Chapter 4
Communal Values and Individualism in Our Era of Globalization: A Comparative Longitudinal Study of Three Different Societies

Hilde Eileen Nafstad, Rolv Mikkel Blakar, Albert Botchway, Erlend Sand Bruer, Petra Filkukova, and Kim Rand-Hendriksen

Introduction[1]

As human beings, we cannot provide the context for our well-being entirely by ourselves. Each of us is dependent on other people's care and civic virtues. Thus, the well-being and good life of the individual is deeply tied to the well-being of others and positive social institutions. Participation in shared or common goods grows out of our social nature: our dispositions for empathy and civility (Batson 1991; Hoffman 1975; Peterson and Seligman 2004). At the same time, the cultural level with its ethics ideologies shapes our social and empathic dispositions as we take part in practices and custom complexes of our culture.

Therefore, in every culture, there has to be a powerful set of ideals about collectivism and individualism; societies have to find a balance between individual independence and collective interdependence. Thus, conceptions of what makes a good life have, in essential and fundamental ways, to consider both individual autonomy and personal growth and the individual's partaking in developing, upholding,

[1] As the present study is conducted as an integrated part of a comparative research program, it is inevitable that the theoretical-methodological framework has been presented in former articles and reports from the project.

H.E. Nafstad (✉)
Department of Psychology and Centre for the Study of Mind in Nature (CSMN),
University of Oslo, PO Box 1094, Blindern, 0317 Oslo, Norway
e-mail: h.e.nafstad@psykologi.uio.no

R.M. Blakar • E.S. Bruer • P. Filkukova
Department of Psychology, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway

A. Botchway
Department of Psychology, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Oslo, Norway

K. Rand-Hendriksen
Department of Health Management and Health Economics Medical Faculty,
University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway

and maintaining his or her community (Nafstad et al. 2009a). Based on its own local historical and cultural traditions, every society has, therefore, to negotiate its own balance between individual and communal values. During the last decades, the degree of interconnections between various world regions has, due to modern communications and economic and financial interdependence between continents and regions, strongly accelerated. Conceiving globalization as an ideology or worldview, as a system of ideas and values circulating in the public realm influencing societies worldwide thereby defining and articulating local values and visions for social change, this study analyzes the influences of globalization on individualism, communal values, and sense of community in three different societies: a post-communist Eastern European state (the Czech Republic), a Nordic welfare state (Norway) and a modern West African society (Ghana).

Currently, late capitalist market ideology is spreading across the globe. This ideology or worldview is based strongly on excessive individualism (Bauman 2000; Giddens 1991; Nafstad et al. 2007, 2009b; Stiglitz 2002). Thereby, there is a danger of neglecting the human being as a social and civic virtuous person capable of empathy and concern for others and the common good (Batson 1991; Hoffman 2000; Nafstad 2005). Thus, across the world, current meaning structures of good life and well-being may be increasingly dominated by a strong, monolithic ideal or value of self-fulfillment: almost the ideal of egotism. We are supposed to expose our selfish concerns. Are today's public discourses around the world, therefore, moving away from the ideal of commitments to others and toward self-centeredness, entitlements, and asocial egoism? Are public discourses around the world currently moving away from an ideal of a careful balance between individual interests and moral visions of fundamental social responsibility and acceptance of others and community? These are the questions raised in this chapter.

The Concept of Ideology and the Ideology of Neoliberalism

Ideologies are associated with socially shared ideas or beliefs (Billig 1997; Nafstad et al. 2012; Van Dijk 1998). Ideology is thus a *Weltanschauung* constituted by cultural values that are taken for granted and shared by members of a society or group. Consequently, ideologies function as cultural structures of meaning, ideals, and norms in society and provide organizing principles for actions of individuals, groups, and institutions (Nafstad et al. 2006, 2009c). An ideology is thus an important meaning system that describes for the individual both the world that *is* and prescribes the world that *ought to be* (Wilson 1992).

As Sampson (1981: 731) contends, on the intra-psychological level, the concept of ideology refers to "… the ideas and thoughts that people hold, including both the form and content of their consciousness." At the same time, ideologies are, as emphasized, socially constructed collective representations or collective voices, as their origin is cultural and they are shared by a large number of individuals. Furthermore, ideologies are discursively mediated in that they are typically expressed in everyday media and professional language (Bakhtin 1952/1986; Blakar 1973/2006, 1979; Mutz 1998).

Media language is presently of particular importance due to the increasing role of mass media as the major "machineries of meaning" (Hermans and Kempen 1998). By being exposed to such languages, the individual becomes attuned to and incorporates the currently predominant ideologies of society. Operating in a globalized context, contemporary media strongly contribute toward creating and shaping our ideologies, both as producers and mediators of these ideologies. Consequently, it is increasingly likely to find all over the world a widespread awareness of a larger world culture (Skrbis et al. 2004). Globalized ideologies mediated by mass media thus increasingly integrate and interconnect societies and organizations all over the world.

