

Reclaiming the Past, Reimagining the Future: Afrofuturism and Spiritual Ancestral Connection in “The Prey of Gods”

by Nicky Drayden and “Everfair” by Nisi Shawl

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استرجاع الماضي وإعادة تصور المستقبل: المستقبل الأفريقي والاتصال الروحي بين الأسلاف

في “قريسة الآلهة” بقلم نيكي درايدن و”العدل الدائم” بقلم نيسي شاول

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تدريسي في جامعة كركوك - كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية - قسم اللغة الانكليزية

الخلاصة

في النصف الأخير من القرن العشرين، ظهرت المستقبلية الأفريقية باعتبارها توليفة من الهوية السوداء والخيال العلمي والروحانية. ومن خلال الجمع بين الأفكار الأفريقية التقليدية والتكنولوجيا المتطورة والخيال العلمي، فإنها تشكل في الروايات الراسخة. تركز الحركة المستقبلية الأفريقية بشدة على روابط الأسلاف الروحية، وتكريم المعرفة القديمة، وتمكين الفئات المحرومة من تصور مستقبل أكثر عدلاً وشمولاً. تعترف هذه العلاقة بالتأثير الكبير الذي أحدثته أحداث الماضي والعادات ومعرفة الأسلاف على الأجيال الحالية والقادمة. في هذا البحث يتم فحص فكرة المستقبل الأفريقي كإطار للتفكير البصري الذي يستعيد الماضي ويعيد تصور المستقبل للناس. من التراث الأفريقي. يحدد الموضوع الرئيسي للمستقبلية الأفريقية على العلاقة مع الأسلاف الروحيين في محاولة لفهم كيف يمكن لمعارفهم وخبراتهم أن تساعد في خلق عالم أفضل. يعتبر الكتابان “قريسة الآلهة” (نيسي شاول 2016) و”العدل الدائم” (نيسي شاول 2016)، من الأمثلة البارزة على الأدب المستقبلي الأفريقي لأنهما يحتويان على قصص تربط بين الماضي والحاضر مع معالجة الصعوبات التي يواجهها الناس السود في عالم يتغير بسرعة. تتناول هذه الدراسة المستقبل الأفريقي كحركة ثقافية تدمج الهوية السوداء مع الخيال العلمي والروحانية من أجل التشكيك في النظريات الراسخة والتنبؤ بمستقبل بديل من خلال تحليل الأعمال الأدبية مثل “قريسة الآلهة” (نيسي درايدن 2017) و “العدل الدائم” بقلم نيسي شاول (2016)

الكلمات المفتاحية: المستقبل الأفريقي، الروحانية، اتصال الأجداد، الشتات الأسود، الخيال العلمي، الخيال، التحريفية التاريخية، قريسة الآلهة، العدل الدائم

Abstract

In the latter half of the 20th century, Afrofuturism emerged as a synthesis of black identity, science fiction, and spirituality. By combining traditional African ideas, cutting-edge technology, and science fiction, it questions established narratives. Afrofuturism places a strong emphasis on spiritual ancestor connections, honoring ancient knowledge, and empowering disadvantaged groups to imagine a more just and inclusive future. This relationship recognizes the significant influence that past events, customs, and ancestors' knowledge have had on the present and next generations. The current research deals with the idea of Afrofuturism is examined as a framework for visionary thinking that reclaims the past and reimagines the future for people of African heritage. Afrofuturism's central theme stresses the relationship with spiritual ancestors in an effort to comprehend how their knowledge and experiences might help create a better world. The two books "The Prey of Gods" by Nicky Drayden (2017) and "Everfair" by Nisi Shawl (2016), are

outstanding examples of Afrofuturist literature because they feature storylines that connect the past and the present while addressing the difficulties encountered by black people in a world that is fast changing. This study examines Afrofuturism as a cultural movement that fuses black identity with science fiction and spirituality in order to question established theories and foresee alternate futures through the analysis of literary works like "*The Prey of Gods*" Nicky Drayden (2017) and *Everfair* by Nisi Shawl (2016).

