

Preface

The term evolutionary computing refers to the study of the foundations and applications of certain heuristic techniques based on the principles of natural evolution; thus the aim of designing evolutionary algorithms (EAs) is to mimic some of the processes taking place in natural evolution. These algorithms are classified into three main categories, depending more on historical development than on major functional techniques. In fact, their biological basis is essentially the same. Hence

$$EC = GA \cup GP \cup ES \cup EP$$

EC = Evolutionary Computing

GA = Genetic Algorithms, GP = Genetic Programming

ES = Evolution Strategies, EP = Evolutionary Programming

Although the details of biological evolution are not completely understood (even nowadays), there is some strong experimental evidence to support the following points:

- Evolution is a process operating on chromosomes rather than on organisms.
- Natural selection is the mechanism that selects organisms which are well-adapted to the environment to reproduce more often than those which are not.
- The evolutionary process takes place during the reproduction stage that includes mutation (which causes the chromosomes of offspring to be different from those of the parents) and recombination (which combines the chromosomes of the parents to produce the offspring).

Based upon these features, the previously mentioned three models of evolutionary computing were independently (and almost simultaneously) developed.

An evolutionary algorithm (EA) is an iterative and stochastic process that operates on a set of individuals (called a population). Each individual represents a potential solution to the problem being solved. Initially, the population is randomly generated. Every individual in the population is assigned, by means of a fitness function, a measure of its goodness with respect to the problem under consideration, which guides the search. The whole process is sketched as:

```

Generate[P(0)]
t ← 0
WHILENOT Termination – Criterion
DO
  Evaluate [P(t)]
  P'(t) ← Select [P(t)]
  P''(t) ← Apply – Reproduction – Operatorson [P'(t)]
  P(t + 1) ← Replaceby [P(t), P''(t)]
  t ← t + 1
END
RETURN Best – Solution
Skeleton of an Evolutionary Algorithm

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It can be seen that the algorithm comprises three major stages: selection, reproduction, and replacement. During the selection stage, a temporary population is created in which fitter individuals have a higher number of instances than less fit ones (natural selection). The reproductive operators are applied to these individuals in this population yielding a new population. Finally, individuals of the original population are substituted by the newly created individuals. This replacement usually tries to keep the best individuals, deleting the worst ones. The whole process is repeated until a termination criterion is achieved. It should be noted that EAs are heuristics, and thus they do not ensure an optimal solution.

Major differences between GA, ES, and EP come from the operators they use and in general from the way they implement the three stages: selection, reproduction, and replacement. EP is closely related to ES. Unlike GA, no crossover operator is used in ES/EP. Moreover, more emphasis is placed on behavioral changes than on the modification of the genetic material. For this reason, the genotype in ES/EP is usually very different (e.g., real numbers for ES, and a finite automaton for EP), and mutation operators are prepared to deal with such representations.

Any EA is composed of a set of common elements, in spite of its differences from other EAs, as follows:

- A population of trial solutions/strings. Typically strings are composed of binary, float, or some complex structure (e.g., a tree) genes.
- A fitness function to be optimized for evaluating strings.
- Some selection/replacement mechanism in order to simulate the survival of the fittest individuals for future generations.
- Nature-inspired operators (like recombination and mutation) for changing a string into a new string.

A large number of researchers, all over the world, have been engaged in developing EC methodologies for designing intelligent decision-making systems for a variety of real-world problems. However, research articles on such topics are sparse.

The present book provides a collection of 40 articles, divided into two parts, containing new material on the theoretical aspects of EC, and demonstrating the usefulness/success of EC for various kinds of large real-world problems. Each chapter represents an article in its own right. Part I contains 23 articles dealing with various theoretical aspects of EC, while Part II contains 17 articles demonstrating the success of EC methodologies. These articles are written by leading experts from many countries.

