UCLA
Departmental Honors Theses

Title
Posthuman Time Beings

Permalink

Author
Ghosh, Kuhelika

Publication Date
2019-03-22

Undergraduate

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

POSTHUMAN TIME BEINGS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

BY

KUHELIKA GHOSH

ADVISOR: MITCHUM HUEHLS

LOS ANGELES, CA

MARCH 22, 2019

ABSTRACT

POSTHUMAN TIME BEINGS

BY KUHELIKA GHOSH

This thesis examines the potential ethics and politics of the cosmopolitan subject in a posthuman world in Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being*. Cosmopolitanism refers to the idea that all human beings live in a global community and are citizens of the world. Although cosmopolitanism initially emerged as a humanist idea with its ethics and politics lying only within the realm of the human, the novel moves beyond this anthropocentric approach due to its setting in the Anthropocene. I assert that *Tale* showcases a posthuman turn in the literary narrative by depicting environmental agency in the processes of literary production and circulation within the novel. With this posthuman turn, there is also a posthuman shift in the epistemological framework of the novel as it refers to the cosmopolitan subject as a "time being," including both the human and the nonhuman within it. However, I contend that this temporal mode of cosmopolitanism diminishes the ethics and politics of the cosmopolitan subject due to the ontological challenges to reality that come up with the distortion of literary time. Instead, I suggest that *Tale* turns toward literary and environmental affect to grapple with the dilemma of posthuman cosmopolitanism and to materialize the cosmopolitan connection, while also maintaining an affective ethics and politics that transcends the human figure.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my gratitude to my advisor Professor Huehls for believing in my ideas, even in their most rudimentary stages. I truly appreciate his guidance in the process of editing as well as the excellent timeline he created during the research seminar, which made this entire thesis a gratifying experience for me. Without his kindness, patience, and brilliance, this thesis would not have been possible. I am also eternally thankful to him for introducing me to the beautiful world of literary theory two years ago, which made me want to write a thesis in the first place.

I am grateful to Professor DeLoughrey for helping me understand the critical conversations around cosmopolitanism theory and familiarizing me with Pheng Cheah's work. I would also like to thank the Undergraduate Research Center for providing me with a fellowship to pursue my research. My friends and family supported me wholeheartedly in this and all my other endeavors, for which I feel extremely grateful. However, most of all, I am thankful to Roxy for her unwavering support and for making me realize just how important a posthuman perspective is. Even though she will never get to read it, this thesis is dedicated to her.

Table of Contents

Introduction

The diary of sixteen-year-old Nao floats across the Pacific Ocean from Japan and reaches

the shores of an island in the Pacific Northwest where the character Ruth comes across it.

Although the two characters occupy vastly different corners of the world, they find solace in

each other's cosmopolitan backgrounds. However, Nao does not call herself a cosmopolitan; she

says she is a "time being," or "someone who lives in time, and that means you, and me, and

every one of us who is, or was, or ever will be" (Ozeki 1). The "time being" includes not just the

human, but trees, waves, crows, mountains, technology, and anything ever to exist in time. Nao

believes that everything on earth is a time being, therefore reducing the human figure's

significance in the world. Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being* (2013) features a posthuman

world, or a world where the human is submerged in the natural environment. However, these

shifting ontological and epistemological frameworks in *Tale* create tremendous anxiety for the

cosmopolitan characters in the novel, Ruth and Nao. By calling herself a "time being", Nao

situates the cosmopolitan subject within the bounds of time but not space or body, and broadens

the notion of normative cosmopolitanism to include both the human and the nonhuman.

However, the cosmopolitan subject often feels lost and isolated in this newly posthuman world

located within temporality, which calls into question the ethics and politics of cosmopolitanism.

A cosmopolitan human being is one who believes in the shared nature of humanity, and

sees the world as their home. In the fourth century BC, the Greek philosopher Diogenes refused

to identify with the Athenians or the Greeks and declared himself a citizen of the world instead

(Piering). However, cosmopolitanism has always been a humanist notion, based on human ideas

of citizenship in nation-states. Similarly, humanism came to be dominant in the seventeenth

century when René Descartes created a binary between the human and the nonhuman,

proclaiming that reason makes humans human. Humanism and cosmopolitanism initially went hand in hand because the human figure was associated with the ethical and political qualities of reason and citizenship, which were not seen to exist in the territory of the nonhuman. However, the dominance of the human in the world becomes questionable as we enter the Anthropocene, "the historical moment when the Human has become a geological force capable of affecting all life on this planet," through climate change and extinctions (Braidotti, *The Posthuman* 5). In the Anthropocene, the human's negative power over material elements makes it necessary to reconsider the repercussions of a humanist approach and move away from it. Thus, posthumanism in today's age is about "the possibility of a serious de-centering of 'Man', the former measure of all things" (2).[1] In the age of the Anthropocene, the cosmopolitan subject feels lost and isolated in an already changing world. Since the human figure is so central to the cosmopolitan project, the Anthropocene threatens humanist cosmopolitanism by shattering the notion of the supreme human being. Instead, it leads to a move toward posthuman cosmopolitanism that engenders a new kind of ethics and politics in the cosmopolitan realm that

---

[1] So, what does posthumanist discourse look like today? Posthumanism is used to refer to a wide variety of movements that have developed in opposition to traditional humanism including philosophical, cultural, and critical posthumanism; transhumanism; new materialisms; antihumanism and metahumanism (Ferrando 26). While antihumanism believes in the symbolic death of man, transhumanism looks at the enhancement of humans through technology and science (31; 27). However, my thesis is interested in critical posthumanism, or the idea of moving away from a human-centric world, which I shall expand upon later on.

transcends the human figure. Thus, this decentering of the human in the world leads to the environment and matter gaining prominence within epistemological representation.

But what does the Anthropocene look like today and why is a posthuman perspective even important? The Anthropocene features two opposing viewpoints. On the one hand, it sees the human as an invasive force that is the reason behind climate change, extinctions and massive geologic change. On the other hand, these changes prove that the human is in fact helpless and just another speck in the universe that is absorbed into nature. In *Walden*, Henry David Thoreau reflects on the natural beauty of Walden Pond, commenting that its splendor will never perish no matter what changes occur:

> Walden is a perfect forest mirror, set round with stones as precious to my eye as if fewer or rarer. Nothing so fair, so pure, and at the same time so large, as a lake, perchance, lies on the surface of the earth. Sky water. It needs no fence. Nations come and go without defiling it. It is a mirror which no stone can crack, whose quicksilver will never wear off, whose gilding Nature continually repairs; no storms, no dust, can dim its surface ever fresh;—a mirror in which all impurity presented to it sinks, swept and dusted by the sun's hazy brush,—this the light dust-cloth,—which retains no breath that is breathed on it, but sends its own to float as clouds high above its surface, and be reflected in its bosom still. (Thoreau 250-251)

In the mid-nineteenth century, Walden Pond was a serene and seemingly untouched place as described by Thoreau. He imagined it would always remain ever beautiful – "It needs no fence. Nations come and go without defiling it" (250). However, Thoreau was wrong. Today, Walden Pond is not the same place it was almost two centuries ago. It is still Thoreau's "perfect forest

mirror" but the pond reflects human activity instead, as it is full of people, trash, and excretions. The increased phosphorus content of the pond causes murkiness and threatens the survival of green algae at the bottom of the pond (Giaimo). In a Thoreau-esque account, journalist Cara Giaimo describes Walden Pond - "A Target bag floats on the surface of the lake. Kids play on the railroad tracks, which are just a few yards from one of the pond's edges. A man in a beach chair reads about toe fungus…People's belongings are strewn through the underbrush and almost meld with the landscape" (Giaimo). In the era of the Anthropocene, Walden Pond is perhaps a microcosm of the rest of the world.

Ozeki wrestles with similar concerns in *Tale* revolving around climate change and the relationship between the human and the nonhuman. When the protagonist Nao watches the Insect Wars take place on television, she bursts into tears in a moment of abjection. She says, "The sight of these stupid bugs tearing each other apart was too much for me. It was horrible, but of course it wasn't the insects. It was the human beings who thought this would be fun to watch" (Ozeki 291). Nao's statement captures the ethical dilemma of the Anthropocene, where the human being is both an agent of change as well as a helpless figure amidst the forces of nature in the Anthropocene. The Anthropocene is a geological epoch dominated by human activity causing climate change around the world. However, with the environmental transformations taking place, the human being gets submerged within nonhuman nature and loses control of its place in the world. Kevin Grove and David Chandler say, "Today, the Anthropocene destabilises the very ground on which the fragile façade of modernity rests. This sense of uncertainty in the face of forces beyond the control or knowledge of the human – that tallies with the Kantian subject confronting the moment of the sublime – transpires at the end of modernity both as a destructive force and as a potentially liberating one" (80). However, is this decentering of the

human, or posthumanism as it is known today, a positive and liberating worldview or a negative and destructive one? This question is one of the many questions my thesis delves into. "What is at stake here is not so much a challenge to the 'renaturalising of politics' (immersing 'Man' in the world of flux and contingency) but rather a question of what is at stake in assumptions of the end of the modernist separations of 'Man' and 'Nature' along with fixed spatial and temporal ontology of modernity" (81-82). As the Anthropocene brings forth the end of a human-centric world, there is a subsequent shift in the larger ethical and political structures of the world as well.

Tale mainly deals with critical posthumanism which tries to deconstruct the existing humanist binaries to give rise to a new materialist world, one where such binaries are absent. Critical posthumanism tries "to think about problems, aspirations and desires that are familiar from humanism" but without the understanding of the "normative, centering concept of the human—the very cause of the problem with humanism in the first place" (Callus et al. 108).[2] In order to break free from humanist norms, the posthumanist project focuses on reconfigurations of existing binaries, thereby moving away from humanist hierarchies but also situating the human within real-world phenomena in a new way.[3] Posthumanist theories of new materialism believe

---

[2] It is also important to note that posthumanism and the posthuman are two very different terms. While posthumanism is a discourse, the posthuman is an "impending historical circumstance" (Callus et al. 107). Thus, the posthuman is still not completely realized today because we are still in the midst of posthumanism.

[3] Callus and his colleagues argue, "A cosmopolitical posthumanism would not centre itself on the human/animal distinction, since undoing that hierarchy would not be sufficient. Rather, it is concerned with all of the ways in which the 'human' of humanism can be radically

that we "should not divide human corporeality from a wider material world, but should instead submerse the human within the material flows, exchanges, and interactions of substances, habitats, places, and environments" (Alaimo, "New Materialisms, Old Humanisms, or, Following the Submersible" 281). This immersive aspect of new materialism seamlessly intermingles the human with its environment, which eliminates the existing nature-culture binary. The eradication of this binary creates a non-dialectical materialism that resists differentiation of the human ontologically and epistemologically.

 Tale not only features a posthuman world but also takes the form of a posthuman literary narrative. Nao's diary serves as an example of posthumanist literature, as it is written by Nao, disseminated by the ocean waves, and parts of the narrative are created by the Jungle Crow. The novel's exploration of literature as being a posthuman construct is closely related to the shifting boundaries between nature and culture in the posthuman era. While nature refers to the environmental world in this novel, culture can broadly be seen as including the human and human creations of literature within it. Braidotti understands the posthuman condition to be the result of a breakdown in the age-old binary between nature and culture, which ultimately leads to a unity between the two. She says the social constructivist approach "which rests on the binary opposition between the given and the constructed, is currently being replaced by a non-dualistic understanding of nature-culture interaction" (*The Posthuman* 3). This non-dualistic approach is a

---

decentred and shown to be biologically, ecologically and zoologically imbricated in changing forms and practices of understanding, as well as in emergent informatic, mediatic or technological situatedness" (109).

consequence of the posthuman nature of the world, resulting from larger historical changes.[4]

Michel Foucault seemed to have predicted the rise of posthumanism in the 1960s, saying "If

those arrangements [of knowledge] were to disappear as they appeared...then one can certainly

wager that man would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea" (29).[5]

However, the posthumanist literary narrative does not completely eradicate the human figure as

seen in *Tale*. Instead, as the nature-culture binary slowly diminishes, this collapse reveals

interconnections between the human and the environment, and between literary creation and the

environment as well.

Within the posthuman framework, we are at a critical moment when the nature-culture

binary collapses. My thesis will explore the position of *Tale* and its potential ethics and politics

given this posthuman turn. Ozeki's *Tale* captures the posthuman turn in the literary narrative as it

features a disparity between a posthuman view of the universe where humans do not matter and

---

[4] Braidotti adds that "the boundaries between the categories of the natural and the cultural

have been displaced and to a large extent blurred by the effects of scientific and technological

advances" (*The Posthuman* 3). Thus, the shift in thought is primarily because of historical

changes taking place in the world.

