

REVOLUTION AND EVOLUTION

Martin Wickramasinghe

REVOLUTION
AND
EVOLUTION

By the same Author

MYSTICISM OF LAWRENCE
BUDDHISM AND CULTURE
LANDMARKS OF SINHALESE LITERATURE
ASPECTS OF SINHALESE CULTURE
LAY BARE THE ROOTS

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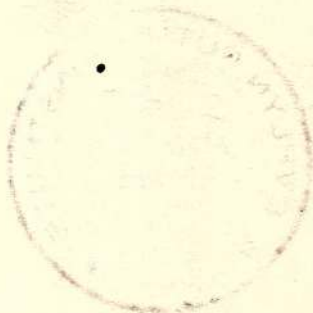
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REVOLUTION and EVOLUTION



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INTRODUCTION

REVOLUTION is also an aspect of evolution. Darwin relied on the accumulation of slight modifications and natural selection as the cause of evolution of new species. The theories of Mendel and de Vries on mutations caused by sudden gene variations are accepted by modern geneticists as a cause which created new species, of course through natural selection.

Lenin's Russian Revolution can be treated metaphysically as a collective psychosocial mutation which occurred as a result of drastic social and economic changes. After this revolutionary mutation, Russian society and culture are evolving through natural selection of psychosocial changes. These changes are not hereditary inheritances but they are transmitted through culture. They become cultural inheritances peculiar only to mankind.

Ernest Haeckel of Germany and Thomas Henry Huxley of England were enthusiastic supporters and powerful controversialists who defended Darwin's theory of evolution, which was subjected to criticism and ridicule by theologians

and the scientists who supported the organised church. But both Haeckel and Huxley treated evolution and natural selection as anti-socialistic theories.

Karl Pearson in his *Grammar of Science* quotes a lengthy passage from Haeckel to show that his view of natural selection and socialism is biased. Darwinism, according to Haeckel, is anything but socialistic. If a definite political tendency is attributed to this English theory—which is indeed possible—this tendency can only be aristocratic, certainly not democratic, and least of all socialistic. The theory of selection teaches us that in human life, exactly as in animal and plant life, at each place and time only a small privileged minority can continue to exist and flourish; the great mass must starve and more or less prematurely perish in misery.¹

After criticising Haeckel's views, Karl Pearson says: "The tendency to social organisation, always prominent in progressive communities, may be termed, in the best and widest sense of the word, *Socialism*. Socialistic, as much as individualistic, tendency is a direct outcome of the fundamental principle of evolution. Finally, there is a third factor of evolution, namely, the profit that arises to humanity at large from common organisation against organic and inorganic foes. The interdependence of mankind throughout the world is becoming a more and more clearly recognised fact."²

It is not only ironical, but also a refutation of the anti-socialistic interpretations of natural

selection by Haeckel and Nietzsche, that Germany should have produced, a thinker like Karl Marx to propound a theory of socialism based on the Darwinian concepts of evolution, struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest in a universal community sense.

C. D. Darlington in his *Genetics of Man* quotes from a letter of Darwin written in 1879 criticising German misinterpretation of his views on natural selection. "What a foolish idea seems to prevail in Germany on the connexion between socialism and Evolution through Natural Selection."³

S. A. Barnett, editor of *A Century of Darwin*, quotes the following passage from C. H. Waddington's *An Introduction to Modern Genetics* as a rigorous expression of the theory of natural selection: "Natural Selection is an inevitable consequence of genetical variation in fitness."

Commenting on this aphorism Barnett says that 'biological fitness, then, is nothing to do with athletic prowess or general physical health, unless these are correlated with superior achievement in leaving descendants. And natural selection is not an *agent*, like a farmer choosing seeds or bulls. It is the name for a process which arises from the nature of living things, in particular from their inheritable variability.'⁴

Darlington observes: "A connexion, which Karl Marx had wished to emphasize dedicating *Das Kapital* to Darwin, existed, of course, between the theories of evolution and socialism. Both required change, and at least a change in thinking. To Marx the connexion was a matter of political expediency. Its scientific senses first came to the

mind of the founder of Eugenics.”⁵ This political view of Marxism and the philosophy of science, perhaps, is due to the ignoring of the dialectical materialism of Marx and Engel.

Man is the only animal who has a developed language which is capable of conveying his ideas, feelings, and abstract and rational thoughts. Because of this unique acquirement, man has been able to create an inheritance which is quite different to the purely biological aspects of heredity of plants and animals including man.

The study of heredity is called the science of genetics, which was developed on the basis of the shrewd guesses of a plant-breeding Catholic monk, Gregor Mendel, the Augustinian Abbot of Brno in Czechoslovakia. His plant-breeding experiments were carried on in his monastery garden without facilities for scientific research.

Because of the invention of language, unlike all other animals including primates, mankind became inheritors of culture. Language, like the genes of biological heredity, became the external carrier of culture. There are a few anthropologists who say that man is entirely a creature of his culture, and that his biological heredity stops at the surface of his skin. Biologists reject this claim. Two great American geneticists, L. C. Dunn and Theodosius Dobzhansky, rejecting this claim says: “Man’s personality, as well as his physical traits, result from a process of development in which both heredity and environment play more important parts.”⁶

Culture is a powerful aspect of human environment which exerts an enormous influence on the

psychosocial evolution of communities. The Russian Revolution has changed and is changing the cultural environment of mankind. It is exerting a more quickening influence on communities and societies which were under Western and American colonial rule until recent times.

The influence exerted on the social environment of Eastern races by Western culture is dwindling. Cultural and political imitators who have been influenced by Western democratic individualism or Soviet and Chinese communism and by English education are now realising the great importance of adapting the socialist system to suit the tradition and culture of each country and community.

Attempts to establish socialism in the small countries of Asia by armed revolution are now paving the way for powerful capitalistic countries to establish military governments jointly with the support of local capitalists and army men. This has already happened in many countries. Socialists of small independent countries should devote their time to independent thinking and activity in relation to the cultural and social environments of their countries. To be merely quarrelling over imported political dogmas by socialist parties is an anachronism in the present phase of human evolution and the spread of socialism.

In Ceylon all our political leaders have to shake off the imitative instincts and thinking acquired over a period of 150 years from English culture, language and literature developed under the powerful influence of the English aristocracy and of capitalism.

Many persons in the world today still hang on to borrowed old dogmas of democratic individualism, socialism, and revolution, without reference to their own local cultural and social environment. When our politicians, educated men and women, university students and other young people begin to think independently of socialism in relation to our own tradition and cultural environment, the imitative instinct and inferiority complex which still undermine our urbanized fellow countrymen will disappear. This will create the appropriate circumstances and feelings for the establishment of socialism, whether by peaceful change or revolution.

Essays in this booklet are speculations on the great influence of the Russian Revolution on aspects of psychosocial evolution in certain countries of Asia.

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PSYCHOSOCIAL EVOLUTION AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

I

THE world and society are changing at a rapid pace. The rapidity of change is due to two main causes: the advancement of science and the spread of socialism and socialist ideas.

The gradual spread of socialism and socialist ideas in every country, advanced or backward, stimulates imaginative writers holding different ideals and temperaments consciously and unconsciously to unite in ignoring class and colour prejudices. They try to depict human life, inspired by the idea of revealing it in all its aspects, uninfluenced by class and racial instincts.

In capitalist countries of today there are economists, scientists, and political writers who are producing anti-communist and anti-socialist literature which is either blatant propaganda or genuine and subtle support for democracy based on individual freedom. But good novelists and poets who intentionally support such propaganda are not common in Ceylon.

Before the Russian Revolution and the spread of modern communism, many writers in Western

countries sincerely believed that the class structure of society was an aspect of nature, a result of Darwinian evolution. Idealistic philosophy, and even the old materialistic philosophy, directly or indirectly supported this concept of the class structure of society as a natural product of evolution. The rise of dialectical materialism and the Marxist theory of economic materialism inspired humanists and intellectuals to fight against this old dogma, which encouraged the exploitation of man by man.

Russia, with her primitive communism, and through her great writers inspired by elemental humanism and fervour for the brotherhood of man, produced a great literature which exposed the cruelties and the selfishness of feudalism and capitalist exploitation. The great Russian classical writers introduced stark realism into Russian fiction and depicted the rottenness of pre-revolutionary Russian society. Gogol, Kuprin, Scherdrin, Tolstoy, Gorky, Dostoevsky and Chekhov were leaders of the Russian novel who completely ignored certain principles of the art of the novel accepted by Western critics and novelists in the early nineteenth century.

Aristocratic art, which was rejected by Russian novelists, encouraged the production of the nineteenth century masterpieces of Jane Austen, Henry James, and Ivan Turgenev. They idealised the life of the upper classes with its superb veneer of refinement,¹ in polished metaphorical language not completely freed from the language of the older romantic novel which depicted aristocratic life.

Jane Austen and Henry James were reluctant to depict the lives of working-class people and peasants in their novels. The old French realists, Flaubert and Maupassant depicted with indulgence and sometimes with fierce sarcasm the life of middle-class society. Of the older English novelists, Dickens in his approach to life and art is in certain aspects not unlike the Russian novelists. But many middle-class English readers of Dickens' time treated him as a vulgar writer.

The stark realism of the Russian novelists unflinchingly depicting the seamy side of Russian life was a revelation to English critics and readers. This realism in a variety of forms has ousted the old feudal form of the novel which treated the life of the workers, farmers, and tramps as material unsuited to the novel.

The change in the form of the novel that occurred later was due to the spread of socialist and scientific ideas, and of the art of the classical Russian novel, which the young American professor George Steiner identified as the third great moment in the history of world literature. The other two moments were the age of Plato and the Athenian dramatists,² and the age of Shakespeare. The Russian novelists identified themselves with elemental humanism rather than with Western individualism and democracy as an institution.

Critical realism and socialist realism are relative terms in connection with the modern novel. The novel which depicts the life of the oppressed classes and their suffering with critical penetration, unflinching courage and humanist

sympathy, moves readers and critics to indignation, and arouse their sympathy with the fighters against decaying capitalism and its supporters. On the other hand, the socialist realist who is a direct propaganda artist concentrates on depicting the destruction of capitalist forces and on the courage and the triumph of the proletarian fighter, in order to rouse many people to direct action.

Socialist revolution requires not only impassioned leadership but also a disciplined rank and file. An intense feeling for and a real knowledge of the oppression and suffering of the people creates the human sympathy which is the best basis for unity and discipline in the rank and file. Classical Russian writers like Gogol, Tolstoy, Chekhov and Gorky contributed much to evoking such human sympathy for the oppressed classes as a prelude to the Russian Revolution. On the other hand, the art of intentional socialistic propaganda serves to rouse people who lead the rank and file who have joined together to destroy an oppressive system.

II

RUSSIAN classical writers including Gorky prepared the Russian people to rise against arrogant feudalist tyranny and capitalistic exploitation. Without the determined participation of workers, peasants and writers, the leaders of the Russian Revolution would not have succeeded. The genius of Lenin, the leader of the revolution which changed not only Russia but about half

of the world, had been nurtured by classical Russian literature and the philosophy of Marx and Engels. Lenin treated Tolstoy as a mirror of the Russian Revolution. Reading Chekhov's *Ward No. 6*, one of his later stories, agitated Lenin so much that it disturbed him in his sleep.

The above argument, I think, suggests indirectly that a primary requirement for social revolution, at least in the East, is not merely to recruit revolutionary leaders, but to unite the people who have been moved to indignation and fury by making them see and realise the extent of oppression, exploitation, and suffering they undergo because of the social and cultural milieu created by imperialism and its ally capitalism.

In many countries of the East, the shouting of revolutionary slogans has become an imitative fashion among the educated young men who are still victims of an educational system imposed on them by colonial rulers.

Talking of revolution is only a means of giving vent to the feeling of discontent, frustration, fury and disgust against leaders who could not end their tutelage to alien cultures and political slogans, and to Western democratic individualism which supports capitalism. As most of these leaders were ignorant of their own language and culture, they were unable to identify themselves completely with the people.

Yet, while the educated young men are furious at the imitative life of such older leaders, they find it difficult to identify themselves with the workers and peasants who together make the greater nation. Their shouting of borrowed

revolutionary slogans is partly a safety valve to expel their genuine discontent and fury, which has become impotent because the system of education and the social environment still segregate them from the workers and peasants.

To achieve socialism by revolution, armed or peaceful, people who form the rank and file as well as the future leaders should discipline themselves together in relation to the local environment. This will not be possible until the progressive younger generation identify themselves with the workers and the peasants who are the real nation. Because of the obsolete educational system, young persons are still competing for clerical and professional jobs. The social environment in the towns of Ceylon still remains a part of the legacy of colonial rule. Its class basis, a form of Westernised Brahminism, encourages even our angry young men to treat workers and peasants as the lowest classes. Far from trying to identify themselves with the latter, they aspire to imitate the middle and upper classes even in revolutionary attitudes.

