



**Ecology in Crisis: An Ecocritical Study of Environmental Collapse in
Netflix Series *Shadow and Bone* (2021)**

Ms Farwa Khurram¹, Dr Katsiaryna Hurbik², Ms Habiba Ibrar³

¹Mphil English Linguistics scholar, Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Faisalabad, Email: farwakhurram.03@gmail.com

²PhD Linguistics, Professor, Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Faisalabad, Email: khurbik.eng@tuf.edu.pk

³Mphil English Linguistics scholar, Department of English Language and Literature, The University of Faisalabad, Email: 2025f-mphil-ling-004@tuf.edu.pk

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Greg Garrard, environmental degradation, Shadow Fold, industrialization, ecocriticism, pollution, wilderness, apocalypse, dwelling, animals, pastoral, future.

Corresponding Author:
Dr Katsiaryna Hurbik,
PhD Linguistics,
Professor, Department of
English Language and
Literature, The University
of Faisalabad,
Email:
khurbik.eng@tuf.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

This study examines the depiction of ecological trauma and environmental degradation in Netflix series *Shadow and Bone* (2021, Season 1) through the lens of ecocriticism, using Greg Garrard's seven key concepts: pollution, wilderness, apocalypse, dwelling, animals, pastoral, and future. It explores how the series portrays environmental destruction driven by industrialization and war, focusing on weapons development, devastated landscapes, and the consequences of militarized power. The fantasy world of *Shadow and Bone* is interpreted as a metaphor for real-world ecological decline, illustrating how human ambition, technological advancement, and authoritarian control can inflict lasting harm on the natural world. The findings reveal how fantasy tropes are transformed into powerful symbols of ecological concern, prompting reflection on the consequences of unchecked industrial progress and technological excess. This research contributes to ecological discourse by showing how fantasy television can foster environmental awareness and challenge dominant cultural attitudes toward nature.

Introduction

The stability of life on Earth is increasingly threatened by climate change, deforestation, pollution, and widespread ecological collapse. These environmental challenges have become some of the most pressing global concerns in recent decades. At their core, however, these crises are not just scientific or political—they are also deeply cultural. They stem from the stories, beliefs, and worldviews that shape how societies understand and interact with the natural world. In response, ecocriticism has emerged as a vital interdisciplinary field. As environmental awareness grows, scholars and artists alike have turned to literature, film, and television to explore the complex relationship between humans and the environment.

One of the defining issues of our day is the growing intensity of environmental catastrophes like pollution, deforestation, climate change, and ecological collapse. These problems are intricately linked to human actions and cultural narratives that influence how we interact with nature. Examining how modern media reflects and critiques these ecological issues is vital as environmental degradation picks up speed. This study examines how environmental trauma and degradation are portrayed in the Netflix series *Shadow and Bone* (2021, Season 1) using an ecocritical lens.

This study sheds light on the intricate relationship between fantasy, industrialization, and ecological trauma by concentrating on the first eight episodes of the series *Shadow and Bone*. It also emphasizes the symbolic and thematic significance of environmental narratives in modern visual storytelling.

Problem Statement

Interest in ecocritical approaches to literature and media has been steadily growing among scholars; the series *Shadow and Bone* remain unexplored through this particular lens. An ecological reading is warranted due to the show's representation of industrial progress, militarization, and environmental harm, particularly reflected in motifs of arms production and devastated terrains. Nevertheless, its potential to highlight broader environmental concerns has been overlooked in existing academic analyses. This research reduces that gap by applying Greg Garrard's ecocritical framework to investigate *Shadow and Bone*'s portrayal of ecological collapse and its implicit critique of humanity's responsibility for environmental degradation.

Research Questions

1. How does the series *Shadow and Bone* (2021, Season 1) portray the environmental consequences of industrialization and war, particularly through its depiction of weapons development and landscape destruction?
2. How does the series reflect Greg Garrard's Eco-critical concepts in its depiction of the relationship between human ambition, technological advancement, and environmental degradation?
3. How does the series *Shadow and Bone* (2021, Season 1) construct a narrative of ecological collapse, and what commentary does it offer on human responsibility in environmental crises?

