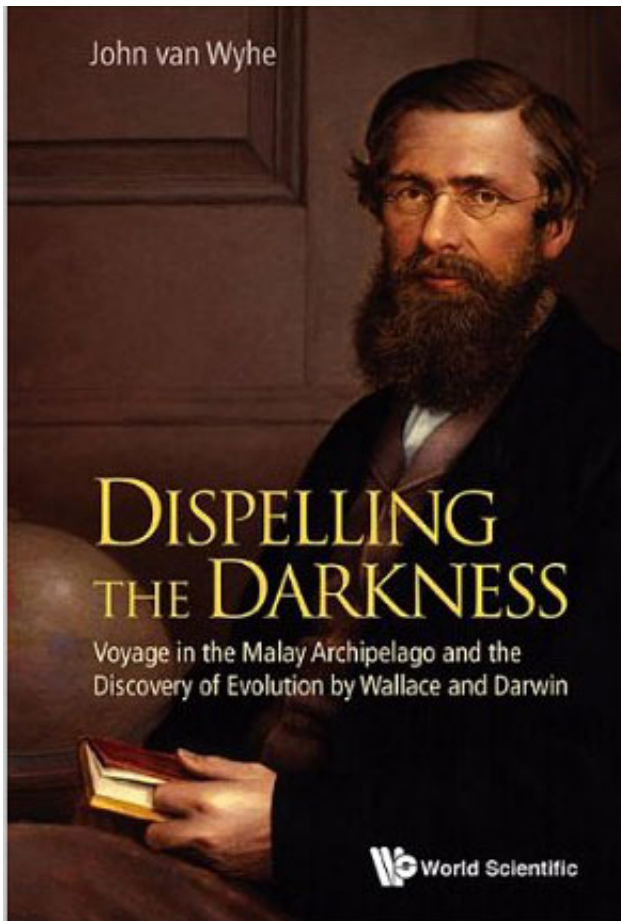


New book rewrites how evolution was discovered

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A major new book by historian Dr John van Wyhe from the National University of Singapore has radically rewritten the story of how

evolution was discovered by Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace.

Titled *Dispelling the Darkness: Voyage in the Malay Archipelago* and the discovery of [evolution](#) by Wallace and Darwin, this new book puts together groundbreaking research by Dr van Wyhe on the two scientists and resolves many long-standing mysteries, revealing the true story for the first time.

While Darwin is one of the most famous scientists in history, he was not alone in the discovery of the theory of evolution. Comparatively forgotten, fellow naturalist Alfred Wallace independently discovered evolution by natural selection during his eight-year travel in the Malay Archipelago.

Wallace drafted an essay to explain his discovery and mailed it to Darwin. Uncertainties about postal delivery dates had fuelled several conspiracies about the relationship between Darwin and Wallace. Did Darwin borrow or plagiarise from Wallace? Were their theories really the same?

Following the route of the fateful letter from Asia to the UK in the 1850s, Dr van Wyhe solved the puzzle and shows there is no mystery, and both men independently reached the very similar conclusions.

In his book, Dr van Wyhe also addresses the mystery of how and where exactly Wallace had discovered natural selection. Through careful study of widely scattered historical documents, Dr van Wyhe reveals that the island of Ternate near [New Guinea](#) was where Wallace had his eureka moment, in the midst of a malarial fever.

"Although the [theory of evolution](#) story has been told thousands of times in [books](#) and documentaries, several long-standing mysteries and many myths and legends have distorted our picture of the most important

revolution in the history of science. This book aims to shed light on Wallace's less well-known voyage and reveal the true story of how evolution was unveiled to the world," said Dr John van Wyhe.

Dr John van Wyhe is one of the world's leading experts on Darwin and Wallace. Currently a Senior Lecturer at the National University of Singapore, he is the author or editor of Darwin Online, Wallace Online, Darwin Notebooks from the Voyage of the Beagle, Darwin's Shorter Publications, Darwin in Cambridge, Wallace's Letters from the Malay Archipelago and the illustrated biography: Darwin.

Published by World Scientific Publishing, the new book is available on sale now at major bookstores and as an e-book.

Accolades for *Dispelling the Darkness: Voyage in the Malay Archipelago* and the discovery of evolution by Wallace and Darwin:

"The story of Wallace will never be the same again. John van Wyhe has delved deeply into archives and brings Wallace's travels wonderfully back to life by discovering new facts about his voyage and theories. Without downplaying the impact of Darwin, van Wyhe's book reveals Wallace as a great evolutionary thinker in his own right, who truly deserves to be considered in context."

-Janet Browne, Aramont Professor of the [History of Science](#), Harvard University:

"This book greatly advances our knowledge of Wallace by correcting a plethora of misleading myths, by reconstructing Wallace's travels, experiences and reflections with authoritative precision, interpretive sophistication, archival documentation and by insightful clarifications of Wallace and Darwin's interactions, divergences and convergences. The overall result is a major scholarly contribution to the intellectual and

social history of Wallacean science and of Darwinian science in their original, distinctive cultural contexts."

-Jonathan Hodge, Honorary Fellow, History and Philosophy of Science, University of Leeds

Provided by National University of Singapore

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