

Medea in hematology

On the front cover of volume 20 of the journal, Medea's image is reproduced after she has stabbed somebody who lies at her feet. What are the links between the sorceress and our speciality? Medea is one of the most famous of Euripides' works. The most tragic moment of this play is depicted in the illustration, when Medea took revenge on her unfaithful husband Jason, who had deserted her for the daughter of King Creon. Medea murdered Creon, his daughter, and her own two sons by Jason.

The connection with Hematology appears to derive from happier times in the life of the couple.¹ Ovid tells us that the enchantress Medea, who had fallen in love with Jason, helped him to obtain the Golden Fleece by putting to sleep the dragon which guarded the treasure. Later, after seeing that his father was near to death, Jason asked Medea to rejuvenate him. The sorceress harvested herbs and plants and other ingredients, and prepared a magic mixture. Meanwhile, she relaxed the old man's limbs. She stirred the concoction with a branch from an old olive, and an instant later it was laden with green leaves and olives. When Medea saw this, she drew her sword and, slitting the old man's throat, let his aged blood drain out and refilled his veins

with her potion. Quickly his beard turned dark once more and his pallor disappeared.^{2,3}

Here lies the hidden antagonistic relationship between Medea and the Journal affiliated with the EBMT. Medea is the precursor of those who are seeking new substitutes for blood and it seems to me that the editors have been extremely fair in giving her a sporting chance in seeing her life depicted in this Journal.

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References

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- 2 Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Translated by Mary M Innes. Penguin Books Ltd: London, 1955, pp155–166.
- 3 Publio Ovidio Nason. *Las Metamorfosis*. Traducido por F Sainz de Robles. Coleccion Austral. Espasa Calpe: Madrid, 1963, pp 122–133.