Université catholique de Louvain

# INGI2145: CLOUD COMPUTING (Fall 2014)

Coordination in distributed applications

11 December 2014

Certain lecture slides adapted from Eurecom DSCC by P. Michiardi, M. Vukolic and and from Cornell CS5412 by K. Birman
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# Today

- Distributed systems coordination

- Apache Zookeeper
  - Simple, high performance kernel for building distributed coordination primitives
  - Zookeeper is not a specific coordination primitive per se, but a platform/API for building different coordination primitives

# Plan for today

- Distributed systems coordination ⇐ NEXT
  - Consensus, FLP
  - Atomic broadcast, replicated state machine
- Apache Zookeeper
  - Coordination kernel
  - Semantics
  - Programming Zookeeper
  - Internal Architecture

# Why do we need coordination?

- Large-scale distributed applications require different forms of coordination. For example:
- Configuration management
  - E.g., list of operational parameters
- Rendezvous
  - E.g., discover final system configuration at run time
- Group membership
  - I.e., which processes are member of the cluster
- Leader election
- Locking
  - I.e., exclusive access to critical resources

# Why is coordination difficult?

- Coordination among multiple parties involves agreement among those parties
  - In general, N processes must agree on something, e.g. a bit
- Agreement ←→ Consensus ←→ Consistency

- Consensus in brief
  - All correct processes propose a value
  - All correct processes decide a value (exactly once)
  - A decision must be proposed
  - All decisions must be the same

# Connection to consistency

- A system behaves consistently if users can't distinguish it from a non-distributed system that supports the same functionality
  - Many notions of consistency reduce to agreement on the events that occurred and their order
  - Could imagine that our "bit" represents
    - Whether or not a particular event took place
    - Whether event A is the "next" event
- Thus fault-tolerant consensus is deeply related to fault-tolerant consistency

# Why is coordination difficult?

- Coordination among multiple parties involves agreement among those parties
  - In general, N processes must agree on something, e.g. a bit
- Agreement ←→ Consensus ←→ Consistency
- FLP impossibility result + CAP theorem
  - Agreement is difficult in a dynamic asynchronous system in which processes may fail or join/leave

# Fischer, Lynch and Patterson (FLP)

- A surprising result
  - Impossibility of Asynchronous Distributed Consensus with a Single Faulty Process
- They prove that no asynchronous algorithm for agreeing on a one-bit value can guarantee that it will terminate in the presence of crash faults
  - And this is true even if no crash actually occurs!

# In the real world?

- Asynchronous model with crash failures
  - A bit like the real world!
- Fault-tolerant consensus is...
  - Definitely possible (not even all that hard). Just vote!
  - And we can prove protocols of this kind correct
- But we can't prove that they will terminate
  - Impossibility doesn't mean the consensus solutions are wrong – only that they live within this limit

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# Atomic broadcast

- A.k.a. total order broadcast
- Critical synchronization primitive in many distributed systems
- Fundamental building block to building replicated state machines

# Atomic Broadcast (safety)

- Total Order property
  - Let m and m’ be any two messages.
  - Let pi be any correct process that delivers m without having delivered m’
  - Then no correct process delivers m’ before m
- Integrity (a.k.a. No creation)
  - No message is delivered unless it was broadcast
- No duplication
  - No message is delivered more than once
  - (Zookeeper Atomic Broadcast – ZAB deviates from this)

# State machine replication

- Think of, e.g., a database (RDBMS)
  - Use atomic broadcast to totally order database operations
- All database replicas apply updates/queries in the same order
  - Since database is deterministic, the state of the database is fully replicated
- To tolerate ≤ f failures, deploy 2f+1 replicas
  - (e.g. with 3 replicas can tolerate 1 failure)
- Extends to any (deterministic) state machine

# Consistency of total order

- Very strong consistency
- “Single-replica” semantics

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# Zookeeper Origins

- Developed initially at Yahoo!

- On Apache since 2008
  - Hadoop subproject

- Top Level project since Jan 2011
  - http://zookeeper.apacher.org

# How do we go about coordination?

- One approach
  - For each coordination primitive build a specific service
- Some recent examples
  - Chubby, Google [*Burrows et al, USENIX OSDI, 2006*]
    - Lock service
  - Centrifuge, Microsoft [*Adya et al, USENIX NSDI, 2010*]
    - Lease service

# But there is a lot of applications …

- How many distributed services need coordination?
  - Amazon/Google/Yahoo/Microsoft/IBM/…
- And which coordination primitives exactly?
  - Want to change from Leader Election to Group Membership? And from there to Distributed Locks?
  - There are also common requirements in different coordination services
    - Duplicating is bad and duplicating poorly even worse
    - Maintenance?

# How do we go about coordination?

- Alternative approach
  - A coordination service
  - Develop a set of lower level primitives (i.e., an API) that can be used to implement higher-level coordination services
  - Use the coordination service API across many applications

- Example: Apache Zookeeper

# Plan for today

- Distributed systems coordination ✔
  - Consensus, FLP ✔
  - Atomic broadcast, replicated state machine ✔
- Apache Zookeeper
  - Coordination kernel ← NEXT
  - Semantics
  - Programming Zookeeper
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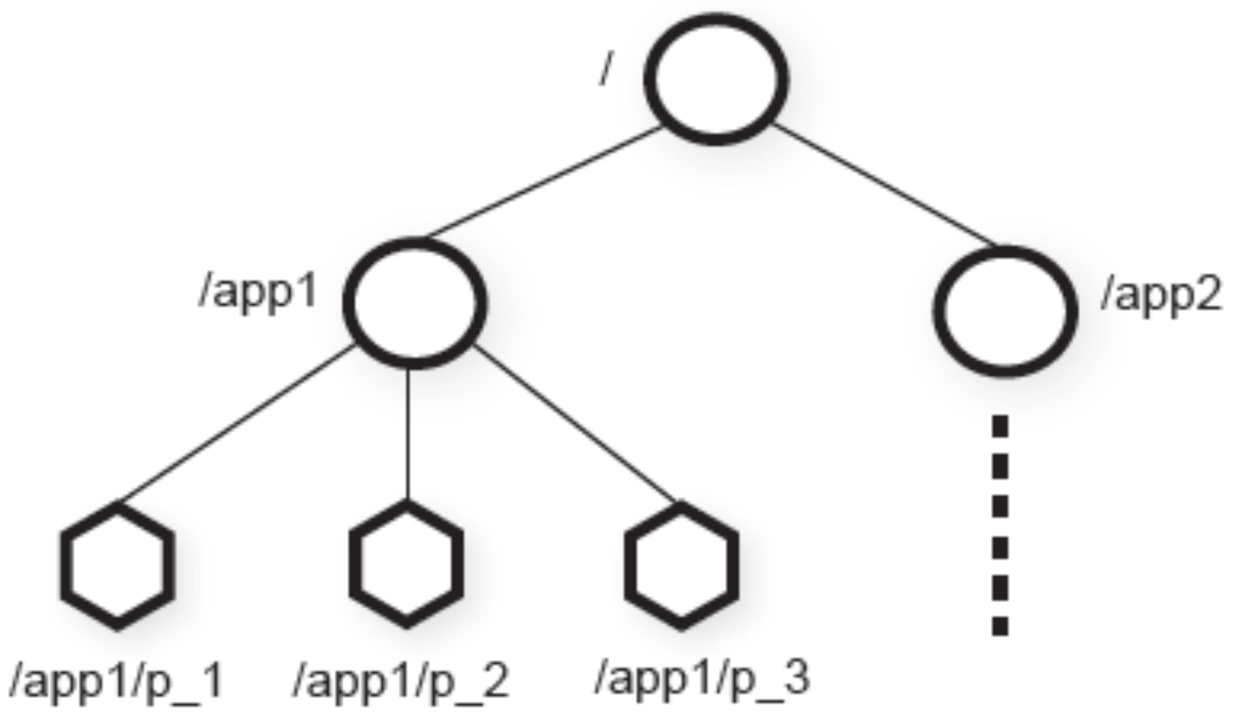
# Zookeeper overview

