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The audience of ancient Rome theater

Theater has been around for a long time and can be traced back to the 6th century B.C. the ancient Greeks started the major practice of theater, but it took the ancient Romans to take over for it to start being one of the biggest events of that time. Roman theater was highly successful and drew a massive audience that would come from their homes in other country's just to see Roman performances and participate in their festivals. This went on for 500 years, entail Rome fell by the Ottoman Empire.

Before this time of the fall of Rome people were seeing these plays and going to this festival every chance there was one. But the question is why they are coming to all these events and what is their motivation to travel these long distances just for something that would have to sit and watch. To answer this question, I will have to look at the people going to these plays and festivals and look at their everyday life. Is there exciting, how do they live, are they poor or rich and what did they have for entertainment that they can get from their hometown or city.

How people lived was based on money and how much money they had or made. Also, if they were a citizen of Rome. There were three categories of social class that were in places at this time, and they were, Patricians, Plebeians, and slave's these classes will determine how a person was living though out that time based on their money just like how we classified social class today.

Patricians were the richest people you could meet and were also known as the ruling class. A person had to be very lucky to be this class because only a few families were a patrician. Also, if a person were in the patrician's class, they would have held all the power over the lower classes. This class lifestyle would go like this, the oldest male would be the head of the family because Romans honored old age and respected them highly. There was not the same for women because they did not have rights currently. The household would usually have slaves if the head of the house could afford them, and if you could not afford slaves, the women would do everything that was needed to be done with the house.

If a person was a patrician, their life would typically go like this depending on what gender they were. For males, they would receive a good education that would heavily focus on subjects that a sophisticated noble would need to know for his career like history and geography, some mythology and important languages. As a child, a kid would have their own bedroom and plenty of toys to play with. The slaves would care for the child by taking them to school if they were a male, carrying their books and doing whatever they ask. Males born into this class would not have to join the military but can become emperor, but this job comes with its consequences. If an emperor loss too many battles they would lose their house, their lands and sometimes their life. If a male did not go down this path, their life would be easy because all they would do is get up every day and go and meet with other patricians or write letters to them and then go to the baths with their friends and then come home to a cooked meal and parties.

For a woman who is a patrician, their life would be a little different. Since women did have no rights, so they could not vote or hold political office. Almost all women were lacking an education, only somewhere lucky to get one. For a woman no matter what class they fall in are expected to have children and raise them. The daily life of a patrician woman would be as easy

as the males, but mostly stayed at their home. If the family had slaves, the women would have to do little too none to get the husband ready to leave the house and the house would be taking care of by the slaves. While all the slaves do the work, the rest are working on the women of the house and the rest of the slaves would tend to the women's needs to get ready for the rest of the day. For a woman's remaining hours of the day, they would socialize and plan for their next entertainment with their friends.

Plebeians were all the rest of the citizens of Rome who were not born or luck to be wealthy, but even though they did not get that pleasure, they still got by. If a person was in this class, they would not be able to be a senate or be any part of public offices, but they could be in the military. If a person were this social class you would have some education but only get the basics like, learn to read, writing and basic math. Where a typical family would live would be apartments, and they're not like the apartments that are available to people today. These apartments would have no kitchens, and everybody who lived in one had to go to restaurants or bars to get their food that was already cooked. Children would not have a bed but would have to sleep on the floor, but if they did get a bed they would have to share with their brothers and sisters or their parents. The apartments would not have bathrooms in them, so the families would have to use a pot and then dumped out of a window on the streets. From them dumping their waste right outside, the streets were always not smelling very great. Also, the apartments were not built very good, so it was not unheard of the apartments collapsing.

The individual plebeians would have their roles to fill depending on that gender you are. For males, they would be the workers, and most of the jobs they had were jobs their parents had that they took over. The kinds of jobs that males would do were to be farmers, craftsmen, laborers, and soldiers. The women took care of the house and children they also could work but

there were not many, they could do like the men were. The women's job options women had been a wet nurse, actress, dancer or acrobat, prostitute, and midwife. If any gender chose to work, they would work for their rest of their days, so they could survive.