In many Eastern countries where the English colonial regime existed for over a century, the role of the writer should be multiple. In such countries, the class structure is different to the class structure of Western capitalist countries. The basis of class structure in Ceylon is not merely feudalism or capitalism. English colonial rule created an environment and atmosphere in Ceylon which easily converted the educated community into an elite of society who succumbed to the English language and to Western behaviour

patterns. They discarded their own language, literature and culture. And persons of the lower middle-class and even some urbanised workers in the towns began to imitate the elite. These people became a segregated minority community. Workers, peasants, the merchant class and even wealthy native capitalists of the towns, who did not adopt the English language and the behaviour patterns of the Westernised Sinhalese, have been and still are treated as a vulgar class, lower even than the lowest grade of English-speaking clerical service men who imitate the Westernised elite in dress and behaviour patterns.

In the Soviet Union, China and in Eastern European countries, gradual cultural changes occurred as a consequence of economic and social revolution. Economic revolution will lead to social revolution, but not to revolutionary changes in the cultural ethos. There was a complete social revolution in the Soviet Union, but is it possible to assert and prove that there was a revolutionary change in cultural patterns? Because language is the inescapable reflex of a nation's past and present culture, no revolutionary transformation in the pattern of a culture is possible unless the language of that nation is completely discarded.

Present-day Soviet literature, art and music reflect cultural evolution. The changing new patterns in this cultural evolution have emerged as a consequence of the economic revolution.

Immediately after the Revolution, there were writers in the Soviet Union who argued that the old Russian culture should be thrown overboard

and that in its place should be built an entirely new proletarian culture. But these proletarian culture extremists disappeared because of the continuity and gradual growth of the Russian language and culture in relation to the economic and social revolution.

A singular writer like James Joyce can make a revolution through his individual style. But he and all the other writers together are incapable of making a revolution in their socially inherited language.

In the same way it is not possible to bring about a revolutionary transformation into a proletarian culture unless the particular socialist state invents an entirely new proletarian language. But it is possible, as in China and Russia, to make a revolution in the political and certain external aspects of cultural patterns. Even these will gradually change when these societies evolve further.

In China, such changes also occurred during the cultural revolution, about ten years after the economic revolution had been accomplished. But Mao Tsetung and his colleagues certainly did not depend on the meaningless repetition of revolutionary slogans to bring about the revolutionary economic upheaval which resulted in the establishment of a great socialist state. They achieved this by identifying themselves with the peasants and workers. The political slogans which our young men are fond of imitating were a feature of the Chinese cultural revolution, ushered in many years after the economic revolution had been successfully stabilised, in order to give a re-orientation to certain aspects of culture and to

safeguard it from those American, English, and Russian influences that would disturb the unity of Chinese socialist culture, which was evolving according to its own independent pattern.

III

THE future of literature in a changing world should be explained from the point of view of the theory of evolution and socialism. The philosophy of dialectical materialism and the historical materialism of Marx are related to the theory of evolution. The theory of Darwinian evolution has undergone changes in consequence of the advancement of genetics and bio-chemistry. Writers cannot ignore these changes.

Marxist-Leninist socialism or modern communism has triumphed. Socialism, but not in one unchanging dogmatic form, has been adopted by different nations of the world with modifications. Socialism in slightly different forms has been adopted in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, China, and other countries of Asia and South-East Asia. In all countries in Asia and Africa, socialism is in mortal conflict with capitalism. There are reasons for believing that eventually socialism, in whatever form, will emerge throughout the world.

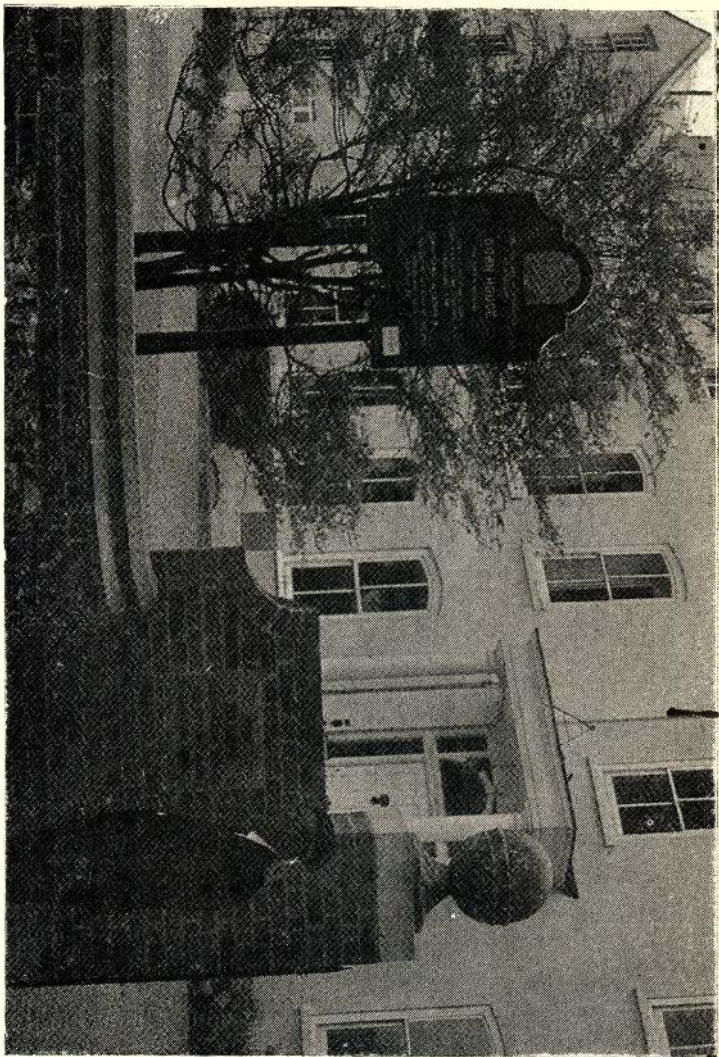
The theory of convergent evolution is a philosophical speculation which requires no support from idealistic philosophy. This theory of convergent evolution encourages us to believe that socialism will triumph by taking different routes.

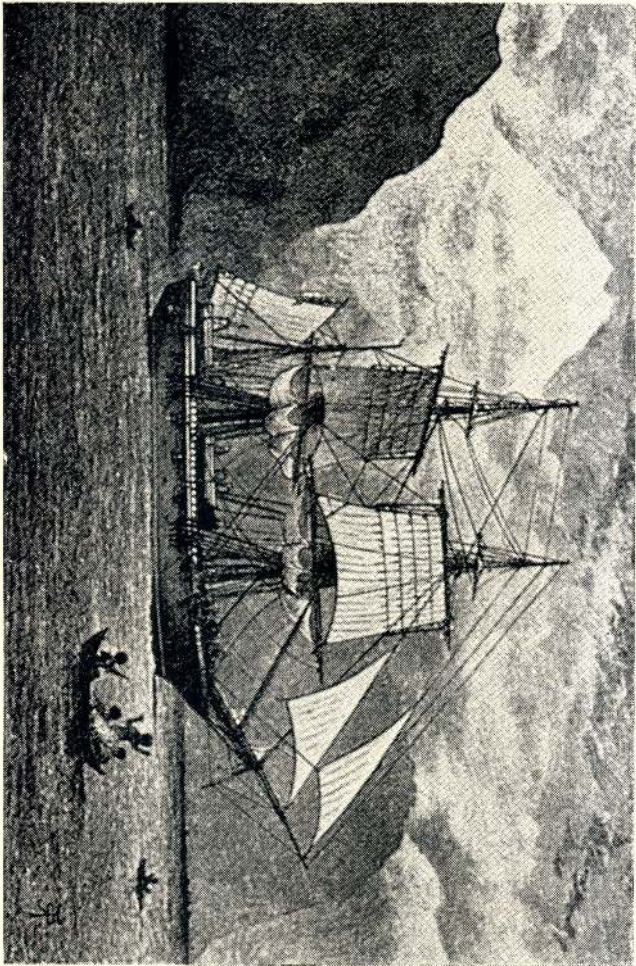
The economic restructuring as a prelude to socialism can be revolutionary. But the perfect socialist state will emerge not by revolution but by evolution. Revolution can only direct human passions and desires. Evolution can change them gradually by the slow process of natural selection.

The biological evolution of certain animals supplies evidence in support of the idea of convergent evolution. The whale, though living in the sea, was evolved from a land mammal. In appearance and form, the whale is a fish but it retains its features of mammalian anatomy and life. Under the skin of each forefin, it has five fingers with digits of the forearm of a land mammal. It is a fish in form but yet still essentially mammal in its modified lungs and in suckling of its young. "It is another example of convergent evolution—that marvellous testimony to the truth of natural selection," says Professor F. H. T. Rhodes in his *The Evolution of Life*.³

Convergence has become a new psychical factor in human evolution. The idea of convergence in human evolution has been elaborated into a speculative theory on the future transformation of mankind by Father Teilhard de Chardin.

Commenting on Father Chardin's speculations on convergent evolution, Julian Huxley points out that animals other than man in their evolution went on dividing into innumerable different species. The bird type has 8,600 species and the insect type has over half a million. Man divided into a few distinct races. But migration and





HMS 'Beagle' in the Straits of Magellan. Darwin sailed in this ship as naturalist and collected evidence to prove his theory of natural selection

intermarriage prevented men from dividing into further subspecies.⁴

Thought, intelligence, reason, and moral consciousness operate more and more as a psychical force on human evolution. Man evolving from the ape ancestor has passed through savagery and barbarism to the modern stage of extra hominisation. This progressive evolution encourages us to believe that mankind, in spite of racial and cultural differences, will converge in its future evolution as an ultra hominised human family who have united in charity, *metta-karuna* (love), equality and brotherhood. Modern socialism has become a factor of this psychosocial evolution.

Kruschov, a verbose and sincere optimist, at the annual Communist Party congress in 1962, said that the idealistic socialist state would become a reality in another twenty two years. But present day socialist thinkers, I believe, will not take such a view because they are influenced by the evolutionary philosophy rather than by political expediency.⁵

The theory of convergent evolution encourages us to believe that the nations of Africa and Asia following different routes will converge at one point as Marxist-Leninist socialist states. Socialism, through revolution or convergent evolution, became possible because of Lenin and the Russian revolution, which gave a death-blow to imperialism. The destruction of imperialism paved the way for socialism to be attained by peaceful revolution and also by convergent evolution.

IV

Literature of the future in such a changing world will contribute directly and indirectly to the growth of the brotherhood of man by creatively depicting the unity of mankind and by helping to eliminate inequalities and avenues of exploitation. It is a gradual and indirect way of destroying capitalism. Capitalism had been successful in exploiting all organised religions in the East—Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. This exploitation in many countries of the East is now coming to an end.

Priests of all religions and sects do not now exert influence over laymen to make them supporters of capitalism. Heads of all religious denominations are realising with alarm the demoralising effects of their support of capitalism on peoples of all faiths. Priests of all religions are now gradually becoming supporters of genuine religion and socialism, instead of playing the role of vendors⁶ of 'religious opium' on behalf of capitalists and their organisations.

America, I believe, has realised the futility of flooding Asiatic countries with blatant propaganda literature. American propagandists now use anti-communist literature written on a subtle intellectual level by men of higher educational institutions. In India and Ceylon, there are professors and lecturers who are producing ponderous volumes on rebirth and occult superstitions. They are encouraged by certain American psychiatrists and occultists. Most of them are possibly genuine students who believe in occult superstitions. But

I suspect that American propaganda organisations are behind this exploitation of occultism which appeals to many educated people in India and Ceylon, as well as to the semi-literate.

In a socialist economy the able-bodied man who does not work has to starve. A statistical survey of the influence of occult beliefs such as astrology, divination, and exorcism will reveal in astronomical figures the amazing number of working hours wasted by the people in Ceylon in resorting to such superstitions and practices to improve their profits, wealth, health and obtain protection from imaginary enemies including devils and evil spirits. And rich educated people spend unbelievable amounts of money and time in seeking the help of exorcists to destroy political enemies whom they fear.

The Buddha in the Pali Jataka said :

*“The fool may watch for astrologically
lucky days
Yet luck shall always miss;
'Tis luck itself is luck's own star —
What can mere stars achieve?”*⁶

Intelligent nations borrow what is good and progressive in other cultures, and re-adapt them to suit their own independent culture. But our educated imitators of English culture borrow animistic elements of the primitive races of India which crept into the original Aryan culture at a later stage in the development of Indian culture.