- Client-server architecture
  - Clients access Zookeeper through a client API
  - Client library also manages network connections to Zookeeper servers
- Zookeeper data model
  - Similar to file system
  - Clients see the abstraction of a set of data nodes (***znodes)***
  - Znodes are organized in a hierarchical namespace that resembles customary file systems

# Hierarchical znode namespace



# Types of Znodes

- Regular znodes
  - Clients manipulate regular znodes by creating and deleting them explicitly
  - (We will see the API in a moment)

- Ephemeral znodes
  - Can manipulate them just as regular znodes
  - However, ephemeral znodes can be removed by the system when the session that creates them terminates
  - Session termination can be deliberate or due to failure

# Data model

- In brief, it's a file system with a simplified API
- Only full reads and writes
  - No appends, inserts, partial reads
- Znode hierarchical namespace
  - Think of directories that may also contain some payload data
- Payload not designed for application data storage but for application metadata storage
- Znodes also have associated version counters and some metadata (e.g., flags)

# Sessions

- Client connects to Zookeeper and initiates a session
  - Sessions enables clients to move transparently from one server to another
  - Any server can serve client's requests

- Sessions have timeouts
  - Zookeeper considers client faulty if it does not hear from client for more than a timeout
  - This has implications on ephemeral znodes

# Client API

- *create(znode, data, flags)*
  - *Flags denote the type of the znode:*
    - *REGULAR, EPHEMERAL, SEQUENTIAL*
    - *SEQUENTIAL flag: a monotonically increasing value is appended to the name of znode*
  - *znode must be addressed by giving a full path in all operations (e.g., '/app1/foo/bar')*
  - *returns znode path*
- *delete(znode, version)*
  - *Deletes the znode if the version is equal to the actual version of the znode*
  - *set version = -1 to omit the conditional check (applies to other operations as well)*

# Client API (cont'd)

- *exists(znode, watch)*
  - *Returns true if the znode exists, false otherwise*
  - *watch flag enables a client to set a watch on the znode*
  - *watch is a subscription to receive an information from the Zookeeper when this znode is changed*
  - *NB: a watch may be set even if a znode does not exist*
    - *The client will be then informed when a znode is created*
- *getData(znode, watch)*
  - *Returns data stored at this znode*
  - *watch is not set unless znode exists*

# Client API (cont'd)

- *setData(znode, data, version)*
  - *Rewrites znode with data, if version is the current version number of the znode*
  - *version = -1 applies here as well to omit the condition check and to force setData*
- *getChildren(znode, watch)*
  - *Returns the set of children znodes of the znode*
- *sync()*
  - *Waits for all updates pending at the start of the operation to be propagated to the Zookeeper server that the client is connected to*

# API operation calls

- Can be synchronous or asynchronous

- Synchronous calls
  - A client blocks after invoking an operation and waits for an operation to respond
  - No concurrent calls by a single client

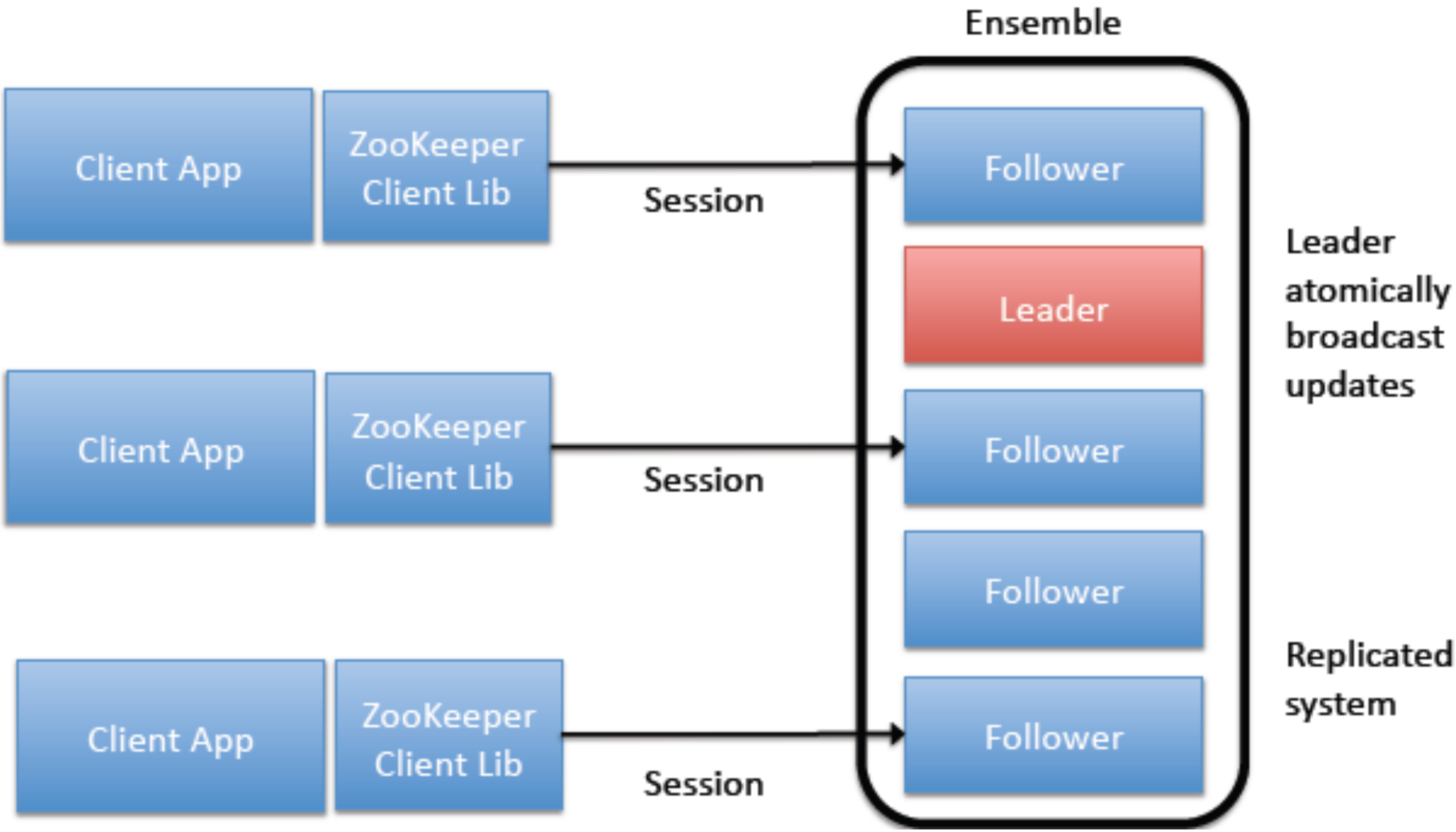
- Asynchronous calls
  - Concurrent calls allowed
  - A client can have multiple outstanding requests