[5] While Braidotti and other scholars argue that posthumanism is a result of science and

technology, Foucault and even Jacques Derrida point to language as being the cause. Foucault

says, "Man had been a figure occurring between two modes of language; or, rather, he was

constituted only when language, having been situated within representation and, as it were,

dissolved in it, freed itself from that situation at the cost of its own fragmentation: man

composed his own figure in the interstices of that fragmented language" (28).

the power of human will and the human being's significance in the world. As Ruth reads Nao's

diary, she experiences dream visions where a wild crow and time itself help her change Nao's

narrative, making literary creation a posthuman endeavor. *Tale* further grapples with the

dilemma of the human cosmopolitan in a posthuman world as the nomadic characters reflect the

figure of the cosmopolitan nomad. In the past, the cosmopolitan nomad could still see itself as a

concrete human subject despite lacking spatial representation; today, the nomad lacks even this

epistemological framework to hold on to. However, *Tale* turns to a temporal mode of

cosmopolitanism through the notion of "the time being" to encapsulate the human and the

nonhuman within it. But temporal logic diminishes the ethics and politics of the cosmopolitan

worldview due to the ontological challenges to reality; therefore, the novel turns to affective

cosmopolitanism instead to materialize the cosmopolitan connection, while still maintaining an

ethics and politics for the cosmopolitan subject in a posthuman world. By struggling with the

cosmopolitan representation of the human subject in a posthuman world, Ozeki's *A Tale for the*

Time Being turns to the materiality of literary and environmental affect to advocate an affective

model of cosmopolitanism in the world.

Through the diary, the literary worlding in *Tale* not only creates a materiality of affect,

but this materiality causes the cosmopolitan project to become noticeable in the world. Brian

Massumi refers to affect as a "felt quality," or "a metaphysics of feeling" which preempts

semiosis (63). *Tale* features multiple literary worlds as it depicts Ruth reading Nao's diary, who

in turn reads her great-uncle Haruki's diary within her own literary narrative. However, there is a

strange intermixing between these literary worlds, where each reader and writer impacts each

other's narratives and contributes to literary creation. When Ruth comes across missing words in

Nao's diary, Ruth's husband Oliver chalks the strangeness of the situation down to quantum

theory, saying "It's just that I'm wondering if maybe there's a quantum element to what's

happening…I'm just thinking that if everything you're looking for disappears, maybe you should

stop looking. Maybe you should focus on what's tangible in the here and now" (Ozeki 232). By

focusing on the material present, Ruth is ultimately able to find Nao's missing words through the

clues left for her by the Jungle Crow. However, the reading of Nao's narrative is only made

possible through nature's intervention in the world whether through the crow's cawing or the

relentless ocean waves. Affective cosmopolitanism shows the interconnections between the

human and the nonhuman world, while also emphasizing the volition of the posthuman world in

its affective stance.

My thesis follows a three-part structure to first understand the dilemma of posthuman

cosmopolitanism that the novel struggles with within the form of the literary narrative and then

locate the ways in which *Tale* reconceives this tension. First, I will examine the posthuman turn

in the literary narrative by focusing on Nao's diary and metafictional representation within *Tale*.

Second, I will analyze the temporal mode of cosmopolitanism in the novel brought forth through

Nao's notion of "the time being"; however, this mode leads to an elimination of ethics and

politics in the posthuman world. Third, I will focus on affective cosmopolitanism within the

novel, as I perceive literary and environmental affects as the primary ways in which *Tale*

negotiates the problem of posthuman cosmopolitanism and brings forth a new ethics and politics.

However, although the novel does hint at the politics of affective cosmopolitanism, it largely

deals with the ethical implications.

The Posthuman Turn in the Literary Narrative

The novel initially sees literature as a human construct owing to Ruth's own experiences as a writer. As she tries to work on her mother's memoir, Ruth finds herself struggling to pen down her ideas. She believes this problem is due to a lack of human contact and the encroaching rainforest which surrounds her home on the tiny island in the Pacific Northwest. When Ruth finds herself missing New York, she explains that it is because of her passion for human culture as a novelist:

> She missed the built environment of New York City. It was only in an urban landscape, amid straight lines and architecture, that she could situate herself in human time and history. As a novelist, she needed this. She missed people. She missed human intrigue, drama and power struggles. She needed her own species, not to talk to, necessarily, but just to be among, as a bystander in a crowd or an anonymous witness. But here on the sparsely populated island, human culture barely existed. (Ozeki 61)

After being surrounded by human culture in New York City, Ruth considers the Pacific Northwest a place where the natural environment overshadows the human quite literally in terms of the immense rainforests but also in terms of the scarcity of people living there. Ruth presumes that literature can only be located in a humanist environment since a posthuman space such as the island in the Pacific Northwest does not grant agency to the human figure and therefore literature cannot be created. Ruth emphasizes the relationship between the human and the literary, refusing to believe that an alternative scenario may exist. She adds that from the standpoint of a novelist, literature needs the human to situate itself in "human time and history"

(61). Therefore, Ruth views literature as both a product of human creation as well as a medium through which specifically human stories are told and shared.

The world has always seen literature as a humanist phenomenon. Whether it be for the purpose of representing human emotion or to share human stories across time and space, the literary narrative has always been selfishly human with the environment merely existing in the background. Rachel Greenwald Smith attributes one of the reasons for the humanistic tendencies of literature to the affective hypothesis, or "the belief that literature is at its most meaningful when it represents and transmits the emotional specificity of personal experience" (1). She goes on to say that this hypothesis functions invisibly and seeps into almost every discipline and movement as "we read works of literature because they allow us direct contact with individuals who are like us but not us…they provoke empathy" (1). This relationship between the human and the literary continues to exist even through the current century when Ruth cannot help but blame the rainforest for her writer's block in *Tale*, creating a metafictional moment connecting the present-day state of literature to the novel's exploration of literary creation.[6]

---

[6] Although my thesis focuses on the posthuman form of subjectivity, Mojca Krevel looks at the postmodern literary subject in *Tale* and illustrates that the diminishing boundary between the real and the fictive in the novel mirrors postmodern creation of identity. Although the postmodern and the posthuman notions of the subject often overlap, posthumanism transcends the human and takes into account the environment and technology, making everything a subject. On the other hand, postmodernism leads to the death of the subject and human beings become object-like themselves as a result of their fractal natures. Therefore, posthumanism and postmodernism differ in the ways they eliminate the subject-object binary.

This metafictional turn seems to signify the rejection of posthumanism by the form of the novel initially as the character Ruth embodies the author Ruth Ozeki in this instance when she speaks about the humanist process of literary creation. *Tale* is centered on the process of Ruth reading the protagonist Nao's diary, leading to the assumption that the diary should provide a glimpse into her life and what it means to be human. Ruth often reads Nao's narrative from a humanistic perspective and she says, "she couldn't help but feel a strong sense of karmic connection with the girl and her father. The diary had washed up on Ruth's shoreline, after all" (Ozeki 311). Ruth disregards the environmental agency involved in the process of reading Nao's narrative and simply thinks of the diary as a humanistic creation where Nao is the only figure that matters. In fact, Ruth often ignores the posthuman aspects of Nao's narrative, and even berates her husband Oliver for straying from a humanistic perspective – "After everything she'd just read – about Nao's life, the girl's father, her situation at school – that [Oliver's] mind would alight upon the crows! There were so many other more pressing things she would have preferred to discuss" (54). Ruth holds a stubbornly humanistic outlook toward literature, even refusing to take into consideration the opinions of other humans with regards to the analysis of the diary. She assumes that the ocean brought the diary to her to facilitate a human connection between her and Nao, rather than seeing this moment for what it is - a random act of nature.

However, Ruth's attempt to read Nao's diary in this humanistic manner is not an isolated event. Nao too begins writing in the diary with a wholly humanistic aim of recording a human life story. Nao begins her journal by saying, "My purpose for writing it before I die is to tell someone the fascinating life story of my hundred-and-four-year-old-great-grandmother, who is a Zen Buddhist nun" (5). Although life writing is her initial goal, the diary quickly turns into a

posthumanist narrative as she realizes the futility of focusing on a humanist narrative in the

Anthropocene era. She says:

> I want to leave something real behind. But what can I write about that's real?
>
> Sure, I can write about all the bad shit that's happened to me, and my feelings
>
> about my dad and my mom and my so-called friend, but I don't particularly want
>
> to. Whenever I think about my stupid empty life, I come to the conclusion that
>
> I'm just wasting my time, and I'm not the only one…And if time is lost forever,
>
> what does that mean? It's not like you get to die any sooner, right? (22)

Although Nao does not necessarily refer to the Anthropocene in this scene, her preoccupation

with the nature of time and the death of the human brings to mind the notion of deep time. Deep

time refers to geologic time that goes beyond the human scale of time (Dimock 759-760).[7] From

a deep time perspective, the human figure does not matter and in a sense, is already dead. Thus,

Nao's journal slowly unravels from a humanistic narrative to a posthumanist tale that

understands the insignificance of the human figure in the world.

    In fact, Nao often perceives herself as an insignificant figure in her very own narrative.

When Nao questions, "Would I be washed out to sea?," she points to the human figure's

---

[7] Wai Chee Dimock also refers to deep time as "denationalized space" (760), which is

interesting to think about from a cosmopolitan perspective. There appears to be a pre-human

quality to the idea of deep time, rather than being posthuman. Yet, I see Nao's struggle with

locating the human within this deep time framework as a posthuman struggle, precisely because

she speaks from the perspective of a migratory individual dealing with the cosmopolitan nature

of the world.

immersion in the sea, thereby foreshadowing a posthuman setting (Ozeki 193). However, by doing so, she also conflates the diary's own material existence with herself since the diary is the one that washes out to sea. Nao conflates herself with the diary in this representation, thus reducing the importance of both the human figure as well as literary creations produced by the human in light of the overpowering agency of the sea. The diary as a form of literature floats out to sea and is washed up on the island's shores, suggesting that the ocean waves have agency over the diary's journey as opposed to a more human model of literary circulation which would involve purchasing the book at a bookstore. Thus, the novel showcases a shift from a humanist to a posthumanist mode of literary circulation and production.

Tale portrays the embedded narrative of Nao's diary as being disseminated and eventually created through the agency of the environment. Both the manner in which the diary gets to Ruth and the way in which Nao's narrative unfolds involve nonhuman elements, indicating that the human does not have sole authority over the literary narrative. First, the ocean is responsible for Ruth finding Nao's diary in the first place. Ruth says, "The sea was always heaving things up and hurling them back" (8), and the discovery of the diary indicates that the ocean attains a positive form of agency in the narrative's journey to Ruth. However, the ocean becomes an invasive force as well, since "the damp sea had swollen [the diary's] pages and the silverfish had taken up residence in their spines" (11). As the human object of the diary and the oceanic elements intermingle, the duality caused by the nature-culture binary in the novel diminishes. The diary becomes a posthuman element where the agency of the narrative becomes equally posthuman. Braidotti refers to this force as "zoe," or a "non-human yet affirmative life force...a vitalist materialism…resting solidly on a neo-Spinozist political ontology of monism and radical immanence (*After Cosmopolitanism* 11). In this novel, the ocean becomes this life

force that dissolves the narrative within it and decides when and where the diary is brought back to the fore time and again. Oliver uses the example of the gyre and the Great Pacific garbage patch to explain the way the ocean takes control of the story - "Anything that doesn't sink or escape from the gyre gets sucked up into the middle of a garbage patch…The diary and letters disintegrating, unread. But instead it got washed up on the beach below Jap Ranch, where you could find it… As in the-universe-provides kind of amazing?" (Ozeki 36).[8] By attributing the journey of the diary to the oceanic forces, the novel points to literary circulation as a posthuman process, in the sense that both the human and the nonhuman are equally involved in its materialization and distribution across the world.

---

[8] Petra Fachinger also brings up the intermingling of the local and the global with regards to the environment as she explores the ecological issues in *Tale* through a transnational lens and draws connections between global capitalism and degradation of the environment. She writes, "*A Tale for the Time Being* makes it clear that the local and the global have become interconnected to such a degree that even a secluded place like Cortes Island does not remain unaffected by acts of mass violence and by natural and human-made disasters elsewhere in the world" (Fachinger 50). Drawing on Rob Nixon's theory of slow violence, Fachinger argues that the novel makes visible the connections between social and environmental injustice, and thereby promotes "environmentally inflected global citizenship" (54). While I concede that the link between the social world and the environmental world is of utmost importance within this novel, I believe that the reason for this association lies in the posthuman state of the world that the novel promotes and already exists within.

