



# Eduqas Drama GCE: A guide for candidates



## WELCOME TO A LEVEL DRAMA

## ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

The WJEC Eduqas A level in Drama and Theatre offers a practical and challenging course of study which encourages you to:

- develop an understanding and appreciation of how the social, cultural and historical contexts of performance texts have influenced the development of drama and theatre
- experience a range of opportunities to create theatre,
- participate as a theatre maker and as an audience member in live theatre
- understand and experience the collaborative relationship between various roles within theatre
- develop and demonstrate a range of theatre making skills
- develop the creativity and independence to become effective theatre makers
- adopt safe working practices as a theatre maker
- analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others

This specification is designed to promote a **balance** between practical theatre making and the theoretical understanding of drama and theatre.

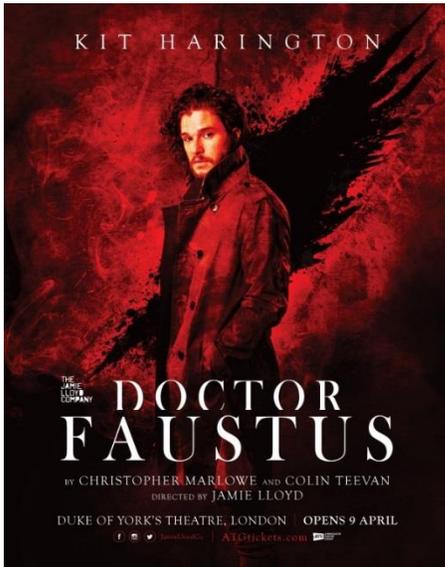
This stimulating and engaging course of study will encourage you to make connections between dramatic theory and your own practice.

You will study **five** performance texts (**two** complete texts and **three** key extracts from **three** different texts) representing a range of social, historical and cultural contexts.

The complete texts are studied for the written examination and the key extracts are divided between all three components.

You will also study **two** influential theatre practitioners (individuals or companies) and produce **three** performances; **one** text performance, **one** devised performance and **one** performance based on a creative *reinterpretation* of an extract from a text.

<b>AO1</b>	Create and develop ideas to communicate meaning as part of the theatre making process, making connections between dramatic theory and practice
<b>AO2</b>	Apply theatrical skills to realise artistic intentions in live performance
<b>AO3</b>	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed
<b>AO4</b>	Analyse and evaluate their own work and the work of others.



# Course details

Two practical components and one written exam at A level

All the set texts are explored practically as directors, actors and designers. You can be assessed on performance or technical skills

## Component 1

You will create a piece of theatre based on an extract from a text using the techniques and working methods of either an influential theatre practitioner or a recognised theatre company.

Learners will deconstruct the original text and create a reinterpretation of the chosen text.

All learners must produce:

1. A [final performance or design](#) recorded audio-visually from the audience perspective

2. A [creative process log](#)

The application of techniques of your chosen practitioner or Theatre Company is open to interpretation. You are not expected to apply all the techniques and conventions practised but they are expected to focus their work on the chosen practitioner or Theatre Company and not mix conventions from other practitioners.

- The text to be chosen by teachers from a list in the specification

## Component 2

You are required to engage with a stimulus to create two pieces of live theatre:

- one devised piece using the working methods and techniques of an influential practitioner or recognised theatre company
- One extract from a text in a different style to that of your devised performance.
- Group sizes 2-4 actors with up to 2 additional designers, each offering a different design skill
- Process and evaluation report completed by each candidate one week after the practical exam and sent to visiting examiner



## Component 3

- Component 3: Text in Performance 120 marks (40%)
- Written exam
- 2 hours 30 minutes
- Two complete texts: The Trojan Women by Euripides and Accidental Death of an Anarchist by Dario Fo
- One extract from The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time

### A level Exam 120 marks

#### Section A: (40 marks)

A series of questions on an extract from one of the complete texts (The questions will be on **either** the pre-1956 text **or** the post 1956 text.)

#### Section B: (40 marks)

An **essay** question on the second complete text (The question will be on **either** the pre-1956 text **or** the post 1956 text.)

#### Section C: (40 marks)

A question on the set extract.



## 1. Researching

Learners are required to research both their chosen text and chosen practitioner/theatre company. This must be a thorough process in order to effectively influence their practical work

## 2: Developing

Learners participate in the creation and development of a piece of theatre based on a *reinterpretation* of the extract chosen for study in stage one.

### What is reinterpretation?

Reinterpretation is the deconstruction of the text in order to create a new piece of theatre.

You will need:

- To put 'a new spin' on the creative aims of the piece e.g. altering the focus of the themes or intended audience response
- To perform/design the extract in a way not originally intended e.g. applying the ideas of a practitioner that are not naturally occurring in the text
- Theatrical challenges of text in terms of acting
- Theatrical challenges in terms of production ideas
- Personal reaction to the text

# Component 1: Theatre Workshop

20% of the overall A Level (60 marks)

Assessed by an internal examiner in a live performance examination. (Moderated externally)

### Potential methods of reinterpretation

Dialogue	Plot and Structure	Character	Theme and Content	Style and Conventions
Repeat dialogue	Change order of scenes	Change gender of characters	Change the theme(s)	Change the style
Cut lines	Alter the narrative	Change target audience	Add music	Use of puppets
Edit lines	Repeat scenes	Multirole	Add poetry	Mime and movement
Choral speaking	Realise offstage action	Divide character Between several actors	Add dialogue from other plays	Physical theatre
Allocate dialogue to different characters	Introduce flash-backs and flash-forwards	Create characters not seen in the original	Add song	Costume from a contrasting period
Translate into a different language	Delete scenes	Change character perspective and/or motivation	Add dance elements	Use of abstract sound and lighting
Vocal techniques	Create a new narrative	Minor to major characters	Add other cultural theatre styles	Use a clash of conventions



### 3. Reflecting

#### The creative log

Learners keep a creative log, compiled during the process of reinterpreting the play.

It should contain reflection on the following elements:

- How ideas are created, developed and refined to communicate meaning as part of the theatre-making process, including how conventions, forms and techniques are used in the piece
- How you have applied research into both the extract in context and your chosen practitioner or Theatre Company

The creative log should fully justify decisions made and is NOT a diary of the rehearsal process.

The creative log can be presented via a variety of illustrative means but there are strict word/time considerations that should be adhered to:

- Written annotation and/or continuous prose: 1200-1500 words
- Blog (suitably edited): 1200-1500 words
- Audio commentary and audio-visual: 9-12 minutes (in total)

### 4. Realising

Learners must realise their final performance or design. The timing of the piece is based on the number of actors in each group. Each actor must be fully engaged with other performers on the stage for a minimum of 5

# Component 1: Theatre Workshop

## 20% of the overall A Level (60 marks)

Photos of rehearsal and set model boxes	Sections of script. (annotated)	Blog	PDF's	Visual Images
Mind Maps	Mood boards	Ground plans	Sketches	Written prose
Lighting cue Sheets	Sound clips – e.g. links to sound cloud	PowerPoint Presentations	Slides	Audio Commentary
Sound cue sheets	Video or audio clips of discussions	Annotated research	Charts	Costume sketches
Prompt copies	Video clips of rehearsal work	Swatches of Fabric	Rehearsal notes	Make up tests
Digital Media	Transcripts of interviews	Surveys and/or questionnaires	Emails/letters re: research	Feedback forms

minutes in each piece to interact meaningfully. Monologues can be incorporated within the piece.



#### Assessment

#### Stages 1-3: Researching, developing and reflecting (AO1)

Assessed through performance/design and the creative log.

30 marks in total comprising of:

- Creating and developing ideas (20 marks)
- Making connections between theory and practice (10 marks)

#### Stage 4: Realising (AO2)

Assessed through the performance /design

30 marks in total comprising of:

- Interpretation (10 marks)
- Application of design/performing skills (10 marks)
- Individual contribution and communication (10 marks)



# Component 2 : Text in Action

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## What do I have to do?

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You are required to engage with a stimulus to create two pieces of live theatre:

- one devised piece using the working methods and techniques of an influential practitioner or recognised theatre company
- one extract from a text in a different style to that of your devised performance.

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## Specific guidelines

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- Learners study one 10-15 minute extract (free choice) from a text and use part of it to create a performance
- Learners devise one piece of performance
- Learners view at least one piece of live theatre
- Both pieces are based on a stimulus provided by WJEC
- 5-14 minutes for each piece depending on group sizes
- Group sizes 2-4 actors with up to 2 additional designers, each offering a different design skill

- Process and evaluation report completed by each candidate one week after the practical exam and sent to visiting examiner
- 5-10 mins viva (design candidates only)

### Stage 1: Researching

Responding to stimulus:

Stimulus materials will be released to centres in the first week of June of the year before the exam is due to be taken.

### Stage 2: Developing

Constructing the DEVISED piece:

DEVISING IS NOT IMPROVISATION IN PERFORMANCE

There is a common misconception that a devised piece does not have to be scripted.

Improvisation does, of course, play a major role in the devising process but the performance should only have improvisation in it if specific elements require it e.g. promenade theatre where the audience may need to be controlled around a space.

The devising process MUST lead to a final script that can be worked on with the same detail as the text pieces. This is particularly important when design candidates are associated with the pieces to be performed.

The quality of the script is not necessarily assessed – it is the quality of the performance that is assessed and learners need to demonstrate that they have prepared their devised piece thoroughly.

The DEVISED Piece

Elements to consider when devising theatre

### DEVISING:

To CREATE a drama from a STIMULUS by working:

*Collaboratively, Creatively, Critically*

Elements to consider:

- Form – overall style of Drama.
- Tragedy, comedy, absurdist, physical theatre
- Structure – How the scenes are ordered in time.
- Linear, non-linear, beginning – middle – end
- Conventions – ways of presenting parts of drama.
- Flashback, voice-over, multi-rolling – specific to practitioner/company chosen

## The TEXT EXTRACT

### Elements to consider

Using the research into various styles AND the chosen stimulus, learners then develop ideas for interpreting their chosen text extracts.

- Also, you must draw influence from the live theatre you have seen
- As with the devised piece, set well-defined creative aims and objectives early on in the process and to keep notes of creative decisions
- The learners should be reminded that the text piece should be in a different style to that of the devised piece

## Stage 3: Realising

Learners should realise their piece of theatre and the timings depend on the number of actors in the group:

- 2 actors: 5-10 minutes
- 3 actors: 7-12 minutes
- 4 actors: 9-14 minutes

Actors: Each actor must interact with other performers and/or the audience for a minimum of five minutes in order to show meaningful interaction.

You will be penalised by having a mark deducted for every full minute under/exceeding these time limits.

## Stage 4. Reflecting and evaluating

### Process and Evaluation Report

It is important that you give the report serious attention. *It is weighted with 40 marks, equal to each of the performances/designs.*

The report has to be completed within one week of the practical exam, along with the recording of the performances and design presentations.

It has 3 sections and should be between 1300-1600 words. A draft must be seen by the teacher in order to be authenticated (see form in pack), but detailed feedback or advice on how to improve the work cannot be offered to you.

### During the process:

- Make sure there are specific aims set out for each piece being performed or designed at the start of the process
- Keep detailed and relevant notes through the whole rehearsal/design process
- Be analytical about the process e.g. problems encountered, how issues were solved
- Set aims for rehearsals
- Work to a clear schedule

### The Process and Evaluation Report:

- Write as if the visiting examiner has not seen your work
- Do not assume that the reader will understand your ideas and concepts
- Avoid narrative
- Avoid diary-style prose
- Do not include irrelevant content e.g. initial ideas that were discarded
- Make sure points are analytical
- Avoid anecdotal elements
- Ensure all sections are completed
- Ensure both performance/design pieces are covered equally
- Keep within the word count

### Possible styles

Naturalistic

Expressionism

Total Theatre

Epic Theatre

Theatre of Absurd

Theatre of Cruelty

Musical Theatre

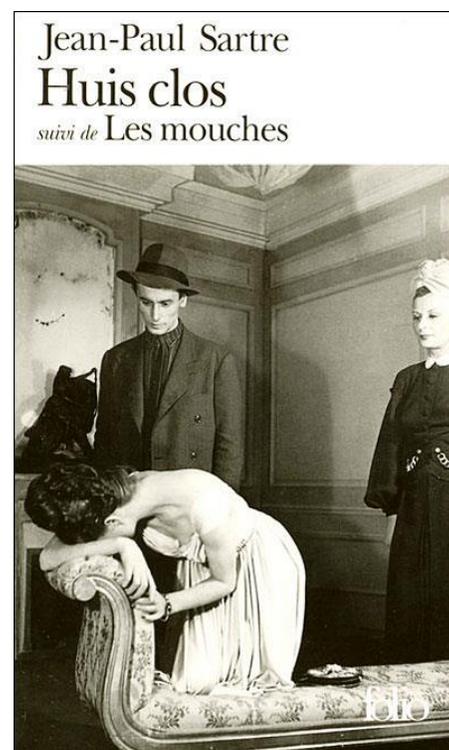
Verbatim Theatre

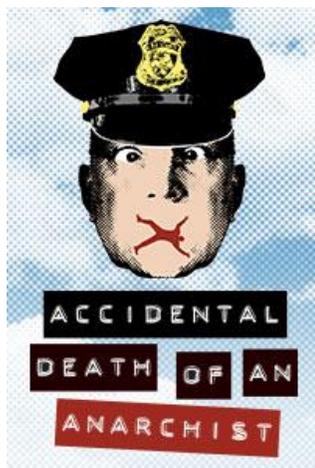
Surrealism

Forum Theatre

Kabuki

Physical Theatre





# Component 3: Text in Performance

Written examination: 2 hours 30 minutes

40% of qualification 120 marks

## Section A: 40 marks

Set Text (either Trojan Women  
Accidental Death of an Anarchist)

Staged questions with increasing  
number of marks on one or two  
extracts from the text.