# Convention

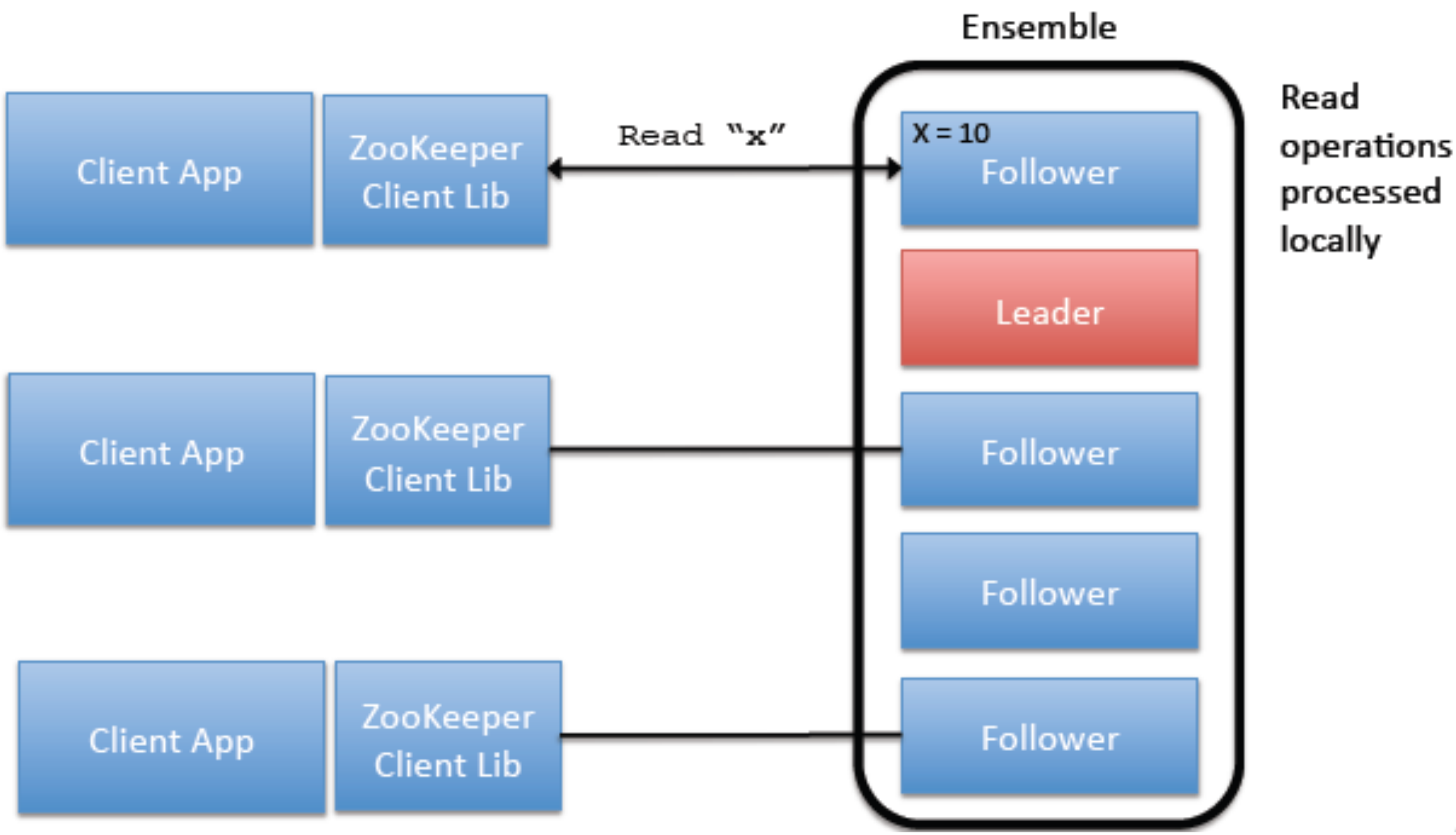
- Update/write operations
  - Create, setData, sync, delete

