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# The Plant and the Pollinator Tale: how to take Teleology seriously in Biology and yet avoid being a Lamarkian?

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## Abstract

The topic this paper shall address is the connections between teleology, behavior and selection within the context of Evolutionary Theory. I start off by considering how Darwin's initial account of Evolution by Natural Selection did not take teleology and Evolution to be so disjointed from each other as later architects of the Synthetic Theory have pictured them to be. Secondly, I shall raise a philosophical question concerning the role of teleology and behavior in current interpretations of Evolution and Natural Selection. I shall contend that if any sort of teleology is excluded from Biology the concept of Selection would cease to make sense in explaining evolutionary processes. Much debate has recently arisen in Philosophy of Biology over the status of selection as a natural force with various philosophers and biologists alike affirming that Natural Selection is not to be interpreted as a real cause directing the evolutionary change of populations. I contend that in the absence of teleology they are actually right. In turn, I defend, if there is a place for teleology in our understanding of Evolution by means of considering the ethological operations of animal organisms in the wild as the real agents guiding the process of organic change, the concept of Selection would be epistemologically safe. Finally, I will discuss specific cases of pairwise coevolution in which different individuals actively select one another thus guiding evolution by way of their behavior.

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