Women In Ancient Greek Society Essay, Research Paper

Women in Ancient Greek Society

Homer and Greek society were strongly machista. The Odyssey presents stories in which men were heroes, won wars and governed countries while females were in second plan and didn t play any expressive role in society. Women were always servants of the men throughout the poem; their existence was based on serving the men in the book. Culture in ancient Greece suggested that women had lower status than men. The Greek Herodutos visited Egypt in 15 BC and found queer the way women were treated because he was used to the machista Greek society. He did not agree that by law, the queen should have greater power and honor than the king and that among private persons the wife should enjoy authority over her husband.

In the books of The Odyssey stories about men and the war are told. Men are always superior and women are never related to their conquests except by the Goddess Athena who helped Odysseus to return to Ithaca, his homeland. The female in ancient Greek history was excluded not only from social and political life but also from the world of reason and love. Women had no formal education, female children were taught to read and write informally, in their homes and usually by their mothers or by slaves who acted as tutors and, therefore, was considered inadequate for the training of new generations; this fell into the hands of the men. Greek women were married as young as 14 or 15 to a man as arranged by her family. He may be as old as 30 and could very well be dead by age 45. A widow was expected to remarry, particularly if she was still of childbearing age.

Female in the book play mostly the role of servants. A clear example of that are the maids of Odysseus house. Them all should be loyal to Odysseus or Telemachus and betraying them granted the men the right to execute the maids.

Ancient Greek culture states that upper class Greek wives, like Penelope, should live in near seclusion in their husband s home. They had no contact with the outside world. Their responsibilities were those of motherhood, sewing and supervision of the slaves. Sexual intimacy between husband and wife was minimal. Sex was not an activity for women to enjoy, but only a way to create citizen. Even though Odysseus was not too machista you notice those characteristics in their relationship.

Machismo has lasted to our present day. Of course there has been major progress since the days of the ancient Greeks, now it is illegal to consider women lower then men in any sense (at least in some countries), yet most of us still see the world through the machista curtain that covers our eyes.