- Reads operations
  - exists, getData, getChildren

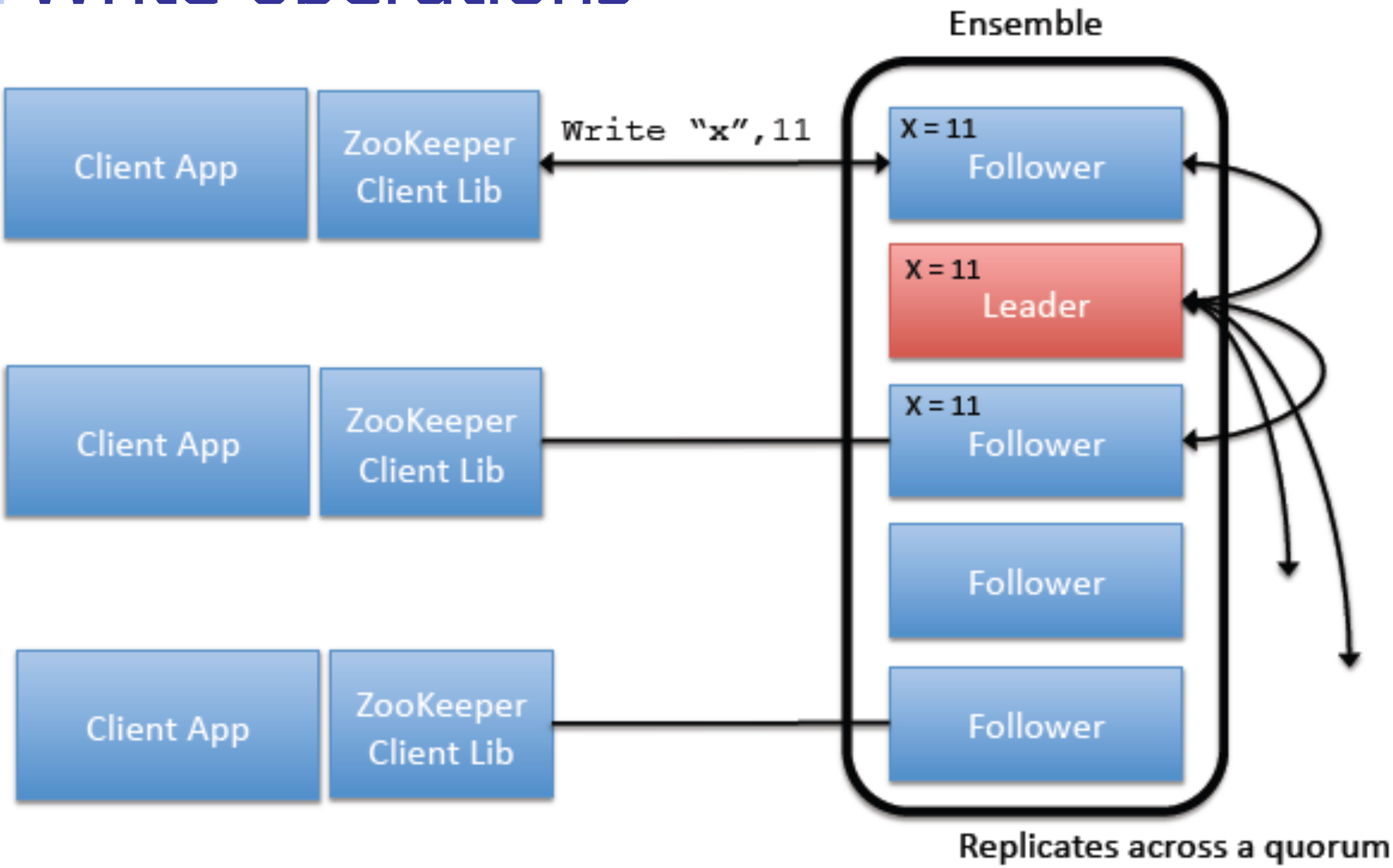
# Session overview



# Read operations



# Write operations



# Plan for today

- Distributed systems coordination ✓
  - Consensus, FLP ✓
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  - Semantics NEXT
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# Zookeeper semantics

- CAP perspective: Zookeeper is in CP
  - It guarantees consistency
  - May sacrifice availability under system partitions (strict quorum based replication for writes)

- Consistency (safety)
  - *Linearizable writes:* all writes are linearizable
  - *FIFO client order:* all requests from a given client are executed in the order they were sent by the client
    - Matters for asynchronous calls

# Zookeeper Availability

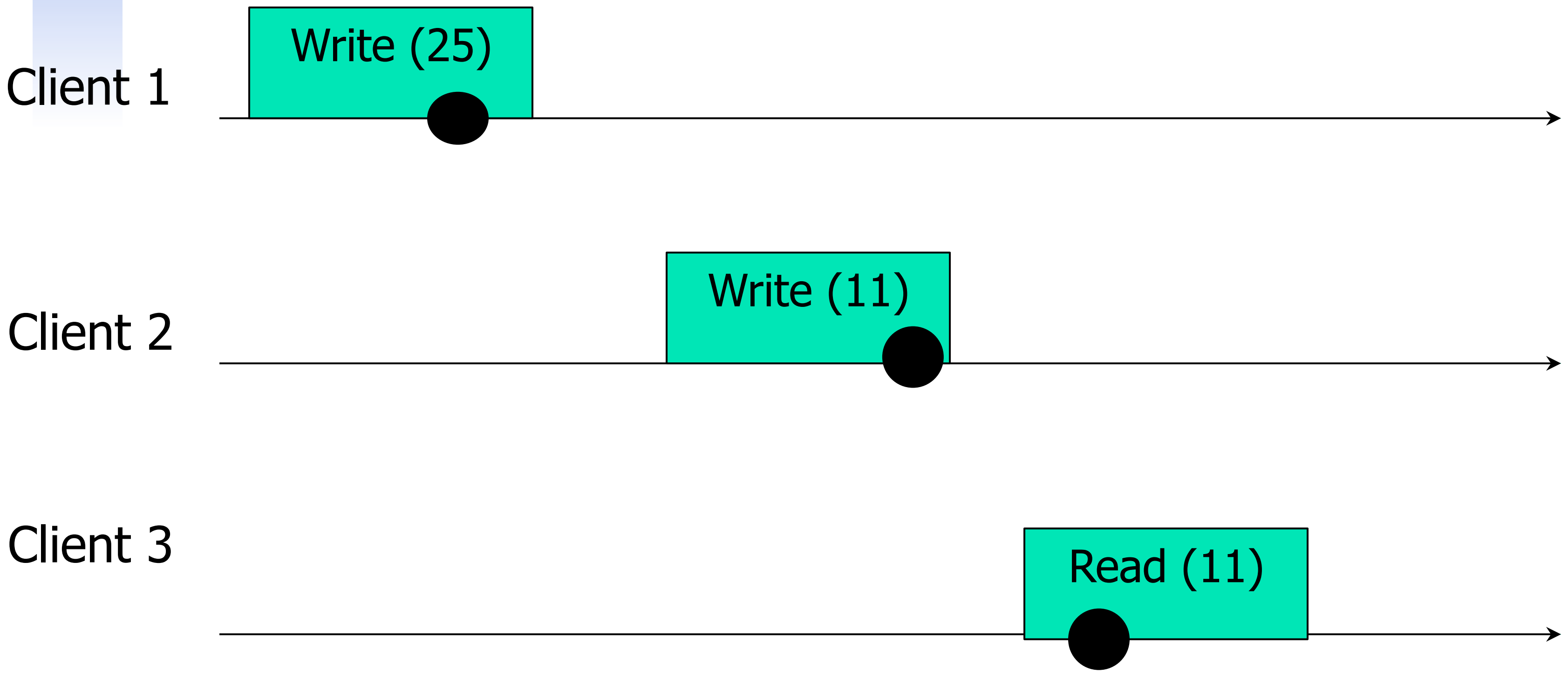
- Wait-freedom
  - All operations invoked by a correct client eventually complete
  - Under condition that a quorum of servers is available
- Zookeeper uses no locks although it can implement locks

