

BEŞİNCİ MEVSİM ROMANININ AFROFÜTÜRİSTİK BAKIŞ AÇISIYLA ANALİZİ

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Özet

Afrofütürizm, bilimkurgu, teknoloji, siyahi tarihi ve kültürünün bir araya gelmesini vurgulayan edebi ve sanatsal bir harekettir. Bu makale, N.K. Jemisin'in çığır açan romanı *Beşinci Mevsim*'i Afrofütüristik bir mercekte incelemekte, anlatının, dünya inşasının ve temalarının geleneksel bilimkurgu geleneklerine nasıl meydan okuduğunu ve onları nasıl yeniden şekillendirdiğini göstermektedir. Irk, iklim değişikliği ve toplumsal yapıların kesişimini analiz ederek, Jemisin'in tarihsel adaletsizliklerle yüzleşmek ve marjinal topluluklar için yeni olasılıklar öngörmek için spekülasyon kurguyu nasıl kullandığını vurgulamaktadır. Mevcut çalışma, romanın yalnızca geleceği yeniden hayal etmekle kalmayıp aynı zamanda karakterlerinin dayanıklılığını ve faaliyetini vurgulayarak çağdaş toplumsal sorunların bir eleştirisi olarak da hizmet ettiğini savunur. Benzersiz jeolojik ortam ve orojenezin rolü gibi önemli bölümlere yakından bakıldığında, Afrofütürizmin bilimkurgu ve fantezi edebiyatı türünü genişletmek ve hızla değişen bir dünyada kimlik, güç ve hayatta kalma hakkında daha derinlemesine konuşmalar başlatmak için ne kadar önemli olduğunu göstermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: İngiliz romanı, Afrofütürizm, Siyah spekülasyon kurgu, Bilimkurgu, Afrika diasporası

ANALYZING THE NOVEL *THE FIFTH SEASON* FROM AN AFROFUTURISTIC PERSPECTIVE

Abstract

Afrofuturism is a literary and artistic movement emphasizing the convergence of science fiction, technology, Black history, and culture. This article analyzes N.K. Jemisin's novel *The Fifth Season* through the lens of Afrofuturism, demonstrates how its plot, setting, and ideas diverge from and reconstitute the norms of the science fiction genre. Concerning the methods, the study specifically examines the relationship between race and environmental change in social relations by exploring how Jemisin harnesses fiction to address the past and imagine new futures for oppressed people. The content contends that the said narrative, besides transforming the challenges posed by the anticipated future, tends to address the highlighted problems of the current society, considering the strength of respecting the characters. Toward this end, the article demonstrates how key features of the story including its chronological setting and the concept of orogeny are important in advancing Afrofuturism as a way of developing speculative banners and more imaginative explanations of identity, power, and survival within the context of change.

Key words: English fiction, Afrotuturism, Black speculative fiction, Science fiction, African diaspora

1. INTRODUCTION

In the current world, Afrofuturism is a way for black people to show who they are politically and artistically. Since it was first used in the early 1990s, it has become very popular in everyday life and the classroom. In his famous essay *Black to the Future*, cultural critic Dery (1994) was the first person to use the term "speculative fiction" to talk about African-American themes and issues in the context of 20th-century technoculture. He also talked about "African-American meanings that use images of technology and a prosthetically enhanced future." In Afrofuturism, science fiction features are used to imagine different worlds with different race relations and ways of being black. That's how it's seen as a way to understand the past and how it still affects black politics today. People in the genre of Afrofuturism link the facts of slavery and forced migration to how bodies change and aliens invade in science fiction and fantasy books and movies. Interstellar travel, time travel, robots, cyborgs, and androids are all big parts of the otherworldly, intergalactic stories that Afrofuturist art, literature, and music are based on. Some afro-futurist works try to break the rules of science fiction to talk about and show racial issues and being black that aren't usually told in stories or aren't talked about enough. Some of these issues and interpretations are the planned absence and token presence of black actors and characters, the idea that racism and paranoia will be commonplace in the future after the world ends, and the idea that the traumatized black body is the most powerful sign of difference, alienation, and otherness (Barber, 2018).

