

Cultural Disconnection and Identity Transformation: Exploring Posthumanism in Brandon Hobson's *The Removed*

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Abstract

This article examines the applicability of Renaissance humanism to modern posthumanist discussions. The case study is Brandon Hobson's novel *The Removed*, and we explore the junction of posthumanism and contemporary literature. *The Removed* is a moving story about identity, cultural displacement, and the blending of human and non-human aspects. The novel tells the experiences of a Cherokee family coping with the effects of contemporary technology and its painful past. Our research challenges anthropocentric narratives and advocates for a more inclusive perspective of the human condition concerning technology, the environment, and the non-human. It does this by contrasting the novel's themes with Renaissance humanism. This analysis draws attention to the novel's contribution to posthumanist discourse and rekindles the debate on the historical humanist viewpoint's ongoing applicability in tackling modern ethical and environmental issues. We provide a comprehensive understanding of how stories connect past traumas and present realities via *The Removed*, which calls for re-evaluating identity and cohabitation in a technologically advanced society. We consider the implications of posthumanism in literature and the significance of bringing indigenous stories and ecological ethics into contemporary philosophical and cultural debate.

Keywords: Posthumanism, Cultural Disconnection, Cherokee Myths, Technology and Nature, Non-Human Perspectives, Renaissance Humanism.

Introduction

In current scholarly discourse, revivifying interest in the humanities, explicitly Renaissance studies, has paralleled evolving concerns in posthumanist theory. This confluence calls for a reassessment of the Renaissance as a vital source for modern posthumanist ideas rather than just as a historical period. Renaissance literature provides more than antiquated texts and ideas in a time of technical transcendence and ecological problems. It lays the framework for addressing the intricacies of human and non-human interactions at the heart of posthumanist arguments. In examining Renaissance Posthumanism¹ Joseph Campana and Scott Maisano persuasively argue in favour of this reassessment. They say that far from being the opposite of posthumanist theory, Renaissance humanism is its forerunner, containing much content that questions the anthropocentric² narratives adopted and cemented by succeeding eras, such as

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¹ Joseph Campana and Scott Maisano, "Renaissance Posthumanism", *South Central Review*, vol. 33, no. 3 (2016), pp. 53-73, 55.

² Donna Haraway, "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin", *Environmental Humanities* 6, no. 1 (2015), 159-165, 160.

the Enlightenment. Going back to Renaissance sources, a school of thinking in which the human identity is viewed as a node in a dynamic web of interactions with the animal, the environment, and the machine rather than as a permanent focus. This essay examines how these connections are portrayed in Renaissance literature, particularly how these works foreshadow current issues with borders between humans and non-humans. The conversation reveals underlying posthumanist aspects of Renaissance philosophy rather than just applying contemporary notions retroactively. Thus, this work challenges and deepens our understanding of both domains, extending the reach of Renaissance studies and adding historical nuance and textual accuracy to the posthumanist discourse. In addition to this intricate web, Brandon Hobson's *The Removed* enriches it with a gripping modern story that profoundly connects with posthumanist concepts by examining identity, pain, and the blending of human and nonhuman components. In *The Removed*,³ the Echota family's battle with the lingering effects of previous tragedies and their Cherokee ancestry offers a contemporary setting for exploring how stories may transcend time and connect the spiritual and material worlds. Re-evaluating the human experience in literature is urged by this novel's portrayal of characters who use connections that blur the boundaries between the material and spiritual worlds to navigate their grief and cultural dislocation.⁴ This article shows how modern works like *The Removed* can be understood in a more extensive, historically rooted posthumanist framework, highlighting the continuity and evolution of themes over time by fusing Renaissance humanism with Hobson's complex narrative.

