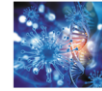


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## THE EVOLUTIONARY DIMENSION OF HAYEK'S THINKING: CULTURAL SELECTION AND SPONTANEOUS ORDER

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### Abstract

This research attempts to synthesize through Friedrich Hayek's analytic-descriptive study how cultural selection acted in the evolutionary process of the kind of society which emerged as a post-industrial Great Society and its consequent division of knowledge, not in a random way but as a result of a spontaneous order.

### Key words:

*Evolutionism, order, cultural selection.*

### Introduction

This research attempts to discuss in Hayekian terms, from the conceptual precision and opposition to the Age of Reason, the way the mechanism of cultural selection evolves in the constitution of order that seems to emerge within the Great Society.

It aims a descriptive analysis, based on Hayek's socioeconomic perspective, on how individual relations will affect the role, formation and unfolding of institutions, the division of knowledge, norms and the State, in the constitution of a certain kind of order as an evolutionary movement of humanity after the 18<sup>th</sup> century, considering its consequences as well, without, however, proposing alternatives and solutions to the issues presented.

### Results and Discussion

The research methodology used was the bibliographic revision of some texts by Friedrich Hayek.

From the concept of cultural selection (which is derived from Lamarck's ideas and not from Darwin's), Hayek demonstrates through evolutionism how order, society and reason itself are products of this selection which occurs through an unforeseen and indefinite, but not random process. In doing so, it observes the social system as a complex non-linear system, which is self-made and self-transforming, thus distancing itself from classical mechanics, determinism and essentialism.

There will be a certain kind of order in this process, which the author defines precisely from the opposition of the classical greek terms 'Taxis' and 'Cosmos', with preponderance of the second over the first. In addition, the greek sophists had already perceived in their time, the dichotomy between the terms 'physei' (natural) and 'nomo' (artificial) whose semantic ambiguities were responsible for the neglect of cultural evolution that produces the moral traditions, which are responsible for the arise of civilization. However, such a dichotomy is false and for a long time has generated incorrect interpretations of how the human decision-making function worked, until it was clarified by Adam Ferguson from the differentiation between human action and conscious human action.

As a result, it shows up the role and limitation of human reason, as opposed to the general conception, held by constructivists, that everything could be explained by reason.

For Hayek such certainty is not coherent because human capacity itself is limited, and the direct unfolding of this fact in its results and in society is that this limitation is one of the central arguments used in the defense of individual freedom as opposed to intervening, regulatory, overly restrictive, or authoritarian forms of government. Thus, approaching the American constitutionalists, the author will self-denominate a Whig.

Such freedom should only be thought of in terms of rules appropriate to a just conduct, without restrictions which interfere with market and social life signals, after all man is as much a rule-following animal as someone with definite goals who acts as a purpose-seeking being. Despite the evolutionist notion, there is no teleology in Hayek, he describes the process only as fact, without regard to the type of society that results.

### Conclusions

This research may infer that the orderly and spontaneous evolutionary process observed by Hayek, and synthesized by this document, it is fundamental for individuals, since it makes predictable the behavior of the other individuals with whom they coexist, in general, hence turning possible goal planning with Individual or collective purposes.

In addition, it was possible to describe the mechanism responsible for the type of society, the role of reason, and the type of state that constituted after the Industrial Revolution. The emergence of the Great Society, cultural selection; whose determining factor is social interaction. And this cannot submit to possible obstacles imposed to its evolution by the largest representative of a 'taxis' type order that the current society knows: the government.

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