# Zookeeper consistency vs. Linearizability

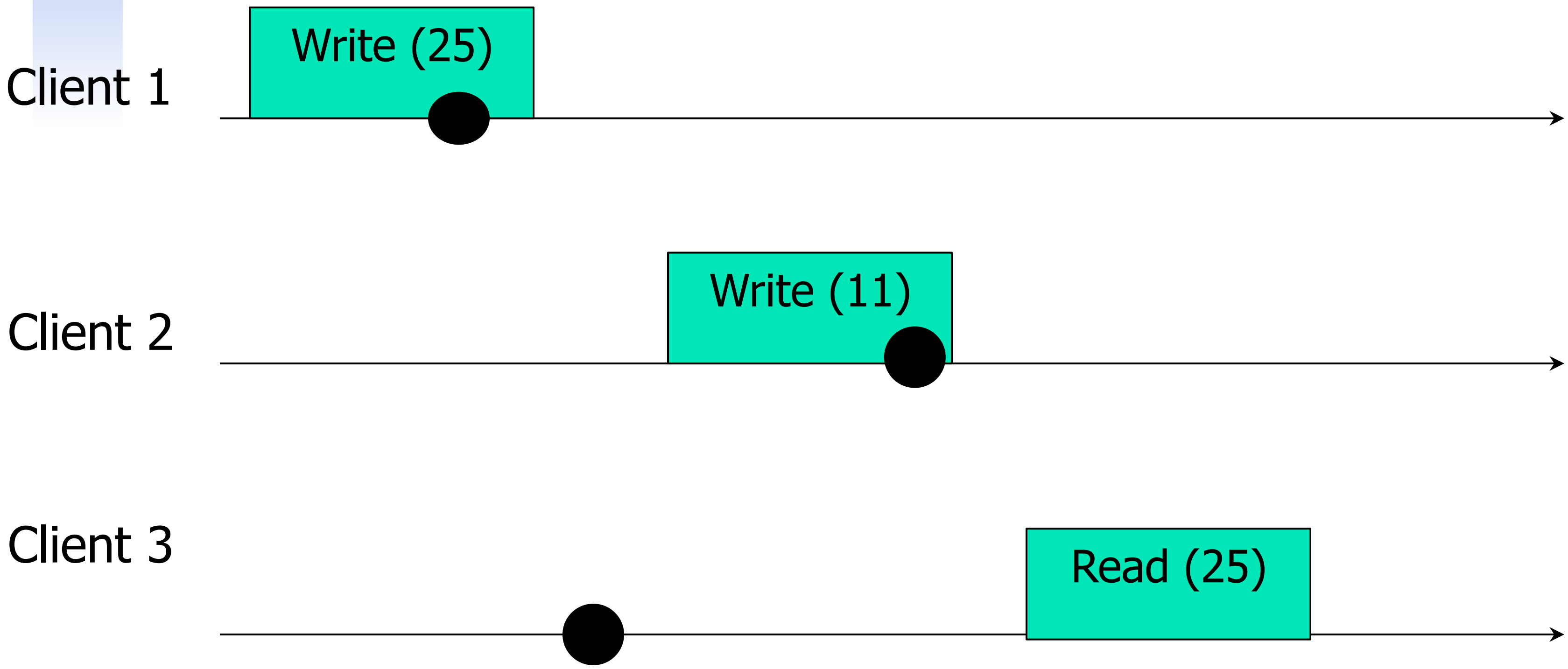
- Linearizability
  - All operations appear to take effect in a single, indivisible time instant between invocation and response

- Zookeeper consistency
  - Writes are linearizable
  - Reads might not be
    - To boost performance, Zookeeper has local reads
    - A server serving a read request might not have been a part of a write quorum of some previous operation
    - ➔ A read might return a stale value

# Linearizability



# Zookeeper

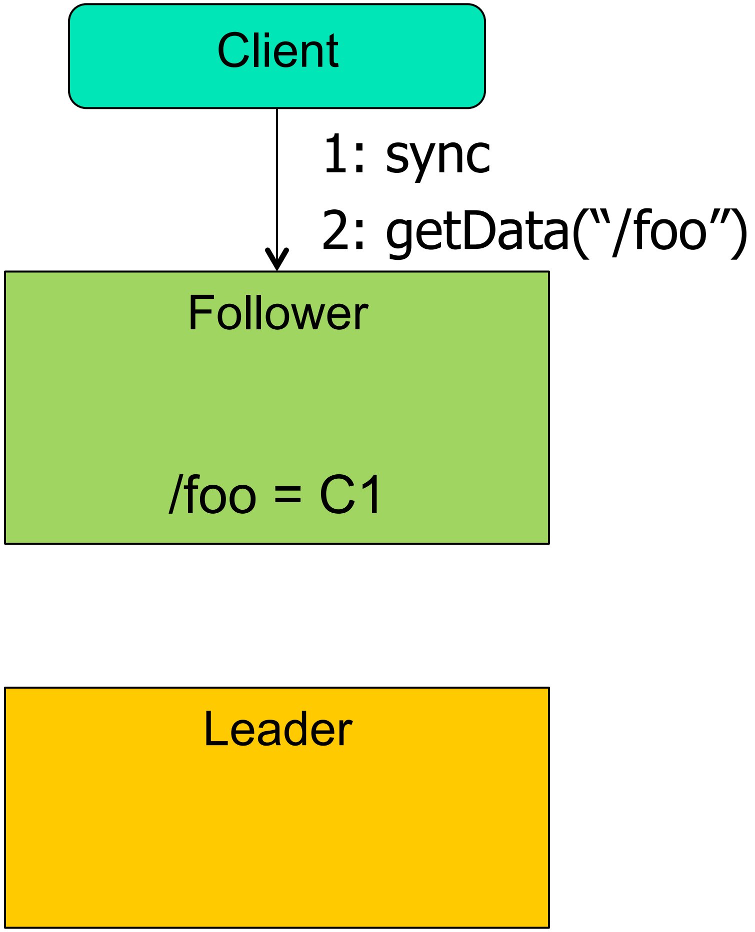


# Is this a problem?

- Depends what the application needs
  - May cause inconsistencies in synchronization if not careful
- Despite this, Zookeeper API is a universal object → its consensus number is ∞
  - i.e., Zookeeper can solve consensus (agreement) for arbitrary number of clients
- If an application needs linearizability
  - There is a trick: sync operation
  - Use sync followed by a read operation within an application-level read
    - This yields a "slow read"