The bottom of the social classes are slaves. Slaves are the starting point for everyone if you were not boring in Rome or a citizen. Some slaves were citizens before, but had to sell their selves to a slaver to support their family. Most of the people living in Rome were slaves because of so many being captured in war from breaking the law as many times. Slaves were forced to work by their masters, but they could be set free by their master, most by buying their freedom but some by a say from their owner. If a slave was set free, they would be known as freedman but just because they're free they still could not hold office. The life of a slave would always be working, but how they were treated could go two ways. One way they could be treated was to be beaten and worked to entail they die, or they could be treated like family. Slaves were very important to people and their value was very high. Slaves could also get paid by their masters, since they don't have much time in the day to work for someone other than their master. All in all, if a person were a slave, they would have to just hope for the best and try to not get killed.

There were a lot of people in Rome and as I find out a lot of people lived very difficult lives that looked like it was never going to get better. People started to realize that and were getting very tired of how they were living, mostly the Plebeians and slaves. The ones in power started to see this and wanted to come up with a plan or distraction to help keep the peace of the citizens of Rome and not upraise against the empire. This allowed people to watch plays, chariot races and attended festivals for free no matter what class you are classified as. Since most of the population in Rome and other countries were the lower classes, many people came to this event and enjoyed them a lot. When this option was becoming a big success, the Romans decided to

build a permanent theater because before there were portable stages that would be moved around Rome on a cart. This portable theater was used for a long-time until the first theater was built called the Theater of Pompey in 55 BC, holding 20 thousand people. Theaters were being built bigger and bigger throughout the later years and reaching a capacity of 80 thousand people. The theater also became comfier for the audience, where with the mobile theater's people had to either stand or bring their chairs or stools. Bigger theaters also made it possible to put on better plays by getting the audience more into the world they wanted them to be in, and it gave the actors and directors more space to work with.

The Romans that came to these plays and events were giving a great experience, and they enjoyed them, but they could not do whatever they wanted and had to respect the venue they were at and follow the rules that were set. The rules of the theater were not written anywhere but were told to the audience before the show started. A speaker would come out and get the audience's attention and say that he wants the spectators to be comfy and to enjoy the play, and then lay out the rules. This is what Beacham stated the speakers would say to the audience," Let no ripe whore sit on the stage, no lictor or his rods make a sound, no usher amble about in front, or show anyone to his seat while an actor is onstage. Those who slept idly at home for too long, should now stand patiently or sleep moderately. No slaves should crowd in - let them either leave room for freemen or put up the cash for their freedom - otherwise, go home to avoid double trouble: a beating here and a whipping at home when their masters return and find things neglected. Let nurses look after their tiny tots at home - don't bring them to the show, lest the nurses go dry, and the kids die from hunger, or bleat for food like goats. Women should watch silently, laugh silently, curb their tuneful prattle, and take their babble home, so as not to plague their husbands both here and there". From this information, I can see what the owner of the

venue wanted out of the audience and hope that the words said would keep some peace during the show.

The statement above gives a lot of information on how people were divided at these events and how a successful show should go. Also, most of these rules were set because of the lack of technology and ways to get around the difficulties of performing in a big area. People could not talk while performances were going on because of how the voice could reach without amplification of the actor's voices. They did have a mask to be able to help with this problem, but it was not enough to fill all that space. Also, these rules made sure that just because this is a public event, it does not rule out the rules of social statues. People could not escape this no matter where they were in Rome, it was always a big deal.