Review of Literature

Ecocriticism is a framework for understanding the relationship between humans and the natural environment. It emphasizes the role of literature in reflecting and shaping ecological awareness. It underlines how literary works can challenge the use and help the protection of the environment. Arguing that ecocriticism is highly crucial to foster a sustainable relationship with nature, this research advocates a multidisciplinary approach that includes ideas from literature, science, and technology to effectively solve modern environmental concerns. This perspective emphasizes increased responsibility towards ecological protection and peace between humans and nature.

Mehdi Khattak and Khattak (2023) explore Brian's metamorphosis in the woods using Glotfelty's 1996 paradigm, highlighting his transition from urban disengagement to a peaceful relationship with nature. Challenging the idea of human behaviors as intrinsically destructive to the environment, it underlines their potential as pragmatic responses to basic needs. The article advocates Eco-criticism that encourages sustainable human-nature relations and redefines human actions as pathways to ecological harmony.

Philips and Sullivan, (2012) extends the traditional boundaries of organic studies by emphasizing the agency's agency, including dirt, waste, bodies and foods, in shaping ecosystems. Unlike traditional ecologist, who often focuses on the literary representation of nature, physical ecosystems highlight the mutual relationship between human and non-human actors in a dynamic physical world. The principal challenges binary distinctions between natural and artificial, suggests that the human body and the environment created are complicated in broad organic systems. By incorporating attitudes from new materialism, scholars discovered how the agency manifests itself on different parameters, from microorganisms to planetary systems. Ultimately, the material encourages to reconsider the environmental district by accepting the active role of the case even in the ecosystem's ecological changes.

Ataullah Nuri (2020) describes ecocriticism as a discipline that studies the relationship between literature and the environment, and its three waves. The first wave concentrated on romantic and pastoral depictions of nature, while the second wave moved on to more critical subjects including anthropocentrism, environmental justice, and ecofeminism. By incorporating postcolonial ecological issues, urban landscapes, and global viewpoints, the third wave expanded the scope. The critical approach has shifted from its original western-centric orientation to accommodate intercultural views.

Vincent (2018) stresses the way ecocentric studies explore climate change and its unthinkable implications. He also stresses the deep relationships between people and the natural world while addressing the environmental challenges brought on by human activity. Themes including ecological destruction, relocation, and the cultural imagination's unwillingness to face climate change are tackled in his fiction and non-fiction works, including *The Hungry Tide* and *The Great Derangement*.

In *Ecocritical Explorations in Literary and Cultural Studies* P.D. Murphy (2009) shows the interaction between people and the natural environment. Murphy maintains that social, cultural, and economic constraints are just a few of the aspects that create our tangled relationship with nature. "Fences, boundaries, and fields" are metaphors he used to explain how humans engage with and view nature. According to the author, we can better appreciate our position in the natural world and how our activities influence the environment by looking at literary and cultural works through an ecocritical lens. Murphy's writing challenges readers to critically look into the connections between natural and human systems and consider their moral repercussions.

Sandip Kumar Mishra's (2016) in his *Ecocriticism: A Study of Environmental Issues in Literature* analyzes the roots between environment and writing. This examination reveals how ecocriticism, an approach of literary criticism, ponders over the relationship between human culture and the natural world. It pays attention to the importance of environmental consciousness, and the function that literature performs in sculpting our understanding of the natural world and its ecological challenges. Ecocriticism strives to encourage ecological literacy and motivate action by undermining superior narratives of society.

The study *Exploring Eco-Criticism in Sweet Tooth: Dark Ecology, Slow Violence, and Human-Nature Interconnectedness* by Ashraf, Maqbool, and Farooq (2024) examines the Netflix series *Sweet Tooth* from an ecocritical standpoint. The writers look at issues including environmental deterioration, the effects of human exploitation of the natural

world, and the idea of “slow violence”—destructive environmental damage that happens gradually. The study emphasizes how *Sweet Tooth* depicts a post-apocalyptic future in which re-establishing harmony with nature is essential to human existence. The researchers illustrate the intricate and frequently unsettling relationship between humans and the environment through Timothy Morton’s “dark ecology.” The essay promotes environmental awareness by showing how the series highlight the pressing need for sustainable cohabitation of species and acts as a narrative warning about ecological negligence.