Currently, the late capitalist market ideology is spreading across the globe (Arnett 2002; Chryssochoou 2004). This ideology is, as mentioned, based on free-market principles and excessive individualism, strongly promoting each individual's freedom to choose and to make his/her choices in a manner aiming to maximize acquisition of material and nonmaterial goods, primarily for oneself. Thus, this globalized ideology emphasizes the values of radical or excessive individualism. In so doing, there is a danger of neglecting communal values and the conception of the human being as a civic virtuous person with a psychological sense of solidarity and community (Batson 1991; Hoffman 1975, 2000; Nafstad 2002, 2005). Thus, current meaning structures of personal identity, good life, and happiness around the world may be predominated by a strong ideal or value of self-fulfillment: Humans are supposed to expose their selfish concerns. Therefore, our sense of prosociality and our willingness to take responsibility for other persons, to act for the common good, and to accept and defend collective rights and interests may be increasingly difficult to nurture in contemporary societies all over the world. We contend that the current neoliberalist variant of capitalism, with its excessive individualist ideology, is becoming increasingly more influential, profoundly affecting local worldviews of good life and well-being.

Ideologies and Language Usage

Linguists, social scientists, and psychologists have for a long time acknowledged the close and reciprocal relations between language and ideology (cf., Nafstad et al. 2012). Primarily, it has been linguistically oriented anthropologists that have endeavored to investigate this interplay between language and ideology (cf., Kroskrity 2000). Silverstein (1985) emphasized the reciprocal interaction between language and ideology: "… the total linguistic fact, the datum for a science of language, is irreducibly dialectic in nature. It is an unstable mutual interaction of meaningful sign forms contextualized to situations of interested human use and mediated by the fact of cultural ideology" (p. 220). It is this contextualization and mediation through cultural ideology which renders language, indeed even the single word (Blakar 1973/2006, 1979; Pennebaker et al. 2003; Rommetveit 1968; Rommetveit and Blakar 1979), into very precise and undisguised reflections of a given society and enables analysis of ideological influence on the individual. Changes in language use over time may therefore reflect profound macrosocial or ideological developments (Blakar 1973/2006, 1979).

In order to describe ideologies, then, words and expressions constitute useful analytical units (Nafstad et al. 2007, 2009b, c). They can represent empirical indicators of the ideological situation, of adjustments and pressures. Negotiations and recalibrations serving to maintain or to construe new value systems and interpretative repertoires can thus be revealed in linguistic changes over time. Analyses of key words, expressions, and utterances thus constitute a valid method to describe how ideological discourses in different cultures develop and change, for instance, under the pressure of currently globalized neoliberalism.

Individualism and Communal Values in an Era of Globalization

Collectivism and individualism are perhaps the most frequently examined cultural characteristics (Hofstede 1991; Triandis 1990, 1995; Triandis and Trafimov 2001). The collectivist ideology emphasizes groups, other people, and community, while individualism is based on concerns for oneself and one's immediate family. Both of the ideologies or worldviews, we contend, are essential in society. They are life-oriented ideals for individual and community and therefore important to know about for positive psychology. However, mixtures of collectivism and individualism will develop as societies continually create amalgamations of individual and collective goals and thereby standards for the optimal functioning a person is expected to achieve (Ryan et al. 1999). In a former study (Nafstad et al. 2009a), it was demonstrated how West African Ghana and North European Norway responded systematically different to the strong individualism imbued in currently globalizing ideologies. As expected, in both societies, individualist values were markedly strengthened under the influence of globalization during the past decades. However, whereas communal ideals or values decreased markedly in Norway, communal values increased in Ghana. We will now follow up this study with analyses of a society very different from both Ghana and Norway. We will analyze ideological and value developments across time in the Czech Republic and compare with developmental trends of collectivism and individualism in Ghana, a modern West African society, and Norway, a Nordic welfare state. The Czech Republic is of particular interest as the former Czechoslovakia was part of the communist Eastern Europe and has undergone profound changes after the Iron Curtain was lifted. Therefore, the Czech Republic has been in a situation of transformation where ideals for individual and cultural practices most probably have to be reformulated.

The Czech Republic, Ghana, and Norway

A North European, post-industrial, and (historically) protestant nation with good and stable economic conditions, Norway, as one of the Scandinavian welfare states, has traditionally been characterized by an ideology valuing social equality, social obligation, and universalistic principles for distribution of common goods. Thus, there

has traditionally been a strong emphasis to value collective arrangements and equal distribution of public services and common goods (Carlquist et al. 2007). We have, in previous studies, analyzed ideological changes which have taken place in the Norwegian society over the past 25 years, from 1984[2] on, and have demonstrated how Norway increasingly has been imbued by the globalizing ideology of neoliberalism with its excessive individualism, in marked contrast to and exerting pressure on the collective arrangements valued by the traditional welfare state (Nafstad et al. 2006, 2007, 2009a, b, c).