Keywords: Afrofuturism, spirituality, ancestral connection, black diaspora, science fiction, fantasy, historical revisionism, *The Prey of Gods*, *Everfair*,

1.2 Introduction

The late 20th century saw the emergence of the visionary cultural movement known as Afrofuturism, which combined spirituality, science fiction, and aspects of black identity to forge a compelling story of empowerment, hope, and cultural reclamation. Afrofuturism's fundamental goal is to question dominant narratives and imagine alternative futures that respect African history while benefiting disadvantaged groups. Spiritual ancestral link, a notion that highlights the value of recognizing and drawing from the knowledge of those who came before us, is one of the main topics within Afrofuturism. This study intends to explore into the deep influence of ancestry information in forming identities, promoting resilience, and imagining a more equal and inclusive future by exploring this idea.

The study examines how Afrofuturism bridges the gap between historical heritage and forward-looking aspirations by analyzing important literary works like *The Prey of Gods* by Nicky Drayden (2017) and *Everfair* by Nisi Shawl (2016), illuminating the road to a deeper understanding of cultural identity and empowerment. In the end, this study aims to shed light on the spiritual ancestral link of Afrofuturism and its significance in recovering the past while creating a brighter future.

1.3 Afrofuturism Theory

This study is a descriptive and theoretical discussion of Afrofuturism and its Artistic Impact: Afrofuturists use imagery to challenge existing narratives of oppression and deficit faced by African-Americans, aiming to reimagine a future that celebrates their cultural heritage and places people of color in prominent social roles (Rahn & Ramos, 2021).

By creating art that envisions alternative worlds, Afrofuturists invite the audience to reflect on current social injustices experienced by African-Americans. This artistic process allows the audience to disconnect from present reality and "time travel" to a more positive and beautiful world, often obscured by mainstream cultural constructs (Asim, 2016; La Ferla, 2016). In essence, Afrofuturist art encourages a shift in perspective and offers hope for a better future (Hamilton, 2017,18).

1.3.1 Afrofuturism Coined Term and Historical Origins:

In 1994, cultural critic Mark Dery coined the term "Afrofuturism" to describe speculative fiction that explores African-American themes and concerns within the context of technoculture and a future enhanced by technology. While Dery's primary focus was on Black people's relationship with science fiction and technology, the term holds broader implications for the future of the Black community in general. Dery questioned the ability of the Black community to imagine futures due to the deliberate erasure of their past by Northern White Europeans (Dery, 1994, 5).

Afrofuturism in Academic Literature: The academic literature on Afrofuturism provides a detailed exploration of its origins and development before the term "Afrofuturism" was coined. Scholars have traced the roots of the movement back to early works like those of Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. DuBois, and Amiri Baraka, as well as contemporary authors like Jamaica Kincaid and Sheree R. Thomas, highlighting how Afrofuturist themes have evolved over time. The literature also examines the relationship between technoculture and emancipatory speculative narratives, particularly in the works of Black science fiction authors. Moreover, discussions extend to graphic novels and comic books featuring superheroes of color, representing fantastical visions of everyday life for African-Americans enforcing the moral compass promised but denied by social democracy (Jones, 2015, 42)(Juang & Morrisette, 2008).

1.3.2 Missing Voices in Afrofuturism Research:

Despite the rich literature on Afrofuturism, one notable absence is the lack of direct input from Afrofuturists themselves. Most of the research has been retrospective or focused on contemporary works aligned with Afrofuturist themes. What is missing from research concerning Afrofuturism is a methodology that includes an open dialogue with the artists and activists involved in creating Afrofuturist works of art. Learning the

artists' inspirations, motivations, and positionality directly from them helps the viewer (and the researcher) establish an emotional and cognitive empathy with the artist's authentic intention (Anastasiou,2015).

Afrofuturism, as framed by scholars like Jabari Asim and Hamilton, serves as a tool for understanding and resisting social injustices faced by African-Americans. It involves envisioning alternative worlds through art, music, and literature that challenge damaging narratives and stereotypes perpetuated by mainstream culture. Afrofuturist works seek to reclaim the narratives of African-Americans, empowering them to create spaces for celebrating their cultural heritage and identity (Husing,2021).

