

POLITICKÉ VEDY / POLITICAL SCIENCES

Journal for Political Sciences, Modern History, International Relations, security studies / Časopis pre politológiu, najnovšie dejiny, medzinárodné vzťahy, bezpečnostné štúdiá

URL of the journal / URL časopisu: <http://www.politickevedy.fpvmv.umb.sk>

Author(s) / Autor(i): Dominika Cevárová
Article / Článok: Book Review: Cultural Evolution. People's Motivations are Changing and Reshaping the World / Recenzia na knihu: Kultúrna evolúcia. Motivácia ľudí mení a pretvára svet
Publisher / Vydavateľ: Faculty of Political Sciences and International Relations – MBU Banská Bystrica / Fakulta politických vied a medzinárodných vzťahov – UMB Banská Bystrica
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24040/politickevedy.2020.23.2.246-248>

Recommended form for quotation of the article / Odporúčaná forma citácie článku:

CEVÁROVÁ, D. 2020. Book Review: Cultural Evolution. People's Motivations are Changing and Reshaping the World. In *Politické vedy*. [online]. Vol. 23, No. 2, 2020. ISSN 1335 – 2741, pp. 246-248. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.24040/politickevedy.2020.23.2.246-248>

By submitting their contribution the author(s) agreed with the publication of the article on the online page of the journal. The publisher was given the author's / authors' permission to publish and distribute the contribution both in printed and online form. Regarding the interest to publish the article or its part in online or printed form, please contact the editorial board of the journal: politicke.vedy@umb.sk.

Poskytnutím svojho príspevku autor(i) súhlasil(i) so zverejnením článku na internetovej stránke časopisu Politické vedy. Vydavateľ získal súhlas autora / autorov s publikovaním a distribúciou príspevku v tlačenej i online verzii. V prípade záujmu publikovať článok alebo jeho časť v online i tlačenej podobe, kontaktujte redakčnú radu časopisu: politicke.vedy@umb.sk.

BOOK REVIEW: CULTURAL EVOLUTION. PEOPLE'S MOTIVATIONS ARE CHANGING AND RESHAPING THE WORLD

Dominika Cevárová*

INGLEHART, R. F.: *Cultural Evolution. People's Motivation Are Changing and Reshaping the World*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018. 293 p. ISBN 978-1-108-48931-7.

Ronald F. Inglehart is the Lowenstein Professor of Political Science at the University of Michigan. He holds honorary doctorates from Uppsala University, Sweden, the Free University of Brussels, Belgium and the University of Lueneburg, Germany. **R. F. Inglehart** helped found the Eurobarometer surveys and is founding president of the World Values Survey Association, which has surveyed representative national samples of the publics of 105 countries containing over 90 percent of the world's population. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. In 2011, he won *the Johan Skytte prize* in Political Science, often considered the highest prize awarded in the field. In the seventies **R. F. Inglehart** began developing an influential theory of Generational Replacement causing intergenerational value change from materialist to post-materialist values. Building on this work, he developed a revised version of Modernization theory, Evolutionary Modernization Theory, which argues that economic development, welfare state institutions and the long peace between major powers since 1945, are reshaping human motivations in ways that have important implications concerning gender roles, sexual norms, the role of religion, economic behaviour and the spread of democracy.

In his new book "*Cultural Evolution. People's Motivation Are Changing and*

* Mgr. Dominika Cevárová, PhD. is Postdoctoral Researcher at the Department of Political Science, Faculty of Political Science and International Relations, Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica, Kuzmányho 1, 974 01 Banská Bystrica, Slovak Republic, e-mail: dominika.cevarova@umb.sk.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24040/politickevedy.2020.23.2.246-248>

Reshaping the World" as we can see from the title of the reviewed book, the author deals with people's values and behaviour shaped by the degree to which survival is secure. For most of the time since humans first appeared, survival has been precarious. This dominated people's life strategies. **R. F. Inglehart** identified that cultural and value changes are the result of three basic lines of development: a) unusual economic growth in the post-war era in Western Europe, the United States, Japan, and Australia; b) the emergence of welfare states and their "safety nets" in the form of various measures, contributions and assistance to the economically and socially weaker; c) absence of direct war conflict between world powers (the world has experienced the longest period without major war conflict in history). This has played an important role, especially in the socialization of young people, mainly in Western Europe, which has begun to prosper significantly after World War II. A large part of the post-war generation in economically developed countries grew up with the perception of security and survival as a matter of certainty. In developed countries, a high level of economic and physical security has led to ubiquitous cultural changes in generations. New generations are placing increased emphasis on individual freedom and self-presentation. This cultural shift has brought enormous social and political changes, from the growing influence of environmental policies and anti-war movements to demands for a higher level of gender equality in governmental, academic and business life, and ultimately contributing to the spread of democracy in the world. Such a broad cultural shift is leading from prioritizing economic and physical security and compliance with group rules and standards to emphasizing an individual's freedom in choosing his or her way of life. The values of self-expression emphasize gender equality, tolerance of homosexuals, lesbians, foreigners and other groups, as well as freedom of expression and participation in economic and political decision-making.

This new book "*Cultural Evolution. People's Motivation Are Changing and Reshaping the World*" extends the conclusions he presented in his earlier work, *Modernization and Postmodernization* (1997). The central category of his work is the role of culture, which revives interest in its research in the context of political science and international relations and the concept of political culture as such. It points out the importance of culture and at the same time reveals the causes of cultural changes, which inevitably influence the political behaviour of citizens and political actors. In addition to culture and cultural change, **R. F. Inglehart** also deals with religion and secularization. Interestingly, according to **R. F. Inglehart**, secularization has serious implications for society. One of them

is the negative impact on human fertility rates. He argues that virtually all countries where secularization is most advanced, have now fertility well below the level of replacement, while many societies with traditional religious orientations have birth rates two or three times higher than the level of replacement.

The key variable in his work is the so-called sense of security. He revised the theory of modernization to the so-called theory of evolutionary modernization, which is based on the assumption that economic and physical insecurity leads to xenophobia, strong solidarity within groups, authoritarian politics, strict adherence to the group's traditional cultural norms. On the contrary, a higher level of security resp. sense of security, naturally lead to greater tolerance between groups, openness to new thoughts and ideas and egalitarian social norms.

The book by **R. F. Inglehart**, which we have reviewed, is a really successful work of modern analysis of contemporary phenomena. It points out, in an interesting way, their interconnection and impacts on social action. I would particularly emphasize the importance of culture and security, which determine and influence each other. In addition, the author brought an interesting idea of the connection between secularization and childbirth in modern, Western countries. It also opens up the themes of homosexuality and gender, which are currently in many countries the basic ideological themes polarizing the society. Questions of values are becoming a frequent argument of populist political parties seeking to gain political power.

This book offers a very interesting set of hypotheses that are tested on a unique database that contains data from 1981 to 2014 when hundreds of surveys of world-wide values and European values were conducted in more than 100 countries, which contain more than 90 percent of the world's population. The author's intention is to help the reader understand how people's values and goals change and how it ultimately changes the world.