Part I starts with the article of Vassilev et al. who studied structures of fitness landscapes to provide a suitable mathematical framework for investigating the evolvability of complex systems. Xin Yao et al. (in a related article in Chap. 2) demonstrated the role of search step size in approximating the landscape by using different hybrid EAs. Chapter 3 is intended to provide an introductory review of the existing work done on visualizing EAs, and to identify some of the key issues for future research.

New schemes of EAs or designing their operators are described in Chaps. 4 and 5. A parameter-free GA (called PfGA) is proposed by Sawai et al. in Chap. 4 based on the disparity theory of evolution which exploits different mutation rates and variable population sizes. In Chap. 5 Droste and Wiesmann suggest guidelines for the design of genetic operators and the representation of phenotypic space to solve specific types of problem. The applicability of this concept is shown by a systematic design of a GP system for finding Boolean functions. This system is the first GP system that has reportedly found the 12-parity function.

Eiben demonstrates the utility of multiparent reproduction with successful results in Chap. 6. The traditional debate of mutation and crossover is also considered in the light of multiparent reproduction.

In Chapter 7 Michalewicz and Schmidt propose a test case generator which is capable of creating various test problems with different characteristics, including the dimensionality of the problem, number of local optima, number of active constraints at the optimum, topology of the feasible search space, etc. Such a test case generator is useful for analyzing and comparing different constraint-handling techniques.

Handling real-coded parameters in GAs is an important research topic nowadays. In Chap. 8 Ono et al. propose a new crossover operator named the unimodal normal distribution crossover for real-coded GAs which works efficiently for optimization problems with epistasis among parameters.

Branke and Schneck provide a good survey of the literature on EC in Chap. 9 for dynamic optimization problems, and offer a classification of the same set of problems. They also suggest a new technique for this task using a multipopulation structure.

In the next chapter Deb proposes a few classical techniques to identify a preferred or compromise solution by introducing a biased sharing technique to find a biased distribution of Pareto-optimal solutions in multiobjective

GAs. The results are encouraging for more complex multiobjective optimization problems.

The utility of gene expression in scalable genetic search is studied by Kargupta in Chap. 11.

Knjazew and Goldberg present an ordering messy GA in Chap. 12 that is able to solve difficult permutation problems efficiently according to the experimental results.

Global optimal solutions are not always acceptable, if they are sensitive to perturbations in the environment. In Chap. 13 Tsutsui and Ghosh suggest ways of detecting robust solutions thereby extending the utility of GAs.

In Chap. 14, EC is used by Spears and Gordon to evolve finite-state machines having an optimal number of states for better performance in resource allocation.

Chapters 15 and 16 try to link EC with statistical inferencing. In Chap. 15 Zhang tries to view EC as a Bayesian inference that iteratively updates the posterior distribution of a population from the prior knowledge and observation of new individuals to find an individual with the maximum posterior probability. Chapter 16 by Aizawa is an attempt to combine experimental design and EC into a single search strategy using a specific type of recombination function called a deterministic crossover operator.

The next three chapters deal with the theoretical understanding of biology and its simulation. Maley's article in Chap. 17 aims to use EAs to extend our theoretical understanding of biology, and to reunite theoretical biology with experimental biology. Kumar and Bentley present a brief survey on using embryology and genetics in developmental biology in Chap. 18. An application of two embryological techniques is also shown in the evolution of certain predefined letters. In Chap. 19 Ray describes an evolutionary approach to synthetic biology which inoculates the process of natural evolution in an artificial medium, and finds the natural form of the living organisms in the artificial medium. He also suggests a possible means of harnessing the evolutionary process for the production of complex computer software.

