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**Trauma and Memory in Homegoing (2016) by
Yaa Gyasi: An Analysis of Intergenerational
Effects of Slavery and Colonialism on African
and African-American Identities**

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Trauma and Memory in Homegoing (2016) by Yaa Gyasi: An Analysis of Intergenerational Effects of Slavery and Colonialism on African and African-American Identities

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Abstract

This paper seeks to explore and understand how *Homegoing* (2016) addresses the themes of trauma and memory, more specifically, the manner in which the theme is developed throughout the narrative and impacts the development of identity of the characters across generations. Of interest, the research aims to analyze the methods narrative chosen by Gyasi to discuss the continuity of trauma, as well as memory as the way to define an individual. To analyze the literacy of *Homegoing* (2016), there was a need to adopt a qualitative analysis of the literary text. Such elements as the topic and its relation to other texts, key motifs and patterns, character transformations were also explored by the means of final reading. This work also incorporated theoretical paradigms retrieved from trauma and memory into the body of the study. *Homegoing* (2016) can be seen to be a great story that presents the present effects of historical traumas on current social persona. The novel implies that despite the fact that trauma constitutes another facet of subjectivity, memory is the single remedy and resource for the subjects and collective subjects.

Keywords: Trauma, Memory, Intergenerational Trauma, Slavery, Colonialism, African-American Identity, Narrative Structure, Yaa Gyasi, *Homegoing*

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Homegoing (2016) by Yaa Gyasi, a novel published in 2016, is a powerful story of the impact of slavery and colonialism on the lives of people of African heritage, and it depicts the two generations living on different continents. The novel's plot revolves around two half-sisters, Effia and Esi, and their generations from the West African state of Ghana in the eighteenth

century to present-day America. Effia is married off to one British colonial officer who is into the business of transporting enslaved people across the Atlantic Ocean. At the same time, Esi is sold into slavery and transported to America. Gyasi portrays the periods of slavery and colonial domination in the description of her protagonists' descendants to depict how these continue to influence even descendants from Africa and the American continents.

As in many other black novelists' works, Gyasi employs a fragmented, non-linear narrative to draw focus to the black story, which spans different generations and times to bring out the themes of memory and trauma. Every chapter brings a new generation, which symbolizes the continuous propagation of trauma and its integration with the person and collective selves. The depiction of trauma is not only the suffering of the characters in Gyasi's novel but the trauma inherited and, therefore, the trauma that results in successive generations, which has been explored in psychological and sociological studies (Kellermann, 2013; Eyerman, 2004).

RATIONALE

Homegoing (2016) by Yaa Gyasi is a powerful story of the impact of slavery and colonialism on the lives of people of African heritage, and it depicts the two generations living on different continents. The novel's plot revolves around two half-sisters, Effia and Esi, and their generations from the West African state of Ghana in the eighteenth century to present-day America. Effia is married off to one British colonial officer who is into the business of transporting enslaved people across the Atlantic Ocean. At the same time, Esi is sold into slavery and transported to America. Gyasi portrays the periods of slavery and colonial domination in the description of her protagonists' descendants to depict how these continue to influence even descendants from Africa and the American continents.

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

This study aims to fill this knowledge gap by examining how literary representations of trauma, memory, and the cultural memory of slavery and colonialism enhance our cumulative understanding of intergenerational trauma and identity formation. As demonstrated in the following analysis, *Homegoing* has been very successful in representing these features, but further attention is to be paid to how the dual timeline's strategy results in the construction of the novel's tragic plot based on historical trauma for African and African-American subjectivities. This research explores the following question:

How does Gyasi construct the narrative to express the continuity of trauma across the generations?

How does the novel design the function of memory in constructing one's individual and collective self?

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this research is to analyze how *Homegoing*(2016) delves into the themes of trauma and memory, illustrating the intergenerational effects of slavery and colonialism on African and African-American identities. By focusing on the novel's narrative structure and dual timelines, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Gyasi portrays the long-lasting impacts of historical trauma.