Ozeki responds to the intermingling of the human and the nonhuman in the material world by using a posthuman form of the literary novel through the help of layers of metafiction. Metafiction refers to fiction which emphasizes its own constructed nature to remind the reader of the artificiality of the literary work. *Tale* features a double metafictional move by portraying the character Ruth's writing process, while also showing Ruth reading about Nao's writing process in her diary, which is a representation of metafiction within metafiction. These dual layers of metafiction interact because of the agency of the oceanic elements, which reveals the constructed nature of literature both from a literary as well as a material perspective. *Tale* shows that parts of Nao's narrative are created by the mysterious crow, while the physical diary itself is distributed by the ocean. These dual metafictional characteristics speak to Karen Barad's notion of a posthumanist performativity, "a materialist, naturalist, and posthumanist elaboration—that allows matter its due as an active participant in the world's becoming, in its ongoing intra-activity" (803).[9] Barad's theory of performativity tries to destabilize the agency and power accorded to language to represent the world, instead opting for matter's role in this process. There appears to be a shift from linguistic representations to material ontology as Barad proposes that "the primary semantic units are not "words" but material-discursive practices through which

---

[9] Barad questions, "Why are language and culture granted their own agency and historicity while matter is figured as passive and immutable, or at best inherits a potential for change derivatively from language and culture?" (801), thereby pointing to the implicit nature-culture binary and the notions of inactivity and lack of agency associated with matter in the past. However, new materialism tries to overturn this binary as well as the underlying beliefs about agency.

boundaries are constituted. This dynamism *is* agency. Agency is not an attribute but the ongoing reconfigurings of the world" (818). The novel's metafictional maneuvers point to literature as a material phenomenon that is constantly changing and dynamic in its configurations, leading to a world where the human and the nonhuman are constantly shifting in their ontologies.

The novel's examination of literature through a posthuman framework frees the diary from the bounds of time and space, creating a liminal space in the world for the diary to exist in and to exhibit posthuman performativity. When Nao reaches the present "now" of her existence, the diary runs out of words, which forces Ruth as the reader to search for the missing words in her dream with the help of the aforementioned crow. Ruth says Nao had "just caught up with herself. With the now of her story…but the end keeps receding, like an outgoing wave" (Ozeki 375-76). As Ruth tries to find out what happens to Nao after she reaches the "now" of her existence, the ending of the story comes to life as the reader Ruth has to physically reach for it. She says, "The word appears on the horizon, black against the unbearable light, and as it comes closer, it starts to turn and spiral…and then, fully feathered, it starts to fly" (349). The narrative stops being just a narrative and transforms into ontology through the metaphor of the crow as the elusive ending. The ending of Nao's narrative demonstrates posthuman performativity as the agency shifts from human hands to those of the nonhuman. With the analogy of the crow and the ocean wave, the novel makes the process of reading a posthuman phenomenon that involves nonhuman agency. However, this posthuman power also allows the diary's narrative to have its own agency and to travel back and forth between the reader and the writer in a performative manner.

Posthuman performativity not only makes possible the reading of the narrative, but also adds to literary creation through magical realist environmental events which affect the story arc.

Ruth's Jungle Crow guides her numerous times and helps her find her missing cat as well as the missing words at the end of Nao's diary as mentioned above. However, the crow is not just a normal crow; it is anthropomorphized through its perceptive nature and ability to change the plot. The crow is said to embody the spirit of Nao's great-uncle kamikaze pilot Haruki #1, who likens himself to the Crow Captain who flies in war, while one of the island inhabitants Muriel equates the crow to Grandmother Crow, "one of the magical ancestors who can shape-shift and take animal or human form" (258; 96). In this manner, the anthropomorphized crow serves as a nonhuman character that is created from human fables and enables the intersection of Ruth's and Nao's storylines. Oliver tells Ruth, "My theory is that this crow from Nao's world came here to lead you into the dream so you could change the end of her story" (376). Thus, the crow becomes a messenger figure that not only transcends the boundaries of cosmopolitan time and space, but also blurs the human-nonhuman binary by participating in the creation of the narrative. Through the blurring of the binary between the human and the nonhuman, the crow guides the novel toward an ontological submersion of the human within the nonhuman by using the literary as its medium.

However, the breakdown of the nature-culture binary does not just reveal associations between the human and the environment, but also unravels the unitary human subject. Stacy Alaimo uses the oceanic world to describe this phenomenon, saying "the jelly-fish, which seems barely to exist as a creature, not only because it is a body without organs but because it is nearly indistinguishable from its watery world. Seemingly flimsy and fragile, these gelatinous creatures are nonetheless thriving" ("New Materialisms, Old Humanisms, or, Following the Submersible" 283). Trans-corporeality, or a move away from the physical body, causes the human to become

equally immersed in the earthly world, therefore losing its unitary nature.[10] She adds that marine life "fosters complex mappings of agencies and interactions in which—for humans as well as for pelagic and benthic creatures—there is, ultimately, no firm divide between mind and matter, organism and environment, self and world" (283). Thus, the elimination of binaries creates a non-dialectical kind of materialism, which changes the understanding of the human subject as well.

Nao too is a human with a fragmented sense of identity owing to the collapse of the human-nonhuman binary in her narrative. In *Tale*, Nao struggles with the decentering of the human subject due to the constant tension between the human and posthuman worlds in the novel. When Nao goes to the beach, she battles with this very question as she considers her significance in the world with respect to the ocean waves:

---

[10] Stacy Alaimo emphasizes that trans-corporeality "opens up a mobile "space" that acknowledges the often unpredictable and unwanted actions of human bodies, non-human creatures, ecological systems, chemical agents, and other actors" ("New Materialisms, Old Humanisms, or, Following the Submersible" 282). Alaimo's notion of a transcorporeal space seems to be derived from Pickering's idea of a "posthumanist space [as] a space in which the human actors are still there but now inextricably entangled with the nonhuman, no longer at the center of the action calling the shots" (26). However, while Pickering's concept of entanglement is epistemological in order to think about what a posthuman framework looks like, Alaimo sees it from an ontological perspective. New materialism therefore creates a space where previously ignored material and immaterial phenomena in the world arising from these interconnections can be recognized, while also giving agency and embodiment to them.

Have you ever tried to bully a wave?…I smacked the wave with the stick, cutting

through it, but the water kept coming. I ran back up the beach and escaped, but

the next one knocked me over. I got to my feet and attacked again and again, and

each time the water crashed down on top of me, grinding me against the

rock….the violence of the waves felt powerful and real…the next time I fell

down, I just lay there and let the waves wash over me, and I wondered what

would happen if I stopped trying to get back up. Just let my body go. Would I be

washed out to sea? (Ozeki 189-193)

Nao illustrates the internal struggle in her mind by battling with the waves, attempting to achieve

the humanist ideal of having more agency than the waves. However, she also speculates about a

scenario wherein she sheds her notion of being the dominant human subject and instead allows

the ocean to submerse her within it. Nao ends up leaning more toward the latter; however, such

posthumanist thought causes Nao to experience uncertainty about her human self. This anxiety

seeps into the literary narrative of Nao's diary within the novel and adds to its posthuman nature,

while also disintegrating the unitary human subject.

With the shift from humanism to posthumanism in the form of the novel, there is also a

subsequent shift in ethics and politics that takes place. Alaimo says, "As the material self cannot

be disentangled from networks that are simultaneously economic, political, cultural, scientific,

and substantial, what was once the ostensibly bounded human subject finds herself in a swirling

landscape of uncertainty where practices and actions that were once not considered in ethical or

political terms suddenly become the very stuff of the crises at hand" ("New Materialisms, Old

Humanisms, or, Following the Submersible" 282). While ethical and political concerns were

primarily within the domain of the human before, they now become a part of other material and

immaterial elements in the world which were previously outside the realm of ethics and politics.[11] This entanglement makes the human being just another aspect of the world and leads to the creation of posthuman literature, as seen in *Tale*.

  Tale wrestles with the ethical and political implications of posthumanism when Nao's great-uncle and kamikaze pilot Haruki #1 is forced to choose between attacking the American battleships during World War II and sacrificing his life to the ocean waves. Haruki's utter perplexity with regards to his decision leads to him handing over agency to the environment. In his letters, Haruki imagines himself as the Crow Captain who flies off to do battle (Ozeki 258), thereby using a nonhuman figuration of the human to signify his purpose as a kamikaze pilot. However, the pivotal moment is when Haruki #1 chooses not to aim his plane at the American battleships in World War II, but instead decides to fly into the waves:

    In the end, then, what volition will arise in me? Will I bravely hold my plane's course steady, knowing that at the moment of contact my body will explode in a ball of flames and kill so many of my so-called enemy, whom I have never met and whom I cannot hate? Or will cowardice (or my better human nature) rally one last time, just long enough to nudge my hand on the control stick and turn my plane off course, so that by choosing to end my life in watery disgrace…I will

---

[11] At the end of *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*, Alaimo advocates an ethics "that is not circumscribed by the human but is instead accountable to a material world that is never merely an external place but always the very substance of ourselves and others" (158). Therefore, from a new materialist approach, ethics and politics need to be made part of a larger realm in order to matter in the world.

(save lives)…the very outcome of this war will be decided by a moment and a

millimeter, representing the outward manifestation of my will. But how am I to

know?...Knowing what I do about the depravity with which this war has been

waged, I am determined to do my utmost to steer my plane away from my target

and into the seas. Better to do battle with the waves, who may yet forgive me.

(325-28)

By making the decision to save lives, albeit giving up his own, Haruki appears to promote human

life and human will. However, this agency is portrayed as a posthuman quality rather than

something Haruki voluntarily chooses to do, as he says, "In the end, then, what volition will arise

in me?...or will cowardice (or my better human nature) rally one last time…" (325). Haruki's

inability to take responsibility for his own decision makes it seem as if the environment is the

one taking over this agency. By choosing to battle with the waves instead of other humans, he

opts for a posthuman ethical framework by locating forgiveness in the waves, rather than in the

human. The motif of the waves links Nao and Haruki's stories together as they both battle

internally between humanist and posthumanist understandings of the world. However, Haruki

believes the decision will magically materialize in front of him, emerging not from within the

human but rather from the surrounding world. Haruki's choice of the waves showcases a

posthuman agency that shifts the ethics and politics of the posthuman novel.

    Tale showcases the attributes of a posthuman novel in both its dual metafictional form

and its portrayal of environmental agency. However, with the shift from a humanist to a

posthuman novel, the ethics and politics of the posthuman novel come into question. If the

human no longer plays a significant role in the form of the novel, the ethical and political

dilemmas of the human also fall away, as in the case of Haruki. As he gives over agency to the

ocean waves, the soldier's ethical dilemma to attack or not to attack also gets eliminated due to the agency of the environment. Therefore, the question arises as to what the ethics and politics of the posthuman novel looks like. One of the main concerns that the novel struggles with is the cosmopolitan project as seen in Nao and Ruth's migratory narratives. Humanist literature is often seen as a way to further the cosmopolitan cause. Cosmopolitanism as a movement is also guilty of being humanist precisely because it sees literature as a tool to connect human beings across distances through the sharing of stories. Kwame Anthony Appiah says, "One characteristic of European cosmopolitanism, especially since the Enlightenment, has been a receptiveness to art and literature from other places, and a wider interest in lives elsewhere" (4). This intellectual awareness, in turn, leads to "the recognition that human beings are different and that we can learn from each other's differences" (4). As literature centered on the human becomes a mode of furthering the goal of cosmopolitanism, the cosmopolitan subject also becomes equally restricted to the human species. However, with the posthuman turn in literature, ethics and politics shifts as the cosmopolitan subject moves beyond the human figure to incorporate the environment as well.

Temporal Cosmopolitanism

Tale features cosmopolitan subjects trapped in a posthuman world, yet cosmopolitanism initially emerged as a normative and humanist term used to describe a world with a single, shared community of people. One of the earliest to do so, Immanuel Kant first explains his cosmopolitan ideas in 1784, saying "there is enough to justify a hope that after many revolutions and re-modellings of states, the supreme purpose of nature will be accomplished in the establishment of a cosmopolitic state as the bosom in which all the original tendencies of the human species are to be developed" (391).[12] However, Kant believes that cosmopolitanism is a possibility only within the human species because man is the "sole rational creature upon earth" (386).[13] This humanist understanding of cosmopolitanism is quite essential to the cosmopolitan project in Kant's day; however, in the posthuman novel *Tale*, Ozeki abandons a humanist model of cosmopolitanism because it fails to take into account the environmental elements participating

---

[12] In comparison to current ideas about cosmopolitanism, Kant's understanding seems to be more political since he says he is interested in "the establishment of a perfect constitution of society", or a "commonwealth" (388). Of course, this political aspect is the thing that makes Kant's idea of cosmopolitanism so unachievable, resulting in its rejection by later scholars.

[13] Although Kant's strong humanist opinions may seem a bit out of place in current literary discourse, it is important to note that he wrote this essay during the Enlightenment, which celebrated man and reason. However, what strikes me as surprising is that this humanist understanding of cosmopolitanism continues to this day, even when we have moved to a posthuman framework of looking at the world. See Higgins for more information on why the cosmopolitan humanist stubbornly refuses to use a broader approach to look at cosmopolitanism.

in the cosmopolitan framework. Within the humanist model, Appiah describes the world as a "global tribe" and an individual being a "citizen of the world" (xiii; xv).[14] However, he tries to construct the cosmopolitan subject in a normative manner by considering the ethical requirements needed to create the perfect cosmopolitan society, limiting individual differences to the realm of the human.[15] However, a truly cosmopolitan society in the posthuman world must transcend the human figure and move away from ethical and political norms in order to be considered cosmopolitan at all, which is what Ozeki tries to do through a posthuman model. In this posthuman model, Ozeki moves toward a temporal mode of cosmopolitanism as opposed to the spatial mode linked to humanist cosmopolitanism.