## Section B: 40 marks

Set Text (either TW or ADA) 40  
marks

- An essay response
- Focus on how the text could be adapted/interpreted for a contemporary audience;

an evaluation of how live theatre  
seen during the course can influence  
creative decisions

### For both Sections A and B:

- Clean copies of the text are permitted
- Structural support will be minimal
- Learners will be expected to respond to all texts as designer, director and/or actor



## Section C: 40 marks

Curious Incident of the Dog in the  
Night-Time

- The 10-15 minute extract from The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time will be published in the first week of March of the exam series year

- A question on a part of the specified extract analysing and evaluating how the text can be performed in the theatre

Discuss	Answer in detail, taking into account different issues or ideas. The question will focus on the areas for discussion. e.g. <i>Discuss costume ideas for Orestes</i>
Examine	Inspect something thoroughly in order to determine its nature. e.g. <i>Examine at least one technique a director could use to rehearse</i>  You are expected to provide relevant detail to prove that they have examined the element of the question thoroughly.
Explain	Give a reason or reasons as to justify a specific set of ideas e.g. <i>Explain how you can interpret Act One for a performance</i>  You are expected to have their own ideas and concepts which they will present with a thorough set of reasons to support their answer.
Analyse	Examine something methodically and in detail, typically in order to explain and interpret it. (Descriptions of content would not lead to an effective answer).
Consider	Think carefully about something in detail before making a decision. e.g. <i>Consider staging form, including audience positioning</i>

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## *Expectations for Lessons, Rehearsals and Performances*

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### Punctuality & Reliability

- All students need to arrive promptly for all sessions.
- In performing arts it is important to be a reliable member of the group at all times. Deliver on promises – ensure you complete tasks or bring equipment and resources needed
- **Do not book holidays during term time** as this can seriously disrupt the rehearsal process and affect other student's work.

### Be considerate

- When working in groups you need be prepared to co-operate and compromise. To work effectively together everyone needs to listen to others and respect their opinions.
- Please keep and leave the performance/rehearsal space clean and tidy.
- When entering the space, place your coats and bags in the designated area.
- Make sure that your mobile phone is switched off during the lesson.
- With the exception of bottled water, no food or drink is to be consumed in the studios.
- Taking holidays during term time will have an effect on your grade.
- If you are going to be absent please inform the sixth form and your Drama teacher with as much notice as possible.
- In order to ensure the smooth running of a production you must keep to all production deadlines.

### Suitable Clothing in lessons

Practical lessons in performing arts often involve a variety of activities (performance and technical) so please make sure you are wearing appropriate clothing and footwear. For example:

**Appropriate:** flat-soled shoes (e.g. trainers), suitable practical clothing for moving, bending and stretching.

**Inappropriate:** High heeled shoes, restrictive clothing and excessive jewellery.

### Line Learning

In order to produce a high quality performance it is important to learn lines early in the process. This will enable you to work on the more subtle elements of acting in order to achieve better grades and produce a more professional performance.

Most people find it is best to learn a small section of lines before moving on to the next section rather than reading through the text from beginning to end lots of times. Don't forget you don't only need to learn your lines but also the line immediately before yours: the cue lines.

### Setting Up and Clearing Up the Performance Space

Last year the Drama Department rehearsed over 15 performance groups; both exam based and extracurricular, during the course of the year.

As you know the studio and theatre are therefore very busy with sets, costumes, props, and lighting and sound equipment. These rooms are also teaching spaces for three other teachers and therefore it is vital that all students take responsibility for setting up and clearing away their equipment from the space.

**Whenever you and your class use a performance or teaching space you must leave it in a suitable condition for the next group to use.**

Setting up for a production involves many different tasks including setting out the audience seating area, the Front of House areas, and the stage and back stage areas (the set, costumes and props for the show). Everyone should assist with both the setting up and clearing away for each production with which they are involved. This process is an integral part of your education and training in performing arts.



**If you wish to rehearse outside of lesson time please make sure you book the spaces via reception.**

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### Top tips for analysing TEXT

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#### “Think before you act, so that you can act before you think.”

- Look at the language patterns and use them!
- Patterned language is the actor's key to script analysis. All scripts contain patterns of sound, sight, and sense. It's the patterning that charges the script, creates beats, provides purposeful blocking, and supports action.
- Handwrite your lines for a personal connection – helps understand the structure.
- Go through every word – look for DETAIL e.g. very happy is different from happy.
- Don't run sentences together. Look for different meaning(s).
- Acknowledge ALL the PUNCTUATION – an exclamation mark is telling you something different from a full stop. It will also help you discover places to change mood, intention, blocking.

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### During the process for both pieces:

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- Make sure there are specific aims set out for each piece being performed at the start of the process. Write them down and keep checking if you are meeting them
- Keep detailed and relevant notes through the whole rehearsal/design process- this will make your evaluation easier
- Be analytical about the process e.g. *problems encountered, how issues were solved*
- Set aims for rehearsals – ensure you know what you need to accomplish each session. Write out targets, agree who will lead the session or develop a scene
- Work to a clear schedule – set yourselves targets to make sure you complete each piece on time.

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### Points to focus on throughout the process

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Plot development  
Character development  
Thematic development

#### THINK CRITICALLY:

Is the purpose of each scene clear?  
Is the purpose of each character clear?  
Are the conventions helping to tell the story?

What parts need more thought/work?  
How can tension and character be further developed?

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### The DEvised Piece

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DEVISING: To **CREATE** a drama from a **STIMULUS** by working:

**Collaboratively**  
**Creatively**  
**Critically**

#### Elements to consider:

(All related to the choice of style)

**Form** – overall style of Drama.

Tragedy, comedy, absurdist, physical theatre

**Structure** – How the scenes are ordered in time.

Linear, non-linear, beginning – middle – end

**Conventions** – ways of presenting parts of drama.

Flashback, voice-over, multi-roling – specific to style

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### Top Tips

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- Keep drafting & redrafting – this is vital if your content is to warrant a high level of performance
- Be brave – cut scenes that do not contribute to the final piece
- Be bored (at times) – being bored of a scene/idea is a natural part of the process
- Do not continually change ideas – if an idea was exciting initially it will probably be exciting for an audience.

#### Rather than change ideas, change approach

- Consider the length of scenes – avoid short scenes that do not help develop character or plot
- Finish a script of your devised piece 3 weeks before the performance.
- Treat the devised like a scripted piece

#### Understand it, learn it, rehearse it!

- Organise time properly allowing time for technical rehearsals



# Y12 Preparation Tasks

LHA Brief 1

## Learning Outcomes

The purpose of this series of lessons is to ensure that you have a deep and detailed understanding of the social, cultural, historical and political context of the set text.

By September

- 1) Be able to define and identify stylistic features of Greek Theatre
- 2) Demonstrate understanding of the history and context of The Trojan Women
- 3) Analyse how the social, cultural, historical and political contexts influenced Euripides in the creation of this play
- 4) To synthesise independent research into concise and accurate learning resources for yourself and others
- 5) To explore the key myths and events discussed within the play.

“In Component 3, learners are given the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills in interpreting texts for performance in a written examination.

Learners are encouraged to approach this component **practically** as an actor, designer and director, and as an informed member of a theatre audience.

*- Eduqas Specification*

### Assessment Requirements

This is what the exam board say you need to be able to do or know to be successful in the exam.

### Section A: 40 marks

A series of structured questions on a specified extract from **either of** the chosen set texts

Learners should consider:

- interpretation of character (e.g. through motivation and interaction)
- vocal and physical performing skills including interaction
- how performance texts are constructed to be performed, conveying meaning through: structure, language, stage directions
- interpretation of design elements including: sound, lighting, set and props, costume, hair and make-up.

### Section B: 40 marks

An essay question on **either of** the chosen set text, demonstrating how the text can be adapted for a contemporary audience.

Learners should consider:

- the social, historical and cultural context of the text
- the influence of contemporary theatre practice
- how performance texts are constructed to be performed, conveying meaning through: structure, language, style of text
- how live theatre, seen as part of the course, influences their decision making and understanding of how drama and theatre is developed and performed
- how the text approaches its theme.

## The Trojan Women – By Euripides

Trojan Women is a Greek tragedy centring on the horror of war and its aftermath. Trojan is an adjective referring to persons, places, and things in the ancient city of Troy; the action of the play takes place before the walls of Troy, which is near the western coast of present-day Turkey.

Trojan Women was first presented at the City Dionysia of 415 BCE, along with two other unconnected tragedies, *Alexandros* and *Palamedes*, and the comedic satyr play *Sisyphos*, all of which have since been lost to antiquity. It follows the fates of Hecuba, Andromache, Cassandra and the other women of Troy after their city has been sacked, their husbands killed and their remaining families about to be taken away as slaves. The action runs parallel to the events in Euripides' play *Hecuba*. *Trojan Women* is a masterpiece of pathos and a timeless and chilling indictment of the brutality of war.

It is often considered one of Euripides' greatest works and as among the best anti-war plays ever written. Euripides wrote *Trojan Women* a short time after an army from Athens, Greece, attacked Melos, an island in the Aegean Sea, during the Peloponnesian War. They did this in order to force its inhabitants to become members of an alliance against the Greek city state of Sparta and they also demanded tribute. After the island residents refused to yield to the Athenian demands, the Athenians overran the city, killing male defenders who stood their ground and capturing women and children to serve as slaves. Many consider this to be the principle influence on the writing of the play and cite the raging moral indignation contained within it as evidence that Euripides wrote *Trojan Women* to protest the incursion against Melos.

## Homework Tasks

Date Set	Description	Date completed
1 <sup>st</sup> June 2020	Ancient Greece: The Greatest Show on Earth <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAkLTWQUbG8">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAkLTWQUbG8</a> Understanding the world of Ancient Greece – Who were these people? How did they live? What did Theatre look like? See the following page for a detailed task outline	
8 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	A trip to the theatre – Ancient Greece style Use the resources on SMHW this week to learn about the actual theatre spaces and staging in Ancient Greece. You need to be able to compare and contrast with modern theatre spaces	
15 <sup>th</sup> June 2020	Directing the Prologue: Use the resources on SMHW to become familiar with the opening of the play and consider your directorial ideas for the given character.	

### What is the Purpose of all this reading and research?

When we explore the set texts we will be exploring this practically 80% of the time in lesson. However, Ancient Greece was so different to today, we need to understand how and why so that you can respond to the text and characters with confidence and clarity. By using this extra time we have it will allow us to start September with even more practical sessions and less research and written lessons. I promise that this written work will make the practical acting/directing and designing tasks easier and more enjoyable when we start the lessons.

If you want to get ahead with the course you could buy a copy of the script now and start reading:

*The Trojan Women and Other Plays* (Oxford World's Classics). 2008 by [Euripides](#) (Author), [Edith Hall](#) (Introduction), [James Morwood](#) (Translator) ISBN-10: 0199538816 You must make sure it is this version.

## Homework Task 1:

Log on to SMHW to find the links to a documentary series about Life in Ancient Greece and the role of Theatre in society.

Life was so different in Ancient Greece that often we struggle to understand the characters decisions and motivations. What appears cruel or brutal to a contemporary (2020) audience would have seemed a normal aspect of life back then.

As you watch the video pause and make notes.

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### *Learning Outcome*

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You need to create a document that demonstrates your new understanding of what life was like in Ancient Greece.

This could take any format you prefer:

A blog with images and video clips

A hand written/illustrated fact file

A PowerPoint presentation

A series of illustrated mind maps

Cue cards

Poster for display in a classroom

Pages of a textbook designed by you

You can be as creative as you like – the important thing is that your learning and knowledge shines through

You need to make sure you have covered the following areas:

- society (rules/laws/ traditions)
- Family roles (attitudes to women/men/education)
- Attitudes to Slavery
- What theatre meant to society – when/where performed, rules/traditions/

## Homework Task 2:

Log on to SMHW to find resources to start you off in exploring the staging and stylistic features of Greek Theatre.

You will also want to supplement this with extra research – there are some fab videos and interactive pages you can find

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### *Learning Outcome*

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You need to create a document that demonstrates your new understanding of what the theatre experiences was like in Ancient Greece.

This could take any format you prefer:

A blog with images and video clips

A hand written/illustrated fact file

A PowerPoint presentation

A series of illustrated mind maps

Cue cards

Poster for display in a classroom

Pages of a textbook designed by you

You can be as creative as you like – the important thing is that your learning and knowledge shines through

You need to make sure you have covered the following areas:

- A labelled diagram of the Greek Ampitheatre
- Discussion of the use of costume and Masks
- The role of actors and THE CHORUS
- What theatre meant to society – when/where performed, rules/traditions/

## Homework Task 3:

Log on to SMHW to access the prologue to The Trojan Women and the task sheets.

You will need to read the sheets and the script and complete the tasks including the one below

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### *Learning Outcome*

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You need to record your decisions about the presentation of this character in detail. 1: Read the Script and complete Student Handout Three

2: Read and Highlight Student Handout Four

3: Complete the task below – make notes as you go about which approach you think works best to open the play

4: Complete the task on Student Handout Five in full sentences with reasons to explain your decision for each point

Task 3:

#### POSEIDON AND ATHENA

The first paragraph of Poseidon's speech mainly uses him as a narrator. We are told that Poseidon, because he had a hand in building the city, has been on the Trojan side, whilst Athena has been on the side of the Greeks. He reminds the audience of the wooden horse and how Troy fell by this trick. He tells us that we are now at that moment when the Greeks are loading up their ships with the spoil they have won, preparatory to returning home. The second paragraph tells us that he is now abandoning Troy because people in times of defeat neglect to honour the gods as they ought. Then he goes back to narration mode: relating how the women, like the other spoils of war, are being divided up amongst the conquerors. Most have already been allocated a master and will be scattered all over Greece; only the higher borne women have yet to learn of their fate. This brings us right up to the 'present' place and time - clearly telling the audience where we are, at what precise moment, and who are in these tents.

