

Mojada and Medea Writing Assignment

Jonathan Langberg

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THEA 250 - Intro to Scenic Design, Prof. Schweikardt

I think it's worth noting that I read *Medea* first, then continued on to read *Mojada*. This had an impact on my understanding of the two shows.

1. What did you notice in your reading of *Medea* that informed your understanding of *Mojada*?

The biggest thing that reading Ian Johnston's translation of Euripedes' *Medea* helped me understand was the ending of Luis Alfaro's *Mojada*. I was genuinely confused at first trying to figure out what happened with the machete, but remembering that Medea killed her kids at the end of the Greek play made me understand that she had done the same to Acan. I also felt like I had a better understanding of what exactly Jason was doing with Pilar after knowing that the original Jason cheated on his wife and left her as well. In *Mojada*, Jason had not done anything wrong yet and I already did not trust him. I am not sure that I would have known what was going on, or understood Medea's internal mental trouble (before it was explained in the flashbacks.) The Greek play was important for me to have an understanding of what was *about* to happen, and the impending problems. This allowed me to think more about the process that drove us to the ending, that feels inevitable considering all of the steps along the way. I was able to think about why the actions in the play took the trajectory they did, even in my first reading of the show. Jason was made out to be villainous and barely allowed to tell his story in *Medea*, but I did not feel that way about him in *Mojada*, and it made me think about his side of things in both shows. While I think he can be a jerk, Jason in *Mojada* wants the best life for himself and his son. This is no excuse for lying to Medea, but it let me think about specifically why somebody might want to leave their family. I still don't think Jason is a good person, but I had a deeper understanding of his actions after reading both shows.

2. What did you notice in your reading of *Mojada* that informed your understanding of *Medea*?

My reading of Alfaro's *Mojada* helped me bring Johnston's *Medea* into the modern day. I had a hard time connecting with the characters of *Medea*, because the world that they lived in is so drastically different from the world today. I have a hard time understanding a society that would kick a divorced woman out of her home when she had done nothing wrong. I think, for me, I found it easier to understand a similar situation when it is related to race. The story of *Mojada* is far from being the same as *Medea*, but I think it is clearly derived from it. Immigration is an especially hot topic in today's society, so this story helped me connect with the character Medea (in both plays), because I feel as though she could be the face of a lot of people that live in today's America. One of the things we talk about frequently in my History of Musical Theatre

class is that theatre productions are typically indicative of the broader world that they take place in. This line of thinking has helped me realize the connections between people in 431 BC when Euripedes wrote *Medea*, and 2017 Trump era America. People, especially those on the lower levels of society, always live in fear of losing everything that they have. Characters like Louisa, or the Tutor would do whatever they think is necessary to protect the limited things that they and their families have. Even when it goes against what they want or think is best, family comes first to people. It is the loss of family that drives tragedy and drives individuals to commit acts of passion or desperation. I do not think *Medea* is a bad person, I think she was in some truly awful situations that drove her to act in the way she did.