Posthumanism, a theoretical framework gaining significance in modern literature, is gaining popularity in academic circles today. It emphasises a crucial move from conventional human-centred narratives to more intricate relationships between people, technology, and the natural world. By decentering the human in the ethical, intellectual, and practical spheres and promoting a more expansive, inclusive understanding of existence that considers non-human actors and systems, posthumanism questions the fundamental ideas of humanism. In this article, posthumanism is understood as a theoretical lens through which we can examine the human condition of technology, the environment, and the non-human, as depicted in *The Removed*. This philosophical change inside the narrative framework is well illustrated by Hobson's novel, which shows the struggles of a Cherokee family dealing with tragedy and grief. The story deftly examines identity, cultural dislocation, and the intersections of human and non-human aspects to demonstrate the posthumanist critique of anthropocentrism.⁵ To address more general ethical and environmental challenges, it defies traditional boundaries between the living and the dead and the past and present. It accomplishes this by slickly fusing technology with Cherokee mysticism. Blurring the boundaries between technical interfaces and human emotional landscapes, Hobson's narrative choices—such as employing virtual reality to feel historical grief—offer a deep indictment of the effects of modernity on cultural and personal identity.

How technology and nature are combined in *The Removed* subverts the conventional divisions maintained by humanist viewpoints and expands the parameters of human experience

³ Brandon Hobson, *The Removed* (New York: Harper Collins, 2021), p. 45.

⁴ Haraway, "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin". P. 160.

⁵ Haraway, "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin", p. 162.

and empathy. The novel uses Cherokee myths⁶ and cosmologies to connect to indigenous knowledge systems, frequently marginalised in popular discourse. These components highlight the posthumanist aim of the book, encouraging a more morally conscious and holistic understanding of human history and modern cultural behaviours. By embracing these concepts, *The Removed* is a potent modern-day allegory for the Renaissance humanism studied in literature, where the limits of human identity and ethics are extensively and critically examined. This juxtaposition enhances our knowledge of posthumanist discourses and their potential to transform literary and cultural studies.⁷ It provides fresh approaches to reading historical and contemporary stories in a way that is less anthropocentric and more related. We contribute to the ongoing re-evaluation of literary studies and the wider humanities by analysing Hobson's work and its thematic resonances with Renaissance humanist and posthumanist thought.

Navigating Grief and Identity: Cultural Heritage and Posthumanism in Brandon Hobson's *The Removed*

Hobson's *The Removed* deftly weaves together parts of Cherokee traditional history, personal pain, and posthumanist concerns to examine the depths of identity and grief in a modern Cherokee family. The story revolves around the Echota family, who are still dealing with the fallout from their son Ray-Ray's sad death, shot by police fifteen years ago. This incident is crucial to understanding the more significant historical trauma that the Cherokee people endured, namely in light of the terrifying events of the Trail of Tears. This forced move continues to be a substantial cause of historical sorrow and identity dislocation. The family is dealing with their loss and dislocation in various ways as the anniversary of Ray-Ray's passing draws near. The matriarch, Maria, has Alzheimer's disease, which makes it difficult for her to separate the past and the present and hampers her ability to maintain her cultural identity and position as the family's core. Ernest, her spouse, takes comfort in building a customary healing campfire, because he thinks it will unite his family and create a channel for Ray-Ray's soul to find peace.⁸

The depiction of their surviving children, Sonja and Edgar, focuses sharply on the junction between the human and non-human as they traverse their emotional difficulties. Sonja's tale highlights the constant balancing act between societal standards and personal needs by revealing her complicated relationships and endeavouring to make short-lived ties to replace the vacuum left by her brother's death. Edgar struggles with drug addiction and homelessness while living away from home in self-imposed exile. He immerses himself in a computerised recreation of the Trail of Tears using virtual reality technology to escape his present situation and strengthen his ties to his Cherokee heritage. The incorporation of Cherokee mythology and the spiritual tales offered by Tsala, a spirit character from Cherokee tradition who appears in the plot to provide knowledge and advice, enhances the novel's examination of identity and trauma. This merging of the legendary and the commonplace highlights the novel's posthumanist components, highlighting the interdependence of tale, land, and identity and the

⁶Hobson, *The Removed*, p. 78.

