

# EVOLUTIONARY SELECTION PROCESSES

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Towards  
Intra-Organizational Facets

BY

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# PREFACE

This book adopts an evolutionary perspective on organizing and focuses on theorizing the strategy process and practices; more generally, the dynamics of organizational evolution. In particular, it focuses on the selection aspect of the classic evolutionary mechanism (VSR) and suggests that selection is explained not only by their interaction with the external environment but also by a set of internal – endogenous – factors. The book suggests that past research was unduly focused on the former. It proposes and describes a multilevel selection mechanism that integrates the endogenous and exogenous selection pressures and describes the dynamics of organizational evolution more fully. Concerning the behavioral and cultural circumstances, the book explains a managerial intervention and its effect on the adaptation mode. We complement it by adding explanations concerning interorganizational level selection in order to build a complex picture of the selection processes.

The book has three core ideas that extend the current conversation in the literature. First, the authors recognize the importance of the internal selection pressures, in particular, the behavioral and cultural factors that shape the selection environment within the organization. Second, the book attempts to integrate the endogenous and exogenous factors into a more complete picture of organizational evolution seen through the lens of an internal and external context. Third,

the book expands the scope of the discussion into multilevel selection within and beyond the organizations, showing how the entire selection mechanism behaves at each level and how these mechanisms are connected across levels.

The evolutionary logic, in principle, involves selection rationale. The selection phenomenon is associated with the idea that the “best” elements are selected – referring thereby to specific criteria such as fitness and efficiency. In general, the evolutionary approach is concentrated on exogenous selection; however, in some cases, it is focused on selection inside the organization (endogenous selection). That endogenous selection is underexplored in the studies. Nevertheless, an evolutionary metaphor is used in many sciences since it is associated with progress and cognitive inspirations.

From the aforementioned perspective, this book will complement management thoughts by evolutionary rationality. However, we include a multilevel approach to explain and discuss exogenous and endogenous selection process interplay. The book is a result of years of research combining expertise knowledge in the field of strategy, organizational change, and evolutionary approach. Finally, it leads readers inside the organization, inside a multilevel context, to discover and to find explanations of endogenous selection mechanism and factors influencing it. It links the evolutionary approach, process perspective, and practice perspective in making explanations in the area of the strategy process. The book challenges an important hypothesis explaining the problems of strategic management saying that in practice managers deliberate and a market decides.

Hopefully, our monography gets the interest not only of evolutionary theorists but also of strategists and change management scholars. We believe that taking the effort to give alternative explanations considering change, especially in the

terms of strategic choice, contributes to existing research as well as to better understanding of the organizational reality.

We expect the book contributes to strategic management research in terms of multilevel strategic adaptation to the environment as well as organizational change and organizational behavior research due to the internal criteria and determinants of organizational adaptation, especially by means of multilevel coevolving internal selection processes.

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