Capitalist countries have been defeated in the battle of propaganda against communism and socialism. There is, I think, a good future for the literature of a fast-changing world if socialist states do not quarrel about dogmas and prestige problems peculiar to each country.

The mission of the writer has two aspects: A writer has to consider the social and the natural environment of his own country. His views on economic and political freedom, socialism and the brotherhood of man have to be adjusted in relation to his own country's social and cultural environment which may have a long or short evolutionary history. At the same time he has to reconcile his views of national environment with the vision of the universal aspects of human freedom, socialism and humanism.

Marxist socialism, invented on the basis of the industrial civilisation of Western Europe, has developed during the last fifty years into a non-orthodox social philosophy in relation to the cultural and social environments of many Eastern countries. The development of this aspect of Marxism is mainly due to the spread of Leninist-Soviet communism.

American propaganda organisations are spending money to demoralise the people, especially the youth of emerging Eastern countries. As these organisations have realised the futility of their direct propaganda against Marxism and Communism, they are now disseminating revolutionary doctrines of socialism of certain individual countries with the intention of creating chaos

among youth. The new revolutionary slogans of Cuba and China fascinate the young people because there are many amongst them who have become tired of the quarrels and futile controversies of old leaders. In many Eastern countries which were under colonial rule until recent times, there are parties which profess allegiance to English parliamentary democracy, Trotskyite and Marxist theories, communist socialism of the Soviet Union, and parties which profess to be revolutionary Marxists or revolutionary followers of Maoism.

The younger generation has become rather tired and cynical of the bickerings of such leaders. In Ceylon, under the leadership of Madame Sirimavo Bandaranaike, three major socialist parties have united together and at the recent election, this United Front has routed other political parties and gained a victory which can be described as a peaceful revolution. This is a triumphal achievement of Sirimavo Bandaranaike and a vindication of her husband's political vision.

Now foreign propagandists are encouraging impatient young men to create revolutionary anarchy in the name of Marx, Lenin, Mao and Che Guevara. Their tactics are to split the United Front by creating chaos among the young.

In those Eastern countries where there are no proletarian democracies, the mission of the writer and the artist is difficult and hard. He still has to face attack and abuse not only from the press and vested interests backed by capitalism and imperialism but even from socialist parties which

profess allegiance to the doctrines of Marx and Lenin, Mao Tsetung, and Che Guevara.

American intelligence services and the hostile press, taking advantage of the meaningless division of socialist parties, are engaged in subtle propaganda to destroy the hard-won unity of various socialist parties, who used to be criticising each other in the past, clinging to theoretical dogmas for nearly twenty-five years.

Foreign organisations and sections of the press in Ceylon now are exploiting the student population, encouraging them to shout revolutionary slogans and dogmas to undermine the present United Front which formed a government with an overwhelming majority which gives them absolute democratic power.

Certain remnants of the shattered capitalist party are perhaps working with the hope of establishing a military dictatorship with foreign aid. Rivalry between the Soviet Union and the Peoples' Republic of China paved the way for an American-aided military dictatorship in Indonesia.

The great socialist countries of Europe and Asia should refrain from doing any propaganda based on their slightly different ideologies and national and cultural rivalries in the countries of Asia, where socialism is slowly emerging in spite of vast influences still exerted by the remnants of colonialism and imperialism.

Communist countries of Europe and Asia should not encourage the socialists of these emerging countries to divide into rival factions by exploiting their ideological and national cultural differences. The communism of Russia, China,

and Cuba differs only in adaptations of it to suit the ethos of the culture of each nation and their changing societies.

It is of the utmost importance at this stage of the gradual socialisation of the whole East not to attempt to impose by propaganda particular interpretations of Marxism and Leninism dear to each socialist country. Such individual propaganda by different countries will only encourage political opportunism, which is the enemy of socialism and an ally of the reactionaries in the emerging countries of Asia. It will mislead the younger generation and make the mission of the Eastern writer and artist of our time a desperate one, and undermine his independence and devotion to socialism.

V

The emergence of the idea of socialism has given a new psychological organisational level to the phenomenon of society as a whole. The science of socialism will replace the science of sociology in the future. Socialism, which has become an aspect of human evolution, is a new complex mental organisational level. The Russian revolution has changed the course of human evolution by making socialism a natural psychological factor influencing human evolution. The phenomena of economic materialism discovered by Marx will cause socialism to emerge in place of capitalism in individual countries. And the emergent collective psychological phenomena of socia-

lism will slowly but inexorably influence the future evolution of mankind and society.

The German theologian Rudolf Otto's aphorism 'the idea of the holy' conveys the paranormal aspect of every religion as implied by Hinduism and Buddhism.

A textbook of Hindu religion and ethics prepared by a board of very intelligent and learned men in India published about forty years ago says that Hinduism is like the ocean. In the ocean children can play on the shore where "the depth is limited from ankle to knee. Gradually the ocean's depth increases. Into the deepest places of the ocean of Hindu religion only the thinkers and mystics can dive." This definition implies that the Hindu religion is capable of evoking of the numinous feeling of the superstitious, illiterate peasant and also of the learned and the mystic.

The Buddha rejected the animistic and occult aspects of religion. During his lifetime his personality and the spiritual aspect of his *dhamma* inspired the intelligentsia and the illiterate with the sense of the holy. After his death, worship of the Buddha image and other symbols, the offering of flowers and the reading of his spiritual poetry were the greatest sources which inspired the sense of the holy in the minds of the educated and the illiterate alike. The development of monastic casuistry called *abhidhamma* and regular inculcation of it in the minds of boys and girls by Buddhist organisations are responsible for decadence of the sense of the holy among educated Buddhists.

Yet the Catholic religion and Hinduism, retain more than Buddhism the aspect of religious

worship which inspires a sense of the holy in the minds of worshippers. As a non-theistical religion, Buddhism is closer in its humanistic aspect to communist socialism in inspiring a sense of the holy in the minds of its followers.

Joseph Needham, the famous Cambridge biochemist and evolutionary thinker, in his book *Time: The Refreshing River*, says that the "clearest understanding of religion has been given by the work of Rudolf Otto who described it as the sense of the holy. In primitive communities we see this 'numinous sense' applied to all kinds of worthless objects and rites, and later incorporated in the apparatus of state government, but in the great religions of the world it forms the essential backbone of their participators. In Christianity, where the ethic of love found its greatest prophets, the numinous sense has become attached to the highest conception of the relation between man and man that we know. The Christian who becomes a communist does so precisely because he sees no other body of people in the world of our time who are concerned to put Christ's commands into literal execution.

"Fundamentally natural and proper to man, the sense of the holy is as appropriate to him as the sense of beauty. As we have seen, the moral theology of communism lacks a doctrine of God, but this does not affect the existence of the sense of the holy. After all, the theology of the Gospels was not very complicated—Jesus did not meet disease and hunger by persuading people that blessedness was already theirs if they would accept a dogmatic intellectual system; but by curing

sickness and distributing bread. This was the practical aspect of his teaching of love. In the motives of atheist communists we detect, therefore, that which is worthy of numinous respect, for they are working to bring in the World Co-operative Commonwealth."7

Needham's interpretation of Christ's teaching applies with equal force to the Buddha and his teaching of *metta-karuna* which he and his disciples practised. He saved Patāchārā who went mad at the death of her husband and two sons at the same time. Laymen greeted her, running naked in the street, with jeers, stones and cowdung. The Buddha received her like a mother who embraces her little daughter who runs in hunger to suck her breasts. Angulimāla, the murderer, beggar women who were starving, and a wretched mother who had to watch and hear the crunching of the bones of her dead child by wild animals prowling in the cemetery, were saved by the Buddha.

Metta and *karuna* were practical human ethics to the Buddha and his followers. But later with the development of *abhidhamma*, the monastic casuistry, all practical human ethics of love and charity in Buddhism became abstractions for mere contemplation called *maitribhāvanā*, which produces more unconscious hypocrites than men and women who practise love and charity.

Owing to the later development of the anti-theistical metaphysics of Buddhism which attracted learned monks and laymen, the sources that inspired the idea of the holy in them have been neglected. They treated the worship of Buddhist

symbols and the offering of flowers at the Buddha image as a degrading form of idol worship which is against the spirit of Buddhism.

Educated modern Buddhists, who think that the essence of Buddhism is *abhidhamma*, have been influenced indirectly by the rationalistic attitude of the Anglican Church to the worship of religious symbols by Catholics and Buddhists. An erudite German protestant theologian Professor Rudolf Otto in his *Idea of the Holy* says:

“There is no religion in which it (the idea of the holy) does not live as the real innermost core, and without it no religion would be worthy of the name.”⁹

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3

FATHER CHARDIN: A DARING EVOLUTIONARY THINKER

I

The name and fame of Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin as a daring evolutionary thinker rose like a meteor after his death in 1955. At eighteen, he became a priest by entering the Jesuit order. But as a student at the Jesuit College of Notre Dame de Mongre near Lyons, his interest in geology led him to pursue the study of palaeontology, in which he distinguished himself as a research worker of human and anthropoid fossils.

In his studies and researches, he became convinced of the truth of the evolution of man from ape ancestors. At the age of twenty-four, he read Henry Bergson's *Creative Evolution* which seems to have fired his imagination.

Bergson was one of the early thinkers who refused to accept the mechanistic view of life. But Pierre Teilhard, as an evolutionary thinker, ignored the vitalistic theories of Bergson and some eminent scientists who influenced biology in the early part of the twentieth century.

Father Chardin's two major works, *The Phenomenon of Man*, and *The Appearance of Man*,



Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
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were written before 1940. When the manuscript of the former was sent to Rome for ecclesiastical censorship, permission was refused. Father Chardin belonged to the most rigorous religious order of the Catholic Church, the Society of Jesus. Bound by the three vows, poverty, chastity, and obedience, of the Jesuit order, Father Chardin obeyed the Church and never thought of sending the manuscript to a publisher who would at once have published it and caused it to be distributed all over the world in translations.

Father Chardin died in 1955 in New York. His censored manuscript of *The Phenomenon of Man* was published in book form in the same year, and the English translation in 1959 with an introduction by the eminent biologist and thinker, Julian Huxley. *The Appearance of Man* in which Chardin with his unrivalled knowledge of palaeontology traces the evolution of man from ape ancestors, was published in 1956 and the English translation in 1965.

In *The Phenomenon of Man*, Pierre Teilhard attempts to explain his view of the evolution of matter, life, mind and thought, and the future of man and society with a sweeping vision and a remarkable optimism. His vision of the world was the result of a synthesis of certain concepts of idealist philosophy and science. His vision enables him to see unity in the innumerable diversities of matter, life, mind and thought. Except in the epilogue of *The Phenomenon of Man*, he tries to avoid the use of religious and theological terms in explaining his philosophy of evolution and cosmogenesis.

Certain biologists and philosophers of the last generation. used words like 'vitalism' and 'entelechy' of Hans Driesch the German biologist, and *elan vitale* of Bergson, to separate life, mind and consciousness from matter. Father Chardin rejects these terms and uses the words 'within' and 'without.' The atom also has a 'within' and 'without'. 'Without' in man is his body, 'within' is his thought and consciousness which will continue to evolve for millions of years.

Chardin's concept of the atom with a 'within' and 'without' is not scientific. It is metaphysical speculation divested of the aid of ponderous terminology. The great German biologist and thinker Hans Driesch who introduced the theory of neo-vitalism used the word 'entelechy' to explain life. According to Driesch, the phenomena of life are based on a special immaterial 'vital force' or entelechy. Entelechy determines the whole course of the vital processes and accounts for purpose in the universe.

Activity of entelechy is subject to no material laws. Father Chardin's use of the words 'within' and 'without' to explain the development of mind of higher animals including man, I think, does not belong to ponderous metaphysical speculations. It accords with the speculations of certain modern philosophers and scientists like Russell, Eddington, Whitehead, Edwin Schrodinger and others, Professor J.D. Bernal in his *Science in History*, discussing the convergence of all sciences in this century, refers to Teilhard de Chardin as the imaginative thinker who propounded a theory of social evolution of humanity itself.¹

P.B. Medawar, a Nobel Prize winner, in a recent book of essays and studies *The Art of the Soluble*, severely criticises Chardin's *Phenomenon of Man* as a variety of tedious metaphysical conceits and euphoric prose-poetry, which he considers one of the more tiresome manifestations of the French spirit. Medawar treats natural philosophy or metaphysics as a philosophical indoor pastime of German origin which does not seem even by accident to have contributed anything of permanent value to the storehouse of human thought. "French", says Medawar "is not a language that lends itself naturally to the opaque and ponderous idiom of (German) nature philosophy."² Therefore Father Chardin has accordingly resorted to the use of 'tipsy prose poetry'.

