

Truly Natural Selection? - Paper IV

Inanimate Competition

The points made in the first two papers of this series on Selection did not make sufficiently clear exactly how non-living processes can “compete” and even in some way, “succeed”, and this omission undermines the whole thesis somewhat.

But, I suppose that I have been concentrating too much on new ground, and taken some fundamentals for granted in this exposition. Obviously, this must be remedied here!

From my previous work on Selection (purely connected with Living Things, and which was therefore entirely to do with Evolution), it is clearly necessary to transfer, and establish, crucial features which also apply to developments in general, and that **must** include non living systems too.

In my other extensive writings on development, I have inevitably come round to a completely **holist** position, and therefore found that though *everything does affect everything else*, there are actually TWO different modes of Change involved in these relations: these are the Pin-heads (slow) developments in relatively Stable Interludes, and the Avalanche (cataclysmic) developments in Emergences.

And, it has also become quite clear that these occur in non-living developments too.

Clearly, Darwin’s *Natural Selection* can ONLY apply to competing and changing organisms and with the necessary mechanisms to make it happen. But, in these musings on Selection in non-living developments, the elements that produce Selection will, most certainly, be **different**, yet *still sufficient!* And it is perfectly clear to me from studies in Cosmology and Geology, that a similar two-paced process of changes is present there too.

The Emergences are clearly evident in such events as Supernovae, and even on Earth, the Origin of Life MUST also count as a development of non-living matter. How else could that remarkable event be seen?

The much slower paced developments are harder to pin down, though inevitable from a holist point of view, and also are the ONLY possible source for the changes that are the engine that will periodically precipitate Emergences. These latter cannot happen out of the blue, but MUST be prepared for, and precipitated by, changes which gradually accumulate and undermine, threaten and finally overthrow any current stability.

The Key Arguments, already present in Papers I & II, are surely those about multiple, simultaneous, chemical processes, which use **resources** and generate **products**.

The crucial concept, which runs entirely counter to that which always sees the result of such multiple contributions as Random Chaos, sees things quite differently! Instead of multiple factors producing ultimately random situations, the outcome is seen in terms of how such processes effect one another, and by these effects either multiply or decline in number. In such a mix, ANY relations between different processes, which make them more likely to occur, are said to be *conducive*, while those which inhibit each other, are said to be *contending*.

Now such relations DO indeed exist in abundance, governed only by the appropriate conditions. The question is, “How do they determine what happens to the mix?”

The very fact of the existence of a history of development of Matter *proves* that the result cannot be Random Chaos, but actual **Order**.

No matter how slight, such processes can be said to compete or support one another, and, hence in such circumstances, which ones will proliferate, and which will decline.

It is clear to me that it will be the mutually conducive ones that will grow greatly in number.

And, as soon as we accept this, we see that the situation will ultimately be *transformed*. If one type of relation between processes is SELECTED FOR, these will proliferate, and actually transform the mix, and hence determine what are the most likely happenings. Certain forms will tend to increase until they actually dominate the situation as a whole, and some new, overall arrangement would inevitably appear. But, when it does, and creates a New Stability, this will NOT terminate all change. It will (as in those which occur with

Living Forms) merely seem to be wholly stable, but in fact will still contain contending (though minor) factors too. The holist view when *matched* to Reality itself, becomes developed into a more sophisticated form, that takes in development and the alternative phases of Stability and Emergence as unavoidable.

(707 words)