

The Compromise of Ecocriticism and Postmodernism to Save Our Environment

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Summary:

Basically, Ecocriticism is meant to speak literally of a material entanglement with the world. It used to be concerned with literal and cultural embodiments of nature, aiming at strengthening literary realism. The most effective proclamations of returning to the real are based mostly on Ecocriticism. Usually, any blame for problems or defects in our environment refers to the postmodern way of dealing with it. In this paper, we try to amend the mostly confused question concerning the importance of the connectedness between Postmodernism and Ecocriticism in adding to the new understanding of the natural environment. Hence, the necessity of declaring the forms of imaginative interrelation with the world from the material point of view. Since each of Ecocriticism and Postmodernism give a high estimation of cultural and biological differences combining both effects will come with a worthy understanding of the elements and the consequences, they both rely on.

Introduction

For many ecocritics, "Postmodernism recreates the world as a text, destroying the world in the process" (Slocombe, 2005, p.494). This compelling point reveals how Ecocriticism advertises itself as a way back from linguistics text to work that can be referred to. Slocombe also states that there is little in the way of real communication being conducted between Postmodernism and Ecocriticism. Indeed, many common points exist between Postmodernism and Ecocriticism. To start with, both of them validate new forms of interaction with the material world. Also, they both seek ways to free themselves from anthropocentric thought. More importantly, they both give high credit for cultural and biological diversity and difference. Both Modernism and Ecocentrism are identified with their message to find solutions for dualisms associated with modern ideas of economic progress. They also make similar efforts to introduce ways towards liberation and to promote more sustainable lifestyles.

Ecocriticism and Postmodernism are often seen as opposites, especially in how they deal with language, reality, and physical things. Postmodernism questions whether we can ever truly know anything, focusing on how language shapes our understanding. Some ecocritics, like Slocombe, worry that this makes it harder to care about the environment, because if nature is just a story, we tell ourselves, why bother protecting it. Ecocriticism, on the other hand, wants to reconnect language with the real world, arguing that what we say and write should be based on actual, physical things. It sees itself as a way to get back to reality and take responsible action to protect the environment. Despite these differences, Postmodernism and Ecocriticism actually have some things in common. Both challenge the idea that humans are the most important thing and value diversity.

Postmodernism in the meantime can have a rather updated definition. It is an attempt to break down and remake the codes that have shaped "our civilization in its present form and that have largely created the ecological crisis" (White, 1998, p.23). In such a willful change, a new vision of reality will define the awareness of the interdependence of all life phenomena: physical, biological, social and cultural. In such a way, ecology would proceed to the point through which reality would declare itself without roundabout mediation which would lead to problematic questions. White thinks that "The point, from a postmodern - ecological perspective, is not to dehumanize human beings by labeling them 'animals' or even to 'human-ize nature engaging in Romantic anthropomorphism, but to construct ourselves and nature anew as posthuman, postmechanistic cyborgs" (White, 1998, p.8). If we take White's point of view from a modern ecological aspect, we realize that the main aim is not to deprive humanity through calling them as animals and not even to personify nature through Romantic anthropomorphism. The matter is about redefining both ourselves and nature as posthuman and postmechanistic beings. This point of view emphasizes interconnected understanding of existence. So, to overcome traditional human-centered that is known as anthropocentric and machine-mechanistic which connect organic and technological elements. It doesn't help to solve environmental problems by simply saying "humans are bad because they're like animals." It is common in Romanticism, where nature is often idealized as a source of solace, wisdom, or spiritual power. Any attempt to characterize nature objectively, according to Hans Bertens, "would lead us back to constructedness of our concepts, to their discursive character" (Bertens, 2008, p.202). Postmodernism raises issues

based on our moral convictions and how our language reflects them. It emphasizes the holistic methods of thinking about both human and non-human natures together, as well as discourse and matter.

In the development of industry, the natural essence of man and the human essence of nature merge to become one: we do not distinguish between man and nature. "Man and nature are not like two opposite terms confronting each other rather, they are one and the same essential reality." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. 4-5).

