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Between Dawkins and Aristotle: Finding Symmetries between Evolutionary Biology and Aristotelian Natural Law

While Aristotle did not assemble a fully-fledged version of the Natural Law, he created the philosophical system which gave rise to it — “*the spiritual stream*”, in the words of Rommen, “*that carried the idea of natural law down through history to our time*”. However, this ‘stream’ became increasingly challenged. Essentialism is contradicted by Darwinian science, while rationality – as the distinctive feature of human existence – was questioned by behavioural economics and associated fields.

This paper, however, undertakes the opposite exercise. Instead of finding conflicts, it starts from the basic assumption that certain building blocks of the natural law are *partly biological*; a reflection of our evolutionary past (e.g., our cooperative abilities, social instinct and certain moral norms). Thereafter, the present paper searches for symmetries between evolutionary biology and the Aristotelian building blocks of natural law. It concludes that – while agonism on certain key domains remains – Darwinism and Aristotelian natural law may, on specific topics, reinforce each other against opposing forces.