion-gate, and other prehistoric stone-work, still standing at Mycenae, had something to do with my choice" (Jeffers, "Tower" 1). In Greek drama Jeffers found much that engaged his intellect. He explained, "In making poems of contemporary life, I find my mood cramped by the conventions and probabilities of the time. . . . To express a violent emotion violently, or a beautiful one beautifully, would be shocking in our daily life. But it is normal in Greek tragedy." He continued, "Greek tragedy represents elemental human nature, stripped—like Greek sculpture—of its neutral and unessential clothing . . . (Jeffers, "Tower" 1).

Jeffers held Euripides in special esteem. He wrote that "Euripides was the youngest of this triumverate [*sic*], and he was never so entirely accepted by his contemporaries as the others [Aeschylus and Sophocles] were; but in later time his influence was deeper and wider. . . . But while Euripides lived, there was always a suspicion, which in fact remains to this day, that his work was not quite moral or solid, not quite 'classical,' compared to the work of the two older men" (Bennett 217). And, perhaps most of all, Jeffers valued Euripides's ability to present "real and

understandable human beings, people you could identify with yourself, rather than ideal heroes and demigods" (Bennett 217).

In comparing mid-twentieth-century America with fifth-century BCE Athens, Jeffers explained that Euripides was

> a private man, a disillusioned student and man of letters. The world had changed in his time, the great dream was fading. Recently Athens had been the savior of all Greece; but now Greece had fallen apart, and Athens, though grown much greater, was only an imperialistic power struggling with Sparta for supremacy, busy with confused battles and oppressions. Therefore, as many honest men have done since his time, Euripides chose to stay aloof from public life; and it seems to me that he was right in his time; but his fellow-citizens judged otherwise. (Bennett 217)

It is apparent that Jeffers identified with Euripides. In his 1948 essay, "Poetry, Gongorism and a Thousand Years," Jeffers wrote: "Tragedy has been regarded, ever since Aristotle, as a moral agent, a purifier of the mind and emotions. But the story of 'Medea' is about a criminal adventurer and his gun-moll; it is no more moral than the story of 'Frankie and Johnny'; only more ferocious. . . . What makes them noble is the poetry; the poetry, and the beautiful shapes of the plays, and the extreme violence born of extreme passion" (*CP* 4: 425).

The Broadway production of Jeffers's *Medea* was a dramatic triumph, running for 214 performances, from 20 October 1947 though 15 May 1948. On opening night, "Judith Anderson gave the greatest performance of her career and received a storm of applause . . . She stood at the front of the stage beckoning to Jeffers in his box to stand, to share in the applause; but Jeffers, completely absorbed in Miss Anderson's success, continued to clap, until Una finally got him to his feet to take one embarrassed bow" (Bennett 200). Jeffers later explained: "I did not want to go to New York on the opening night; simply because I do not like to hear my own verses recited." But Miss Anderson took his "somewhat static attitudes and gestures . . . and wrought all into fluid fire" (Bennett 219–20). Audiences were as spellbound as the play's author. "Night after night, 'Medea' played to a full house . . . lauded by the theater's most astute critics, publicized in every newspaper and magazine in the country, with a two-page spread in *Life* magazine" (Bennett 201). Medea became Jeffers's greatest financial success. It closed only because of the dispute between Miss Anderson and the producers.

Already in book form (1946), Jeffers's adaptation had received high praise. A professor in the Department of Classics at Stanford wrote to Jeffers: [Your] "Medea is a living, breathing person, no longer the strange witch from the fringe of the Greek world. . . . You have made it thoroughly Greek in its simplicity, its vividness and awful tragedy. Some-

times I think you write better than the Greeks. . . . I like your version with Medea's words of bitter scorn, and Jason crushed and the sense of utter futility. You have breathed a new spirit into a great play and made it more appealing. We classicists will always be deeply indebted to you" (Bennett 195).