Still narrating, Poseidon points Hecuba out, as she lies grieving. He tells us that another daughter of hers, Polyxena, has been killed as a sacrifice on the tomb of the Greek hero Achilles; Hecuba, he says, does not yet know of this. Moving forward in time, he tells how Cassandra will be raped by Agamemnon, despite being a virgin sacred to the god Apollo himself. The speech finishes with the statement that Troy would still be standing if powerful Athena had not been on the side of the Greeks.

Hidden within this speech, there are many clues as to attitude and tone. Look carefully first at each of these lines:

'I am Poseidon.'

Try saying this:

- very slowly and with great dignity
- aggressively, as if to an audience full of enemies - Greeks perhaps.
- Coldly
- friendly and warm

'The sacred groves are desolate and the sanctuaries of the gods are awash with blood.'

Try saying this:

- coldly, with little emotion emotionally,
- full of pity

- with anger
- Indignantly - this is as if someone has levelled a personal insult at you.

'And Priam has fallen in death near the steps below the altar of Zeus the Protector of the Hearth.'

Try saying this:

- angrily
- Bitterly - Zeus should have protected him - why didn't he?
- with little real emotion - but with a note of irony 'How ironic and mildly interesting that he should die in his own home, where Zeus should most have protected him.'

'They are waiting for a fair wind to blow ... so that after ten long years they can have the joy of looking upon their wives and children - the Greeks who made war upon this city.'

Try this:

- with a heart full of anger and hatred of the Greeks
- bitterly - stressing words such as 'they' to emphasise the contrast between the Greeks who can return to their families and the Trojans who have lost their loved ones.
- coldly and factually

'I am abandoning famous Ilium...'

Say this:

- matter-of-factly - little emotion, just stating facts
- aggrieved - he is taking the whole thing very personally
- with enormous sorrow and regret

'...and with them is the Spartan daughter of Tyndareus, Helen, rightly classed as a prisoner.'

Try saying this:

- vindictively - you hate her and hold her to blame
- coldly - you have no particular feelings about her or anything
- wistfully - even you are affected by her beauty

'Agamemnon will abandon piety and the wish of the god and bed her by force in an unlawful marriage.'

Try:

- with pity for Cassandra
- tone of 'how dare he insult the will of a god?'
- outrage at such violence

Now try the whole of the last paragraph as if:

- this was a slightly unpleasant hiccup to your life and you are glad to leave it behind you and move on
- with genuine love and regret
- with bitterness against Pallas [Athena]
- with bewilderment against Pallas

Working through the speech in this way may wake up some ideas about Poseidon's attitude.

## Who was Euripides?

Euripides, ranked nowadays with Aeschylus and Sophocles as the greatest of the Greek tragic playwrights. Little is recorded of his early life, but in any event, he received a thorough classical education and studied under Socrates and other philosophers before applying himself to dramatic composition.

He wrote about 80 dramas, probably more, and of these, 18 complete versions still exist. It is a testament to his reputation, gained especially after his death, that his plays were widely appreciated throughout the Roman and Byzantine empires and more have survived to modern times than those of Aeschylus and Sophocles together. He was not, however, so widely acclaimed in Athens during his life.

The structure of his plays was considered unconventional and his characters, although drawn generally from classical mythology, were represented more as contemporary Athenians, speaking the language of everyday Athens. Both factors may have led many to feel he was questioning the traditional values on which Athens was based.

Euripides lived the latter part of his life in a time of war – the dreadful Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta, which eventually resulted in the downfall of Athens as supreme City-state in this area of Greece. Born in 485BC, he would have had traumatic childhood memories of being evacuated as the Persian Army sought to conquer Athens. Being an evacuee, homeless and terrified, is not so much different from being a refugee as are then women in *The Trojan Women*

Late in life he moved from Athens to the court of King Archelaus of Macedonia where he was received with courtesy and friendliness but died horribly at about 80 years of age. Reputedly, he was walking alone when he was attacked and savaged by wild dogs.

Euripides' known plays include: *Alcestis*, *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Trojan Women*, *Helen*, *Orestes*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *The Bacchae*, *Andromache*, *Children of Heracles*, *Hecuba*, *Electra*, *Suppliants*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, *Madness of Heracles*, *Ion*, *Phoenissae* and *Cyclops*.

## **Grecian Life and Times in the 5th Century BC**

### **Society**

The distinguishing features of ancient Greek society were: the division between the free and the slaves, the differing roles of men and women, the relative lack of status based on birth, and the importance of religion. The way of life of the Athenians was common in the Greek world compared to Sparta's special system.

### **Social Structure**

Only free people could be citizens entitled to the full protection of the law in a city-state. In most city-states, unlike Rome, social prominence did not allow special rights. For example, being born in a certain family generally brought no special privileges. Sometimes families controlled public religious functions, but this ordinarily did not give any extra power in the government.

In Athens, the population was divided into four social classes based on wealth. People could change class if they made more money.

Slaves had no power or status. They had the right to have a family and own property but they had no political rights. By 600BC chattel slavery had spread in Greece. By the 5th century BC slaves made up one-third of the total population in some city-states. Slaves almost never revolted because they were made up of too many nationalities and were too scattered to organise.

Most families owned slaves as household servants and labourers; even poor families might have owned one or two slaves. Owners were not allowed to beat or kill their slaves. Owners often promised to free slaves in the future to encourage slaves to work hard. Unlike in Rome, slaves who were freed did not become citizens. Instead, they were mixed into the population of metics, which included people from foreign countries or other city-states who were officially allowed to live in the state.

City-states also legally owned slaves. These public slaves had a larger measure of independence than slaves owned by families, living on their own and performing specialised tasks. In Athens, public slaves were trained to look out for illegal counterfeit coinage, while temple slaves acted as servants of the temple's deity.

### **Living Conditions**

For a long time, the way of life in the Greek city-states remained the same. People living in cities resided in low apartment buildings or single-family homes, depending on their wealth. Residences, public buildings, and temples were situated around the agora. Citizens also lived in small villages and farmhouses scattered across the state's countryside.

## **The Household**

A common Greek household was simple if compared to a modern one, containing bedrooms, storage rooms, and a kitchen, situated around a small inner courtyard. Its average size, in the 4th century, about 230 square meters, was much larger than the houses of other ancient civilizations which indicates a better standard of living.

A household consisted of a single set of parents and their children, but generally no other relatives. Men were responsible for supporting the family by work or investments in land and commerce.

Women were responsible for managing the household's supplies and overseeing slaves, who fetched water in jugs from public fountains, cooked, cleaned, and looked after babies.

Men kept separate rooms for entertaining guests because male visitors were not permitted in rooms where women and children spent most of their time. Wealthy men would sometimes invite friends over for a symposium. Light came from olive oil lamps, while heat came from charcoal braziers. Furniture was simple and sparse, which included wooden chairs, tables, and beds.

## **Women**

With the notable exception of Plato, Athenian philosophers believed that women had strong emotions and weak minds. For this reason they had to be protected from themselves and they had to be prevented from doing damage to others.

Guardianship was the system developed to deal with this perceived quality in women.

Every woman in Athens had a kyrios (guardian) who was either her closest male birth-relative or her husband. Although she could own her clothing, jewellery, personal slave and purchase inexpensive items, she was otherwise unable to buy anything, own property or enter into any contract. Her kyrios controlled everything about her life.

Citizenship for a woman entitled her to marry a male citizen and to join certain religious cults closed to men and non-citizens, but it offered no political or economic benefits.

A girl in Athens was normally married soon after puberty to a man who was typically in his late twenties or early thirties. Her father or other guardian provided the dowry and arranged the match. The betrothal symbolised the groom's acceptance of the qualities of the dowry as well as the qualities of the bride.

It is quite possible that Athenian reality never quite lived up to Athenian ideal. There is some evidence to suggest that at least some women could read and write and were well informed on the issues of the day. Vase paintings etc, would suggest that women frequently gathered together. Women and men, however, did not socialise

together – at least, respectable women and men did not. If a man had guests in his home the women would be expected to remain in the women's quarter. There are few paintings that show husband and wife together after the wedding.

### **Marriage**

As in the rest of the ancient world the most important reasons for marriage were:

1. The management and preservation of property
2. The production of children as future care givers and heirs

Only children whose parents were both citizens could become citizens. Simply being born in Athens was not enough.

In arranging the marriage, citizenship and wealth were important considerations. Since a fair amount of property was involved, a guardian would want to choose the son of a relative or close friend, so marriage usually took place within a small circle. Rich married rich and poor married poor.

The marriage ceremony itself took place soon after the betrothal. A wife's duty was to bear legitimate children (i.e. heirs) and to manage the household. She was expected to remain inside her home except for attendance at funerals and festivals of the specific cults that were open to women. A woman seen outside on her own was assumed to be a slave, prostitute, concubine or a woman so poor that she had to work. Childcare, spinning and weaving were the most important activities in the daily routine of the good wife. One writer said that the best woman was the one about whom the least was heard, whether it be good or bad.

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### **Food**

Ancient Greek food was simple. Poor people mainly ate barley porridge flavoured with onions and other vegetables, cheese or olive oil. Few people ever ate meat regularly, except for the free distributions from animal sacrifices at state festivals. Sheep when eaten was mutton: bakeries sold fresh bread daily, while small stands offered snacks. Wine diluted with water was a favoured beverage.

### **Fashion**

Greek clothing changed little over time. Both men and women wore loose tunics. The tunics often had colourful designs and were worn cinched with a belt. People wore cloaks and hats in cold weather, and in warm weather sandals replaced leather boots. Women wore jewellery and cosmetics – especially powdered lead, which gave them a pale complexion. Men grew beards until Alexander the Great created a vogue for shaving.



## The Great Spring Festival

Every year at the end of March the people of Athens celebrated the god Dionysus, who brought Spring back to the countryside. Crowds of people followed a parade singing and dancing with the excitement of this great tradition. The God passed through the farms and fields of Athens blessing the crops.

## The Venue

- The great Spring Festival lasted for 7 days
- A major part of this great festival was the plays. For 4 days, the Theatre of Dionysus became the venue of a play competition. (*pictured below*)
- Over the 4 days 20 plays were performed. The plays were judged and prizes were awarded for the best authors and most popular actors.
- Many of the plays that have survived come from the 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC. At this time, a theatre was constructed of a stone foundation and wood stage, seating and beaten earth.
- The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens has been nearly totally restored. All that was left of the original stage structure was one wall of foundations.

## Sound

Seeing the Theatres were so large, having to accommodate so many people, the site of a theatre was very important. This was because the acoustics were vitally important to the plays. There was no point in being in the theatre if you were unable to hear the show!

The Theatre at Epidaurus is an example of Greek ingenuity. The ancients did not bend the terrain to their theatre, they searched for the perfect hillside, right size and shape, that would capture sound.

At Epidaurus, an actor in the center of the stage can drop a nail and it can be heard in the seats furthest away.

### **Who Watched**

- The people from each district of a city had their own special block of seats.
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*'Audiences of 30,000 were common'.*

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### **The Chorus**

The audience seats sloped down to a large circular area called the orchestra. In ancient times this meant the 'dancing floor', or area of movement.

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### **Altar of Dionysus**

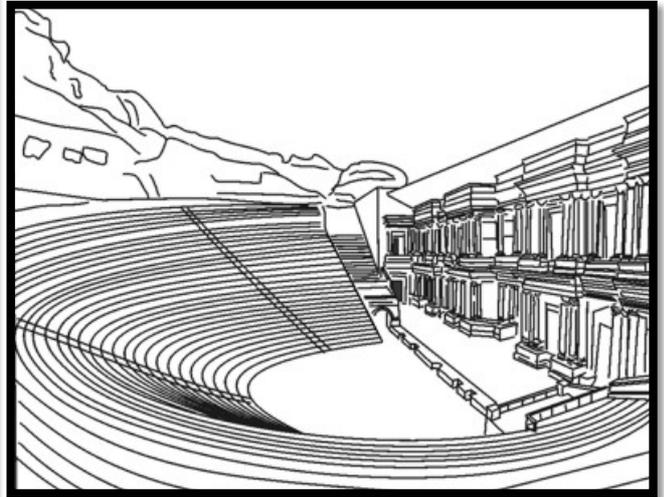
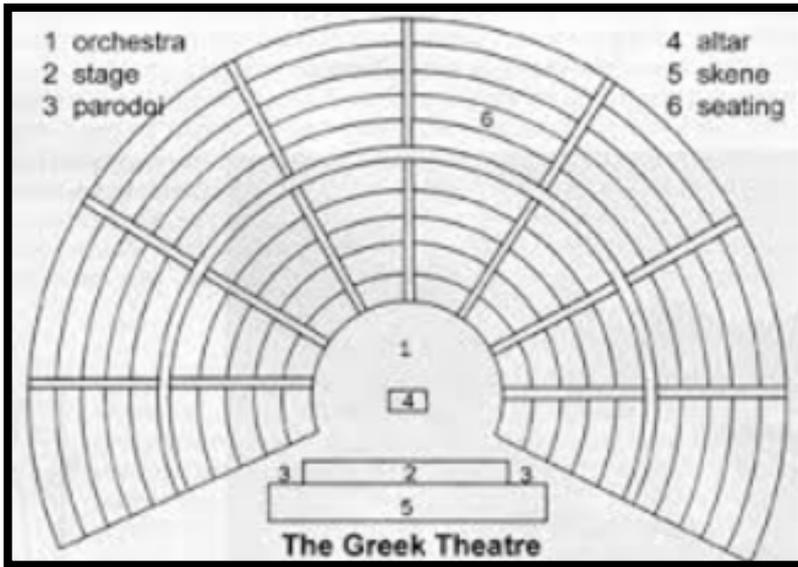
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### **Parados**

At the back of the orchestra there was a passageway leading out of the theatre on each side. This was called the Parados, or entryway.

When the play was about to start, the Chorus would walk down the Parados into the Orchestra.

The Chorus would be on stage throughout the whole play.



