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**The Trouble with Adaptation:
Historical vs. Economical Concepts of Evolution**

Darwinian scholarship largely falls into two factions, each claiming the true and authoritative interpretation of Darwinism for themselves:

1. Sociobiology and neoclassical Darwinism (Dawkins, Axelrod, Wilson), conceiving of evolution in terms of uniform and universal causal laws to be carved out by mathematical and economic modelling, favouring a gradual and progressive image of evolution.
2. Punctuated Equilibrium Theory (Gould, Lewontin, Eldredge), emphasising the irreducible historical contingency of, and the multi-faceted causes involved in evolution, and explicitly rejecting the idea of evolutionary progress.

These two diametrically opposed views shall be explained by analysing their approach to the phenomenon of adaptation by natural selection. Part of this endeavour will be identifying which styles of reasoning, which intellectual traditions, however epistemically productive in their own right, contributed to the divisions at hand. I will argue that, apart from ideological agendas on both sides, those views are not mutually exclusive if their different explanatory purposes and contexts are taken into account.