

Flying (S)hero Arro-yo: Exploring the Representation of Afrofuturistic Feminism from Biafra to Ginen for a Sustainable Future

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Abstract

This paper explores the issues of empowered identity through the character of Arro-yo. It illustrates the reality of women's resilience in the Afrofuturistic short stories "Biafra" and "Windseekers" by Nnedi Okorafor. The concept of feminism is reflected in Arro-yo as the subject; her flying is used as a tool to emphasize the concepts of freedom, female strength, and connection with African mythology and Afrofuturism. This qualitative literary analysis employs close reading of Okorafor's "Biafra" and "Windseekers," applying Stiwanism, Nego-Feminism, intersectionality, and decolonial feminism to code for themes of flight, negotiation, myth-technology fusion, and eco-urban design. The framework of African futuristic feminisms comprises the equalist theories of Molaria Ogundipe's Stiwanism and Obioma Nnaemeka's Nego-Feminism, which are used to depict Arroyo's action. The integration of Stiwanism and Nego-Feminism into Afrofuturism can create sustainable and gender-inclusive futures, advocating for their active participation in societal transformation. The city of Biafra is a dystopian representation of the past and later the technological and naturalistic future of Ginen, blending science fiction and futuristic culture. Afrofuturism draws on myths of African tribes, placing them within the framework of speculative fiction to offer viewers a more nuanced understanding of African gender dynamics, social transformations, and futuristic visions rooted in African experiences, where architecture seamlessly integrates technology. The dystopian city of Biafra contrasts with the hybrid, techno-nature utopia of Ginen, illustrating how Afrofuturism remediates erased or misrepresented African identities by merging tradition and modernity. Ultimately, Arro-yo embodies a proactive, responsive Afrofuturistic feminism that advocates for women's active participation in societal transformation and sustainable development. This paper fills that gap by examining how Okorafor's stories "Biafra" and "Windseekers" fuse Stiwanism, Nego-Feminism, intersectionality, and decolonial feminism to articulate gender-inclusive, eco-conscious urban imaginaries. It shows Afrofuturistic fiction can operationalize African feminist theories to envision sustainable, gender-inclusive urban futures.

Keywords: Afrofuturistic Feminism, Afrofuturism, African Literature, Stiwanism, Nego-Feminism, Technonatural Futures, Sustainable Future.

Introduction

Nnedi Okorafor writes speculative fiction that integrates African myth, futurism, and social commentary, and sometimes focuses on Black African women as heroes. Okorafor envisions futures and other worlds that are firmly rooted in Igbo history and cosmology in

her stories, such as the short versions of the futures and alternate worlds in “Biafra” and “Windseekers” (Okorafor, 2013). Arro-yo (Inyang as a young girl) is a windseeker, a woman with the ability to fly, whose duties take her trudging through time and space to face war, tradition, and identity. The angelic ability and agency of Arro-yo signify her as an Afrofuturistic heroine, a character whose quest can be explored through technology, legend, and gender. This paper will discuss how Okorafor employs such a character to investigate African feminism. We review Biafra and Windseekers through the lenses of African feminisms, primarily Molaria Ogundipe-Leslie Stiwanism, as well as Obioma Nnaemeka's Nego-feminism, followed by an invocation of intersectional and decolonial approaches. We will demonstrate that the stories presented by Okorafor in her works can be seen as an example of Afrofuturistic feminism: an understanding of gender and empowerment rooted in African knowledge and a vision of the future, which posits the possibility of changing the world.

Mark Dery (1994) coined the term “Afrofuturism,” which refers to speculative fiction that explores African American themes and addresses African American concerns within the technoculture of the twentieth century (Kettle, 2020). A similar idea of rewriting African futures and pasts with the help of SF is present in the work of Okorafor, who notes that, however, she would rather use such a term as Africanfuturism, which, according to the writer, is a kind of science fiction that is directly connected with African culture, history, mythology, and worldview without the prioritization of the West (Collins, 2021). In Okorafor, Africanfuturism can be described as gendered, as it centers on the voices of African women and children in the story of technology and transformation. In “Biafra” and “Windseekers,” the re-centering is fulfilled in the heroine Arro-yo. She carries African myth (the diasporic legend of the flying Africans) as well as questioning the contemporary crisis (war, patriarchy) in her behaviour.

Critics emphasize that Okorafor's Afrofuturist vision is counter-hegemonic. She has written postcolonial speculative fiction that demonstrates its potential as a location for counter-hegemonic discourse (Oku, 2021). Well, Arro-yo does not only fly miraculously: in this way, he means liberation from oppression. The Flying Africans is a well-known legend in African and African Diaspora folklore, featuring enslaved Africans who welcomed the prospect of reclaiming their freedom by flying back to their native lands. Flight is a form of runaway slave jargon, representing black mobility through flight to freedom (Allison, 2019). This mythic archive is reflected in the skyward trips of Arro-yo. The future, in which the Black woman takes to the wing to fly across the continent and through time in Okorafor, is a vision of a future in which the women of Africa overcome the problems presented by the colonizer and patriarch, as well as the constraints they impose.

Despite growing scholarship on Afrofuturism and African feminist thought, few studies examine how speculative narratives fuse these traditions to envision sustainable, gender-inclusive futures. This paper addresses that gap by analyzing Nnedi Okorafor's short stories “Biafra” and “Windseekers” through Stiwanist, Nego-Feminist, intersectional, and decolonial feminist lenses. In doing so, it demonstrates how Okorafor operationalizes

African feminist theories within Afrofuturistic world-building, offering a novel framework for integrating feminist praxis into eco-urban imaginaries.

We posit that the agency empowerment of Arro-yo is a result of the fusion of Afrofuturism and two African feminist traditions, as homage to Molaria Ogundipe-Stanley's (Social Transformation Including Women in Africa) and Obioma Nnaemeka's Nego-Feminism (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994; Nnaemeka, 2004). Placing Arro-yo in these contexts, this paper demonstrates that Afrofuturistic fictional texts can be used to envision a gender-friendly, more sustainable urban future. The technologically integrated city of Ginen and the war-torn Biafra represent a continuum of time and space. Whereas Biafra represents the colonial past with the memories of civil war, Ginen represents the techno-ecological future of a harmonized world. In the journey of Arro-yo, we reveal how Afrofuturistic feminism can offer distinctive perspectives on the roles of African women in driving socio-environmental change.