The specific objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To examine the narrative structure of *Homegoing* (2016) and its role in highlighting the persistence of trauma and memory across generations.
2. To analyze the novel's dual timelines, explore how they emphasize the differences and continuities between the experiences of African and African-American characters.

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION TO TRAUMA AND MEMORY IN LITERATURE

The focus on trauma and memory as the subject of study has attracted considerable interest in the past few decades, primarily regarding the history inscribed to societies and individuals. To name but a few, Cathy Caruth (1996) and Dominick LaCapra (2001) have done extensive work in showing how trauma operates within the literature to account for the event. Caruth (1996) opines that trauma is not simply an occurrence but a disruption of a story that raises questions on memory and the self. LaCapra (2001), on the other hand, writes on 'working through' in literature, and in this sense, working through means dealing with the past as narratives of trauma where characters and readers try to come to terms with the past.

In this respect, trauma and memory are seen to be at their most acute in such settings as slavery and colonialism, where people continue to suffer the consequences of the past, even in their later generations. Novel enables one to discover how such legacies linger on as part of one's communal identity, and literature reveals how trauma forms part of social memory, is passed on, and re-imagined across generations (Eyerman, 2004). Such themes are represented by YaaGyasi's *Homegoing*(2016), which explores the role of multiple generations in tracing the effects of slavery and colonialism on the contemporary African and African-American selves.

INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND MEMORY

Intergenerational trauma, as it has been discussed in the psychological and sociological literature, speaks to continued suffering in the descendants of those who experienced the traumatic event (Kellermann, 2013; Yehuda & Bierer, 2009). Such a process has been most notably described in children of holocaust survivors, Native American families, and African American people whose ancestors endured slavery and racism (Brave Heart, 1998; Danieli, 1998).

In the novel, the behavior and experiences of the characters show other aspects of how literal or secondary intergenerational trauma is reflected, including in populations that have community trauma. Some of the techniques that have been employed by Morrison in *Beloved* (1987) and Butler in *Kindred* (1979) include the fact that slave trauma is psycho-emotional in that the next generations inherit it. Similarly, in *Homegoing* (2016), Gyasi further traces how the aboriginal inhabitants of Africa, as well as those forcibly removed, continued to be haunted by the effects of capture and slavery as well as colonialism, where the descendants of the victims are also shown to bear the physical and psychological repercussions of these historical occurrences in concrete and /or metaphorical ways as described by Harrtman (2007).

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE AND DUAL TIMELINES IN TRAUMA LITERATURE

The plot of the novel is significant in explaining the possibility of post-traumatic stress disorder and memory, especially in the effects witnessed among generations. Academic work has established that fragmented as well as non-chronological narratives are used in trauma fiction, given that the nature of trauma is defined by disruption as well as fragmentation of memory (Whitehead, 2004). Such a narrative approach enables the researcher to delve deeper into the nature of survivor's trauma as well as the type and manifestation of trauma that is intergenerational.

In *Homegoing* (2016), Gyasi employs a dual timeline structure, effectively switching between Effia and Esi's descendants to show the different but connected stories of African and African-American characters. This structure does not only reveal how and where traumas are experienced in these two groups but also shows that specific types of trauma can occur at any place and at any time in the future. This is mainly because the use of dual timelines also enables Gyasi to compare and contrast the African characters and Americans, and this captures the colonized world (Gikandi, 2000, p. 73).

This kind of treatment of historical events is typical for the concept of the literature of trauma, for which the works of Sebald's *Austerlitz* (2001) and Hemon's *The Lazarus Project* (2008) serve as examples due to the use of non-linear time constructs and disintegrated/unified narratives to describe trauma. Such novels as *Homegoing* (2016) should be read so that the listener or the reader is expected to put the pieces together because the traumatic memory is often fragmented and gaps exist.