But not only were classicists impressed. Brooks Atkinson of *The New York Times* wrote rave reviews: "Jeffers's *Medea* is a landmark of the modern stage. His verse is modern, his words are sharp and vivid. . . . His imagery austere and brilliant. . . . Although Jeffers has retained the legend and the characters, he has freely adapted *Medea* into a modern play." By and large, astute critics across the country and abroad agreed with Atkinson (Vardamis 136–42). When Jeffers died in 1962, many of the obituaries remarked mostly on his work as a playwright. For example *Time* magazine concluded "this solitary poet of gloom is best known for his vividly free adaptation of Euripedes's *Medea*." The San Francisco *Chronicle* reviewer wrote, "a good argument might be made that the greatest thing Jeffers did for American poetry was to learn Greek . . . His version of the *Medea* is a truly great work of translation." *The New York Times*, in its obituary, wrote, "Jeffers was perhaps best known for his free adaptation of 'Medea.'" (Vardamis 230–32).

After Broadway, Jeffers's *Medea* went on the road: in 1948 to San Francisco, Edinburgh, and London; in 1949 to Honolulu, Denmark, Italy, and France; in 1951 to West Berlin; and in 1955 to Australia. Through the years, it has been staged in other countries as well. It was featured as David Susskind's first televised "Play of the Week" on 12 October 1959. In 1982 it had a five-week run with Zoe Caldwell in the lead at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC. In Carmel, Jeffers's adaptation was staged at the Forest Theater from 26 June through 5 July 1959, for 10 consecutive nights, with Ruth Warshovsky in the lead, to help celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Forest Theater. This was the stage where Judith Anderson in 1941 performed in Jeffers's *Tower Beyond Tragedy*. The play was mounted again in 1984 (21 September–6 October) at the Forest Theater, to open the season of the newly formed Pacific Repertory Theater. And in February–March 2003, Jeffers's *Medea* had a successful run at Carmel's Golden Bough, with Julia Brothers in the lead.

Jeffers's version continues to be singled out. The director of the 2002 production at Milwaukee's Chamber Theater had chosen it because Jeffers "was very much a pacifist" and accordingly the production had "a kind of antiwar angle, in the sense of anti what men tend to do—shake their spears and push everyone around." In a 2002 production in Los Angeles, the director focused on "intolerance of foreign races and reli-

gions," emphasizing the Greeks' condescending attitude toward the barbarian Medea. (See *American.*)

Jeffers made substantial changes to Euripides's *Medea.* He did not want a literal translation. He modified the text for a modern audience, distilling and shortening many of the long speeches. Hence, Jeffers's play is faster-paced than the original. Jeffers concentrated on concise dialogue. As Brooks Atkinson wrote: "Mr. Jeffers has dispensed with the formalities, editing most of the woe-woe out of the chorus speeches, and in the interest of melodramatic suspense he has not announced every five minutes what Medea is going to do . . . [Jeffers] has kept most of the speeches short, which is a blessing in or out of the theater, and his literary style is terse, idiomatic and sparing" (27). Jeffers made the chorus smaller (reducing it from 15 to three). Each chorus member has her own individual voice. One is a practical housewife, one timid and fearful, and the third something of a pontificator.

Jeffers, moreover, introduced animal imagery, suggesting human links with nature. Often, his animal references reflect the nobility, or, as the case may be, ignobility, of the characters. Jeffers's Medea, for example, is fiercer than a "lioness." Her children are "little falcons." Her final sacrifice "glares . . . like a lion on a ridge." In contrast, her enemies are "scavenger dogs" with "hairy snouts." When Medea is forced to beg King Creon for her life, she proclaims, "you saw me low on my knees before the great dog of Corinth; humble, holding my heart in my hands / For a dog to bite:—*break this dog's teeth*" (*CP* 3: 154).