Medawar as a well-read research scientist has a perfect right to treat metaphysical speculations as nonsense. But I doubt whether he has a right to treat philosophical poetry and the speculations of science as nonsense because such speculations are capable of stirring the imagination of scientists.

Medawar himself in a broadcast talk given in the BBC Third Programme in 1963, treats hypotheses as results of imaginative adventures of the mind. "Hypotheses arise by guess work," says Medawar. "That is to put it in its crudest form. I should say rather that they arrive by inspiration; but in any event they arise by processes that form part of the subject-matter of psychology and certainly not of logic.

"The scientific facts and scientific acts should follow the discussion, and the scientist should not be ashamed to admit, as many of them apparently

are ashamed to admit, that hypotheses appear in their minds along uncharted by-ways of thought; that they are imaginative and inspirational in character, that they are indeed adventures of the mind.”³

The Phenomenon of Man is not a book on genetics and the biological evolution of man. It is the work of an original thinker who uses scientific terms imaginatively to suggest a theory of the social evolution of humanity.

II

Cyril Hinshelwood, F.R.S., in his presidential address at the British Association for the Advancement of Science held at Cambridge in 1965 said: ‘But romantic curiosity and the enjoyment of wonder and beauty do not make the man of science unless they are allied to a deep wish not only to know but to organise knowledge into a coherent picture of the world. Science, whatever else it may be, is a form of creative art.’⁴

Medawar was president of the British Association for Advancement of Science for 1969.

Lord Cohen, a past president of the Royal Society of Medicine, in his Nuffield Lecture for 1966 selected ‘The Fruits of Error and False Assumption’ as the topic of his lecture. He says: “Discoveries may result from planned experiment and reason; from intuition, imagination or hunch; from chance or erroneous observation, and all may play their part though in varying measure.”⁵

He gives many instances of false problems in the sciences which led to important advances in

knowledge. Russell, after patiently analysing Bergson's philosophy, observes that 'his imaginative picture of the world, regarded as a poetic effort, is in the main not capable of either proof or disproof.'⁷ Instead of dismissing Bergson's philosophy as nonsense, Russell ironically says that it is philosophical poetry incapable of being proved or disproved. In spite of his irony, his assessment of Bergson betrays his vague belief that the creative imagination of Bergson could be a source which would inspire scientists and philosophers to new discoveries from 'intuition, imagination and hunch', as Lord Cohen puts it.

Julian Huxley, in his lengthy introduction to *The Phenomenon of Man*, does not treat it as a scientific book. Huxley says: "The sweep of his thought goes even further. He seeks to link the evolution of mind with the concept of energy. If I understand him aright, he envisages two forms of energy, or perhaps two modes in which it is manifested—energy in the physicists' sense, measurable or calculable by physical methods, and 'psychic energy' which increases with the complexity of organised units. This view admittedly involves speculations of great intellectual boldness, but speculation is extrapolated from a massive array of facts, and is disciplined by logic. It is, if you like, visionary but it is the product of a comprehensive and coherent vision."⁸

When Father Chardin resorts to theology to explain certain aspects of his evolutionary vision, Julian Huxley criticises him and dismisses his theological excursions.

There are two essays in Medawar's book *The Art of the Soluble* in which he boldly criticises certain concepts of science accepted by many British scientists. In the essay 'Two Conceptions of Science' Medawar accepts, of course with qualification, Shelley's saying that science and poetry in its widest sense are cognate. "Every advance in science is therefore the outcome of a speculative adventure, an excursion into the unknown," says Medawar. "According to the opposite view, truth resides in nature and is to be got at only through evidence of the senses: apprehension leads to a direct pathway to comprehension, and the scientist's task is essentially one of *discernment*. This act of discernment can be carried out according to a method which, though imagination can help it, does not depend on the imagination. The scientific method will see him through."⁹

Medawar accepts that there is a great deal of truth in both these views. A scientist must indeed be freely imaginative and yet sceptical, creative and yet a critic. Teilhard is a scientist, a palaeontologist who was more interested in human evolution in its psychosocial aspect. *The Phenomenon of Man* is not a book on the biological evolution of man but on the evolution of mankind collectively in their psychosocial and cultural aspect. It is a book on an aspect of evolutionary philosophy by a scientist with a creative vision.

Medawar in his hostile attitude to the natural philosophy of the German metaphysical thinkers fails to grasp the significant core of Teilhard's *Phenomenon of Man*.

The originality of Pierre Teilhard's philosophy of evolution can be better appreciated with a knowledge of the recent history of the theory of evolution and genetical studies.

All Christian churches rejected the theory of evolution completely, in a losing battle with the scientists. The churches had to accept a modified theory of evolution. Not only theologians, but even scientists who opposed the mechanistic view of life, contended that life could not have evolved from dead matter. Biologists and philosophers invented vitalistic theories to separate life from physical and chemical phenomena. Recent developments of molecular biology and experimental researches in genetics have undermined old vitalistic theories.

The church claimed that as only man had reason, consciousness, language, and conscience, he could not have descended from the apes.

Father Teilhard ignores the concepts which gave rise to religious and idealistic controversies which have since died. His philosophy of evolution implies, if I am not mistaken, a unity in all the diversities. His use of the word 'within' indicates that concept of unity in diversity. It has a similarity to the Upanishadic Brahman and Buddhist concept of *sankhāra*. But the Brahman concept has inspired Vedantic thinkers of ancient India to treat the empirical world as an unreal shadow of Atman (Brahman). Some old Indian thinkers, perhaps to escape from their extremely pessimistic view of life, seem to have converted a mystic concept into an idealistic fairy tale.¹⁰ Pierre Teilhard develops his philosophy of cosmogenesis

and evolution on the basis of an idealistic concept which is closer to the philosophy of science than to religion.

Father Chardin's concept of evolution and matter is, I think, closer to the Buddhist concepts of *sankhāra* and the process of becoming than to the Upanishadic concept of unchanging pure consciousness from which the world is manifested.

According to Teilhard's philosophy of evolution, the phenomenon of consciousness cannot be confined to the higher form of life. "The 'within' or 'consciousness' is a dimension that informs all cosmic matter albeit at different intensities. The whole physical world contains a psyche but in different concentrations. Just as man's body goes back to the first atom, so his spirit goes back just as far."¹¹

Rhys Davids, in explaining the meaning of the word '*sankhāra*' said about half a century ago: "One of the most difficult terms in Buddhist metaphysics, in which the blending of the objective-subjective view of the world and happening, peculiar to the East, is so complete that it is almost impossible for Occidental terminology to get at the root of its meaning in a translation."¹²

III

The development of science during the last fifty years influenced Western thinkers and philosophers to coin new words to express new concepts. 'World stuff,' 'mind dust,' 'events' are new words which suggest concepts similar to that of the Pali word *sankhāra*.

Professor T. A. Goudge in his work *The Ascent of Life*, explaining the meaning of the words, 'world stuff' as used by Julian Huxley, says that the concept implies matter and mind as aspects of the one ultimate substance¹³ in which they are united. Bertrand Russell says that "in a completed science, the words 'mind' and 'matter' would both disappear, and would be replaced by causal laws concerning events."¹⁴

If the Buddhist causal formula (patichcha samuppada) has a cosmological significance, the word 'sankhāra' can be rendered into English as 'events' or 'mind stuff.' Even if the causal formula is treated as a metaphysical explanation of the birth and rebirth of an individual, the word 'sankhāra' implies a concept that consciousness is produced by mind stuff and not from matter.

Father Chardin's philosophy of evolution is directly developed from Western biological and idealistic thinking. Some of his new evolutionary concepts can be traced to their germinal forms in earlier thinkers and biologists. His concept of noosphere externally resembles the Vedantic concepts of the envelope of mind and the envelope of consciousness.

The distinguished Cambridge biochemist Dr Joseph Needham's concept of a cosmic mind envelope also suggests an aspect of noosphere. Needham, influenced by the idea of levels of organisation, says that the organic conception of the world involves succession in time and envelopes in space. There are four envelopes in space representing physical, chemical, biological, and psychological levels of organisation.¹⁵

According to the Vedantic philosophy, there are five *koshas* or envelopes, chemical, biological and psychological envelopes and the envelopes of consciousness and bliss. Consciousness and bliss is the inmost envelope because the world is a manifestation of the Atman which means consciousness and bliss.

Father Chardin ignores both the mechanical levels of organisation of dialectical materialism and the concept of mystical idealism of the old Indian thinkers. But influenced by science and rationalistic idealism, Teilhard, treats atom or mind dust as the point alpha of evolution and the evolutionary goal the point omega. His idea of the noosphere implies the future goal of evolution when man will transcend himself. He calls it ultra-hominisation.

From cosmogenesis came biogenesis and from biogenesis noogenesis, and from noogenesis will come super-personal genesis. Father Chardin calls it ultra-hominisation.

It is easy for a Buddhist student of evolution to speculate that from cosmic noogenesis will come cosmic prajna-genesis. Metaphysically Christ, the son of God, and God are diametrically opposed to the concepts of prajna and Nirvana. But aesthetically and symbolically they are same. Prajna is Nirvana itself individualised. The individual who attains prajna in this life is free from re-becoming or rebirth. On his death he attains non-personal Nirvana. From the point of view of evolution, the concepts of prajna and Nirvana are not unrelated to the concepts of the son of God and God the Father.

Pierre Teilhard's *Letters from a Traveller* ends with the quotation from his *Le Milieu Divin*: "The only subject capable of mystical transfiguration is the whole group of mankind forming a single body and a single soul in charity."

This is one aspect of his vision of the point omega of evolution. Metta, karuna, mudita as practised by the Buddha and the old simple Buddhists who followed him is equal to the idea of universal charity visualised by Father Chardin.

Buddhist idealism teaches that a man by renouncing the householder's life by living a rigid moral life, and by contemplation can purge all his passions and attain Nirvana or ultra-hominisation in this life. Father Chardin's evolutionary metaphysics anticipates the ultra-hominisation of mankind in a remote future age.

Learned monks and laymen of today are trying to surpass the Buddha by converting his practical humanism and charity into a series of abstract metaphysical concepts, as objects for silent contemplation by the monk or layman who sits cross-legged on a mat directing his eyes at the tip of his nose.

French philosophical tradition is not dominated by rationalism. Some of the French thinkers' philosophical speculations are saturated with literary and scientific imagining. Bertrand Russell thinks that Henri Bergson's *Creative Evolution* is irrefutable poetry or poetic speculation. Scientific, especially biological, imagination pervades Father Teilhard's *Phenomenon of Man*. In his creative speculations he ignores the scientific method.

The Australian-born English thinker Samuel Alexander, influenced by the biological theories of emergent evolution, attempted to expound a theory of evolution slightly similar in concept to that of Pierre Teilhard. As he was a trained philosopher and a metaphysician, he built his philosophy of emergent evolution upon mere speculation. According to him, the next stage of evolution will be the emergence of an organisational level which he calls 'Deity.'

Pierre Teilhard, being a trained scientist, steers clear of these theological and metaphysical terms in his exposition of the theory of the future of the evolution of man. He invents new terms on the basis of his knowledge of biology and palaeontology.

"Marxists believe in the future of mankind while the present-day Christians do not," said Father Teilhard de Chardin. The Marxist belief in a future classless and greedless society is not entirely different to the Teilhard idea of mankind in the future forming a single body and a single soul in charity.

To Pierre Teilhard evolution is a process of complexification which implies an ideological culmination. The nineteenth-century English thinker Herbert Spencer was the first to be inspired by the philosophical aspect of evolution. He developed his synthetic philosophy on the basis of force or matter and motion which he called the Unknowable. His conception of evolution was incessant change of everything from simple to complex; from homogeneity to heterogeneity. Applying this idea, he developed his synthetic

philosophy to explain evolution on mechanistic principles. Pierre Teilhard's idea of complexification is independent and implies a non-theological cosmic teleology.

IV

Bernard Delfagauw, in his *Evolution: The Theory of Teilhard de Chardin*, says that the point of agreement between the thinking of Marx and of Teilhard probably does not derive from any first-hand knowledge of Marx's writings on Teilhard's part.¹⁶

Teilhard's speculations are based on man's evolution from ape ancestors to the stage of nomadic savages who lived by hunting. Then mankind became agriculturists which was a revolution in relation to the nomadic life of the savages. Then came the industrial revolution which inaugurated a new phase in the evolution of society, culture and economic life.

There are points of agreement between Marx and Teilhard on human evolutionary thinking because the basis of the philosophy of Marx is Darwinian evolution. The vision of Marx on the ideal state of socialism is similar to Chardin's conception of the ultra-hominisation of mankind which he defines in terms of his religion as 'the whole group of mankind forming a single body and a single soul in charity'.