⁷ Francesca Ferrando, "Posthumanism, Transhumanism, Antihumanism, Metahumanism, and New Materialisms: Differences and Relations", *Existenz*, vol. 8, no. 2 (2013), p. 28.

⁸ Hobson, *The Removed*, p. 45.

brittle borders between the past and present and between humans and non-humans.⁹ These components are used by Hobson's storytelling technique to tell a story that explores the larger existential issues that characterise humanity in addition to the past and suffering of one family. Integrating Cherokee spiritual rituals, the harsh realities of modern life, and the transformational potential of technology, *The Removed* offers insights into how societies manage bereavement and preserve their identities amidst constant change. With this method, Hobson can explore in great detail how traditional beliefs and contemporary realities may coexist and influence one another, offering a multifaceted and nuanced viewpoint on the long-lasting effects of past trauma and the intricate ways families work to reconcile and remember.

Historical Trauma and Cultural Identity

The Removed is a moving novel that primarily focuses on the damage the Trail of Tears has left behind. This terrible story serves as a metaphor for the Cherokee people's past suffering and forced displacement, which Hobson deftly weaves into the lives and identities of the individuals. The story's principal family, the Echota family, reflects on their individual and communal memories while embodying the scars caused by these past tragedies. A recurrent subject in the book is the interaction between past traumas and present experiences, showing how historical occurrences like the Trail of Tears¹⁰ Continue to form and impact Cherokee identity today. The characters' struggles with loss, efforts to preserve their traditional legacy, and encounters with the contemporary world all powerfully depict this. Hobson employs these components to examine more general issues of memory, identity, and the lasting effects of past injustices and highlight the tenacity and suffering of the Cherokee people. Furthermore, Hobson skilfully employs technology as a dual force in the story. It may be a source of estrangement and a bridge to the past, enabling characters to feel the physical suffering of their ancestors and re-establish a connection with their history. This sophisticated depiction of technology highlights how contemporary developments may alienate people from and bind them to their cultural heritage. The novel's examination of these issues offers a broader commentary on the legacy of colonialism and the value of cultural memory in comprehending and navigating the present, in addition to being a monument to the characters' hardships and resiliency. Hobson's story prompts readers to consider the enduring consequences of historical occurrences and how they have affected people's lives for centuries.

Technology is crucial in *The Removed*, representing a complicated interaction between the past and present and acting as a connecting and isolating factor. The novel's examination of identity and historical trauma, particularly within the Cherokee family at the centre of the story, heavily relies on technology's dual function. Edgar's use of virtual reality to experience the Trail of Tears is one of the most stunning examples of technology serving as a link to the past. Thanks to this immersive technology, Edgar can put himself in his ancestors' shoes and experience their anguish and sorrow as if it were his own. In addition to providing a link to historical comprehension, the virtual reality experience is a powerful means of internalising the

⁹ Theda Perdue and Michael Green, *The Cherokee Nation and the Trail of Tears* (New York: Penguin Books, 2007), p. 78.

¹⁰ Hobson, *The Removed*, p. 103.

historical pain that moulded his family's and community's identities. Edgar needs this connection more than anything else since it gives him a better knowledge of his Cherokee background and a sense of belonging, something he battles with throughout the book.¹¹ However, the same technology also carries the risk of estrangement. Edgar ironically becomes further removed from his present environment and relationships due to his need for virtual reality to connect with his past. Despite their potency, the immersive experiences are mediated via a computer interface, which may make one feel detached from reality. Not only does the technology create a physical barrier to his mental and physical isolation, but it also acts as a buffer against genuine emotional interaction with himself and the people around him. Edgar finds solace in virtual reality to escape the difficulties in his present existence, underscoring the solitary nature of technological progress. Furthermore, technology plays a part in the family's interactions and communication throughout the book. The older generation's more conventional ways of communication, such as direct conversation and storytelling, are discreetly contrasted with the younger generation's use of cell phones and other digital media. This generational gap is another example of how alienating technology can be since it may cause miscommunication and a feeling of estrangement within the family. Hobson deftly employs these examples to ponder the more general effects of technology in modern culture. Although technology can help us re-establish connections with our past and improve our self-awareness, there is a serious risk that it will increase our sense of alienation and disconnection from the physical world. Thus, *The Removed* offers a balanced perspective on technology, arguing that although it may help us connect deeply to the past, we must use caution when using it to avoid the risks of alienation it may also bring.