"In all of Ginen, especially the city of Ile-Ife, the people had accomplished something more advanced than any society Arro-yo had seen in her many travels: A happy weaving, interlocking, meshing of technology and plants. A true symbiotic relationship between man and flora." (Windseekers, p. 176)

Materials and Methods

The study utilizes qualitative literary analysis of Okorafor's "Biafra" and "Windseekers," selected for their explicit engagement with African feminist ideologies and speculative visions. Criteria for close reading include thematic focus on female agency, ecological integration, and symbolic elements such as flight. The application of Stiwanism, Nego-Feminism, intersectionality, and decolonial lenses guides interpretation. These theoretical frames inform how we examine Arro-yo's response to societal structures, gender norms, and historical trauma, and how speculative fiction can envision eco-feminist, inclusive futures. The mentioned African feminist theories allow the reader to consider the agency of the protagonist Arro-yo, her resilience, and involvement in the socio-environmental context in a contextualized manner. The deconstruction was conducted through a close reading of the works, isolating symbolic themes such as flight, the symbiosis of nature and technology, and the empowerment of women. Moreover, the article also considers intersectionality and a decolonial feminist lens in order to interpret the multiplicity of oppression in which Arro-yo struggled, including the colonial past, the war, and gendered aggression. The literary works were reviewed in an attempt to explore the ways in which speculative fiction can provide sustainable futures by incorporating African myth, gender justice, and ecological harmony. To enhance the analysis, secondary sources were identified based on literature related to Afrofuturism, African feminism, and postcolonial theory. In doing so, this interdisciplinary and theoretical study offers a cultural reading of Okorafor's work as a model for envisioning gender-inclusive paths and technologically and ecologically balanced futures for Africa.

Theoretical Framework & Literature Review

African Feminist Paradigms: This study draws on two key African feminist theories. Molaria Ogundipe's *Stiwanism* (Social Transformation Including Women in Africa) critiques Eurocentric feminist models and foregrounds collective social change led by African women, challenging colonial legacies and patriarchal norms (Ogundipe-Leslie, 1994). Obioma Nnaemeka's *Nego-Feminism* advocates strategic negotiation, "no ego feminism", within existing social structures, emphasizing cultural realism and pragmatic resistance in postcolonial African societies (Nnaemeka, 2004). These frameworks situate Arro-yo's actions within debates on transformational versus negotiated feminist praxis.

Afrofuturism, Africanfuturism, and Postcolonial Critique: Afrofuturism, as defined by Mark Dery (1994) and explored by Kodwo Eshun (1998), reimagines Black subjectivity through technocultural narratives, contesting Western teleologies. Okorafor's alignment with "Africanfuturism" shifts the locus to indigenous mythologies, decolonial agency, and African cosmologies (Collins, 2021). This positions her work within postcolonial theory debates as per Gayatri Spivak's subaltern reclamation and Homi Bhabha's hybridity, by rewriting futures where African identities resist and transcend colonial impositions.

Intersectionality, Decolonial Feminism: Kimberlé Crenshaw's intersectionality framework (1989) reveals how overlapping systems of oppression, gender, race, class, shape lived experiences, a critical lens for reading Arro-yo's dual marginalization as a woman and a war survivor. Decolonial feminist scholars like María Lugones and Walter Dignolo (2011) highlight the need to de-link from colonial epistemologies and recover suppressed knowledges. Additionally, ecocritical theory (Heise, 2008) informs the analysis of Ginen's techno-ecological design, connecting feminist care ethics with sustainable urban imaginaries. Together, these approaches embed the paper in broader scholarly conversations across feminist, postcolonial, and environmental humanities.

The Afro-futuristic Feminist Fusion: Stirring up Feminism, Stiwanism, and Negofeminism

The strategy employed by Okorafor is correlated with the overall tendencies of African women's speculative fiction. According to Arit Oku (2021), Africanfuturist fiction often challenges gender stereotypes and enables readers to imagine alternative avenues for the post-crisis development of Africa and its economic success. In all of these books, powerful African women challenge the concept of technology and its power relationship. Arro-yo, for example, plays against the classical hierarchy of patriarchy: she is not fated to be chosen by an inevitable destiny, as she predetermines what happens to happen, simply by existing. It represents a feminist position, otherwise known as Afrofuturist feminism, a style of thinking that expresses the outspoken and independent Black women protagonists who align their cultural heritage with futurist ideals (Allison, 2019). Her ability to fly, as depicted by Arro-yo, can be interpreted as a symbol of freedom and resilience, which are prominent themes in Afrofuturist feminism. Her ability to fly freely. This mythic power relates her to her lineage roots, just as it sends her into new worlds. One of the few rejuvenating abilities

still possessed by superheroes like Superman is flight, which is comparable to the tremendous powers that Arro-yo maintained during her flight. Since Okorafor utilized science fiction and speculative fiction as an escape to freedom, having the ability to fly and live forever can be seen as a form of empowerment (Sum & Makokha, 2022). Building on the exploration of feminist theories of Stiwanism, a concept developed by Molaria Ogundipe, and Nego-Feminism, introduced by Obioma Nnaemeka. These theories frame Afrofuturistic feminist narratives to make Arro-yo feasible and culturally comprehensible for African people. As Arro-yo passively works for the betterment of society. If policymakers keep this in mind, it would benefit society, as half of the people are women, and they can significantly impact it. Stiwanism and Nego-Feminism within Afrofuturism can create better contention for possible and convincing conceptions of equality and sustainability, which is referred to as 'Situating Feminism' (Amaefuela, 2021). Arro-yo calmly handles the situation and never resorts to open revolt, unlike radical feminists, who do. Instead, she shows resilience and takes action for betterment.