The genre draws on historical works, contemporary artistry, and futuristic imagery to create a profound emotional connection with its audience. Afrofuturism's focus on current social issues impacting African-Americans, such as the prison system, is foundational to its intention of resistance and liberation. The representation of Black superheroes further emphasizes Afrofuturist narratives, offering a fantastical escape from oppressive circumstances and a reimagining of personal narratives. Afrofuturism continues to evolve, incorporating elements of science fiction, ancestral roots, and tribal symbolism, allowing for time travel and a reimagining of identities. With the popularity of the film "Black Panther," Afrofuturism has gained renewed attention in both art-centric publications and mass media, reshaping narratives of Black lives worldwide (Womack, 2013, 8).

Afrofuturism has emerged as a powerful tool to address the invisibility of Black artists in contemporary art and the need for representation in art education. While scholars have emphasized the importance of inclusivity in the curriculum for students of color, the author argues that an Afrofuturist art curriculum goes beyond representation. It encourages students, especially Black students, to envision and shape their own futures through art. The Afrofuturist art curriculum should encompass various aspects, such as aesthetics, media, language, and nurturing students' artist identities, with the aim of decentering Whiteness and empowering Black students to speak themselves into existence in the future art world (Acuff, 2018; López, Pereira, & Rao, 2017; Sions, 2019). This approach aims to provide a more inclusive and empowering educational experience for all students.

In essence, Afrofuturist art prompts its audience to engage in contemplation about current social injustices faced by African-Americans. By envisioning alternative worlds that could potentially exist in the near future, the art invites the audience to disconnect from present reality and "time travel" to a beautiful and positive world often overshadowed by the constructed reality portrayed in mainstream culture (Hamilton, 2017,20).

Moreover, Afrofuturism's ability to compensate for the lack of concrete historical material about African people allows it to create imaginative narratives that envision alternative and empowering futures for the Black community (Nelson, 2000; Mayer, 2000). As scholars like Kodwo Eshun and Susana Morris have expanded Afrofuturism's scope, it now serves as a program to recover counter-futures that challenge oppressive projections faced by the African diaspora (Eshun, 2003; Morris, 2012). This alignment with Black feminist thought underscores the centrality of Black people in shaping future knowledge, cultural production, and resistance against tyranny. Afrofuturism's commitment to using precolonial African histories as a foundation for envisioning postcolonial futures positions Africa at the center of these narratives (Eshun, 2003; Morris, 2012).

Overall, Afrofuturism has become a multifaceted cultural movement that encompasses art, literature, music, and education, empowering African-Americans to reclaim their stories, challenge societal norms, and envision a future that celebrates their identity and culture. By engaging with Afrofuturist art and narratives, individuals are invited to transcend temporal realities and reimagine a world that embraces diversity, equity, and justice for all (Youngquist,2005).

1.4 Reclaiming the Past, Reimagining the Future: Afrofuturism and Spiritual Ancestral Connection in *The Prey of Gods* by Nicky Drayden

A fascinating investigation of Afrofuturism and ancestor link, *The Prey of Gods* by Nicky Drayden (2017) is set against the backdrop of a near-future South Africa. In order to create a story that transcends barriers of time, society, and identity, Drayden expertly combines elements of futuristic technology, mythic resonance, and various individuals in this work. The novel explores the connections of the past and the future via a variety of diverse perspectives and a wonderfully imagined setting, inviting readers to consider the reclaiming of heritage, the remaking of destinies, and the strong ties that bind people to their ancestors. The movie *The Prey*

of Gods asks to think deeply about the enormous relevance of cultural inheritance, spiritual links, and aspirations as characters navigate their shifting identities and aspirations.

1.4.1 Nicky Drayden

Nicky Drayden is a skilled systems analyst whose abilities go beyond writing code to communicate stories. Her first book, "*The Prey of Gods*" (Harper Voyager), was named one of the Best of New Science Fiction and Fantasy in The New York Times, and it was also listed among the recommended summer reads in The Wall Street Journal(). The New Weird and Afrofuturism are expertly merged in Drayden's sophomore novel, "*Temper*," demonstrating her mastery in fusing myth, science fiction, fantasy, horror, and dark comedy. Her experiences to South Africa during her college years have had a significant impact on her literary attempts. She enjoys a variety of genres and thrives on pushing the limits of social norms. Drayden honed her technique by taking part in National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo), where she collaborated with countless other aspiring writers to produce first chapters. She also writes short tales, and she has over 30 to her credit, many of which have appeared in magazines like Space and Time, Daily Science Fiction, and Shimmer(Drayden, n.d.).