---

[14] However, as Appiah himself rightly points out, the Cynics of the fourth century BC coined the term cosmopolitan, intending it to mean "citizen of the cosmos", where "the cosmos referred to the world, not in the sense of the earth, but in the sense of the universe" (xiv). This point makes me wonder whether the Cynics had a more posthuman understanding of the term, which somehow got lost after Enlightenment discourse came into the picture. See Kant for more information on cosmopolitan ideas during the Enlightenment.

[15] Appiah rightly argues, "cosmopolitanism is not the name of the solution but of the challenge" (xv). I think Appiah is correct in viewing cosmopolitanism as a difficult ideal to recreate in society; however, it is because of the normative way in which he views the concept of cosmopolitanism that he starts facing this dilemma. He goes on to specify that the cosmopolitan individual needs to acquire an "openness to the world", "exposure to the range of human customs and beliefs", and "truth and reason" (5; 6; 26), all of which describe the cosmopolitan subject normatively.

At the outset, Ozeki recognizes the spatial nature of the preexisting humanist cosmopolitan perspective. Cosmopolitanism has always been linked to this idea of lacking a specific nation state to call home. In *Tale*, both Nao and Ruth lack a fixed place to call home. Nao finds her home in zazen, or meditation, which her grandmother teaches her, and she says, "You return your mind to zazen, it feels like coming home...Zazen is a home you can't ever lose" (Ozeki 182-183); however, home becomes a physically intangible space for Nao through this strategy. Ruth is also unsure of home as a concrete place and says, "I don't know what home would feel like" (234). Cosmopolitanism remains a physically intangible concept in the world for Ruth and Nao because of their lack of a spatial home. This uncertainty makes Ruth and Nao unsure of their ontological and temporal existences as well. However, the novel foregoes this spatially objective approach to cosmopolitanism and perceives it as a project of world-making instead, striving to bring the human and the nonhuman under the cosmopolitan umbrella of "the time being." This shift from spatial logic to temporality opens up the cosmopolitan worldview to a different kind of political framework, not based on nation states. Instead, the novel looks toward temporality as the cosmopolitan idea of home.[16]

Although *Tale* utilizes a cosmopolitan framework to understand the meaning of "the time being," it departs from the traditional normative notions of cosmopolitanism. When Nao first starts writing in her journal, she wonders about the identity of the reader, saying, "Are you a male or a female or somewhere in between? Are you in a New York subway car… Sunnyvale…

---

[16] Of course, Ozeki could just abandon the cosmopolitan project altogether; however, she remains committed to the idea of the cosmopolitan connection and attempts to redefine the stringent nature of humanist cosmopolitanism, rather than rejecting it completely.

Phuket… Brighton?" (3). These questions pointing to differences in place and gender suggest cosmopolitan human difference.[17] However, at the end, she says that "it doesn't matter very much, because by the time you read this, everything will be different and you will be nowhere in particular, flipping idly through the pages of this book...wondering if you should keep on reading" (3). By pointing to changed notions of temporality in the literary process of reading, Nao dissolves cosmopolitan difference by hinting at its overall insignificance within time itself. In this sense, the novel moves toward a posthuman understanding of cosmopolitanism by using the temporal limit as the point of connection.

In *Tale*, time serves as the cosmopolitan connection between the human and the nonhuman. Time appears to be the only concrete variable in the novel as the novel starts blurring the boundary between the human and the environment by including them under the same umbrella of "the time being." Nao's grandmother Jiko equates the human and the nonhuman saying, "Surfer, wave, same thing…A wave is born from deep conditions of the ocean. A person is born from deep conditions of the world. A person pokes up from the world and rolls along like

---

[17] It is interesting to note that while I see the conflict between holism and difference as a mark of cosmopolitan identity within the novel, Marlo Starr believes that this conflicted subjectivity hints at a feminist portrayal of Nao and Ruth's transnational connection. Starr examines embodiments of feminism in *Tale* and claims that transnational feminism is the alternative to cyber- and Buddhist feminisms, as it allows for empowerment through materiality as well as disembodiment. Although I think that the materiality and disembodiment of the characters in the novel definitely play a role in shaping subjectivity, these characteristics may not necessarily translate to a purely feminist model.

a wave, until it is time to sink down again" (194). This connection of beings involves a struggle

to make sense of cosmopolitanism through a posthuman framework. However, the novel uses

Jiko's non-dualistic understanding of the world to create a new kind of cosmopolitanism, one

that includes nonhuman nature and time as well as the human. Nao says, "Form is emptiness and

emptiness is form…I think it means that nothing in the world is solid or real, because nothing is

permanent, and all things – including trees and animals and pebbles and mountains and rivers

and even me and you – are just kind of flowing through for the time being" (106-107).[18] The

novel not only goes against the traditional humanist understanding of cosmopolitanism but also

points to the ongoing reconfiguration of all beings, which defies normativity.

The concept of cosmopolitan difference takes on a new political role as it transcends the

boundaries of the human in *Tale*. Rosi Braidotti advocates a "nomadic form of reflexive

cosmopolitanism," where she looks at the concept of difference as a hierarchical notion in the

past as a way to highlight an "implicit norm" (*After Cosmopolitanism* 12). Moving away from

prior conceptions of cosmopolitan difference, Braidotti looks at the cosmopolitan subject in a

new way which frees the cosmopolitan subject from the bounds of capitalism, while still

maintaining its existence in the world. She says, "The nomadic subject is a performative image, a

---

[18] Drawing on this notion of "the time being," Sue Lovell attempts to uncover new forms

of posthuman subjectivity in *Tale* through narratological methods. She claims posthumanist

narratives like *Tale* shape identity representationally, discursively and actively to generate shifts

in reader consciousness. While I believe that the connection between the reader and the writer is

significant in *Tale*, it is also equally important for *Tale*'s posthuman take to consider the

implications of literary affects, as I will discuss later on.

political myth that allows me to weave together different levels of my experience…a

postmetaphysical vision of subjectivity" (*Nomadic Subjects* 29). By denying the ontological

existence of the nomadic subject and moving on to an epistemological representation, Braidotti

looks at the kinds of politics that the nomadic subject can engender. She says, "The nomad

enacts transitions without a teleological purpose;…the rhizome stands for a nomadic political

ontology, that…provides relational foundations for a posthumanist view of subjectivity.

Nomadic consciousness is a form of political resistance to hegemonic, fixed, unitary, and

exclusionary views of subjectivity" (58).[19] Thus, Braidotti's rhizomatic understanding of

cosmopolitan difference offers current cosmopolitan discourse a non-hierarchical political

framework as opposed to previous normative theories of cosmopolitanism.

Current cosmopolitan discourse tries to include the nonhuman within it and critically

examines humanist cosmopolitanism's normative and subsequently dialectical outlook. Rebecca

Walkowitz terms critical cosmopolitanism, as a "type of international engagement that can be

distinguished from "planetary humanism" by…an aversion to heroic tones of appropriation and

progress, and a suspicion of epistemological privilege, views from above or from the center that

---

[19] Here, the idea of the rhizome refers to Deleuze's nomadic mode of figuration, where

Deleuze contrasts the rhizomatic root (a root that grows sideways) with the linear roots of trees.

Braidotti says, "it is "as if" the rhizomatic mode expressed a nonphallogocentric way of thinking:

secret, lateral spreading as opposed to the visible, vertical ramifications of Western trees of

knowledge" (*Nomadic Subjects* 58).

assume a consistent distinction between who is seeing and what is seen" (2).[20] This critical

approach to cosmopolitanism has resulted in many scholars refusing to define the term

cosmopolitanism, saying that "cosmopolitanism refers to a philosophical project and also to an

attitude" (5), since it is a constantly changing project derived from the ongoing epistemological

frameworks in the world.[21] This refusal to define cosmopolitanism further shifts the

cosmopolitan project from being normative to a post-normative one, which "cultivates a process

of differentiation that produces an ever-broader spectrum of identities," which are mutable and

un-made (Cherniavsky, "Neocitizenship and Critique" 20). With this reconfiguration of identities

geared toward the future, the cosmopolitan project becomes embedded in the idea of future

possibilities rather than present perception. Pheng Cheah says, "since one cannot *see* the

universe, the world, or humanity, the cosmopolitan optic is not one of perceptual experience but

of the imagination" (26). Cheah foregoes the normativity usually associated with

cosmopolitanism because it is closely linked to the already existing dialectical relationships in

---

[20] It is important to note that cosmopolitanism has always been critical in its approach, as

Walkowitz points out. Kant himself made sure to give cosmopolitans the power to question the

status quo; however, critical cosmopolitanism "implies a new reflection about reflection," or a

critique of critique (Walkowitz 3).

[21] At the beginning of a collection of essays called *Cosmopolitanism*, the editors write,

"specifying cosmopolitanism positively and definitively is an uncosmopolitan thing to do"

(Pollock et al. 1). I find this point quite insightful because it proves just how obscure and broad

cosmopolitanism as a term truly is.

the world.[22] Instead, Cheah sees the world "as an ongoing, dynamic process of becoming, something continually made and re-made rather than a spatial geographical entity" (30-31). This kind of dynamic approach to cosmopolitanism opens up cosmopolitan discourse to other variables besides the normative human figure, such as time and matter, as well as the ability to explore the human aspect more thoroughly without normative constraints.

Drawing on its title, *Tale* features time as the medium for a global posthuman politics, which overturns the fundamental nature of the cosmopolitan movement. Nao says, "A time being is someone who lives in time, and that means you, and me, and every one of us who is, or was, or ever will be" (Ozeki 3). Through this definition of a time being, Nao emphasizes the posthuman nature of the time being by collapsing all of humanity as well as the environment into one mass conglomeration existing in time. The novel draws on Buddhist philosophy and says, "Time itself is being and all being is time…In essence, everything in the entire universe is intimately linked with each other as moments in time, continuous and separate" (30). As time becomes responsible for the cosmopolitan connection between the human and the nonhuman, the nature of

---

[22] Cheah's point is significant because he considers the way in which literature is apt for representing the post-normative cosmopolitan project. He says, "Literature communicates directly with this force because of its peculiar ontological status. As something that is structurally detached from its putative origin and that permits and even solicits an infinite number of interpretations, literature is an exemplary modality of the undecidability that opens a world" (35). Here, Cheah is talking about world literature more broadly, but I think the same could be said of Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being* particularly because of its unique formal aspects as discussed previously.

cosmopolitanism shifts to encapsulate the entire universe. The novel seems to advocate for a shift from cosmopolitanism to planetarity.[23] However, Ozeki seems resistant to giving up the idea of cosmopolitanism altogether. A reason for this persistence might be because planetarity as a concept may either bring together the human and the nonhuman or push them apart, while Ozeki views posthuman cosmopolitanism as undertaking the former only. Although the temporal mode of cosmopolitanism manages to negotiate the non-dialectical epistemological relationships of the posthuman world, it also appears to struggle with representing the wide-ranging cosmopolitan subject in *Tale*.

Due to the ontological implications associated with the distortion of time in *Tale*, temporal cosmopolitanism contributes new challenges to understanding reality. The novel begins by using the metafictional form to point to a cosmopolitan connection; however, this approach soon proves to be futile due to the distorted quality of literary time. Nao's diary serves as a sort of halfway point between reality and imagination, which is the kind of cosmopolitan outlook that Ozeki seems to favor. Nao comments on her writing process, saying, "When I sit down to write, [the words] slip away and become unreal again. The past is weird. I mean, does it really exist? It feels like it exists, but where is it? And if it did exist but doesn't now, then where did it go?...Maybe that Nao of the past never really existed, except in the imagination of this Nao of

---

[23] Planetarity refers to a more ecological way of looking at the planet as opposed to a globalized framework. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak says, "The planet is in the species of alterity, belonging to another system; and yet we inhabit it, on loan….If we imagine ourselves as planetary creatures rather than global entities, alterity remains underived from us; it is not our dialectical negation, it contains us as much as it flings us away" (72-73).

the present" (97). Nao self-reflexively tries to understand her past self through writing, but she makes the mistake of linking the words in her diary to ontology, expecting the two to match up. However, as she notes, the boundary between reality and imagination is slim and writing is especially representative of this dilemma since literary time differs from real time. When you write, "you're always stuck in the *then* and you can never catch up to what's happening *now*, which means that *now* is pretty much doomed to extinction" (98). Nao's metafictional reference to literary time draws attention to the limitations of temporality within the space of her diary, while also highlighting Ozeki's own novelistic process, thus creating a literary cosmopolitan connection between the two writers.