Ogundipe (1994) argued for "Social Transformations in Africa Including Women," rejecting Eurocentric definitions of feminism. Crucially, Stiwanism sees the systems of oppression, colonial legacies, patriarchy, and economic injustice as the actual adversaries of African women. As Ogundipe pointed out, the "biggest adversary of women is the systems that oppress and subordinate them" (AWID, 2020). In other words, Stiwanism emphasizes structural change, calling for the dismantling of neocolonial patriarchy and discriminatory traditions. It also insists that women's well-being of their "bodies and selfhood" be a central concern of any African feminist project (Masha & Mogoboya, 2024). In practice, Stiwanism promotes collective activism and community cooperation, with women participating equally in shaping society. In 'Biafra', Arro-yo emerges as a hero who saves people as in stiwanism women will help out to build a society where she is healing others by natural collecting herbal remedy from the forest (Okorafor, Biafra, 223), but in futuristic Ginen City, her mind is like a radar that if anything harmful is there she can identify it easily. There is a symbiotic relationship between the city, plants, and humans. From the past Biafra to the future Ginen, it is shown that after recognizing the true power of femininity, they created a better future. A courtesy for women is needed to have a gender-inclusive role in championing sustainability and the consequent policies. (Okorafor, 2013)

In Nnaemeka's words, "African feminism is not about carrying ego." Nego-feminism does not require women to wait patiently and quietly to be exploited; instead, it requires cultural savvy. There can be times when women accept to bend, but not break, the rules, until the time comes when they can change them. This strategy is described as the metaphor of the chameleon, which is slow, steady, and resilient (Ossai, 2025). Nego-Feminism presents an opportunity to examine the position of African women in future societies, as Arro-yo navigates her identity through negotiation. This is relevant to sustainability because sustainable development always involves working with a societal web. This approach facilitates a more culturally sensitive feminism, allowing for the 'African' construction of African women's feminism (Edwin, Shirin, 2016). This approach is more realistic to the

social structures in Africa. It presents a practical manner in which those societies can be changed and at the same time fight the rampant patriarchy that is evident in most African cultures. The resistance Arro-yo showed against Ruwan. (Okorafor, 2013)

By synthesizing insights from Stiwanism and Nego-Feminism, the Afrofuturistic narratives offered by Nnedi Okorafor demonstrate how a war-torn city can transform into a futuristic city for sustainability, as observed by Arro-yo. Stiwanism emphasizes social change, while Arro-yo focuses on helping people, and Nego-Feminism addresses the cultural realities of African societies, where patriarchy is dominant. If Afrofuturistic works incorporate these specified feminist frameworks, then the representation of sustainability can be extended to embrace both technological and social aspects, as men and women participate simultaneously. For Afrofuturism to effectively contribute to the discourse on sustainability, it must go beyond merely envisioning technologically advanced societies. It must also address the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability in a manner that is inclusive and equitable. Stiwanism and Nego-Feminism can be essential tools for achieving this goal (Amaefula, 2021). In most Afrofuturistic stories, technology is often seen as central to the construction of African futurity. That is why all plants have a symbiotic relationship with humans that will also sustain nature. These frameworks would not only depict futures where African societies are technologically advanced but also ensure that these advancements are accompanied by social justice, economic equity, and environmental stewardship (Womack, 2013). In doing so, Afrofuturism can contribute to the creation of futures that are not only imaginative but also grounded in the realities and aspirations of African women.

Along with African feminist thinking, we use intersectionality (Crenshaw) and decolonial feminism. Intersectionality acknowledges that Arro-yo is a wartime woman in Nigeria, a position that implies co-occurring oppressions. Her issue of gender cannot be separated from the ethnic violence and racism. Intersectionality, in turn, as one NGO summary puts it, denotes the interdependent nature of social classifications, such as race, class, and gender, which are considered to produce an overlapping and mutually reinforcing orientation of discrimination (Womankind Worldwide, 2019). This lens makes us remember that Arro-yo experiences sexism on the one hand and the trauma of the struggle of her people on the other. Decolonial feminism is implied: Okorafor provides settings (postcolonial Nigeria, mythic homelands), which allow one to analyze the influence of colonial history. In particular, in Biafra, the main character must battle a war that originated during Nigeria's colonial period, and her journey can be interpreted as an act of reclaiming narrative control and seeking justice.

Our frameworks inform our readings: Stiwanism draws our attention to how collective transformation and structural inequality happen as a result of the acts of Arro-yo; Nego-feminism enables us to observe how she engages in patterned negotiations with the patriarchal norms and tradition; intersectionality reminds us of her gender in connection to ethnicity, history, and power. The combination of them provides an Afrofeminist discourse that is sensitive to Okorafor's cultural environment.

Windseekers: Freedom and Feminist Agency

Freedom and Flight: Flight serves as a metaphor for liberation. Arro-yo's aerial rescues in Biafra (Okorafor, 2013) and defiance of Ruwan's threats (Windseekers, p. 176) exemplify how flight reclaims mobility as feminist praxis and ancestral return. Through Arro-yo's journey, flying represents freedom and escape from physical and social structures, transcending geographical and societal barriers. Women's cultural connection to African folklore and the incorporation of sci-fi elements into the Afrofuturistic concept. (Womack, 2013). Heroes will always inspire and motivate new generations, and the flight will always serve as a reminder that it is possible to overcome challenges and soar to great heights, both literally and figuratively. (The geek spark, 2024). That is why in this paper Arro-yo is addressed as "(S)hero", the flying protagonist. In Biafra, we found the context of a civil war, and flying Arro-yo was saving Igbo people there (Okorafor, 2013). The concept of flying Africans has its mythical foundation in Africa. It is the spiritual association with liberation, soaring high, and being one with the sky as a mode of existence for Arro-yo (Womack, 2013). Here, by depicting Arro-yo as a flying creature, Okorafor is also creating a myth that can overcome all kinds of obstacles. Her flight from the ground symbolizes the resistance to the male-dominated, warmonger society in Biafra. In Ginen, she demonstrated her flying power with Ruwan, asserting her power over Ruwan.