Rahmah, F., and Rahmi, G. (2023) in the Netflix series *Shadow and Bone* have examined seven domains using Vladimir Propp’s Action theory. Six of these domains are identified in the series by the study: the hero, Alina Starkov; the dispatcher, King Pyotr; the donor, Baghra; the false heroes, Genya Safin and General Kirigan; the helpers, Zoya Nazyalensky, Malyen Oretsev, and The Crows; and the villains, General Kirigan, Arken Visser, Dreesen, and General Kirigan; the helpers, Zoya Nazyalensky, Malyen Oretsev, and The Crows; and the villains, General Kirigan, Arken Visser, Dreesen, and General Zlatan. The princess’s and her father’s spheres are missing. The study examines how this character roles advance the plot using a descriptive qualitative methodology.

In his work *Greening the Theatre: Taking Ecocriticism from Page to Stage* Timothy J. May (2005) delves on the tools of ecocriticism to theatre and performance. The article highlights the ecocritical tools that can be used to observe and produce plays, spotlighting the prospective for the theatre to engage with environmental issues. May examines the junction of ecology, performance and drama, arguing for a more mature way to approach the theatre making and criticism.

Budi A, (2021) delves on ecocriticism, which has arisen as a crucial framework in literary studies, concentrating on the relationship between literature and the environment.

Reviewed literature also shows how scholars like Greg Garrard emphasize literature's importance in expressing ecological concerns and combating anthropocentric ideas. In literary contexts, works often critique environmental damage caused by exploitative development strategies. Conie Sema’s *Rawa Gambut* fits within this tradition, employing play to highlight the ecological problem because of human-centered exploitation, while supporting an ecocentric perspective that pushes environmental awareness and sustainable living.

The series *Shadow and Bone* (S1, 2021) has not been examined through an ecocritical lens, particularly in relation to Greg Garrard's theory. This research addresses this gap by exploring how the series portrays industrialization, war, and environmental degradation, offering new insights into the relationship between human actions and ecological collapse.

Theoretical Framework

Ecocriticism, often referred to as green criticism or environmental literary studies, represents a rapidly expanding interdisciplinary field that interrogates the relationship between literature, culture, and the natural environment. Among the most influential voices in this field is Greg Garrard, whose work *Ecocriticism* (2004, 2nd ed. 2012) offers a critical and accessible synthesis of key ecological ideas as they resonate with modern day ecological crises. Garrard identifies seven thematic areas that structure ecocritical inquiry:

- Pollution: The Toxic Imprint of Industrialism
- Wilderness: Between Sublimity and Otherness
- Apocalypse: Spectacle and Revelation
- Dwelling: Reclaiming Ethical Relationships with Place
- Animals: The Monsterization of Nature
- The Pastoral: Critique of Idealized Nature
- The Future: Environmental Imagination and Ethical Urgency

- Industrialization and Ecological Disruption
- The Interconnectivity of Garrard's Ecocritical Themes

Each theme reveals a particular mode of environmental representation and invites readers to consider how texts either uphold or subvert dominant ecological ideologies.

Greg Garrard's approach to ecocriticism does not present a fixed or straightforward narrative; rather, it unfolds as a complex framework of environmental perspectives. The seven central motifs—pollution, wilderness, apocalypse, dwelling, animals, the pastoral, and future—interweave and intersect, each offering unique insights into the evolving human-nature relationship.

Research Methodology

This research adopts a qualitative method to investigate the series *Shadow and Bone* (2021, Season One) through the theoretical framework of Greg Garrard's *Ecocriticism* (2004). The study employs an interpretive lens, exploring how environmental concerns are woven into the series' storyline, thematic elements, and symbolic representations. Significant sequences that illustrate concepts such as wilderness, apocalypse, and dwelling are analyzed in depth to assess their correspondence with Garrard's ecocritical principles. Utilizing thematic analysis, this research uncovers recurring ecological patterns that highlight the independence and endurance of the natural world.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Netflix series *Shadow and Bone* (2021), based on the Grishaverse novels by Leigh Bardugo, constructs a richly imagined fantasy world deeply entangled with themes of war, displacement, and technological transformation. The first season presents a world fragmented not only by national conflict but by a catastrophic rift in the natural order: the Shadow Fold. This chapter applies Greg Garrard's ecocritical theory to examine how *Shadow and Bone* season 1 dramatizes the intersection of industrialization, war, and ecological degradation. Each episode contains unique contributions to the broader ecological narrative, whether through its portrayal of tainted landscapes, militarized magic, or the possibility of environmental restoration. Through stark imagery, haunted landscapes, and subtle dialogues, the opening episode introduces a world fragmented by power and divided by a vast unnatural scar: the Fold. Each theme from Garrard's theory of pollution, wilderness, apocalypse, dwelling, animals, the pastoral, and the future is present in embryonic form, establishing *Shadow and Bone* as a rich text for ecocritical investigation.