However, the significance of literary time also points to Nao's identity, owing to the similarity between her name and the word "now," which makes her resemble time itself and appear more than human. Nao is a product of the limitations of literary time as she exists both as her real self as well as her diary representation; the two cannot be merged into one. Nao's two selves exist as separate entities which cannot be connected through literature and therefore, literature fails to unite the different aspects of the literary cosmopolitan identity. In the diary, Nao's last words are, "The fact is, I'm all alone...I don't believe I exist, and soon I won't. I am a time being about to expire...Maybe I'm invisible. I guess this is it. This is what now feels like" (340-41). At this moment, Nao's perceptual reality and her literary imagination collide, but this temporal implosion is somehow ontologically evident in the physical diary that Ruth holds in her hands, years later and an ocean away. The temporal limit of literature is transcended by the cosmopolitan space created by the posthuman aspects of the novel.

The temporal distortion of posthuman cosmopolitanism transcends the literary space of the diary and begins to seep into Nao's life as well. She says, "When I was a little kid in

Sunnyvale, I became obsessed with the word *now*. My mom and dad spoke Japanese at home, but everyone else spoke English, and sometimes I would get caught in between the two languages. When that happened, everyday words and their meanings suddenly became disconnected, and the world became strange and unreal" (98). Nao's childhood struggle to place herself in the world due to the disparity between her two languages and in the interstices of her own name results in her adolescent liminality. Drawing upon her own name, she says, "saying *now* obliterates its meaning, turning it into exactly what it isn't...Catching it destroys it, and I felt like I was disappearing too" (99). Through the process of speaking and writing, Nao realizes the temporal fragility of the word "now" as well as her of own self when considered from a bigger cosmopolitan framework of feeling lost in the world. Nao's lost, cosmopolitan nomadism is a result of a shift from a normative to a post-normative take on her own self. As Nao realizes the indefinable nature of the cosmopolitan subject because of the multitude of identities formed through time, her dissonance from reality grows stronger. At one point, she says, "I was unreal and my life was unreal, and Sunnyvale, which was real, was a jillion miles away in time and space," while Ruth also agrees, saying that her "life in New York still felt so vivid and real. Like Nao's Sunnyvale" (79; 95). By highlighting the felt sense of reality that Ruth and Nao feel about distant places occupied in the past, their current sense of reality diminishes with regards to their present posthuman selves. The novel suggests that cosmopolitan realness is in fact, just a product of the past and of the imagination, and does not have a place in the posthuman world.

In the posthuman state of the world in *Tale*, the very understanding of a temporally present reality gets overturned as it is instead used to refer to a sort of cosmopolitan possibility, rather than concrete reality. When Ruth tries to corroborate Nao's stories with factual evidence on the Internet, she is desperate to find out whether Nao is truly real. She says, "she felt like

she'd been trying to suck the girl out of the flowing screen with the sheer force of her will and the fixity of her eyeballs. Why did it matter so much? But it did. She needed to know if Nao was dead or alive. She was searching for a body" (115). Ruth's desire for perceptual evidence of Nao's existence speaks to the nomad's quest for concreteness within the cosmopolitan project. However, the nomad's constantly shifting subjectivity and lack of hierarchical frameworks in the posthuman condition results in a rejection of a concrete understanding of reality.[24] Ruth too starts to give up her prior desire for perceptual truth while exploring the possibilities of quantum theory. Ruth says, "On a subatomic level, a single particle can exist as an array of possibilities, in many places at once…Nao would have liked that…If she were a subatomic particle, she could live here and in New York" (397).[25] The subatomic particle is likened to a cosmopolitan individual occupying many different places at once, and the distortion of time distorts the ontological understanding of the cosmopolitan subject as well.

Although time seems to make possible a posthuman mode of cosmopolitanism, the distortion of temporality also makes it difficult to cultivate posthuman cosmopolitan subjectivity

---

[24] By a concrete understanding of reality, I specifically mean a reality consisting of hegemonic power structures already in place.

[25] Ruth's husband Oliver talks about the specifics of Hugh Everett's theory of multiple worlds, which destroys the idea of one single reality or perspective. He says, "Multiple outcomes imply multiple worlds" (Ozeki 395). So, in the case of the Schrodinger's cat experiment (a cat is put into a box and no one knows whether he is dead or alive until you peek inside), there are two worlds created - "a dead-cat world and an alive-cat world" (398). Merely the possibility of an alternate outcome forms a sort of reality in itself.

ontologically. Nao struggles with the ambiguity of reality, both in her own life as well as in her literary representations, where the ambiguity arises due to the different narrative layers in this novel. Nao's ultimate goal with the diary is to attain a certain sense of tangibility, something that the cosmopolitan nomad lacks, and to impart this tangible affect to the reader. She says, "I want to leave something real behind. But what can I write about that's real?" (22). The novel links the cosmopolitan perspective with the limitations of language, both of which have a hard time proving their ontological existences. *Tale* starts off by referring to itself as just a fictional idea, in a metafictional move, saying "Or maybe none of these things will happen except in my mind and yours, because, like I told you, together, we're making magic, at least for the time being" (5). The novel seems to embrace the imaginative possibilities of literature and cosmopolitanism at first. Nao and Ruth's worlds collide precisely because of this ability to imagine a world where the corners of their worlds meet, engendering an imaginative cosmopolitanism. However, at the end of the novel, Ruth turns away from the imaginative possibilities of a cosmopolitan optic and says, "I don't care about other worlds. I care about this one. I care whether she's dead or alive in this world...This watch is real. Listen. It's ticking. It's telling me the time" (400). Ruth rejects the notion of temporal possibilities by moving toward a materialist notion of the world, which seems to bring the novel back to the idea of a normative cosmopolitanism.

Although time appears to be the solution to the dilemma of posthuman cosmopolitanism, it also raises a new set of problems for the cosmopolitan subject. For instance, the unbounded and uncontrollable nature of time seems to eradicate any kind of ethics and politics for the posthuman cosmopolitan subject since reality becomes difficult to pinpoint. As Ruth contemplates Nao's existence in the world after reading the diary, she says, "In the earthquake and the tsunami, 15,854 people died, but thousands more simply vanished, buried alive or sucked

back out to sea by the outflow of the wave. Their bodies were never found. Nobody would ever

know what happened to them" (400). In this scene, the death and decay caused by the ocean

waves and time itself cannot be reversed, therefore eradicating any cosmopolitan ideals that Ruth

initially had. As the ocean waves immerse thousands of human beings within its depths, Ozeki

makes it clear that posthuman cosmopolitanism can in fact eliminate the human altogether, in

which case any kind of ethics and politics becomes unnecessary. In this sense, time does not

serve as a solution to Ozeki's original question dealing with the normative nature of

cosmopolitanism. If those norms completely fall away, then ethics and politics disappear too and

the cosmopolitan subject becomes just an imaginary possibility in the world, much like the

quantum particle. Therefore, even as Ozeki calls the cosmopolitan subject "a time being," she

also attempts to give it materiality through affect, or the cosmopolitan connection itself. Affect

helps to deal with the challenges to reality posed by a temporal mode of cosmopolitanism. In

turn, affect makes possible new ethical and political frameworks for the posthuman cosmopolitan

subject.

  The lost and nomadic quality of posthuman cosmopolitanism is alleviated through the

materiality of posthuman affect, wherein time also serves as the medium for affect. Ruth finds

herself at odds with her own self, when she explains the contradictory meanings of her name -

"In Japanese, Ruth is either pronounced *rutsu*, meaning "roots," or *rusu* meaning "not at home"

or "absent"" (59). Simultaneously rooted and absent, Ruth becomes a migratory figure, stuck in

the liminal space of home and non-belonging forever. She finds herself embodying a posthuman

liminality in her dreams - "Not a place, but a feeling of nonbeing, sudden, dark, and

prehuman...No hands, no face, no eyes, no glasses, no Ruth at all. Nothing but a vast and empty

ruthlessness…an eternal sense of merging and dissolving into something unnamable that went on

and on in all directions, forever" (122). Ruth's struggle to locate herself is a result of the

posthuman state of the world as well as her cosmopolitan nature. However, affect solves this

problem by materializing the connection between the human and the nonhuman. Ruth's terror is

soon "replaced by a sense of utter calm and wellbeing...It was like being cradled in the arms of

time itself" (123). Therefore, Ruth's initial discomfort with being a posthuman disembodied self

gradually shifts to a sense of comfort due to the material and maternal role played by time. The

destructive connotations usually associated with time give way to a sense of permanence as Ruth

says, "she stayed suspended in this blissful state for an eternity or two" (123). The embodiment

of material and immaterial elements in the dream is reversed as Ruth is the one who is

disembodied while time is embodied and is represented with arms. This strange role reversal

creates a sense of the posthuman world as blurring the binary between the material and the

immaterial, while creating an affective connection between the human and the nonhuman at the

same time.

Thus, affect causes a new kind of cosmopolitan worlding to take place. Claire Colebrook

says, "Above and beyond physical and political borders there might be affective or immaterial

communities… a space of infinite hospitality without limit, a city of refuge that occupies a

virtual space, a community that is not grounded upon a common soil or even a normative notion

of the citizen" (167). She uses the immateriality generated from affect to create a new kind of

cosmopolitanism, one that adheres to immaterial as well as material elements of the world.[26]

---

[26] Colebrook argues that the old approach to cosmopolitanism relies heavily on

materiality - "Traditionally the cosmos signifies an orderliness, suggesting that the actual globe

as material entity is placed within or expressive of a broader harmony (a cosmos of the planets

Colebrook argues, "In new forms of cosmopolitanism such appeals to divine or eternal harmony give way to an imaginative supplement: whatever the world is here and now, with all its global networks, markets and power structures, there can also be the figuration of ethical territories" (167).[27] Thus, the affective and imaginative worlds created are directly associated with a shift in ethics, pointing to a new kind of cosmopolitanism - affective cosmopolitanism.[28] I will use the term affective cosmopolitanism to look more closely at the new kind of cosmopolitanism that

---

and heavens)" (167). However, Colebrook goes against this notion to suggest that immateriality also has a place within cosmopolitanism today.

[27] It is interesting to note that Colebrook still believes in norms within cosmopolitanism as she says, "I maintain certain norms and values – this gives me the individual identity that allows me to be a moral individual. Yet, on the other hand, I am aware that those values are provisional, culturally and historically specific and never fully universalizable" (177). Although she tries to advocate a post-normative ethical positioning, she does not truly believe that such a position exists as "the cosmos is always an extension of the composed polity, an abstraction or idealization of man englobed in his world of human others" (178).

[28] Melissa Gregg and Gregory Seigworth also agree with the link between cosmopolitanism and affect, saying "Affect marks a body's belonging to a world of encounters or; a world's belonging to a body of encounters but also, in non-belonging, through all those far sadder (de) compositions of mutual in-compossibilites" (2). The idea of belonging or a lack of it is essential to the cosmopolitan project and its origins in affect hint at the possibility of an affective model of cosmopolitanism.

Ozeki's novel constructs.[29] Affective cosmopolitanism is a foray into the space between perception and possibility, to attempt to reveal the kinds of cosmopolitanism that can be made possible in the world through affect, but simultaneously keeping in mind the perceptual limits, which time often ignores.

---

[29] Leela Gandhi defines affective cosmopolitanism as "the ethico-political practice of a desiring self inexorably drawn toward difference," which means that people's "affective intensities are equally liberated toward strangers as to kin" (17). Therefore, an affective community, in the broadest sense, points to a cosmopolitan approach within itself. However, the non-dialectical nature of affect makes it difficult to even quantify what is "difference," by Gandhi's definition, and what is not.