A former colony of Britain, Ghana, gained its independence in 1957. Situated along the West Coast of Africa, Ghana is characterized by very challenging social and economic conditions. However, Ghana was one of the first African countries to implement economic reforms under the tutelage of the World Bank (Aryeetey et al. 2000). Akotia and Barimah (2007) contend that traditional Ghanaian values in general "… prescribe collectivism and social support for each other. … Every individual in the community has the social responsibility for the other person" (p. 410). This collectivistic worldview is captured in the statement: "I am because we are, and because we are, therefore I am" (Akotia and Olowu 2000, p. 4). This attitude may explain why we found communal values to be increasing in Ghana (Nafstad et al. 2009a).

Czechoslovakia was created in 1918, following the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1948, the Communist Party took control, and the country became part of the Eastern Bloc. In 1989, Czechoslovakia changed from a communist regime to liberal democracy, during the so-called Velvet Revolution. The Czech Republic was created in 1993 when Czechoslovakia peacefully split into two independent states: the Czech Republic and Slovakia (Agnew 2008). Thus, Czech ideology has been deeply marked by 41 years of communist rule, leading to a situation where individuals are unwilling to take responsibility for decisions, political or other (Švejnar and Hvížďala 2008). Social responsibility was, during communist rule, conceived of as an entirely collective matter. There is currently a growing public dissatisfaction with the inability of Czech politicians to deal with what is perceived as a system of "wild capitalism" and widespread corruption. The societal ideologies in the Czech Republic has thus undergone profound changes over the past decades, from communist regime to modern democracy and to "wild capitalism." The country is now continually struggling to deal with these huge transitions of ideologies and value systems concerning collective and individualist rights, entitlements, and duties.

Given the currently globalizing neoliberalism, we expect that individualist values will be increasing in the Czech Republic as well as in the other two societies. However, given the dramatic changes the Czech Republic has undergone during the past years after the fall of the Iron Curtain, we expect a mixed pattern of collective and individualist values and less clear-cut developmental trends, in particular with regard to communal values, compared to Norway and Ghana. Even though we are now analyzing a slightly different period of time, there is

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[2] Newspapers in Norway have been electronically filed and thereby accessible for analysis since 1984.

every reason to assume that the developmental patterns in Ghana and Norway with regard to individualism and communal values will still be as described above (cf. Nafstad et al. 2009a).

Method

A Longitudinal Design

The present study is based on a longitudinal design, identifying ideology and ideological shifts as reflected in electronically archived media (newspaper) language from the time when searchable electronic archives were established to present. For the Norwegian society, we have during the past decade developed and refined a methodology for assessing and describing developmental trends over time (from 1984 when the first Norwegian newspaper became electronically available, see method section).[3] The searching facilities and methods of analyses are not as flexible in Ghana and the Czech Republic as those developed in Norway.[4] We will therefore present the methodology as used in the Norwegian analyses and point out how the methodologies available in Ghana and the Czech Republic deviate from this.

Materials: Search Words

How do we select search words? In principle, a huge variety of words and expressions of the actual language might constitute possible search words for selection (Nafstad et al. 2006, 2007, 2009a, b, c). The words used in the present study were identified by their potential contribution to the redefinition of individualist versus communal values in society. Words referring to or words denoting communality and community such as we, us, responsibility, solidarity, etc. and words indicative of individualism such as I, me, rights, etc. The principles for identifying search words in the Ghanaian and Czech analyses are, logically, the same as in the Norwegian ones. Care was taken to establish sets of words that function as equivalent as possible in the three languages: Norwegian, English (the written language in Ghana), and Czech. The Norwegian search words are presented in Table 4.1, the Ghanaian in Table 4.2, and the Czech in Table 4.3.

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[3] The method is developed as a "mixed methodology design" (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998) in that aspects of both the quantitative and qualitative paradigm are combined throughout most steps of the process of assessing ideological shifts. However, in large-scale mappings such as the present study, it is possible to adopt the method purely quantitatively, mapping changes in frequencies of newspaper articles using various key words over time.

[4] The methodologies used in the Ghanaian and Czech societies, however, are at about the same level of refinements as the methodology we used in the first studies in Norway.

Materials: Newspapers

An increasing number of newspapers in Norway have been digitally filed and made electronically accessible by way of a comprehensive, integrated database (Retriever) located on the World Wide Web. Thus, it is now possible to identify and trace a variety of changes in media language over time.

To ensure representativity, an array of available newspapers with differential profiles should be included when analyzing the ideological situation. Various newspapers make different ideological contributions to and reflections about society. In electronic archives, newspapers are gradually added over time. Therefore, it is easier to ensure representativity in synchronic analyses than in longitudinal or diachronic analyses to adopt Saussure's classic distinction (cf., Lyons 1968). At present, the Norwegian electronic archive covers more than 50 newspapers. Only one newspaper, the nationwide Aftenposten, has been included from the very establishment of the electronic database in 1984. As it is essential for longitudinal analyses to cover as long a time span as possible, the analysis reported here is restricted to Aftenposten, which allows analysis across more than two decades (1984–2008). Aftenposten represents a traditional broadsheet paper covering politics, national as well as international and foreign, economics, culture, and sports. Aftenposten has a somewhat conservative basic orientation. The main editorial office is located in Oslo, the capital. However, Aftenposten has local editorial offices and journalists and contributors throughout the country.[5]