Pollution and Industrialization: The Toxic Imprint of War

In *Shadow and Bone*, pollution is not depicted through traditional imagery such as factories or urban decay. Instead, it takes symbolic form in the Shadow Fold—a vast, unnatural rupture in the landscape created through magical experimentation. The Fold is a physical scar upon Earth, but also a metaphor for the environmental trauma caused by unchecked ambition. Arken Visser captures this sentiment when he states, "He tore a hole in the world." (S01E01, 2021). This line encapsulates the idea that pollution, in this context, is not just external but embedded in the very act of creation—a violent reshaping of the environment that mirrors real-world industrial and military abuses of nature.

The Fold stands as the most striking environmental allegory in the Grishaverse, representing the catastrophic result of unchecked technological or magical ambition. Created by the Darkling in a past attempt to expand Grisha power, the Fold now looms as a literal and figurative wasteland. Its black sands, absence of sunlight, and ever-present threat of volcra (monstrous creatures) evoke images of post-industrial ruin, where ecological imbalance has rendered nature hostile and lifeless. Alina's mission, "You are here to tear down the Fold," (S01EP03, 2021) suggests a restorative ecological endeavor to reverse magical pollution. The physical division it causes also symbolizes the fragmentation

caused by industrial expansion, severing communities and making vast territories uninhabitable.

The Fold reflects Garrard's idea of pollution as a symptom of ecological failure and human arrogance. As it is once more explained in Kirigan's story as the unexpected result of magical experimentation. Kirigan: "He created the Fold instead. And was killed by it. Along with countless others." (S01EP04, 2021).

War and Weaponization: The Violence Against Nature

The Grishaverse revolves around war and its effects on the environment. The following discussions demonstrate the direct aggression against nature and non-human beings, as well as the militarization of both humans and the environment: "Drüskelle... Elite members of the Fjerdan military trained to infiltrate deep behind our lines and kill or kidnap Grisha." Fighter: "There's too much smoke! Squaller! I can't see!" (S01E02, 2021). These interactions demonstrate how people and the environment are weaponized by conflict; smoke, wind, and even light is used as weapons or hazards. Garrard's worry about how war not only ruins the environment but also transforms nature into a battleground is shown by the Drüskelle's hunt for Grisha and the use of Grisha's abilities as a weapon. According to Garrard's ecocritical study, war narratives frequently present nature as a tool or a victim, undermining its agency and causing further ecological harm.

The Fold's development as a weapon is a reflection of ecological warfare, in which human brutality purposefully destroys and exploits nature. Such weaponization serves as an example of the disastrous human dominance of the environment, as highlighted by Garrard's ecocriticism.

Mal: "Mikhael and Dubrov weren't so lucky." (S01EP06, 2021). This dialogue demonstrates how even loyal soldiers are disposable in the ever-expanding sphere of state violence. Commodification of life mirrors ecological exploitation, as both people and landscapes are stripped of intrinsic value.

The Collapse of Dwelling: Displacement and Uninhabitable Landscapes

Dwelling, as Garrard notes, involves more than shelter—it is about belonging, stewardship, and rootedness. In *Shadow and Bone*, episode 1, this sense of home is absent, disrupted by war and fear. Ethnic divisions, colonial borders, and the looming presence of the Fold ensure that characters are not living with the land but are dispossessed by it.

For instance, the Soldier addresses Alina, "You're Shu. Half-breed. That makes you a refugee everywhere." (S01E01, 2021). One of the central themes in Garrard's chapter on 'dwelling'—the deterioration of stable housing—is reflected in these lines. Whether because of the Fold, war, or persecution, the conversion of familiar locations into unsuitable environments reflects actual patterns of relocation brought on by environmental deterioration and violence. As seen by the refugees and exiles in the Grishaverse, Garrard highlights the significance of "dwelling" as a means of feeling at home in the world; its breakdown portends a serious existential and ecological disaster.

