

# Review of: "Femmes finales: natural selection, physiology, and the return of the repressed"

Leandro Giri<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero

**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

It is my opinion that this article stands out for its academic quality. It is an in-depth analysis of the history of final causes in (philosophy of) biology. The author detects that, probably as a legacy of the Baconian metaphor of nature as a woman to be forced to obtain her secrets (and his later metaphor of the vestal virgins), final causes acquired a feminised (and somewhat humiliating, within an increasingly positivist scheme of thinking within biology) character. The author's in-depth historical enquiry reveals the different uses of metaphor (and the different conceptions of the use of final causes to generate epistemically fertile explanations) by some of the most relevant naturalists of the 19th century (and also by some of their heirs in the 20th century). It remains to delve a little deeper into the current status of final causes, but it is true that this would be asking too much of the current article, which is already voluminous due to the amount of primary sources analysed. In that sense, I would recommend that the author's next enquiry go in that direction. For my part, I can only congratulate him on the excellent philosophical and historiographical work, as well as the fresh and clear prose.