Drayden contributed to The Drabblecast's legacy of offering unorthodox speculative literature to an equally diverse audience in his capacity as managing editor. She selected pieces for specialized series like "Women and Aliens Month," which included works by well-known writers including Lauren Beukes, Nnedi Okorafor, and Alaya Dawn Johnson. Nicky Drayden lives in Austin, Texas, where it's not just acceptable but frequently necessary to embrace the unusual. Jennifer Jackson from the Donald Maass Literary Agency is in charge of representing her novels (Drayden, n.d.).

1.4.2 *The Prey of Gods* analysis

It presents a gripping narrative set in near-future South Africa, where an array of diverse characters gains supernatural abilities through a street drug known as Godsend. Faced with a disenfranchised goddess determined to reshape their world and alter humanity's destiny forever, these characters must unite to counter her threat(Drayden, n.d.).

Incorporating elements of personal robots in its futuristic setting, Drayden's novel artfully blends magical elements with unusual yet impactful choices. Praised by Library Journal with a starred review, the novel offers a unique mashup of genres and moods, showcasing a fresh and accomplished literary voice. As noted by the Washington Post, Nicky Drayden's debut work masterfully combines folklore, urban fantasy, and science fiction within a futuristic South African context, captivating readers with its imaginative prowess (Drayden, n.d.). Nicky Drayden's *The Prey of Gods* expertly combines science fiction and fantasy elements to create a story set in a near-future South Africa where cutting-edge technology and ancient abilities coexist. Wallace Stoker, also known as Felicity Lyons, Wallace Stoker (also known as Muzi), Nomvula, Sidney, and Riya Natrajan are the book's five primary protagonists, all of whom have different origins and experiences. The journeys of each individual are intertwined with those of demi-gods and goddesses, who gain strength from faith and dread (The Middle Shelf ,2017).

Due to Drayden's skillful blending of science fiction and fantasy, a unique world has been created where DNA manipulation and eight-legged computer robots peacefully coexist with prehistoric legendary forces. This merger makes it possible to explore in great detail how the past and the present interact and shape one another. While evoking works like "*American Gods*," the introduction of sci-fi themes is effortlessly woven into the story, improving the entire storytelling experience (Marryat,1871).

The frustration that results from passing up possibilities to dive deeper into important issues is mentioned in the review. The novel's setting in South Africa, a nation with a complicated history of racial and class difficulties, for instance, offers plenty of opportunity to examine these themes in the perspective of a futuristic civilization. The review points out that, despite this potential, the work simply skims the surface of these topics, leaving some readers longing for a deeper investigation(Andrews, 2020).

While "*The Prey of Gods*" successfully combines traditional and avant-garde components, it also appears to underutilize its ability to explore sociopolitical themes in the same depth. This observation mirrors the sentiment of "*Reclaiming the Past, Reimagining the Future*," underlining how the book blends action-packed sequences and hints at deeper concerns but occasionally loses the chance for a more thorough analysis of its socio-cultural setting (Andrews,2020).One element is Afrofuturism and reimagining the Future: The story is set in a futuristic South Africa where cutting-edge technology coexists with long-standing customs. Afrofuturism incorporates African traditions and ideas to challenge the Western-centric view of the future.

African culture is depicted in *The Prey of Gods* as being both maintained and incorporated into the future. The celebration of African identity and legacy is made possible by this reinvention of the future in a setting that is frequently dominated by Western narratives (Marryat,1871).

Another element in this novel is spiritual ancestral connection that many African societies place a strong emphasis on ancestry and spiritual activities. Characters in the book encounter a variety of paranormal and magical occurrences that link them to their ancestors and the afterlife. This link enables a conversation between the past and present, highlighting the significance of tradition in determining the course of the future. The story addresses the idea that the past is not static but rather continues to affect and create the present and future through the characters' relationships with ancestral forces(Andrews,2020).