# sync

- Sync
  - Asynchronous operation
  - Before read operations
  - Flushes the channel between follower and leader
  - Enforces linearizability



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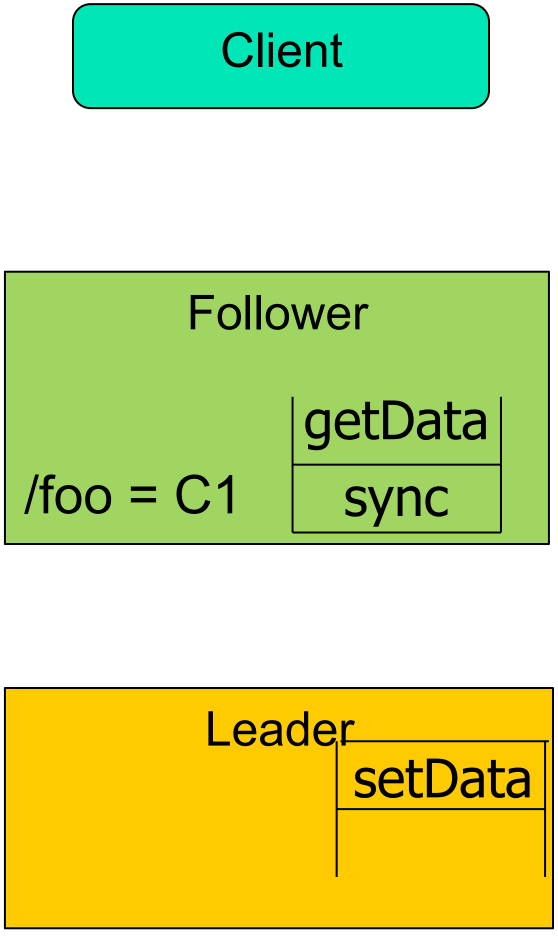

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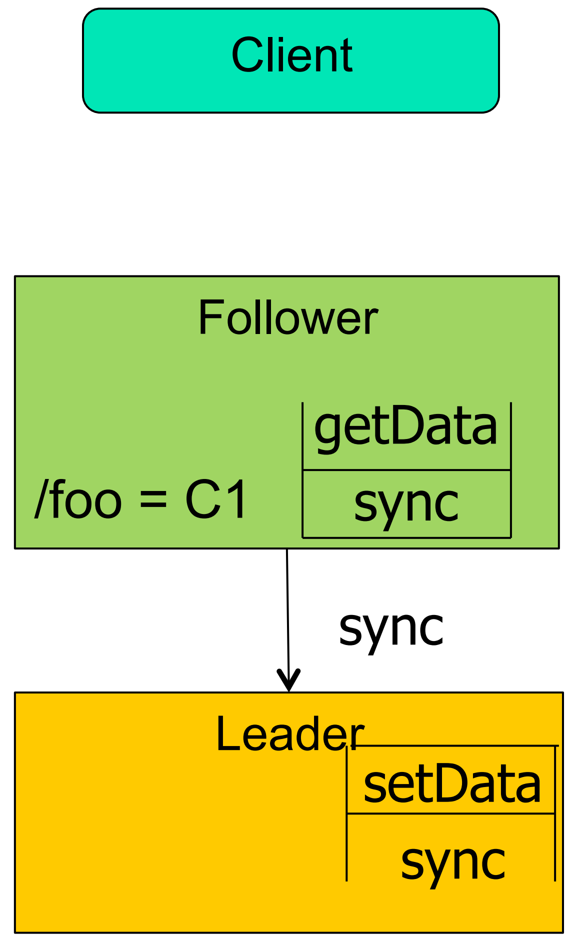

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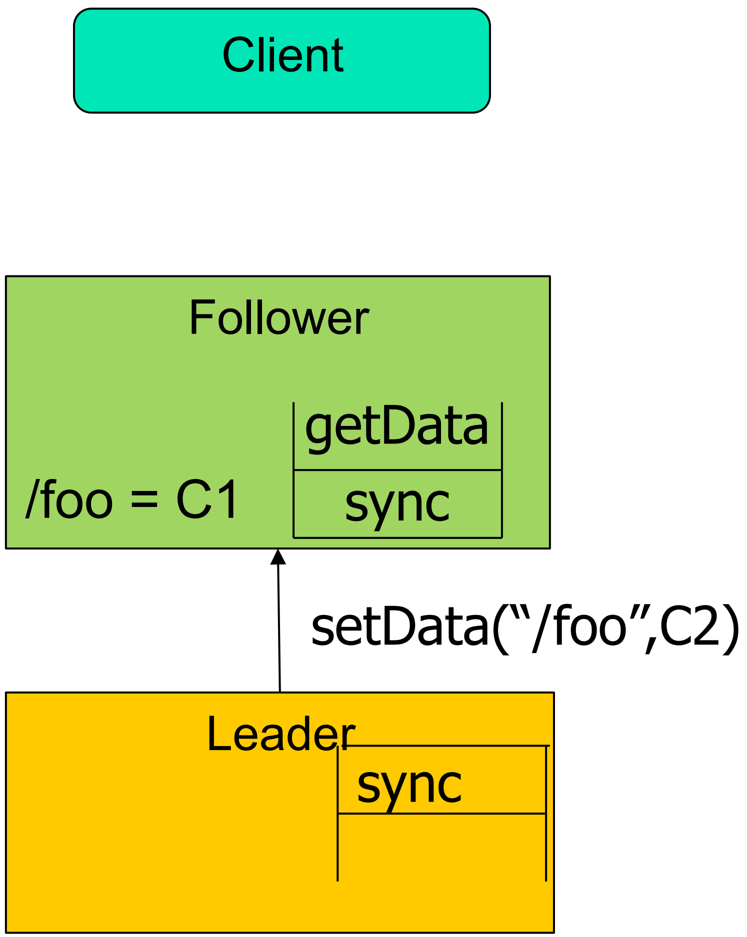