THE ROLE OF MEMORY IN SHAPING IDENTITY

Memory is one of the fundamental signifiers in the trauma discourses, especially those exploring the consequences of slavery and colonialism. Memory and forgetting have extraordinary roles in the definition of individual and collective identities (Assmann, 2011). Memory becomes ideological, and it is the space of struggle where the past that has been imposed through slavery and colonialism is rewritten based on the requirements of the present.

In Gyasi's *Homegoing* (2016), memory is not merely a passive archive of the past but an energetic force that determines the self of such characters. The theme of trauma in this novel speaks to how humans define themselves or get defined regarding traumatic pasts that may be theirs or that of their ancestors. This is especially evident in African-American characters that

have to find their new identity in the context of slavery and racism (Eyerman, 2004). Gyasi's ideas about remembering correlate with theories such as those of Rothberg (2009), who claims that memory lies within the active construction of past and present experiences.

It is also important to note the struggle of remembering and forgetting, as in *Homegoing* (2016). For some characters, such as Kojo, it becomes impossible to remember the past because it would mean facing tragic events that happened in the past; for other characters, such as Marjorie, the only way is to remember and embrace one's roots. This tension is not without a trace of more general controversies of dealing with the heritage of slavery and colonialism, especially in the context of African American bodily existence (Hartman, 2007). It is clear that for Gyasi's characters and everyone to be accurate, one must remember and forget and that the process of going through the two extremes is intricate.

TRAUMA, MEMORY, AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

One of the important concerns in the trauma discourse is the connection between trauma, memory, and collective identity. Halbwachs (1992), for instance, posits that collective memory is significant in giving people their identity since it gives out a set narrative for all the people in the community. Regarding the issues of slavery or colonization, collective memory helps to keep the records of the oppressed people so that their tales can be told to posterity.

Using *Homegoing* (2016) as her subject, Gyasi seeks to demonstrate how history or the past is passed from one generation to another and how it defines the characters, whether African or African-American. This is neatly captured here in the novel in a manner that shows that even after generations, the pain of slavery and colonialism in Africa is imprinted in the cultural DNA of the people and thus shapes the subjectivities of characters in the novel. This is well illustrated by the African-American characters, where the viewer is made to understand that they come with a background that was brought by slavery, but on the other side, they are strong, coming from a lineage of strong women (Eyerman, 2004).

Gyasi's approach to how the inhabitants of that world remember their past fits the scholarly expositions of how the memory of slavery impacts the African-Americans, for example, by Gilroy (1993). Another criticism of Gilroy's idea of the 'Black Atlantic' it can be pointed out that slavery and colonialism have resulted in the formation of a culture that is not necessarily bounded by geographical territory. This concept is also wedged in *Homegoing* (2016) in the sense that it maps out the relationships between African women and African-American people and how, despite the physical distance, the experiences of abuse make them one.

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research utilizes only qualitative data and a method of literary analysis to analyze YaaGyasi's *Homegoing* (2016) regarding the subject areas of trauma and memory. Hence, since the novel has complex plots and themes, a qualitative analysis method is suitable for capturing how Gyasi presents the impact of slavery and colonialism, particularly on African and African American subjects. This methodology enables one to engage in a fine-grained analysis of a given text by looking at it from the standpoint of its methodology, characters, and themes, for

instance. The study is primarily qualitative in that its primary purpose is to analyze the potential meanings and significance of the mentioned topic within the context of the novel.

TEXT COLLECTION

For this study, *Homegoing* (2016) itself is the principal source of text collection.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

In the analysis of *Homegoing* (2016), the theorists whose insights were considered are trauma and memory; authors such as Cathy Caruth (1996) and Dominick LaCapra (2001) were taken into consideration. Analyzing the novel's structure and its realistic representation of how trauma affects one's memory, Caruth's idea of trauma as a deficit in the ability to narrate came in handy. To this end, LaCapra's concept of traumatically 'working through' – with the characters of Homing and how they negotiate antecedent trauma in coming to terms with their personalities. In addition, the papers on the intergenerational trauma theories used to understand how trauma is passed down in the novel include postmemory by Marianne Hirsch (1997).