Also, diversity of personalities and perspectives in that novel is presented by embracing a variety of personalities and experiences, Afrofuturism frequently challenges stereotypical depictions of black identity. The cast of "The Prey of Gods" is made up of a variety of people from different ethnic backgrounds, genders, and sexual orientations. This diversity enhances the story and highlights the depth of Afrofuturist ideology, which aims to magnify the voices and experiences of the underprivileged (Samatar,2017).

Afrofuturism usually considers how technological advancements will affect society and the possibility of a fairer future. The tension between progress and its ethical ramifications is reflected in the novel's dual-sided effects of sophisticated technology. The possibility for balancing tradition and innovation is highlighted by the combination of cutting-edge technology and age-old practices (Peattie,2022).

Another element is cultural continuity and transformation that the conflict between cultural continuity and transformation is another theme explored in the book. The characters struggle with their own identities and the shifting world around them, yet they also manage to adapt and grow without losing touch with their origins. This is similar to the Afrofuturist idea that embracing change can result in a dynamic synthesis of tradition and modernity rather than forcing one to choose between the two(Peattie,2022).

By fusing ideas of ancestor connection, cultural preservation, technological advancement, and variety, *The Prey of Gods* is an excellent example of the fundamental ideas of Afrofuturism. The South African futuristic setting of the book offers a blank slate for envisioning the future while paying tribute to the past.

5.1 Reclaiming the Past, Reimagining the Future: Afrofuturism and Spiritual Ancestral Connection in *Ever Fair* by Nisi Shawl

Nisi Shawl is the author of the alternative history book *Everfair*. The story, which takes place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, offers a creative reworking of European powers' colonization of the Congo. By establishing a hypothetical country called *Everfair*, which is created as a haven for African people and European settlers seeking safety from oppression and exploitation, Nisi Shawl gives a distinctive viewpoint in this novel. In order to provide a thought-provoking tale that questions accepted historical narratives and provides a new perspective on a complicated time of history, the book examines topics of colonialism, racism, technology, and diplomacy.

5.1.1 Nisi Shawl

Nisi Shawl, an accomplished African-American author, editor, and journalist born in 1955, presents a captivating narrative in her alternative history book "Everfair." Set in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the novel creatively reimagines the colonization of the Congo by European powers. Shawl introduces the hypothetical nation of Everfair, conceived as a haven for both African people and European settlers seeking refuge from oppression and exploitation. This unique premise offers a fresh perspective on a complex historical period, challenging traditional narratives and exploring themes of colonialism, racism, technology, and diplomacy. Through the story, Shawl effectively questions accepted historical viewpoints and presents a new outlook on this turbulent era (Torner et al., 2016).

One of the key literary and artistic movements that influences "Everfair" is Afrofuturism. This movement envisions futures that draw from Africa's history, culture, and traditions, providing an alternative lens through which to view narratives. In the novel, Shawl reclaims the colonial history of the Congo and crafts the fictional nation of Everfair as a symbol of resistance and hope. By presenting an alternate narrative where African and European individuals collaborate to establish a peaceful society, Shawl challenges the Eurocentric interpretations of history. This act of reclaiming history aligns with Afrofuturist principles, advocating for a reexamination of the past to shape more inclusive and empowered futures (Brett, 2019).

Embedded within the narrative is the profound spiritual ancestral connection personified by Lisette Toutournier, a prominent character in *"Everfair."* Lisette, an African woman, navigates the complexities of Everfair's society, carrying the weight of her ancestors' struggles as a survivor of colonial-era abuse and exploitation. Her experiences and upbringing shape her identity, emphasizing the intergenerational trauma she carries. Through her interactions with Mama Léo, a spiritual healer, Lisette's link to her ancestors becomes evident. Mama Léo guides Lisette in reconnecting with her forebears through traditional Congolese spiritual practices. These encounters allow Lisette to gain insight from her ancestors' stories of resilience and resistance, highlighting the significance of this ancestral bond (Brickler IV, 2018).

By weaving together, the themes of Afrofuturism, reimagining history, and spiritual ancestral connection, *"Everfair"* stands as a poignant example of how literature can challenge conventional narratives. Nisi Shawl's innovative approach not only reshapes historical events but also underscores the importance of understanding the past and its impact on shaping diverse and empowered futures (Myers, 2020).

