

THE HONG KONG POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING

Departmental Research Seminar

Is globalization making us more similar?
Answers from Europe and around the globe

By

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Date : 26 Nov 2018 (MON)

Time : 2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Venue : M802

Abstract

Cultural values are adaptive mechanisms that have historically evolved to habituate societies to different natural and social environments. The main differences relate to the role of the individual in society, the acceptance of hierarchy, traditional authority, gender equality and sexual liberalization. Large cultural distances exist between several world regions that are based primarily on geographic proximity and common religious and historical background. Globalization, however, diminishes the distances and enables instantaneous cultural exchange across the globe. Many countries have also closed their economic disparity with the West, therefore their societies are exposed to similar socioeconomic conditions that would assume cultural change in a convergent direction. Should we expect that the world has converged towards a common cultural script since the rapid globalization of recent decades? Plamen Akaliyski finds answers from the World Values Survey, which is the largest cross-national social survey ever conducted, covering almost 100 countries since the beginning of the 1980s. The intensive interaction within the European Union (EU) as well as the active promotion of certain values by EU institutions has enabled the cultural convergence of Western and Central European societies. The nations not participating in the European integration have, however, further diverged from the EU's average and have created large cultural polarization of Europe that threatens the stability of the continent. On a global scale, nations have not blended their cultural values either. Differences in identities and clustered networks of interactions led to shortening the value distances only within cultural regions but those between them have grown larger. As a result, the world has become not more culturally united but fragmented and this may pose challenges to solving global problems and disagreements.

Mr Plamen Akaliyski is a PhD research fellow at the Department of Sociology and Human Geography at the University of Oslo, Norway, and an associate researcher at the Laboratory for Comparative Social Research, Higher School of Economics, Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia. He is a graduate from the Free University Berlin and a former research fellow at WZB Berlin Social Science Center in Germany. His dissertation focuses on cultural value change in Europe and its geopolitical implications; parts of it have been published in the European Journal of Political Research and Comparative Sociology. He is currently a visiting researcher at the Department of Management and Marketing, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

All interested are welcome.



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