Gendered Resistance and Urban Futures: Okorafor portrays Arro-yo as both warrior and healer. Her machete symbolizes agency in conflict zones, while her oversight in Ginen's planning embodies feminine wisdom in urban design. Through these motifs, the text critiques militarized patriarchy and imagines participatory, gender-inclusive cityscapes. Barr stated that, "the concept that for one to be classified as a woman, she has to behave like a woman. Gender being subversively a performance akin to a mask, a masquerade, makes the readers ponder upon who gets to lay down the laws that define a proper way of performing womanhood". The readers can see how Arro-yo killed the man in "Windseeker" while in Biafra Arro-yo saved people. Arro-yo's response to disprove Ruwan's assertion of physical might over her and her preparedness to meet him physically flies in the face of the conventional culture of gender demureness. Afrofuturistic feminist themes often challenge the gendered power structures and depict women as superior in various domains. (Houghton, 2019)

"You best ask me that, more politely. I'm growing tired of you" (Windseekers, p. 180). When Ruwan tries to dominate Arro-yo, telling her to stop showing herself off, she replies to him directly and bluntly, which proves that she is a strong-willed woman. Arro-yo is a strong-headed woman who works and does not need a man telling her what to do. Her unflinching reaction to Ruwan's presence portrays her strength and confidence. Arro-yo asserts herself to Ruwan as a person of her rights, including her wants, needs, and emotions. The desire to assert an active subjectivity in a time when it is being taken away can be a form of resistance. Besides constructing her subjectivity, she seeks a thorough change in a woman's role. In feminist dystopian texts, the character expresses her concern through how she is objectified and repressed, ultimately silenced (Falk Jones, 1991). Thus, the voices of women

in dystopian narratives present a social injustice of gender regarding her situation, hence: The voices are doubly effective because they throw back negative silencing into clamorous sound" (Falk Jones, 1991). "And he wouldn't have hesitated, as she didn't. Her machete was sharp and she sliced fast, her arm muscles working" (Windseekers, p, 186). It can be interpreted as the sole theme of survival. Arro-yo's actions stem from necessity, highlighting the basic need she requires for her survival. If they are the hunters, they experience regret after the kill; otherwise, they die after being hunted. Survival, defined by the ability to hunt and stay alive, thus becoming 'the hunter,' is a duality that Arro-yo blurred, blurring the predator and prey concept.

"To some critics, they argued that the term was not enough to describe their severity. However, I was not about enemy-like relations with men or men's hostility. We nurture men and bring them into this world, we raise some of them to oppress other women, and sometimes marry them and are blood-related to them, so we cannot hate them. What I am saying is that we are linked with men; consequently, we have to find ways of how we can live with them and, in some cases, live happily with them (Allan, 1995). "I've killed myself, she thought (Okorafor, p. 169). Arroyo never hated Ruwan. Arroyo's realization that she has metaphorically "killed herself" indicates a profound transformation. The act of killing Ruwan is not just a physical action, but a catalyst for profound internal change. The struggle between innate impulses, guilt, sorrow, and one's personality. This kind of inner turmoil and inner conflict is most effectively portrayed, allowing readers to see why Arro-yo behaves as she does and feel compassion for her character. They have unconsciously interacted with the two sexes as strategic stakeholders. The battle between fear and guilt relates to identity and loss due to war.

"She flew into the sky to get away from gunless, machete-bearing, desperate men gone mad who tried to attack her" (Biafra). A paradigm shift is evident here in Biafra, where we saw the men carrying machetes, but in "Windseekers," Arro-yo has her machete. Arro-yo's journey through the war-torn landscape reveals the impact of conflict on individuals and communities. On the other hand, Arro-yo in Ginen offers a sense of hope to the people who envision such a future. Ironically, the machete symbolises Arro-yo in terms of his preparedness and willingness to fight. This symbol is her breasts, her warrior strength, the violence she had to embrace to survive, and the violence inside her. Sharpening the machete is a form of preparation, and one can argue that Arro-yo is preparing for future skirmishes. This defies many conventional war narratives where women are neatly excluded or merely victims and camp followers, and instead brings to the front line the roles of women in resistance and survival. This idea is especially applicable in Afrofuturistic feminism, which seeks to center African cultural norms and trends at the core of feminist practice or discourse, rather than the Western style of feminism. (Amaefula, 2021)

Arro-yo's commitment to helping people and her ability to exist in a postapocalyptic world reflected the essence of people's ability to exist and achieve goals. As in the story, she continued to live and breathe while sitting beside the dead man's body, the desire to feel the warmth of the sky and be alive. Next, she demonstrated empowerment through action

by choosing to help her people during such a calamity, even if it meant jeopardizing her own life, which gave the character what she could describe as empowerment and determination to make a change. Arro-yo speaking up and behaving both as a healer and a warrior goes against the gender roles of the story and other works of the same period and demonstrates women's ability to lead and create change. Despite the challenging conditions, she delivers an impact that showcases the agency and power of women, which is the essence of feminism. As in the story, and then, as gently, as tenderly, she put the man down. A few minutes later. She then got up from there, liberated from what had held her since she came back to the continental nation of her birth. (Okorafor, 2013)

As Patricia McFadden states, let us borrow from the past only what is highly selective, and let us borrow only what propels us forward in formulating an agenda and an identity that corresponds to the progressive concepts and configurations of the present. Let me warn you, as one who survived feminism and as a woman who will call herself a mature old lady fully fed with the fruits of being a liberated goddess, till I am more than a hundred years old – there will be a backlash, and boy, it will not be easy to handle. It is vicious and ever-present: the way that patriarchy can be so totally and underhandedly all-encompassing. "Patriarchy can be so totalising and invasive... the erasure, the stalking, the abuse, in some instances, the killing of feminists... the alters, the erasure, and the vilification." (McFadden, 2024)

"We all tell stories about her. She is a legend. Still, we don't all believe such a woman could ever be grounded, but worse things have happened" (Biafra, p. 247).

