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Genealogies of Environmentalism: The Lost Works of Clarence Glacken
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Few students of environmentalism feel completely undaunted after their first encounter with Clarence Glacken's *Traces on the Rhodian Shore* (*Traces*). It is a work that, for decades, has proved a touchstone for understanding the history of western ideas about nature. There are many critical appraisals of *Traces*; it is seldom accused of being unambitious. But where did Glacken's wide-ranging scholarship go from there? What did the former Berkeley professor make of the form of environmentalism that took shape after *Traces* ends in the late eighteenth century and in the wake of Alexander Humboldt, Charles Darwin or George Perkins Marsh? *Genealogies of Environmentalism*, a carefully recovered and edited version of one of Glacken's lost manuscripts, provides part of the picture.

The book begins with a foreword and preface that provide biographical context to Glacken's intellectual life. He had, for instance, once submitted to the University of California Press an apparent sequel to *Traces*: a tome of some 2000 pages that, for inexplicable reasons, was not published and was then destroyed. That manuscript lost in lore, *Genealogies of Environmentalism* recovers an archived essay written in the classic style of that genre – part art, part science – on the history of ideas shaping modern environmental thought. Each chapter from Glacken's recovered essay is framed and introduced by the editor with remarks on where the essay shifts in tone and style, or areas where editorial decisions had to be taken owing to lack of clarity in the original draft. The result is a fine addition to Glacken's thought and to those interested in the particular moment of environmentalism in which Glacken himself was writing.

Glacken's original title, 'Man and Nature: Selected Essays', nods to the foundational work of George Perkins Marsh, yet the essays begin with the issue of population and William Godwin's refutation of Thomas Malthus. This debate is situated amid a detailed discussion of the French reformer Charles-Irénée Castel as an exemplar of scholars promoting universal notions of progress. Glacken's assessment of progress and population connect to familiar themes developed in *Traces*, notably his concern with what constitutes a 'habitable Earth.' From this discussion, Glacken then examines the works of Humboldt with two core aims: The first is to reinvigorate Humboldt's concern with the geographies of plants as the means to connect 'the phenomena of life and those of inanimate nature' (p. 23), and the second is to recover the humanistic and aesthetic aspects of Humboldt's thought. This double concern presciently anticipates many contemporary debates and mirrors another aspect of Humboldt's thought Glacken was concerned with: the interlocking nature of 'the history of exploration and the history of science' (p. 44).

Glacken's concern with how the narrative of progress is built into both the scientific and humanistic aspects of Humboldt's thought carries into his discussion of Darwin, Huxley, and Wallace. Glacken takes up Darwin's philosophy of nature at length but passes judgment on the class blindness that the theory of evolution entailed. Glacken finds room in Darwin to think about how humans modify the Earth, but chastises him as blinded by Malthusian explanations of poverty and his silence on 'child labor or slums' of industrial society (p. 78). Glacken then takes up the works of Marsh with a particular aim in mind – to connect considerations of progress, population and human changes to the Earth with concerns regarding land. He is dismissive of environmental determinism yet alert to the fact that 'land' figures centrally in the accounts of *lebensraum* developed by Friedrich Ratzel, in which struggles for life prove struggles for space. Glacken considers these struggles not with respect

to how they were used to naturalise nationalism, but instead for how they were employed to globalise population concerns with respect to Earth's ability to support human life.

The penultimate chapter considers five key elements of late nineteenth-century environmentalism: (1) the study of soils, (2) the emergence of ecology, (3) links of science to exploration, (4) belief in progress, and (5) anthropogenic environmental change. Early twentieth-century theories connecting these trends, suggests Glacken, are especially helpful for the environmental social sciences. Among them, Glacken holds Peter Kropotkin in special esteem for the links made between social class and environmental deterioration – a view that is still a live option for Kropotkin scholars today. Here, Glacken also highlights the important role of migration in understandings of environments, engaging with (but never being satisfied by) explanations of geopolitics in the frontier theories of Frederick Jackson Turner and the geopolitical histories from Halford Mackinder that came briefly back into fashion after WWII.

Glacken's final chapter reaches up to the UN Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources held in 1949. Beginning with a generalised account of population increase – inexplicably ignoring the genocide of Indigenous peoples across the Americas – Glacken moves to his main target, which is to identify the 'Malthusian shadow' still cast across environmentalism well into the twentieth century. Glacken is sceptical of population crises as constructed by global-scale statistics, but he is nevertheless resigned to the fact that such statistics will inevitably be used. His own view is that the care of the world's soils presents environmental challenges on a par with the 'abolition of war' (p. 196). As he signs off the book, Glacken's immense confidence in his understanding of the history of ideas shows through. He shrugs off an anticipated criticism that the essay is too selective with the simple counter than a more exhaustive work would have shown little more. Perhaps, given what else has been lost of his works, he had good reasons for holding this view. Regardless,

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Genealogies of Environmentalism presents an opportunity to engage not only with how Glacken assembled the history of environmental thought, but also with his appraisal of theories at work linking people and planet.

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