An unabridged translation of Chardin's *Phenomenon of Man* was published in Moscow in 1965 with a preface by an eminent French communist, Roger Graudy, who has contributed an article to

the volume of *Studies in Teilhardian Synthesis: Evolution, Marxism and Christianity*, in which he quotes a passage from Teilhard: "Are not the two extremes, the Marxist and the Christian, destined, in spite of their antagonistic concepts, because they are both animated by an equal faith in man, to find themselves together on the same summit?"¹⁷

This is one aspect of the theory of convergent evolution elaborated by Teilhard de Chardin in his *The Phenomenon of Man*. Roger Graudy concludes his article with this pertinent passage:

"It is up to us Marxists to listen to the questions of Teilhard, and beyond him, of Christianity, by trying much more to understand what is fundamental in them than to dwell on the forms which shock us. Whatever objections the scientist, philosopher or the theologian may raise against Teilhard, the important thing is the breach he has opened in the ancient dogmatism of his church, thus helping it to open up to the world, in a spirit to which the second Vatican Council was not an entire stranger, and making possible the great dialogue of the twentieth century between all those who love man and his future.

Beyond all the subaltern polemics we should stand fast by this message, following the marvellous teaching of the Buddhist proverb, "When a finger points to the moon, the fool looks at the finger"¹⁸.

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A BUDDHIST CONCEPT REINTERPRETED

Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, the Catholic evolutionary thinker, introduces new concepts and words in his *Phenomenon of Man* which throws new light on controversial questions raised by new theories of physics and biology and old concepts of idealistic philosophy.

Father Chardin ignores many concepts which in the past gave rise to religious, and idealistic controversies which have since died. His philosophy of evolution implies, if I am not mistaken, a unity in all the diversities. His use of the word 'within' in a metaphysical sense indicates the concept of unity in diversity. Father Chardin's concept of 'within' and 'without' I think has an affinity to the Buddhist concept of *sankhāra* rather than to the Brahman concept of the old Indian idealistic thinkers.

According to Teilhard's philosophy of evolution, mind stuff is not confined to higher forms of animal life.

"The 'within' or 'consciousness' is a dimension that informs all cosmic matter albeit at different intensities. The whole physical world contains

a psyche but in different concentrations. 'Just as a man's body goes back to the first atom, so his spirit goes back just far.' ”¹

Rhys Davids, in explaining the meaning of the word *sankhāra*, said about fifty years ago: "One of the most difficult terms in Buddhist metaphysics in which the blending of the objective-subjective view of the world and happening, peculiar to the East, is so complete that it is almost impossible for Occidental terminology to get at the roots of its meaning in a translation."

The development of science during the last fifty years influenced Western thinkers to coin new words to express new concepts. World-stuff, mind-stuff, mind-dust, events, are new words which suggest more or less similar concepts to the concept suggested by the Pali word *sankhāra*.

If the Buddhist causal formula *Patichcha Samup-pada* has a cosmological significance, the words event, world-stuff, mind-stuff, and within and without of the atom, can be treated as concepts more or less related to the Buddhist metaphysical term *sankhāra*. The word is defined in *abhidhamma* as a cause which produces effects, even if it occurs in the causal formula only as an explanation of rebirth and karma; or, according to Rev. C. Nyanasatta Thero, as 'a scientific treatment of rebirth according to karma.'²

In a metaphysical sense, *sankhāra* can be justifiably interpreted as mind-stuff which produces consciousness. The first link of the causal formula is 'avijja', which is translated into English as ignorance. This is a scholarly and literal translation

of the Pali word. But the English word does not signify the implied cosmological and metaphysical meaning of the Pali term.

Professor K. N. Jayatillake rejects the cosmological explanations given to causal formulae by certain European scholars. He says that the 'Chain of Causation' gives a causal account of the factors operating in maintaining the process of the new individual and thereby of suffering.³ This interpretation can be justified if the 'Chain of Causation' applies only to man.

As it applies, according to abhidhamma, from man to the lowest animals, it must apply to plant life also because the lowest forms of animal life and plant life are inseparable. Therefore avijjā and sankhāra have to be treated as cosmological and metaphysical concepts.

If the chain of causation gives a causal account of the factors operating in maintaining the process of the new individual, then it implies a mental element as the cause of life of a new individual. It is an idealistic concept.

According to abhidhamma 'bhavanga' is the element which causes rebirth of the next individual. One of the meanings given by Rhys Davids to the term 'bhavanga' is 'functional state of consciousness, i.e. subliminal consciousness or subconscious life-continuum'.⁴

This term has a relation to the Freudian term 'Id', which is defined as the impersonal mass of interacting energies or forces constituting the unconscious or what might be designated structural unconscious behind the process making up conscious life, as inner determinants of these processes.

Bhavanga is defined in abhidhamma as a subliminal conscious process which is free from all empirical sense impressions and attachments.

Dr Y. Karunadasa points out in *Buddhist Analysis of Matter* that in the Nikayas *rupa* is sometimes used in a subjective sense—a usage which does not seem to have been retained in post-Nikaya works. But after a scholarly analysis of the objective and subjective views of matter, Dr Karunadasa accepts the former view,⁵ ignoring the metaphysical implications of Paticca Samuppada or Dependent Origination and its relation to anatta, karma, rebecoming and Nirvana which are some of the original concepts introduced into Indian philosophy by the Buddha.

The Buddha equated 'chetana' with karma, which implies that metaphysically karma is an aspect of 'chetana'. According to the Dependant Origination formula, sankhāras give rise to consciousness from which arise nāma and rūpa or mind and life. Even if the Dependant Origination formula or the Chain of Causation is not cosmological but gives only a causal account of factors operating in maintaining the process of the new individual, the concept of Sankhāra postulates an idealistic metaphysical interpretation. Matter and life evolved from mental elements called sankhāras. Karma is their activity.

How can sankhāras give rise to consciousness if they are not a kind of mental element or units of mind-stuff? The modern view that the mind-stuff is experienced as matter is an aspect of the mind-stuff theory of certain speculative scientists. There

is a close similarity between the mind-stuff concept and the sankhāra concept.

As the Buddha equated chetana with karma, sankhāra assumes the status of a unit of mind-stuff and karma. Volition is a function of an integrated conscious mind. Therefore chetana cannot be translated as volition, which is a function of Saguna Brahman or the immanent aspect of Brahman, from which originate all nama-rupa dharmas and the world.

The Buddha concentrating on explaining the meaning of four truths had to utilise the linguistic usage and the empirical knowledge which were current amongst the intelligentsia of his time. Scientific knowledge has progressed immeasurably during the last hundred years.

The old Indian linguistic usages and the empirical knowledge, saturated with myth and superstition, is a crust that hides the kernel of spiritual experience and intuitive knowledge expounded by the Buddha. This kernel of the Buddha's metaphysical and spiritual teaching finds more support from the modern development of scientific speculation than it does from the Upanishadic philosophy of the unchanging universal consciousness.

The metaphysical aspects of Buddhism should be reinterpreted in modern terms in the light of scientific philosophy, instead of hanging on to monastic casuistry developed by commentators who were also influenced by a spurious kind of mystical knowledge known as occult science.

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THE PEAK POINT OF THE HUMANIST REBELLION



The Russian Revolution of 1917 is a continuation and culmination of the intellectual and humanist rebellion originated in France and the rest of Europe against religious and political dogmas, and religious and social intolerance which have been supported by monarchy.

The following passage from a Catholic writer of 1931, Christopher Dawson, quoted by Professor Basil Willey in his *The Seventeenth Century Background* reveals the nature and the result of this rebellion in certain European countries:

“The Western mind has turned away from the contemplation of the absolute and eternal to the particular and the contingent. It has made man the measure of all things and sought to emancipate human life from its dependence on the supernatural. Instead of the whole intellectual and social order being subordinated to spiritual principles, every activity has declared its independence, and we see politics, economics, science, and art organising themselves as autonomous kingdoms which owe no allegiance to any higher power.”¹

The last sentence of this passage can be taken as a definition of English and French democracy and of the radical system of government which emerged after the revolution of 1917 in the Soviet Union. None of the Western countries was able to complete the rebellion which they started. Russia, led by the daring revolutionary and humanist Lenin, succeeded in bringing the European rebellion to its logical and practical culmination.

Albert Camus, in his excellent book *The Rebel* first published in 1953, traces the origin and development of the European rebellion during a period of about 200 years. He tries, without justification, to isolate the Russian Revolution and suggest in a subtle way that it was not a continuation of the European rebellion. In the third chapter of *The Rebel*, Camus says:

“It is not legitimate to identify the ends of Fascism with the ends of Russian Communism. The first represents the exaltation of the executioner by the executioner; the second, more dramatic in concept, the exaltation of the executioner by the victim. The former never dreamed of liberating... all men by provisionally enslaving them all.”²

Camus's generalisation, stated thus in rhetorical language, is a misinterpretation of the revolution and communism. Camus thinks that the Russian Revolution of 1917 was a sort of rational terror which later became state terror. He forgets the Russian culture which disciplined Lenin to re-adapt and re-create Marxism in practice.

Jacob Miller says that Marx himself, in reply to a letter written by Vera Zasulich of Russia in 1881, said that his theory 'referred to Western Europe where the private property of peasant ownership had to become the private property of capitalist ownership, whereas Russian peasant property in land is communal. This Russian village community is a springboard of social regeneration for Russia. For it to function as such, it must first of all be freed of the destructive influence affecting it from all sides. Lenin freed old Russian communism from the destructive influences pointed out by Marx.'³

The Russian Revolution of 1917 is not a perpetuation of rational and political terror in spite of a Fascist tendency which emerged as a consequence of Hitler's war. It was the continuation and culmination of the European rebellion influenced by elemental Russian humanism and Russian culture. Russian culture and humanism developed independently of the European culture and humanism which have all along been dominated by democratic individualism.

The American anthropologist Edward Sapir, in an essay on Russian culture, said that Russian democracy has as its fundamental aim less the creation of democratic institutions than the effective liberation of personality itself.⁴

Students of the Russian novel from Gogol to Solakhov and Alexander Solzhenitsin of today will intuitively feel the truth of Sapir's diagnosis of this persistent trend of Russian culture. This trend is one of the links which connects the Russian peoples with the peoples of India and Ceylon.

The desire for effective liberation of personality is a source of discipline which prepares people for suffering. Dostoevsky referred to this aspect of Russian character as 'unquenchable thirst for suffering' and Gorky as 'unquenchable romantic love of humanity that burned in the Russian heart'.⁵ Most European writers fail to appreciate this aspect of the character of the Russian people.

In spite of the influence of Marxism, European political thought, and Western philosophy, Lenin was a leader disciplined by Russian culture and Russian humanism. Therefore it is prejudice, if not propagandism, which stimulates a person to argue that the Russian Revolution was a reign of political terror and that the European rebellion was a fight for intellectual freedom and democracy.

When Father Tikhon, the head of the Russian Church, heard in 1918 that the Soviet government was preparing the basic law of separation of Church and State, he issued a strongly worded condemnation of the Soviets. It was suggested that Tikhon should be arrested and put in jail. Trotsky, who was a leading member of the committee for the ecclesiastical affairs, demanded the arrest and punishment of Patriarch Tikhon. Lenin said, 'It is dangerous to touch that man.' Lenin suggested that the Patriarch should be put under house arrest.⁶

Lenin's humanism and the intimate understanding of Russian culture saved the Soviet government from the fury of 71000 priests and monks, and 117 million members of the Russian Church, most of whom were superstitious peasants.

Edmund Wilson, the American literary critic, in his critical studies of the Revolution *To the Finland Station*, refers to Lenin as an inspired worker in the immediate material of humanity rather than a doctrinaire writer like Trotsky. The Soviet law of separation of Church and State was closely modelled on the analogous French law passed in 1905, says Rev. Mathew Spinka in his *The Church in Soviet Russia*.⁷

It is strange that there are still intellectuals in Europe who are trying to prove that the Russian Revolution was a reign of political terror. In spite of the deafening propaganda carried on by America for about twenty years, the common peoples of Asia feel and understand the real implications and the significance to them of the Russian Revolution.

The German thinker Fredrick Nietzche condemned the values of Christianity and socialism as slave morality. Pity, compassion and equality of this slave morality are Christian, Buddhist and socialist values. Russian communism and socialist values are gradually stimulating all Christian, Buddhist and Hindu sects to sever their servile allegiance to all forms of political creeds which encourage and support exploitation.