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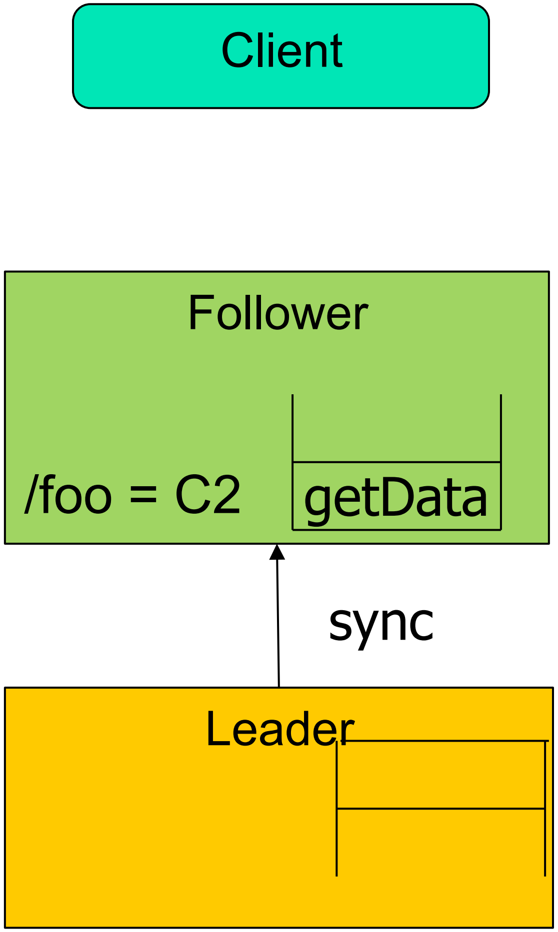

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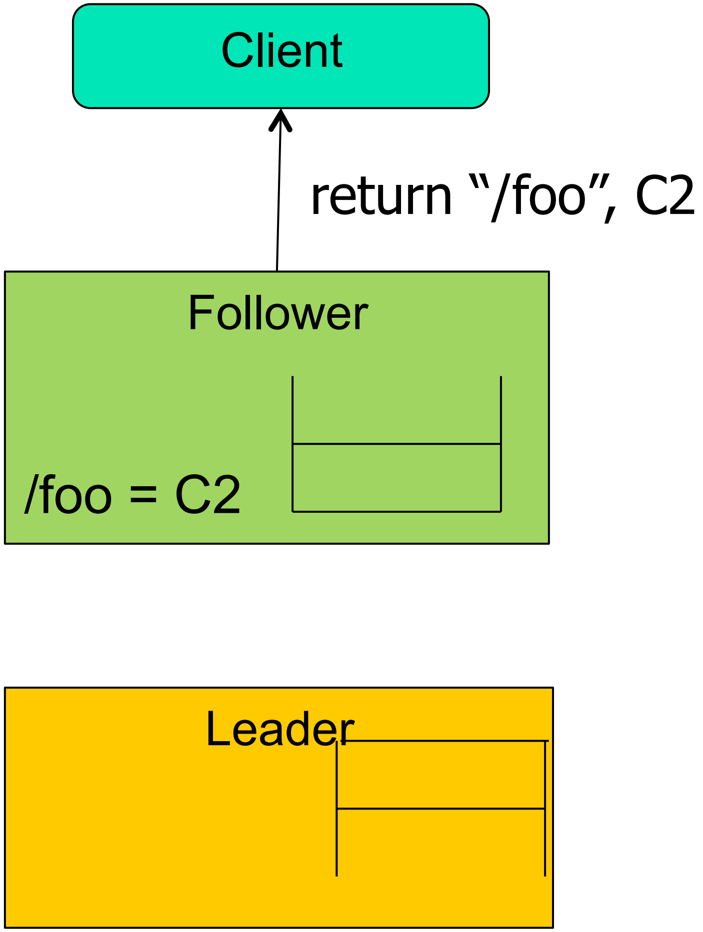

# Read performance

- Slow reads (sync + read)
  - Linerizability
  - Slow, leader bottleneck
- “Normal” reads
  - Might be non-linearizable
  - 1 round-trip client/server
- One more option: Caching reads
  - Cache reads at a client, save on a round-trip
  - Set a watch for a notification needed for cache invalidation

# Write operations (summary)

- Always go through the slow "path"
- A write request is forwarded by a follower server to the leader
- Leader uses atomic (total-order) broadcast to disseminate messages
  - Using ZAB protocol
- ZAB
  - A variant of Paxos tweaked to support FIFO/causal consistency of asynchronous calls
  - Quorum-based (2f+1 servers, tolerates f failures)

# Session consistency

- What if a follower that a client is talking to fails?
  - Or connection is lost for any other reason
  - Some operations might have not been executed

- Upon disconnection
  - Client library tries to contact another server before session expires

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# Implementing consensus

- Consensus in brief
  - All correct processes propose a value
  - All correct processes decide a value (exactly once)
  - A decision must be proposed
  - All decisions must be the same
- `Propose(v)`

```
create(“/c/proposal-”, “v”, SEQUENTIAL)
```

- `Decide()`

```
C = getChildren(“/c”)
Select znode z in C with smallest sequence number
v’ = getData(z)
Decide v’
```

# Simple configuration management

- Clients initialized with the name of znode
  - E.g., "/config"

```
config = getData("/config", TRUE)
while (true)
      wait for watch notification on "/config"
      config = getData("/config", TRUE)
```

Note: A client may miss some configuration, but it will always "refresh" when it realizes the configuration is stale

# Group membership

- Idea: leverage ephemeral znodes
- Fix a znode "/group"
- Assume every process (client) is initialized with its own unique name and ID
  - What to do if there are no unique names?

```
joinGroup()
    create("/group/" + name, [address,port], EPHEMERAL)
getMembers()
    getChildren("/group", false)
```

Set to true to get notified about membership changes

# Locks

- Can also use Zookeeper to implement blocking primitives
  - Not to be confused with the fact that Zookeeper is wait-free
- Let's try Locks

# A simple lock

```
Lock(filename)

1:      create(filename, “”, EPHEMERAL)
2:      if create is successful
3:              return                          //have lock
4:      else
5:              getData(filename,TRUE)
6:              wait for filename watch
7:              goto 1:

Release(filename)

        delete(filename)
```

# Problems?

- Herd effect
  - If many clients wait for the lock they will all try to get it as soon as it is released
- Only implements exclusive locking

# Simple Lock without Herd Effect

```
Lock(filename)
1:      myLock=create(filename + “/lock-”, “”, EPHEMERAL & SEQUENTIAL)
2:      C = getChildren(filename, false)
3:      if myLock is the lowest znode in C then return
4:      else
5:              precLock = znode in C ordered just before myLock
6:              if exists(precLock, true)
7:                      wait for precLock watch
8:                      goto 2:
Release(filename)
        delete(myLock)
```

# Read/Write Locks

- The previous lock solves herd effect but makes reads block other reads

- How to do it such that reads always get the lock unless there is a concurrent write?