Deleuze and Guattari propose that language and reality are inextricably linked as a reciprocal network. They are able to comprehend both nonhuman reality, which is represented by nature and ecological systems, and human reality, which is represented by social and cultural systems, since they share a common stem. They argue that reality and language are not separate fields and that they are interconnected through rooted structures. The root is non-hierarchical model of knowledge. Meaning and existence emerge from multiple connections rather than fixed categories. Both human reality that is represented in culture and nonhuman reality which is represented in nature are attached together and could not be apart from each other. They are not existing as two distinct spheres but we can say that they form a dynamic system of interactions. This view challenges traditional epistemology, which often treats knowledge as fixed and separate from the world it describes. Instead, postmodern thought—especially in its later stages—seeks new forms of knowledge that integrate ecological and social realities, aims for new knowledge at its final stage of growth, knowledge that is integrative and imaginative rather than just rationalistic. In its last phase, postmodernism strives for new knowledge by taking the ecological situation as that of conventional epistemology. To enable it to function as a controlling balance between humans and the natural environment, this new understanding is linked to imagination.

According to Suzi Gablik, the main goal of postmodern imagination is to "restore health and aliveness through an empowered new vision" (Gablik, 1992, p.179). One of the primary driving forces for ecocriticism is this concept. Indeed, several postmodern theorists have confirmed Gablik's viewpoint. One of these philosophers, David Ray Griffin, embraces postmodernism's ecological turn in opposition to the conventional focus on nature and aims to replace it with a more positive outlook. David Ray Griffin highlights the ecological destruction in his argument for an ecological interpretation of postmodernism: "ecological devastation

of the modern world, is providing an unprecedented impetus for people to see the evidence for a postmodern worldview and to envisage postmodern ways of relating to each other, the rest of nature, and the cosmos as a whole" (Allan, 2004, p.xiv)

Griffin emphasizes the significance of embracing postmodern worldview of the rational nature of reality. Any failure to notice that reality is dynamic and interrelated at all levels has caused a great deal of suffering. This is due to the fact destructive human practices directly impose errors in the regulational system which in turns, affect the relationships between the human and the nonhuman realms. Fundamentally, the dualism of mind/matter, Subject/object split are totally anthropocentric. They feed our understanding of nature in accordance with economic, Cultural, social and ethical forms. Consequently, we tend to apprehend nature as objects that are "devoid of all experiences intrinsic value, internal purpose, and internal relations" (Griffin, 2007, p.8). It is the inability to see humans as part of the environment. The problem lies in the fact that the models of our knowledge that describe nature belittle its worth. Nature used to be looked upon as a lifeless mechanism as many social, cultural and ethical manners let nature down. Wrong deeds and irresponsible mechanisms legitimated the devastation of the world's ecosystems in the name of economic progress. Unfortunately, the consequences are tragic:

The entire planet is now imperilled by climate destabilization and ecological degradation, resulting from the modern assumptions that highly advanced societies could throw toxic substances 'away' somewhere and could exude staggeringly unnatural levels of carbon dioxide into our atmosphere. (Spretnak, 1999, p.2). The significant disruptions in climate patterns, such as increased temperatures, altered precipitation, and more frequent extreme weather events. These changes threaten ecosystems, wildlife, and human communities. Advanced societies can manage waste and pollution by simply discarding toxic substances. This assumption has led to harmful practices, such as dumping waste in landfills or oceans, which do not resolve the problem but rather exacerbate it.

Climate issues and ecological health are interlinked. The actions of modern societies have far-reaching consequences for the planet, indicating a need for a reevaluation of how we interact with our environment.

We are worried about the modern, mechanistic worldview that denies subjectivity, experience, and feeling in nature. This leads to see nature as merely an object to be

used and exploited instead of considering nature as a living, interconnected system. We need to develop new ways of understanding nature and the environment. The reason for this necessity lies in the fact that dominant perspectives have historically denied nature any form of subjectivity, experience, or feeling. By doing so, human perception of nature has become fragmented, reducing it to mere objects or resources for exploitation rather than recognizing its intrinsic value and interconnectedness. This objectification has led to environmental degradation, as nature is treated as a passive entity rather than a living system that demands respect and ethical consideration. Therefore, reinterpreting nature in ways that acknowledge its complexity, agency, and intrinsic worth is essential for fostering a more sustainable and harmonious relationship between humans and the environment. By stripping nature of its intrinsic value and reducing it to a set of resources for human consumption, this perspective has contributed to environmental destruction. This lower estimate is the result of nature's irrational spending. The anthropocentric viewpoint was similar to the dualism of contemporary society in that it held that all substances, including people, are essentially distinct from one another and behave and respond in ways that are predetermined.