There is a prophetic utterance in the introduction written by Edward Garnett in 1899 to the fourteenth volume of Ivan Turgeniev's novels:

“The Russian is so inwardly discontented with his own actions that he is such a keen and incisive critic of everything false and exaggerated, that he despises all French rhetoric and German sentimentalism. And it is in this sense this Russian

lack of will comes to deepen his soul. He surrenders himself thereby to the universe and, as do the Asiatics, does not let the tiny shadow of his fate, dark though it may be, shut out the universe so thoroughly from his consciousness, as does the aggressive struggling will-power of Western man stirring to let his individuality have full play certainly, in the inner light of thought, intellectually, morally and economically the Russian is a half-way house between the Western and the Eastern races.”⁸

The developing Soviet democracy, in spite of the temporary emergence of Fascism during Hitler’s war, is exerting a powerful and invisible influence in spreading the idea of brotherhood of man amongst the masses of India and Ceylon. The growth and spread of this idea will tend to unite all religions by freeing them from bureaucratic institutionalism and effete dogmas. Is it exaggeration to say that this is happening now?

Dr Joseph Needham, bio-chemist of Cambridge and the author of the monumental work in five volumes *Science and Civilization of China*, quotes in his book *History is on Our Side* the following observation of a businessman of Philadelphia: “If it had not been for all this Christianity,” he said, “we shall never have had all this socialism.”⁹

Dr Needham comments: “He was perfectly right. Communism has been called the heir of Christian tradition.”⁹

Now all Christian sects are slowly beginning to realise the anti-Christian aspect of unbridled Capitalism, and Fascism. Friedrich Nietzsche, with his penetrating vision, saw over a half a century

ago, the intimate relation of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ with socialism. In spite of his tribute to French Christians, he wrote his *Anti-Christ* because he abhorred democracy and socialism.

Nietzsche says in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*:

“You ‘Higher Men’ — thus the mob blinketh — ‘there are no higher men; we are all equal; man is man; before God we are all equal!’

Before God! But now this God is dead. But before the mob, we will not be equal. Ye Higher Men, leave the market-place!”¹⁰

“But I say unto you, your love for your neighbour is your evil, love yourself.

“Do I counsel you to love your neighbour? I rather counsel you to flee from your neighbour and love that which is farthest.”¹¹

Dr Roy Pascal in his introduction to *Thus Spake Zarathustra* says:

“The Europe he had in mind was a conquering Europe. The mistress of the world. In opposition to modern industrial culture — ‘the most vulgar there was ever’ — he admires a military culture, tyrants and ruthless oligarchies. ‘All higher culture,’ he asserts, ‘rests on a privileged leisured class.’

“Nietzsche’s definition of what action is good is unambiguous. Christianity, like democracy and socialism, is condemned as the morality of the weak and impotent, ‘the slave race,’ who thereby seek to reduce the whole of mankind to their impotence.”¹²

Manu, the Brahmin lawgiver of ancient India, was a Fascist in the disguise of a theist who supported the ruthless oligarchy of the warrior caste and

Brahmins who jointly exploited the common people. The Buddha destroyed Brahminical occult theism, with its sacrificial rites which supported the ruthless oligarchy, and preached the equality and brotherhood of man.

The Russian Revolution was the continuation and culmination of the European rebellion which was started as a protest against the oligarchies of the aristocracy and the priestly class who jointly exploited the communities of Europe. Later, the power of the nobles and the priests was snatched by an oligarchy of industrialists and bourgeoisie whose culture, according to Nietzsche, was the most vulgar. Manu, like Nietzsche, treated the industrialists and merchants as a vulgar class.

The Russian Revolution destroyed the joint oligarchy of aristocrats, priests, and bourgeoisie. It is really the logical culmination of the European metaphysical rebellion started by anarchists, atheists, regicides and humanists. Rebellion became a revolution in Russia because anarchists, atheists and Marxists joined together with the workers and peasants. It was not a political revolution started by a handful of men to snatch power. It was a humanist rebellion which naturally became a revolution. Camus in his *Rebel* tries to make a distinction between rebellion and revolution by arguing that revolution implies the establishment of a new government, whereas rebellion is action without planned issue — it is spontaneous protestation.

Rebellion became a revolution when the spontaneous protestation was not limited to a handful

of anarchists or regicides. The Russian Revolution was a humanist rebellion because it occurred as a result of the protest of the people of Russia against the tyranny of an oligarchy which exploited the people. 'Government, even of its best, is but a necessary evil,' said Thomas Paine. Marx and Lenin were aware of this nature of all forms of government. When the ultimate communist society emerges, the state will wither away. The entire political society will develop into the communist self-administrative socialist state. This utopian ideal, communists believe, will become a reality. Camus' argument that revolution implies the establishment of a new government does not apply in its entirety to the Russian Revolution. The new socialist government of Russia is a transitional one which will wither away by giving place to a self-administrative socialist state. The communist ideal of a social state without any form of government cannot be dismissed as a fantastic idea. Even those who treat it as a fantastic idea have no justification to say that the Russian Revolution was the result of a conspiracy by a handful of regicides to establish a new government.

Before Hitler's war, many European intellectuals had little knowledge of culture of the people of pre-revolutionary Russia. Many English critics misinterpreted the characters in Russian novels except those of Turgenev's. Chekhov in one of his letters to a friend criticising Turgenev said that he had not created a real Russian woman in his novels.¹³

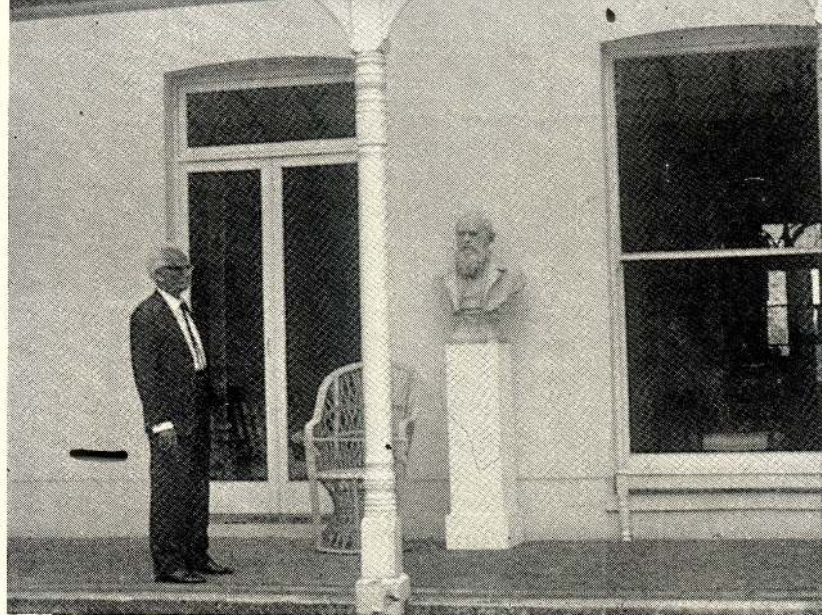
Dr E. J. Dillon's *Count Leo Tolstoy: A New Portrait* published in 1933 caricatures Russian life and Tolstoy. It is not hostility or critical approach but his failure to understand Russian culture that makes Dr Dillon caricature Russian life and Tolstoy.

Dr Dillon describing his visit to Tolstoy who was residing on one of his estates says: "My own coachman persuaded me to remain the night in the village. But I asked where I should sleep. In the best habitation in the hamlet,' was the reply of the coachman. And he himself conducted me to one of the larger dwellings. But as soon as the door was opened, the stench which issued from the interior decided me. Cost what it might, I was determined to reach the Count's residence that night. After much persuasion, I finally gained my point and my coachman consented to take the risks involved."¹⁴

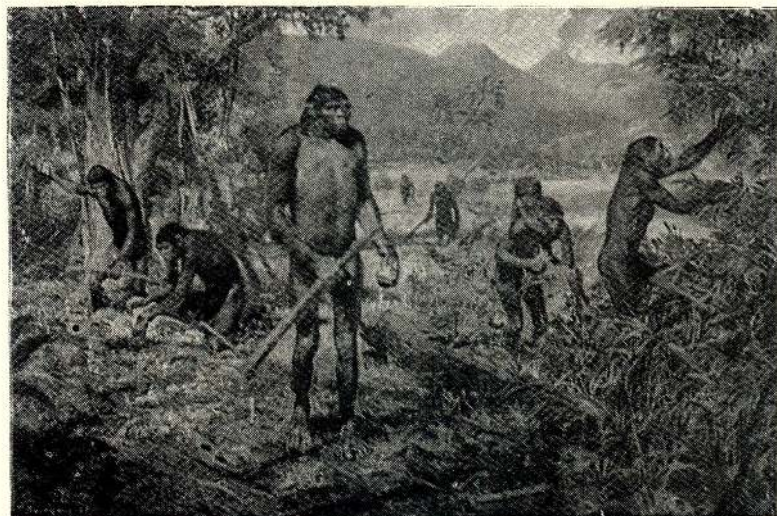
Arriving at Tolstoy's residence, he spent the night there without meeting Tolstoy who was in bed. He says, "I did not sleep that night either, and my room was none too comfortable. In the early morning I was up and out — for the only way of getting a wash was to go into a sort of closed yard where, on a rickety stool, there was a dirty tin basin with an earthenware jug full of water. I performed my ablutions as best I could and had only just finished when I heard the angry voice of the Count who was engaged in scolding — to put it mildly — some peasants. Having heard of his exhortations to live on brotherly terms with the meanest of one's brethren, I felt somewhat surprised and scandalised at this unstaged scene."¹⁵

Dr Dillon lived in pre-revolutionary Russia and was at one time professor of comparative philology at the Imperial University of Kharkhov. He admired westernised Russians and was influenced by them. His attitude to Russian culture was that of a 19th-century Englishman to the culture of the people of India. His hostility to the Russian people and Tolstoy was due to his failure to understand Russian culture and his Western prejudices. His enmity towards the Soviet government and the Russian Revolution would have inspired him to write *Count Leo Tolstoy: A New Portrait*. Lenin himself said that Tolstoy was a mirror of the Russian Revolution.

One English writer on the Russian novel who understood Russian culture intimately was Maurice Baring who was British ambassador in pre-revolutionary Russia. His *Outline of Russian Literature* was first published in 1914 as a volume in the Home University Library. Next to certain American anthropologists, Maurice Baring shows a thorough understanding of the spiritual depth of Russian culture and literature. In the preface to his book, he points out the prevailing ignorance of the English public with regard to all that concerns Russian affairs. An intelligent Russian connected with the Art Theatre of Moscow said to Maurice Baring that he feared that the new interest taken by English intellectuals in Russian literature and Russian art would be 'crystallized in a false shape and directed into erroneous channels'.¹⁶ Maurice Baring said that this ignorance of the English public would remain until English people



