

putting aside mechanistic differences, is it not now lost in any case? Has not modern vitalism in accepting the limitation to entelechies or impetus destroyed itself?

The situation, briefly, seems to be as follows: two evolutionary processes independently result in two complementary fitnesses; hence they are related. In the one process the origin of fitness is in part explained by a mechanistic hypothesis. Nevertheless, many philosophers, as is their right, declare that in this process a further extraphysical influence is to be assumed. But any one who makes such an assumption for the one process must certainly now make it for the other; thus he will be led to see impetus or entelechies everywhere. Under these circumstances it may be doubted if his acquaintance with the nature of his impetus or entelechies is so intimate that he will be able to distinguish the inorganic from the organic, for he has surrendered to science all the positive physico-chemical differences between organic and inorganic bodies and processes. Hence, unless he is to make an arbitrary and unintelligible distinction, or to indulge in the spinning of cobwebs, his vitalism has ceased to be exclusively organic, in short has ceased to be vitalism at all, and has become mere universal teleology.