### The Actors

The main actors of the play performed on a special area behind the Parados. This may have been even raised a little like a modern stage.

### Skene

Behind this stage was the stage building, or Skene.

- These buildings consisted of stone foundations and Wood. None of these buildings have survived from ancient times.
- The Stage buildings ran the entire length of the stage and was about 5 meters high.
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## **Props**

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Dionysus

Theatre Mask





# Greek Theatre

# The Great Spring Festival

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Dionysus riding  
panther

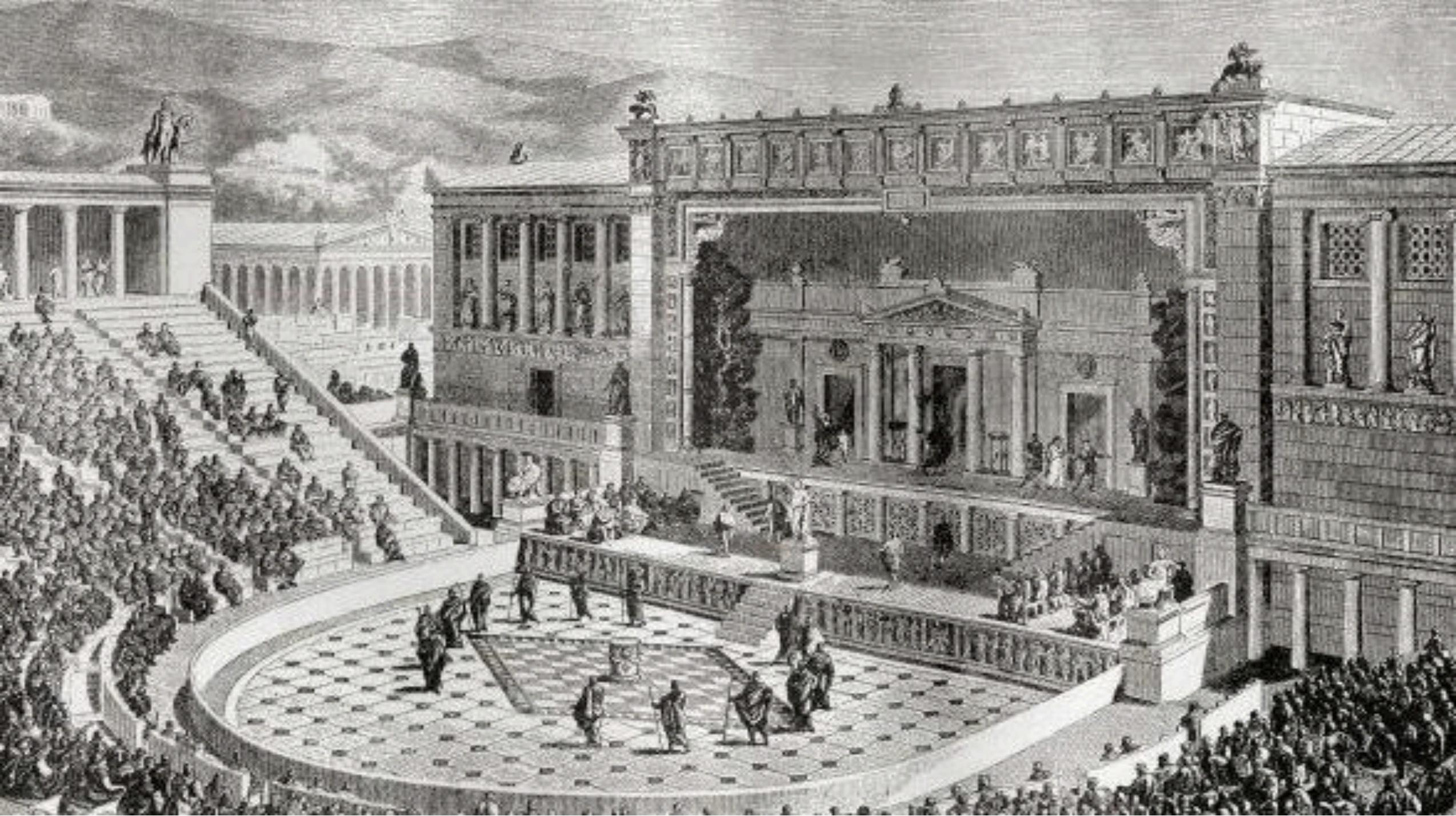


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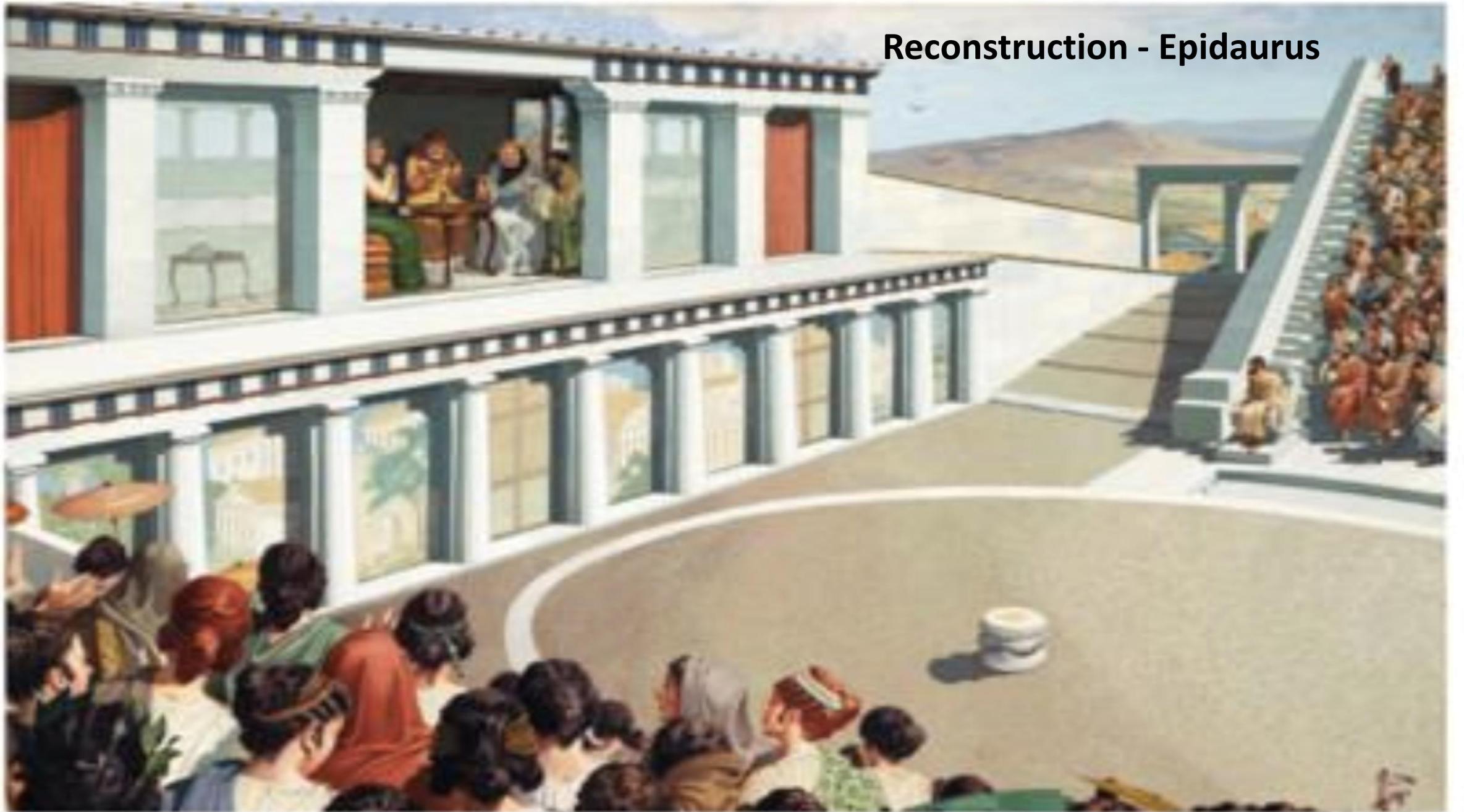
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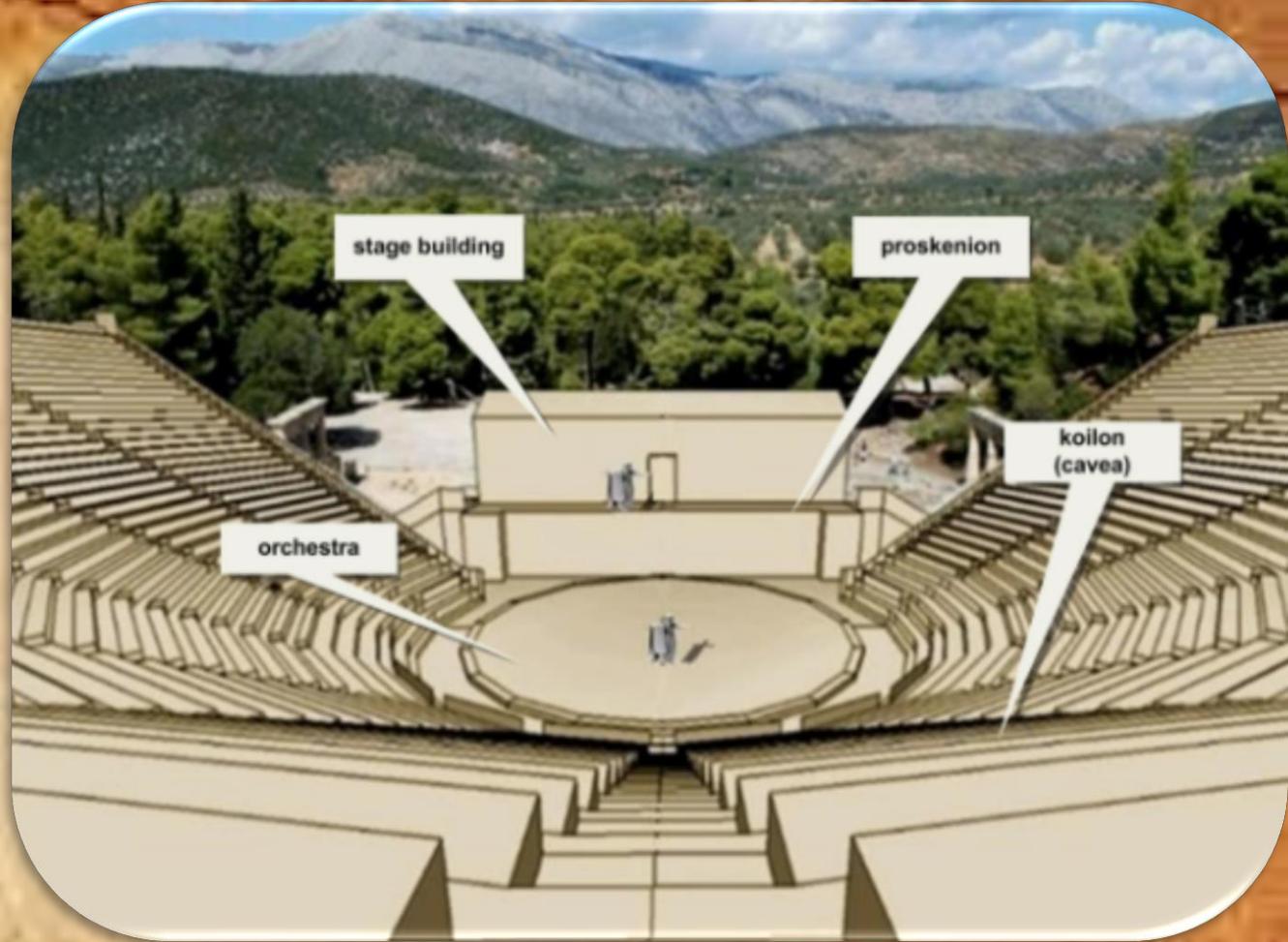
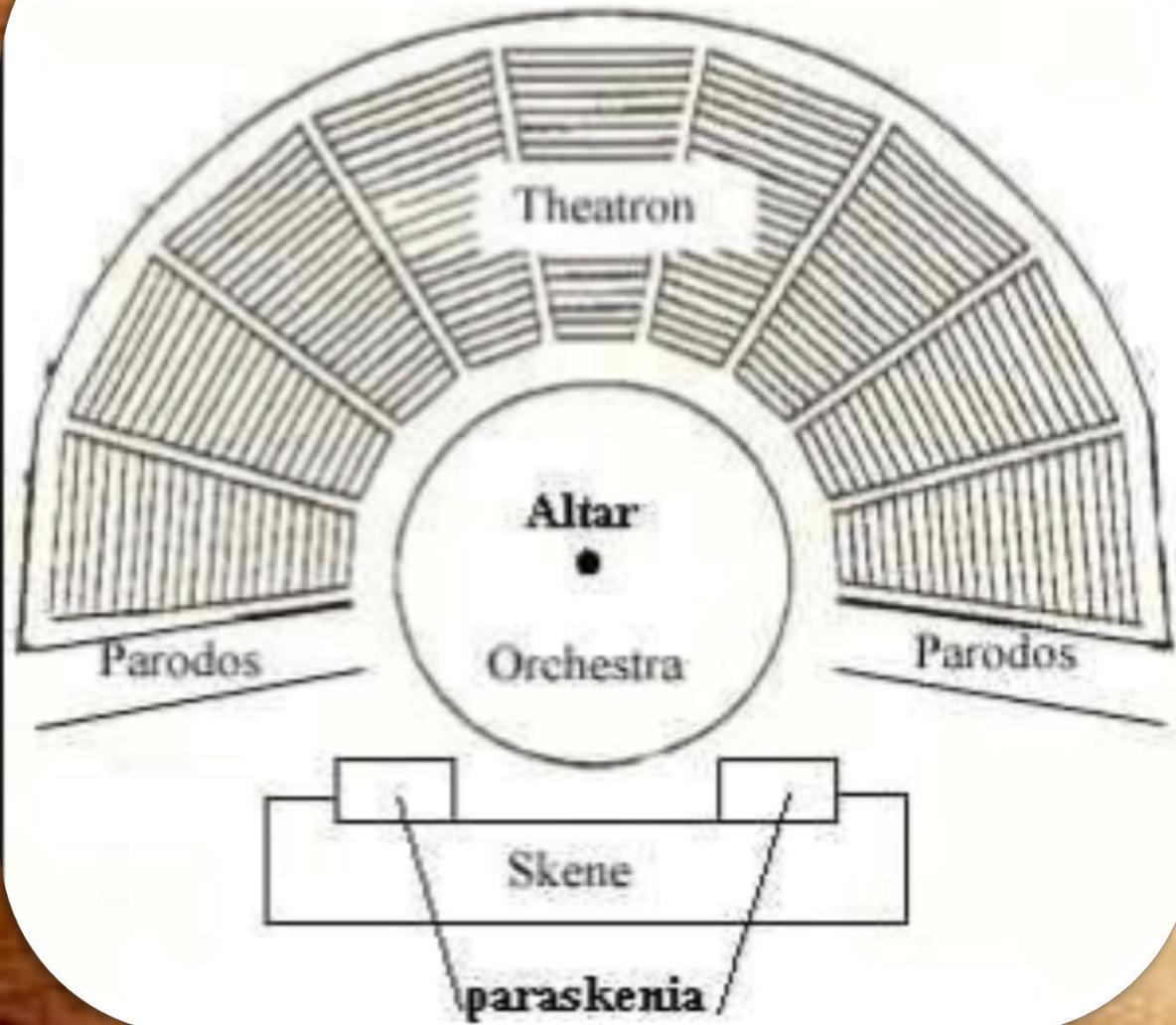
(Make sure to have a look at the many videos of Epidaurus Acoustics on YouTube)