Human-Nonhuman Relationships and the Environment

The Removed explores posthumanist themes that question established notions of identity and existence through the protagonists' encounters with non-human beings and their surroundings. A key idea of posthumanist philosophy is the interconnectedness of the human and non-human worlds, which is best illustrated by these interactions. The Echota family's relationship with their surroundings is more than just a setting for the story; it plays a dynamic role throughout the book.¹² The terrain serves as both a backdrop and a storehouse for memories and emotions, primarily related to the Cherokee people's terrible past and incidents like the Trail of Tears. A deeper, spiritual connection fundamental to the character's identity as Cherokee people is reflected in their interactions with the land. Their encounters with Tsala, a spirit who stands in for an ancestor and the land, depict this bond. The novel's use of Tsala personifies the land and emphasises that the natural world is a living being with agency and memory.

This representation suggests a world in which human and non-human components are intricately intertwined, in keeping with Cherokee tales that frequently highlight the consciousness of the natural world.¹³ The anthropocentric perspective—which holds that people are superior to and apart from nature—is contested by these myths. Such myths are not merely

¹¹ Hobson, *The Removed*, p. 45.

¹² Hobson, *The Removed*, p. 143.

¹³ Clara Sue Kidwell and Alan Velie, *Native American Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), p. 130.

cultural artefacts in Hobson's story; they play a crucial role in the characters' perception of who they are and how to respond to individual and group difficulties. The novel also delves into environmental ethics, mainly when the family's father, Ernest, constructs a bonfire in honour of his son Ray-Ray. Getting together around a fire, a fundamental component, highlights a morally significant moment of acknowledging the past and its traumas and a period of sharing and respect for the natural world. The fire serves as a metaphor for healing and reflection, bringing the family back together and re-establishing a connection to the land and their cultural heritage. These story components highlight a more general ethical point: redressing historical injustices and paving the way for healing depend on our ability to respect and comprehend the environment and non-human beings.¹⁴ Hobson uses these exchanges to criticise how disconnected we are from the environment these days and to make the case that getting back in touch with these non-human entities might result in a more moral and complete life.

The Removed presents a universe in which these components are crucial to comprehending human identity and ethics. It skilfully uses its protagonists' interactions with the environment and non-human beings to explore posthumanist issues. Hobson encourages a more ethical interaction with the world around us by challenging readers to reevaluate their perspectives on nature and non-human entities via this investigation. The spiritual ties to the land central to Cherokee mythology and culture are how *The Removed* integrates environmental ethics into the story. These components support a symbiotic link between humans and the natural world by highlighting a profound appreciation for it that goes beyond simple ecological concerns. In addition to serving as the backdrop for the events surrounding the Echota family,¹⁵ the land in Hobson's book is of holy importance and reflects Cherokee cosmology. The Cherokee people have an extraordinarily spiritual and practical understanding of the land and its surroundings, considering rivers, mountains, trees, and animals to be alive and full of spirit. This approach opposes the anthropocentric Western viewpoint, frequently resulting in environmental plunder. Hobson uses tales from the Cherokee people¹⁶ to support this moral position on the environment. For example, the story of the Water Beetle represents creation and the beginning of life by plunging to the bottom of the ocean and bringing up the mud that becomes the earth. This suggests a deep interchange and connection between humans and the natural world. Although it isn't explicitly stated in the book, the reverence for the land and the natural world that permeates it conveys an Indigenous perspective of people as a member of, not lords of, a more comprehensive ecological system. The work also depicts the loss of culture and spirituality due to environmental deterioration. The Echota family's loss of identity and broader cultural upheaval are reflected in their estrangement from their ancestral lands, which is made worse by contemporary environmental issues.¹⁷ The disintegration of their cultural origins and legacy is symbolic of the deterioration of the land. Hobson challenges readers to re-evaluate prevailing views about nature and to acknowledge the moral

¹⁴Jace Weaver, Craig S. Womack, and Robert Warrior, *American Indian Literary Nationalism* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), p. 245.