The novel was compared and contrasted based on the two timelines to identify the similarities and differences in the experiences of black characters from Africa and America and how Gyasi utilized the timeline to address the theme of continuities and discontinuity of trauma. Memory was also emphasized as a key aspect that defines the characters' identities; the problem of memory politics in Gyasi's text was also discussed regarding the conflict between remembering and erasing the past and cultural memory and collective identity. Semiotic strategies for interpreting primary sources included close reading skills applied to specific excerpts to find the presence of leitmotifs and explain the symbolic meaning of the novel's imagery.

LIMITATIONS

The study on *Homegoing* (2016) offers qualitative insights but has limitations that affect its factual accuracy, as the text relies heavily on individual interpretation. While trauma and memory are prominent themes, they are not the only ones present. Future research could benefit from incorporating theories such as postcolonialism or gender studies for a more comprehensive analysis. Despite these limitations, the research contributes meaningfully to the understanding of how the novel addresses the intergenerational effects of slavery and colonialism, highlighting its relevance in the field of trauma literature.

Results and Analysis

ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVE STRUCTURE AND DUAL TIMELINES

This concept of genealogy and, indeed, the narrative style of the book is one of the most significant features of *Homegoing* and talks about traumatic memory and traumatized subjectivities. The two chronological structures that overwrite each other focusing on the descendants of Effia in Ghana and Esi in America, are used to emphasize the dual storylines of black people in two different worlds – Africa and America. This structure highlights how slavery and colonialism continue to color people's experience of the world and Africa's integration into

the contemporary global system. However, the abuse of one generation is passed on to the next across continents.

From this aspect, it is realized that Gyasi employs this structure to explain the similarities in the characters' experiences in Africa and America. For instance, Quey struggles with his family's participation in the slavery business in Ghana. At the same time, Ness tries to live with the fact that her grandmother Esi was an enslaved person in America. While Quey's father is personally involved in the whole business of the slave trade, and it takes all the moral fiber of Quey to deal with it, on the other hand, we have Ness, the black slave girl who has to suffer in American plantations. Such comparison emphasizes that the effects of the slave trade remain long-lasting and affect cultures of peoples differently, depending on historical conditions.

The same analysis also shows that Gyasi utilizes the structure to portray the vulnerability of reiteration. Every chapter is devoted to a different generation of characters, and each illustrates their continued efforts to come to terms with their past. The repetition of some of the topics, like displacement, loss, and the search for the self, shows that trauma is a progressive experience that is continuous from one generation to the next. This finding relates to trauma theory, primarily intergenerational trauma, in which trauma impacts future generations (Kellermann, 2013).

EXPLORATION OF TRAUMA IN CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

In *Homegoing* (2016), character development is as much a product of memory and hurt as it is of the more prominent novel's more significant themes. With characterization, Gyasi makes her characters products of history, where their experiences are heavily informed by the events that befell their ancestors. For instance, H was forced to work when he was falsely imprisoned in America, and the ordeal mirrors that of his ancestors who went through the ordeal of slavery. This rewinding of history indicates that slavery is an inseparable part of the character's personalities, where they are compelled by it and often for the worse.

It is thus possible to state that through the characters' communication with the past, Gyasi produces an understanding of how trauma appears. Some characters, such as Akua, can be traumatized through the memory form; that is, the characters frequently have nightmares that remind them of the horror. In contrast, others, like Marjorie, can be traumatized through people's form, that is, the characters trying to learn their heritage and the stories of their forefathers. All of these different responses to trauma point to one fact: cures and treatment of the past is a highly complex business that shows that there is no right way of healing and coming to terms with the past. However, to be more flexible with gender conventions, the novel depicts several denial, repression, acceptance, and reconciliation strategies.

