

# The shadow our future throws by al gore

Literature



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The Shadow Our Future Throws - Al Gore The shadow our future throws is a chapter in Al-Gore's book, Earth in the balance: ecology and the human spirit. The book itself in general is about the ways in which humans are using our environmental resources and how this use of environmental resources has caused a serious imbalance in our nature. The book is also about the way in which humans are forming themselves around capitalism and not the other way around. The chapter in which he elaborates the theories underlying the questions of globalism and capitalism are detailed in the essay, 'The Shadow our Future Throws'. The name itself is a signifier that actions can lead to disastrous consequences if we leave progress unchecked.

The first theory that Gore mentioned concerned the 'Chaos Theory'. The 'Chaos Theory is also known as the butterfly effect (because the plot of the mathematical model crosses each other like a butterfly). It is easy for example to say that chaos exists but in the nature of man and science everything is neat and well-ordered with charted predictability however in every stable known natural phenomena for example, exists unpredictable uncharted and chaotic phenomena. For

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example, the movement of the earth's tectonic plates that caused the inevitable tsunami destruction that affected South Asia and Southeast Asia. We know the cause of the tsunami, what we do not know is why. Therefore, the earth is moving at a chaotic erratic and random pace that cannot be known to man specifically. However, due to the fact that the chaos theory is difficult to chart and understand, scientists have the tendency to wait back before proceeding into any statement. This is a plausible move however but Gore argues that it might be too late when the world's climate is changing rapidly due to the greenhouse effect. Initially, the earth has a particular manner in which it will swing 'pendulum-like' from state to state. The earth is able to recuperate itself continuously but the rapid changes and avid materialism and capitalism that is being overzealously advocated today is moving the natural environment too fast too soon. What are the effects on the environment and the earth of our rapid pollution

Often the target of such rapid pollution is portrayed by the media as the work of irresponsible loggers or irresponsible swidden agriculturalists but nobody seems to question why

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there are swidden agriculturalists, to what extent are their involvement with slash and burn

agriculture that affects the forest and causes deforestation and where does all the trees go The

answer is quite simple, it is transported to developed countries. Resources belonging to developing

countries are simply used for materialism and capitalism of developed countries. The cost of

capitalism is this, we move and shift natural resources from one part of the globe to another without

realizing the consequences of our actions. In addition the problems of import and export are also

apparent with the high cost of capitalism in maintaining 'freshness' of packaged goods. The media

does not portray the perpetrators of capitalism and the wreckage of environmentalism to be the

work of developed countries, on the contrary, environmentalism and environmentalists concentrate

their efforts elsewhere by creating humanitarian problems instead in the developing countries (Tsing

2005). However, this does not mean that there should be disjointed efforts on conserving the

environment but rather, joint efforts on conserving the environment, one that cooperate for the

initiative of other and other's communities instead of hoping to preserve solely only developed

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communities. Capitalism and environmentalism are two sides of a sword and are strange bedfellows but the truth is, they are action and reaction of one another.

Previously, man and still today, those of the hunting and gathering communities have always lived harmoniously with nature, they do not have the attitude of keeping and gathering for later but instead perceive that there will always be abundance and they take only what they need (Sahlins 1972). This is in line with Gore's theory of using science within the environment especially when he uses  $E=mc^2$ , the formula for the theory of relativity. Our use of mass affects our experience that is shaped by time and space (Gore 1992: 48).

In conclusion, we are able to use science as a means to concentrate our efforts on reducing global effects of pollution thus saving ourselves from the rapid change in climate. In fact, we can use whatever means and resources that we have with us to change this situation, the media must cooperate, science must cooperate and above all, everyone must cooperate but we also must keep in check that our relationship with our society is also our relationship with nature.

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