



Seeds

Title	<p>MEDEA</p> <p>Theatre activity by Liceo Scientifico Marconi</p>
Description	<p>The problem of protecting biological and cultural diversity, which are strictly connected, according to Garrett Hardin definition in “The Tragedy of the Commons” is one of those problems that cannot have a technical answer.</p> <p>The solution does not come from technological innovation or science progress, on the contrary it requests a signifying ethical and behavioral change.</p> <p>So, in order to educate about biodiversity, we need an empathetic approach: transmitting theoretical info is not enough, it is mandatory to involve students in research and creative re-elaboration processes, with a cooperative and inclusive learning approach.</p> <p>In this perspective, the theatre laboratory could act as a tool for debating and sharing: since ancient times, in fact, theatre has been a privileged special place, for society to debate its dominant values highlighting their peculiarities, limits and contradictions. The theatre lab includes a first part dedicated to the reading and deepening of different aspects of cultural and biological diversity, through the reading of cogent texts, which will be collectively re-elaborated later, when a script is produced that will finally go on stage.</p> <p>The lab is managed by the teachers helped by an expert in theatre direction</p>
Materials and Time needed	<p>Books: Euripide, Medea Christa Wolf, Medea. Voices.</p> <p>Duration: One whole school year or at least one term</p> <p>Working group: One complete class or about 20 students of different classes; the external expert</p>
Instructions	<p>Speaking of diversity, Medea is a powerful and evocative character: she’s the main dark character of Euripides tragedy, the mother who kills her children in order to punish Jason. She is the repository of an ancient knowledge and a well known priestess, famous for her knowledge and healing capacities. She is the daughter of Aeete – king of Colchis, the land where the legendary Golden Fleece is kept. Jason and the Argonauts are looking for the Golden Fleece and when Medea falls in love with the hero she really helps him overcoming all the difficulties for conquering it.</p> <p>Medea and Jason together arrive in Corinth, the golden city, where Medea - as a foreigner in a foreign country - confronts with a very different society. Medea comes from a culture where in women lies the responsibility of the strong bond with Earth and they have the ability of building a profound relationship with their environment. In Corinth, pale and opportunist Jason throws away all the eternal</p>

love promises and repudiate Medea to marry king's Creon daughter. Besides the personal happenings, Medea has to face difference and otherness. The tragedy in fact proposes a contrast between two different cultures; the Corinthian one, considered to be more modern and civilized, and the one from Colchis, more barbaric and underdeveloped. At the end of a long internal conflict, Medea kills her own children; she's not simply seized by a revenge fury, but also follows a clear-headed project, not to let her children be outraged.

Euripides regards revenge as a statement of the woman's dignity, a claim of free will (for better or for worse) even though this corresponds to a self-destruction process.

Medea is a controversial character, always and continuously revisited.

In 1966 Christa Wolf re-wrote the story of this ancient heroine in her novel *Medea. Voices*. For the author it's not even thinkable that Medea, the healer, could have killed her children; Christa Wolf considers Medea as an example of the transition from a matriarchal model, rejecting violence, to the patriarchal one, founded upon the centrality of power and the role of richness. In this way, Medea becomes the occasion for reflecting over the female difference. The Colchis sorceress' culture feeds on the mysterious rituals of body and fertility, connected to values such as conception and childbirth. Medea discovers the horrible death and violence secret over which Corinth society lays its foundations. The bright, crystal rationality that Greek people are so proud of, belongs to a culture that raped the knowledge of body and Earth. Medea considers existence as part of the organic reality of life and cannot understand its reduction to a layout that simplifies multiplicity and complexity.

Medea is a classical text but always particularly signifying and permanently actual. The classics offer a never-ending cultural richness, they satisfy a thirst for words that lay foundations, they favor debate about essential subjects for the community, such as respect and safeguarding of diversity.

Medea's barbaric look, in Christa Wolf novel, offers the starting point to a critical analysis of the occidental society, where everything is flattened to a purely economic dimension, exclusively based on production and consumption.