Preface

The ideas behind this book were developed gradually over a number of years. Many individuals have influenced this effort, particularly by sharing their own experiences on anti-money laundering (AML). However, what has undoubtedly taken a much longer time to establish was the connection between anti-money laundering as a pragmatic problem domain and systems theory as a theory that could be used to develop AML research. Even though this book constitutes an academic endeavour in its core, there are indeed important implications for practitioners. Research results from a financial institution that was studied over a period of three years are included in this book. I trust that the analysis of AML operations of the financial institution will be of considerable interest to the reader. This analysis is presented as an in-depth case study and a whole chapter is dedicated to this purpose. The influences of information systems on AML, as well as the internal suspicious transaction-reporting regime of the financial institution, yield some interesting results and point to a fascinating complexity around AML.

I would like to thank a number of people without whom my AML experience would not have been the same. From the London School of Economics, I would like to thank James Backhouse and Bernard Dyer, two close collaborators with whom I've worked on two AML projects funded by the European Commission (projects Spotlight and GATE), as well as Jeannine McMahon for managing these projects on behalf of LSE Enterprise. For their collaboration throughout these projects, I would like to thank a good friend and ex-student from the LSE, Giorgos Panousopoulos, as well as Massimo Nardo from the Central Bank of Italy who has always assisted our LSE-based research activities with his experience on the modelling of money laundering. For originally introducing me to systems theory, I would like to thank Ian Angell, my former PhD supervisor and co-author on a number of academic publications (including a book titled *Science's First Mistake*); he has always given me invaluable advice on a number of research initiatives and was always willing to review my work. I would also like to thank Jannis Kallinikos for pointing me to the works of Niklas Luhmann and second-order cybernetics, as well as Carsten Sørensen for a number of useful discussions on data mining applications and general discussions on technology matters.

I'm particularly grateful to Professor Ian Angell, Bernard Dyer, Professor Michael Mainelli and Alexei Poulin for reviewing draft chapters of this book and for providing me with very useful comments that have improved the text. Naturally, I would like to thank all the employees of the financial institution who have shared with me a wealth of information but who cannot be named for confidentiality reasons. This book is dedicated to them.

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