"But Arro-yo knew, even in these civilized days, if someone were revealed to be a Windseeker, he or she would be plucked from the sky and tied to a tree until death came." (Windseekers, p. 177)

One of the most prevalent subjects in Afrofuturism is the exploration of cultural memory and the search for identity, particularly when combined with futuristic and imaginary imagery (Womack, 2013). The memory Arro-yo possesses is represented as "I was born with a memory strong as the oldest trees," which symbolizes a deliberate effort to insert women into a history that is otherwise inclined to erase them. (Okorafor, 2013). As if Arro-yo knew that no place was safe for her, regardless of how civilized it was. She has a death threat in this community, even though it is a futuristic era. Arro-yo knows that the hi-tech civilized people of the city of Ife-Ife will kill a wind seeker if they find any. Rather than openly revolting against her power, Arro-yo is tactically avoiding any dispute that will create anarchy. However, by applying the word "civilized", she is mocking the artificial concept of civilization, as seen in Biafra, where she also mocked the word "independence" (Okorafor, 2013). This is a recurrent practice in many feminist dystopian narratives. Thus, in order to stake a claim against the resistant gendered power, it is also a way that female characters can appear to comply with whatever patriarchal power structures expect of them before they can actively rebel against it. If they were to pretend to be courageous, they would be dismissed or let go, and this would make resistance impossible. (Meghan Hurley-Powell, 2019)

Molara Ogundipe's Stiwanism (Social Transformation Including Women in Africa) aims to promote the participation of women in the socio-economic transformation of African societies, which differs from Eurocentric notions (Edwin, Shirin, 40). Stiwanism also differs from Western feminism in its understanding of gender as connected to other social issues rather than as separate from them, political and economic awakening, along with social justice. This approach supports the framework of sustainability, which also involves engaging all the stakeholders to find multiple solutions to the multifaceted problems. Here, the framework of sustainability can be illustrated by Arro-yo, who is engaged in various circumstances to find multiple solutions to the multifaceted problems. Here, the relevance of the chameleon metaphor is found in Nnaemeka. (Edwin, Shirin, 2016). The possibility of revising the narratives that serve as the basis for the scenarios that inform decisions about the social-ecological future arises with the development of new writers, scientists, and artists on the continent. In the era of rapidly accelerating social and ecological change, bridging these starkly divergent future visions is a crucial tactic in the science communication arsenal for making more effective judgments in sustainable development. (B Moyo, R Sitas, 2004). "Afrofuturism gives optimism that, despite efforts to bring in a sustainable development age that 'leaves no one behind', we may reject the dire futures that rationalise social, political, and economic injustice" (B Moyo, R Sitas, 2004). The concept of symbiosis Between Technology and Nature: The city of Ile-Ife is portrayed as the perfect city based on sustainable design, particularly incorporating technology and plants. This aligns with one of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 11 targets, which aims to make cities and human settlements sustainable.

As McFladden says, Ideological differences can never be just washed away. Radical feminists in the Movement will not disappear, and to anyone who can tell me that the African Women's Movement is for moderates and conservatives only. Therefore, it is necessary to recognize and address the ideological disparities that lie at the heart of them. However, it is worth noting that everyone contributes to the Movement; what remains most important is how we treat what we have to bring in. The reader can find defensive violence as a form of empowerment through Arro-yo. The violent act on Ruwan is represented as necessary and a way of avenging and empowering Arro-yo. It is a common fear among women that sometimes they have to kill in order to be safe from male violence. This aspect is evident in her decision to kill Ruwan, which shows that women have to be aggressive to fight the world that dominates them. It can also be viewed as a symbolic form of self-defense. Thus, Arro-yo's action in killing Ruwan can be a representation of an emancipative move to fight patriarchal control. It is an assertion of liberation from oppressors, enabling her to take charge of her life and her body. Henceforth, the subversion of traditional romance is intertwined with conflict. The conflicted nature of Arro-yo's and Ruwan's interaction, which consists of sexual tension and rivalry, defies the conventional representation of a romantic pair. Their notions depart from the traditional thinking of affectionate union as a perfect complement and are instead characterized by conflict and power struggle. In *Living a Feminist Life*, Sara Ahmed notes that many women endure

despite not being meant to, and they do so in a rebellious manner. Some women are assumed to be scared to step out into society fully, and therefore, their survival can be seen as a form of protest (Ahmed 237). For any woman in the world, it is tough to remain passive or inconspicuous because such behavior can put her in deadly peril. Getting to pick survival as Arro-yo did, an existence indicates that one is becoming passive or even complicit in gendered power because the woman is not making seemingly obvious moves, such as moving out of the community, to fight it. This resonates with the radical interpretations by feminist scholars on how romantic partnerships perpetuate gender inequalities. Their affair is depicted as a profound but complex relationship that defies the social order, offering insight into the true nature of love in a man's world. (Okorafor, 2013)

Nnedi Okorafor's "Windseekers" and "Biafra" are, to some extent, saturated with Western feminism, which is related to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's fifteen suggestions on feminism. There, she roasted the concepts of stiwanism and nego-feminism by calling them "Feminism Lite". She criticizes those who condition equality from a male perspective (Adichie, 2017). However, the reader can find the Arro-yo character as fully balanced with several kinds of African feminist theories, exploring themes of the emancipation struggle of a woman who seeks to achieve her independence in a male-dominated society. Travelling is the symbol of the chance to take back the future and create one. Arro-yo soaring through the sky of opportunity and hope in an escape from the actualities of hardship, but carrying the incredible seeds of agency that lay dormant within. In her flight to the sky, she captured the route and direction that would help her people reach a bright future, metaphorically. This vision aligns with radical feminism's goal of eradicating subjugation and falsely constructed systems of gender with special regard to women's emancipation and liberation. The one that we saw in "Windseekers," in which she is more of a powerhouse than before.