An Affective Mode of Cosmopolitanism

Ozeki's novel turns to the model of affective cosmopolitanism to deal with the lack of ethics and politics that a temporal mode of cosmopolitanism creates in the posthuman world. Often times, posthuman cosmopolitanism can lead to feelings of isolation and nomadism for the human figure, and perhaps for the environmental elements as well. This sense of nomadism stems from the dissonance from reality that temporal cosmopolitanism causes. Thus, the posthuman world may in fact cause a greater binary between the human and the nonhuman, isolating the two within the larger cosmopolitan framework. However, affect is the nebulous resonance between people and things that brings back cosmopolitanism's ethical and political methodologies, without becoming normative.[30] An earlier understanding of affect, which

---

[30] Although affect has no singular definition or theory that defines it, it is a way to make sense of the non-dialectical and new materialist nature of the world. Like posthumanism, affect theories vary vastly. While some approaches look into phenomenologies of embodiment in human/nonhuman nature, others try to blur the affective line between living and nonliving technologies (Gregg and Seigworth 6-8). Still others link movements of matter with incorporeality or use it to resist normativity and are used in feminist and political theory (6-8). Affect can also be a mode of psychoanalytic inquiry to look at intersubjective and interobjective systems of social desiring, or an aspect of postcolonial discourse that considers emotions as affectual qualities without requiring subject and object positions (6-8). Thus, affect can serve a number of different functions and "affect theory is, at one level, an "inventory of shimmers" while, upon another register, it is a matter of affectual composition...as an ontology always coming to formation" (11).

sometimes carries on till today, is that affect refers to emotions that are expressed and reflected by human beings, in a kind of feedback loop (Sedgwick 12). Drawing on Eve Sedgwick's understanding of affect, affect is said to add a texture to the social world that is mixed into our social experiences. However, these earlier views tie affect specifically to the human world. Although *Tale* showcases human affect, it also turns away from this traditional affective model to perceive posthuman affect as a way to solve the dilemma of posthuman cosmopolitanism and materialize the cosmopolitan connection in the novel. Affect transcends the realm of social human relations to occupy the larger environment within this novel through both literary and environmental spaces. Current scholars define affect as being "found in those intensities that pass body to body (human, nonhuman, part-body, and otherwise), in those resonances that circulate about, between, and sometimes stick to bodies and worlds, *and* in the very passages or variations between these intensities and resonances themselves" (Gregg and Seigworth 1). Furthermore, affect becomes a material entity in itself, which helps to diminish the isolated nomadism and ontological challenges to reality that cosmopolitan subjects struggle with in a posthuman world. Instead, they can now turn to affect for a sense of cosmopolitan connection without necessarily locating this affect within a particular space or time or even body. Although the novel mainly takes on affective cosmopolitanism's ethical repercussions, the politics of the project is also hinted at briefly. In *Tale*, Ozeki redefines the concept of cosmopolitanism in the posthuman world and locates the ethics and politics of the cosmopolitan subject within an affective realm, not bound to either the human or the environment but to the space in between.

However, not all forms of affect maintain the nondialectical relationships that Ozeki is striving for in her novel. Nao attempts to move away from a human model of affect, but takes on a different approach, one of disembodiment, which worsens the isolation and sense of unreality

of the cosmopolitan subject. Upon her move to Japan, her classmates often bully her owing to

her linguistic and cultural differences. Initially, she opts for a posthuman disembodiment in order

to cope with her pain and her lack of agency becomes her superpower, as she says:

> Jiko was helping me cultivate my supapawa! by encouraging me to sit zazen for
>
> many hours without moving, and showing me how not to kill anything, not even
>
> the mosquitos that buzzed around my face…I learned not to swat them even when
>
> they bit me and also not to scratch the itch that followed…And soon there was no
>
> difference between me and the mosquitos. My skin was no longer a wall that
>
> separated us, and my blood was their blood. (Ozeki 204)

By making this lack of agency her agential strategy, Nao becomes one with all living beings

including mosquitos, thus achieving the nonunitary subject status that she desires. However, with

this shift from unitariness to immateriality, her suffering also becomes equally immaterial and

gets lost within the posthuman framework of the world. The "my blood was their blood" strategy

might work for the human-nonhuman relationship because the suffering is devoid of power

relations between the human and the nonhuman. However, this strategy does not seem to be

successful for the human-human relationship because of the hierarchical relations involved

which distort the humanist outlook. This disembodiment makes Nao feel lost and isolated

because of her already liminal cosmopolitan subjectivity.

The immateriality of suffering becomes a form of dehumanizing the human cosmopolitan

subject based on the idea of difference, which takes away from the posthuman ethics of equality.

When Nao's classmates decide to film a video while assaulting her, Nao says, "I just lay there,

perfectly still. It was pointless to struggle or scream…They could break my body but they

wouldn't break my spirit...I summoned up my supapawa, and soon the shadows were just

mosquitos, buzzing in the distance and bothersome only if you let them be" (277). Nao's posthuman superpower is her lack of agency and her ability to make her suffering immaterial like mosquitos buzzing in the distance. However, this immaterial suffering, which was formerly a coping mechanism, starts to threaten her survival. Nao attains a state of disembodiment, where she not only moves away from affect but also from her body, instead restricting herself to a small space within her mind. When Nao gets ignored at school by her classmates and teacher, she says, "My voice stopped working then. No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't force any sound to come out...I was unreal and my life was unreal" (77-79). As the disembodiment and lack of agency aggravates, Nao's dissonance from reality and affect increases, fueled by the immanence of suffering. Nao truly becomes a posthuman subject in this instance because of this ability to make herself completely insignificant; however, this insignificance does not apply to all human subjects collectively, just her. Therefore, affect from a disembodied stance fails to solve the problem of the cosmopolitan subject – the isolation and ontological challenges to reality. In fact, this kind of affect worsens the plight of the human figure in a posthuman world, creating an even more normative and restrictive form of ethics and politics than before.

Nao soon realizes that disembodiment fails to solve the problem of human suffering because the immateriality becomes a way of reinforcing power relations rather than eliminating them; therefore, she looks toward posthuman affect to reclaim agency. When the man from the French maid cafe tries to rape her, she goes "to the silent frozen place" in her mind "that was clean and cold and very far away" (335); however, ultimately, she brings herself back from her disembodied self to fight back and reclaim agency in time to find out that Jiko is dying and she must travel all the way to Jiko's temple to bid farewell to her beloved great-grandmother. Nao's reclamation of agency may seem to be contradictory to the posthuman framework of the novel;

however, it speaks to the significance of materializing affect in a space that is neither completely human nor completely posthuman. When Nao reclaims her agency in front of her classmates, she lets out a fierce cry:

> The supapawa of my bald and shining head radiated through the classroom…a bright bulb, a beacon, beaming light into every crack of darkness on the earth and blinding all my enemies. I put my fists on my hips and watched them tremble, holding up their arms to shield their eyes from my unbearable brightness. I opened my mouth and a piercing cry broke from my throat like an eagle, shaking the earth and penetrating into every corner of the universe. I watched my classmates press their hands over their ears, and saw the blood run through their fingers as their eardrums shattered. (288)

This hyperbolic imagery suggests that Nao gains power over her classmates through her singular act of agency in the novel. However, this agency does not come from human will, but rather from affect, as Nao says, "a piercing cry broke from my throat" (288), where there is an absence of bodily agency. Her eagle-like cry pierces the ends of the earth and hints at affective agency as a form of agency that is both human and nonhuman in its expression. Although Nao does show off her bald head and cry out, at the end of the day, all she does is passively watch her classmates' reactions, as indicated by the passive verbs, "watched" and "saw," instead of taking any sort of direct action. Nao's cry and its violent imaginary effects signify a move away from physical agency to the affective power of her grief through that nonhuman cry. The cry brings Nao's suffering out of its current status of immateriality. Affect, just like in other instances throughout the novel, becomes a material thing in itself that moves past questions of agency and non-agency to occupy substantial space in the world as a posthuman creation. This posthuman

affect does not take away from the human's suffering, and also maintains an active relationship with nonhuman agency. Rather than being an expression of only human affect or nonhuman affect, posthuman affect expresses both Nao's grief as well as that of the imaginary eagle in this scene. In this sense, Nao's posthuman affect helps to delineate a clearer sense of the ethics and politics of the posthuman cosmopolitan subject, which involves a bothness rather than a struggle between the human and the nonhuman worlds.

In *Tale*, affect takes the material form of the environment like the eagle's cry above as well as the literary form itself due to the human's ontological dissonance from reality as discussed in the previous section. As both an aesthetic and ideological tool, affect moves the novel forward both formally and content-wise, where literature and nature act as the two affective media in *Tale* bringing back ethics and politics to forgotten groups in the world. As Ruth watches footage from the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, she compares the lost stories of suffering to a gyre, saying "The tidal wave, observed, collapses into tiny particles, each one containing a story…Like plastic confetti, they're drawn into the gyre's becalmed center, the garbage patch of history and time. The gyre's memory is all the stuff we've forgotten" (114). The tsunami and the Internet turn into a human gyre of stories, where people's stories are lost within. Ruth assumes Nao's story to be just one of them, although she turns out not to be a victim of the tsunami. However, the novel's multiple metafictional moves and literary worlds bring to light the resonances of lingering affect from generation to generation even in different times and worlds. In fact, the literary form is able to transmit affect in a way that goes beyond mere representation or connection, but instead the literary worlding creates a swirling and increasing accumulation of affects which highlight both human and nonhuman tales of injustice. Ruth mentions the practice of killing whales to obtain blubber in the nineteenth century and says,

"Whales are time beings…Creatures who survive and live that long presumably have long memories…The locals get excited. But mostly the whales still stay away from Whaletown, leaving only their names behind" (58). The ocean waves further the accumulation of past and present affect by serving as the medium through which the stories are passed on. Therefore, literature and nature not only function as channels for expanding affect, but as affective modes of being themselves, broadening the normative notions of ethics and politics in cosmopolitanism.

Affective cosmopolitanism in *Tale* is also brought out through the material elements of natural migration that seep through the novel into human and nonhuman lives, emphasizing the preexisting cosmopolitan nature of the environment. When Ruth first moves to the island, her surroundings are rife with plant and animal species from various parts of the world. Ruth's European climbing roses and Oliver's bamboo grow together in harmony covering up the outer walls of the house, while Miyagi oyster shells litter the island's beaches (60; 187). This natural cosmopolitanism makes Ruth feel "the wide Pacific ocean shrink just a little" (187). As isolated as the island seems, it incorporates people and plants and things from all parts of the world, suggesting that nature is already a cosmopolitan entity. However, the cosmopolitan nature of the plants appears to hinder human existence as Ruth says, "The two species quickly grew up into a densely tangled thicket, so that soon it was almost impossible to find the entrance to the house if you didn't already know where it was. The house seemed in danger of disappearing" (60). As the materiality of natural cosmopolitanism becomes more prominent, it overshadows the human being's minute existence corresponding with the posthuman state of the world. The threat of the immaterial nonhuman world overshadowing the human remains a crucial problem in posthuman cosmopolitanism.

However, affective cosmopolitanism negotiates this issue through posthuman affect which allows for a coexistence of both the human and the nonhuman in the world, without a hierarchical system in place. The materiality and agency of the ocean waves throughout *Tale* speak to the affective nature of natural cosmopolitanism as it bridges the gap between the human and the nonhuman. When Ruth wonders about Nao's existence, she says, "Was the girl out there somewhere in all that water, her body decomposed by now, redistributed by the waves?" (30). Although she paints a rather morbid scene, Ruth points to the cosmopolitan nature of the waves which moves beyond merely being a natural cosmopolitan entity in the world, but also ensures the human's cosmopolitanism through the image of redistribution of Nao's body throughout the world because of the waves. Although the human is dead in this scene, Ozeki tries to perceive a different way of visualizing the human's position in the world. In fact, Nao even calls herself a "ronin," which means "a samurai warrior who doesn't have a master," or as she describes herself, "a little wave person, floating around on the stormy sea of life" (41; 42). By bringing the terms "wave" and "person" together, Nao creates a new posthuman being, one that is both a combination of the human and nonhuman, at least figuratively. This material and resilient connection between human Nao and the nonhuman waves is maintained through the medium of Nao's diary and diminishes any prior hierarchies existent in the world.

Therefore, Ozeki's "time being" does not just connote living in a posthuman cosmopolitan world, but also points to the affective resonances between time beings because we all live in time collectively. Nao says, "And it occurred to me that the big old tree is a time being, and Jiko is a time being too...and I started to think about how words and stories are time beings" (24). Time not only gains agency by being a significant part of everything in the world, but also serves an affective function, drawing people and words and trees together. Through this shared

affect, time becomes an affective force in all their lives, both epistemologically and materially, although it remains an immaterial thing. Ruth tries to grasp at time's affective nature, saying, "What had those long moments felt like to [Nao]? It was hard to get a sense from the diary of the texture of time passing. No writer, even the most proficient, could re-enact in words the flow of a life lived" (64). By attempting to feel the texture of time itself, Ruth minimizes human agency in the form of the novel and views time as an agential and affective element that goes beyond its linear epistemological function, creating narrative shifts in people's lives. In fact, the novel plays with this idea of posthuman affect by showing increasing evidence of affect that generates from the environment and time itself. Ozeki separates human agency from affect in order to create new kinds of ethics and politics for a posthuman cosmopolitan world, separated from the normative structures already in place.

In fact, literary affect is one of the main ways the characters in the novel make sense of ethical decisions. As Haruki realizes the sense of unreality associated with human knowledge, he starts to depend on the literary form to help him understand the affective nature of his decisions. Haruki writes in his diary, ""Tomorrow I will die in battle," said Captain Crow. Montaigne wrote that death itself is nothing. It is only the fear of death that makes death seem important. Am I afraid? Certainly, and yet… "Que sais-je?" Montaigne asked. The answer is nothing. In reality, I know nothing. And yet, at night I lie on my bed, counting my beads, one for every thing on earth I love, on and on, in a circle without end" (326). Human affects such as fear and love are meaningless in a way, because of the utter ignorance of the human being. Although he lists the things he loves again and again, Haruki really has only his impending death to live for. However, by choosing to write down his affective experiences, they become material and he says in the freedom of death, he will "look forward at last to being fully aware and alive" (324). There

seems to be a strange dichotomy between Haruki's feeling of "being fully aware and alive" and his death; however, the same dichotomy reappears when Jiko's last words on her deathbed turn out to be "To live" (366). Jiko's last words reflect Haruki's last act of agency, both in their non-duality as well as in their literary materiality, as they become literary affects materially changing Nao and Ruth's lives for the better. Therefore, affect shifts from the human space to the written arena which makes the affective cosmopolitan connection materially present in the world.

