Foreword

My goal as editor of the Myth and Poetics series is to encourage work that helps to integrate the critical study of literature with the approaches of anthropology and pays special attention to problems concerning the nexus of ritual and myth. Early volumes in the series set the groundwork for a broadened understanding of the very concepts of myth and ritual as reflected in the specific cultural context of ancient Greek poetics. Later volumes extended the field of vision from the Greek perspective to linguistically related realms such as ancient Indic ritual syntax and medieval Scandinavian heroic sagas and ballads. Lisa Raphals's *Knowing Words: Wisdom and Cunning in the Classical Traditions of China and Greece* extends the field even further, drawing on the philosophical and literary traditions of China to explore the semantics of wisdom and cunning, and, through them, the broader problem of intelligence. In the area of Greek intellectual history, an anthropological approach to this problem, most clearly articulated in Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant's *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, has proved to be particularly successful. Raphals's book offers a reexamination of this approach in terms of Chinese traditions, arriving at a powerful new formulation that will interest sinologists, classicists, and scholars of philosophy and comparative literature.

GREGORY NAGY