The story is replete with displacement. Alina longs to return to a modest military tent, while Inej talks about her history, stating, "This was all that I had when I was sold to the Menagerie." (S01EP03, 2021). Ecological trauma due to homelessness is reflected in this remark. The Fold has disrupted communities and made travelling dangerous. Mass displacement has resulted from the Shadow Fold rendering large areas of land unusable. The fact that the hideous volcra were previously common people, serves as a reminder of how ecological disasters alter both the land and its inhabitants. Real-world situations where environmental deterioration results in refugee movements and the loss of one's home, culture, and identity are reflected in such artwork. This tragic revelation shows that ecological collapse annihilates familiarity and transforms humans into the monstrous, erasing the boundaries of life and civilization.

Wilderness as the Other: Fear, Fantasy, and the Monstrous Fold

Greg Garrard's concept of wilderness as "the other" explores the way natural spaces are often framed as alien, threatening, or hostile—particularly when they resist human control. Within ecocritical discourse, wilderness is not merely a physical space but a symbol of fear and danger, especially when it challenges human authority. In *Shadow and Bone*, this notion is powerfully illustrated through the Shadow Fold—a vast, unnatural zone of darkness and terror. Though it resembles a wilderness in its isolation and inaccessibility, the Fold is not a product of untouched nature. Rather, it is the direct consequence of human interference with natural forces. Created through magical experimentation, the Fold exemplifies ecological trauma inflicted by militarized power and technological excess.

Wilderness is continuously shown as an enemy—a place of unpredictability, survival, and dormant fear—in Episode 4. Natural environments are presented as dangers that need to be avoided, overcome, or traversed, whether they are frozen hunting fields or the invisible terror of the old.

The dreadful background noises—tornadoes, growls, and animal roars—evoke the forest as an alien realm rather than Eden. Instead of being understood, these factors make nature something that must be subdued or controlled. The bewilderment of Alina during Kirigan's magical binding: "What's happening? Wait. I don't understand". (S01EP07, 2021).

The Fold's constructed wilderness subverts to the romantic or primeval notions of wilderness often seen in fantasy. Instead, it becomes a space of projected fear, shaped by human error rather than natural autonomy.

Animals and the Monstrous Transformation of Nature

Garrard's exploration of animals within ecocriticism critiques the human tendency to either romanticize or vilify non-human creatures, often reducing them to narrative devices. In *Shadow and Bone*, Episode 1 introduces the Volcra—terrifying, winged predators that inhabit the Fold—not as ordinary animals but as monstrous mutations, a product of magical catastrophe caused by Darkling. Inej Ghafa stated, "The Volcra were once men. Before the Shadow Fold, before the dark magic twisted them." (S01E01, 2021).

The Grishaverse's magical beings, particularly Morozova's amplifiers, serve as a reminder that corruption and human meddling can affect even the animal species. Hunting these uncommon animals for power is comparable to using animals for military or commercial purposes in the real world.

The exploitation of animals illustrates a loss of biodiversity and the moral cost of viewing nature purely as a resource. Mal: "Twice as big as any other. All white. When it looked at me head on, its antlers..." (S01EP05, 2021).

Baghra: "He's been obsessed with power... with hunting all of Morozova's creatures." (S01EP05, 2021). The mythicization and exploitation of animals illustrate a loss of biodiversity and the moral cost of viewing nature purely as a resource.

Apocalypse and the Normalization of Ecological Crisis

The apocalypse in Garrard's framework is not always about the end—it is about revelation. It reveals a world on the brink, shaped by unsustainable choices and collapsing ecosystems. The very existence of the Fold as a permanent ecological scar, treated almost as routine military terrain, exemplifies the normalization of apocalypse in the Grishaverse. "You'll cross the Fold tomorrow. Try not to die," — the officer to the recruit (S01E01, 2021).

This offhand remark, delivered with dry humor, exposes how environmental catastrophe is no longer shocking—it is embedded in military schedules, logistics, and daily life. The apocalypse, Garrard argues, becomes aestheticized and banal in many cultural texts. Here, *Shadow and Bone* uses that banality to critique society's desensitization to ecological devastation. The fear of extinction is replaced by apathy, survivalism, or fatalism.

