



THREE TYPES OF PLAYS

The Greeks invented three types of plays that are still the basis for how we think about theatre today. In fact, the philosopher Aristotle will be our main source for vocabulary on dramatic terms. We'll learn more about him very soon. In the meantime, the 3 types of plays...



TRAGEDY

This was the first type of play invented. In a tragedy, one or more major characters always suffers a disastrous end. Sometimes, tragedies hold lessons about hubris, or human pride taken too far.

In Greek drama, the chorus or the singers told the story, not the actors. Actors used gestures and masks to act out their parts. Actors changed roles by changing masks.

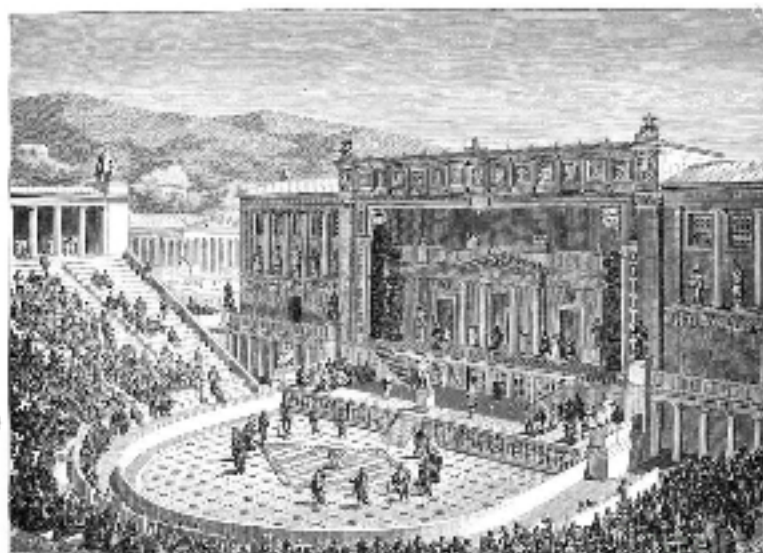
COMEDY

Comedies were invented next. It was said that the gods did not enjoy so many sad stories and preferred a little praise as well as sorrow. A comedy was just a play with a non-disastrous ending. Usually, comedies weren't even actually funny- they were just not sad.



SAD NEWS:

Greek women did not get to share the stage with Greek men



THEATRE OF EPIDOURA, 4TH CENTURY BC

SATIRE

Satires were plays that made fun of mortal legends and of real people. In ancient Greece, you did not poke fun at the gods - not in a play, not in real life, not ever. But you could poke fun at your leaders. And that was uniquely Greek.

Aristophanes remains one of the best known satirists in history. His play, 'The Clouds', led leaders to consider reform.

Probably the most famous actor in ancient Greece was a man named Thespis. Actors today are called thespians in his honor.

