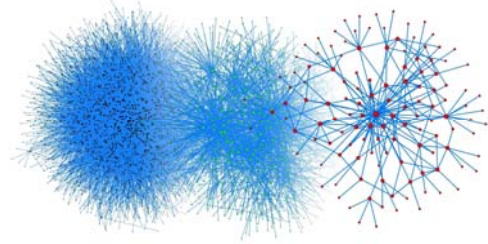


21ST CENTURY SCHOOL
SEMINAR SERIES

“COMPLEXITY AND SYSTEMIC RISK”



THURSDAY 4 MARCH 2010, 3.30-5PM

Professor Dirk Helbing

Professor of Sociology, in particular of Modeling and Simulation, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich, Switzerland

"Cooperation, Norms and Conflict: Towards Simulating the Foundations of Society"

Summary: In order to understand social systems, it is essential to identify the circumstances under which individuals spontaneously start cooperating or developing shared behaviors, norms, and culture. In this connection, it is important to study the role of social mechanisms such as repeated interactions, group selection, network formation, costly punishment and group pressure, and how they allow us to transform social dilemmas into interactive situations that promote the social system. Furthermore, it is interesting to study the role that social inequality, the protection of private property, or the on-going globalization play for the resulting "character" of a social system (cooperative or not). It is well-known that social cooperation can suddenly break down, giving rise to poverty or conflict. The decline of high cultures and the outbreak of civil wars or revolutions are well-known examples. The more surprising is that one can develop an integrated game-theoretical description of phenomena as different as the outbreak and breakdown of cooperation, the formation of norms or subcultures, and the occurrence of conflicts.

*The seminar takes place in the Old Indian Institute Building
(corner of Holywell and Catte Streets).*

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