Ecological postmodernism provides a promising approach to such a worldview. It focuses mostly on "reanimating" the natural world. We must come up with new ways to understand nature and the natural world. The reason behind this is that "(denying) nature of all subjectivity, all experience, all feeling has encouraged fragmentary perception leading to objectification and exploitation of the natural environments" (Gablik, 1992, p.2). We are, humans, worried about the modern, mechanistic worldview that denies subjectivity, experience, and feeling in nature. This leads to see nature as merely an object to be used and exploited instead of considering nature as a living, interconnected system. We need to develop new ways of understanding nature and the environment. The reason for this necessity lies in the fact that dominant perspectives have historically denied nature any form of subjectivity, experience, or feeling. By doing so, human perception of nature has become fragmented, reducing it to mere objects or resources for exploitation rather than recognizing its intrinsic value and interconnectedness. This objectification has led to environmental degradation, as nature is treated as a passive entity rather than a living system that demands respect and ethical consideration. Therefore, reinterpreting nature in ways that acknowledge its complexity, agency, and intrinsic

worth is essential for fostering a more sustainable and harmonious relationship between humans and the environment. By stripping nature of its intrinsic value and reducing it to a set of resources for human consumption, this perspective has contributed to environmental destruction. Nature has to be reevaluated in a better gratitude. The inborn value of nature deserves to be rediscovered, and it is the job of ecological Postmodernism. It has to reveal that all material entities, even atom particles have a sense of awareness. The moment we accept this as a matter of fact, we tend to see that all living things are potent agents capable of acting purposefully. What encourages this anticipated concern towards nature is the fact that we have no limiting feelings towards matters, individuals or even animals. Hartshorne suggests that we as human beings tend to sympathize with the universal "life of things". In return, he claims "all nonhuman entities possess creative experience and some degree of feeling" (Oppermann, 2017). According to Hartshorne, "creative freedom that is found in this planet emerged from compound individuals" (Hartshorne, 1970, P.190). High-grade compound persons are possible. like an animal, or anything low-quality like a molecule. Therefore, even if they lack awareness, molecules and cells can have internal interactions insofar as they react to their surroundings. By implication, scientists endorse such notions. According to a biologist, a human being is a subject and not just an object that is manipulated by outside forces. Being a subject is being receptive and consciously forming oneself in reaction to one's surroundings. I think the postmodern perspective that views human experience as a high-level "exemplification of entities in general, be they cells or atoms," makes the most sense All are subjects. All have internal relations. (Birch, 2017, pp.70-71)

Birch's scientific fact goes in tandem with many ecological postmodern thinkers that the world and all its entities are better apprehended in relational terms and that acknowledging vitality, creativity and effectivity of non-human entities enables us to detect "a fuller range of the non-human powers circulating around and wither human bodies." (Bennett, 2010, p.ix). Other comparable perspectives on ecological postmodern visions were anticipated by Bennett's proclamation. As the new theories highlight this link, it intensifies the reality that we are tied to other human and non-human beings.

This demonstrates unequivocally that humans and non-humans cannot exist outside of this pattern. Because the environment resides inside both brains and bodies, there can never be a dichotomy between them. In actuality, we are a part of

this planet with all of its variations. Accordingly, reality tends to have transitions of different shapes, enriching the dynamic ability of having new models of processes: Rocks and winds, germs and words, are all differential manifestations of this dynamic material reality.... they all represent the different ways in which this single matter _expresses itself (De Landa, 1997, p.21). The existence of human and nonhuman entities has interconnected relationships. So, they do not exist in isolation. Birch's scientific fact agrees with thinkers who argue that the world is best understood in relational terms.

