

HCU

HafenCity University
Hamburg

University of the Built Environment
and Metropolitan Development

Stoyan V. Sgourev

ESSEC Business School Paris

THE RADICALIZATION OF IDEAS:

Marginality and Mobility in the Art World

Public
Lecture

June 5, 2018
18:00

HCU Hamburg
R 2.102

Where does radical innovation originate from - the center or the periphery? In this talk, I propose a process interface, where ideas from the core are radicalized on the periphery, thereby realigning the primacy of the core in diffusing ideas and that of the periphery in forging distinctiveness. Quantitative and qualitative evidence from the history of art lend support to the arguments, including breakthrough paintings, such as *The Scream* by Munch and *the Black Square* by Malevitch. Peripheral locations deepen faultlines and reinforce contradictions in personal identities, making the pursuit of compromise less feasible or less likely. Radicalization is facilitated by conditions of simultaneously increasing differences and exchanges between the core and the periphery. This framework helps explain sudden shifts in the epicenter of innovation, when experiments escalate on their way out of central locations.



Stoyan V. Sgourev is Professor of Management at ESSEC Business School Paris. He received his PhD in Sociology from Stanford University. His research is focused on innovation, specifically in art, ballet and opera. He also pursues historical subjects, such as early modern Dutch trade or banking in Italy. His latest project is on the rise of Modern art (1905-1915), tracing careers of artists and the evolution of collaborative networks.

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Economic Studies Group
HCU | Gernot Grabher