

Glocalization?

A Comparative Analysis of Freedom of Speech

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Research Question

What are the characteristics, such as the similarities and differences, in terms of freedom of speech present in Constitutional law?

Introduction

This study examines whether a global culture exists and whether this global culture influences national or regional cultures, or vice versa, by analyzing 'freedom of speech' in the emerging global community.

1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

"Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers."

The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights confirmed that the 1948 Declaration is a universal value.

Globalization's Cultural Consequences

Cultural Universalism/Imperialism
Homogenization (Boyd-Barrett, 1998)

Cultural Relativism
Heterogenization (Appadurai, 1990)

Cultural Hybridization
Glocalization (Kraidy, 1999)

Glocalization, or in Beck's (2002) own words, 'internal globalization', perspective is to move the research focus from the part (i.e., the nation-state) and the whole (i.e., the world system) to the dialectic relationship between the global and the local.

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Method

Data

Constitutions of the World Online: <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.web/ccw-ddt>

8 regions (159 countries)

Western Europe (17)

Eastern Europe (12), the Newly Independent States of Eurasia (12), and Russia (1)

Middle East and North Africa (21)

Sub-Saharan Africa (East [10], West [22], and South [10])

Asia and the Pacific (24)

Australasia (2)

Latin America and the Caribbean (26)

North America (2)

Data Analysis Procedures

Computer-assisted content analysis

Results

Almost all non-western countries have adopted international human values (i.e., Freedom of Speech is a basic human right), however, and adapted them according to their political and cultural backgrounds.

There is an external influence from international human rights documents such as the UDHR; Constitutions contained similar provisions and languages (All 8 regions).

There is another external influence from other constitutions which contain human rights provisions. Examples set by the explicit inclusion of human rights provisions have been followed by former colonial states, such as the Latin American regions.

This undoubtedly reflects the heritage of each local culture, which includes authoritarian control (Asia/Sub-Saharan Africa), religions (Middle East), community (Sub-Saharan Africa), national unity (Eastern Europe/ the Newly Independent States of Eurasia), and libertarian traditions (North America/Western Europe/Australasia) of freedom of speech and so on.

Conclusion

Globalization's cultural procedure does not necessarily mean cultural homogenization, in general and specifically, tradition within specific countries/regions is consistent with the recognition of freedom of speech.

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