Actually, this perspective is deeply rooted in ecological postmodernism, which challenges anthropocentric views by emphasizing the agency and vitality of non-human entities. It is very important to mention as Jane Bennett states, recognizing the "non-human powers circulating around and within human bodies" (Bennett, 2010, p. ix) allows us to see the world as a network of interdependent forces rather than a hierarchy with humans at the top. Vicky Kirby, Australian feminist theorist and posthumanist scholar reinforces this idea by asserting that "the very ontology of the entities emerges through relationality" (Kirby, 2011, p.76). Bennett critiques thinkers like Habermas and American evangelicals for reinforcing this boundary, whereas postmodern Ecocriticism sees nature and culture as deeply intertwined. Your article could argue that postmodernist skepticism toward grand narratives aligns with Ecocriticism's rejection of the idea that nature is a pure, separate realm untouched by human influence. Instead, both perspectives recognize that nature is constructed, interpreted, and shaped by human discourse—yet still retains its own agency. Her concept of vital materialism—where all matter (human and nonhuman) has agency—echoes postmodern critiques of anthropocentrism. Postmodernism questions human exceptionalism, much like ecocriticism seeks to decenter humanity in favor of a more ecological perspective. In your article, you could highlight how postmodern thought, by embracing multiplicity and rejecting rigid structures, is well-suited to ecological concerns that require flexible, interconnected approaches.

She criticizes the attempts to reinforce the nature-culture divide has direct environmental and political implications. If we continue to see nature as separate from human culture, we risk failing to take responsibility for our impact on the environment. Postmodernism's resistance to fixed categories can help Ecocriticism develop a more adaptive and politically engaged response to environmental crises.

Your article might argue that a compromise between Ecocriticism and postmodernism allows us to move beyond old debates about whether nature is real or socially constructed and instead focus on how to respond to environmental challenges. This enhances that both ecocriticism and postmodernism need to move beyond human-centered thinking. If, as Bennett suggests, nonhuman matter has agency, then postmodernism's destabilization of subjectivity can work in favor of Ecocriticism. This perspective allows for a more distributed understanding of agency, where ecosystems, animals, and even objects participate in shaping the world alongside humans. Bennett explores the agency of nonhuman entities and challenges traditional distinctions between subjects and objects where she encourages to "admit that humans have crawled or secreted themselves into every corner of the environment, admit that the environment is actually inside human bodies and minds" (Bennett, 2010, p.116). Human Impact on Nature is Recognized which society readily acknowledges that humans influence nature through pollution, climate change, and environmental destruction. This is a conventional view in both science and environmental discourse. The term "actant," borrowed from Latour, refers to any entity that has agency, meaning it can produce effects and influence outcomes. Recognizing that things like trash, weather, and technology actively shape human life challenges the deeply ingrained belief that agency belongs solely to humans. Bennett's argument aligns with postmodernism by dissolving these categories and asserting that nonhuman forces have their own vitality. Really, nothing exists in complete isolation; every entity—whether human, animal, plant, stones, trees or any material objects obtains its identity through its interactions with others. This challenges traditional dualisms, such as human/nature, subject/object, and animate/inanimate, by suggesting that all things participate in dynamic, co-constitutive relationships.

All of this challenges every traditional dualism, as human/nature, subject/object and also animate/inanimate. This is through proposing that all things take part in dynamic, co-constitutive relationships. Ecosystems and Interdependence

A rainforest is not merely a collection of trees, animals, and microorganisms; rather, it is an intricate web of relationships where each entity shapes and is shaped by others. The existence of trees depends on fungi that facilitate nutrient exchange, just as pollinators like bees and birds ensure plant reproduction. These connections highlight how life emerges through relational networks rather than isolated units.

Bennett's idea of "non-human powers" within human bodies can be observed in the microbiome. The trillions of bacteria in our gut are essential for digestion, immunity, and even mental health. Our bodily functions are not purely "human" but rely on a vast network of non-human life, further illustrating how existence is inherently relational ecological postmodern thinkers assert rationality as an essential principle of existence. We should not look at the rainforest as just a view of trees, animals' microorganism because it is indeed a deep web of web of relationships where each entity shapes and is shaped by others. The existence of trees depends on fungi that simplify nutrient exchange. We understand how life appears through rational networks by these connections between the human and the non-human entities. The Human Body as an Ecosystem, Bennett's idea of "non-human powers" within human bodies can be observed in the microbiome. The trillions of bacteria in our gut are essential for digestion, immunity, and even mental health. The bodily functions of humans are not purely human but depend on a wide network of nonhuman life, really explaining how existence is inherently relational ecological postmodern thinkers assert relationality as an essential principle of existence.