Now that I know the rules of Rome theater, where are these people sitting, deepening on their class? If a person had a small influence and low money, they would have to sit on the tallest tier of the theater. The good would be they could see pretty well and the bad will be is they would not be able to hear much of what is being said depending on how big the theater is and if the theater was massive all they will not be able to see much of the actors. Also, they would have to sit on wooden seats that were mostly not very comfy. If a person had money and bigger influence, they would get to seat at the lower tier of the theater and get a great view and will be able to hear the actors very well. The rest of the tiers would be filled by the general crowd that was in the middle of the social class. This was called the seating law, set in place if an honored guest came to see a show the stage would be lowered and have 2 short flights of steps added for them. By Augustus.

With plays going on almost every day and people coming from all nearby countries to see these plays, there comes a point to look at why is no other country getting this much attention

with their theater production. The reason is that when people go and see Roman plays, their expectations started to change what they wanted to see from plays. The audience became very familiar and satisfied with the plays Rome was putting on because it was different and had more lively plays than other century's plays they were showing. Even this was great for Rome's competition it did not work very well with the new playwrights trying to step in the works of Rome theater Audience were demanding an increase of violence and less thoughtful amusements. To appeal to their audience, the new playwrights turned to plays with slave protagonists and verbal violence and threats. These soon become the new way of how plays are written and played out in comedy and dramas.

Roman theater was very brutal, and sexual because things were taken very seriously to please the audience. If an actor was going to die in the play, he would say his last lines and then be swapped out by a condemned man and would actually be killed during the play. They would also engage in any sexuality on stage. These were the mimes who did this, and they were actors who would only play out their acts through gestures or interaction with each other. The mime shows that showed this was not considered the norm for the audience, but there was possibly a crowd watching these types of acts. Today if people saw or performed these types of acts they would get in major trouble or think the people putting these on are crazy and horrible people, but for the Romans, this was just another day at the theater to them.

Mimes were like but not liked by all the people in Rome. The church thought of the mimes very poorly and thought they were a threat to people's morals. They also saw theater as an institution based on paganism and ideas of hedonistic immorality. This is because they thought all theater was like the mimes acts and nothing else. The mimes did stand up for their self's and started to mock the church in their plays and performances. This brought amusement to the

people of Rome. This soon caused the church to act upon the mine's of actors and ban theater practices for christens. With this ban come rule changes to people who were Christians and that went to the church. They were not able to marry actors without them being baptized and were willing to give up acting forever. This also made it be no Christian could involve themselves into the theater, but could participate in church plays that were held and the church. This did not stop theater in Rome continued to be popular and practiced, but they had to not have performances on Sunday and could not dress up as nuns. They also could not be in the presence of Christian women or boys. These rules did not do anything because of the major days of Christian faith the churches were always empty, and the theaters were always full. The church still did not want to give up and went as far as trying to get the theater tor down, but it did not work, and the church would try to fight for the theater for many years to come.

Roman theater would go on for about 800 years, but in time all things must come to an end. The church was never successful when it came to ending theater in Rome, but there was another obstacle that did and that was the barbarians. The barbarians hated theater, but not because of the reason the church hated it. They attacked half of the Roman Empire, putting people and theater in a though spot for getting money to put on a play and attend. The theater was soon removed from Rome by the church, and the theaters were turned into barracks or government storehouses. There was still theater, but not in Rome, so people either had to go back to life without entertainment or travel to places that had a theater.

Even though Rome was stripped of their theater, the knowledge and performances were taking a passed on for generations. We today use many aspects of Rome theater, from types of drams and to stage mechanics. They are more modern than what the Romans had, but we would not possibly have them if this legendary time in history never happened. With everything we see

today, we can trace back to all ancient theater because of how much of an impact it made with people back then.

In ancient Rome, the theater was popular but not for only one reason but for many just as in why music, books, and tv is popular today. All these types of entertainment mean something to people and give them relief or a clam mind from the world they live and the thing they go through every day. Entertainment helps people live their fantasies or even help them create their own. Plays back then helped people in the same ways it helps people today and will continue to do this till the end of time.

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