"She whipped her head around, snatching her machete into her grasp and pointing it at his neck." ("Windseekers, p. 183). The experiences Arro-yo undergoes reveal her struggle to make her own decisions and determine her own life, a typical principle of radical feminism, which makes her a threat to Ruwan. She desires to be independent and make decisions on her own, rather than being bound by norms and procedures imposed on women. Her activities suggest she wants to escape the prison of female subjugation. This can be seen as a kind of militant feminism protesting the patriarchal patterns of women's behavior and their determination by male supervisors. The author proves that she constantly denies him control throughout her life, which is the essence of radical feminism's aim to destroy male-defined relationships and create independent women. "Don't overrate yourself" she said. Moreover, she was telling the truth. She did not have any fear of Ruwan, at least not physically." Arro-yo's denial of Ruwan's physical might over her turns the conventional gender script on its head by portraying her as not only bold but also as someone who measures power and might in a different way. Here, Ruwan objectifies her in light of her gender, but points out the general societal wrong that is being done to her as a woman because of the saying, "Obviously, I am physically superior to you." She not only disallows

Ruwan from shutting her up, but also speaks up for herself, by ensuring that this moment is a protest of his misogynistic behaviour.

Biafra: Healing, Responsibility, and Collective Future

It takes an entirely different tone with Biafra. This is where Arro-yo exchanges the greenery of Ginen with the burnt earth of a civil war. Her getaway turns out to be a form of service work. Amidst war, she is a caring lady who is strong in spirit. With the same windseeker power, Arro-yo has become the savior, now relieving suffering by carrying the injured and assisting the villages. This she-heroine kind of character is a kind of guardian angel to her people. Notably, she undertakes this labor not only because she is duty-bound, but also because she feels a sense of guilt and a sense of belonging here. The narrative mentions the feeling of guilt experienced by Arro-yo because she spent her life abroad while her family members suffered. The reason behind her return is based on a collective sense of identity; she is, first and foremost, an Igbo woman, and secondly, a war refugee. What is emphasized in this is the convergence of gender, ethnicity, and history in the story.

"Those she saved who were Christian called her an angel. They said that she was sent from the heavens to help those who needed help. Those who were Muslim were sure that she was a servant of Allah. Others called her Yemeja, Mami Wata, and many other things. People now might compare her to a superhero of some sort." (Biafra, p. 247)

The story's ending is notably unsentimental. Arro-yo's mission, while noble, cannot stop the broader devastation. This lack of a fairy-tale resolution is itself significant. It underscores a decolonial truth: even extraordinary individuals cannot undo systemic violence on their own. However, Okorafor does not portray Arro-yo as disempowered; rather, the emphasis is on resilience in the face of catastrophe. Arro-yo's losses (she loses close relatives and witnesses cruelty) humanize her and emphasize the cost of war. Still, by the story's close, she remains unbroken. Her survival and continued flight signal that hope persists. In Afrofuturist terms, the ending opens a space for imagining recovery. Indeed, Okorafor situates part of this recovery in the very concept of Ginen as a metaphoric homeland that Arro-yo glimpses. In "Windseekers," Arro-yo met Ginen's future city; in "Biafra," her actions in the war imply that a healed future is worth striving for. The juxtaposition invites the reader to link past sorrow with future possibility, an Afrofuturist gesture of reclamation.

Negotiation and Communal Healing: Arro-yo embodies Nego-Feminism by negotiating with tradition and patriarchy rather than confronting them directly. Her healing work in Biafra and radar-like attunement in Ginen portray African women's potential in sustainable development, illustrating how cultural negotiation fosters communal resilience. Finally, while women's lives and their bodies are where the actualities of civil strife find their manifestations, there is, to this date, no efficient remedies that can be invoked to punish males for raping and robbing women across the continent and many regions of the globe. When one sees female bodies being portrayed as a stage set where men get to play their future games, one is most often overwhelmed with helplessness (McFladden, 2024), as we

see in "Biafra" when Arro-yo talked about violence against women. These leaders had intercourse with woman after woman, thereby exhausting the women's life force, and there, just disposed of their flat, depressed corpses. However, those shattered bodies still produced children, so these men received thousands of sons not to spare themselves any power, so that none could be taken away in the event of an assassination. "These leaders had intercourse with woman after woman, sapping their feminine life force and then throwing away their shriveled, sad bodies. But those broken bodies still birthed children" (Okorafor, 2013). It seems we must do something; first, we must know what it is they are doing to them that enables them to do it without consequence. The genocide and ethnic violence that have been inflicted upon women, children, and poor men are a significant concern for those trying to build a new world, and correlate with militarization and negation of human rights. On May 30, 1967, the Nigerian Civil War, also known as the Biafran War, broke out. Arro-yo expressed a notion of existential solitude and self-reliance in both stories. The fact that Arro-yo carries on her quest unaccompanied. From Biafra to Ginen, an appreciation for isolation and independence is prominent. Her decision to let go of a possible way to have someone to be with her signifies her dedication to her direction and the negation of one's capability of being complete through reliance on other people. It portrays the struggle of choosing independence, to embrace the painful fact that feminism and the desire for freedom entail loneliness and personal loss to some extent. Arro-yo's tears and her perceived loneliness can be well understood in the context of feminism, namely, the bittersweet freedom from patriarchy.

In Okorafor's story, Arro-yo's escapade is a call to the same legacy. It allows her not only to escape the clutches of gravity but also to break free from the shackling gender conventions of her establishment. Ginen presents a futuristic setting, as Arro-yo flies beyond plant-grown skyscrapers and the so-called organic tech, being a master of both nature and technology (ViolininAvoid, 2013). The text is about the ecology of Ginen - the skyscrapers are built from living trees, and the technology is cultivated on the vine, offering a good mix of tradition and innovation. Arro-yo, a windseeker, embodies this mix: she is both firmly rooted in Igbo culture (hair and dada, fate as a windseeker). She emerges as a product of the technologically transformed future. Her air voyage over the sky of Ginen is therefore both mythical and modern. It quite literally reinforces her connection to African mythologies and emphasizes her status as a symbol of liberation and strength.

Futuristic Folkloric Fusion in Afrofuturism's Mythic Meld

Eliot stated that "the historical sense compels a man to write not merely with his generation in his bones, but with the feeling that...literature...has a simultaneous existence and composes a simultaneous order" (Eliot, 1975). Afrofuturism depicts future histories in which the burdens of colonialism and slavery never enter the picture for African cultures to remain fabulously authentic without the histories that have mutilated their opportunities. Simultaneously, it dares to dream of a future where individuals of African descent take centre stage (Womack, 2013).