Additionally, the haunting visuals of people boarding the skiff to cross the Fold evoke a refugee aesthetic—citizens displaced by environmental warfare, unsure of return. The episodes do not yet provide a resistance narrative; they depict a world that has accepted collapse, reflecting Garrard’s concern that apocalyptic narratives, if not critically framed, can reinforce helplessness instead of inspiring change.

The Grishaverse normalizes crisis, turning the end of the world into a lived reality as opposed to a far-off threat: “The Volcra went after the riflemen and our Inferni first,” –Zoya (S01E02, 2021).

“The whole country wants to see the Fold gone,” – Alina to Fedyor (S01E02, 2021). The apocalyptic tone of *Shadow and Bone*’s season 1 aligns with Greg Garrard’s assertion that ecological catastrophe often functions as both a warning and a narrative mirror to contemporary environmental fears. The Shadow Fold, in its vast, devouring presence, represents a slow-moving apocalypse—an ongoing unraveling of ecological stability brought about by human hubris. Its existence fractures not only the landscape but the psyche of the world’s inhabitants, cultivating despair and fatalism. Yet, within this devastation lies a critical ecocritical insight: the apocalypse is not merely an end, but a revelation of human complicity in environmental destruction.

Post-Pastoral Landscapes and the Death of Nature's Innocence

In traditional literature, the pastoral mode represents nature as peaceful, restorative, and morally pure. But Garrard critiques this perspective as an illusion that obscures real ecological damage. *Shadow and Bone* Episode 1 avoids any idealization of nature. Even seemingly untouched landscapes are militarized or marked by trauma. The camp where Alina and Mal live, surrounded by trees and grass, is filled with ethnic tension, military orders, and preparation for crossing the Fold. There is no escape into greenery—nature is not a refuge, but a contested zone. Garrard’s post-pastoral thus resonates powerfully here. The land may look calm, but it is part of the war machine.

The Grisha verse presents landscapes molded by exploitation, loss, and violence, rejecting the notion of a pristine, innocent nature: “At least now, thanks to General Kirigan, we’re protected. Fear. The Little Palace has walls in the first place? Because for years, being Grisha was a death sentence.” Fedyor to Alina (S01E02)

These conversations depict a post-pastoral society in which nature is no longer a loving or secure place, and innocence has been lost. Garrard’s critique of the pastoral tradition and its subversion demonstrate how modern literature frequently reveals the complicated and violent reality of human-nature connections while dispelling the myths of pastoral purity. Any notion of peaceful, unspoiled nature is further challenged by Grisha’s perilous and distrustful engagement with their environment.

In *Shadow and Bone*, nature is never lovely, unspoiled, or pure. Rather, it is a haunted memory, a resource depot, or a battleground. Violence even permeates Alina’s fantasies of her early year’s memories of separation, war, and being drafted into the First or Second Army. Even the Stag itself is chased rather than free, and the few surviving sacred locations, such as the ash trees, are in danger. Nature is not honored; it is lamented. It is not a live presence, but rather a relic of a bygone era. Physical transformation—appetite, attractiveness, vitality—all tinted with expense, rather than pastoral beauty, is how her authority is celebrated. Alina: “He’ll hunt me down and he’ll never stop.” (S01EP06, 2021). Her connection to nature (via the Stag) makes her both sacred and hunted. The death of innocence is marked by pursuit, not peace.

Envisioning the Future: Light, Hope, and Ecological Restoration

Garrard’s final thematic concern—the future—is not about utopia but ethical vision. He argues that ecocriticism must imagine futures grounded in sustainability, justice, and accountability. In Episode 1, while the world is grim, a single metaphor emerges as a

counterpoint to the darkness: Alina's light. The rumors in whispers foreshadowed, "She's a Sun Summoner. She can bring light into the Fold." (S01E01, 2021).

In Garrardian terms, Alina represents not just a messianic figure, but an ethical question: can the future be changed by those willing to confront environmental collapse not with domination, but with restoration? The symbolism of light is not arbitrary—it ties into Garrard's call for futurity as responsibility. Alina's story arc, introduced here in fragments, offers a counter-narrative to apocalyptic fatalism.