¹⁵ Hobson, *The Removed*, p. 243.

¹⁶ Jack F. Kilpatrick, *The Oral Traditions of the Cherokee* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), p. 192.

¹⁷Jace Weaver, *The Red Atlantic: American Indigenes and the Making of the Modern World, 1000-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), p. 84.

ramifications of our environmental actions through these depictions. The book argues that adopting and comprehending Indigenous environmental ethics may result in more considerate and sustainable ways of living.

Dislocation and Identity Transformation

The Removed explores the idea of cultural displacement as a potent undercurrent that propels the characters' identity alterations, especially those of the Echota family. This displacement is both cultural and spiritual in addition to being physical, and it reflects the more excellent experience of many Native American tribes. The Echota family is a prime example of the continuous fight of Native Americans to preserve their cultural identity in a society that sometimes marginalises or erases it. Ray-Ray was killed in a police shot. The family's endeavour to preserve Cherokee customs despite the overwhelming impact of American society is the clearest example of this conflict. The book describes how they prepare for the yearly bonfire, a ceremony of remembrance and cultural reaffirmation that coincides with Ray-Ray's death anniversary. Mother Maria personifies this displacement as she battles Alzheimer's, which causes her memories and identity to be broken apart.¹⁸ Her illness serves as a metaphor for the Cherokee people's experience of cultural disintegration when their history and customs are lost or misrepresented as a result of assimilation and modernisation pressures. Maria's valiant efforts to preserve her identity by relying on fragmented recollections of Cherokee phrases and tales underscore the agonising process of cultural disintegration and the intense struggle to maintain one's identity. Her husband Ernest uses his ancestors' spiritual traditions as a way to cope with his loss and displacement; this helps him stay connected to his heritage and offers a counternarrative to the mainstream society that has traditionally suppressed these kinds of activities. A moving illustration of this is his building of the campfire, which stands for a light amid the shadow of cultural disruption. As the characters move between the past and the present and attempt to reconcile their Indigenous identities with the reality of living in a contemporary, sometimes insensitive environment, the more significant issue of identity transition is highlighted. The book powerfully conveys the fight to preserve cultural identity in the face of erasure and assimilation, underscoring the significance of memory and tradition in this endeavour.

The utilisation of virtual reality¹⁹ (VR) technology in *The Removed* is an essential narrative tool for delving into loss and memory. Hobson connects the past and present using virtual reality, enabling the characters—especially Edgar—to face and come to terms with the Cherokee people's historical suffering. Edgar's interaction with a virtual reality Trail of Tears simulation is a powerful example of how technology may access and materialise historical events that are otherwise immaterial or divorced from an individual's past. Edgar can relate viscerally to his ancestors' suffering through this immersive experience, as opposed to through history books or oral traditions that could not fully convey the emotional and physical devastation of those events. However, the book also shows VR has two drawbacks. Edgar feels a solid connection to his roots via it. Still, it also runs the risk of being a diversion from the

¹⁸ Hobson, *The Removed*, p. 233.

¹⁹ Weaver, Womack, and Warrior, *American Indian Literary Nationalism*, p. 113.

reality of his current situation, which includes homelessness, drug abuse, and the unresolved anguish over his brother's death.²⁰ Because of its dual nature, virtual reality raises more significant concerns about the use of technology in our lives—namely, whether it should be used as a tool for empathy and understanding or if it should be used as a way to disconnect from reality. Furthermore, *The Removed*'s use of VR invites a more in-depth examination of the nature of reality and memory. The characters' conceptions of their identities and pasts are tested due to the technology's ability to blur the borders between simulation and reality. This blurring is representative of the novel's posthumanist themes, which challenge the limits of human experience and the connections between memory, identity, and technology. Taken as a whole, these themes show how difficult it is to navigate historical trauma and cultural displacement in the modern day, highlighting the significant effects of both technological breakthroughs and cultural practices on our perception of the past and ourselves.

