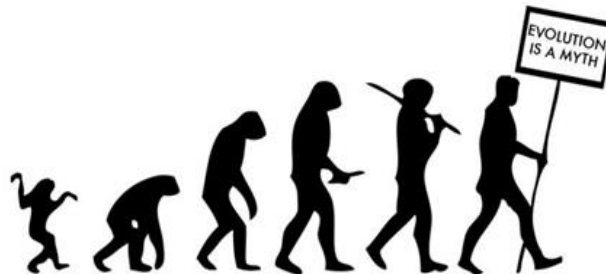


# Evolution or Revolution?

Human evolution is considered to be the process by which human beings developed on Earth from now-extinct primates. The usual prospect on this process is essentially biological, and the process of evolution seems to be so far finished by reaching the phase of Homo sapiens (for about 200.000 years, starting from Africa). The logical stringency and the empirical proofs of the theory of biological evolution are completely apparent - and only fundamentalists resisting to communicate about these proofs deny the broadly accepted fact of biological evolution.



<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2013/11/seven-evolutionary-reasons-people-deny-evolution>

## From homogenous groups to societies

Humanization, indeed, has been influenced not only by biological and geographical variables, but also by interdependencies between genetic, cerebral, ecological, social, and cultural factors. So the competing power of humankind towards - often much bigger and very aggressive - animals requires an effective social organization. For that to happen the ability of talking, diverse other mind abilities, and cultural and social bounds have to be acquired. Social care and provision in a constant childhood have to be brought about. Finally conscience in a time dimension and a reflected relationship to one-self, to own motives, actions, and possible aftermaths of them, belong to humanity. Since all these attitudes and performances require social connections, we have to deal with social structures und social processes in order to understand human

evolution. Hence an evolution of societal structures becomes an issue of its own.

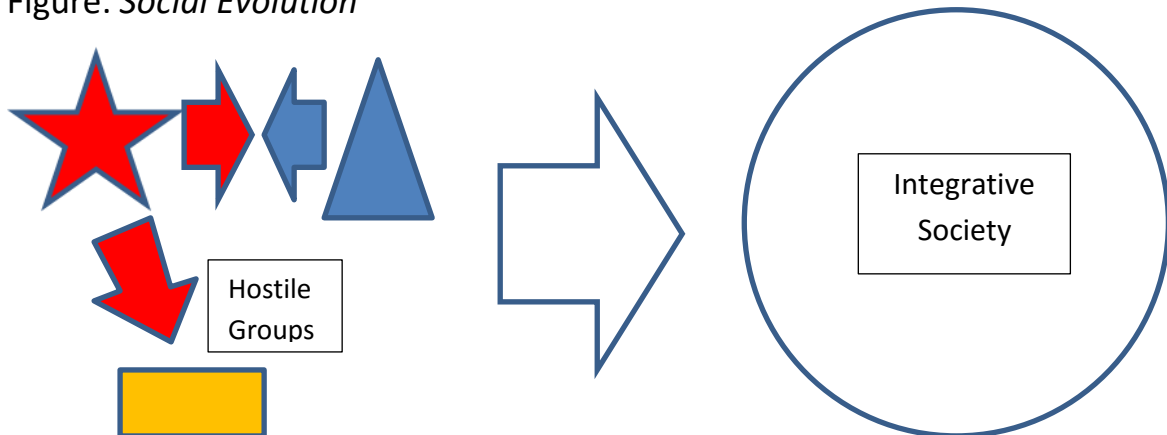
An - in historical and logical terms - basic difference refers to living in homogenous groups or in a society:

- **Homogenous groups:** A social group within social sciences has been defined as two or more people who interact with one another, share similar characteristics, and collectively have a sense of unity.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_group) Social groups come in a myriad of sizes and varieties. The point here (confronted with societies), however, is the sense of unity towards other groups: Particularly homogenous groups with relatively uniform living styles, common basic values and world views, one-dimensional power structures (wherein the strongest individuals dominate), one overarching religion, and sharply defined borders towards other groups constitute a sharply contrasting social concept to integrative societies. Since groups perceive others usually as strange and often as foes, homogenous groups usually interact in the logic of power over or even in the logic of war. That's why wherever homogenous groups encounter there is a high risk of war. Once weapons of mass destruction get practically accessible, the dominion of hostile groups and concepts even implies risks of the humanity's self-annihilation.
- A **society**, in contrast, is the most inclusive social frame wherein different groups (with different life styles, different interests, different values, different religions, and/or different world views) sustainably live together. This structure is much more demanding and complex than simple uniformity because a two-level system of both differentiation and integration must arise. Sensitive ethical bonds of civilization have to entrench not only in institutions and collective norms but also in individual attitudes. On the other side open societies imply by far better developmental capacities and chances than simple group structures offer. So a division of labor reaching beyond group borders implies enormous potentials of growing productivity and welfare. And differentiated functional systems, such as economy, state, administration, politics, juridical affairs, science, sports, music and so

forth, develop and unfold themselves as self-setting and self-referential subsystems. Last but not least peace is structurally given - the greatest advantage compared to a dominion of hostile groups.

