



# Unsettling Dreams: Investigating Crisis in Earthquake Literature from Japan and the Pacific Northwest

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### What can art and stories offer a world unsettled by change?



#### THEORY

1. Stories hold and define relationships in *networks* that yield meaning. (Le Guin 1986)
2. Stories are pieces of *technology that function as actors* in networks. The contents of stories are also actors in that network. (Latour 2012)
3. Stories foster connection both within and without their borders, thus becoming *places readers can go and be*. (Busselle and Bilandzic 2008; Green 2004)

#### EARTHQUAKE LITERATURE

- Environmental crisis without human blame
- Visceral; felt in human bodies and systems
- Fulfills *ecocriticism* by addressing environmental crisis & investigating connection between humans and non-humans

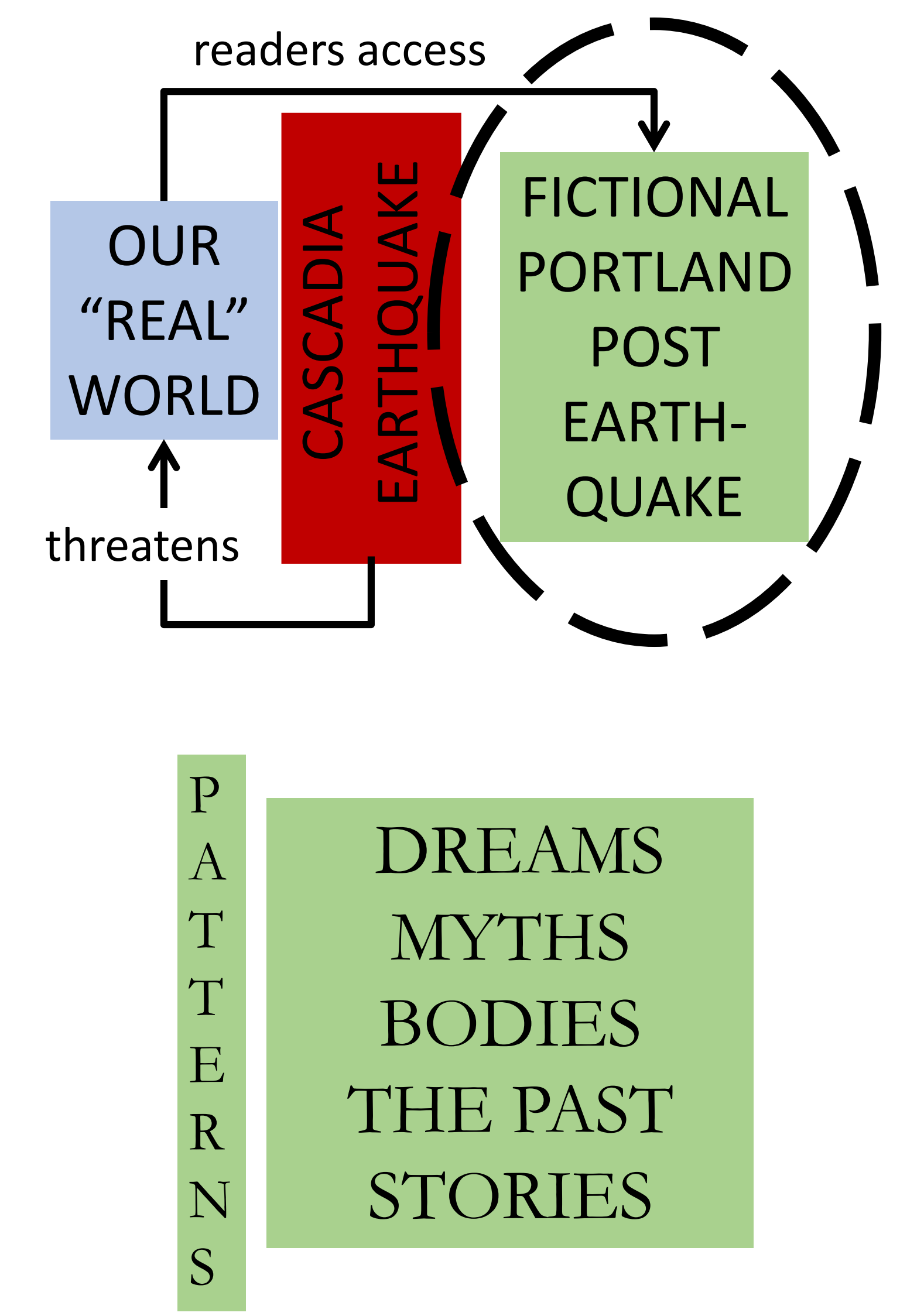
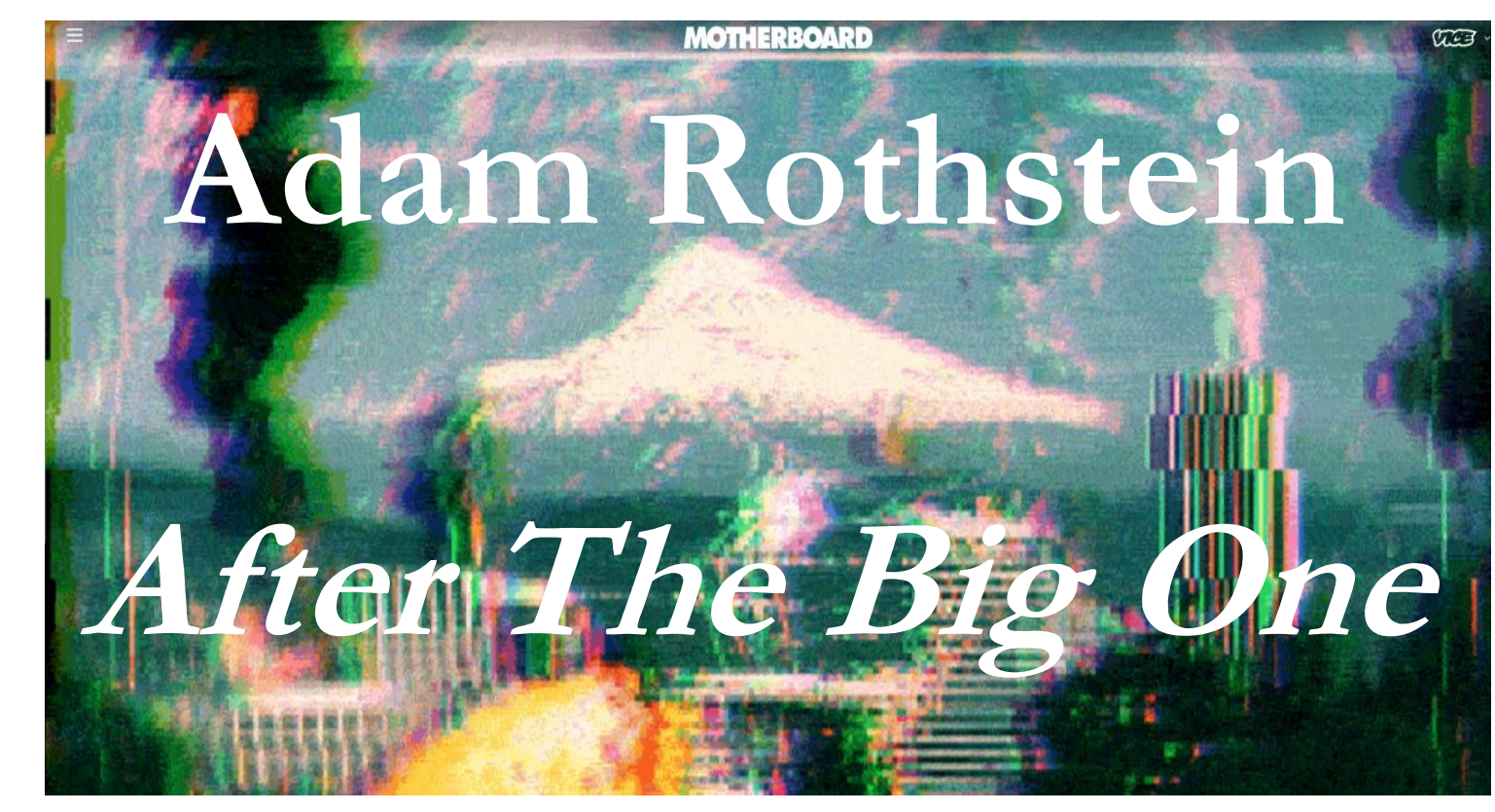
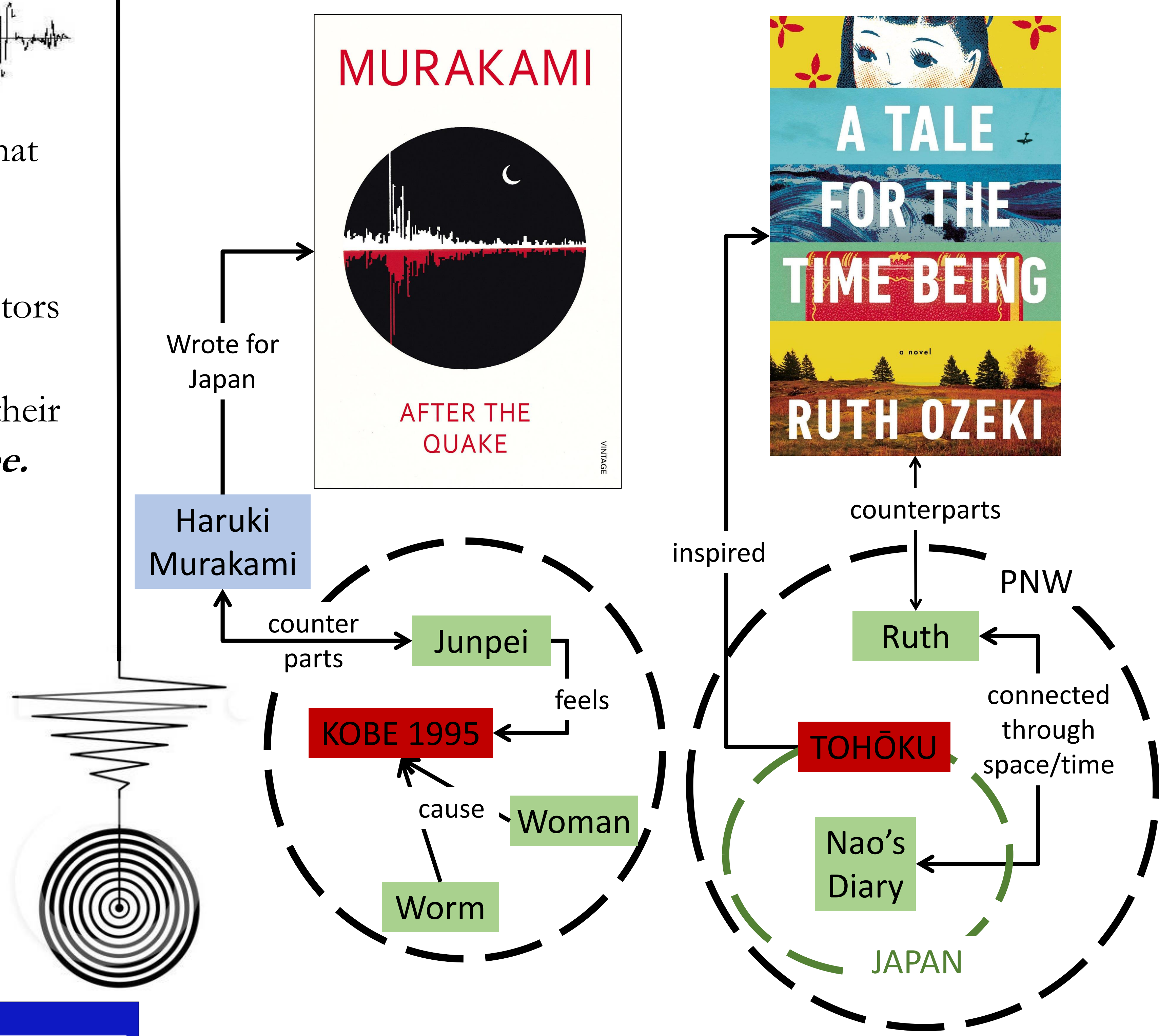
### How and why do authors from Japan and the Pacific Northwest render earthquakes in fiction?

LEGEND

(FICTION)

NONFICTION

EARTHQUAKE



<b>JAPAN</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent earthquakes</li> <li>• Long cultural/geologic history of disasters</li> </ul>	<b>PACIFIC OCEAN</b>	<b>PACIFIC NORTHWEST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High risk of earthquakes</li> <li>• No contemporary earthquake culture</li> </ul>
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#### IMPLICATIONS

- Texts question boundaries that attempt to maintain distinction, enriching:
- literary endeavors
  - environmentalist endeavor of understanding modern disasters
  - the humanities to participation in human survival.

By examining earthquake literature under a framework of ecocriticism, I establish the potential for literature to promote survival and resilience in crisis by forging intimate connections between earth systems, stories, and humans.

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