Successful or not, we all (have to?) go to various markets and participate in their activities. Yet, so little is understood about their functionings. Efforts to model various markets are now substantial. Econophysicists have also come up recently with several innovative models and their analyses.

This book is a proceedings of the International Workshop on “Econophysics of Stock Markets and Minority Games”, held in Kolkata during February 14-17, 2006, under the auspices of the Centre for Applied Mathematics and Computational Science, Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics, Kolkata. This is the second event in the Econophys-Kolkata series of meetings; the Econophys-Kolkata I was held in March 2005 (Proceedings: Econophysics of Wealth Distributions, published in the same New Economic Windows series by Springer, Milan in 2005). We understand from the enthusiastic response of the participants that the one-day trip to the Sunderbans (Tiger Reserve; a world heritage point) along with the lecture-sessions on the vessel had been hugely enjoyable and successful. The concluding session had again very lively discussions on the workshop topics as well as on econophysics in general, initiated by J. Barkley Rosser, Matteo Marsili, Rosario Mantegna and Robin Stinchcombe (Chair). We plan to hold the next meeting in this series, on “Econophysics and Sociophysics: Debates on Complexity Issues in Economics and Sociology” early next year.

We are very happy that several leading economists and physicists engaged in these recent developments in the econophysics of markets, their analysis and modelling could come and participate. Although a few of them (Fabrizio Lillo, Thomas Lux and Rosario Mantegna) could not contribute to this proceedings volume due to shortage of time (we again try to get this proceedings published within six months from the workshop), we are indeed very happy that most of the invited participants could contribute in this book. The papers on market analysis and modellings are very original and their timely appearance here will render the book extremely useful for the researchers. The two historical notes and the Comments and Discussions section will give the readers two examples of personal perspectives regarding the new developments in econophysics, and
some ‘touch’ of the lively debates taking place in these Econophys-Kolkata series of workshops.

We are extremely grateful to Mauro Gallegati and Massimo Salzano of the editorial board of this New Economic Windows series of Springer for their encouragement and support, and to Marina Forlizzi for her efficient maintenance of publication schedule.

Kolkata,                                Arnab Chatterjee
June 2006                                Bikas K. Chakrabarti
# Contents

## Part I  Markets and their Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On Stock-Price Fluctuations in the Periods of Booms and Stagnations</td>
<td>Taisei Kaizoji</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Outlook on Correlations in Stock Prices</td>
<td>Anirban Chakraborti</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Power (Law) of Indian Markets: Analysing NSE and BSE Trading Statistics</td>
<td>Sitabhra Sinha, Raj Kumar Pan</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Random Matrix Approach To Volatility In An Indian Financial Market</td>
<td>V. Kulkarni, N. Deo</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why do Hurst Exponents of Traded Value Increase as the Logarithm of Company Size?</td>
<td>Zoltán Eisler, János Kertész</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Distribution of Stock Returns Runs</td>
<td>Honggang Li, Yan Gao</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluctuation Dynamics of Exchange Rates on Indian Financial Market</td>
<td>A. Sarkar, P. Barat</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise Trading in an Emerging Market: Evidence and Analysis</td>
<td>Debasis Bagchi</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Contents

**How Random is the Walk: Efficiency of Indian Stock and Futures Markets**  
_Udayan Kumar Basu_ ................................. 85

---

**Part II Markets and their Models**

- **Models of Financial Market Information Ecology**  
  _Damien Challet_ .................................................. 101

- **Estimating Phenomenological Parameters in Multi-Assets Markets**  
  _Giacomo Raffaelli, Matteo Marsili_ ................. 113

- **Agents Play Mix-game**  
  _Chengling Gou_ ............................................. 123

- **Triangular Arbitrage as an Interaction in Foreign Exchange Markets**  
  _Yukihiro Aiba, Naomichi Hatano_ ....................... 133

- **Modelling Limit Order Financial Markets**  
  _Robin Stinchcombe_ ........................................ 143

- **Two Fractal Overlap Time Series and Anticipation of Market Crashes**  
  _Bikas K. Chakrabarti, Arnab Chatterjee, Pratip Bhattacharyya_ ............ 153

- **The Apparent Madness of Crowds: Irrational Collective Behavior Emerging from Interactions among Rational Agents**  
  _Sitabhra Sinha_ ............................................. 159

- **Agent-Based Modelling with Wavelets and an Evolutionary Artificial Neural Network: Applications to CAC 40 Forecasting**  
  _Serge Hayward_ ........................................... 163

- **Information Extraction in Scheduling Problems with Non-Identical Machines**  
  _Manipushpak Mitra_ ......................................... 175

- **Modelling Financial Time Series**  

- **Random Matrix Approach to Fluctuations and Scaling in Complex Systems**  
  _M. S. Santhanam_ ........................................... 192
The Economic Efficiency of Financial Markets
Yongui Wang .......................................................... 201

Regional Inequality
Abhirup Sarkar ....................................................... 208

Part III  Historical Notes

A Brief History of Economics: An Outsider’s Account
Bikas K Chakrabarti ............................................... 219

The Nature and Future of Econophysics
J. Barkley Rosser, Jr. ................................................. 225

Part IV  Comments and Discussions

Econophys-Kolkata II Workshop Summary
J. Barkley Rosser, Jr. ............................................... 237

Econophysics: Some Thoughts on Theoretical Perspectives
Matteo Marsili ......................................................... 240

Comments on “Worrying Trends in Econophysics”: Income Distribution Models
Peter Richmond, Bikas K. Chakrabarti, Arnab Chatterjee, John Angle . . 244
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<thead>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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