There are glimmers of optimism in *Shadow and Bone* despite the destruction. Restoring light to a planet engulfed in darkness is one of Alina's potential healing abilities as the Sun Summoner. The guidance given to Alina is practical and rooted in survival, emphasizing that restoration requires both courage and strategic thinking.

Garrard's utopian strand of pastoral and ecocriticism's ethical optimism for ecological restoration, which emphasizes human accountability and resilience in forming a sustainable future, is in line with Alina's capacity to return light and heal the soil.

Although the past cannot be changed, the future can still be influenced by care, optimism, and resiliency, according to this glimpse of ecological restoration.

Despite the bleakness, Alina's power as the Sun Summoner suggests hope. Her light literally parts the darkness of the Fold. In Episode 8, she begins to assert control over her ability, implying at a future where healing is possible. Light becomes symbolic of ecological renovation a force that can reclaim even the most destroyed terrain. Alina's struggle suggests that while environmental collapse is disturbing, recovery is not beyond reach if power is exercised responsibly.

Conclusion

The findings demonstrate that the Netflix series *Shadow and Bone* use its fantasy setting not merely for escapism, but as a platform to reflect real-world ecological concerns. By analyzing narrative elements like the Shadow Fold, magical warfare, industrial destruction, and ecological displacement, the study reveals how the series constructs a symbolic and multifaceted critique of environmental breakdown.

The Fold, a result of magical experimentation, functions as a powerful metaphor for human-induced pollution, symbolizing moral collapse and the consequences of unchecked ambition. Characters' interactions with nature—through conflict, exploitation, and displacement—highlight the consequences of militarization and the erosion of safe, sustainable dwellings.

Bringing these insights together it becomes evident that the series incorporate ecological concerns at the heart of its narrative. Nature is portrayed not as a neutral backdrop, but as a contested space, shaped and scarred by war and exploitation. The story thus equates conquest with environmental harm, while also acknowledging the psychological and cultural damage of ecological disruption. It clearly shows that environmental damage affects not just the land, but also the lives and stability of people within it.

Importantly, the series encourage viewers to reflect upon ecological responsibility. Through its portrayal of environmental ruin alongside the potential for restoration, *Shadow and Bone* presents both a warning and a glimmer of hope. This thesis affirms that speculative fiction, particularly fantasy television, can serve as a meaningful site of environmental discourse.

References

Khattak M and Khattak, S 2023 Applying Glotfelty's 1996 framework to explore Brian's transformation in the wilderness: A journey from urban detachment to ecological harmony. *Eco-Criticism Journal*, 12(3), pp.45–67.

Phillips D and Sullivan HI 2012 Material ecocriticism: Dirt, waste, bodies, food, and other matter. *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment* 19(3): 445–447.

- Nuri MA 2020 Three waves of ecocriticism: An overview. *Horizon* 2(5): 253–268.
- Vincent S 2018 An Eco-Critical Analysis of Climate Change and the Unthinkable in Amitav Ghosh's Fiction and Non-Fiction. *Humanities* 7(2): 59.
- Murphy PD 2009 *Ecocritical explorations in literary and cultural studies: fences, boundaries, and fields*. Lexington Books.
- Mishra SK 2016 Ecocriticism: A study of environmental issues in literature. *BRICS Journal of Educational Research* 6(4): 168–170.
- Ashraf S, Maqbool S and Farooq A 2024 Exploring Eco-Criticism in Sweet Tooth: Dark Ecology, Slow Violence, and Human-Nature Interconnectedness. *Journal of Development and Social Sciences. Gujranwala, Pakistan* 5(2): 573–581.
- Rahmah F Rahmi G 2023 7 Spheres of Action in Netflix Series Shadow And Bone S1 (2021): A Vladimir Propp's Theory Perspective. *Jurnal Sosial Humaniora dan Pendidikan* 2(3): 34–48.
- May TJ 2005 Greening the theater: Taking ecocriticism from page to stage. *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies* 7(1): 84–103.
- Budi A 2021 A study of ecocriticism on the representations of ecological conditions in Rawa Gumbat. *Studies in English Language and Education* 8(3): 1267–1284.
- Garrard, G., 2004. *Ecocriticism*. 1 ed.: Taylor and Francis Group.
- Sema, C., 2017. *Rawa Gambut* [Drama script]. Teater Potlot.