However, affect is traditionally not a material element of the world, and its immateriality is what causes it to be so undefinable.[31] Ben Highmore says, "In common English usage the words designating affective experience sit awkwardly on the borders of the material and the immaterial, the physical and the metaphysical: we are *moved* by a sentiment; our *feelings* are hurt; I am *touched* by your presence" (120). But how does this disparity between the perceived immateriality of affect and its linguistic materiality relate to Ozeki's novel? It is precisely because affect's materiality is located within language, which is also immaterial, that affect becomes a sort of link between the material and the immaterial world in the novel. This point is especially relevant to *Tale* because of the existence of four concentric literary worlds within the space of the novel, which creates a tangible in-between location for the transmission of affect through time and space. However, it must be noted that this transmission of affect does not relate

---

[31] Gregg and Seigworth say, "How to begin when, after all, there is no pure or somehow originary state for affect? Affect arises in the midst of *in-between-ness*: in the capacities to act and be acted upon" (1). Affect does not seem to have an origin, instead it originates from doing, or agency.

to empathy communicated between the reader and the writer, but rather the novel itself creates a staging ground for a cosmopolitan ethics and politics through literary affect.

Affect is often expressed through the literary form within *Tale*, as depicted through Nao's diary and her great-uncle kamikaze pilot Haruki #1's attempt to pen down his thoughts during the Second World War. When the real readers read Ruth reading Nao reading Haruki #1's letters and secret French diary, it creates three layers of metafiction in total and four literary worlds. However, these four concentric reader-writer circles do not translate literary affect in the same ways. The spaces between the four literary worlds pass down affect from Haruki #1 to Nao to Ruth to us, where I would assume that each time the characters' affect gets watered down to a representation of a representation and so on. However, Ozeki's novel suggests a different scenario. Nao's journey through affect is one of grief and suffering. When the dot-com bubble bursts, Nao's father loses his job in California and has to move back to Japan, where he remains lonely, unemployed and severely depressed. Nao also struggles to deal with the shift due to the linguistic and cultural barriers she encounters at school as well as her father's multiple suicide attempts. However, she converts the immateriality of her grief into a material representation by writing in her diary, which is transmitted to Ruth even as she reads the diary in a different time and place. Ruth says, "The purple words were mostly in English, with some Japanese characters scattered here and there, but her eye wasn't really taking in their meaning as much as a *felt* sense, murky and emotional, of the writer's presence" (Ozeki 12). The words on the page appear to bring Nao's grief to life and create a metafictional affective connection between Ruth and Nao. However, this literary linkage is not just the typical reader-writer connection. There is something more going on underneath the surface due to the multiple reader-writer worlds in the novel, which goes beyond connection and leads to a materiality of sorts. This material affect speaks to

the cosmopolitan goal of a transnational connection, but severs it from any sort of normative ethics and politics already in place. Instead, this affect leads to a space for creation of an ethics and politics, that stems from the resonances of contact, rather than from some global authority.

Although it may seem as if the novel is committing the affective fallacy by suggesting that the reader-writer affective connection lies in the transmission of emotional feelings, the novel in fact, moves away from this very idea by hinting at affect's impersonal quality. Of course, there is a sense of connection between the reader and the writer as with every novel; however, Ozeki's novel moves beyond that superficial emotional pleasure that comes from reparative reading and instead looks at the impersonal affects between the various literary worlds created in the novel. Smith warns readers against the affective hypothesis and clarifies that personal feelings come under the realm of the affective hypothesis, while impersonal feelings do not conform to such a market model and "emphasize the unpredictability of affective connections" (2). By looking at literary affects as impersonal feelings, she views the link between aesthetics and feelings as destabilizing the relation between the emotional and the personal (11).[32] Smith also talks about I.A. Richards and his philosophy that the affective response to an image is not linked to its representative content but to some other neurological relation, that produces a "readiness for this or that kind of behaviour in which we find ourselves

---

[32] Smith locates these literary affects or impersonal feelings within the neoliberal moment specifically, but I am considering them within the posthuman moment in Ozeki's novel.

after the experience" (13). By moving beyond representation, affect points to action instead.[33]

Smith locates literary affect's agency in the tone of a text, which is "a literary or cultural

artifact's…global or organizing affect, its general disposition or orientation toward its audience

and the world" (Ngai 28). Sianne Ngai says tone cannot be located entirely in either subjective

experience or specific objective features of a text; however, it is still easy to recognize because

affect is so perceptibly immanent despite its immateriality (30).[34] Thus, the aesthetic judgements

that accompany the affective tone of a text function both aesthetically and ideologically (18). It is

in this double functionality that affect engenders new kinds of ethics and politics in the world by

focusing on the connection itself rather than the specific subject it originates from.

Affect's ethical implications become most evident when Haruki #1 battles with the

question of literature itself and its relationship to affect. In a metafictional move, he draws two

different representations of the link between literature and affect.[35] On the one hand, he says in

---

[33] Sigmund Freud argues that affect does not reflect or think; affect acts; however,
"sensate tendrils" constantly extend between unconscious affect and conscious thought (357-
59).

[34] Ngai uses the example of disgust to explain this idea of affect going beyond subjective
and objective textual features - "For we can speak of a literary text whose global or organizing
affect is disgust without this necessarily implying that the work represents or signifies disgust, or
that it will disgust the reader. Exactly 'where,' then, is the disgust?" (30).

[35] This point is echoed by Rocío Davis as she considers *Tale* from the perspective of
genre theory by focusing on the transits between fiction and autobiography in the novel. She
elaborates upon Haruki's diary and letters, saying, "Haruki's two forms of life writing—the

the letters, "I find myself drawn to literature more now than in the past; not the individual works as much as the idea of literature – the heroic effort and nobility of our human desire to make beauty of our minds – which moves me to tears" (Ozeki 257). Haruki's idea of literature as an aesthetic tool to depict humanist agency is nothing new, but this statement is a front that he puts up for the army inspectors who might see his letter. He turns away from this idealistic approach to literature as a humanist instrument, instead believing in its worthlessness. He says in his secret diary, "Silly. The amount of ink I waste on foolish outpourings, smashing clocks in my mind, crying out in my imagination. Forget the clock. It has no power over time, but words do, and now I am tempted to rip up these pages. Is this how I want to be remembered? By these words? By you?...I write them for my own benefit, to conjure you in my mind. They are meant only for me" (322-323). By moving away from the idea that literature offers a safe space for an emotional connection between the reader and the writer, the novel overturns the supposed assumptions of the affective fallacy. Instead, Haruki says that words put forth a space for conjuration or creating

---

letters and the diary—allow for ontological slippages facilitated by multiple inscriptions of the self" (Davis 96). However, she is more interested in the question of how writers represent reality in their fiction, which is a project that Ozeki undertakes in this novel through the way in which the protagonist Ruth is clearly based on her own self. Davis argues, "Writing the lives of others becomes a key operation for the characters in the novel: Nao and Ruth (and, to a degree, Haruki) struggle to write the stories of others, perhaps as a strategy for understanding themselves" (96-97). Although this concern is a question that I certainly came across during my research, I see the materiality of affect as the reason behind the seemingly blurred lines between reality and fiction in this novel.

worlds, as he mentions in his final letter, "There are other words and other worlds, dear Mother" (258). Thus, the location of affect also shifts to this space of creation, rather than a space of connection.

The ethical repercussions of literary affect in the world can be seen in Nao's act of reading Haruki #1's Second World War memoir, causing a monumental ethical shift in both her and her father's life. Ruth is the one who finds Haruki's diary lying amidst the washed-up drift and realizes the significance of that diary for all their lives. She says, "Nao must read this, and her father, too. They have to know the truth" (330). And so, Ruth leaves the diary in a safe place for Nao during one of her dream sequences. Nao ends up finding the diary right after Jiko says her last words and that diary brings both her and her father out of their depression, due to Haruki's small but significant act of courage during his last moments. Therefore, Ruth's single affective act creates a chain reaction, further affecting all the other characters in different worlds and spaces and times. However, the one question she asks herself is "It's real, but how did it get here? How did it end up in the freezer bag and here in my hands?" (329). The sudden reappearance of Haruki's diary on Ruth's shoreline almost seems to portray an act from beyond the grave, but rather it is a clear materialization of literary affect itself, made possible by the ocean waves and crossing all the boundaries that have ever existed. As the literary reading process intermingles with environmental agency, an affective mode of cosmopolitanism becomes predominant in the novel which creates a deeply personal cosmopolitan connection between these time beings. The personal tone of the connection suggests that this project is more about the ethics than the politics of posthuman cosmopolitanism.

Then, going back to the issue of the metafictional connection between Ruth and Nao, the question becomes more about the post-normative creation of the reader and the writer, rather

than the preexisting ethical connection between them. At one point, Ruth contemplates on this very concern, saying, "Surely a reader wasn't capable of this bizarre kind of conjuration, pulling words from the void?...Who had conjured whom?...Was Nao the one writing her into being?" (392). The conjuration of literature and literary worlds creates a space for affect to exist in, but this affect is conceived within the literary just like the brand of posthuman cosmopolitanism that Ozeki favors. One of the first things Nao writes in the diary is "You wonder about me. I wonder about you" (3). Through the second-person point-of-view, the novel appears to link the reader and the writer in an affective connection; however, the act of wondering signifies a worlding move, rather than intimacy or connection.[36] Nao says, "It feels like I'm reaching forward through time to touch you, and now that you've found it, you're reaching back to touch me...It's like a message in a bottle, cast out onto the ocean of time and space" (26). The message in the bottle refers to the affective resonances occupying the space between the multiple worlds in the novel.

---

[36] Hsiu-chuan Lee considers the worlding within the novel as a cosmopolitical move as she examines the world-making potentials of minoritized individuals in *Tale* by focusing on the link between cosmopolitanism and fiction reading and writing. She argues, "In *Tale*, minor cosmopolitics derives force from the connection between Nao and Ruth as two marginalized figures" and fiction writing "is a cosmopolitan encounter that, according to *Tale*, bears vivid similarities in both process and consequences to the chance encounter between two particles in the quantum universe" (Lee 34; Lee 37). While Lee emphasizes the connections between cosmopolitanism and the creation of fiction, I see this link as being just a byproduct of affect's materiality within the novel. Affect is the glue that joins these seemingly arbitrary concepts together owing to the resonances it leaves behind in between the real and the fictive worlds.

However, affect here is not just a signifier of the connection between the reader and the writer, but rather a space for creation of something beyond the reader-writer connection. This space for creation offers a space for new ethical frameworks, which stem from these affective resonances.

In fact, the novel goes on to advocate a cosmopolitan ethics based on nonhuman agency in the current posthuman age. While working at a computer technology company in the Silicon Valley, Nao's father tries to design a "weapon that will refuse to kill," that would ultimately prevent human soldiers from losing their own ethical intuition (309). Nao's father attempts to preempt human agency with technological agency in order to lessen the effects of the Anthropocene. If computer technology can make ethical decisions by itself, then human agency decreases and with it, human responsibility for their actions. Ozeki says, "He was trying to figure out if there was a way to build a conscience into the interface design that would assist the user by triggering his ethical sense of right and wrong and engaging his compulsion to do right…Needless to say, technology design is not value-neutral, and military contractors and developers do not want these kinds of questions raised, never mind built into their controllers" (308). By moving toward a posthuman mode of ethics through affect, Ozeki tries to universalize the ethical project of cosmopolitanism by expanding it to include the technology in the world today as well as the natural environment as mentioned earlier. From the affective cosmopolitan worldview, human beings, technology and the environment all have to equally take part in the affective project in order to approach ethics from the posthuman standpoint and move away from dialectical hierarchies.