# Read/Write Locks

```
Write Lock(filename)
1:      myLock=create(filename + "/write-", "", EPHEMERAL & SEQUENTIAL)
[...]   // same as simple lock w/o herd effect
Read Lock(filename)
1:      myLock=create(filename + "/read-", "", EPHEMERAL & SEQUENTIAL)
2:      C = getChildren(filename, false)
3:      if no write znodes lower than myLock in C then return
4:      else
5:              precLock = write znode in C ordered just before myLock
6:              if exists(precLock, true)
7:                      wait for precLock watch
8:                      goto 3:
Release(filename)
        delete(myLock)
```

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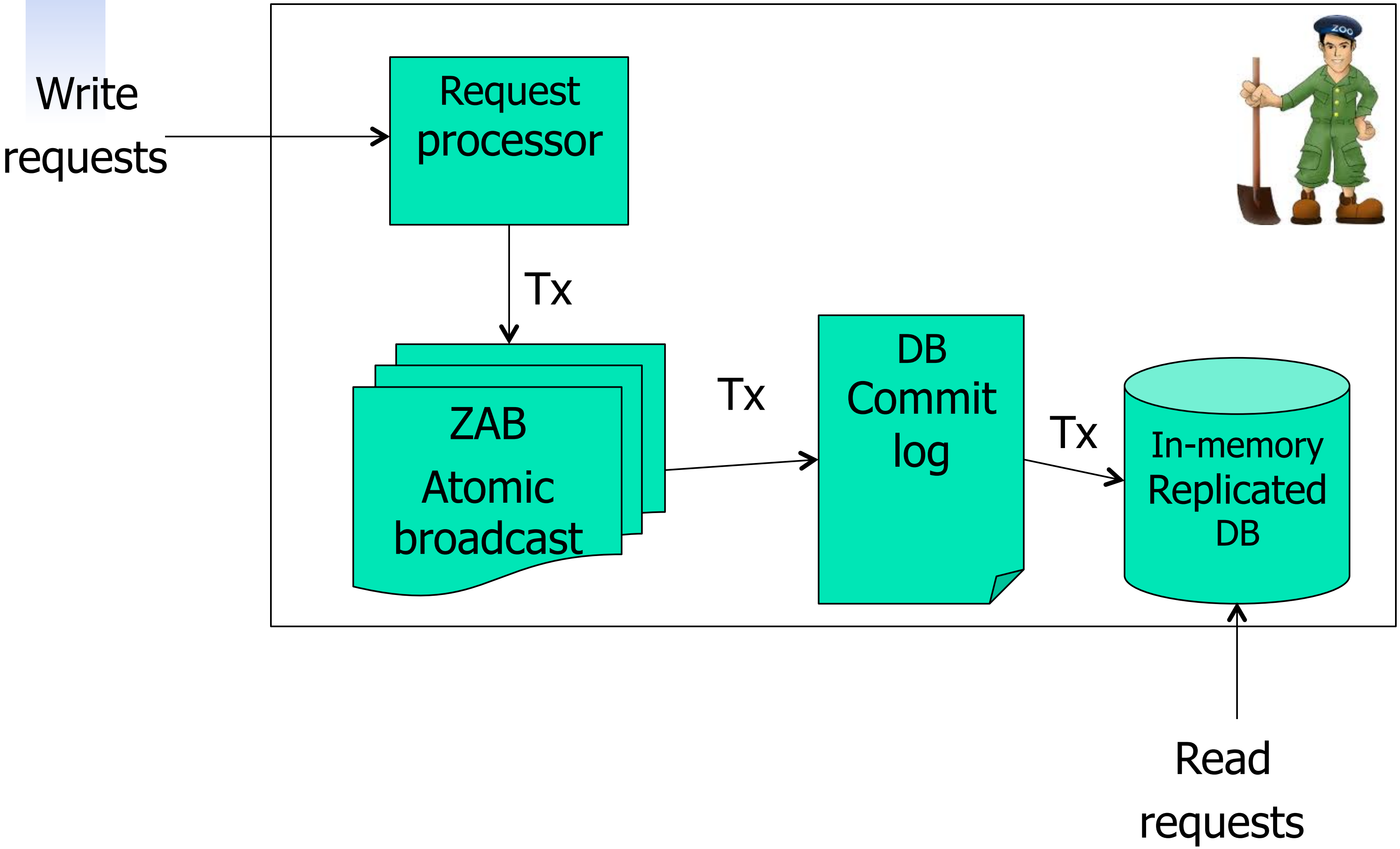
# Zookeeper components (high-level)



# Zookeeper DB

- Fully replicated
  - To be contrasted with partitioning/placement in storage systems
- Each server has a copy of in-memory DB
  - Store the entire znode tree
  - Default max 1 MB per znode (configurable)
- Crash-recovery model
  - Commit log
  - + periodic snapshots of the database

# ZAB: a very brief overview

- Used to totally order write requests
  - Relies on a quorum of servers (f+1 out of 2f+1)
- ZAB internally elects leader replica
  - Not to be confused with Leader Election using Zookeeper API
- Zookeeper adopts this notion of a leader
  - Other servers are followers
- All write requests are sent by followers to the leader
  - Leader sequences the requests and invokes ZAB atomic broadcast

# Request processor

- Upon receiving a write request
  - the leader calculates in what state system will be after the write is applied
  - Transforms the operation in the transactional update
- Such transactional updates are then processed by ZAB, DB
  - Guarantees idempotency of updates to the DB originating from the same operation
- Idempotency: Important since ZAB may redeliver a message
  - Upon recovery not during normal operation
  - Also allows more efficient DB snapshots

# Further reading

(recommended)

- P. Hunt, M. Kumar, F. P. Junqueira and B. Reed: Zookeeper: Wait-free coordination for Internet-scale systems. In proc. USENIX ATC (2010)

  http://static.usenix.org/event/usenix10/tech/full_papers/Hunt.pdf
- Zookeeper 3.4 Documentation

  http://zookeeper.apache.org/doc/trunk/index.html

(optional)

- F. P. Junqueira, B. C. Reed, M. Serafini: Zab: High-performance broadcast for primary-backup systems. DSN 2011: 245-256
- M. Burrows: The Chubby Lock Service for Loosely-Coupled Distributed Systems. OSDI 2006: 335-350
- A. Adya, J. Dunagan, A. Wolman: Centrifuge: Integrated Lease Management and Partitioning for Cloud Services. NSDI 2010: 1-16