

Evolutionary Theory and World Society

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The paper will look at the theory of sociocultural evolution which is one of the core components in Niklas Luhmann's theory of society and will try to clarify if and how evolutionary theories can deal with the hypothesis of world society. Some of the relevant questions are:

1. How is the hypothesis of the "psychic unity of mankind" or - in archaeological terms - the "out-of-Africa"-hypothesis related to the later emergence of world society?
2. How is the emergence of communication as an evolutionary new social form (in primates?) related to the communicative unification of world society?
3. Can Neo-Darwinist theories which primarily seem to be theories of micro-evolution deal with macro systems such as world society?
4. If macro-evolution in Darwinist terms means speciation and the reproductive (geographical) isolation of populations, are there sociocultural analogues to these conditions?
5. How to formulate a sociological concept of "population"?
6. Which are the mechanisms of the production of diversity in world society and is it possible to give an evolutionary interpretation to them? Which is the importance of "decoupling" and "loose coupling" – and figure these two categories as relevant terms in the theory of society?
7. Is all sociocultural evolution internal to function systems and how does one explain the differentiation of function systems in evolutionary terms?
8. What does the singularity of world society mean for evolutionary theorizing?