Chapters 20–22 deal with other heuristic algorithms closely related to EAs, simulating some other natural phenomena. The main goal of Chap. 20 by Glover et al. is to demonstrate the development of scatter search procedures by illustrating how they may be applied to a class of nonlinear optimization problems of bounded variables. They conclude the chapter by highlighting the key ideas and research issues that offer the promise of yielding future advances. In Chap. 21 the application of several ant colony optimization techniques is demonstrated by Carbonaro and Maniezzo on a number of hard optimization problems with specific attention to a new algorithm called ANTS. In recent years, considerable interest and enthusiasm have been generated by the prospect of widespread use of intelligent agent-based systems. A co-evolutionary optimization approach for evolving agent groups for multiagent

systems and an adaptive system approach are suggested by Sen et al. in Chap. 22.

Schmidhuber studies in Chap. 23 an embedded active learner that can limit its prediction to arbitrary computable aspects of spatiotemporal events using probabilistic algorithms.

In Chap. 24, the first article of Part II, Ku et al. demonstrate a method to combine local search and evolutionary search techniques for neural network learning to reduce the computational time.

Chapters 25–27 deal with designing analog circuits using EC techniques. Analog circuits are evolved using variable-length genetic algorithms in Chap. 25 by Iba et al. Koza suggests a technique in Chap. 26 for applying genetic programming techniques for the automatic synthesis of topology and sizing for analog electrical circuits, the synthesis of placement and routing for circuits, and the synthesis of both the topology and tuning of controllers. In Chap. 27 Cohoon et al. use EC for a physical design problem where the input to the physical design set is a logical representation of the system under design, and the output of this step is the layout of a physical package that optimally or nearly optimally realizes the logical presentation. They also discuss important requirements for evolutionary-based approaches for even greater acceptance within the VLSI community.

The next two chapters (28 and 29) discuss issues related to designing communication channels. In Chap. 28 Zimmermann et al. report results on the application of EAs constrained to multiobjective, large, real-world antenna placement problems for mobile radio networks. EAs are used by Back et al. in Chap. 29 to find a routing table that increases the performance of a communication network by reducing the probability of end-to-end blocking, and which is applied to a non-hierarchical network.

Scheduling by EAs is discussed in Chaps. 30 and 31. Ross et al. present a survey with critical analysis on the application of EC in timetable scheduling problems in Chap. 30. They claim that a wide-ranging investigation is needed on this problem. Chapter 31 by Dorndorf et al. describes techniques to use GAs as metaheuristics to guide an optimal design schedule decomposition sequence for solving the minimum makespan problem for job shop scheduling, resulting in shorter makespans than for other local search algorithms. A scheme for bus driver scheduling along various routes is suggested by Yoshihara in Chap. 32.

Chapters 33 and 34 demonstrate the usefulness of EAs for data-mining problems. Alex Freitas presents an excellent survey of different EAs for data mining problems in Chap. 33. He also discusses whether the tasks of data mining and knowledge discovery in data bases will influence the design of EAs. Interactive EC is used by Teraso and Irada in Chap. 34 to get effective features from the data, and inductive learning is used to acquire simple decision rules from the subset of data for data-mining problems using clinical data.

Chapter 35 by Bhanu and Fonder discusses an approach to image segmentation which is guided by GAs and learns the appropriate subset and spatial combination of a collection of discriminating functions associated with image features. In this context they also suggest techniques for physics-based segmentation evaluation, novel crossover operator and fitness functions, and a system prototype, and they demonstrate experimental results on real synthetic aperture radar imagery of varying complexity.

Cao and Dasgupta propose an immunogenetics approach to recognize spectra for chemical analysis in Chap. 36. Their experimental results show the effectiveness of the approach in finding products responsible for a composite spectrum in which there are multiple, physically mixed products.

Steffen Kremer describe techniques which applied GAs to two-dimensional protein folding in Chap. 37. The results and limitations of the applicability of GAs to the problem of three-dimensional fold prediction are also presented.