This asserts the point of view that reality can be enlivened and renewed towards having newly born materialisms. This would certainly result in producing an environmental thought capable of creating vitality which is diverse and abundant in its connectedness. This kind of reality attracts empathetic feelings with all elements of nature: rivers, rocks, wind flowers, humans, rain insects, etc. In such a way human and non-human will connect with one another in different, complex ways. Consequently, such conceptual models have the ability to maintain new expressions of ecological Postmodernism. The Postmodern thought maintains for the development of the present-day stage Ecocriticism. Indeed, the exact modification of Ecocriticism is enclosed in the postmodern concept of materiality. This indeed, helps much in orienting our essential thoughts concerning environmental and even social realities in words and deeds. In this regard, Ecocriticism is ultimately Postmodern as it tries to strip down the anthropocentric and the controlling power of some ambiguous formations More importantly, Ecocriticism searches for a meaningful performance with the world of purposeful making. Ecocriticism, as a matter of fact, provokes new thinking by means of sharing the new trends of matters. Such matters relate to the new materialisms and their ecological, social and cultural multi-faceted practices. This would "represent co-presence and interdependence" (Iovino, 2010,

P.54) Such an interdependence will lead to us to apprehend reality as a systematic structure of co-existing entities. Indeed, such intermingling of different practices would certainly raise other related questionable matters. Focusing on the simple representations of environment in cultural or literary text is but having a narrow-minded perception towards the subject. This is due to the fact that non-human and human systems cannot be understood in any restricted way. They should be treated as multitude of interrelated process that encompass creativity, nature cultural indication.

Such trends towards a whole understanding for the interconnectedness of the human-non-human is the scope of Barad's work. Karen Barad thinks that it is essential to highlight the interdependence of natural and cultural processes. According to her, these processes are interdependent. "Intra-ction" she states: "signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies" (Meeting, 2004, p.33). The 'intra-action' concept here refers to the idea that everything is intertwined in an intra-activity of recognizing, evaluating and accepting matters. Hence, the fair-minded study towards forming relations with the world demands a multiplicity of viewpoints. Also, the emphasis on both the local and the ecological sense of existence in the world comes in tandem with ecological Postmodernism - as Ecocriticism discloses all the signs that are also postmodern. The concept of intra-action, which suggests that humans and non-humans are not separate entities but are instead deeply interconnected in a continuous process of mutual recognition, evaluation, and acceptance. This idea challenges traditional notions of independent existence, highlighting that our interactions with the environment are dynamic and reciprocal rather than one-directional. Environmental crisis is deeply attached to our ways of thinking and our awareness of its significance and thus concepts like ecology and postmodernism should not rigidly defined as fixed entities.

Postmodern Ecocriticism emphasizes how our conceptual frameworks take part in the ecological crises and it refers to an interconnected approach for understanding environmental degradation. In such a way, Ecocriticisan displays mutual key awareness of Postmodernism. The understanding of any degradation in the environment does not have a relation with our own social or economic practices. It, rather, has a relation with our digressive formations that led to such degradation in the first place. The practical side of postmodern Ecocriticism embraces the material and the digressive without involving either term to the other. Such is the case, it

stands on a direct intersectionality with ecological Postmodernism. All the ideas concerning Postmodernism and ecology are "Complementary halves of a new multidimensional ethic and practice" (White, 1998, p.33). Ecological postmodernism and ecocriticism intersect, emphasizing their shared focus on locality, materiality, and the digressive nature of environmental degradation. While traditional Ecocriticism often critiques postmodernism for its perceived detachment from material reality, this perspective suggests that postmodern thought can enrich ecological awareness rather than undermine it. Ecological postmodernism values situated, localized experiences over universal, abstract theories. Ecocriticism and ecological postmodernism intersect, challenging simplistic explanations for environmental degradation and advocating for a multidimensional, intersectional approach to ecological ethics. Rather than seeing postmodernism as destructive to environmentalism, it can offer critical tools to deconstruct harmful ideologies, decentralize knowledge, and promote diverse ecological engagements. The ontologies of matter are the subject of these concepts. They also address the new ethics concerning human and nonhuman facets of existence in this world, which relate matter to theory in an effort to connect the many cultural and humanistic practices.