The strong spiritual ancestral connection that permeates the entire book is personified by one of the characters in *Everfair*, Lisette Toutournier. African woman Lisette becomes well-known in Everfair's culture. Her upbringing and experiences have an impact on her. As a victim of abuse and exploitation throughout the colonial era, she carries the weight of her ancestors' sufferings. Lisette's connection to her ancestors is made obvious during her sessions with a spiritual healer by the name of Mama Léo. Through rites and ceremonies, Mama Léo assists Lisette in making a connection with her ancestors. She practices traditional spirituality as it is in the Congo. Through these spiritual contacts, Lisette is able to communicate with her ancestors and gain insight from their stories of tenacity and resistance (Brett & et al., 2019).

One of the characters in *"Everfair,"* Lisette Toutournier, personifies the profound spiritual ancestor link that permeates the entire book. Lisette is an African woman who rises to prominence in Everfair's society. She is influenced by her upbringing and experiences. She bears the burden of her ancestors' struggles as a colonial-era survivor of abuse and exploitation. In her meetings with a spiritual healer named Mama Léo, Lisette's link to her ancestors is made clear. Mama Léo helps Lisette connect with her ancestors through ceremonies and rituals. She follows traditional Congolese spiritual practices. Lisette is able to connect with her ancestors through these spiritual encounters and learn from their tales of resiliency and resistance (Brickler IV, 2018).

For instance, at a pivotal juncture in the narrative, Lisette is forced to make a difficult decision that will impact the course of Everfair. She joins Mama Léo in a ritual to ask her ancestors for guidance because she is feeling overburdened. During the ritual, Lisette experiences a vision in which she witnesses her ancestors resisting injustice and colonization. Because of her origins, Lisette is motivated to make decisions that honor both her history and the tenacity of her people as a whole. An outstanding illustration of cultural diversity and synthesis may be seen in how the nation of Everfair is portrayed in the book. Everfair is envisioned as a safe haven for migrants fleeing oppression from both Africa and Europe, fostering a cosmopolitan community that welcomes people from many different cultural backgrounds (Brickler IV, 2018).

The development of a common language in Everfair is one noteworthy instance of cultural synthesis. A new language named "Lingua Franca" is created to promote communication among the different population. People from different cultural backgrounds can communicate well since this language combines aspects of several African and European languages. As a representation of cooperation and unity, Lingua Franca demonstrates how cultural diversity may spur the development of novel solutions that are advantageous to all.

In *"Everfair,"* the novel's portrayal of the nation of Everfair itself is a prime example of cultural diversity and synthesis. Everfair is envisioned as a safe haven for both African and European refugees fleeing oppression, forming a multicultural society that embraces a wide range of cultural backgrounds. One notable example of cultural synthesis is the creation of a shared language in Everfair. To foster communication among the diverse inhabitants, a new language called "Lingua Franca" is developed. This language incorporates elements from various African and European languages, allowing people from different cultural backgrounds to communicate effectively. Lingua Franca becomes a symbol of unity and collaboration, showcasing the potential for cultural diversity to inspire innovative solutions that benefit all (Brickler IV, 2018).

Furthermore, Everfair's social structure clearly reflects the merging of cultural traditions. African traditional rites and customs interact with European traditions, giving rise to distinctive festivals, events, and art forms. For instance, the people of Everfair hold an annual celebration that mixes aspects of African harvest festivals with masquerade balls in the European tradition. This fusion not only illustrates the ability of diverse traditions to come together and produce something new, it also celebrates the diversity of cultures. The

Everfair building's architecture serves as another illustration. The nation's buildings represent a harmonic fusion of cultural influences because they are built with care for both African and European aesthetics. This fusion of architectural styles not only produces a strikingly original environment but also acts as a constant reminder of the intercultural harmony that makes Everfair unique(Ibid, 2018).

In general, "Everfair" effectively conveys the idea of cultural diversity and synthesis by presenting a multicultural society in which many cultural aspects collide and adapt to form a coherent whole. Language, rituals, holidays, and architectural fusion of African and European traditions highlight the capacity for cultures to coexist and thrive despite obstacles. This representation is consistent with Afrofuturist principles of imagining inclusive futures that embrace innovation and collaboration while celebrating the diversity of heritage(Brickler, 2018).