If you looked back at the 1950s, when Anglo-American speculative fiction, especially science fiction, was popular in movies, books, and music, you might have thought African-American, Afro-Caribbean, and other African writers couldn't show they could write creative speculative fiction in the future. The Anglo-American imaginary had a strong hold on speculative literature, so any idea that imagined a time of black techno-culture imagination and civilization in the setting of currents in global speculative writing would have been thrown out. It was impossible to ignore this idea because it had such a strong hold on them. Mosley (2000) says that speculative writing gives black people another way to relive their lost past. He also talks about how this type of writing affects black people all over the world. Mosley says the cutting edge of slavery cut black people off from their ancestors. A new way to give black people more power over their imagination, body, history is through scientific fiction (Thomas, 2014).

Through the telling of a riveting story about an apocalyptic world where earth-moving abilities are considered a curse rather than a gift, *The Fifth Season* grapples with rather heavy themes typical of people's societies, that as racism. The Setting of the Stillness is based on the oppression of orogens – people who wield the power to alter the earth's core – who in the vast majority representation happen to be black and are mistreated and feared. Such experiences have been witnessed even today when supplies and labor from marginalized groups are important but at the same time, crippling oppression is exerted on them. In Jemisin's narrative, orogeny defines a terrain as a bitter but necessary strength in most colonized groups especially in their use of deferential politeness even in the face of brute force. For one, Jemisin's construction of the world takes place in a reclamation of history, a past that concerns itself, especially with the people of the African Diaspora. In many ways, this was not only a critique of the current situation, but also a review of the past, letting people begin to search for themselves in the ruins of a broken society. These tendencies seem to embrace Afrofuturism, which mostly works to recreate the narrative and the situations surrounding individuals in Black bodies. The journey of the orogenes is the fight to take back the historical and societal narratives as It's been said about being black in America, many have integrated the mute culture (Sunday & Akung, 2022).

The novel presents a form of speculative writing that deals with issues such as climate change and the apocalypse, which is quite in a way Afrofuturism and focuses on humanity and the planet's wellbeing. Within themes of survival, Afrofuturism acknowledges resilience and so does *The Fifth Season* within the bonds and social networks, which develop when people struggle. The journey of the main characters reinforces the theme of unity and active participation in fighting for one's presence. The reconciliation of competing interests, partly due to the incorporation of disorders, articulates a particular Afrofuturism that resists individualism, and empowerment rather than oppression that is espoused in Western science fiction. Interlacing race, history, and aesthetics, The novel is not only an analysis of the current social order that Jemisin aspires to, but it is a new world, in which the silenced imagination, the downtrodden, can take back their story and their power. It taps into certain themes that are central to the experience of the African Diaspora supplemental ingredients of Afrofuturism and truly focuses on the issues of identity, survival, and rebirth in circumstances of systemic repression.

2. AN OUTLINE OF AFROFUTURISM

Afrofuturism is a prominent cultural movement in the arts and literature that connects race, history, culture, and technology within science fiction frameworks. The term was popularized in the 1990s by cultural critic Mark Dery in his essay *Black to the Future* (1994), where he introduced "speculative fiction" to describe narratives that embed African-American themes in 20th-century technoculture. Dery highlighted the use of technology and futuristic themes to explore African-American identity and resilience (Dery, 1994). Through speculative fiction, Afrofuturism envisions alternative worlds that rethink race relations and Black identity. By reimagining historical narratives, it engages with the continuing influence of past traumas on contemporary Black politics and identity (Barber, 2018).

In Afrofuturism, sci-fi elements like interstellar travel, time manipulation, and advanced technology allow for narratives that relate the historical facts of slavery and migration to science-fiction motifs, such as alien invasions and bodily transformations (Mosley, 2000). These narratives often break conventional science fiction frameworks to present issues central to Black experiences, including systemic racism, racial trauma, and survival in post-apocalyptic settings (Thomas, 2014). Jemisin's *The Fifth Season* exemplifies this approach by depicting an oppressed group, the "orogenes," who possess earth-manipulating abilities and face systemic persecution due to their powers. Jemisin's novel not only critiques contemporary race dynamics but also revisits historical oppression to empower Black readers through re-envisioned futures (Sunday & Akung, 2022).

Afrofuturism intertwines social justice, feminism, alienation, and reclamation to empower Black communities. Distinct from Africanfuturism, which focuses on African cultural perspectives, Afrofuturism blends African diasporic and Afrocentric ideologies with speculative elements, broadening the imagination beyond Western interpretations (Afrofuturism, Africanfuturism, and the Language of Black Speculative Literature, 2020). Okorafor (2012) defines African futurism as science fiction rooted in African culture, mythology, and viewpoints that transcend Western perspectives. *Lagoon* (2016) by Okorafor, for instance, reorients the sci-fi trope of alien contact within Lagos, Nigeria, presenting aliens as benevolent agents of change rather than threats (Okorafor, 2016).