Both Ecocriticism and Postmodernism refer to the importance of local contexts and also they evaluate their interconnectedness with broader global concerns. Ecocriticism advocates for place-based awareness, urging individuals to consider their mediate environment's significance. Similarly, Postmodernism challenges grand narratives, focusing instead on localized, diverse perspectives. This mutual emphasis reveals how both movements resist universalist frameworks in favor of contextualized understanding.

Ecocriticism sees literature as a tool to challenge anthropocentric viewpoints, revealing nature as an active participant rather than a passive background. Postmodernism and ecological thought are interconnected, forming a unified but multifaceted approach to ethics and practice. They are not opposing forces but rather two sides of the same intellectual movement. Postmodernism forms stable structures and challenges dominant narratives. Ecology concentrates on the sustainability and a universal perspective of existence. Postmodernism and Ecocriticism together create a deeper way of thinking and acting, where ethical decisions consider both cultural and ecological complexity.

Conclusion

The distinct shift towards the explorations of the broadening mind set in ecological contexts certainly raises questions about how such an essential field as Ecocriticism can be theorized in ways to enable ecocritics to imagine the world with new lens. Such pursuit most expectedly leads to postmodern formulas in the way they are now inserted in the new materialist models. This justifies the reasons why one can put forward that Ecocriticism is becoming postmodern. As a result, we tend to think over and over on our basic assumptions concerning the environment, the textual and the biological nature of reality. Not only this, but our social, cultural, and ethical relations with the whole world would certainly be influenced by our thoughtful understanding of the postmodern ecocritical point of view. Having overcome the obstacle opposition between the human and the non-human realms, the perspectives of the postmodern thinkers provided important implications for ecocritical practice and theory along with ethical commitments to the more-than-human world. Both Ecocriticism and Postmodernism refer to the importance of local contexts and also they evaluate their interconnectedness with broader global concerns. Ecocriticism advocates for place - based awareness, urging individuals to consider their mediate environment's significance. Similarly, Postmodernism challenges grand narratives, focusing instead on localized, diverse perspectives. This mutual emphasis reveals how both movements resist universalist frameworks in favor of contextualized understanding.

lurs boundaries between fiction and reality, Ecocriticism sees literature as a tool to challenge anthropocentric viewpoints, revealing nature as an active participant rather than a passive background. Postmodernism and ecological thought are interconnected, forming a unified but multifaceted approach to ethics and practice. They are not opposing forces but rather two sides of the same intellectual movement. Postmodernism forms stable structures and challenges dominant narratives. Ecology concentrates on sustainability and a universal perspective of existence. Postmodernism and Ecocriticism together create a deeper way of thinking and acting, where ethical decisions consider both cultural and ecological complexity.

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تسوية النقد البيئي وما بعد الحداثة لإيقاظ بيئتنا وما بعد الحداثة

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الكلمات المفتاحية: النقد البيئي. ما بعد الحداثة، علم البيئة، الطبيعة البيئية

الملخص:

يهدف البحث إلى تقييم البيئة من خلال العلاقة ما بين النقد البيئي وما بعد الحداثة. يعد النقد البيئي أساساً إلى تقييم العلاقة المادية ما بين الإنسان والبيئة، هادفاً للوصول إلى علاقة مثالية للواقع الأدبي والثقافي لمكونات الطبيعة. إن كل من النقد البيئي وما بعد الحداثة يسعى جاهداً لإيجاد الحلول الازدواجية المقترنة بالأفكار الحديثة حول التطور الاقتصادي وكذلك فإن من أولويات الدراسات البيئية النقدية تقديم الخيارات حول حرية اتخاذ القرار بما يؤمن طرق مختلفة لحياة مستدامة أكثر.

وعليه فإن كلا من النقد الأدبي وما بعد الحداثة يحاولان إعادة صياغة المبادئ الحضارية والبيئية بما يتلاءم وحل أشكاله التدهور البيئي. إن تعريض الطبيعة والبيئة اليوم قد يضيء بعض الغموض حول ما التالية الحال من الوقت الراهن. ومن هنا فإن كلا من النقد البيئي وما بعد الحداثة يطرحان تساؤلات ويقدمان الحلول لأجل إنقاذ ما يمكن إنقاذه.