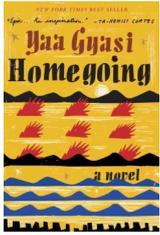


Homegoing



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A Ghana proverb says, "By going and coming, a bird weaves its nest." The title of this novel tells the story of many people from Ghana who were forcibly removed from their African home, yet centuries later, two descendants return to find their family.

If you liked Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad*, Yaa Gyasi's novel will make the perfect follow-up. Hard to believe that she started writing this in her early twenties and finished it by age twenty-six. It covers much more ground than Whitehead's historical novel: Africa and the U.S., and much more time, from the mid-seventeen hundreds to now.

At one point in the novel, a black history teacher describes history as storytelling. Gyasi presents many eloquent and heart-rending stories here. What ties them together is that all the characters belong to one extended family, who were once royalty in Ghana. They became both slave-sellers and slaves. Many came to America.

Gyasi follows two tracks of this family: one remained in Ghana, the other was forced into slavery in the U.S. It follows their descendants after the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the great migration north.

Gyasi visited Africa as a student to do research on a book about mothers and daughters. But when she toured Ghana's Cape Coast Castle, something in the rooms, the cellar where slaves were chained and abused in dungeons called out to her. She immediately decided to focus on the African slave trade and its diaspora later in the U.S. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on April 25, 2017

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