

Week 10 Assignment: Medea and Mojada Response

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Medea greatly informed my reading of *Mojada* in many ways, as it was the piece that *Mojada* was based off of and is what informed Luis Alfaro, the playwright, in his crafting of *Mojada*. The biggest takeaway from *Medea* was the pride that Medea felt throughout the story. The character of Medea is not the same in both stories, a result of the cultures they are influenced by, but the pride *Medea* has as a woman is something she never gives up, even at the expense of her family, her home, and her life. She is willing to do whatever she needs to do to be with the person she loves, but she will not forgive a betrayal such as the Jason's, especially after all she has sacrificed to be with him. Her pride in herself is the only thing she can bring with her after participating in the murder of both her family and Pelias and being forced to escape from both of their lands. She remains stalwart in her decision to be with Jason and cut down anything that remains in his path and it is this same ruthlessness she brings against him when he puts himself in front of that same path of vengeance. This uncompromising nature is what scares a lot of other characters in *Medea*, something that comes from the cleverness she exhibits to others, letting others know that it is not wise to cross her. Because *Medea* starts after Jason has left Medea and Euripides uses the time in the play to fully flesh out the betrayal Medea is feeling, I felt more of an understanding of Medea's inner feelings. This is definitely also helped by the fact that Medea goes into great detail expounding on them, as is the style of ancient Greek plays. This feeling of unwavering pride in herself and a willingness to do what it takes to keep her pride allowed me to see *Mojada's* Medea with a different light. She lost the sense of weakness that we can often attribute to a woman in her position and instead gained a ferocity hiding beneath the surface, lying in wait for it to be released.

My reading of *Mojada* in some ways informed my views on *Medea* more so than the other way around. The biggest and most important, in my opinion, takeaway from *Mojada* is the sense of how culturally distant Medea is from the place she is currently living. As a modern audience without the same Ancient Greek cultural understanding the original audience had, it is hard to comprehend the difference in Medea's home Colchis and Jason's bride's home Corinth. *Medea* refers to Colchis as a barbaric land, but in many of our minds, as most modern audiences aren't so familiar with the details of ancient Greek kingdoms beyond the famous Athens and Sparta, one ancient Greek city state is not so different from another. *Mojada*, by using the city of New York to represent Corinth and Mexico to represent Colchis, plays on common stereotypes to better represent to the modern audience how culturally different Medea is to Jason and to their new home. These differences, in both plays, rear their heads when Medea and Jason argue about what kind of wife Medea should be and what values they place on their marriage. This point is only highlighted in both at the ease Jason feels marrying another woman and how he expects Medea to act when she finds out. In *Mojada*, the difference of class between Medea and Pilar also adds another dimension to the culture differences. In *Medea*, Medea is still a princess, although of a "barbaric land". The class difference between her and the princess of Corinth is visible, as Corinth is a more prosperous and advanced land, but there is still a respect afforded to Medea, seen by the way Ageus speaks to her. In contrast, in *Mojada*, Medea is almost forgettable, easily swept under the rug. And this is evidenced by the way Pilar expects Acan to stay with her instead of leaving with Medea. In both cases, Medea is the weaker of the two, but uses her personal pride to overcome that

gap and defeat those who believe they can easily control her actions. This loneliness Medea feels is much easier to understand in regards to the culture shock using *Mojada* and the cultures it depicts.