

The Dynamics and Evolution of Social Systems: New Foundations of a Mathematical Sociology (Theory and Decision Library A:)

Jürgen Klüver



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When I started with this book several years ago I originally intended to write an introduction to mathematical systems theory for social scientists. Yet the more I thought about systems theory on the one side and theoretical sociology on the other the more I became convinced that the classical mathematical tools are not very well suited for the problems of sociology. Then I became acquainted with the researches on complex systems by the Santa Fe Institute and in particular with cellular automata, Boolean networks and genetic algorithms. These mathematically very simple but extremely efficient tools are, in my opinion, very well appropriate for modeling social dynamics. Therefore I tried to reformulate several classical problems of theoretical sociology which is able to join immediately on the great traditions of theoretical sociology. The result is this book; whether I succeeded with it is of course up to the readers. As the readers will perceive, the book could not have been written by me alone but only by the joint labors of the computer group at the Interdisciplinary Center of Research in Higher Education at the University of Essen. The members of the group, Christina Stoica, Jom Schmidt and Ralph Kier, are named in several subchapters as co-authors. Yet even more important than their contributions to this book were the permanent discussions with them and their patience with my new and very speculative ideas. Many thanks.

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