

Transcending the Boundary of Traumas: Spatial Trauma in Richard Powers' 'The Echo Maker'

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Abstract : This paper critically reads Richard Powers' novel The Echo Maker to read and understand the personal traumas of the characters in the novel depending on the various situations they face throughout the story. Also, the paper attempts to read different traumas and disorders due to their different situations. With a focus on the individual experiences, this paper addresses the core issues of trauma, which triggers their reactions and reads the novel through theories of Freud, Caruth, and other critics in this field. While transcending the boundary of personal and collective trauma, this paper suggests that traumas not only arise from the core mental issues, from both past or present memories; it also depends on places too which can be called, according to Yi-Fu Tuan, topophobia. Intimate places such as home provoke not only attachment and expectation but also produce fear in a person. Failure in identifying with such places means losing a central piece of identity of the individual. In order to analyse the traumas in the novel, the characters' association with homes and places has been provided. This paper attempts to suggest that people are not traumatised because of what Freud explained as unpleasant memories of the past but also intimacy and lost identities related to a place can trigger trauma.

Keywords : spatial trauma, traumatic stress disorder, identity and place, core mental issues

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