That's why in a complex, fast globalizing world, peace and general development presuppose the transition from hostile groups to an integrated society. Social evolution in that sense becomes an existential challenge of humanity.

Figure: *Social Evolution*



There is a bundle of endogen dynamics, such as economic widening, social migration, and communicative globalization, to foster processes of society building in the described sense. On the other side, there are some counter processes.

## Counter Processes

Since the developing and rising of societies implies an enormous increase of complexity - from multi-level systems until strong ethical demands of collective and personal civilization - processes of social evolution get in trouble whenever social costs become too high for a relevant part of population. That may occur by suddenly breaking down capacities, so in strong economic crises or by other external impacts. Another negative option in that sense emerges through the upcoming and stabilization of alternatives that seem to be ethically and socially cheap, such as ethically rigorous but a lot proclaiming groups. Under these preconditions particularly fragile and relatively simple-minded - amongst them often rattled young -people easily abandon norms and advantages of functioning societies.

Here a matter of particular importance is religious groups that operate outside of and against civilized societies. Since religion operates with extremely high proclamations (potential advantages) without standing any logical or empirical test (low costs). That's why open or latent religious groups routinely belong to the main actors to destabilize functioning societies.

An extreme case of that type is **ISIS** (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria) that frontally fights against all civilian bonds of modern society and any trace element of plurality or diversity. For a long time economically supported by autocratic Islamist states like Saudi Arabia and militarily as well as politically fostered by insensible strategies of the USA and other states, Islamic State meanwhile kills not only thousands of people together with a wide reaching destruction of living opportunities today - it has also started systematical destruction (annihilation) of cultural heritage of mankind.

<http://www.spiegel.de/politik/ausland/video-zeigt-zerstoerung-der-ruinen-von-nimrud-a-1028149.htm>

## Poor and Rich Politics

What roles do politics play facing the described challenges of social evolution and its counter processes?

The word *politics* has often been used in contradictory and diffuse ways. But in a scientific discussion, thoroughly thinking about the specific meaning of the word appears necessary: *politics, political (Politik, politique, politica)* go back to the ancient Greek word *polis* denoting an urban civil town. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polis>  
The citizen of such a polis was called *polites* denoting a person that took part in public decision-making according to jointly accepted procedures and laws. In that decision-making process, every (accepted) citizen was entitled to articulate own arguments and interests - leading to an exertion of political conflicts according to given rules.

Following this understanding, political affairs (in short: *politics*) denote a process of institutionally based public decision-making. In contrast pure relations of hostility up to war are not political in this sense because in war the involved actors do not respect each other as legitimate actors, and there is no common decision-making. That's why **war is no politics, and politics is no war.**

Whenever politics changes into war, it rather loses its specific logic and potentials.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to war, political processes are not only influenced by interaction, but also by commonly accepted (that's why independent) institutions and policy discourses. The degrees to what these different dimensions are significant, indeed, vary. In order to understand those variations better, different types of political processes (politics) may be differentiated:

- Once politics proceeds predominantly in the logic of power (fighting about dominance, using institutions and policy arguments, if at all, only for one's one ends), it may be called power focused or **poor politics**.
- Once given institutions, in contrast, are strictly accepted by all involved actors, a substantial discourse of its own can arise - opening up differentiated and creative learning processes in substance, implying **rich politics**.
- Between and beyond these two basic types, a lot of sophisticatedly **combined types** of politics are possible. See for instance political debates in parliament between deputies of government and opposition or see typical discourses between institutionalized officials (like nation-state presidents, prime ministers, ministers, or members of political administration). Particularly tricky combined, multi-dimensional ways of politics arise in communication processes between actors within the political agenda and the public as well as in artificial media such as Political Cabaret.

