Seminar: The Self-Organisation of the Information Society

Session 2
Social Self-Organisation

Social systems are but another type of self-organising systems. It will be demonstrated that the application of the theory of self-organisation to society is capable of reconciling the two opposite approaches that up to now characterise the discourse in sociology: action theory which focusses on agency, i.e. mainly on actions of individual actors, and system theory which stresses the structure, i.e. mainly organisational relationships. Furthermore, this application can meet criteria of critical theory. This will be exemplified with Ernst Bloch's concept of the Not-Yet which combines what is desired with what is possible. Thus, a Critical Social Systems Theory (CSST) can be envisioned.