As our longitudinal analyses are based on only one newspaper, *Aftenposten*, its representativity as an indicator of developmental changes in media language is critical. To assess representativity, we have conducted correlation analyses of the developmental pattern over time of the frequency of usage identified in Aftenposten for each word with the developmental pattern of frequency of usage identified in the five other newspapers available in Retriever since 1992,[6] combined. Only search words for which the developmental trend in *Aftenposten* correlates significantly (at .05 level) with that of the other five newspapers combined for the period 1992 through 2008, i.e., more than two-thirds of the total period analyzed, should be included. Neither in Ghana nor in the Czech Republic existed integrated databases allowing such refined procedures for assessing reliability of the chosen newspaper.

There are two potential sources of error one must control for when mapping changes over time. First, there is variation in the total number of articles published within newspapers from year to year. Second, the average length of a newspaper

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[5] During our research period, Retriever expanded the database; the tabloid VG was by scanning made available as far back as 1945. However, due to both theoretical issues and methodological instabilities, we have not included VG further back than 1992 as one of five newspapers used for assessing Aftenposten's reliability (see below).

[6] The five newspapers are *Bergens Tidende, Dagens Næringsliv, Nordlys, NTB*, and *VG*. These newspapers hold different editorial positions on political and ideological issues, and NTB is a press agency delivering articles to all Norwegian newspapers.

article may also vary by year. Thus, as newspapers publish a different number of total articles that vary in length in any given year, a baseline adjustment has to be administered in order to examine and compare developmental trends over time. As an empirical adjustment factor, we use the average development of the 10,000 most frequently used words in the Norwegian language (Rand-Hendriksen 2008). Neither in Ghana nor in the Czech Republic was it possible to adopt such a refined procedure. In both countries, mean number of articles published annually in the actual newspaper during the period analyzed is used as basis for adjusting scores.

Percentages of changes in the usage of words from 1984 to 2008 give an understandable expression of the magnitude of changes. However, there are limitations in using mere percentages for analytical purposes: First, for new words and expressions being introduced during the period, it is impossible to calculate percentage increase (as the baseline is zero). Second, for words and expressions with infrequent usage, the percentage change may be several hundred and thus not representative. Third, the percentage rate of change does not differentiate between a gradual change over the whole period of time, or, for example, an abrupt increase the very last year. Fourth, percentage change increase and decrease of usage function differently: A decrease cannot exceed 100%, whereas there is in principle no limit to how many percent the usage of a word or utterance may increase. Fifth, and most importantly, it is difficult to compare magnitudes of change detected in newspapers that have been electronically available for different periods of time. To meet these obstacles, we adopted the following unit to express trend change over time: "estimated mean annual change" (EMAC). To calculate EMAC, we start with the slope of the linear regression line. To turn the slope into a measure comparable for different time spans and different absolute levels, we calculate a relative slope. To obtain the relative slope, rather than the absolute gradient of the regression line, one would normally base the calculation on the score of the first observation (the first year of the time series). As the score for the first year in our analysis may be zero (i.e., for new words that are introduced during the period), we have based our calculations on the average number of articles per year during the entire period covered in investigation. In addition to always being above zero, the average is more resistant to random fluctuation than any single measure. To obtain EMAC, we therefore divide the slope (change per year according to linear regression) by average score (average number of articles per year) and then multiply by 100, which yields the mean annual percentage change.

A developmental trend can also be described in terms of how strongly the developmental pattern for a particular word (the time series data) correlates with the annual time series itself (1984, 1985, …, 2008); this will give correlation with linear time.

In Ghana and the Czech Republic, there exists no integrated, searchable database similar to the Norwegian Retriever. However, in Ghana, a searchable electronic news archive containing selected articles from various Ghanaian newspapers is available in the form of GhanaWeb. This news archive is thus an edited archive and does not cover complete newspaper output. Still, this archive includes articles from the main Ghanaian newspapers and covers a broad range of issues: from politics and

economics to culture, religion, and sports. GhanaWeb goes back to 1995. However, in 1995 and particularly in 1996, few articles are included. Consequently, it was decided to use 1997 as the starting year in order to obtain reliable results. A growing number of newspapers are being made available electronically in the Czech Republic. The second largest newspaper,[7] *Mladá fronta DNES*, was chosen because it was the first Czech newspaper available in a searchable electronic database. Historically, this paper used to be the mouthpiece of the Czech Communist Party's Socialist Youth, but its journalists were among the first to challenge censorship and cover the Czech Velvet Revolution. After the revolution, the word "dnes" (Czech for "today") was added to the title of the newspaper, signifying end of state ownership and censorship of the newspaper. The archive goes back to 1996, but due to great fluctuations in total number of articles in the first years (1996–1998), we decided to use 1999 as the starting year.

