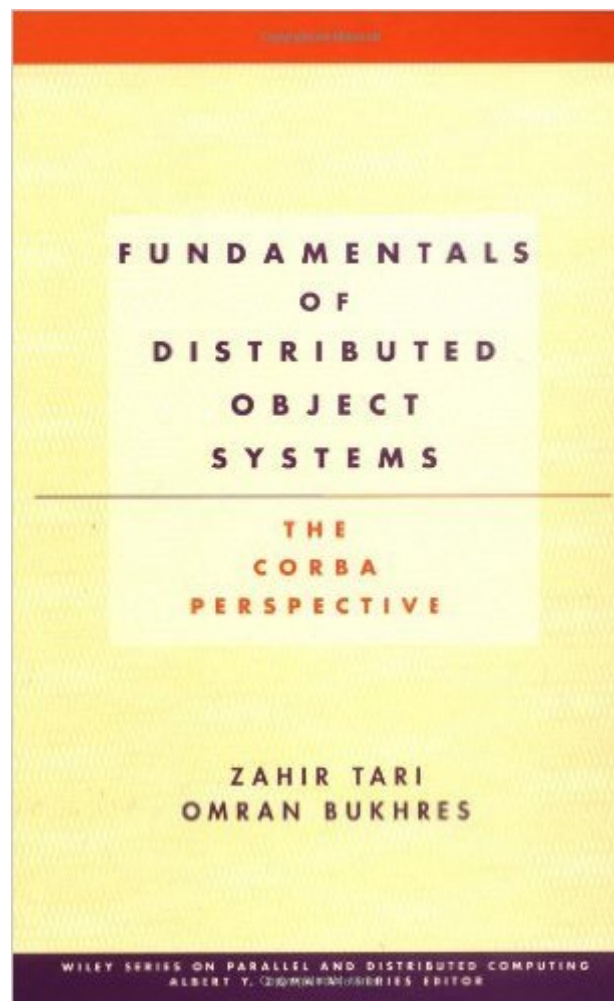


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Fundamentals Of Distributed Object Systems: The CORBA Perspective (Wiley Series On Parallel And Distributed Computing)



Synopsis

Distributed Object Computing teaches readers the fundamentals of CORBA, the leading architecture for design of software used in parallel and distributed computing applications. Since CORBA is based on open standards, it is the only effective way to learn object-oriented programming for distributed systems. This language independent book allows material to be taught using Java, C++ or other Object Oriented Programming Languages.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The book is divided into three parts: Basics of CORBA, Advanced CORBA, and CORBA Services. Part one gives an intro to distributed systems and CORBA, including a bit of CORBA programming (in Java). Part two talks about object adapters, interoperability, and caching. Part three covers naming, trading, event, transaction, and query services. Unfortunately, there is a lot to criticise about this book. On the editorial side, you get a shocking job: it is plain that no copy editor or proof reader has ever been near this work. Spelling and grammatical errors abound, as well as inconsistent use of fonts; the index is put together without any great care. The writing style is mostly poor. The prose

is often stilted or redundant, uses obtuse phrasing, and is full of vague descriptions. Terms such as "usually", "in general", and "typically" are used liberally and, more often than not, are followed by descriptions that are imprecise or vague, leaving the reader wondering whether the authors properly understand what they are trying to explain. More seriously, in many places, the authors are unable to take the reader step by step through a topic. Often, the discussion veers off to something that is completely irrelevant, making it difficult for the reader to develop a clear mental picture of how things hang together. The presentation of IDL is intermingled with (poor) explanations of language mapping issues, leaving a tangled and incomplete mess. The book doesn't describe a particular version of CORBA but appears to be largely based on the authors' experience with OrbixWeb. This means that much of the book talks about a now obsolete and proprietary BOA implementation.

This book is clearly a reference, and research material rather than a hands-on programming guide. While there are many code fragments to support the authors' explanation of concepts, and the largest single chapter is on CORBA programming there is no single project built throughout the book as is often the case in programming guides. I much prefer this approach of being a reference rather than building a project. For example, code or diagrams illustrate things such as SII, DII, DSI, IFR, Exceptions and Any, which gives a competent programmer enough to experiment with the various bits of CORBA. For implementation using BOA, some good diagrams show implementation option using the TIE approach, handy for Java, which has single inheritance. It would be useful though to have some code fragments of a POA implementation in this section. The book has three parts. The first part covers the basic foundation concepts of distributed computing showing how different distributed technologies (eg RMI, DCOM, RPC) need to find solutions to the same issues. Parts 2 and 3 give an in-depth look at distributed systems and CORBA with much to study. The role of object adaptors is explained and the POA architecture is compared to the better-known BOA. This is well diagrammed, again some POA code would help. This is where the book becomes more than a programming book and a serious study of CORBA features, such as Naming Service, Trading Service, Event Service and Query Service. Additionally there is a detailed discussion of performance and consistency issues with a CORBA Caching implementation. This for me was the most interesting part of the book.

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