"And that is how the tortoise got his cracked shell." (Windseeker, p. 183)

This story aims to establish the connection between Ginen and West African traditions, thereby signifying that African mythologies are deeply rooted, as they are intertwined. It captures how cultures carry forward their folklore and legends, and how the same stories are told to succeeding generations with slight variations to accommodate changes in geography and language. It is in this sense that folklore serves as a means of keeping people connected to the stories they are a part of, allowing for a connection between them and, subsequently, a connection to every other person, linking the past with the Present and tying a culture of that time into today's future. (Bawin, 2020)

Hence, the tortoise's story gives a valuable lesson on the folly of pride and the burden that it brings. The tortoise shows that it is dangerous to be greedy and carried away with a goal, as one should always humble themselves and stay in check due to their humanity. The symbol of the cracked shell of the tortoise represents the everlasting damage and consequences of the sins of greed and deception, which presuppose the materialisation of actions and their unchangeable effects. Tradition in many African cultures serves as a cultural normative standard, framing the community and the behavior of its members. The story places a strong emphasis on people adhering to tradition and prioritizing it when attempting to solve a problem. (Nathaniel & Akung, 2022)

Arro-yo felt shock, anger, confusion, and, yes, fear. This is evident in the way Arro-yo reacts to the tale, where her facial expression is that of a confident individual with an assertive personality. However, she is a coward and does not trust anyone. Through storytelling, the tension between Arro-yo and Ruwan is depicted throughout the story, making the moral aspect of the folktale seem to exist in real life. This creates a parallel between myth and the real world. A preview of the conflict that will be revealed between Arro-yo and Ruwan. Like the betrayal that can be seen in the current narrative, the birds betray the tortoise. This suggests that perhaps Ruwan is not as friendly and innocent as he appears to be, and that Arro-yo must be on the lookout for betrayal. This mixture of myth and real-life shows that the stories serve their purpose even to this day, giving the audience an understanding of the instincts that control us and the issues of trust and betrayal. The reader can find a Myth and legend integration between Windseekers and their communication with plants. In this creation, the integrated concept of myth and speculative fiction is portrayed by the ability of people known as Windseekers to perform flight and interact with plants (Okorafor, 2013). Science fiction elements are prominently featured in Afrofuturism, and the concept involves asking what if the African mythologies and legends were set in the future. On the other hand, historical memory and cultural Continuity are found in Calabar, the original place of Arro-yo. Ginen is described as a mythical Africa and forms part of the cultural psyche of the Afropolitan lineage that has been imprinted in the minds of African descendants in the diaspora. This is because Afrofuturism primarily explores history and memory, raising questions about the African past and its presence (Nathaniel & Akung, 2022). That is why the story positions Ginen as a geographic locality, which, in turn, points to a rather nuanced understanding of self and ancestry. Arro-yo is called the daughter of

the Water Goddess Mami Wata. The worship of Mami Wata has spread throughout Nigeria, Ghana, the Benin Republic, Cameroon, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Nicolene Burger, 2023). Thus, the narrative is enriched by the appearance of traditional folklore, allowing the reader to become acquainted with the cultural roots of the story and gain insight into the general themes of myth and storytelling in the culture of the people.

Speculating Eco-friendly Urban Futures in a Gender-Inclusive Society

"This was Ginen, where all things began and all things finished. Moreover, in Ginen, everything completed itself in threes... Ginen was the mother of the motherland, where Africans migrated from, Africa's Africa" (Windseekers, p. 177). Pythagoras believed that the essence of the number three holds significance. The number three was revered as a 'divine' number, with several understandings. It was the number of times – past, present, future; birth, life, death; beginning, middle, end – it was the number of the Gods. Ginen is also a city where all things are completed in threes. Making that city not only the future but also connects the past with it. Once, it was called "mythical Africa," and people were forced to forget their history. For some people, it is also a realm of consciousness. (Okorafor, 2013)

Arro-yo's return to Nigeria during the Biafran War is a clear indication of the war's profound impact on society. The war has ensured that homes, infrastructure, and many villages have been destroyed, and people have been displaced and hurt severely. Arroyo's action aligns well with the problems that the Sustainable Development Goals aim to address, specifically the goal to "Make cities and human settlements safe and sustainable." Here, Arro-yo helped injured people in Biafra and demonstrated community development by assisting them in times of distress. In Ife-Ife, she saw a place that is sustainable for the environment and safe for human settlements. The incorporation of skyscrapers that are fundamentally plants unveiled a concept of cities where technology complements the ecosystem, rather than overwhelming it. One moment in the narrative relates to the loss of archaic practices surrounding the plant, suggesting that today's population lacks a correct approach and, hence, is closely tied to cultural heritage. (Okorafor, 2013).

Myth and Technology: The integration of folklore, such as the tortoise's tale and Mami Wata, and technology in Ginen constructs a hybrid identity. Ginen's techno-ecological balance illustrates Afrofuturism's vision of harmony between heritage and innovation, aligning narrative world-building with real-world sustainability goals. Okorafor imbues her female main characters with different powers as cases of characterological counterfactuals. The characters are exposed to other possible spaces or options within the textual country of past and future, which are not (un)known to the reader. This comes as a shock as it remains our only way of comprehending how these sites empower them in their endeavours, characterised by confrontations with dominant patriarchal forces. (Womack, 2013). In Biafra, Arro-yo's mission of saving the people from bombing was prominent. In Windseekers, Arro-yo undergoes initiation in a futuristic country named Ginen and a city named Ife-Ife, which exists outside the real world and is largely unknown to most people.