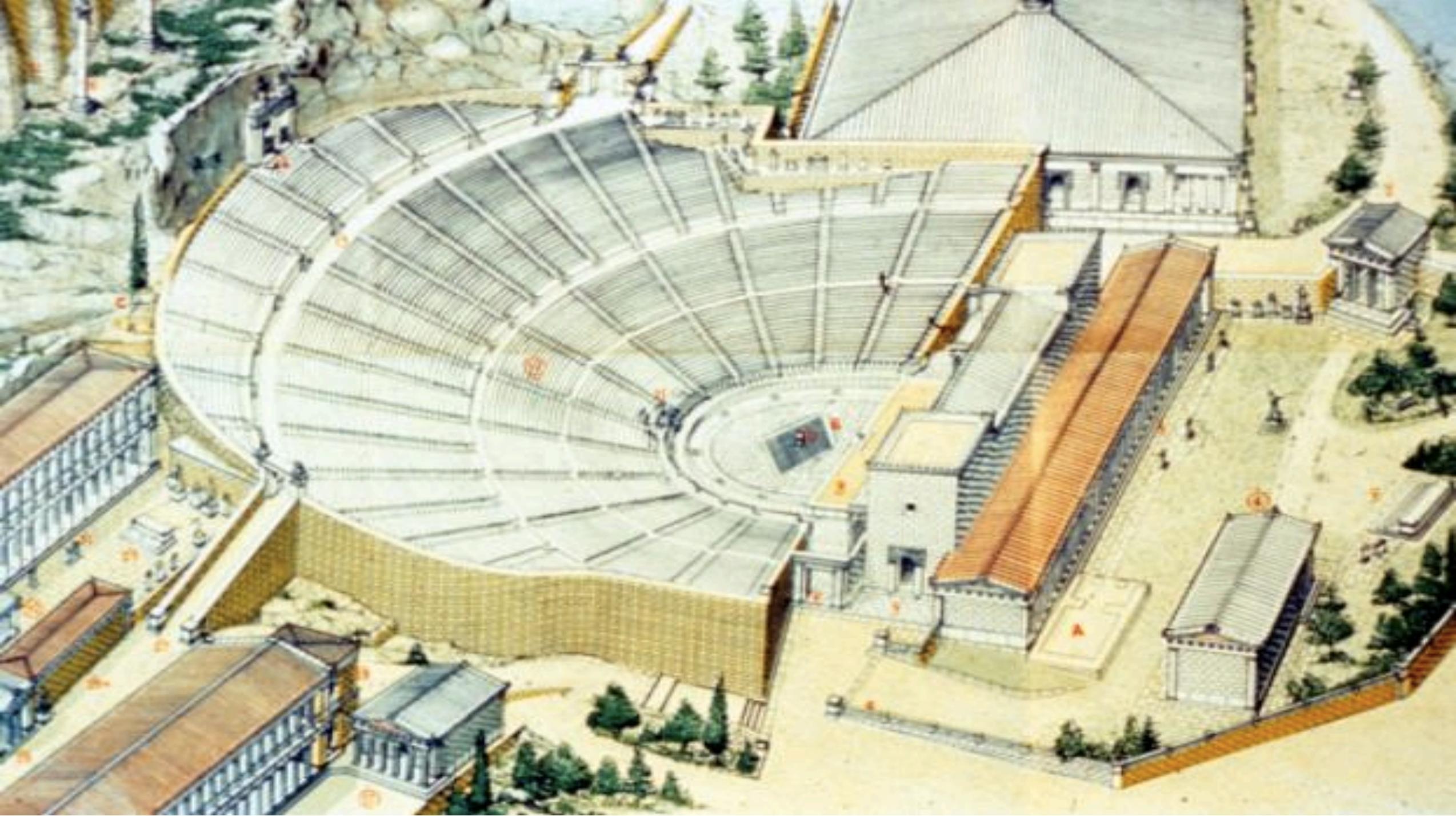


Reconstruction - Epidaurus



# Parts of a Greek Theater



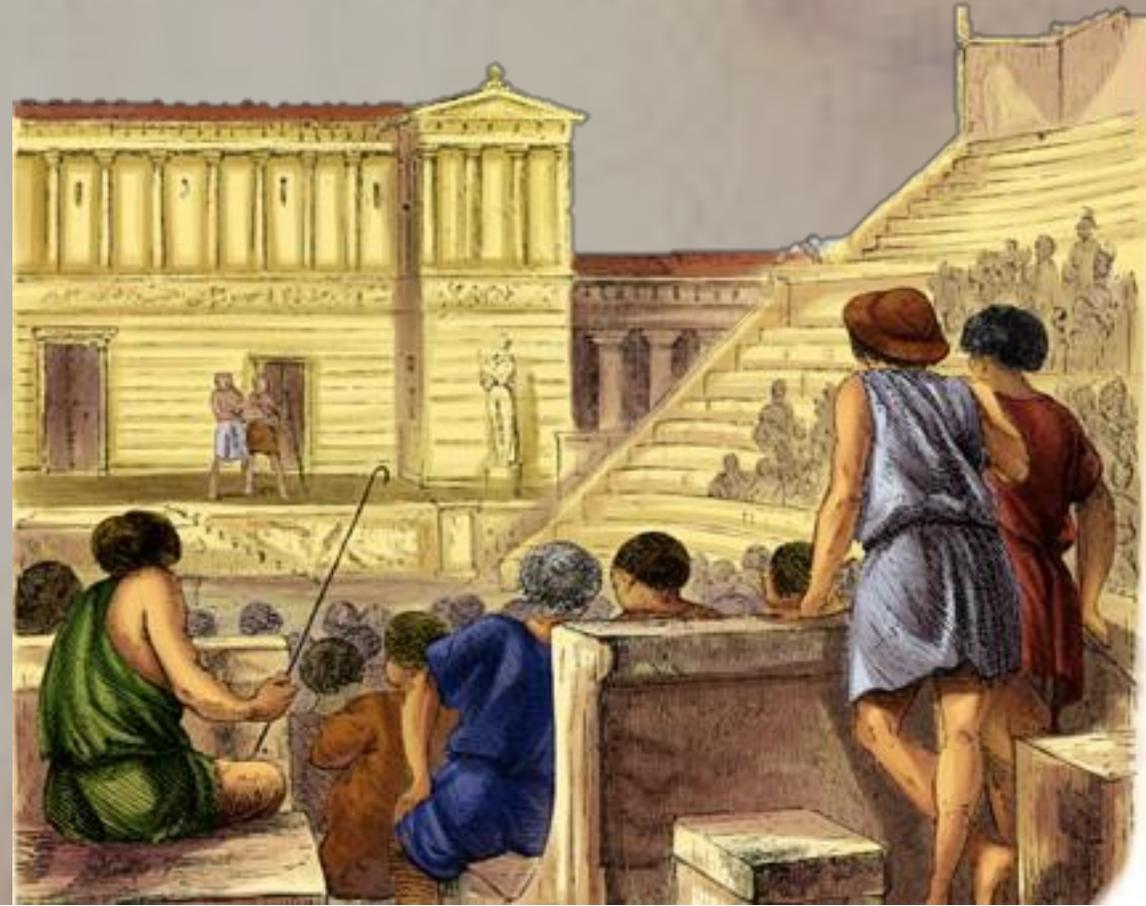


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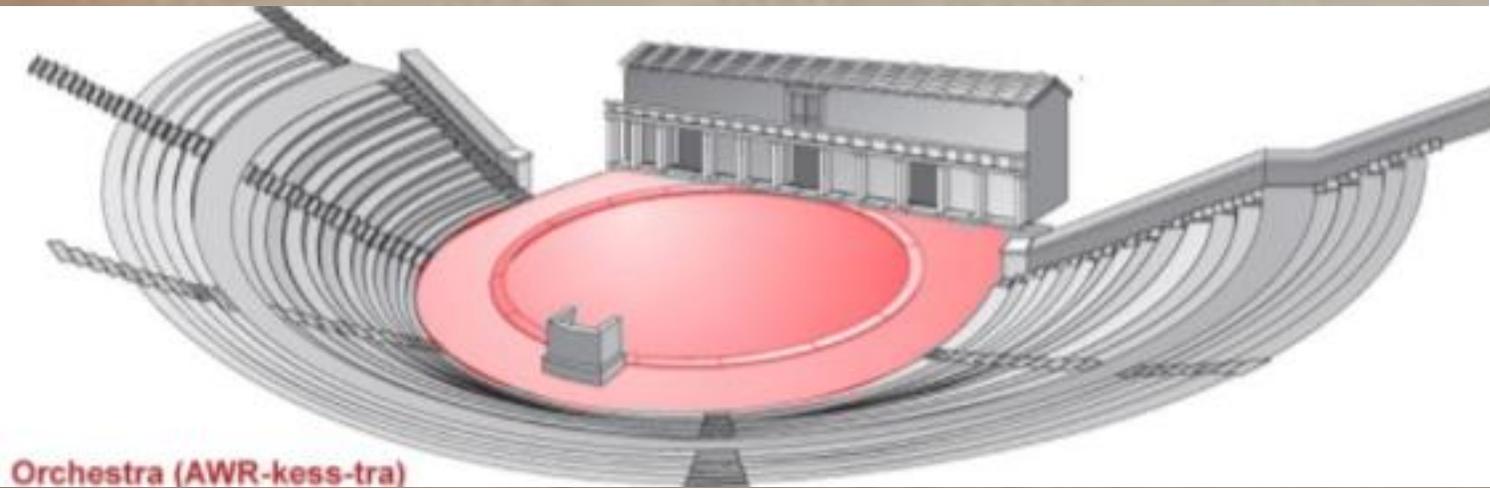
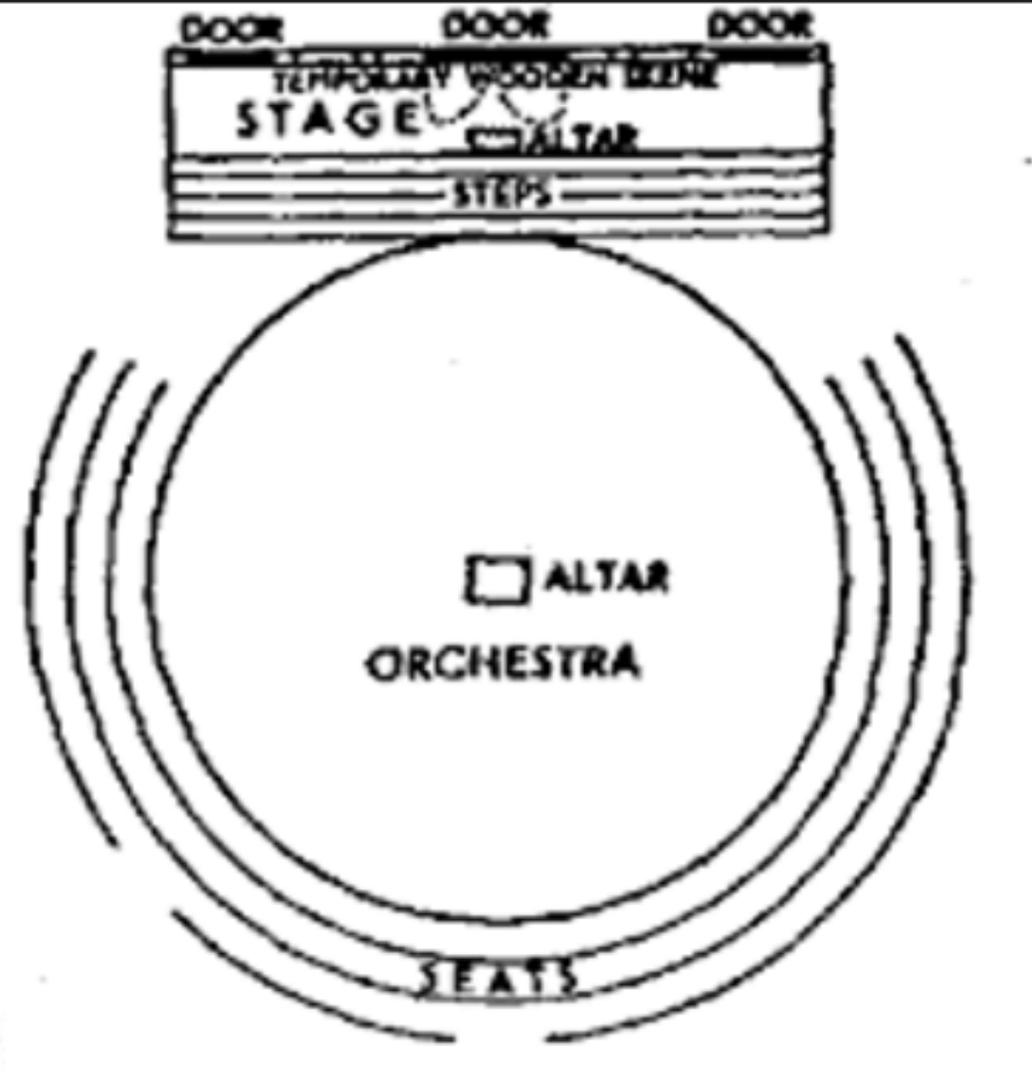
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Orchestra (AWR-kess-tra)