In Africanjujuism, real African religions and beliefs merge with fictional elements, resisting Western-centric narratives. This concept appears in Octavia Butler's *Kindred* (1979), where a Black woman time-travels to the Antebellum South, and in Okorafor's *Who Fears Death*, where Onyesonwu, a magical heroine, confronts societal evil, showcasing themes of spiritual strength and Black women's resilience (Bagnall, 2021). Works like Buchi Emecheta's

The Rape of Shavi (1983) reflect Africanfuturist principles by depicting Black power and community in speculative African societies unaffected by Western influence (Anderson & Jones, 2015).

Afrofuturism, Africanfuturism, and Africanjujuism address the dual challenges of Black identity and Eurocentric dominance in speculative fiction. They promote a reclamation of cultural history to construct futures that validate Black perspectives. Nnedi Okorafor and Buchi Emecheta, for instance, use speculative fiction to critique contemporary issues like racism and societal injustice, projecting transformative futures for Black communities (Okorafor, 2012; Bigoni, 2019).

3. AN AFROFUTURISTIC ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL *THE FIFTH SEASON*

Jemisin's (2016) *The Fifth Season* is set in the Stillness, a world that is prepared for a shift though the readers have to brace themselves for a lot of earthquakes and storms politically. There are three main plots: Essun, a mother in the process of being driven to search for her daughter who is missing for the last time in the wake of an apocalypse; Syenite, a young orogen whose largely spent life exists because of an enforced mating scheme aimed at creating dynamos; Damaya, a little girl who is branded with the orogenic curse goes up societal captivity with so much contempt because she is an outcast in an already diabolical obsessed community. The storyline begins during the Fifth Season, which is a cataclysmic advancement that changes the terrain and civilization. Within these storms, these three women's lives come together and provide a horrific depiction of the oppression suffered by the orogenes who are despised yet used as tools by the higher caste. Issues of race and identity as well as the degradation of the environment are also present illustrating the fight of the people who have been oppressed and exploited for the existence that the society offers. While the characters keep crossing with one another, they come face to face not only with the issues of the individual but also with the causes of the whole system. The novel in the end features the ideas of fighting against oppression, the meaning of belonging to a unit, and the effects of reparation despite all odds, thus providing a deep insight into the past and healing in the present.

According to Laskar (2024), the Afrofuturist elements that are present in *The Fifth Season* have been the focus of continuous scholarly and critical examination. Within the context of a theoretical framework, the novel's investigation of race, identity, power, and social issues has been further enriched by new research and conversations. The most current findings and analyses on Afrofuturism that have been made in the novel are as follows: intersectionality and power dynamics, environmental justice and resilience, Afrofuturist aesthetics, and story form. In the context of Afrofuturism, Jemisin's depiction of power relations that interconnect with one another presents a challenge to conventional narratives of oppression and resistance, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of identity and agency. To live and fight against oppression, the people in the book respond to environmental obstacles by drawing on traditional knowledge and cultural customs. Its film version presents a concept of resilience that emphasizes underserved communities and their ability to adjust to new circumstances and thrive despite the challenges they confront. The novel has also concentrated on the aesthetic and narrative form of the novel, investigating how Jemisin's artistic choices have influenced the novel's narrative. The imagery and symbolism are utilized to produce a distinctive Afrofuturist aesthetic that defies the traditions of speculative fiction that are heavily influenced by Eurocentrism. The style of Jemisin's narrative reflects the richness and complexity of Black lives, and it encourages readers to conceive new possibilities for the future. Within the first main section of Essun, her husband Jija is shown to have murdered her young son Uche by beating him to death. Since then, Jija has departed with their daughter Nassun behind. Essun withdraws from the world and spends two days with Uche's body as a result of her sadness.

While this is going on, she makes use of her orogeny to steer the massive earthquake that Yumenes is passing through away from her hamlet (p.104).

Orogenes, or people who can control natural forces, are oppressed by the system. This is what *The Fifth Season* is all about. This kind of oppression is like racial discrimination in the past and now, especially against Black people. Orogenes are seen as both important to the community's life and dangerous to its stability, and the society of stillness is based on fear and control. This duality shows how marginalized groups work in the real world, where they add to society but are still at risk of systemic violence.