Black veranda of Down House with bust of Darwin

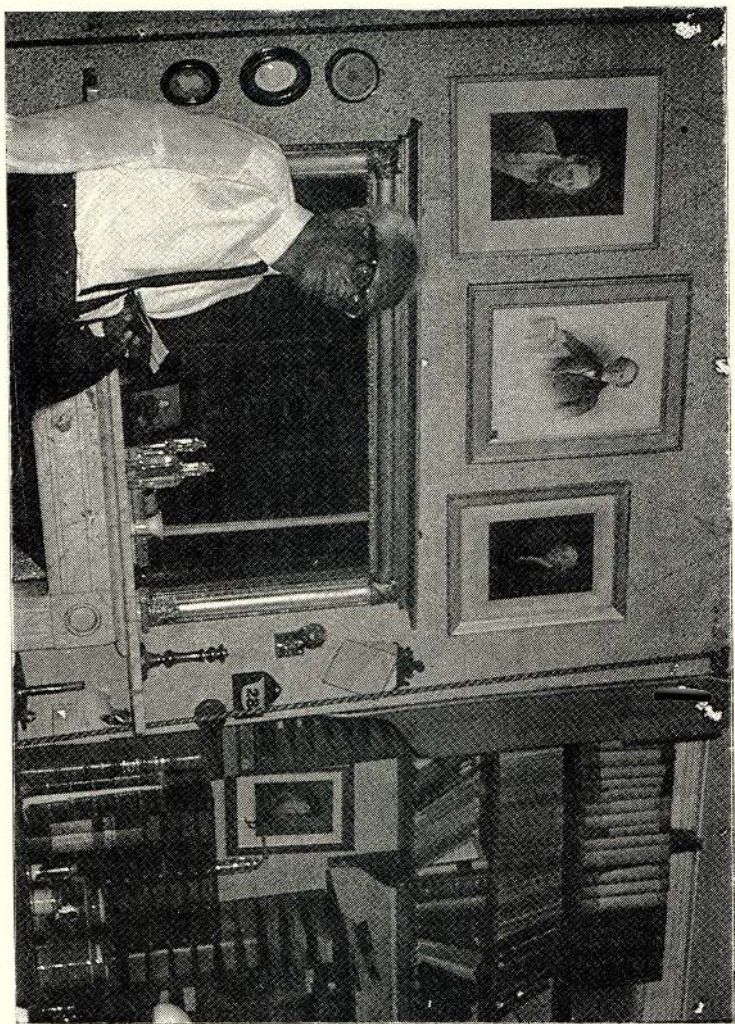


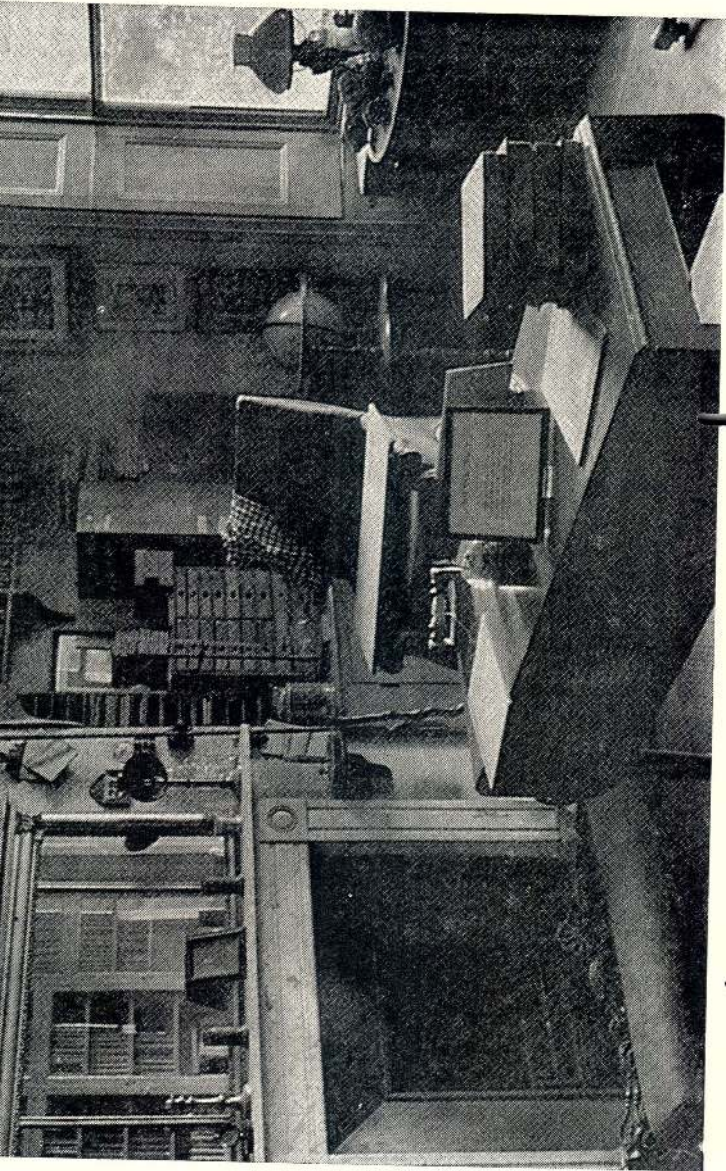
Java apemen. Painting based on the reconstruction of Pithecanthropus by the curator of The Anatomy Museum, Royal College of Surgeons of England



A section of room in the Darwin Museum in Kent with paintings based on skulls and bones of Heidelberg man, Pithecanthropus of Java and Australopithecus of Africa.

Martin Wickramasinghe in the old study of Darwin





The old study at Down House where Darwin wrote *The Origin of Species*
(Reproduced from *Charles Darwin and Down House* prepared
by the Royal College of Surgeons of England)

went to Russia and learned to know the Russian people at first hand.

English critics and readers thoroughly appreciate Anton Chekhov. But, except Ronald Hingley, most critics and readers fail to understand and appreciate the best and most serious stories of Chekhov written after his trip to Sakhalin island. Chekhov in a letter to Suvorin written before his trip to the island of Sakhalin said:

“Sketches, feuilletons, nonsense, vaudevilles, tedious stories and a great mass of mistakes and absurdities, tons of used paper, the Academy prize — and yet not one line which in my eyes has a serious literary value. There was a mass of forced labour but not a minute of serious work. . . . I want passionately to hide myself somewhere for five years and engage in serious detailed work. I must teach myself.”¹⁷

Ronald Hingley says that some of the stories written by Chekhov after his trip to Sakhalin are the finest. But he thinks that Chekhov had, in writing some of them, to abandon his approach to fiction as a comparatively dispassionate observer. Social problems began to feature more prominently in his stories which elicited comments on life.¹⁸

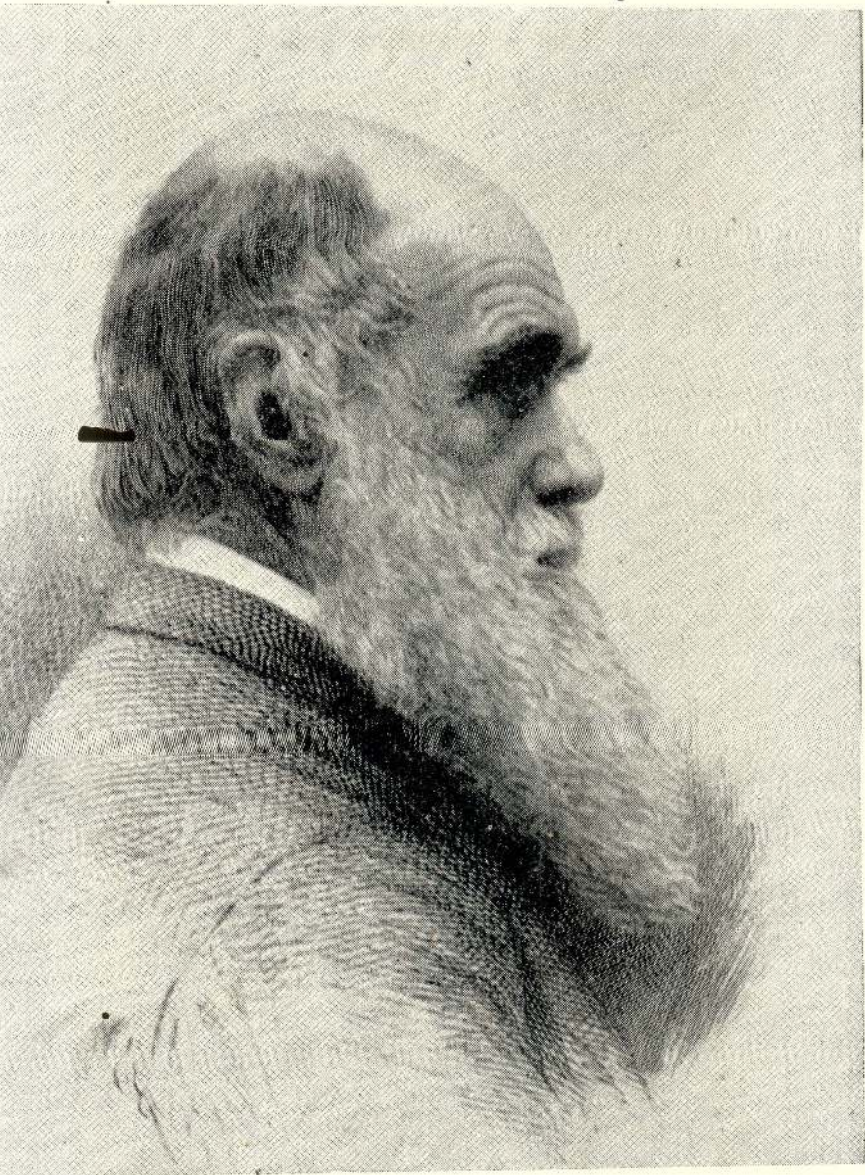
Janko Lavrin commenting on Chekhov's *Black Monk* and *In the Ravine* says that they illustrate his cult of frustration — a feature which is so totally different from the Anglo-Saxon cult of success.¹⁹ But Hingley appreciates *In the Ravine* as one of the finest stories of Chekhov, perhaps, because he has a better knowledge of Russian life and culture.

The failure of many English critics and readers to grasp fully the depth and significance of Chekhov and other Russian novelists can be attributed to their lack of knowledge of Russian culture. Camus fails to assess the Russian Revolution and its relation to European rebellion because he ignores the Russian people and their culture.

Marxism inspired only a few Russian leaders. Even Lenin had to adapt Marxism to suit the elemental humanism of the Russian people. Proletarian dictatorship became a state terror during the time of Stalin who had to face the ruthless armies of Hitler. It is this accidental calamity that converted proletarian democracy into a form of state terror which has made Camus to disparage the Russian Revolution.

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Charles Darwin

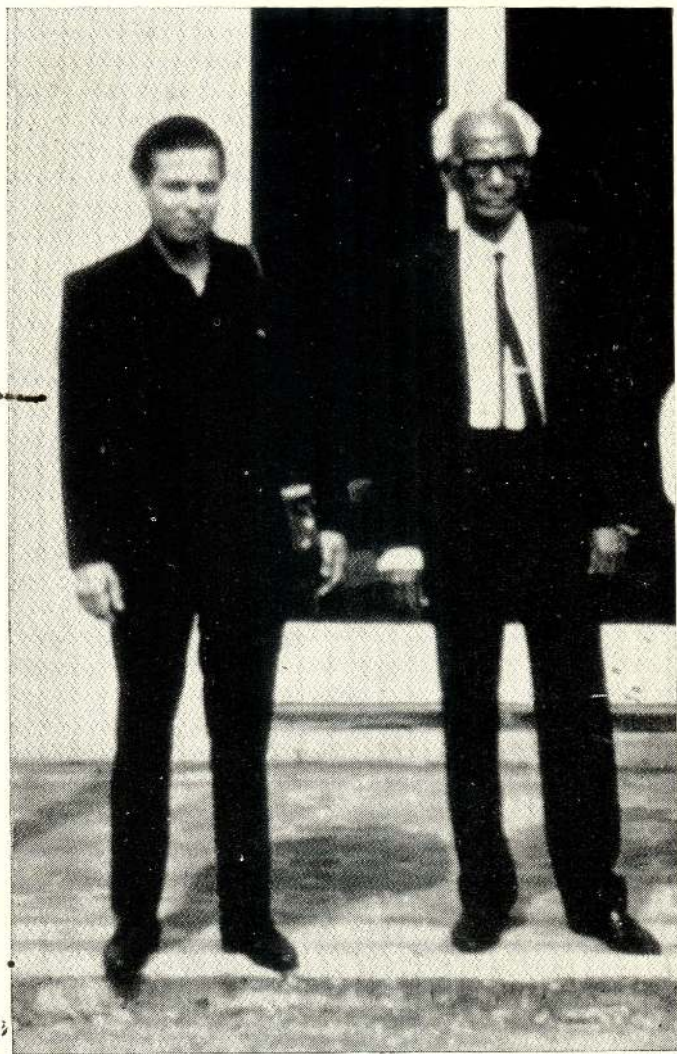
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THE DARWIN MUSEUM IN KENT

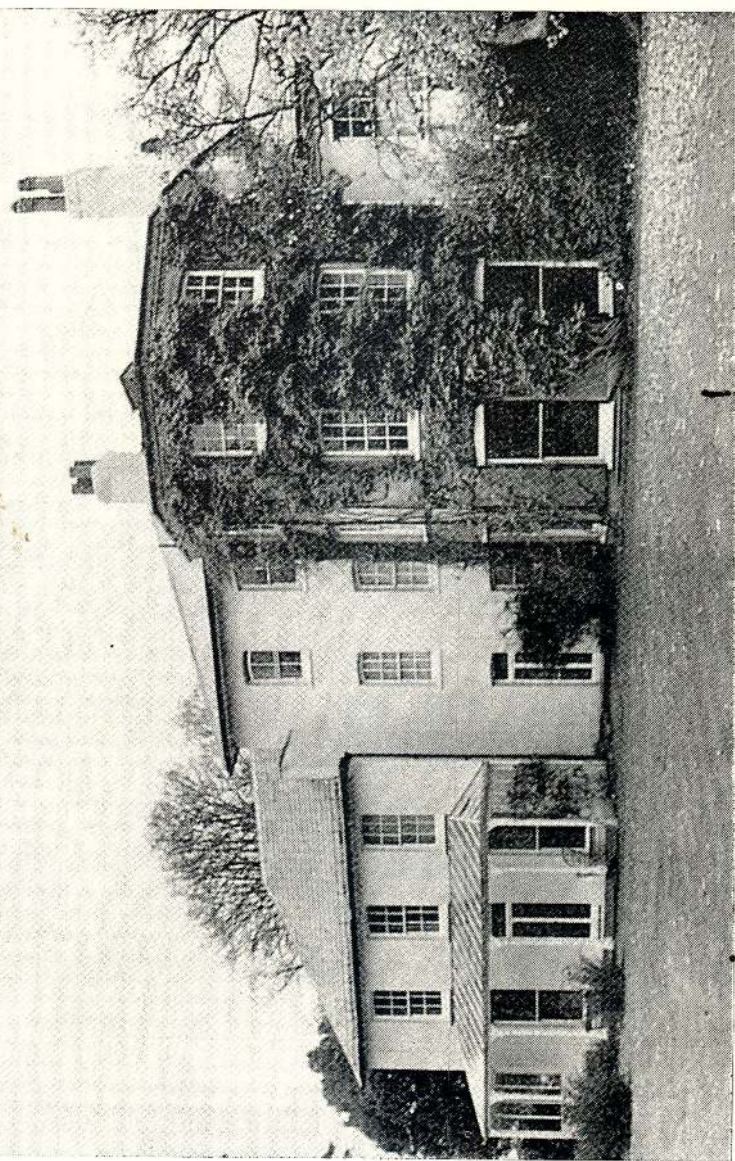
In July 1967, I spent three weeks in London at the flat of my friend Gunadasa Amarasekere, who was doing a post-graduate course in dental surgery on this, my third visit to England. Of the places I visited, the Down House of Darwin in Kent made an indelible impression on me. Kent still represents several beautiful aspects of the old rural landscape and the life of the English gentry. Our Sir John Kotelawela, in selecting his farm and the old English style homestead in Kent, has manifested his instinctive aspiration for squireship and gallantry.