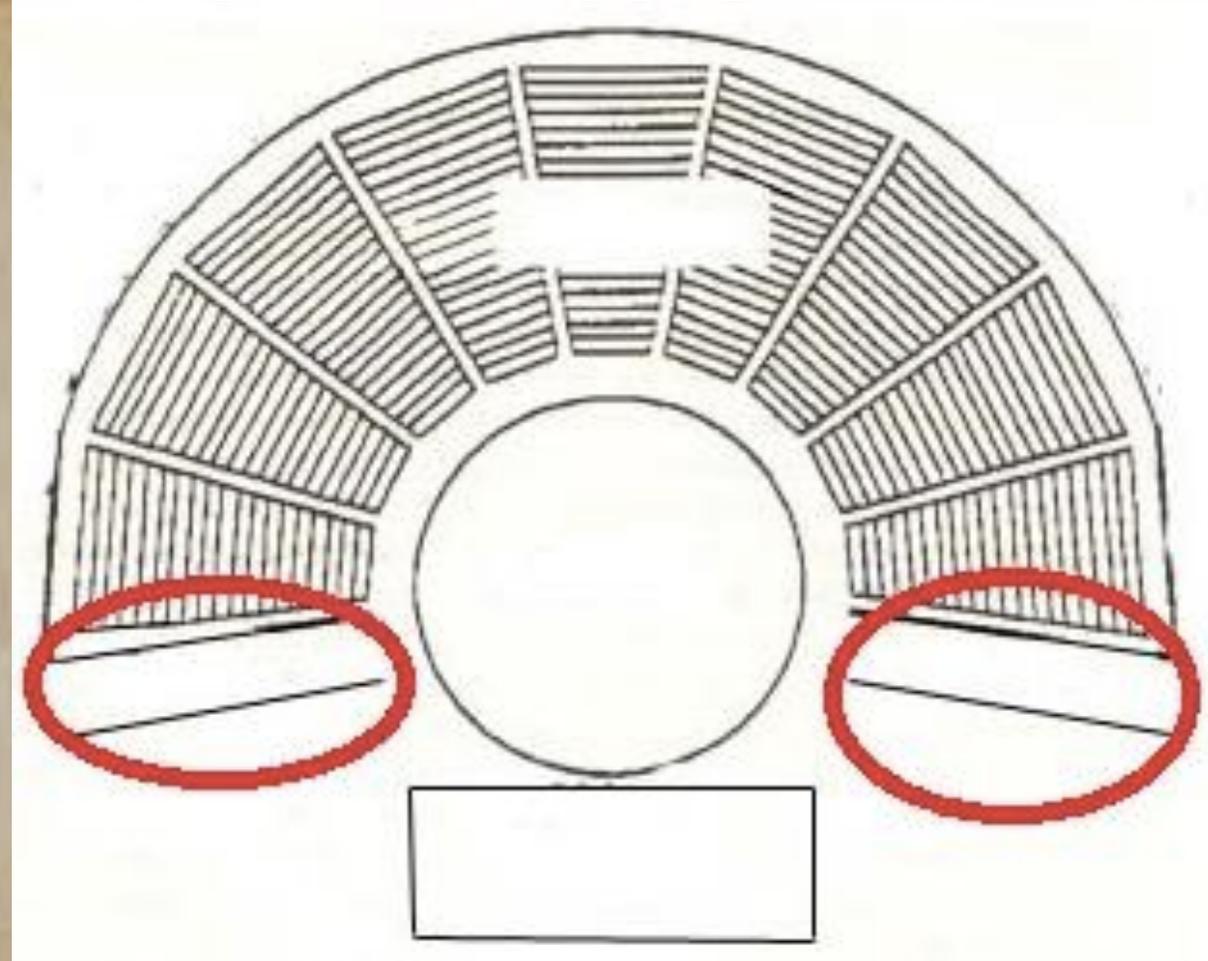
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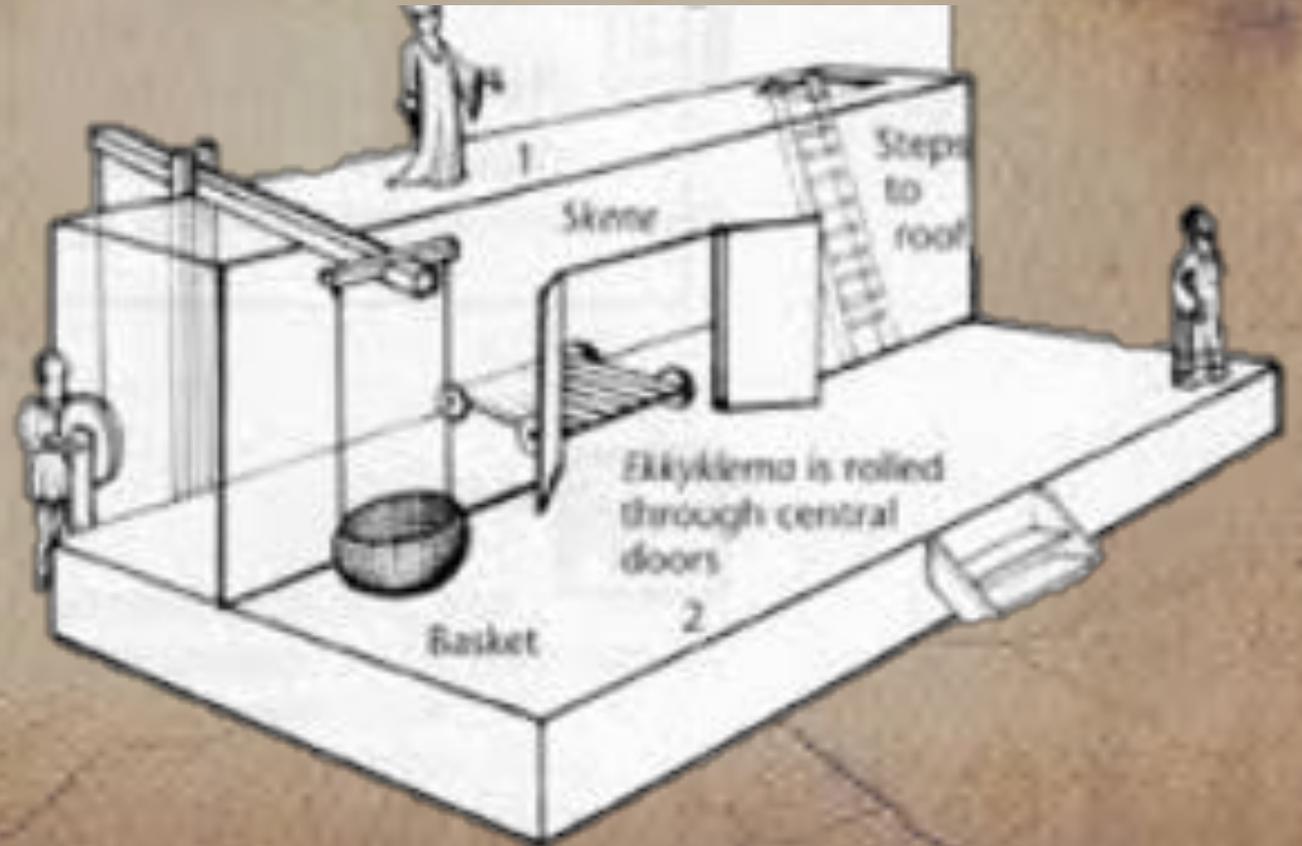
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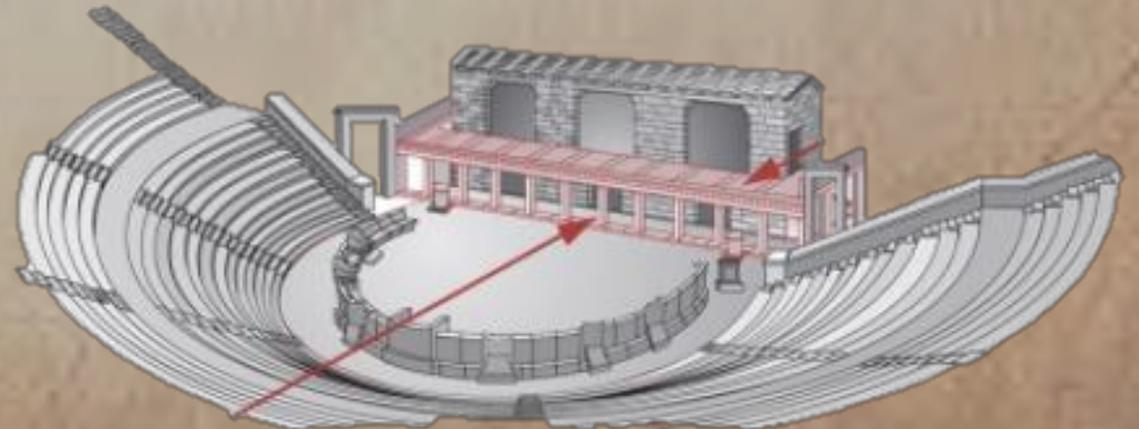
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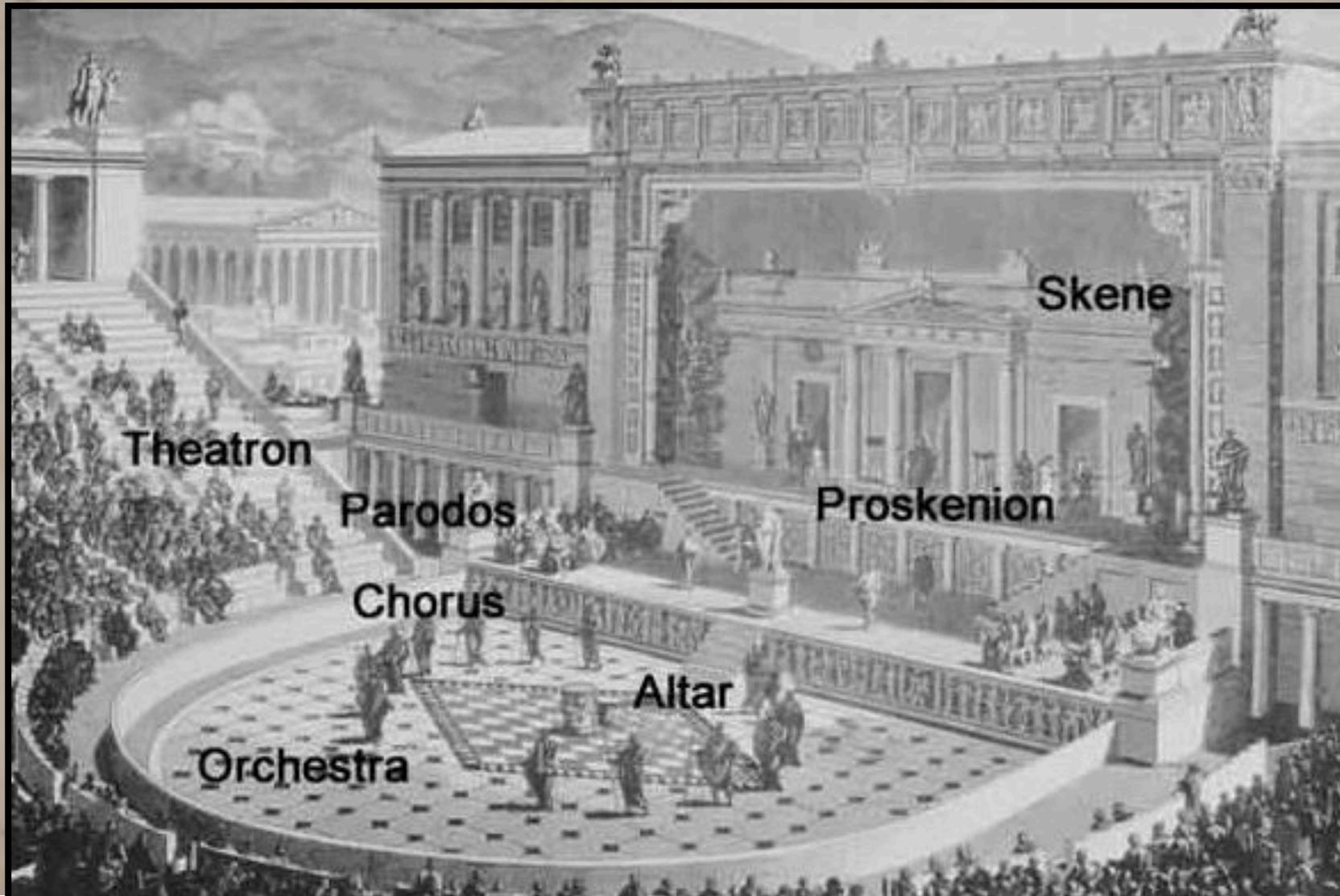
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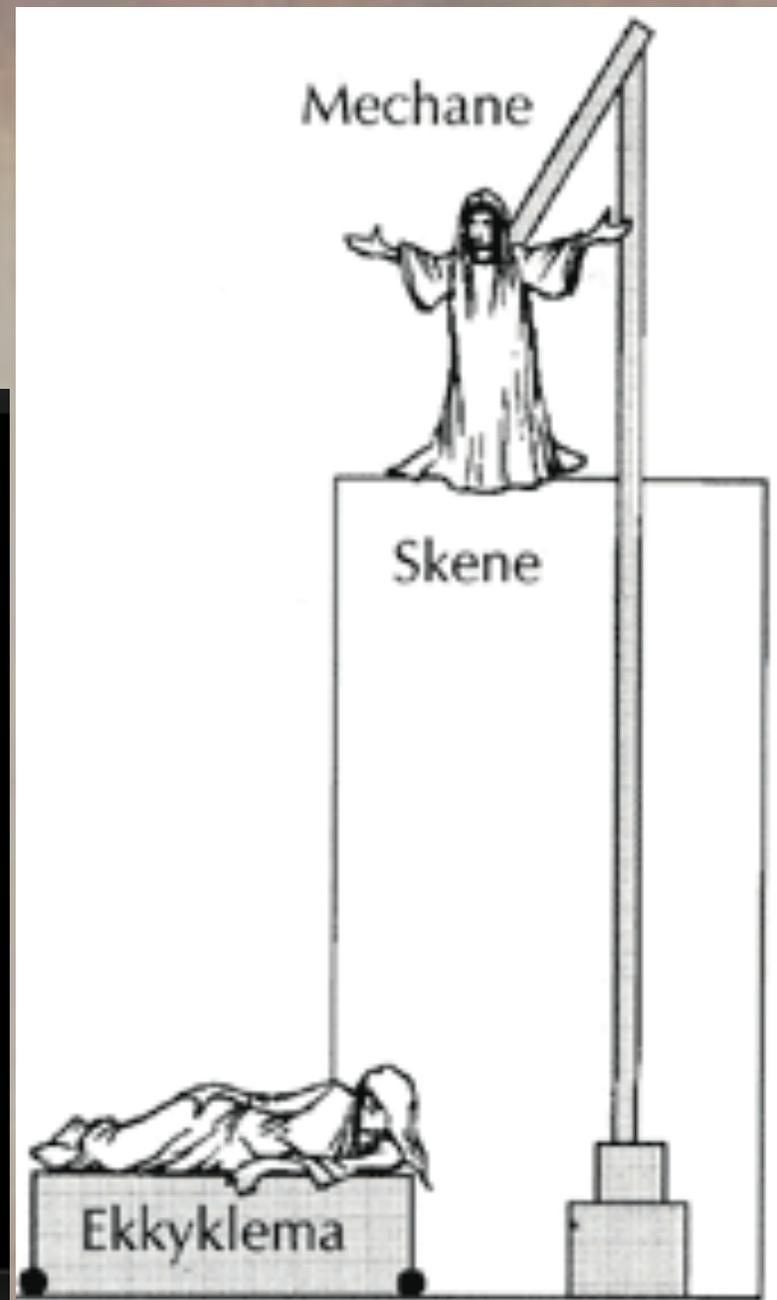


