



Complexity Perspectives in Innovation and Social Change (Methodos Series)

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Innovation is nowadays a question of life and death for many of the economies of the western world. Yet, due to our generally reductionist scientific paradigm, invention and innovation are rarely studied scientifically. Most work prefers to study its context and its consequences. As a result, we are as a society, lacking the scientific tools to understand, improve or otherwise impact on the processes of invention and innovation. This book delves deeply into that topic, taking the position that the complex systems approach, with its emphasis on 'emergence', is better suited than our traditional approach to the phenomenon. In a collection of very coherent papers, which are the result of an EU-funded four year international research team's effort, it addresses various aspect of the topic from different disciplinary angles. One of the main emphases is the need, in the social sciences, to move away from neo-darwinist 'population thinking' to 'organization thinking' if we want to understand social evolution. Another main emphasis is on developing a generative approach to invention and innovation, looking in detail at the contexts within which invention and innovation occur, and how these contexts impact on the chances for success or failure. Throughout, the book is infused with interesting new insights, but also presents several well-elaborated case studies that connect the ideas with a substantive body of 'real world' information.



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