A man who lives in a flat in the congested part of London, when he sees and perceives the beauty of the rural landscape, forests, and isolated old English style buildings standing in their individual freedom in vast gardens in Kent, is bound to feel that he is out of the rathole-like city dwellings.

Nanda Lal Rodrigo, an apprentice student of engineering, and D. P. Kularatne, who was studying librarianship, accompanied me as friends and guides. At the Kent railway station, we tried to get information from two or three minor officers



Lal Rodrigo and Martin Wickramasinghe. Both of them are standing on the back veranda of Down House



Down House (Reproduced from *Charles Darwin and Down House* prepared by the Royal College of Surgeons of England)

about the easiest way to reach the Darwin Museum by bus or taxi. Being busy people with railway time-table and passenger traffic, they were rightly ignorant of the fellow called Darwin or his Museum. Fortunately I accosted a beatnik who was soberly dressed.

“We wish to visit the Down House of Darwin.”

“It is only four miles from here,” he said courteously but in a hurry, pointing out the main road to his left, and we went in a taxi. Before we reached the neighbourhood of Down House, we had to pass through beautiful rural country and an area covered with trees and dense shrubs emanating a continuous foul smell.

“Are we passing a big manure factory?”

“No. We are passing a big chicken farm,” said the driver.

On reaching Down House, we had to pay over two pounds. The driver told us that our destination was over five miles and he was therefore entitled to charge double.

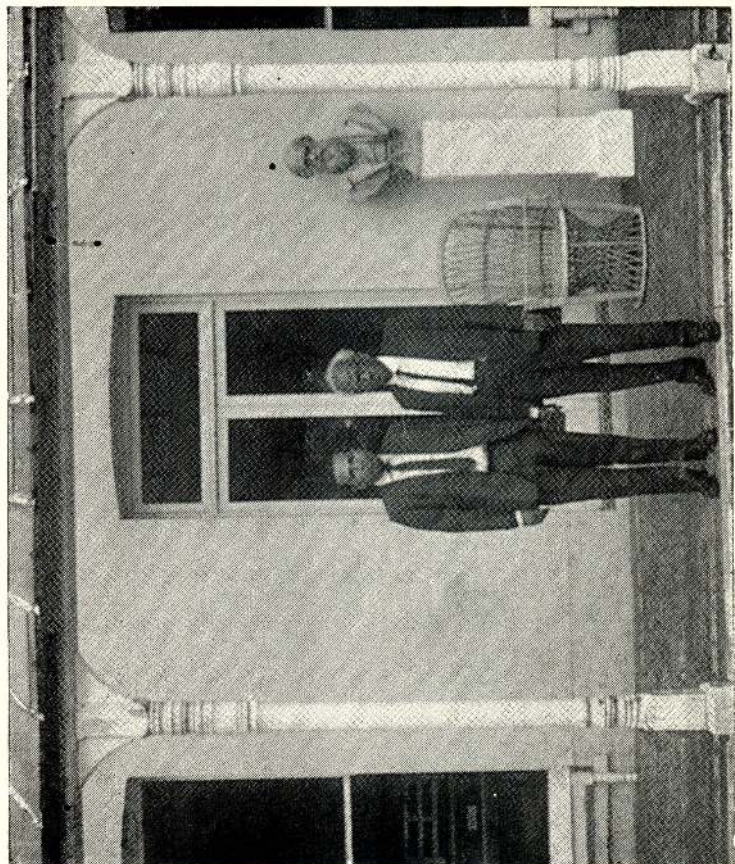
I recalled that very highly educated people in Ceylon, except those who study biology or zoology confuse evolution with Darwinism. A critical scholar who was an authority on European, Indian and Ceylon history, once contradicted me saying that the theory of evolution was first propounded by Max Muller, the famous philologist. Another scholar devoted to the study of comparative religion said that Darwinism is in the limbo of forgotten things. Both of them seem to have confused Darwinism with speculations of ancient philosophers on evolution. Even in Europe “for many laymen Darwin means not natural selection,

but the 'monkey theory' " says Dr S.A. Barnett, editor of the centenary volume *A Century of Darwin*.¹ Darwinism is the theory of natural selection which gave a scientific status to the old speculations on evolution.

Sir Julian Huxley says that Darwin was the first to apply the scientific method-blend of induction and deduction to the study of evolution. He discovered the mechanism which co-operated in causing the evolution of species.² Before Darwin, evolution was mere speculation. Scientists refused even to listen to it. One of the oldest Upanishads *Taitriya* has this evolutionary speculation: "From Atman verily ether arose; from ether wind; from wind fire; from fire water; from water earth; from the earth herbs; from herbs food; from food semen; from semen the person."³

Historians of the theory of evolution find clear speculation on it by Chinese and Greek philosophers who lived later than the Upanishadic thinkers. In the year Darwin was born, Jean Baptist Lamarck, the French zoologist, wrote a book in which he brought forward evidence in support of evolution. He based his speculations on the hypothesis of the inheritance of acquired characters.

The English writer Robert Chambers wrote his *Vestiges of Creation* fifteen years before the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. In it Chambers adduced popular evidence in support of his speculations. Scientists refused to consider plausible speculations because the speculators failed even to suggest a mechanism which could have operated in nature to produce new species.



D. P. Kularatne and Martin Wickramasinghe



Kularatne and Wickramasinghe sitting on the spacious lawn
of the Down House

Professor T. H. Huxley mercilessly criticised Chambers' *Vestiges of Creation*. A biologist who lived much later referred to the severity of this criticism as the "needless savagery of Professor Huxley".

Malthus, one of the earliest students of eugenics, inspired Darwin to invent the hypothesis of struggle for existence and natural selection. He collected facts for about thirty years to substantiate his hypothesis. *Origin of Species* was published by Darwin after such patient research collecting verifiable facts.

The development of the science of genetics after Darwin supplied ample evidence to support his theory and also to modify certain aspects of it. The term neo-Darwinism indicates the later developments of Darwinism in the light of the revelations of genetical research. *A Century of Darwin* the centenary volume published in 1958, has articles by leading biologists of Britain and America on the development and later modifications of the Darwinian theory.

The Down House of Darwin, as it stands today, represents a beautiful and imposing aspect of old English architecture. Its back garden has a beautiful and spacious lawn shaded by a few cedar trees with hanging bushy twigs which resembled the tresses of a woman's hair. Old Sinhalese poets compared a woman's tresses to the hanging strands of the kitul flower.

The Down House has been converted in 1952 into a museum by the Royal College of Surgeons of England. Four large rooms and the sitting-room have been converted into five sections of the

museum. The first section on the left introduces the visitor to Darwin's modest study. Here are a few glass bookcases, a writing-desk and an old-fashioned microscope. The second section on the right is a large room with wall-paintings which represent the evolution of animal life on our earth from the Precambrian the oldest geological period, to the Pleistocene Age in which man arose from ape ancestors. In the last wall-painting representing the Pleistocene Age, there are the figures of the *Pithecanthropus* and the *Australopithecus*. These imaginative reconstructions of extinct ape-men and apes have been made on the basis of skulls and other bones discovered by palaeontologists.

The sitting-room of the Down House is the section from which the visitor can form his own idea of Darwin's happy family life. In this room, there are the large oil-paintings of Darwin's wife Emma, Sir Francis Darwin and Erasmus Darwin. A lock of Emma Darwin's hair is in the glass case under her portrait.

One of the most interesting sections of the museum to me was the large room in which were memorial volumes and books presented to Darwin, his manuscripts and note-books, and the portraits of geologists and zoologists who defended Darwin and fought aggressively against the opponents of Darwinism, and pictures depicting incidents of his life during the voyage of the research ship *Beagle*. There is a very large oil-painting of T. H. Huxley who was referred to in controversial literature as Darwin's 'bulldog.' There is a portrait of Ernest Haeckel who fought aggressively for

Darwinism. Haeckel visited Ceylon in 1881 and spent two months at Weligama studying and collecting marine animals. There was a rumour of a human freak which was referred to by people of certain areas of the Southern province as the 'monkey child' (සිලා දරුවා) of Weligama. I do not know whether this rumour originated after Haeckel's visit to Weligama or not. Haeckel in his book *Evolution of Man* reproduces the picture of a man of Weligama with well-developed female breasts.

Haeckel climbed Adam's Peak on February 12th 1882. By a curious coincidence it happened that it was the date of Darwin's birth in 1809. Haeckel made a speech on Darwin at the summit. On Haeckel's death in 1919, Armand de Souza, Editor of the *Ceylon Morning Leader*, paid a tribute to him in a second editorial in which he said that if Haeckel had not criticised Christianity, he would have been acclaimed unanimously as the world's greatest zoologist.

In one of the glass cases of the same section in the Darwin Museum, there is a complimentary copy of Karl Marx's *Das Capital* in German, with Marx's signature and the dedicative inscription in English.

Dr S. A. Barnett, editor of the centenary publication *A Century of Darwin*, referring to socialism and Darwin, says that the autographed copy of Marx's *Das Capital* remains uncut at the Down House. If I am not mistaken, the open copy of *Das Capital* which is displayed in a glass case at the Down House has many cut pages. Darwin's letter to Karl Marx, which is in the same glass

case, corroborates my guess that he read several pages of *Das Capital*. This is Darwin's letter to Karl Marx which I had to copy in a hurry because we were lingering in the museum after its closing hour:

“Dear Sir,

I thank you for the honour you have done me by sending me your great work ‘Capital.’ I heartily wish that I was more worthy to receive it by understanding more of the deep and more important subject of political economy, though our studies have been so different. I believe that we both earnestly desire the extension of knowledge, and that this in the long run is sure to add to the happiness of mankind.

I remain, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
C. R. Darwin”

A large oil-painting of T. H. Huxley and portraits of Earnest Haeckel, Sir Charles Lyell and Hooker who fought for Darwin were in the room. In another room, there were six memorial volumes on Darwin.

There was a framed large picture on one of the walls of this section. Darwin is examining the bark of a huge tree in one of the islands probably in the Galapagos group. It reminded me of an amusing incident related by Darwin who was interested in insect life from his boyhood.

In his voyage in the *Beagle* as research scientist, he was studying especially the animal life of the

tropical Islands. In examining the bark of a tree in one of the islands, he saw a new kind of beetle. He caught the insect in one of his hands and searched for new ones. Then he saw a new kind of insect under the bark, and eagerly caught the new insect in the other hand. Another insect was emerging from the bark. Darwin put one of the insects he was holding into his mouth and caught the new one. The insect which was in his mouth, ejected a fluid which burnt his tongue.

When I saw this picture of Darwin examining the bark of a tree, I related the incident. The keeper of the Down House Museum was rather surprised to hear anecdotes of Darwin from a coloured man from Ceylon, who knew about Darwin and Darwinism and of scientists who fought for Darwin. He took me back again to Darwin's study, removed the silk cord which protected it from the intrusion of visitors and invited me to enter and examine Darwin's microscope and other materials he used in doing research and writing.

In this special section, there were pens, lenses, a microscope and other materials used by Darwin in his studies and writing. I was delighted to peep through Darwin's old fashioned microscope at an enlarged section of a piece of tissue from the stomach of an owl.

On returning to Ceylon, I sent the keeper of the Down House Museum a copy of the fifth revised edition of my Sinhala book on Darwinism and evolution which was first published in 1934.

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