In the Norwegian database Retriever, Boolean functions such as OR, AND, AND NOT, and so on can be used to identify articles containing, for example, either of the words x OR y. Articles containing either "jeg" (I) OR "meg" (me) or articles containing both "likhet" (equality) AND "rettferdighet" (justice) can thus be identified. Moreover, in the Norwegian database, there exists a truncation function, enabling identification of every word/utterance starting with a specified string of letters. This means that a search word in Norwegian is being identified in all forms (singular and plural, definite and indefinite, as part of a longer compound word, and so on) in one single truncated search. In GhanaWeb, neither Boolean functions nor truncation is available. Only single words or utterances (word strings) can be searched in GhanaWeb. The search functions of Mladá fronta DNES allows the Boolean function OR and truncation. However, due to the complexity of the Czech grammar, adopting truncation would have resulted in a lot of search results not comparable to the Norwegian and Ghanaian search words. It should also be mentioned that the language situation in Ghana is complex; a series of local languages are spoken, whereas English is the official language. English is also the language of GhanaWeb.

The developmental patterns found in Aftenposten correlate significantly with the developmental pattern identified in the five other newspapers combined at the .05 level for all but three of the words and at .01 level for two-thirds of the words.[8] We are confident, therefore, that the patterns of change in language usage that we identify are representative of Norwegian media language, at least from 1992 to 2008. There should

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[7] The second largest newspaper was chosen instead of the largest Czech newspaper, "Blesk," because Blesk was regarded as too tabloid compared to the archives chosen in Norway and Ghana. Comparison between archives could have been difficult if the selected newspapers varied too greatly in journalistic style.

[8] The three search words included, even though the developmental patterns in Aftenposten do not correlate significantly with the other newspapers, are: *ansvar* (responsibility), *rettferdighet* (justice), and *borgere* (citizens). They are included because they represent very interesting issues in comparative analyses. When discussing trends in the Norwegian society, these three search words have to be interpreted with greater care than the others.

be no reason to assume a different situation in the pre-1992 period. Whereas we are confident about the representativity of our analyses of changes in language usage in Norwegian newspapers, we are thus less certain about the representativity of our analyses of changes in Ghanaian and Czech public discourses.

Results: Presentation and Discussion

To best capture potential influences of globalization processes over the past decades, we start by presenting data from Norway where a period of 25 years is covered. We then present developmental trends in Ghana and the Czech Republic where much shorter periods are covered. Finally, developmental trends for all three countries for the decade 1999–2008, the time period covered in all three countries, are compared.

Norway (1984–2008)

Developmental changes over time for the various words in the Norwegian context are presented in Table 4.1. The marked increase (55%) of articles, including either "*jeg*" OR "*meg*" (I OR me) compared to the more stable pattern (16% increase) for articles containing either "*vi*" OR "*oss*" (we OR us), is a strong indication of a shift toward increased individualism. Another indication of shifts toward more individualist values in the Norwegian society is demonstrated by a 38% increase of articles including the word "*rettighet*" (rights; entitlements), whereas there is a 35% decrease of articles containing the word "*plikt*" (duty; obligation). The developmental trends of the usage of both these words correlate significantly with linear time (see Table 4.1). Add to these findings that the usage of the word "*solidaritet*" (solidarity) during the same period has been reduced by 61%. Furthermore, the above descriptions of the ideological shifts are underlined in that individuals are conceptualized increasingly as "*brukere*" (users; consumers); the usage of the word "*brukere*" has increased 77%, and the developmental trend correlates significantly with linear time. At the same time, there have been only minor changes in the usage of the word "*borgere*" (citizens) (see Table 4.1).

Our analysis also reveals an unequivocal decline in the usage of a number of words and concepts which may be connected to communality. The usage of the word "*felles*" (common; communality; shared) has decreased by 27%. The reduction in frequency of usage correlates significantly with linear time with an estimated mean annual change (EMAC) of −2.0% during the 25-year period. Moreover, the usage of the words "*samhold*" and "*samhørighet*," both referring to social cohesion and belongingness, declined by 34% and 65%, respectively. For these two words, the reduction in frequency of usage correlates significantly with linear time with EMACs of respectively −3.2% and −5.1%.

Table 4.1 The search words used in the longitudinal (1984–2008) analysis in the Norwegian society with number of articles observed in 2008[a], percentage increase/decrease since 1984, correlations (Pearson's r) with linear time (year), and estimated mean annual change (EMAC) for each search word. Data for the comparative 1999–2008 period is included as well

