

Review of: "How WEIRD is the US and why does this matter for the rest of the world?"

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This paper is an interesting commentary on Henrich's monumental book *"The Weirdest people in the world"* (2020). The paper aims to be a relatively short comment, rather than a detailed investigation. Which is why I'm not going to recommend too much additional text or analysis. But some smaller developments could benefit the paper.

Here are my thoughts, in no particular order:

The author criticizes Henrich for being "individualist" in his conceptualization of culture. Instead, the author proposes to follow a more "societal" approach to culture. But when it comes to actual empirical analysis, the author relies on questionnaire measures of people's values, taken from World Values Survey and Hofstede's survey. Isn't that also "individualist"? After all, the value data are collected from individuals. Perhaps the author can add some clarification, how the use of such data allows one to escape "individualism"?

The author stresses the distinction between U.S. and other World regions (including other Western countries). But I don't think that this distinction is very important for Henrich. Sure, in his 2010 *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* article, he did find that U.S. is unique even among the Western countries. But the argument of his 2020 book, doesn't seem to rely on the difference between U.S. and the rest of the West. Rather, the argument is that the West is different from the rest of the World. So, the lack of American exceptionalism, is not a major argument against Henrich, in my opinion. (I still think it's a good idea to report U.S. separately in Graph 1).

The author believes that Henrich's "psycho-cultural" explanation of societal development is not satisfactory. Instead, the author supports the decolonial theory. The paper ends with *"The explanations for the relative success of these societies have to be found elsewhere (as has been done abundantly in anticolonial literature)"*. I would like to see some more references to important decolonial literature. The author cites the classical 1972 book *"How Europe Underdeveloped Africa"*. In addition to that, I ask the author to put forward the most recent and most convincing examples of the literature that explain the development of societies from decolonial perspective.

The empirical portion of the paper is rather short and simple, which is fine for a paper of this type. But some additional details could perhaps be useful. In Graph 1, the author presents only four of the six Hofstede value dimensions. Is that because the other two dimensions do not have enough data for African countries? I still think that the other dimensions should be included. Also, the author talks about Inglehart's two dimensions in the text, but does not include those in the graph. Why not report those in the same manner as the Hofstede's dimensions.

In addition to Hofstede and Inglehart, there's a third great value theorist whose data are not used at all. That is Shalom Schwartz, who proposed his own value dimensions and collected cross national data (Schwartz 2006). If the author wants to be thorough in his analysis of major value dimensions, then perhaps he should add Schwartz's dimensions into the regional comparison. The more dimensions are included in the analysis, the more it is possible to prove or disprove the uniqueness of the West. Schwartz's data are available at:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304715744_The_7_Schwartz_cultural_value_orientation_scores_for_80_countries

In the graph, I would prefer to see the value dimension names in full. I have difficulty understanding what is IDV or IVR. It might also be useful to add the number of countries for each World region (separately for each value dimension, if necessary).

As for the regional classification, wouldn't it make sense to separate Eastern-Europe and Western-Europe? After all, Henrich's argument is mainly about Western-Europe.

Schwartz, S. H. (2006). A theory of cultural value orientations: Explications and applications. *Comparative Sociology*, 5, 137-182.