She also enjoys becoming a bird-like entity, a kind of morphing that grants her a new perspective on her world and a liberation from dominant subject positions. (Okorafor, 2013) From Biafra to Ginen Arro-yo, it is perceived that war is always a loss; if they are united, they can sustain. "Women have to participate as co-partners in social transformation. I think that feminism is the business of both men and women in Africa. All males should be in some way 'feminists,' moving towards a socially just society in which a woman may fully develop herself if this is her desire; that is the right to choose: the nature of liberation, 'freedom'... The female liberation agenda across the globe must accommodate males and enlist males towards a better completion of the task of making society more humane. (Ogundipe-Leslie 1995:230)" Also in Biafra, Arro-yo never blamed Nigerians; rather, she despised the British people who were manipulating Nigerians to fight against Biafra by enforcing a false boundary imposed by foreign people. Also, rather than placing the blame on her people, she claimed that the Britishers had also chosen the Rulers and magicians (Okorafor, 2013). The decolonial nature of the framing of these stories is embedded in Okorafor. She rewrites African mythology (windseekers, flying ancestors), which had been excluded in the colonialist accounts as superstition. Western oppression that characterized the history of the real Nigeria is absent in her vision of Ginen. Instead, the world of proper fusion between nature and technology prospers, a utopia that is not burdened with the past traumas of colonization. Conversely, the issue of a colonial aftermath becomes apparent in Biafra: the war was fueled by colonial-era customs and challenges, as Okorafor points out, as well as by the exploitation of oil (Adams, 2011). The conflict that Arro-yo undergoes in this environment can be interpreted as a symbolic response to those narratives. Arro-yo is a decolonial exaltation in the sense that she aims to rebalance history, serving as a bridge between the future (Ginen) and the past (the Biafran War). The intervention is futuristic and far beyond the war that occurred, serving as an indication of the hope for future generations to learn about these traumas.

Conclusion

Nnedi Okorafor, in the stories "Biafra" and "Windseekers", employs African mythologies, spiritualities, and eco-technologies to develop the science fiction genre through a feminist model. Stiwanism, as formulated by Molara Ogundipe and Nego-Feminism articulated by Obioma Nnaemeka, presents us with Arro-yo as a heroine who flew in both ways, mythically and practically, as an instrument of socio-environmental change. This contrast between the war-induced dystopia of Biafra and the techno-ecological utopia of Ginen demonstrates the range of possible futures in Africa, empowering women and propelling forward sustainable and gender-inclusive futures. Afrofuturistic feminism, as carried by Arro-yo, provides an avenue to criticise colonial histories, review patriarchal organisations, and imagine the African-led futurities based on cultural memory and eco-stewardship. The area to be covered in the future is the expansion of Afrofuturistic feminist praxis, exploring the possibility of implementing community-based and women-led technological projects in modern African cities. The ability to make connections between mythic legacy

and speculative invention offers researchers and practitioners an opportunity to co-produce sustainable, just futures within African epistemologies that build on transnational solidarity.

Through imagining cities in which women are agents of social change, Afrofuturism has the potential to present how urban space can support the citizenry in their daily lives and thereby contribute to positive urban transformation. Thus, these theories could enrich the intersectional approach on the international level by highlighting cultural factors and the necessity of diverse types of feminism that are appropriate to different contexts. The integration of Stiwanism and Nego-Feminism into Afrofuturism can offer a powerful means of creating sustainable and gender-inclusive futures, as evident in Ginen city, where Arro-yo confidently claims herself as powerful as Ruwan (McQuaid, 2017). The Gender Snapshot 2023, published by the UN, is a progress report that highlights the need for gender equality not only in Africa but worldwide. By applying these African feminist theories, Afrofuturistic narratives can move beyond simplistic depictions of technological progress and instead offer more comprehensive visions of sustainability that prioritize social justice, cultural relevance, and the active participation of women (Nnaemeka, 2004). As Carry Mattern Suggested, teaching about Afrofuturism in the classroom, specifically "Reclamation," can help reclaim what was lost due to oppression, allowing women to claim their rightful contributions. Incorporating this concept into pedagogy, we can contribute to community development. (Carrie M. Mattern, 2023). The incorporation of 'skyscrapers' that are plants indicates a postmodernist reality in which technology is used to enhance ecological processes instead of diminishing them. This is a clear sign of efforts to revive communities devastated by disaster, a strategy Arro-yo has employed in Biafra by providing medical needs and support, including health aid and herbal medicine from nearby forests. This is why it is crucial that even during suffering, people are ready to help each other to restore the communities, as Arro-yo was helping everyone. She is surprisingly another important figure involved in the whole process of offering aid and comfort (Okorafor, 2013). From guilt and selfishness, which shaped Arro-yo's personality, the text demonstrates spiritual growth through the selfless service of women and their initiatives. This is why the character of her battles against stereotypical gender expectations is crucial, and why it is essential to value females' contributions to society as well as their capacity to act during emergencies. Ile-Ife is represented as the model of how an efficiently designed city could be based on the integration of technology and plants. This aligns with the objective of the Sustainable Development Goals, focusing on sustainable cities. Governments, non-governmental organisations, and other community-based organisations should encourage female-led organisations that align with the principles of Stiwanism and Nego-feminism. These initiatives included funding for projects that would enhance health, education, and environmental conservation, with a particular focus on local communities. Similarly, Arro-yo supported medical needs through the application of herbal medicine. There is also a need for political leaders under different governments to embrace and develop policies that support Stiwanism or Nego-Feminism. There is a need to develop frameworks that

facilitate the establishment of gender equity, women's empowerment, and the enhancement of women's involvement in decision-making, both at the national and global levels, towards gender-responsive policies. Synchronize local and national development frameworks with the SDGs focus area, including: sustainable cities, gender Equality, and climate change. This can be duly illustrated by the principles of technology and ecology applied in the design of Ile-Ife city.

By mapping Arro-yo's journey from the dystopia of Biafra to the utopia of Ginen, the study contributes to scholarship on Africanfuturism and feminist literary criticism. Limitations include the focus on only two texts and absence of empirical audience data. Future research could compare Arro-yo with other speculative heroines across African diasporic narratives, explore community-led technological initiatives inspired by Afrofuturist feminism, and develop pedagogical strategies for teaching eco-feminist speculative fiction in diverse educational contexts.

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