Also, the character transformations of *Homegoing* (2016) bear testimony to the fact that even if adversity proves to be incapacitating, it, in equal measure, maybe inspirational. For instance, Yaw, whose face was burned by the fire that killed his mother, becomes a successful teacher and a historian who turns his memories into teaching others the value of history. In the same way, Marjorie feels detached from the Ghanaian cultural practices while growing up in America, but she later finds comfort in embracing the Environment. Such examples suggest that

although the protagonists are struggling to cope with the post-traumatic stress disorders that originate at the root of the character's experiences, they are not depicted as passive victims of their pasts.

MEMORY AND IDENTITY: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Most of the novel focuses on memory as a painful experience and a tool for the survival of the characters in the novel. Based on the text, the author, Gyasi, as seen from the given presentation, has emphasized memory as a double-edged sword; it is a burden and something that must be cherished as it reflects identity and cultural practice. Therefore, this duality is expressed mainly in the characters and concerning their memories.

For some of the characters, traumatic memories serve as steady reminders of the pain the characters have experienced. For instance, Akua, who was a young girl, has traumatic memories of how her mother died, as well as the atrocities she had to endure. This memory shows itself as nightmares and hallucinations and leads her to a terrible act that passes on the pain to the next generation in her family. The story of Akua is quite unfortunate because unresolved past trauma has dire consequences not only for the lives of that particular family but also for future generations.

On the other hand, characters like Marjorie and Yaw can be said to use memory as a form of reclaiming power. Perhaps this analysis can find a better justification in Marjorie's journey to rediscover her Black identity and Yaw's passion for history that underlines the message that in order to come to terms with the trauma, one needs to remember it. In line with the concept that pain is needed for the storage of memory to facilitate identity formation and the keeping of culture (Assmann, 2011), Gyasi's characters' act of remembering their past sting respectively.

Like the previous thematic analysis, remembering and forgetting are also seen in *Homegoing*. According to Gyasi, although forgetting could relieve pain with the aim of healing, it is destructive in that it makes people lose their identity and cultural belonging. This can be seen most effectively through the example of the character Kojo, who, upon escaping servitude, decides to try and leave the ordeal behind as though it never happened, only to realize that it is impossible to wash off the effects of servitude. This tension can be seen as a part of broader discourses on how to historically and culturally interact and succeed in the effects of slavery and colonialism in multicultural, globalized societies with a focus on African Americans.

RESULTS SUMMARY

Therefore, by examining the narrative structure, character progression, and essential motifs in *Homegoing* (2016), YaaGyasi employs all those aspects to discuss the traumatic memory transfer between the African and the African American communities. Flashbacks in the narrative, the two timelines are shown, and the circle of trauma is depicted, and the characters' experiences differ to depict a real-world scenario of dealing with and overcoming trauma. The novel's messages include that being traumatized is part of one's identity, yet individual and cultural memory can expunge the pain. These findings are summed up in understanding how

literature can address and interact with traumatized social realities, such as the aftermath of slavery and colonialism, and build the notion of subjectivity and recall.

DISCUSSION

INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA AND MEMORY IN *HOME GOING*

Homegoing (2016), written by Yaa Gyasi, is quite an inspiring novel with a rich storyline that unravels the effects of slavery and colonization on African people. To this end, the shifting of generations and families, which is also followed in the novel as a narrative style, can be seen as a highly effective means of investigating how trauma travels through time. In the last part of this discussion, I incorporate literature on intergenerational trauma and memory to situate *Homegoing* (2016) within the context of existing research.

As described by several authors, including Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart (1998), one can talk about intergenerational trauma, which means that descendants feel the impact of the losses experienced by their ancestors. In *Homegoing* (2016), this concept is well depicted as the readers follow the story of Effia and Esi's descendants. This is not to say that the later generation of black Americans has not known the shadows of slavery, for indeed, its effects are well documented, evidenced by a high incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder, cultural loss, and identity crises among black Americans.

