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# Beyond Generalized Darwinism: Considering Alternative Ways to Articulate Evolutionary Economics

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## Abstract

In two recent papers ("Beyond Generalized Darwinism. I. Evolutionary Economics from the Perspective of Naturalistic Philosophy of Biology. II. More Things in Heaven and Earth." *Biological Theory* 6:338-350, 351-365, 2011) I reflected on "generalized Darwinism" as currently discussed in evolutionary economics. Focusing on Hodgson and Knudsen's generalization of Darwinism in terms of "generative" replication and interaction (*Darwin's Conjecture: The Search for General Principles of Social and Economic Evolution*, University of Chicago Press, 2010), and the debate it spurred, I concluded that extant evolutionary economics as a whole (1) continues to resist consistent "Darwinizing," (2) is incompletely naturalized (e.g., invoking teleological and intentional reasoning at the population level), (3) disregards the importance of analogical and metaphorical reasoning for knowledge transfer between fields, and, most importantly, (4) is based on a dated gene-centric, adaptationist, selectionist, and externalist Modern Synthesis view of evolution.

Against this background, I attempt to do three things in this talk:

(1) To schematically mine alternative biological 'source fields' for concepts and models that could be more fertile in inspiring evolutionary economics as 'target field.' These range from theories of self-organization as employed, in, e.g., biophysics and developmental biology to epigenetics and EvoDevo (evolvability, innovation, modularity...) to niche construction theory.

(2) To discuss the comforts and pleasures of a more pluralistic approach to generalizing evolutionary thinking.

(3) To suggest how evolutionary economics could escape from its current *cul-de-sac* by designing new formats for the interaction between economists, biologists, philosophers and historians of biology, and others.

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