

Earth in the Balance

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Earth in the Balance. Senator Al Gore. New York: Plume, 1993. Pages 261-62.

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One of the newest of the great universalist religions, Bahá'í, founded in 1863 in Persia by Mirza Husayn Ali, warns us not only to properly regard the relationship between humankind and nature but also the one between civilization and the environment. Perhaps because its guiding visions were formed during the period of accelerating industrialism, Bahá'í seems to dwell on the spiritual implications of the great transformation to which it bore fresh witness: "We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us and say that once one of these is reformed everything will be improved. Man is organic with the world. His inner life molds the environment and is itself deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions." And, again, from the Bahá'í sacred writings comes this: "Civilization, so often vaunted by the learned exponents of arts and sciences will, if allowed to overleap the bounds of moderation, bring great evil upon men."

[Sources for his citations from the Bahá'í Writings not given. -J.W.]

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