## Evolution or Revolution?

Starting from this differentiated understanding of political processes we can formulate some **hypotheses** on relations between social evolution and politics:

- **Groups** with hostile attitudes, such as violent extremism, particularly terrorism, and camouflaged forms of warfare (like militarily operating

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<sup>1</sup> Hence Carl von Clausewitz' famous phrase, *Der Krieg ist eine bloße Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln* (*War is nothing but a continuation of politics/Vom Kriege*, 1st book, 1st chapter, sub-chapter 24) goes wrong. It is no wonder that modern autocrats such as Mao have taken up Clausewitz's phrase in an emphatically affirmative sense. But also a broad stream of journalists of democracies uses the formula in an affirmative way.

separatism), principally **favor the logic of war and are so far not political.**

- Homogenous, such as religious, groups that claim absolute power for their programs, operate, if at all, only with forms of power-focused, that is poor, politics, such as in power battles. Once they cannot enforce their programs effectively, either they pull back from society (sects, eschatological programs) or they get aggressive up to proclaiming (Sacred) War. So far they participate in rich politics, independent institutions respectively elements of a functioning society make them adapt to these norms and procedures.
- In functioning societies wherein given independent institutions are binding for anybody, also for powerful actors, rich politics is usual.
- Since rich politics fosters the sake of all people, there is a principal dynamics to use and to strengthen rich policies. Indeed both, the process as well as the preconditions of it, are vulnerable. So **social evolution** corresponds with a vulnerable change from poor to rich politics - a kind of **political evolution.**

While the term *political evolution* hitherto has seldom been applied, the word **revolution** is usual in science and everyday communication. It usually stands for a fundamental change in power or organizational structures that takes place in a relatively short period of time. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolution>. Traceable back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century's Latin word *revolutio* in its meanings *rolling back*, *round about* (first used in astronomy <http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolution>) the term, however, has got an ambivalent and precarious meaning. Whereas particularly socialistic and communist movements emphasized their perceptions and programs of revolution to be forward-oriented (according to the dominant idea of progress in history), they obviously failed and destroyed fundamental achievements of socio-political evolution. A core element of this fall back was the principal and emphasized legitimation of violence and destruction by revolutionary movements and parties. On the track of brutal violence and war, all so-called **political revolutions** at least immediately led to a fall back behind the given status in terms of economy, technology, social differentiation, and political institutions. In terms of multi-dimensional political analysis, revolutions implied **transitions from politics to war and from war to extremely**

**authoritative poor politics.** Not until before new fundamental changes came up to develop civil ways of communication and civil procedures, some (but limited) forms of rich politics got possible - see for instance the French Revolution ending in a nightmare of bloodshed, the Russian October Revolution that fell massively back behind already made progress by the Mensheviks and led to the Stalinist totalitarianism, see the *National Socialist Revolution* of the Hitler Regime (leading to the worst injuries of human rights in history) or the Maoist Revolution, that indeed could be corrected by the Deng reforms to a successful economic approach, but still bears down on the Chinese people. While these revolutions from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century often were associated with social progress at least by their adherents, some meanwhile happened revolutions (Khomeini Revolution in Iran and the present wave of Islamist state building by ISIS and similar movements in some African countries) **explicitly point at going backwards in history.** So the IS tries to copy exactly what prophet Mohammed did in the seventh century (literally interpreting the Iran and the Sharia, ways of penalties and punishments, and so forth). Here the word *revolution* unfolds and displays its core meaning of going backwards in history in a brutally open and consequential way: Any trace of diversity, plurality, and multi-dimensional politics has systematically been annihilated, any trace of evolution has been turned back respectively destroyed, a new nadir of brutal uncivility.

## Conclusions

In strict contrast to backward oriented, unsocial, and unpolitical **revolutionary** movements, all civil people on this Earth should cooperate on building up and strengthening an integrated society. On this way we need rich politics that implies broadly accepted fair institutions and independent policy debates on how common problems may be solved best.

Looking back at history, we see that already many thousand years ago integrative societies constituted successful socio-cultural and state-political frames of sustainable welfare and development - see Mesopotamia between the fifth and the first millennium before Christ, Old China, and Old Egypt. The Islam got only sustainably successful so far it incorporated evolutionary approaches, such as institutionalizing certain degrees of cultural and judicial

pluralism. Finally we see that the by far most successful welfare states on Earth today are based on highly differentiated societies and political systems of multidimensional (rich) politics. Since the end of the Second World War, and particularly since the end of the Cold War (1989), a massive dynamics towards an uprising of civilized democratic countries has taken place. We should learn from that and communicate the results.