Search word	Adjusted no. occurrences in 2008	Percent increase/decrease since 1984/1999		Correlation with linear time (year) 1984–2008/1999–2008		Estimated mean annual change (EMAC) (in %) 1984–2008/1999–2008	
Rettighet[b] (right; entitlement)	1,308	38	18	.88**	.81**	1.7	2.0
Plikt[b] (duty; obligation)	681	−35	−11	−0.93**	−.51	−1.5	−1.1
Ansvar[b] (responsibility)	5,272	−13	−5	−0.87**	−.62	−0.7	−0.9
Felles[b] (common; communal; shared)	3,722	−27	−2	−0.85**	−.39	−1.7	−0.4
Solidaritet[b] (solidarity)	310	−61	−5	−0.90**	−.65*	−4.5	−1.8
Samhold[b] (cohesion)	173	−34	−13	0.87**	.09	−3.2	−0.3
Samhørighet[b] (belongingness)	35	−65	−21	−0.93**	−.20	−5.1	−1.5
Brukere[c] (users)	467	77	50	.87**	.54	3.5	2.3
Borgere (citizens)	353	−12	−28[d]	.20	−.61	0.3	−2.2
Jeg OR meg (I OR me)	25,412	55	15	.98**	.96**	1.8	1.9
Vi OR oss (we OR us)	35,341	16	14	.52**	.95**	0.4	1.6
Likhet[b] (equality)	1,226	−17	−15	−0.92**	−.19	−1.2	−0.1
Rettferdighet[b] (justice)	249	−32	−12	−0.81**	−.27	−1.4	−0.7

* Significant at .05 level; ** significant at .01 level

[a]The registration and retrieval procedures of this electronic media archive have been revised/improved several times since the present research commenced in 2002. Moreover, the "rules" for what is included/not included in the archive has varied, for example, according to authors' copyright. Therefore, over time, searches have produced marginally differing results for some search words. However, the overall developmental patterns have been the same

[b]Means that the word string is searched truncated

[c]"Brukere" (users) and "borgere" (citizens) had to be searched in plural to avoid other meanings of the words

[d]Larger increase/decrease in 1999–2008 than 1984–2008 indicates a nonlinear development.

As a consequence of the reported changes, it is also reasonable to expect that the traditional universalistic principle of equality within the Norwegian society, that all citizens have the same value, will also be under attack; social differences will increasingly be accepted. From 1984 through 2008, the frequency of the usage of the word "*likhet*" (equality) is reduced by 17%: a significantly negative correlation with linear time, with an EMAC of −1.2%. The usage of "*rettferdighet*" (justice), moreover, is reduced by 32%: a significantly negative correlation with linear time and an EMAC of −1.4%.

Taken together, the developmental patterns of the various words demonstrate how the currently globalizing ideology with its excessive individualist values and goals is increasingly taking control over the Norwegian language. What about Ghana and the Czech Republic? Do we find the same developmental trends?

Ghana (1999–2008)

Developmental changes over time for the various words in the Ghanaian context are presented in Table 4.2.[9] As can be seen, there is a marked increase of newspaper articles containing words associated with individualism. Number of articles containing "rights" increased by formidable 160%: "I" by 120% and "users" by 42% during this 10-year period. However, at the same time, also the usage of words associated with communality and communal values increased markedly in Ghana. Notably, number of newspaper articles containing "citizens" increased by 140%. Moreover, the usage of "solidarity" and "common" increased by 32% and 34%, respectively. "Equality" and "justice" increased by 77% and 33%, respectively.

It is noticeable that during this relative short period of 10 years, the developmental patterns for a majority of the words correlate significantly with linear time (see Table 4.2). This indicates stable and enduring processes of change. Moreover, the relative strengths of the ongoing changes in Ghana are underlined by high estimated mean annual changes (EMAC): for 11 out of 13 search words, EMAC is higher than 3%.

The Czech Republic

Developmental changes over time for the various words in the Czech context are presented in Table 4.3. As can be seen, for two of the theoretically most central search phrases associated with individualism, "I OR me" and "users," there is only

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[9] Even though we have data for Ghana back to 1997, here we present data from 1999 only. The reason being that in the Czech Republic, we have data from 1999 only, and in a longitudinal perspective, the difference between 1997 and 1999 is so little that we prefer to have data for identical periods for the two countries. In Table 4.1, Norwegian data for the same period is presented together with data covering the whole period 1984–2008.

Table 4.2 The search words used in the longitudinal (1999–2008) analysis in the Ghanaian society with number of articles observed in 2008, percentage increase/decrease since 1999, correlations (Pearson's r) with linear time (year), and estimated mean annual change (EMAC) for each search word

Search word	Adjusted no. occurrences in 2008	Percent increase/decrease since 1999	Correlation with linear time (year)	Estimated mean annual change (EMAC) (in %)
Rights[a]	821	160	.87**	7.0
Duty	516	14	.06	0.2
Responsibility	671	73	.96**	6.3
Common	859	34	.85**	4.5
Solidarity	93	32	.46	3.3
Cohesion	80	94	.66*	6.5
Belongingness	3	–[b]	.84	20.8
Users[c]	202	42	.52	3.9
Citizens	877	140	.92**	7.9
I[d]	1,806	120	.90**	7.1
We	1,571	95	.84**	6.4
Equality	125	77	.80**	12.5
Justice	1,006	33	.26	1.4