Founding and defense of the nation of Everfair itself is one of the most notable examples of confronting power structures in *Everfair*. The characters get together to establish a safe haven where people from many backgrounds can flee imperial exploitation and persecution. The protagonists defy the dominant power structures held by European invaders by creating this separate nation, claiming their agency and their right to self-determination.

King Mwenda, for instance, is a key figure in organizing the rebellion against Belgian colonial control. In order to combat the oppressive forces, he uses strategic and diplomatic means such as alliance-building, negotiations with nearby nations, and the mobilization of Everfair's resources. King Mwenda's deeds show how the novel explores how group effort and questioning power relationships can result in transformational change(Moore, 2018).

Another instance is Daisy Albin, an American woman who plays a significant role in Everfair's management. Through her profession in engineering and technology, Daisy actively engages in questioning social conventions. Her initiatives to create a more just society that honors the contributions of women and oppressed groups serve as an example of how people can fight oppressive institutions by upending established power structures and lobbying for inclusive frameworks (Brickler IV,2018).

Holistic worldview is another element in this novel a spiritual medium, serves as an illustration of the novel's holistic worldview and how the past, present, and future are all intertwined. The emphasis in the book on the lingering effects of history is embodied in Tink's capacity to interact with spirits and access the ancestral realm. Readers see how past challenges, knowledge, and advice impact the characters' decisions and actions in the present through Tink's contacts with the spiritual world.

For instance, Tink's interactions with the ancestors reveal tales of struggle, survival, and tenacity from many historical periods. These tales support the notion that the past shapes the present and the future as well as encouraging the characters to carry on with their fights for justice. The lessons learned from Tink's experiences highlight the value of cultural heritage as a source of support and wisdom and serve as a gentle reminder to readers that their current deeds are part of the ongoing story of their ancestry (Kröger, & Anderson,2019).

In *Everfair*, the combination of contesting power systems and adopting a holistic worldview emphasizes the Afrofuturist dedication to imagining novel possibilities. The story inspires readers to consider the possibility of change, the significance of opposing oppressive systems, and the enduring effect of ancestors by engaging with themes of resistance, agency, and the interconnection of time.

Conclusion

The Prey of Gods by Nicky Drayden and *Everfair* by Nisi Shawl both serve as outstanding illustrations of how Afrofuturism and the investigation of ancestor-centered spiritual ties can enhance the fields of speculative fiction. Through their distinctive tales, these books break down conventional barriers and invite readers to think about the complex relationships between the past, present, and future as well as the possibilities for empowerment and change within these frameworks.

By providing an alternative viewpoint on colonization and fusing many cultural origins under the imaginary nation of Everfair, it reclaims history. Shawl's skillful storytelling brilliantly illustrates the blending of African and European customs, showing how cultures can coexist and adapt. Characters that oppose prevailing power systems and fight for self-determination, mirroring Afrofuturist ideals of imagining worlds free from oppression, complement this combination. A holistic perspective that spans generations and transcends linear time is fostered by the novel's examination of spiritual ancestral links, which also highlights the significance of ancestry in determining destinies.

In a sci-fi South Africa that smoothly combines tradition and modernity, "The Prey of Gods" expertly combines aspects of science fiction and fantasy. The book's characters, who represent the Afrofuturist idea of spiritual ancestry connections, manage their multifaceted identities while interacting with the spiritual world. They confront societal conventions and technical breakthroughs that frequently perpetuate injustice as they draw courage and wisdom from their past. Diversity, transformation, and the possibility of harmony between the past and the future are themes that are in line with the Afrofuturist concept of rewriting stories and altering the course of human history.

In essence, *Everfair* and *The Prey of Gods* represent the basic ideas of Afrofuturism, promoting the reclaiming of past, remaking of future narratives, and celebrating cultural heritage. These books cut across genres, providing subtle examinations of interconnectivity, identity, and power. Readers are encouraged to consider the intricacies of the human experience and the enduring impact of the past on the present and the future as a result of their innovative storytelling. As these stories develop, they nudge us to imagine scenarios that surpass constraints, confront tyranny, and pay homage to the various strands of tradition that weave together to form our shared history.

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