



Book Review

Selçuk Sönmez

War Colleges Command, Army War College, Yenilevent-34330, İstanbul, Turkey.

E-mail: selcuksonmez@gmail.com

**Systems Thinking
Managing Chaos and Complexity**
A Platform for Designing Business Architecture
Third Edition

By Jamshid Gharajedaghi
Elsevier, 2011

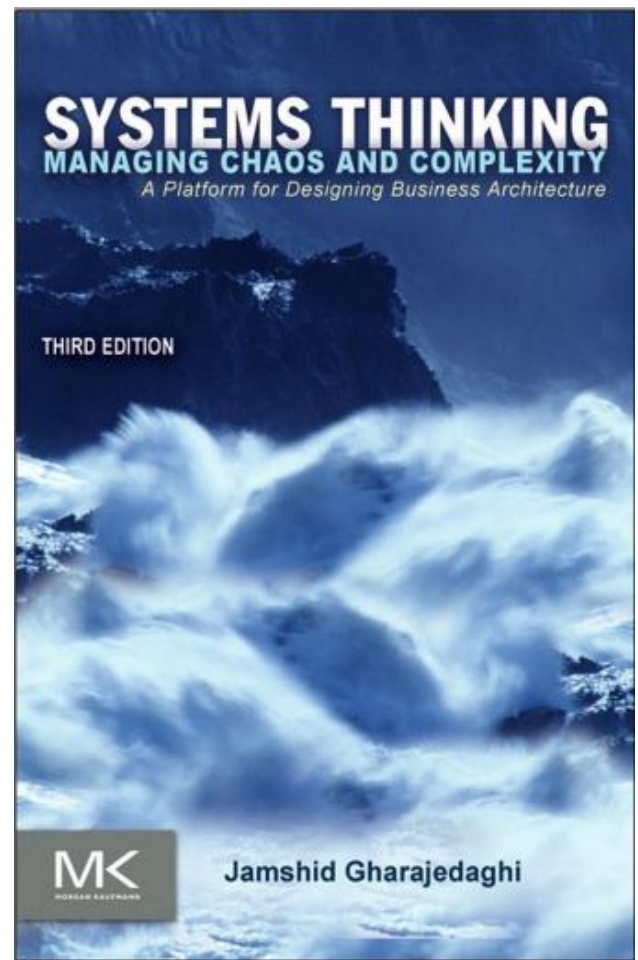
351 Pages

ISBN: 978-0-12-385915-0

This book is the third edition of the Author's System Thinking and was first published in 1999 by Butterworth-Heinemann Title. This book is a direct result of the author's work with the systems methodology first introduced by the author's partner, Russell Ackoff, one of the founding fathers of systems thinking. Ackoff reported that it was the most comprehensive systems methodology he has seen.

This book is about to develop a working concept of systems theory and to deal operationally with systems methodology. It brings holistic approach to systems methodology. It deals with all dimensions of a system: structure, function and process. It is about a new mode of seeing, doing and being in the world; a way of thinking through chaos and complexity.

We see the world as increasingly more complex and chaotic because we use inadequate means to explain it. When we understand something, we no longer see it as chaotic or complex. Understanding a crisis, a problem or an environment including systems need a key to make changes leading to desired end state. With the system thinking and iterative design to holistic view dealt in this book, it will be easy



to synthesize systems theory and interactive design, by providing an operational methodology for defining problems and designing solutions in an environment increasingly characterized by chaos and complexity.

This book has several parts including the synthesis of holistic thinking (iteration of structure, function and process), operational thinking (understanding chaos and complexity), sociocultural systems (movement toward a predefined order), the history of analysis and interactive design (redesigning the future and inventing ways to bring it about). With the chapters on self-organizing systems, Holistic, Operational, and Design thinking the Author simplifies the systems around us.

You will also enjoy the famous story of “identifying an elephant in the room” and the darkness story narrated by Molana Jalaledin Molavi (Rumi) with the eyes of holistic thinking.

I think this book can change your thinking paradigm. It combines system dynamics and systems design so beautifully that you understand easily. In my opinion what makes this book different from the others the way its operationally deals with the art of simplifying complexity, managing interdependency, and understanding choice using a different scheme called iterative design.