

THE SELFISH GENE AND AFTER: A PERSONAL APPRAISAL OF THE DAWKINS PHENOMENON

DEBAL DEB

*This article is in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the *The Selfish Gene* (TSG) by Richard Dawkins. The book was one of the most exciting intellectual debate of the 20th century on the understanding of genetic determinants of human cultures and subsequently, biopolitics. The debate involved the most renowned biologists, anthropologists and philosophers, and revealed the nuances of how scientific ideas are influenced by, and reflect, dominant political ideology. The debate continued for at least 5 decades since the publication of this book, and shaped the public perception of organic evolution and human social behaviours. The debate spread on all major academic campuses, including the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. As young researchers in ecology and evolution, my group of peers honed our own understanding of evolutionary biology from the Sociobiology Debate. I attempt here to describe the unfoldment of the novel ideas discussed in TSG, their scientific connotations and social implications from a participant-observant's perspective.*