For instance, the character portrayed as suffering from distress related to the memories of her mother's death, as well as the violence that she witnessed during the fight, is the most appropriate example of how intergenerational trauma finds a way to transmit the distress from one generation to the next. This concurs with Kellermann's (2013) *Epigenetic Transmission*, where he notes that the effects of the trauma witnessed in a community are passed biologically, with the subsequent generations' ability to lead healthy mental lives affected. Gyasi's representation of Akua's nightmares Akua and the horrible, uninhibited act that the woman performs is in agreement with the author's previous statement about trauma as a phenomenon that, if not treated, will hurt the descendants.

In addition, *Homegoing* (2016) represents postmemory – the term suggested by Marianne Hirsch (1997) that defines the connection between the "second generation" and the previous generation's personal, collective, and cultural trauma. Postmemory is a term that describes a situation in which the later generations are emotionally connected to the memory of the traumatic experiences of their predecessors, even when they have been personally exposed to them. This is more so the case in the character of Marjorie, who, despite growing up in the United States of America, has so much attachment to her black heritage and the effects of the slave trade regarding her family. Through Marjorie's lost attempts to embrace her cultural background and learn the family's history with slavery, post-memory can be described with Hirsch's (1997) term of mediated post-memory through the narratives and cultural items.

NARRATIVE STRUCTURE AS A REFLECTION OF TRAUMA

Homegoing's (2016) shifting and complex plot can be interpreted as a literary rendering of trauma's disruptive effect. This narrative approach aligns with the analysis made by other critics, such as Anne Whitehead (2004), who explained that in trauma fiction, the narrative structure is

characterized by non-linear and fragmented storytelling, which imitates the structure of traumatic memories. In another way, the structure of *Homegoing* (2016) with the two opposite lines of descendants of Effia and Esi might produce a sense of estrangement and connection simultaneously, which may be expressive of the long-lasting effects of slavery and colonialism.

It also enables Gyasi to depict various forms of alienation as an experience of the past trauma of Africans and African Americans. For instance, the characters from Ghana must come to terms with the impact of colonialism and internal strife. At the same time, those in America are subjected to the racism consequences and terrible experience of slavery. The contrast between these two settings is excellent. Thus, the narrative portrays trauma caused by slavery and colonialism as not being limited to a geographic location; instead, it is present all over the world. This affirms Paul Gilroy's (1993) Black Atlantic thesis that underscores the crossing of black people in the Atlantic world, making the culture and the historical experience of the black people across the Atlantic sea.

Another way in which the novel is cyclical is through the recycling of leitmotifs such as displacement, loss, and the 'quest for self' from one generation of characters to the other. Such repetition points to what Dominick LaCapra (2001) had said in his works on trauma and history regarding the compulsion to repeat the past. Another way of portraying this continuity is how each generation of characters relating to the novel's main characters has to suffer through slavery and/or colonialism, even as generations separate them. According to LaCapra (2001), working through is a process that involves reflective work through an inherited trauma that is latent in a family and visited on the innocent figures or the next generation by the guilty figures. This is observable in how the characters deal with their inherited trauma. Some, such as Yaw, seek to share what they know about memory and history with others, while others, like Kojo, seek to completely disregard such occurrences by denying their roots.

MEMORY AND IDENTITY FORMATION

Memory is an essential theme in *Homegoing* (2016) because it determines personal and group affiliations and loyalties. Examining memory as a source of suffering as well as strength is consistent with the existing literature on the traumatized subject, which positions trauma and memory in binary pairs. Memory is an influential aspect since it involves rehearsing through or recalling the misfortune. Hence, it can be a burden, but on the other hand, it is crucial in imperializing identity and culture.

It will also be important to understand the characters' consciousness and their relationship to their memories in *Homegoing* (2016). Some of the survivors who participated in the study, including Akua, are coping with trauma that continues to haunt them through nightmares and hallucinations. This is in concordance with Cathy Caruth's (1996) argument that for the trauma victim, memories of the event are intrusive and fragmented, thus disrupting the unity of a person's self. Akua's case exemplifies the challenges of trying to come to terms with traumatic experiences, especially when such experiences are meshed with cultural and shared clan heritage.