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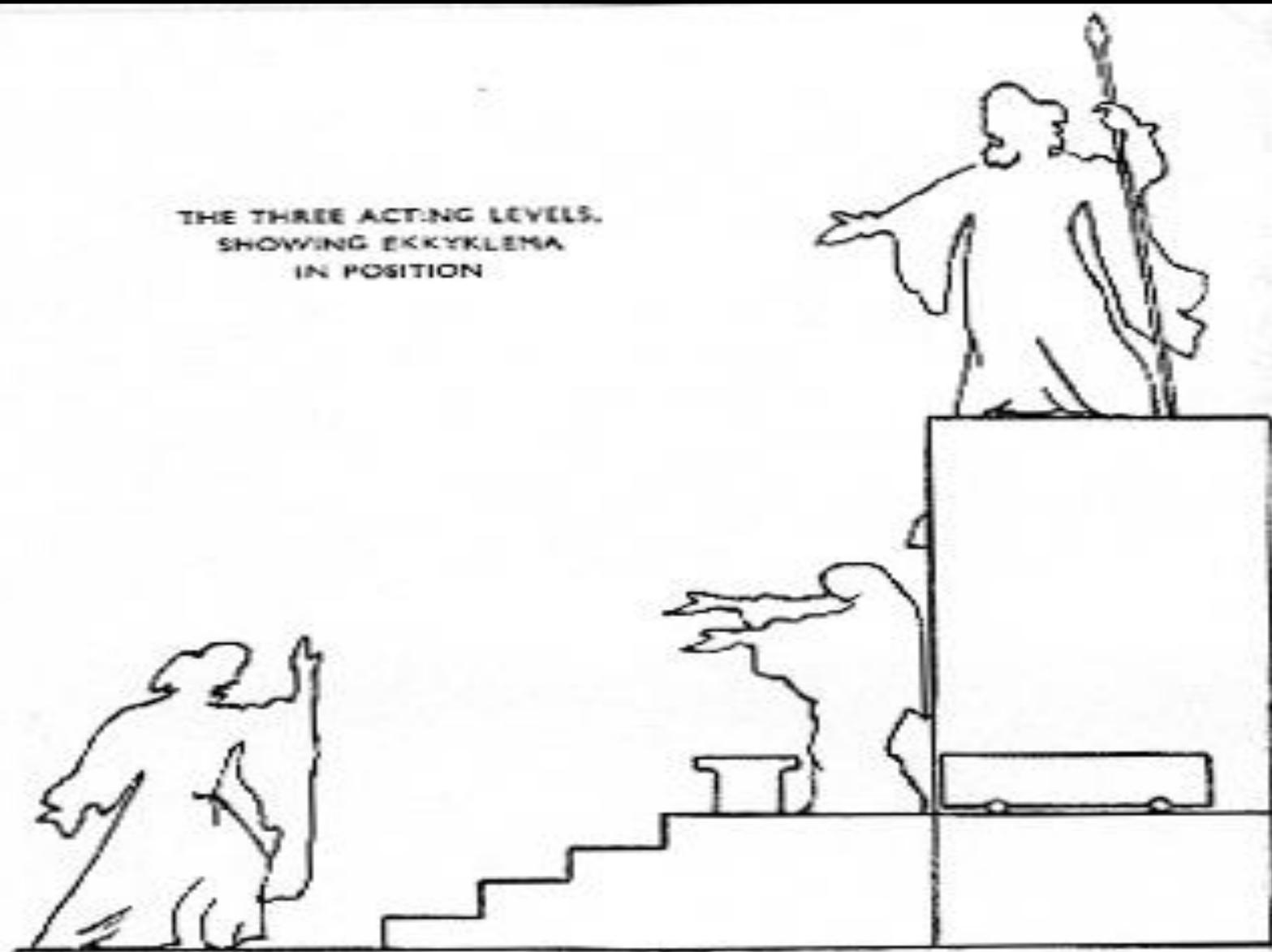


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THE THREE ACTING LEVELS,  
SHOWING EKKYKLENA  
IN POSITION



## *Special Effects*

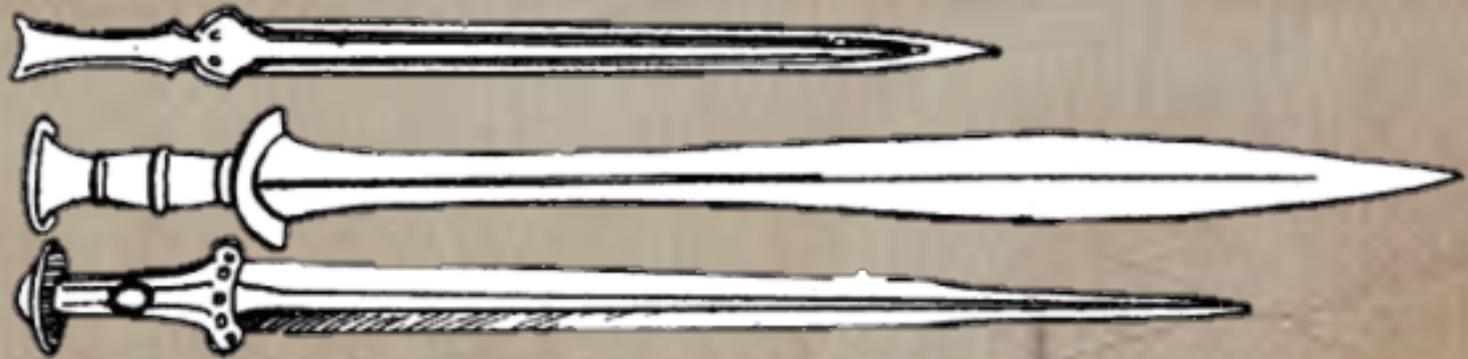
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Comic choristers dressed as horses and riders.