Cherokee Myths: The Role of Cherokee Myths in Shaping the Narrative

Cherokee myths are more than just tales; they represent the people's survival strategies, cultural values, and collective wisdom. They are deeply ingrained in the tribe's beliefs and history. The way the characters in *The Removed* respond to tragedy, grief, and the challenges of the modern world is greatly influenced by this mythology. The Myth of the Water Beetle is essential to comprehending the Cherokee's relationship to land and environment. It tells how the world was formed from mud that the water beetle carried from the rivers. This story speaks to the characters' strong feeling of place in the world and their belief that the land is a living, sentient being. The people have an active and reciprocal connection with the land; it supports them, and they respect and care for it. The characters' journey through grief and healing reflects this interdependence, which is basic to the Cherokee way of life. One of the most common symbols in Cherokee mythology is fire. It stands for purification, rebirth, and the union of the material and spiritual realms. Fire has a powerful place in Cherokee rituals. The Echota family's yearly bonfire is a literary representation of sacred fire. It is a family-oriented celebration that pays tribute to their son Ray-Ray and establishes a link between them and their cultural heritage. The family's ability to communicate their sorrow and sense their ancestors' presence through the fire rite confirms the myth's ability to offer moral and spiritual instruction.

The Cherokee tales told throughout the story provide the protagonists with a moral compass in addition to cultural and historical settings. Respect for all living things and inanimate objects is a lesson imparted by these stories, and it permeates the actions and relationships of the characters with nature and one another. The stories also teach lessons about resiliency, life's cycles, and the value of community and support during trying times. Myths Teach Ethical teachings: In Cherokee culture, myths are frequently employed to impart moral teachings about harmony, balance, and respect for life. For instance, regard for the land and the fires reflects a more profound concern for life and the relationships that keep it going.²¹ These values, which emphasise a holistic outlook on life essential to Cherokee ethics, direct

²⁰ Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on PostIndian Survivance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), p. 143.

²¹ James Mooney, *Myths of the Cherokee* (New York: Dover Publications, 1995), p. 221.

the characters' choices and relationships. Incorporating these Cherokee stories allows Hobson to question readers' conceptions of morals and ethics while enhancing the characters' cultural background.²² The myths offer a framework that challenges and contrasts with popular Western narratives, frequently dividing people into groups based on individuality and humanity. Cherokee myths play various roles in *The Removed*: they question preconceived notions about people and the natural world, create the story, and provide moral guidance for the protagonists. Hobson creates a story fundamental to Cherokee spirituality and cultural identity through these stories. In doing so, he offers a thought-provoking reflection on the ability of storytelling to preserve culture, teach moral lessons, and promote healing.

Storytelling as a Means of Identity Formation

Storytelling is shown to be a powerful posthumanist weapon in Hobson's *The Removed*, upending conventional human-centric viewpoints and muddying the lines between the past and present as well as between humans and non-humans. Hobson skilfully subverts traditional storytelling patterns with his narrative style, integrating Cherokee mythology and the tragic history of the Cherokee people with the present-day realities of the Echota family. This method modifies the readers' conception of what makes up the human experience and alters the characters' conceptions of identity and time. Dissolving the traditional course of time is one of the primary posthumanist elements of *The Removed's* storyline. Hobson weaves together the tale of the Echota family, a modern family coping with their recent loss and grief, with the historical pain of the Cherokee people. The characters' perceptions of their pasts and lives reflect this temporal mixing. For example, the Cherokee ancestor Tsala makes several appearances in the book as a historical person and a living influence on the Echota family. The distinction between the historical and the modern is blurred by Tsala's appearances, implying that the past is a living, impacting history rather than a remote, unconnected one. Hobson's storytelling surpasses the human-centric narrative by making the world and non-human beings essential to the plot. For example, the land plays an active role in the story rather than just being a location, representing the Cherokee concept that everything is alive. This viewpoint is brought to light as the ground is prepared for the bonfire; it is revered and seen as an essential witness to the family's rituals and grieving process. The conventional anthropocentric worldview, which holds that people are distinct from and superior to nature, is challenged by incorporating non-human viewpoints, such as the voice of Tsala and the symbolic presence of animals and natural elements.