* Significant at .05 level; ** significant at .01 level
[a]"Rights" had to be searched in plural to avoid the meaning of "right" as opposite to left
[b]No observations in 1999
[c]"Users" and "citizens" were searched in plural because the Norwegian "brukere," and "borgere" had to be searched in plural to avoid other meanings of the words

minor increase in usage. However, the usage of the word "rights" decreases markedly by 26%. For the words referring to communality and communal values, there is also a rather mixed pattern. The usage of the majority of the words associated with communal values decreases; for example, "solidarity" decreases by 58%, "responsibility" by 23%, "common" by 17%, and "justice" by 15%. On the other hand, the usage of "cohesion" increases markedly by 59%. Finally, the usage of "citizens" and "equality" did not change at all. Thus, for words associated with individualism as well as for words associated with communal values, we find differential developmental trends in the Czech Republic. For half of the words (6 of 13), the developmental trends correlate significantly with linear time (see Table 4.3).

Norway, Ghana, and the Czech Republic: Comparisons for the Period 1999–2008

Different periods of time (25 years in Norway vs. 10 years in the Czech Republic and Ghana) render comparisons somewhat tentative. Therefore, in Table 4.4, we have excluded major parts of the Norwegian data and present developmental parameters for the years 1999–2008 only for all three countries. However, before comparing the

Table 4.3 The search words used in the longitudinal (1999–2008) analysis in the Czech society with number of articles observed in 2008, percentage increase/decrease since 1999, correlations (Pearson's r) with linear time (year), and estimated mean annual change (EMAC) for each search word

Search word	Adjusted no. occurrences in 2008	Percent increase/decrease since 1999	Correlation with linear time (year)	Estimated mean annual change (EMAC) (in %)
Rights[a]	6,270	−26	−0.79**	−4.1
Duty[b]	3,013	−16	−0.65*	−2.2
Responsibility[c]	2,167	−23	−0.80**	−3.3
Common[d]	6,389	−17	−0.68*	−2.5
Solidarity[e]	299	−58	−0.87**	−10.0
Cohesion[f]	240	59	.75*	5.8
Belongingness[g]	81	−22	−0.58	−4.6
User[h]	816	6	−0.25	−0.5
Citizen[i]	4,572	1	−0.45	−0.9
I or me[j]	35,259	7	.55	1.4
We or us[k]	45,963	−9	−0.38	−0.9
Equality[l]	214	−1	−0.13	−0.9
Justice[m]	1,002	−15	−0.60	−2.0

* Significant at .05 level; ** significant at .01 level

[a]Searched as: právo OR práva OR právu OR právem OR práv OR právům OR právech OR právy

[b]Searched as: povinnost OR povinnosti OR povinností OR povinnostem OR povinnostech OR povinnostmi

[c]Searched as: zodpovědnost OR zodpovědnosti OR zodpovědností OR zodpovědnostem OR zodpovědnostech OR zodpovědnostmi OR odpovědnost OR odpovědnosti OR odpovědností OR odpovědnostem OR odpovědnostech OR odpovědnostmi

[d]Searched as: společný OR společného OR společnému OR společném OR společným OR společná OR společné OR společnou OR společní OR společných OR společnými OR sdílený OR sdíleného OR sdílenému OR sdíleném OR sdíleným OR sdílená OR sdílené OR sdílenou OR sdílení OR sdílených OR sdílenými

[e]Searched as: solidarita OR solidarity OR solidaritě OR solidaritu OR solidarito OR solidaritou OR solidarity OR solidarit OR solidaritám OR solidaritách OR solidaritami

[f]Searched as: soudržnost OR soudržnosti OR soudržností OR soudržnostem OR soudržnostech OR soudržnostmi

[g]Searched as sunálezitost

[h]Searched as: uživatelé OR uživatelů OR uživatelům OR uživatele OR uživatelích OR uživateli OR konzumenti OR konzumentů OR konzumentům OR konzumenty OR konzumentech

[i]Searched as: občané OR občanů OR občanům OR občany OR občanech

[j]Searched as: já OR mě OR mne OR mi OR mně OR mnou

[k]Searched as: my OR nás OR nám OR námi

[l]Searched as: rovnost OR rovnosti OR rovností OR rovnostem OR rovnostech OR rovnostmi

[m]Searched as: spravedlnost OR spravedlnosti OR spravedlností OR spravedlnostem OR spravedlnostech OR spravedlnostmi

three societies across the past decade (1999–2008), it is relevant briefly to comment upon the historical (1984 onward) analyses in Norway. The above-described changes toward strong individualism and weakened communal values in Norway were particularly salient during the late 1980s and throughout the 1990s. For example, "solidaritet" (solidarity) and "samhold" (cohesion) decreased by 43% and 48%,

Table 4.4 Comparison of changes over time in Norway, Ghana, and the Czech Republic during the decade 1999–2008

Search word[a]	Percent increase/decrease since 1999		
	Norway	Ghana	The Czech Republic
Rights	18	160	−26
Duty	−11	14	−16
Responsibility	−5	73	−23
Common	−2	34	−17
Solidarity	−5	32	−58
Cohesion	−34	94	59
Users	50	42	6
Citizens	−28	140	1
I or me[b]	15	120	7
We or us[c]	14	95	−9
Equality	−15	77	−1
Justice	−12	33	−15

