

Advanced Information and Knowledge Processing

Longbing Cao

Metasynthetic Computing and Engineering of Complex Systems

Advanced Information and Knowledge Processing

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Preface

We are in the era of complex systems.

An increasingly critical research issue facing researchers in different disciplines is how to compute and engineer complex systems and how to build corresponding problem-solving systems.

Various system metaphors have accordingly been proposed to address the intricacies of complex systems. This effort has become increasingly focused in recent decades as complex systems have become omnipresent in our everyday, social, business, and web worlds.

Reductionism has proved to be a very effective philosophy for tackling complexities in physical and chemical systems, in particular by dedicating priority to the parts of a system rather than the whole. Its principal ideas have widely influenced the research and engineering of complex scientific problems in many domains and business applications.

In recent decades, holism has emerged, bringing with it a focus on systems thinking and an emphasis on understanding complexities in the whole rather than merely in part. System sciences and cognitive sciences have a particular interest in holism. The science of complexity urges the exploration of holism for understanding complex natural and social systems.

Complementing the challenges of applying reductionism and holism for complex systems, systematology combines top-down holistic methodologies with bottom-up reductionistic approaches to consider the complexities in the whole system and its parts, as well as their respective connections. Systematology appears to be really important for addressing the complexities of open complex giant systems, in which it may not be effective to apply only reductionism or holism.

Faced with open complex giant systems like the Internet, we often do not know what we do not know. A qualitative-to-quantitative metasynthesis which explores the synergy of human intelligence and machine intelligence in a human-centered, human-machine-cooperative way may be helpful in understanding system complexities and building problem-solving systems.

Metasynthetic computing and engineering take human-centered, human-machine-cooperative, qualitative-to-quantitative metasynthesis as the main guide for understanding open complex systems. In this book, we outline the corresponding aspects: Chap. 1 presents an overview of complex systems, Chap. 2 considers ubiquitous intelligence in complex systems, Chap. 3 examines system methodologies, Chap. 4 explores computing paradigms, Chap. 5 focuses on metasynthesis, Chap. 6 looks at organization- and service-oriented methodology for engineering complex systems, Chaps. 7, 8, and 9 investigate visual modeling, formal modeling, and integrative modeling of complex systems, Chaps. 10 and 11 discuss the architecture and detailed design of complex problem-solving systems, Chap. 12 addresses ontological engineering, and Chaps. 13, 14, and 15 detail several case studies in building problem-solving systems for actionable knowledge discovery and understanding complex behavior and social data.

The overarching goal of compiling this book is to encourage and inspire discussion and reflection, and the implementation of effective methodologies and tools for computing and engineering open complex systems and problems, while synergizing ubiquitous intelligence, including human, domain, social, network, data, and machine intelligence, during the respective problem-solving processes and in problem-solving systems.

Sydney, Australia

Longbing Cao

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