In addition, the book uses narrative to examine and affirm identity, especially in light of assimilation and cultural deterioration. The stories the characters create for themselves and one another are active constructs that assist them in readjusting to their displaced identities and re-establishing their connection to their Cherokee history rather than merely being retellings of historical events. It is said that recounting stories to younger generations is a way to teach them about their culture and beliefs and stay connected to their ancestors.²³ This is especially moving when Maria tries to tell her grandchildren Cherokee legends despite her memory failing and

²² Kilpatrick, *The Oral Traditions of the Cherokee*, p. 201.

²³ Hobson, *The Removed*, p. 144.

uses storytelling to ground herself and pass on cultural information.²⁴ In the end, Hobson uses storytelling as a transformational tool that reorganises connections and understanding across species, time, and existence. The story asks readers to see storytelling as a dynamic, multifaceted art form that captures the intricate connections between identity, history, and the universe. In doing so, Hobson challenges us to re-evaluate how tales might assist us in navigating the difficulties of living in a posthuman world and telling the story of a family.²⁵ Storytelling in *The Removed* is more than just a device for presenting a story; it's a deep engagement with posthumanist²⁶ ideas that test and broaden our conceptions of life, time, and narrative. Using storytelling, Hobson creates a story that is equally about the past and non-human as it is about the present and human, provoking a more in-depth examination of how we fit within a larger ecological and historical framework.

Conclusion

This article has considered the complex ways that *The Removed* by Brandon Hobson addresses posthumanist themes. It tells a story that combines the trauma of historical events like the Trail of Tears, Cherokee cultural heritage, and modern issues influenced by technological innovation. A thorough analysis revealed how the book both echoes and builds upon the ideals of Renaissance humanism, adding to the ongoing posthumanist discussions that oppose anthropocentric narratives and push for a more inclusive ethical framework that takes the non-human into account. The study's main conclusion emphasises how *The Removed* functions as a critical narrative that blurs the lines between the past and present, as well as between human and non-human, by revisiting the issues of identity and cultural displacement via a lens. This method resonates with wider posthumanist issues about technology, the environment, and the interactions between different kinds of life, and it also helps us grasp the Cherokee experience more deeply. However, this study has several drawbacks. Although investigating Renaissance humanism in connection to modern literature is enlightening, it might be strengthened by a more thorough analysis of particular Renaissance writings. Furthermore, the study mainly concentrates on Cherokee mythology and its ramifications, possibly ignoring other indigenous stories that might also contribute to the posthumanist conversation. Future expansion of this research might involve comparing it to other works of indigenous literature to see how comparable themes are expressed in different historical and cultural situations. A more thorough examination of the technological facets of posthumanism, in particular the implications of virtual reality as examined in *The Removed*, may also lead to a more sophisticated understanding of how technology alters our cultural practices and narratives. Hobson's *The Removed* is a critical work in posthumanist literary studies that provides significant insights into the continuous re-evaluation of humanism in light of Indigenous experiences and contemporary technological circumstances. This study urges a re-evaluation of identity and cohabitation in an increasingly complicated world, calling for further scholarly investigation into how literature may connect past tragedies with contemporary realities.

²⁴ Gerald Vizenor, *Survivance: Narratives of Native Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2008), p. 84.

²⁵ Weaver, Womack, and Warrior, *American Indian Literary Nationalism*, p. 92.

²⁶ Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), p. 67.