The orogenes of the Fulcrum serve the world," he says. "You will have no use name from here forth, because your usefulness lies in what you are, not merely some familial aptitude. From birth, an orogene child can stop a shake; even without training, you are orogene. Within a comm or without one, *you are orogene*. With training, however, and with the guidance of other skilled orogenes at the Fulcrum, you can be useful not merely to a single comm, but all the Stillness." He spreads his hands. "As a Guardian, via the orogenes in my care, I have taken on a similar purpose, with a similar breadth. Therefore it's fitting that I share my charges' possible fate (Jemisin, 2016, p.28).

This quote from *The Fifth Season* sums up some of the most important ideas about identity, power, and systemic abuse in the stillness. The speaker, who is probably a person in charge at the oppressive institution called the Fulcrum, talks to the orogene children and stresses their natural skills and the demands of society. The phrase "your usefulness lies in what you are" brings up a part of the orogene experience that makes people less human (Jemisin, 2016, p.28). Their family ties are taken away, and their identities are reduced to their skills as orogenes, or people who can control natural forces. This emphasizes one of the main ideas of the book, which is how society treats people like things based on how useful they are seen to be. The orogenes are valued not for who they are as people, but for their powers. This is similar to how minority identities are often defined only by how useful they are to those in power in the real world.

Jemisin builds a complicated world by making connections between the natural disasters that shape the story and the traumatic events that happened in the African Diaspora in the past. The world of the stillness, with its harsh climate and unstable society, is a metaphor for how strong you need to be to deal with oppression. The harsh rules that control orogenes are similar to how Black bodies and cultures have been dominated in the past. This lets Jemisin criticize modern problems of many people have been going through like racism and climate change.

At this, Feldspar looks fleetingly, but truly, annoyed. The quartent governor of Allia, or possibly Allia's Leadership, must have been especially irritating. In the years since Feldspar became her assigned senior, Syen has never seen the old woman show any expression worse than a brittle smile. They both know the rules: Fulcrum orogenes—Imperial orogenes, blackjackets, the ones you probably shouldn't kill, whatever people want to call them—must be always polite and professional. Fulcrum orogenes must project confidence and expertise whenever they are in public. Fulcrum orogenes must never show anger because it makes the stills nervous. Except Feldspar would never be so improper as to use a slur like the stills—but that is why Feldspar is a senior and has been given supervisory responsibilities, while Syenite merely grinds her own edges alone. She'll have to demonstrate more professionalism if she wants Feldspar's job. That, and she'll apparently have to do a few other things (Jemisin, 2016, p.47).

The passage shows that the Fulcrum is organized in a hierarchy, with orogenes' roles and behaviors heavily based on their place in the hierarchy. As a senior orogene, Feldspar lives up to the responsibilities and power that come with her job. The fact that she is annoyed by the quartent governor of Allia shows that even powerful people can be swayed by outside forces, which shows how complicated the political system is in the stillness. The reference to orogenes and the expectation that they will be polite and professional show that their identities are not just based on their skills, but also on how well they follow certain rules that support their status. The rules about how orogenes should act, especially the one that says they must never show rage, show how emotions are pushed down in unfair systems. This assumption helps keep things

the same by keeping the "stills" (people who aren't orogene) calm and obedient (Jemisin, 2016, p.47). It shows how people are afraid of orogen power and how far the Fulcrum will go to control their public image. In real life, too, people from disadvantaged groups are often told to hide their feelings so as not to upset or anger people from dominating cultures. This dynamic is similar. The fact that Syenite knows she needs to be more professional if she wants Feldspar's job shows how competitive their setting is. The Fulcrum's strict structure and the push to fit in and do well show how systemic oppression not only changes who people are but also fuels ambition based on fear. Syenite's knowledge that she needs to grind her edges alone shows how alone she feels and how the system's demands affect her. Along with her desire to be successful, she knows that her success depends on how well she can work within a system that is meant to hold her back. The text criticizes the systemic structures that control behavior and hide people's identities. Feldspar's fragile smile and her real irritation are different, which suggests that powerful people put on a front to get through a complicated social world. This tension is used by Jemisin to show how much mental work orogenes have to do, which is similar to what marginalized people go through in many social settings.