On the other hand, characters such as Marjorie and Yaw depict how memory can be used effectively as a tool of agency and cultural resilience. Thus, firmly believing that memory, while being painful, is crucial for embracing things and learning how to overcome them, the story of Marjorie trying to find her African identity and Yaw, who works hard to teach Ghanaians the history of their country, can be viewed as the movies' major message. Another argument supporting this view is that of Michael Rothberg (2009), who conceptualized the idea of multidirectional memory, according to which memory is not a war of winners and losers but a struggling process of integration of past and present. Here in *Homegoing* (2016), the negotiation takes place in the interaction between the characters about their ancestry, as they struggle to incorporate in their persona the experiences of trauma that are part of their roots.

Thus, the conflict in *Homegoing* between memory and oblivion parallels the discussions about what should be done regarding the heritage of colonial slavery. In this sense, some characters, such as Kojo, try to block the traumatic past from their memory so that they can have a fresh start in life, whereas the opposite is true for Marjorie, who tries to remember her ancestry's ordeal. This tension is emblematic of what Assmann (2011) describes as the "two forms of memory": The first is a type that aims at conserving and commemorating history, while the second is a type that tries to transcend history. Gyasi's novel teaches us that while both kinds of memory are needed to heal, the process works in a zig-zag fashion, where knowledge is mixed with forgetting.

IMPLICATIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA AND MEMORY

The implications of the insights deriving from this analysis of *Homegoing* (2016) for the study of trauma and collective memory are, therefore, manifold and far-reaching. Hence, Gyasi's novel joins the list of other writings that try to explain how far these historical genocides affect the present shapes of identities and culture. The variety of themes and the exploration of trauma and memory in *Homegoing* will help a reader to get a deeper understanding of literature as a tool that shows potential and past traumas' influence on people.

Furthermore, one of the most important aspects of the novel is its narrative strategy and thematic focus on memory for understanding the connection between the individual and the collective self. This is visible in Gyasi's characters, which face the effects of their ancestors' traumatic past and how memory is instrumental in constructing self in such communities. This conclusion can be explained by the works of Assmann, who refers to the phenomenon of cultural memory as one that exists to preserve and disseminate cultural traditions (Assmann, 2011).

Last, *Homegoing* raises awareness of modern society and the historical trauma phenomenon. Thus, the novel points out that although slavery and colonialism happened in the past, their impact is still being experienced in the present time in defining the identities of specific individuals and groups. Borrowing from the works of similar scholars like Paul Gilroy (1993) and Michael Rothberg (2009), it becomes possible to articulate that the effect of historical trauma must first be recognized and reframed to achieve the goal of equality in society in the future.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper revealed that *Homegoing* (2016) Yaa Gyasi's novel can give a powerful portrayal of the ongoing effects of slavery and colonialism on Africans and black Americans. Both the complex plot and the setting that spirals between the past and the present make it possible to suggest that the novel is highly successful in describing how the main character experiences trauma as an ongoing process that interferes with one's life. The representation of trauma is worth exploring in more detail because it reveals how Gyasi shows that history and its injustice are never indeed buried. Its influence on identity reflects this idea. The novel develops its mediation on memory to enhance further this narrative of how the characters endure the legacy of trauma. At the same time, they are trapped in between the process of remembering and the process of forgetting that helps to heal. Finally, *Homegoing* (2016) is important in discussing trauma and memory in literature and relevant to the discussion of memory and history, cultural memory, and social identity in searching for identity and justice in post-slavery and post-colonial contexts. Through the analysis of Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing* (2016), this study hopes to underscore the importance of literature in facilitating these essential searches and queries, depicting how literature addresses the lingering marks of history within society.

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