

Encoding the Design of the Memorial Park and the Family Network as the Icon of 9/11 in Amy Waldman's the Submission

Authors : Masami Usui

Abstract : After 9/11, the American literary scene was confronted with new perspectives that enabled both writers and readers to recognize the hidden aspects of their political, economic, legal, social, and cultural phenomena. There appeared an argument over new and challenging multicultural aspects after 9/11 and this argument is presented by a tension of space related to 9/11. In Amy Waldman's the Submission (2011), designing both the memorial park and the family network has a significant meaning in establishing the progress of understanding from multiple perspectives. The most intriguing and controversial topic of racism is reflected in the Submission, where one young architect's blind entry to the competition for the memorial of Ground Zero is nominated, yet he is confronted with strong objections and hostility as soon as he turns out to be a Muslim named Mohammad Khan. This 'Khan' issue, immediately enlarged into a social controversial issue on American soil, causes repeated acts of hostility to Muslim women by ignorant citizens all over America. His idea of the park is to design a new concept of tracing the cultural background of the open space. Against his will, his name is identified as the 'ingredient' of the networking of the resistant community with his supporters: on the other hand, the post 9/11 hysteria and victimization is presented in such family associations as the Angry Family Members and Grieving Family Members. These rapidly expanding networks, whether political or not, constructed by the internet, embody the contemporary societal connection and representation. The contemporary quest for the significance of human relationships is recognized as a quest for global peace. Designing both the memorial park and the communication networks strengthens a process of facing the shared conflicts and healing the survivors' trauma. The tension between the idea and networking of the Garden for the memorial site and the collapse of Ground Zero signifies the double mission of the site: to establish the space to ease the wounded and to remember the catastrophe. Reading the design of these icons of 9/11 in the Submission means that decoding the myth of globalization and its representations in this century.

Keywords : American literature, cultural studies, globalization, literature of catastrophe

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