The futuristic parts of the book question common ideas about technology by incorporating it into the earth's structure. You can think of orogeny as a kind of technology since changing the way natural forces work is a way to get back your power. This fits with Afrofuturist ideas that look at technology through the lens of Black experiences and points of view, rather than the Western-centered stories that are common in science fiction and fantasy. Jemisin's vivid descriptions of environmental collapse make readers think about what happens when we ignore communities that are already struggling. This makes a very powerful statement about the fact that how race, ecology, and life are all connected.

Brevard is cramped and narrow and high in a way that she has never before experienced, so she hunches in the saddle as they ride into it, looking up at the looming buildings on either side of the street and wondering if they ever collapse in on passersby. No one else seems to notice that these buildings are ridiculously tall and crammed right up against each other, so it must have been done on purpose. There are dozens of people about even though the sun has set and, to her reckoning, everyone should be getting ready for bed (Jemisin, 2016, p.61).

Stonelore changes all the time, Syenite." He doesn't say her name often, either. It gets her attention. "Every civilization adds to it; parts that don't matter to the people of the time are forgotten. There's a reason Tablet Two is so damaged: someone, somewhere back in time, decided that it wasn't important or was wrong, and didn't bother to take care of it. Or maybe they even deliberately tried to obliterate it, which is why so many of the early copies are damaged in exactly the same way. The archeomests found some old tablets in one of the dead cities on Tapita Plateau—they'd written down their stonelore, too, ostensibly to pass it on to future generations. But what was on the tablets was different, *drastically* so, from the lore we learned in school. For all we know, the admonition against changing the lore is itself a recent addition (Jemisin, 2016, p.88-89).

The first quote says that Brevard is a "cramped and narrow" place with "looming buildings" that make Syenite feel anxious. (Jemisin, 2016, p.61). Through its design, the building shows not only physical but also mental oppression, making the space feel stifling and scary. The tall buildings stand for the weight of social expectations and control. They seem to be meant to make people feel like they don't matter. Syenite's hunched posture shows that she is uncomfortable and uneasy in this stifling space, showing how design can affect how people feel and interact with each other. The fact that no one seems to realize the harsh design also brings up a theme of normalization in oppressive settings. It shows how social structures can make people less sensitive to pain or danger, highlighting the power of conformity and how people can internalize systemic abuse. This fits with Afrofuturist ideas that criticize how disadvantaged people deal with and adapt to systems that hurt them without questioning their legitimacy. The second citation details the idea of stone lore, which is historical information that shapes cultural identity. The character thinks about how societies change or leave out parts of history that they don't think are important. In a broader sense, this is about how the balance

of power affects how information is kept and passed on. The idea that important stories can be out of mind shows how fragile collective memory is, especially for groups that have been historically pushed to the edges. The fact that different historical reports have different details and that the tablet was damaged makes us think about who has the right to tell the story and whether the main stories are true. It seems that the histories taught in schools are often skewed toward those in power, making it hard to understand the past. This criticism of erasing history fits with Afrofuturist ideas because it shows how disadvantaged groups need to take back their stories and learn about their pasts to create a stronger future. Altogether, these quotes show a deep link between physical space and how we build information. The controlling nature of Brevard's building is similar to how historical stories are controlled. The tall buildings make it hard for Syenite to move and see things, and the selective protection of stone lore makes it hard to understand her cultural identity. Both places expect people to follow the rules, which supports the themes of power and control that run through Jemisin's world.

Through her characters, especially the main character Essun, Jemisin shows how important identity and society are. Essun's journey shows the challenges Black people, especially Black women, face as they deal with trauma and societal oppression. Her relationships with other characters, like her children and other orogenes, show how important it is to stick together when things go wrong. Afrofuturism often stresses the power of community as a way to be strong and independent. This focus on togetherness and working together is a key part of the movement.

Heresmith sighs. "That's very poetic, Syenite Orogene. But Asael is correct. Moving would mean the loss of our comm's identity, and possibly the fracturing of our population. It would also mean losing everything we've invested in this location." She gestures around, and Syenite understands what she means: You can move people easily, but not buildings. Not infrastructure. These things are wealth, and even outside of a Season, wealth means survival. "And there's no guarantee we won't face worse problems elsewhere. I appreciate your honesty—I do. Really. But, well... better the volcano we know (Jemisin, 2016, p.88-89).

