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Medea task

How and what Euripides explored ideas of: the role of women, treatment of foreigners and dramatic conventions.

Introduction:

Euripides wrote the ancient Greek tragedy *Medea* around 431 BC. The tale of Jason and Medea, in which Medea fell in love with him when he visited her country to take the Golden Fleece, serves as the basis for the story. Since then, she had supported Jason by utilizing her guile and sorcery to get him out of awkward circumstances. However, Medea planned a horrific retaliation after Jason abandoned her for the princess of Corinth. The author, Euripides, was a classical Athens tragedian. He passed away in Macedonia between 484 and 406 BC, having been born on Salamis Island in Greece. The works of Sophocles, Socrates, Protagoras, and Anaxagoras had an impact on Euripides (*Medea | Ancient Greek, Tragedy, Revenge | Britannica 2023*).

The following sub questions will be explored and debated throughout this essay considering the thesis, "Euripides *Medea* has left an influence that transcends time." "The role of women," "the treatment of foreigners," and "the dramatic conventions" are the three key topics that will be covered. The Greek playwright Euripides challenged conventional social norms and opened the door for progressive conversations on these essential facets of human existence by carefully and provocatively examining ideas about women's roles, how foreigners should be treated, and dramatic conventions in his works.

P1: The role of women

The argument posited that women's reputation for deceit and backhanded manipulation—embodied by Medea's personal past and sorceress practice—comes from the few remaining power channels afforded to them by society. However, it was also mentioned that although women are strong, when they feel deceived, they may become vicious and destructive. "Women are restricted to specific roles." Because it so obviously acknowledges the gender gap in society and so powerfully expresses and denounces the anguish and suffering that come with being a woman, Medea's speech is incredibly feminist (*Business Bliss FZE 2023*).

Women's roles in ancient Greek society are complexly and provocatively portrayed in Euripides' drama "*Medea*." Women were traditionally seen as strong and crafty, and Euripides gave the lead heroine, Medea, a strong sense of self-assuredness. It was shown that Medea was a strong, independent woman who defies gender norms by putting issues into her own hands rather than being a helpless victim. The stereotype of women as subservient is in stark contrast to her brains, cunning, and strong will. The tension between one's own desires and society standards is emphasized by Medea's persona, which focuses on the expectations society has of women. The social mores of the day are broken by her desire for vengeance against her unfaithful husband, Jason. Additionally, a major theme of the play is Medea's role as a mother and the tragedy of motherhood. There's a heartbreaking tension between her need for vengeance and her maternal instincts. Her choice to murder her own children in retaliation was a startling and horrible deed that goes against conventional notions of parenting (*The Complete Handbook for 'The Women of Troy' by Euripides 2023*).

Medea in play: We women are the worst treated creatures alive, out of all creatures that can feel and think."

This quote's significance to the play lies in its use of a primary source—a woman—to discuss how she felt women were treated at the period. She made a bold statement when she said that women are the worst treated things alive, expressing her feelings. It reveals that life was somewhat different in the

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past than it is now, when women are treated much differently and somewhat more fairly, however there are still issues with how they are handled. In the ancient world, women were perceived and treated in this way, according to the role models of the day. During this period, women were perceived as restricted to specific roles and were not depicted in the same light as males.

P2: Racism

Euripides's advocacy for change or raising awareness—rather than making suggestions for improvements, he simply advocated for change—was directed at minority groups, barbarians, and cultural variety. These individuals suffer; read the play's preface for support and an example, and you can use it as a main source. Sophistication in Athens. Aegeus, the king of Athens, dealt with a murderer and a sorcerer; other issues included minority groups' suffering and the city's marketing. Medea has melancholic quotations on how difficult it is to be absent from her family in an attempt by Euripides to highlight the fact that there are people in the play who are not treated very well (**Marked by Teachers 2023**).

Foreigners, especially the play's protagonist Medea, experience prejudice and mistrust in Euripides' "Medea," and they are frequently regarded with a sense of otherness. Originally a sorceress and princess of Colchia, Medea finds herself on the outside when she marries Greek hero Jason. Her foreign identity causes friction and conflict with the Greek characters throughout the play (**Klose-Ullmann 2020**).