Jeffers gave the play a California setting. In his foreword to the 1938 *Selected Poetry*, Jeffers said that the California coast from Carmel down to Big Sur was a landscape similar to Homer's Ithaca, and thus comparable in its heroic and tragic possibilities. "Here was life purged of its ephemeral accretions. Men were riding after cattle, or plowing the headland, hovered by white sea-gulls, as they have done for thousands of years, and will for thousands of years to come" (*CP* 4: 392). His metaphors dealing with nature derive from the area he knew. Jeffers also removed the *deus ex machina* ending. In Euripides, Medea is swooped away by a chariot sent by the sun god. In Jeffers's adaptation, there is much less emphasis on the gods throughout, to the point where Corinth seems to be a society without any gods.

Jeffers's Medea exists within a cosmic scale. Whereas Euripides's Medea has departed for Athens by the end of the play, Jeffers's Medea is stage center. She is less interested in her escape than she is in exulting in her victory over Jason. In Euripides the last lines belong to the Chorus, who ascribe the tragic events to Zeus in Olympus. The last lines in Jeffers's play belong to Medea. She declares that she departs under "the cold eyes of the weakness-despising stars" (*CP* 3: 197). Medea has

passed, in a Nietzschean sense, beyond good and evil. She is identified with the stars. On a literal level, she might be departing for Athens. However, that is secondary in importance. Jeffers's Medea, symbolically, is entering another realm.

Jeffers contrasts prudent, orderly, "civilized," rational, proportionate Greece to the wild, passionate, fierce, emotional Medea, who, above all, "will not endure pity." She is uncompromising. She refuses to bend. Also, she scorns the conventional. Her enemies are soft, bright, "smiling, chattering Greeks." She despises their weakness. She, the barbarian, the outsider in Corinth, is shrewd, strong, arrogant, and proud. Jeffers's Medea resembles a hawk. Like the hurt hawk in Jeffers's poem, Medea is a natural force. And like the hurt hawk, she is surrounded by cowardly dogs:

> The curs of the day come and torment him
> At distance, no one but death the redeemer will humble that head,
> The intrepid readiness, the terrible eyes.
> The wild God of the world is sometimes merciful to those
> That ask mercy, not often to the arrogant. (*CP* 1: 377)

Medea's declaration, "I do according to nature, what I have to do" (*CP* 3: 182), a key line in the play, further suggests her identification with the wild forces of nature.

For each age there is a version of *Medea*, and what follows is another reading that seems particularly valid today.

After decades of war against the Persians (the final battle of Eurymedon took place in 467 BCE), the First Peloponnesian War (461–451 BCE) ended with the "Thirty Years Peace" between Athens and Sparta, a peace which, in fact, lasted only 20 years. During that interval, Athens and Sparta, economic and political rivals, competed for hegemony over the Greek city-states, islands, and colonies. When Corinth joined sides with the Spartans, war seemed inevitable. Each party was jealous of the other. Both Athens and Sparta felt wronged. After years of failed diplomacy, the Second, and most deadly, Peloponnesian War began in May 431 BCE, when King Archidamus of Sparta invaded Attica by land. The Athenians countered with a naval encirclement of the island of Aegina. The war dragged on, with victories, defeats, and vast casualties on both sides. In 404 BCE Athens was forced to capitulate to Sparta.

The fifth century BCE was almost as bloody as the twentieth century CE. Sparta's invasion in 431 BCE marked the beginning of a decades-long conflict that devastated the independent Greek city-states and ultimately led to the triumph of Macedonia in the middle of the next century. In February of that year of war, 431 BCE, Euripides's tragedy, *Medea*,

premiered in the annual Festival of Dionysus. It was greeted with enthusiastic acclaim.

Fast forward 2,376 years to 1945. The most devastating war in human history, World War II, was ending with aerial bombardment, massive destruction, and nuclear holocaust. In that year of war, Jeffers was asked to translate *Medea*. He accepted the task with enthusiasm and genius. His adaptation opened on Broadway in 1947 to broad acclaim.

Fast forward once again to the United States of America post-9/11. Terrorism looms large and our leaders promise us endless, relentless war against the forces of evil. Witness on stages all over America and in much of Europe a rash of productions of *Medea*, to enthusiastic acclaim. Why this current interest in the play? Is there a common link that ties fifth-century BCE Greece with 1945 and the early, troubled twenty-first century? Is there an unspoken message that resonates through the centuries?