[a]Exact search string for the Norwegian variant of each search word is found in Table 4.1, of the Ghanaian search words in Table 4.2, and of the Czech search words in Table 4.3

[b]Searched as "jeg" OR "meg"' (I OR me) in Norwegian. Searched as "I am" and "I was" in Ghanaian; results presented here are mean values for the two searches. Searched as: já OR mě OR mne OR mi OR mně OR mnou in Czech

[c]Searched as "vi OR oss" (we OR us) in Norwegian. Searched as "we are" and "we were" in Ghanaian; results presented here are mean values for the two searches. Searched as: my OR nás OR nám OR námi in Czech

respectively, from 1990 to 2000, whereas "rettighet" (rights) increased by 17% and "brukere" (users) by formidable 131%. Our analyses indicate that influences in the Norwegian society by globalizing neoliberalism peaked in the early 2000s (cf., also Nafstad et al. 2007, 2009a, b). Observing relative small changes in percentage (Table 4.4), fewer significant correlations with linear time, and smaller EMACs (Tables 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3) in Norway than in the other two societies across the past decade, it is reasonable to assume that globalizing neoliberalism has imbued the Western Norwegian welfare society years before the Ghanaian and Czech societies.

As can be seen in Table 4.4, merely two words demonstrate the same developmental pattern, either increase or decrease in usage, across all three countries. It testifies to the massive global influence of neoliberalism with its strong individualism that the two words, which both demonstrate increasing usage across all the three differential countries, are "I OR me" and "user."

Thus, Norway demonstrates the developmental pattern that we would expect in our era of globalizing neoliberalism: Words referring to individualism increase, whereas words referring to communal values decrease. Characteristic to Ghana is

that the individualist as well as the communal words increases markedly in usage. Regarding the consistent and marked increase in usage of communal words, Ghana deviates from both of the two European countries in which usage of communal words decreases. The Czech Republic demonstrate by far the most mixed developmental pattern; whereas the vast majority of the communal words decrease as in the other European country, Norway, one communal word, "cohesion," increases by formidable 59%. Similarly, one of the most individualist words, "rights," does not follow the general trend of individualist words in the Czech Republic and Norway but decreases by a marked 26%.

Limitations of the Present Study

The methodology adopted in the present study has been developed and refined within the Norwegian context for more than a decade (Nafstad 2002; Nafstad et al. 2006, 2007, 2009a, b, c; Rand-Hendriksen 2008). The present study shows that the methodology is promising with regard to exposing culturally different developmental trends as well. However, in future studies, efforts should be taken to elaborate the search systems and the electronic databases in the actual countries (in this case Ghana and the Czech Republic).

Another critical objection could be that we have presented developmental trends of too few words to warrant justifiable interpretations. In order to conclude about the influence of globalizing neoliberalist ideology with its excessive individualism upon language, a greater number of words should be analyzed, thus improving the validity of the description. However, we have, as argued, attempted to select a variety of words representing core aspects of individualist and communal values, respectively. How many words should be included in the analysis is a matter of judgment. We believe that by combining the selected search words, we have offered a useful description of the most salient and relevant ideological shifts across the past years.

Conclusion

The current globalized culture has privileged the ideology of excessive individualism and consumerism. Contending that civic virtues are fundamental for well-being, that human beings are prosocial, and that a good life comprises solidarity and community, we have investigated the interplay between the currently globalized ideology and local ideologies in three different societies. Our parallel longitudinal analyses of changes in language usage in Ghana, Norway, and the Czech Republic demonstrate how local cultures and the forces of globalization merge and shape the resultant ideologies in the public discourse very differently: In all three societies, the usage of words signaling individualism increase. With regard to words signaling communal values, however, the developmental trends differ completely. Whereas the usage of such words decreases

in the two European societies, the usage increases markedly in West African Ghana. Finally, developmental trends in the Czech Republic are more mixed than in the other two societies, most probably reflecting the dramatic changes of ideologies this country has undergone after the Iron Curtain was lifted. Thus, the Czech Republic is currently obviously struggling to find a balance between individualist and communal values.

As Delle Fave, Massimini, and Bassi (2011) contend, socio-cultural information, norms, and values undergo dynamic processes of change across time. Currently, late capitalist free-market ideology is spreading across the globe, influencing and changing basic ideologies or value systems within societies around the world. However, every nation has its own economic, political, cultural, and social history which makes each nation negotiate, merge with, and implement the globalized ideologies in unique ways. We have previously argued (Nafstad et al. 2009b) that as a consequence of this complex interplay, positive psychology should continually be attentive to the situation and development of local ideology discourses. Such ideology discourses represent important socio-cultural information; they represent meaning systems, ideals, values, and norms in society and carry tremendous influences on the lives of people as they shape people's belief systems about the good life, well-being, and how to navigate between considerations of their own individual needs and the happiness and the well-being of others and society.

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