Xenophobia: The drama depicts the anti-immigrant sentiment prevalent in classical Greece. Characters frequently bring up Medea's foreign heritage, and they take use of it to make fun of and shun her. Her foreign identity is highlighted by the Chorus and other characters, which adds to the general mistrust (**How Does Euripides Characterise Medea To Make Her Appear More Sympathetic To The Audience? - Free Essay Example - Edubirdie 2022**).

seclusion: One factor in Medea's seclusion is her foreign origin. She is alone not just because she is an outsider but also because of the unusual things she does and the magic she uses. The drama is set in Corinth, where the people are suspicious of her foreign upbringing and the esoteric customs that come with it (**Patriarchy In Medea - 1284 Words | Bartleby 2021**).

Jason's Betrayal: Part of Jason's motivation for betraying Medea and going for Glauce, the daughter of King Creon, is his desire for social and political recognition. He believes that by marrying Glauce, he will be able to rise in society more quickly than he could with a foreign wife like Medea.

In essence, the play portrays foreigners as being suspicious, biased, and subject to discrimination, with Medea serving as a prime example. The way that immigrants are portrayed is a criticism on the prejudices and societal attitudes of ancient Greece.

P3: Subject specific language

Euripides' "Medea" is a classical Greek tragedy that follows several dramatic traditions common to ancient Greek theatre.

Greek tragedies usually had a chorus, which is a cast of characters that comment, offer analysis, and consider what has happened in the play. This is done in "Medea," when the Chorus expresses the community's feelings and ideas. They also perform lyrical odes that heighten the play's emotional effect (**examinedlifeeducation 2018**).

Unity of Time, Place, and Action: The action in ancient Greek plays was usually confined to one location, took place over a brief period, and was centered around a main theme. This approach was

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known as the principle of unity. The events of "Medea" occur on a single day in front of Medea's home, preserving the sense of place and time. The action centers on Medea's quest for retribution against Jason and the fallout from her choices (**How does Medea express the classical unities of time, action, and place? - eNotes.com 2019**).

Tragic Hero: At the heart of Greek tragedy lies the idea of a tragic hero. The tragic hero is usually a noble figure who falls from grace because of a fatal defect. One could view Medea, the main character in "Medea," as a tragic hero. Her tremendous love and magical prowess combine to become both her tragic defect and strength, causing the play's disastrous consequences (**Is Medea A Tragic Hero? - Free Essay Example - Edubirdie 2022**).

In conclusion, "Medea" employs several theatrical devices that are characteristic of classical Greek tragedy, such as the chorus, the unification of space and time, the tragic hero, the usage of masks, the significance of fate, and the need for audience catharsis. The play's overall effect and structure are enhanced by these principles.

Conclusion:

In summary, Euripides' plays remain timeless testaments to a Greek dramatist who dared to explore difficult and divisive subjects. In the field of ancient Greek literature and drama, Euripides made a lasting impact by investigating the roles of women, how foreigners are treated, and dramatic customs. His personas subverted conventional gender roles, emphasizing the hardships and tenacity of women in a culture ruled by men. In addition, his plays frequently examine how outsiders are treated, exposing the inequities and effects of xenophobia. Euripides also experimented with theatrical norms, adding new aspects like moral ambiguity, intense realism, and psychological depth

The Greek playwright Euripides challenged conventional social norms and opened the door for progressive conversations on these essential facets of human existence by carefully and provocatively examining ideas about women's roles, how foreigners should be treated, and dramatic conventions in his works.

Euripides's works were not only topical in his own time but also enduring in that they continued to elicit thought and conversation in the centuries that followed because of his capacity to question social standards and engage with eternal issues. His plays are a tribute to the eternal ability of art to investigate, test, and provoke our understanding of the universe, inspiring modern audiences, academics, and writers alike. Euripides is still regarded as a visionary playwright whose observations on women's roles, how foreigners are treated, and theatrical conventions have a lasting impact on our comprehension of humanity's enduring challenges and victories.

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