

Why did Stalin reject Darwinian Evolution?

(excerpted from *War Comes to God's House*)

Some fascinating 'asides' can be mentioned here before Ms. Sanger falls completely out of sight. Her 'pivotal' book (i.e. Margaret Sanger, *The Pivot of Civilization*), in addition to attacking Christian "moralists", attacks "Marxist" dogma; that is, she is attacking the official line of the Communist Party of the day because Stalin banned Darwinian evolutionary theory from the Communist world – and with it, Sanger's eugenic ideology (though Stalin had no trouble in finding his own justifications for mass murder).

If there was anything for which I could applaud Stalin, it would be his seeing the class bias of Darwinian Evolutionary dogma and its offspring, Social Darwinism. Even though Marx lauded Darwin for striking a blow against the bonds of Christian civilization, Comrade Stalin banned Darwinian "survival of the fittest" Evolution from Soviet science in favor of the more politically palatable Eighteenth Century French theorist Lamarck, as interpreted by Russian peasant turned Soviet agronomist, Lysenko.

Stalin took his Marxist dogma seriously. Marx had asserted that all "history", that is all war, rising and falling of empires, etc., was due to economic/materialistic reasons, chiefly the conflict between capital and labor. Taking the cue from Charles Darwin himself, though, Evolutionary theory was immediately submerged into the Eugenic Movement, founded by his cousin Francis Galton. The Eugenic/Social Darwinists held that "history" is biologically determined. The Nazis were only slightly extreme in their beliefs that race purity, and racial mixing led to the rising and falling, respectively, of the world's great civilizations.

Stalin also kicked the British scientist, Marxist theoretician, and leading eugenicist J. B. S. Haldane out of the Communist Party. Haldane is most remembered today as half of the Oparin/Haldane team responsible for the "primordial soup" theory of the origin of life – but don't let me dip into that crockpot.

It's amusing that even today, intellectuals of the left fume over Stalin's 'ignorance' and the shabby treatment of the 'great man Haldane'. It was quite the *cause celebre* in those days. I wonder if Stalin's rejection of Darwinism, so dear to Hitler, might have been among the reasons Hitler rejected Marxism in favor of his own home-grown socialism.

Let me add a bit more about Haldane not included in the above excerpt.

Haldane was a member of a group of prominent British socialist "intellectuals" who were all in for eugenics and Nazi-like biological determinism, including George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and Julian Huxley. Haldane was actually a member of the Communist Party, though, and distinguished himself by public opposition to Lysenko's theories, and therefore to Stalin. That war for the soul of Communism, shriveled as it was, was quite revealing. After the de-Stalinization of the Communist party, Haldane and the other Darwinist/Eugenic leftists won their victory.

An excellent article on the subject is *Eugenics and the Left* by Diane Paul, published in the Oct., 1984 *Journal of the History of Ideas*.