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English 2111 11

July 2018

27fox350,80/WPA

Lysistrata and Medea obsolete women in ancient Greece

Though vastly different, Lysistrata a crude graphic comedy and Medea a scandalous 326 316 tragedy they are both representations of life in ancient Greece. More specifically they are solid views into the life of a woman in classical Greek times. Medea illustrates how quickly women 200? can be aside, how mistrusted they are, and low they are viewed. Lysistrata displays the gender bias and roles that women had politics, and ultimately both Medea and Lysistrata provide a clear example of their obsolete rights in comparison to men. In both Lysistrata and Medea, the women are depicted as good for very little, leading a primarily restricted life with no political rights, which was typical of Greece's classical age.

Medea is a woman in ancient Athens who married the hero Jason. She sacrificed her homeland, her family and even her standing for and to be with Jason. However; Jason soon finds a way to increase his status and power by marrying into royalty. Jason without any real adverse side effects or damage to himself pushes Medea and her children to obtain this marriage. The nurse who is loyal to Medea provides these details by explaining "Jason has betrayed them – his own children, and my lady for a royal bed" (Euripides 22-23). Ultimately if Medea doesn't punish Jason herself, there would be no consequence of casting Medea aside. The nurse continues "Poor Medea, mournful and dishonored / shrieks at his broken oaths" (Euripides 24-

25). This casting aside to marry up was common in ancient Greece. The gender bias of a man
leaving a woman for another woman was not exactly looked upon negatively. Ackah in her
article Euripides Medea and Jason: A study in the Social power of Love explains that "Medea
speaks for all women in the patriarchal setting of Greek antiquity, when she laments: T10: For
women, divorce is not respectable; to repel the man, impossibleif a man grows tired of the
company at home, he can go out and find a cure for tediousness. We wives are forced to look to
one man only (236-246)" (37-38). She continues by stating "that by allocating or distributing
power in an intimate relationship, patriarchal norms placed Jason in a position of power over
Medea this includes relationship options favourable to him. In such a position, he was under no
pressure to sustain his marriage by anything;" (38). Simply stated Jason could divorce Medea
and his obligations to her and her children with no ill-will from society.

In Medea, it is depicted that women of the time earned their reputation and status by whom they were married and not by their merit this is clear when Medea laments:

First of all, we have to buy a husband.

Spend vast amounts of money, just to get

a master for our body-to add insult

to injury. And the stakes could not be higher:

will you get a decent husband, or a bad one?

If a woman leaves her husband, then she loses

her virtuous reputation. (Euripides 233-239).



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