Heresmith's worry that they would lose the comm's character if they moved shows how deeply people are connected to their surroundings. The phrase "the loss of our comm's identity" (Jemisin, 2016, p.89) makes a point of showing that identity is not just something that people make up; it is deeply connected to the past, experiences, and physical presence of the community as a whole. The infrastructure and buildings are reminders of their shared history and investment. They are a visible legacy that shapes their cultural identity. When people talk about moving, they often talk about how place shapes character. Heresmith says that people can be moved, but what they have made and taken care of in their physical surroundings has a value that can't be easily found elsewhere. This shows that a community's identity is strongly rooted in its social and geographical setting. When people lose their homes, it can break up their sense of belonging because the ties they make there are often tied to memories, cultural practices, and their ability to stick together. The reason Heresmith says not to move is fear of the unknown, which is summed up in the term "better the volcano we know" (Jemisin, 2016, p.89). This is related to a bigger idea that people in groups tend to stick to what they know, even if it's dangerous, rather than risk the unknown that comes with change. People who are afraid of losing their identity and safety can be very resistant to change. They may feel safer with the status quo, even though it is risky than with the possible risks that come with it. This is similar to what marginalized groups have gone through when they were forced to move or were displaced, showing how emotionally heavy these choices can be. The phrase "everything we've invested in this location" shows how identity and belonging are connected to money (Jemisin, 2016, p.89). Assets like infrastructure and income are more than just things; they represent the community's work, sacrifices, and hopes. This investment helps people feel like they own something and join, which is important for building community identity. Moving could split up the people, which makes us think about how to keep relationships strong and how

to use our collective power. This shows how important it is to stick together in a harsh world. In *The Fifth Season*, these lines beautifully show how identity, society, and the natural environment are all linked. Jemisin uses Heresmith's writings to look at how place affects identity, how people fear change, and how important it is for communities to work together to keep their bonds strong. A strong theme that runs through the whole book is the conflict between security and the need for safety. It makes readers think about how complicated belonging is and the things people give up to survive and find their own identity.

Gender and sexuality are also important issues in the novel, especially in how it shows women and their power. The story is centered around female characters who go against gender norms and fight against systemic sexism. Jemisin's writing about motherhood, identity, and trauma gives us a complex look at what it means to be a Black woman, and it challenges the patriarchal systems that often push these experiences to the edges.

You saw two women holding each other, rocking in an effort at comfort. You saw a man your own age with the look of a Strongback, who gazed steadily at his big, thick-fingered hands and perhaps wondered if he was hale enough, young enough, to earn a place somewhere (Jemisin, 2016, p.58).

A group of six women who have clearly banded together for safety whisper among themselves at the sight of you—and then one of them says loudly to another, “Rusting Earth, *look* at her, no!” Apparently you look dangerous. Or undesirable (Jemisin, 2016, p.77).

The picture of "two women holding each other, rocking to comfort" shows how important and strong it is for women to stick together when they are upset (Jemisin, 2016, p.58). This close moment between the women shows how strong their resistance is to structural oppression and how they build support networks to get through hard times. The male character's thoughts, which are based on self-doubt and societal standards of strength, are very different from their relationship. This comparison shows that women's identity and power are often based on community and social support, which goes against the idea that strength has to be in line with traditional male ideals. The second quotation talks about a group of women who "banded together for safety," which adds to the idea that women can be strong when they are in danger (Jemisin, 2016, p.77). Their whispered talks show that they both know how dangerous it is to be in a world that sees them as weak. The loud comment, "Rusting Earth, look at her, no!" shows a quick judgment based on the main character's looks (Jemisin, 2016, p.77). It shows how society tends to name women as dangerous or undesirable based on quick assessments. This moment shows how women are often policed by both outside social norms and their friends, showing how complicated it is to be a woman in a patriarchal society. The second quote talks about feeling unsafe and unwanted, which is a reflection of larger social worries about women's power and the fear of women who don't follow the rules. People look closely at the main character's appearance, which suggests that showing power or not being a traditional woman can make people feel uncomfortable or hostile. People who are Black often face multiple forms of discrimination because of their race and gender, and they have to deal with social expectations and systemic sexism. This theme hits home for them. Even though they don't say parenting by name, the themes of female relationships and the need to feel safe can be connected to the ways women care for and protect others in a dangerous world. Jemisin's writings about motherhood often deal with pain and strength, showing how Black women's experiences shape who they are and how they fight against patriarchal oppression. The private moments between the women suggest a group approach to healing and resistance. They show how shared suffering can bring people together and give them the strength to face systemic problems. Jemisin talks about sexuality and gender through the lens of interactions between women and women's empowerment. The text challenges patriarchal rules and shows how complicated it is to be a Black woman by focusing on the bonds between women and how they deal with societal judgments. Jemisin not only criticizes systemic sexism through her writing

about trauma, identity, and community, but she also praises the strength and resilience that can be found in female connections. This complex picture makes readers think about how powerful it is for women to support each other as they fight for their identity and independence.