Medea loves her sons. She even pleads that the earth swallow her before she harms them. Why, then, does she kill them? Is she insane? The problem is considerably cleared with a simple substitution. Instead of Mother Medea, consider that other entity that is often called "Mother." Instead of Mother, think of Nation. Or State. Or Tribe. Or Race. Then, all at once, the play becomes clearer and richer.

Do nations not, from time to time, feel sufficient loathing for the enemy that they kill their sons (and nowadays, daughters) in order to wreak vengeance? To be sure, nations sacrifice their children just as reluctantly as does Medea. But sacrifice they do. Whether it is a nation that feels so wronged that she invades another nation, knowing full well that some of her children will be slaughtered, or a terrorist cell that sends sons and daughters as suicide bombers into an enemy city to wreak vengeance, the motivation is little different from Medea's.

Medea "loathed" her enemy, Jason, more than she "loved" her sons (*CP* 3: 196). She is no more or less moral than a hawk striking its prey or a nation state silencing an enemy. For Medea, weakness is sin. Thus she uses her sons to achieve total, ultimate, complete victory and vengeance over her enemy.

Of course, we cannot know what was going through Euripides's mind, when, in a year of impending war, he created the Medea who kills her children. We should remember, however, that Medea, as an infanticide, was first introduced by Euripides. In earlier versions of the legend, after Medea kills Creon and his daughter, it is her Corinthian enemies who, in an act of vengeance, slaughter her children. Euripides, with his change, created one of the bloodiest roles in dramatic history.

We do know that Jeffers found war abhorrent. In the play there is apparent "Male-warrior" versus "Female child-bearer" imagery, but

Medea goes far beyond that. Medea is indeed a woman badly wronged. But that does not justify killing her children. Similarly, nations may be badly wronged. Nevertheless, that does not justify the wholesale slaughter that is modern warfare. It is this unspoken message of the basic immorality of war that makes this play so disturbing, and so important, for today. In *Medea*, war is personified in the title character. Jeffers's use of war imagery enriches his unspoken theme.

The first words out of Medea's mouth support this interpretation. "Death. Death is my wish. For myself, my enemies, my children. Destruction. / That's the word. Grind, crush, burn. Destruction" (*CP* 3: 142). Shortly thereafter, the second woman counsels,

> Never pray for death, never pray for death,
> He is here all too soon.
> He strikes from the clear sky like a hawk,
> He hides behind green leaves, or he waits
> Around the corner of the wall. (*CP* 3: 144)

In terms of modern warfare, death can come from aerial bombardment, from an ambush, or from a sniper in hiding.

Medea compares childbirth to combat. "It is easier to stand in battle three times, in the front line, in the stabbing fury, than to bear one child" (*CP* 3: 154). Passionate love, too, is described in terms of war. The First Woman says, "A great love is a fire / That burns the beams of the roof. / The door-posts are flaming and the house falls. / A great love is a lion in the cattle-pen, / The herd goes mad, the heifers run bawling / And the claws are in their flanks. / Too much love is an armed robber in the treasury, / He has killed the guards and he walks in blood" (*CP* 3: 162).

War does not forgive. Medea, too, rejects forgiveness and compassion. When Jason responds that if his children were killed, he would "cut their killer into red collops," she replies, "vengeance / Makes grief bearable" (*CP* 3: 177).

The First Woman, in what could be a description of aerial bombardment answered by an artillery barrage, speaks of a godless universe, rumbling with violence and destruction: "I have heard evil / Answering evil as thunder answers the lightning, / A great waste voice in the hollow sky, / And all that they say is death. I have heard vengeance / Like an echo under a hill answering vengeance, / Great hollow voices: all that they say is death" (*CP* 3: 182). Lest there be any ambiguity in the war imagery, the Second Woman immediately reinforces the theme: "The sword speaks / And the spear answers: the city is desolate. / The nations remember old wrongs and destroy each other, / And no man binds up

their wounds" (*CP* 3: 182). In these lines Jeffers conflates the vengeance of Medea with the vengeance of "the nations."