Within this larger ethical framework of nonhuman agency, politics becomes a fuzzy term to define; however, the novel locates politics in the post-normativity and anonymity of the posthuman era. Foucault makes the distinction between a disciplinary society that norms

individuals and a society of control that unravels the modern nation-state relation and leads to

post-normativity through neoliberal governance (Cherniavsky, *Neocitizenship: Political Culture*

After Democracy 17). Cherniavsky further expands on this prognosis, saying "governmentality

after discipline is a grammar of environment, which abdicates (as no longer necessary or

functional) the vast disciplinary project of normalizing the identifications, the grammar of

incorporation and abjection, which constitute the psychic life of human subjects" (22). The post-

normative subject therefore exists in a society of control, forming "incomplete, susceptible

subjects, perennially open to refinements – or "modulations" of control that now traverse the

social field (23). As the environment and technology gain agency over ethical decisions in *Tale*,

the cosmopolitan subject becomes imbricated in this post-normative subjectivity because agency

shifts from the hands of the human to the nonhuman. Cherniavsky wonders, what are the

political capacities of the neocitizen? (35).[37] Ozeki also finds herself struggling with the same

---

[37] In her book *Neocitizenship: Political Culture After Democracy*, Cherniavsky looks at

neocitizenship through the lens of neoliberal governance, which is of course quite different from

the posthuman cosmopolitan worldview I am considering. However, in many ways, the

neoliberal and the posthuman approaches overlap. With the move from the public nation-state

idea to private interest, there is a rejection of a national "way of life" (35). This rejection causes

an elimination of the previous idea of reproduction of the state subject. Instead, the neocitizen no

longer makes distinctions between the nation-state and other countries due to the emergence of

individual entrepreneurial actors (Ong 14). Similarly, posthuman cosmopolitanism rejects the

idea of the human as dominating all life and the cosmopolitan worldview as well. Instead, it

questions in the posthuman novel as the human is no longer in control of their own subjectivity and subsequently politics as well.

Ozeki turns toward anonymity in the posthuman era to negotiate the obscure politics of the posthuman novel. Nao's father creates an online security system to remove the videos of Nao being bullied from the Internet and to give her a fresh start. However, this technology also serves as a way of keeping people anonymous and eliminating their existence on the Internet. This move adds to the posthuman character of the world in the novel, as the human not only merges with the environment but also becomes nonexistent. Nao's father says, "Naoko made up a funny theory of unbeing…She says anonymity is the new celebrity…freedom comes from being unknown" (Ozeki 383). The novel does not just advocate a posthuman epistemological shift, but perhaps a world where the human is in a state of epistemological nonbeing as a way to locate freedom. This shift in the way Ozeki perceives the politics of posthuman cosmopolitanism is particularly interesting considering Cherniavsky's views about the post-normative nature of the society of control. In *The Transparency Society*, Byung-Chul Han adds that in the society of control, "compulsive transparency annihilates the fragrance of things, the fragrance of time" (32).[38] Therefore, to maintain the fragrance of things and time, or affect, anonymity is the mode

---

moves toward a post-normative subjectivity and in fact, takes a step beyond Cherniavsky's ideal to include nonhuman participants in that framework.

[38] Han further says, "The society of transparency not only lacks truth; it also lacks symbolic appearance. Neither truth nor symbolic appearance are see-through. Only emptiness is entity transparent. To avert this emptiness, a mass of information is brought into circulation. The

used in *Tale*. Han says "no community can form in the society of transparency" because of the

information overload which turns the entire globe into a panopticon and freedom becomes a form

of control (49). A cosmopolitan community can only survive through anonymous affective

relations in the posthuman world, which again functions post-normatively.

---

mass of information and imagery offers fullness in which emptiness is still noticeable...the mass

of information produces no truth" (40-41).

Conclusion

Tale is situated in a posthuman world where the human being feels lost and vulnerable amidst the nonhuman elements. Nonhuman figures like the lone Jungle Crow and the ocean waves transcend their usual literary value and encompass a significant part of the posthuman literary imagination. These nonhuman elements not only form an essential part of the narrative but create and change it as well, thereby altering literature from a humanist to a posthumanist endeavor. Meanwhile, the cosmopolitan subjects in *Tale* use literature as a way to understand and further their sense of cosmopolitanism, the prime example being Ruth and Nao's literary connection through the diary. The posthuman turn in the literary narrative shifts the nature of cosmopolitanism from a normative concept to a post-normative one as Nao looks at a temporal mode of cosmopolitanism through the idea of "the time being." *Tale* promises the cosmopolitan subject a posthuman world to live in, but within this very promise lies the eternal difficulty of being a human subject while also decentering oneself. *Tale*'s struggle to define the cosmopolitan subject also stems from the ontological challenges to reality that come with the distortion of literary time. As the novel battles with the contradictions inherent within posthuman cosmopolitanism, the novel reconceives the ongoing tension between the human and the posthuman worlds through literary and environmental affect. While the text materializes the cosmopolitan connection through the multiple layers of metafiction, environmental affect complicates this materiality of connections by blurring the line between the material and the immaterial. *Tale*'s affective model of cosmopolitanism generates from its metafictional form as well as from its examination of agency with respect to affect, transcending the human and creating posthuman connections.

Affective cosmopolitanism helps to materialize the literary connection between the reader and the writer, and the human and the nonhuman, thereby effectively negotiating the problem of posthuman cosmopolitanism and raising the ethical and political stakes of the cosmopolitan project. Affective cosmopolitanism promotes a way of being that ensures that human cosmopolitanism can be posthuman as well. This project raises the stakes of the cosmopolitan project by making it ethically different from its previous conception. While humanist cosmopolitanism was primarily concerned with human subjectivity and the cosmopolitan connection between human beings, posthuman cosmopolitanism turns toward human as well as nonhuman entities in order to locate affective relations within the larger planet. Through affective cosmopolitanism, the human figure learns to take pride in its new position as a speck in the universe and nonhuman agency and anonymity become the new mode of ethics within posthuman cosmopolitanism.

Thus, affective cosmopolitanism ensures that posthuman cosmopolitanism does not completely do away with ethics and politics, but instead still maintains these larger foundations through an affective positioning that moves away from existing beliefs. However, one of the limitations of affective cosmopolitanism is that the political project still falls short due to its undefined nature in Ozeki's novel. *Tale* advocates a cosmopolitan ethics based on anonymous affective relations, but I wonder about the political implications of anonymity in the posthuman age. While humanist cosmopolitanism had a sole political project of transcending the nation-state to look at human rights and global democracy, its ethical requirements were equally stringent focusing on universal norms. Posthuman cosmopolitanism shatters the normative ethical and political framework of humanist cosmopolitanism and radicalizes the cosmopolitan project by suggesting a post-normative mode of ethics and politics beyond human personhood. The novel

suggests that anonymity becomes the new ethical mode of posthuman cosmopolitanism; however, a drawback to this approach is that anonymity might completely eradicate the political project or perhaps turn all politics into ethics. Ozeki does not delve deep into the political implications of posthuman cosmopolitanism, but rather gestures toward them. These questions could be a starting point for further research by looking at other novels or particular literary genres that turn to the posthuman form of the novel to engage with politics.

Works Cited

Alaimo, Stacy. *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*. Indiana UP, 2010.

Alaimo, Stacy. "New Materialisms, Old Humanisms, or, Following the Submersible." *NORA - Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, vol. 19, no. 4, Dec. 2011, pp. 280–84, doi:10.1080/08038740.2011.618812.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. W.W. Norton & Co., 2006.

Barad, Karen. "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter." *Signs*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2003, pp. 801–831. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/10.1086/345321.

Braidotti, Rosi. "Becoming-World." *After Cosmopolitanism*, edited by Rosi Braidotti et al., Routledge, 2013, pp. 8–27.

Braidotti, Rosi. *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory*. Columbia UP, 2011.

Braidotti, Rosi. *The Posthuman*. Wiley, 2013.

Callus, Ivan, et al. "Introduction: Dis/Locating Posthumanism In European Literary And Critical Traditions." *European Journal of English Studies*, vol. 18, no. 2, May 2014, pp. 103–20, doi:10.1080/13825577.2014.916999.

Cheah, Pheng. "What Is a World? On World Literature as World-Making Activity." *Daedalus*, vol. 137, no. 3, 2008, pp. 26–38.

Cherniavsky, Eva. *Neocitizenship: Political Culture after Democracy*. NYU Press, 2017.

Cherniavsky, Eva. "Neocitizenship and Critique." *Social Text*, vol. 27, no. 2 (99), June 2009, pp. 1–23, doi:10.1215/01642472-2008-020.

Colebrook, Claire. "Destroying Cosmopolitanism for the Sake of the Cosmos." *After Cosmopolitanism*, edited by Rosi Braidotti et al., Routledge, 2013, pp. 166–182.

Davis, Rocío G. "Fictional Transits and Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being*." *Biography*, vol. 38, no. 1, 2015, pp. 87–103. *Project MUSE*, doi:10.1353/bio.2015.0007.

Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Brian Massumi, U of Minnesota P, 1987.

Descartes, René. *Discourse on the Method of Rightly Conducting Reason, and Seeking Truth in the Sciences*. Open Court Publishing Company, 1910.

Dimock, Wai Chee. "Deep Time: American Literature and World History." *American Literary History*, vol. 13, no. 4, 2001, pp. 755–775. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/3054595.

Fachinger, Petra. "Writing the Canadian Pacific Northwest Ecocritically: The Dynamics of Local and Global in Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being*." *Canadian Literature*, vol. 232, 2017, pp. 47-63.

Ferrando, Francesca. "Posthumanism, Transhumanism, Antihumanism, Metahumanism, and New Materialisms: Differences and Relations." *Existenz: An International Journal in Philosophy, Religion, Politics, and the Arts*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2013, pp. 26–32.

Foucault, Michel. "The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences." *Posthumanism*, by Neil Badmington, Macmillan, 2000, pp. 27–29.

Freud, Sigmund. *Project for a Scientific Psychology*. Edited and translated by James Strachey, Hogarth, 1966.

Gandhi, Leela. *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-de-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship*. Duke UP, 2006.

Giaimo, Cara. "What Is Walden Pond?" *Atlas Obscura*, 10 Aug. 2018,

      http://www.atlasobscura.com/articles/walden-pond-modern-day.

Gregg, Melissa, and Gregory Seigworth. "An Inventory of Shimmers." *The Affect Theory*

      Reader, edited by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, Duke UP, 2011, pp. 1–28.

Grove, Kevin, and David Chandler. "Introduction: Resilience and the Anthropocene: The Stakes

      of 'Renaturalising' Politics." *Resilience*, vol. 5, no. 2, May 2017, pp. 79–91. *Crossref*,

      doi:10.1080/21693293.2016.1241476.

Han, Byung-Chul. *The Transparency Society*. Stanford UP, 2015.

Higgins, Chris. "Humanism, Cosmopolitanism, and the Ethics of Translation." *Educational*

      Theory, vol. 64, no. 5, Oct. 2014, pp. 429–37. *Wiley Online Library*,

      doi:10.1111/edth.12073.

Highmore, Ben. "Bitter after Taste: Affect, Food and Social Aesthetics." *The Affect Theory*

      Reader, edited by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, Duke UP, 2010, pp. 118–37.

Kant, Immanuel. "Idea of a Universal History on a Cosmo-political Plan." *The London*

      Magazine, edited by John Scott and John Taylor, Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1824, pp.

      385-393.

Krevel, Mojca. "A Tale of Being Everything: Literary Subject in Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the*

      Time Being." *Brno Studies in English*, no. 2, 2017, doi:10.5817/bse2017-2-6.

Lee, Hsiu-chuan. "Sharing Worlds through Words: Minor Cosmopolitics in Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale*

      for the Time Being." *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*, vol. 49, no. 1,

      Jan. 2018, pp. 27-52. *Project MUSE*, doi:10.1353/ari.2018.0001.

Lovell, Sue. "Toward a Poetics of Posthumanist Narrative Using Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being*." *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, vol. 59, no. 1, 2017, pp. 57–74, doi:10.1080/00111619.2017.1360834.

Massumi, Brian. "The Future Birth of the Affective Fact: The Political Ontology of Threat." *The Affect Theory Reader*, edited by Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, Duke UP, 2011, pp. 52–70.

Ngai, Sianne. *Ugly Feelings*. Harvard UP, 2007.

Ong, Aihwa. *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*. Duke UP, 2006.

Ozeki, Ruth L. *A Tale for the Time Being*. Canongate, 2013.

Pickering, Andrew. *The Mangle of Practice: Time, Agency, and Science*. U of Chicago P, 1995.

Piering, Julie. "Diogenes of Sinope." *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 26 Apr. 2006, www.iep.utm.edu/diogsino/.

Pollock, Sheldon, et al. "Cosmopolitanisms." *Cosmopolitanism*, edited by Dipesh Chakrabarty et al., Duke UP, 2002, pp. 1–14.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity*. Duke UP, 2003.

Smith, Rachel Greenwald. *Affect and American Literature in the Age of Neoliberalism*. Cambridge UP, 2015.

Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. *Death of a Discipline*. Columbia UP, 2003.

Starr, Marlo. "Beyond Machine Dreams: Zen, Cyber-, and Transnational Feminisms in Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being*." *Meridians: feminism, race, transnationalism*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2016, pp. 99–122. *Project MUSE*, muse.jhu.edu/article/620251.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden*. Thomas Y. Crowell & Company, 1910.

Walkowitz, Rebecca L. *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism Beyond the Nation*. Columbia UP, 2006.