ROLES AND TREATMENT OF WOMEN AS DEPICTED IN YAA GYASI’S NOVEL HOMEGOING.

Women are had less power and are supposed to be submissive to commands laid down by their men. After the fire broke hell, Cobbe tells baaba they will never speak of what happened that day and that is what happened. Cobbe also commands Baaba to love Effia.

It’s among women’s role to prepare meals during ceremonies, When the old chief died, the village women prepared the food.

Girls didn’t have the right to make their own decisions. As much as Effia imagined how her husband would be, she did not have a right to choose who she wanted. Adwoa aidoo’s husband was chosen for her by her mother.

Women are not supposed to talk, to express their feelings and to question their mothers. When Effia asked Abeeku a question, Baaba gave her a strange look. Baaba used to practice silence and expected the same from Effia. Women were supposed to eat together and when the men walk in they should keep quiet, this is depicted when Baaba and Effia when to chief Abeeku’s home during the white man’s visit there.

The Fante women who were married to the White men were not supposed to inherit the money, instead the money is given to friends and soldiers and then given to the wives and children. The village women married to the white men were referred by their husbands as wenches which means they regard them as their prostitutes and not legal wives.

Mothers were highly respected when it came to the bride’s hand in marriage. The mothers gave consent on behalf of their daughters as we see in the case of Effia and Adwoa. The white men came to pay respect to Adwoa’s mother and Effia’s.

Women are treated as property, the asante’s traded goods with people. Baaba convinced Abeeku that when Effia marries the white man, their trade will prosper. Esi was taken as a slave and kept in the dungeons together with Tansi, Afua and other women.

The role of the woman was to get married as soon as she gets the blood, the only compliment passed to the woman is you will make a good wife. We have seen this through Effia, Esi and Adwoa. A woman is supposed to bear children when she gets married or she will be taken back to her parents home, We see this when Adwoa pressures Effia to get pregnant as her husband might return her back. Girls who don’t get their blood are regarded as not yet a woman and she is devalued.

Women are punished for having children out of marriage, we see this through Afua who was sold as a slave by the village chief to the traders. Afua’s child was taken from her and she later on dies from the harsh surroundings.

Women are regarded as the only ones who are supposed to know what is expected in marriage. We see this when Effia says that she was taught what was expected of her on the wedding night but James did not know.

Women were not included when it came to decisions made and matters concerning the village, that is when Effia asked Fiifi what will happen next after their meeting with the Cobbe, Abeeku ad the village men, Fiifi told her that she was not a man.

Every woman had her own hut which she shared with her children. Baaba had her own hut and also the rest of Cobbe’s wives each had her won hut. Big man as well.

Women are supposed to prepare and present themselves well for the men. Adwoa skin was slick and shiny and hair regal in preparation for the white man. Effia’s hair was plaited and they made her look like a ram, strong and willful. Abeeku sent the maid to inform Arekua to look presentable before the guests.

Women are physically and sexually abused. It starts when Cobbe sexually abuses Maame and impregnates her and gives birth to Effia, Baaba physically abuses Effia and in return Cobbe beats baaba. In the women’s dungeon, Esi was kicked to the ground by one of the soldiers and she was also raped by one of the soldiers and no action was taken in her favour even when James the governor found out that. The women were also smacked and stack on top of each other.

HOW DIFFERENT ARE THE WOMEN TODAY

We live in the 21st Century where Women’s rights are generally upheld by the constituition and laws of Kenya, whereby a person is charged for rape, physical abuse and domestic violence. The constitution ensures that a girl is educated and her rights are catered for.

Women and girls have a right to choose who they want to marry and when to get married, we have supportive parents who are no longer engraved in the traditional norms.

Women empoer each other through empowerment programs to ensure girls have a right to education and basic needs. They also provide safe spaces for the girls where they can freely feel that sense of belonging.

Women are bolder and more powerful than ever, they are not afraid to speak up and defend themselves and the rest of the women.

Women are now more than ever open-minded, they very well know what their rights are and know they are not supposed to only be in the kitcgen as they are conditioned to feel but they thrive in different fields such as in government, Technology, the fields that were only male dominated.

Women take part in making decisions on matters concerning the society and the country at large, There are Women representatives and members of parliament that take part in government.