Hasegawa and Fukuda suggest a method to control the regrasping motion of a four-fingered robot hand using EP in Chap. 38.

In Chap. 39 Lanzi and Riolo review recent advances and trends in learning classifier systems (LCS). These include credit assigned to rules, alternative LCS architectures like rule syntax and semantics, and the increase in the number and range of LCS.

David Fogel describes a hybrid technique in Chap. 40 for exploiting the advantages of neural networks and EC for designing a program which plays checkers at an expert level.

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Contents

Part I

Smoothness, Ruggedness and Neutrality of Fitness Landscapes: from Theory to Application	3
<i>Vesselin K. Vassilev, Terence C. Fogarty, and Julian F. Miller</i>	
Fast Evolutionary Algorithms	45
<i>Xin Yao, Yong Liu, Ko-Hsin Liang, and Guangming Lin</i>	
Visualizing Evolutionary Computation	95
<i>Trevor D. Collins</i>	
New Schemes of Biologically Inspired Evolutionary Computation	117
<i>Hidefumi Sawai, Susumu Adachi, and Sachio Kizu</i>	
On the Design of Problem-specific Evolutionary Algorithms .	153
<i>Stefan Droste and Dirk Wiesmann</i>	
Multiparent Recombination in Evolutionary Computing	175
<i>A. E. Eiben</i>	
TCG-2: A Test-case Generator for Non-linear Parameter Optimisation Techniques	193
<i>Zbigniew Michalewicz and Martin Schmidt</i>	
A Real-coded Genetic Algorithm Using the Unimodal Normal Distribution Crossover	213
<i>Isao Ono, Hajime Kita, and Shigenobu Kobayashi</i>	
Designing Evolutionary Algorithms for Dynamic Optimization Problems	239
<i>Jürgen Branke and Hartmut Schmeck</i>	
Multi-objective Evolutionary Algorithms: Introducing Bias Among Pareto-optimal Solutions	263
<i>Kalyanmoy Deb</i>	
Gene Expression and Scalable Genetic Search	293
<i>Hillol Kargupta</i>	

XIV Contents

**Solving Permutation Problems
with the Ordering Messy Genetic Algorithm**..... 321
Dimitri Knjazew and David E. Goldberg

**Effects of Adding Perturbations to Phenotypic Parameters
in Genetic Algorithms for Searching Robust Solutions** 351
Shigeeyoshi Tsutsui and Ashish Ghosh

Evolution of Strategies for Resource Protection Problems ... 367
William M. Spears and Diana F. Gordon-Spears

**A Unified Bayesian Framework
for Evolutionary Learning and Optimization** 393
Byoung-Tak Zhang

Designed Sampling with Crossover Operators..... 413
Akiko Aizawa

Evolutionary Computation for Evolutionary Theory 441
C. C. Maley

Computational Embryology: Past, Present and Future 461
Sanjeev Kumar and Peter J. Bentley

**An Evolutionary Approach to Synthetic Biology:
Zen in the Art of Creating Life** 479
Thomas S. Ray

Scatter Search 519
Fred Glover, Manuel Laguna, and Rafael Martí

**The Ant Colony Optimization Paradigm
for Combinatorial Optimization**..... 539
Antonella Carbonaro and Vittorio Maniezzo

Evolving Coordinated Agents 559
Sandip Sen, Sandip Debnath, and Manisha Mundhe

Exploring the Predictable 579
Jürgen Schmidhuber

Part II

**Approaches to Combining Local and Evolutionary Search
for Training Neural Networks:
A Review and Some New Results** 615
Kim W. C. Ku, M. W. Mak, and W. C. Siu

Evolving Analog Circuits by Variable Length Chromosomes . 643
Shin Ando, Mitsuru Ishizuka, and Hitoshi Iba

Human-competitive Applications of Genetic Programming . . . 663
John R. Koza

**Evolutionary Algorithms for the Physical Design
of VLSI Circuits** 683
James Cohoon, John Karro, and Jens Lienig

**From Theory to Practice: An Evolutionary Algorithm
for the Antenna Placement Problem** 713
Jörg Zimmermann, Robin Höns, and Heinz Mühlenbein

**Routing Optimization in Corporate Networks
by Evolutionary Algorithms** 739
Thomas Bäck, Claus Hillermeier, and Jörg Ziegenhirt

Genetic Algorithms and Timetabling 755
Peter Ross, Emma Hart, and David Corne

**Machine Learning by Schedule Decomposition –
Prospects for an Integration of AI and OR Techniques
for Job Shop Scheduling** 773
Ulrich Dorndorf, Erwin Pesch, and Ton Phan Huy

Scheduling of Bus Drivers’ Service by a Genetic Algorithm . . 799
Ikuo Yoshihara

**A Survey of Evolutionary Algorithms
for Data Mining and Knowledge Discovery** 819
Alex A. Freitas

**Data Mining from Clinical Data
Using Interactive Evolutionary Computation** 847
Takao Terano and Masanori Inada

XVI Contents

Learning-integrated Interactive Image Segmentation 863
Bir Bhanu and Stephanie Fonder

**An Immunogenetic Approach
in Chemical Spectrum Recognition** 897
Yuehua Cao and Dipankar Dasgupta

**Application of Evolutionary Computation
to Protein Folding** 915
Steffen Schulze-Kremer

Evolutionary Generation of Regrasping Motion 941
Yasuhisa Hasegawa and Toshio Fukuda

Recent Trends in Learning Classifier Systems Research 955
Pier Luca Lanzi and Rick L. Riolo

**Better than Samuel:
Evolving a Nearly Expert Checkers Player** 989
David B. Fogel

Index 1005