Soon thereafter the First Woman links war, aerial bombardment, and the hawk: "She fled from her father's house in a storm of blood, / In a blood-storm she flew up from Thessaly, / Now here and dark over Corinth she widens / Wings to ride up the twisted whirlwind / And talons to hold with—" (*CP* 3: 183). Jason's bride, Creusa, dies like someone killed in an air raid: "she ran, she was like a torch, and the gold crown / Like a comet streamed fire; she tore at it but it clung to her head; the golden cloak / Was white-hot, flaying the flesh from the living bones; blood mixed with fire ran down, she fell, she burned / On the floor, writhing" (*CP* 3: 188). When Creon, father of Creusa, tries to smother the flames, he, too, is burned alive: "The fire stuck to the flesh, it glued him to her; he tried to stand up, / He tore her body and his own. The burnt flesh broke / In lumps from the bones. . . . They lie there. / Eyeless, disfaced, untouchable; middens of smoking flesh laced with molten gold . . ." (*CP* 3: 188–89).

In his recent book about the devastating effects of Allied bombardment of German cities in World War II, W. G. Sebald describes how the citizens of Hamburg were burned alive in a firestorm that "lifted gables and roofs from the buildings, flung rafters and . . . billboards through the air, tore trees from the ground and drove human beings before it like living torches . . . Those who had fled from their air-raid shelters sank, with grotesque contortions, in the thick bubbles thrown up by the melting asphalt" (Rev. of *On the Natural History*). One of the characteristics of white phosphorus fire-bombing, such as was used against Hamburg, was that victims were untouchable. Those who went to their aid became, themselves, victims in exactly the same manner as Jeffers describes the death of Creon.

When Medea hears how Creon and Creusa have perished, she cries out triumphantly, "Our enemies . . . are down in the ashes. / Crying like dogs, cowering in the ashes, in their *own* ashes" (*CP* 3:189). She next directs her fury on Jason. "I want him crushed, boneless, crawling . . . " (*CP* 3: 190). When the nurse warns her to flee, Medea replies like a warrior: "I have a sword in the house. / I can defend you" (*CP* 3: 191). In an act of ultimate vengeance, she kills her two children. When their father, Jason, sees their bodies, he says, "No wild beast could have done it." (*CP* 3: 195). Medea replies," *I* have done it: because I loathed you more / Than I loved *them*. Mine is the triumph" (*CP* 3: 196). Like a victorious commander in battle, Medea gloats over her defeated foe: I "have met you, throat for throat, blood for blood, betrayal for betrayal" (*CP* 3:197). The play ends with Medea's lines, "Now I go forth / Under the cold eyes of the weakness-despising stars:—not *me* they scorn" (*CP*

3:197). Medea's universe recognizes only one value: strength. The greatest sin is weakness.

How often in wartime do the leaders of nations invoke that principle. We must win, they declare, despite the costs. If we must sacrifice our youth to achieve victory, so be it. There is no substitute for victory. Destroy the enemy. That was said by both sides in the Peloponnesian Wars. That cry has echoed through the ages. It was the justification for the Allied carpet bombing of German cities in World War II. It was the rationale for the nuclear bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is the guiding principle in the current war on terrorism. The need for vengeance is inexhaustible. That is why Euripides's play, and especially Jeffers's adaptation, with its specific war imagery, is so relevant and vital today.

Jeffers's overtly antiwar volume, *The Double Axe* (1948), drew a barrage of protest from all quarters and caused the publisher, Random House, to include a disclaimer, disassociating the firm from the author's political views. Ironically, *Medea* carries the same strong antiwar message and played on Broadway at the same time as the publication of *The Double Axe*. Because *Medea*'s antiwar message was subtle and covert, it went virtually unnoticed.

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