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*Costumes*





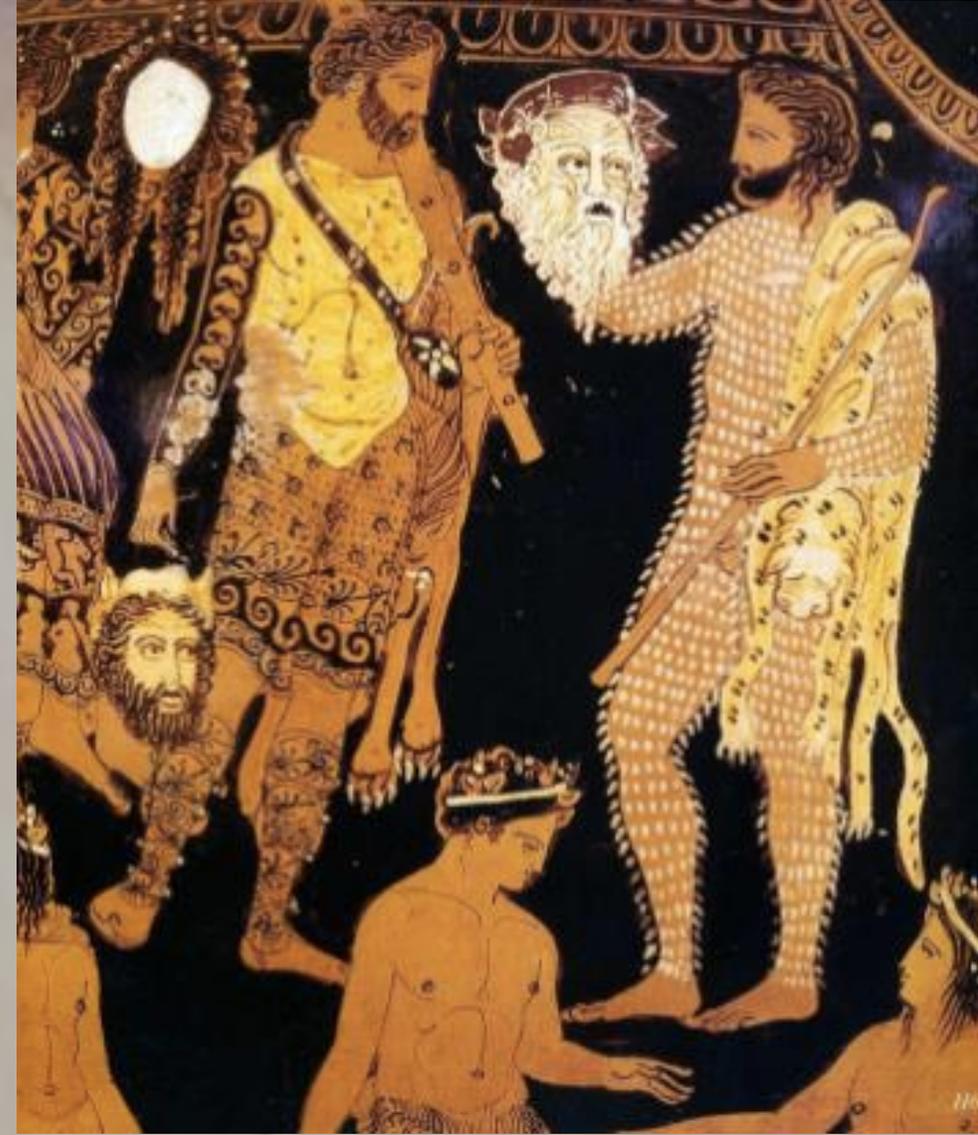
**Ancient Greece**



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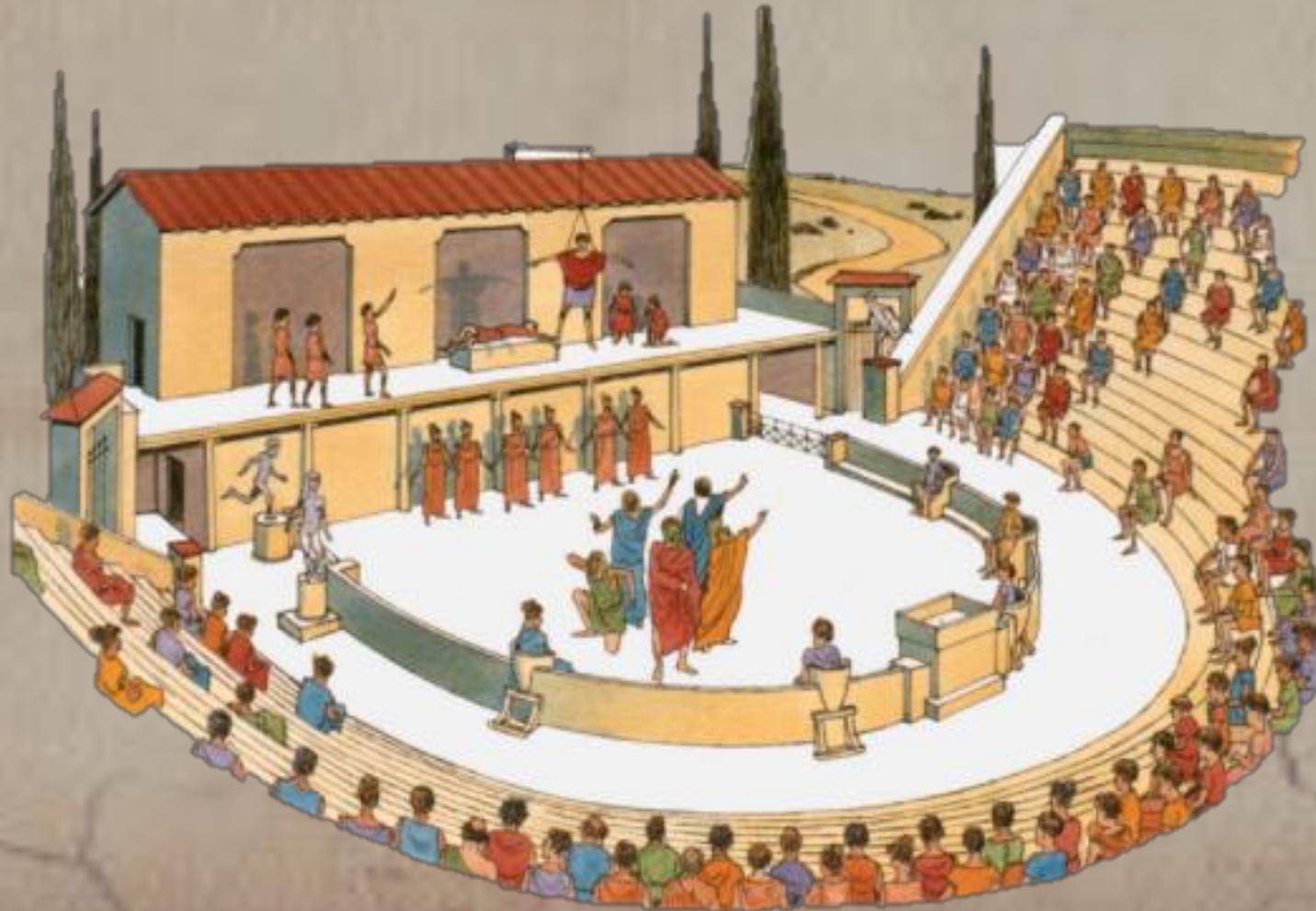
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### TASK ONE: WAR AND DESTRUCTION

This play is a tragedy that focuses upon the horrors of war and its aftermath. Poseidon's opening speech explains the devastation and ruin that the city faced after the Greek armies invaded and won.

•Pick out all the quotes that you can from Poseidon's opening speech which conveys the idea of a city in chaos or a city left to face the destruction of war.

### TASK TWO: MYTHS AND THE GODS

Poseidon is himself a god; he is god of the sea. In this speech he talks about how he is about to leave the city.

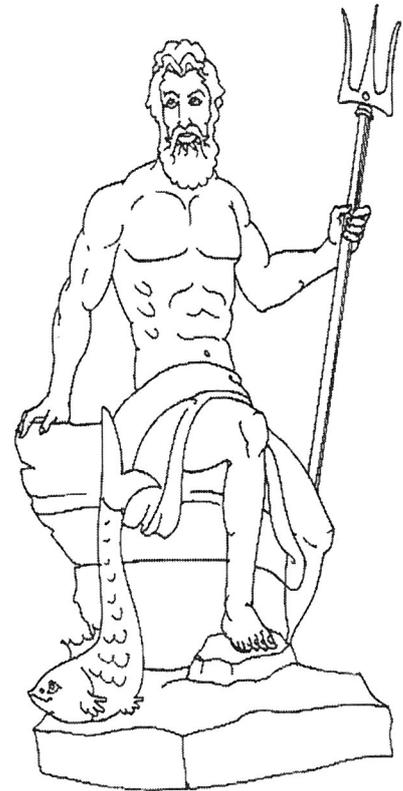
Euripides based this play upon myths and legends about the Trojan War. It is believed that this war took place between 1350 and 1100 BC. It was believed that gods and goddesses took sides during the war and even got involved in battles, determining which sides would win. Poseidon sided with the defeated Trojans in this war.

•Pick out all of the quotes which make reference to the gods or their supposed involvement within the war.

### TASK THREE: WOMEN

It seems that the main victims in the aftermath of war seem to be the females-they are to become the slaves of the victorious Greeks. In this opening speech, Poseidon's speech is sombre and serious as he reflects upon the anxiety and sorrow of the women as they await their Greek masters' arrival.

•Pick out all of Poseidon's quotes which describe the women who are suffering.



## Euripides' depictions of the gods in his drama:

Euripides was a playwright who became famous for his unconventional or different views that he conveyed within his drama, especially because of his beliefs about gods. Euripides' beliefs and ideas challenged the beliefs of the time. Whereas many people during this time would have believed that the gods could control people's lives and destinies, Euripides believed that human life was also dominated by chance. His stories placed more emphasis on people being in charge of their own destiny than gods having full control over human affairs. This would have been shocking to many people at the time and it often earned him much criticism.

When depicting the gods, Euripides would sometimes show them as cruel or unpredictable rather than simply as heroic and powerful. He would often choose to focus on the everyday or commonplace rather than fill his drama with elevated gods. It is interesting, therefore, that at the beginning of *The Trojan Women*, he chose to have the gods departing and leaving the humans. Poseidon says, 'I am abandoning' Troy and he leaves the humans to make their own decisions, 'fare you well,' he says. It was not that he did not believe in the gods, just that he felt that humans must accept that the actions gods perform are beyond humans' control and humans must make their own choices and follow their own paths. Therefore, his tragedies were often less elevated and focused more upon common and ordinary people such as women or slaves.

Therefore, when staging this opening prologue, you may wish to exaggerate Poseidon's elevated status-perhaps fly him on to the stage. This will then greatly contrast the mortal, ordinary characters. Or, you may wish to do the opposite and lower Poseidon's status, perhaps make him seem more on a level with humans to reflect the fact that this playwright was more focused upon the ordinary aspects to life, than the elevated gods.

Ancient Greek theatres were much larger than those of today: some of the ancient theatres could accommodate audiences of more than 15000. Because of the large size, characters would need to be instantly recognisable because some spectators would be seated very far away from them. Therefore, when the dramas first became popular between 500 and 300 BC, the convention was for actors to wear specially crafted masks to make them more identifiable. Therefore, an actor playing the role of Poseidon in Euripides' day would have probably worn a mask. However, because today's audiences will be sat in a much more intimate venue, I would not need to use a mask to make him recognisable for audiences sat further away.

However, it is important that the character of Poseidon looks different to the other characters because he is a god. He needs to suggest this immortal, elevated status in contrast to the other humans. His presence on stage should suggest grandeur and mystery. Therefore, lighting could be utilised to ensure that the audience do not see how he arrives. In some versions of the play, the stage directions refer to the fact that he enters in darkness. This would be effective, his entrance should surprise the audience, a revolve on the stage could even be used which would show him to be a character who doesn't even have to move in order to appear in front of us.

The actor could then stand directly within a beam of light that is shining down above his head. This would create the effect of a pool of light around where he stands and would help achieve a sense of mystery. By lighting from above, rather than in front, we would also not see much of his facial features which again increases a sense of mystery to this role.

In comparison to today's theatre, the Ancient Greeks did not have the technology or equipment to create many special effects within their drama. However, they did use some equipment. For example, the *deus ex machina*, or "god out of the machine," was a crane used to lower an actor into the scene. (The actor who played a god might descend into the action to solve a problem.) Later productions introduced the *eccyclema*. This was a wheeled platform that carted furniture or props onto the stage. Ancient Greeks were also not allowed to show violent or gory acts on stage, therefore this cart would be used to make suggestions (such as the outcome of a battle by wheeling on a dead body to show a battle that has occurred). In this opening

prologue, a wheeled cart could be on stage with bodies heaped on it to symbolise the fallen within the battle. Poseidon could make an action with his fingers if he wants this cart to move away from him and the cart could instantly move (being controlled by a remote control off stage)-it could appear as if he is able to control things in this mystical way.

Scenery was, at first, very basic in Ancient Greek times and some of the earliest dramas would not have used any scenery. Instead, they would rely upon the audience to use their imaginations or the playwright might use dialogue to describe the settings for the audience. This is clear in Poseidon's Prologue: Euripides is using this dialogue to set the scene of war and destruction, his language paints a picture: *'the sacred groves are desolate and the sanctuaries of the gods are awash with blood.'*

During the fifth century BC, skenes started to be used in Greek theatres. The skene was a type of hut where actors could go to change costume or they could store props inside it. It was placed just behind the acting area (facing the spectators) and would often have multiple exits and entrances that actors could use. Some skenes had painted walls which formed the first basic type of scenery within the Greek theatres. Images were painted onto the external walls and these images would help convey the location of the action for the audience. At the start of this prologue we see reference to the action being set. The skene therefore might serve as these tents in Euripides' day.

So, what started as a basic hut for costume change started to evolve into the first type of stage scenery and eventually became a background for the drama. If a character needed to appear as if they were high up, they could stand on top of the skene. As the skene became more central to the design of the drama, its design started to change and even became more ornate. Instead of simply using a small wooden hut, some productions developed two storey buildings and some were even decorated with columns, using many doors to enable different entrances and exits for the actors. By the end of the fifth century BC, the wooden skene was replaced by a stone structure which became integral to the acting space. In terms of my production, I would also use a 'skene' type construction which could be used to signify different settings, in this case it could have canvas draped over it to signify the tents.

1. The context of this speech is very important. The speech is delivered after a ten year war has ended. Poseidon has come to his once 'favourite city,' Troy and is surveying the carnage. How would you convey the carnage through your set design? How would you reflect his feelings about what has happened to the city through his movements or how he speaks?

2. Find three individual lines or words which you think an actor should concentrate upon that reveal Poseidon's horror and dismay at the carnage. Could he accompany each of these lines with either a facial expression or gesture?

3. Find three words or phrases an actor should concentrate upon which reveal Poseidon's annoyance towards the Greek brutality. How would he deliver such lines? Could he use actions to reveal annoyance? Or volume?

4. Pick out a line or two which could reveal Poseidon's own personal feelings of defeat. How would you deliver these lines?

5. How does this character move around the stage? Remember, he is a god and so does have an elevated status. Would you use lighting to convey the idea that the gods occupy a different world/space compared to the human characters? Will you use any technical equipment on your stage, anything that moves, or even an eccyclema? Or, will you make use of platforms to suggest they have an elevated position? Should his costume convey power and status?

6. Pick out three words which Poseidon uses to demonstrate how much the Trojans have suffered. How would he say these words? Is he sympathetic towards them? Remember, he is abandoning them. Does he show sympathy towards Hecuba?

7. Poseidon's speech ends with almost a moral warning to the audience about war. How would the actor conclude this speech? Would he use a clear, accusatory tone or a tone of dismay and disappointment? Is the speech being delivered direct to the audience?

8. Positioning is an important aspect to consider when approaching this monologue. The audience are given divine understanding in this opening-they know information that the other characters do not. Will you use positioning to make the gods closer to the audience?



\* Before starting use Google to find out what/ who/ where of the bold words you will not have heard before. These may be gods, people, places and the script will make more sense if you find out what they mean \*

### THE TROJAN WOMEN

*The action is set before the city of Troy in front of the tents where the captive Trojan Women have been quartered. HECUBA lies on the ground. (Thought the opening scene is between the gods – Hecuba seems unaware of their presence)*

#### **Poseidon:**

I am Poseidon. I have come, leaving the salt depths of the **Aegean sea** where the dancing **Nereids** twirl their steps so gracefully. For since the time when **Phoebus** and I set up the stone circle of towers around this land of Troy with our straight rules, good will towards the city of the **Phrygians** has never left my heart. Now it is smoking.

**Sacked** by the **Argive** Spear, it lies in ruins. For through **Pallas'** schemes, **Epeius**, a **Phocian** from **Parnassus**, fashioned a horse pregnant with arms and sent its deadly weight inside the towers. [As a result it will be called by future generations the Wooden Horse, fraught with hidden spears of wood.] The sacred groves are desolate and the sanctuaries of the gods are awash with blood. And **Priam** has fallen in death near the steps below the altar of **Zeus** the Protector of the Hearth. Masses of gold and Trojan spoils are being sent to the ships of the **Achaean**s. They are waiting for a fair wind to blow from the stern so that after the ten long years they can have the joy of looking upon their wives and children – the Greeks who made war upon this city.

I am abandoning famous **Ilium** and my altars, since I have been worsted by the Argive goddess **Hera** and by **Athena**, who joined forces to destroy the Phrygians. For whenever the curse of desolation lays hold on a city, religion grows sickly and there is no will to honour the gods. **Scamander** echoes with many a howl from female captives as they are allotted their masters. And some the **Arcadian** people have won, some the **Thessalians**, some the **Athenian** chiefs, descendants of **Theseus**. But all the Trojan women who have not been allotted are in their tents. They have been picked out for the foremost men of the army, and with them is **Spartan** daughter of **Tyndareus**, Helen, rightly classed as a prisoner.

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And if anyone wishes to look upon this unhappy woman (*Poseidon points to Hecuba*), *here* is **Hecuba** lying in front of the entrance, shedding many a tear for many reasons. She is unaware that her daughter **Polyxena** has been killed in a pitiable sacrifice at **Achilles'** tomb. **Priam** and her children are no more. As for virgin **Cassandra** whom lord **Apollo** left mad, **Agamemnon** will abandon piety and the wish of the god and bed her by force in an unlawful marriage.

Well then, dear city with your finely squared towers, you that were once so happy, fare you well. If Pallas, the daughter of Zeus, had not destroyed you, you would still be standing on your foundations.