

Free essay about eurocentrism and west-centrism

[Parts of the World](#), [European Union](#)



As Amin says in his essay, “Eurocentrism is, like all dominant social phenomena, easy to grasp in the multiplicity of its daily manifestations but difficult to define precisely” (97). However, if I were to define the term in my own words, Eurocentrism is a way of thinking and ordering society that strongly favors European interests, peoples and attitudes as the dominant, preferable way of thinking around the world. However, when considering this in light of the idea of ‘West-centrism,’ (namely, the worldview that places Western civilization as the dominant one around the world), Eurocentrism is simply part and parcel of the same thing. While Eurocentrism is focused on the European West, West-centrism involves the United States and other Western industrialized nations as well. It makes more sense to talk about West-centrism on the whole than strict Eurocentrism, as West-centrism gets to the core of the dominant ideologies that determine the colonialism inherent to the current models of globalization and market economies. There are those who believe that West-centrism and Eurocentrism are actually expressions of violence; I would say that this viewpoint has merit. The imposition of Western and European values on the rest of the world through their utter domination of markets and culture allows other civilizations and ideas to be made irrelevant or whitewashed. The victims of this kind of violence include the Third World, ethnic and racial minorities, those who believe in socialist or non-capitalist political ideologies, and more. The victimizers are the West themselves - corporate forces, culture makers, legislators and more - who set the rules and expand this influence of culture and behavior to the rest of the world. Through their immense resources and lack of cultural pluralism, the West tends to steamroll over whatever cultural

values other countries hold dear, feeling as though their ways are the best (and should therefore be adopted instead). For example, the colonial occupation of India for decades imposed European values onto that country, which still exist to this day even after its eventual liberation and independence.

It is certainly hoped that West-centrism can give way to a more magnanimous and egalitarian view of the world; however, for the moment, “it becomes impossible to contemplate any other future for the world than its progressive Europeanization” (Amin 98). Right now, globalization serves the West most clearly; it allows for a wider reach and influence onto other countries of Euro- and West-centric cultural norms, standards of culture and beauty, and more. The radicalism that Amin mentions in passing – the “socialist revolutions, anti-imperialist wars of liberation” is somewhat justified, given the stifling hold Western culture holds over the rest of the world (Amin 99).

In order to truly bridge the gap between the West and the Eastern and Third World, substantial changes would have to be made. For one thing, a greater sense of restraint would have to be fostered by the West to stop foisting its culture and values onto others. This would be a controversial decision, particularly in nations with ostensible human rights abuses; distinctions would have to be made regarding what decisions should be left up to cultural pluralism and which ones would justify intervention. After all, the dangerous thing about West-centrism is that it all sounds pretty good – “scientific and technological progress to social advances like the recognition of the equality of men and women” and so on, including conservationism and labor equality

(Amin 98). The trouble is that these values are not necessarily being passed to these other cultures in a transparent and courteous way, if at all - we need to understand the effects of one culture supplanting another before we decide to continue down the road of Eurocentrism's dominance over the globalized world.

Works Cited

Amin, Samir. "Eurocentrism." In *Beyond Borders* (pp. 97-99).