The reclaiming of the past is an important part of Jemisin's story. In *The Fifth Season*, the characters deal with their pasts and events that affected them personally and as a group. In Afrofuturism, this reclamation is very important because it lets people make new futures by reinterpreting past stories. The book stresses how important it is to understand and accept the past to build a better future, which gives people hope and strength.

4. CONCLUSION

The evaluation of African futurism and Afrofuturism is based on five criteria: experience, authorship, language, landscape, and black character heroism and technology. Experience is a crucial factor in the history and literature of every race and society, as it is a staple of a people's culture, history, philosophy, and civilization. While experiences may be similar, they cannot be the same. The African and people of color experience is two-pronged, with Africanfuturism addressing African peculiar experiences and concerns, and Afrofuturism addressing those of people of color. Both have historical bearings, but colonialism is more prevalent in Africa than in the New World. Post-independence disillusionments, gender oppression, cultural and economic exploitation, corruption, ethnic rivalry, kidnapping for ransom, banditry, terrorism, and religious fundamentalism are peculiar to Africa. In contrast, people of color experience racism, identity crisis, alienation, and serfdom as aftermaths of their slavery experience. Literary texts that fail to address these concerns while being conscious of the inherent two-pronged experiences should not pass as Afrofuturism or Africanfuturism (Bagnall, 2021).

While some people were upset that Jemisin's non-stereotypical science fiction book won the Hugo Award, she also made it clear how important it is to show and talk about the dreams, goals, and imaginations of people who are on the outside. It is important for a genre like science fiction, which is meant to show other possibilities to what we think is real, to include all of these options, not just the most famous ones. There are other mythologies besides European ones, and white people are not the only ones who can be strong, brave, and good. Women can also be heroes. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* series was a success because it had both universal themes that all readers could relate to as people of the world and themes that are too often ignored, ignored negatively, or ignored altogether. The trilogy's strength lies in how broad and open it is at the same time. The same is true for Afrofuturism as a whole: this cultural and philosophical movement wants to make the world a better place by rediscovering the African, African American, and black diasporic past, by bringing back traditions, cultures, and histories that have been lost, forgotten, or silenced, and by taking a more open-minded approach to science fiction and art. Afrofuturism is becoming a current that includes authors, artists, photographers, directors, and philosophers from very different traditions, histories, and social and economic backgrounds. These people are coming together to contribute to it, though, by sharing common traits and hopes for the future (Bigoni, 2019).

The Fifth Season, takes place in a geographical region known as the Stillness, which is teeming with disasters and conflicts. Essun, a desperate mother attempting to locate her little girl in the middle of destruction; Syenite, a gullible orogene used as reproductive machinery in an elaborate genetic dream; Damaya the reject—these three main characters depict exploitation in its grandest form. Most of the action occurs during the time of the Fifth Season, a cataclysmic event where orogenes, who are people with abilities to geoe engineer, are brutally tortured and used by the society from which they are indispensable but dread their powers. Other than exploring themes of race, identity, and ecological destruction in urban settings, the novel also addresses the problems of oppressed peoples. It targets structural injustice and highlights the

middle ground through people and people's activism. The problem occurs because, the author can expose the dynamic through traditional Afrofuturism, where the characters' melting pot of experiences is all in their head and 'draws culture from power not because there is any, but to combat the adversities'. A critical summary of key texts explains how oppressive regimes tend to strip individual differences by depicting every orogen with utility and not as a person. Even the design of the space—oppressive due to its design—can itself be considered a representation of society's control and enhances the effects of the fictional characters' conflict with society's internalized violence.

Moreover, Jemisin examines the theme of gender and sexuality focusing on female bonding that is contrary to conventional patriarchy. They center around motherhood, trauma, and recovery, and demonstrate the importance of a support system in overcoming external oppression. The novel seeks to recover history, as a tool of imagining a more positive construction of possible futures, in line with the premise of Afrofuturism's concerns about the retelling of stories as a method of liberating those who have been silenced. The novel weaves together such multifaceted layers and, as a result, fully depicts and critiques the themes of self-identity, home, and community relationship with one's biophysical environment.

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