

Recalling a Witness

Foundations and Applications of Monotonic State

Danel Ahman @ INRIA Paris

Cătălin Hrițcu and Kenji Maillard @ INRIA Paris

Cédric Fournet, Aseem Rastogi, and Nikhil Swamy @ MSR

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Outline

- Monotonic state by example
- Key ideas behind our general framework
- Accommodating monotonic state in F^*
- Some examples of monotonic state at work
- More examples of monotonic state at work (see the paper)
- Monadic reification and reflection (see the paper)
- Meta-theory and correctness results (see the paper)

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Monotonicity in program verification

- Consider a program operating on **set-valued state**

```
insert v; complex_procedure(); assert (v ∈ get())
```

- To prove the assertion (say, in a Floyd-Hoare style logic), we could prove that the code maintains a **stateful invariant**

$$\{\lambda s. v \in s\} \text{ complex_procedure() } \{\lambda s. v \in s\}$$

- likely that we have to **carry** $\lambda s. v \in s$ **through** the proof of `c_p`
 - does not guarantee** that $\lambda s. v \in s$ holds at every point in `c_p`
 - sensitive** to proving that `c_p` maintains $\lambda s. w \in s$ for some other `w`
- However, if `c_p` **does not remove**, then $\lambda s. v \in s$ is **stable**, and we would like the program logic to give us $v \in \text{get}()$ “for free”

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Monotonicity in programming

- **Programs** also rely on **monotonicity**, even if you don't realise it!
- Consider ML-style typed references `r:ref a`
 - `r` is a **proof of existence** of an `a`-typed value in the heap
- Correctness relies on **monotonicity**!
 - 1) Allocation **stores** an `a`-typed value in the heap
 - 2) Writes **don't change type** and there is **no deallocation**
 - 3) So, given a ref. `r`, it is **guaranteed to point** to an `a`-typed value
- Baked into the memory models of most languages
- We derive them from **global state** + **general monotonicity**

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Monotonicity is really useful!

- In this talk
 - our **motivating example** and **monotonic counters**
 - **typed references** (`ref t`) and **untyped references** (`uref`)
 - more flexibility with **monotonic references** (`mref t rel`)
- More in the paper
 - temporarily **violating monotonicity** via snapshots
 - two substantial case studies
 - a **secure file-transfer** application
 - Ariadne **state continuity** protocol [Strackx, Piessens 2016]
 - pointers to other works in F* relying on monotonicity for
 - sophisticated **region-based memory models** [fstar-lang.org]
 - **crypto** and **TLS verification** [project-everest.github.io]

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Key ideas behind our general framework

- We focus on **monotonic programs** and **stable predicates**
 - per verification task, we **choose a preorder rel** on states
 - set inclusion, heap inclusion, increasing counter values, ...
 - a stateful program e is **monotonic** (wrt. rel) when
$$\forall s e' s'. (e, s) \rightsquigarrow^* (e', s') \implies \text{rel } s s'$$
 - a stateful predicate p is **stable** (wrt. rel) when
$$\forall s s'. p \ s \wedge \text{rel } s s' \implies p \ s'$$
- **Our solution:** extend Hoare-style program logics (e.g., F^*) with
 - a means for turning a p into a **state-independent proposition**
 - a means to **witness** the validity of $p \ s$ in some state s
 - a means to **recall** the validity of $p \ s'$ in any future state s'
- Provides a **unifying account** of the existing *ad hoc* uses in F^*

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Recap: Ordinary global state in F*

- F* is an ML-like dependently typed language, aimed at verification
- F* supports Hoare-style reasoning about state via the **comp. type**

$$ST_{\text{state}}\ t\ (\text{requires}\ \text{pre})\ (\text{ensures}\ \text{post})$$

where

$$\text{pre} : \text{state} \rightarrow \text{Type} \qquad \text{post} : \text{state} \rightarrow t \rightarrow \text{state} \rightarrow \text{Type}$$

- ST is an **abstract** pre-postcondition refinement of

$$st\ t \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \text{state} \rightarrow t * \text{state}$$

- The global state **actions** have types

$$\text{get} : \text{unit} \rightarrow ST\ \text{state}\ (\text{requires}\ (\lambda _.\top))\ (\text{ensures}\ (\lambda\ s_0\ s\ s_1.\ s_0 = s = s_1))$$
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New: Monotonic global state in F*

- We capture monotonic state with a new **computation type**

$\text{MST}_{\text{state}, \text{rel}}\ t\ (\text{requires}\ \text{pre})\ (\text{ensures}\ \text{post})$

where pre and post are typed as in ST

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New: Recalling a Witness

- We introduce a **logical capability** (a **modality** in ongoing work)

$\text{witnessed} : (\text{state} \rightarrow \text{Type}) \rightarrow \text{Type}$

together with a **weakening principle** (**functoriality**)

$\text{wk} : p, q : (\text{state} \rightarrow \text{Type}) \rightarrow \text{Lemma} \left(\text{requires } (\forall s. p\ s \implies q\ s) \right)$
 $\left(\text{ensures } (\text{witnessed } p \implies \text{witnessed } q) \right)$

- We add a **stateful introduction rule** for **witnessed**

$\text{witness} : p : (\text{state} \rightarrow \text{Type}) \rightarrow \text{MST unit} \left(\text{requires } (\lambda s_0. p\ s_0 \wedge \text{stable } p) \right)$
 $\left(\text{ensures } (\lambda s_0 - s_1. s_0 = s_1 \wedge \text{witnessed } p) \right)$

- We add a **stateful elimination rule** for **witnessed**

$\text{recall} : p : (\text{state} \rightarrow \text{Type}) \rightarrow \text{MST unit} \left(\text{requires } (\lambda _. \text{witnessed } p) \right)$
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- We add a **stateful introduction rule** for **witnessed**

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New: Recalling a Witness

- We introduce a **logical capability** (a **modality** in ongoing work)

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Outline

- Monotonic state by example
- Key ideas behind our general framework
- Accommodating monotonic state in F^*
- Some examples of monotonic state at work
- More examples of monotonic state at work (see the paper)
- Monadic reification and reflection (see the paper)
- Meta-theory and correctness results (see the paper)

The motivating example revisited

- Recall the program operating on the **set-valued state**

```
insert v; complex_procedure(); assert (v ∈ get())
```

- We pick **set inclusion** \subseteq as our preorder rel on states
- We **prove the assertion** by inserting a witness and recall

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insert v; witness ( $\lambda s. v \in s$ ); c_p(); recall ( $\lambda s. v \in s$ ); assert (v ∈ get())
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- For any other w, wrapping

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insert w; [ ]; assert (w ∈ get())
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around the program is handled **similarly easily**

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ML-style typed references (local state)

- First, we define a type of **heaps**

```
type heap =
```

```
| H : h : (N → cell) → ctr : N {  $\forall n. \text{ctr} \leq n \implies h\ n = \text{Unused}$  } → heap
```

where

```
type cell =
```

```
| Unused : cell
```

```
| Used : a : Type → v : a → cell
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- Next, we define the **heap inclusion** preorder

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let heap_inclusion (H h0 _) (H h1 _) =  $\forall \text{id}. \text{match } h_0\ \text{id}, h_1\ \text{id} \text{ with}$ 
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```
| Used a _, Used b _ → a = b
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| Unused, Used _ _ →  $\top$ 
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- As a result, we can define new **local state effect**

$$\text{LST } t \text{ pre post} \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \text{MST}_{\text{heap, heap_inclusion}} t \text{ pre post}$$

- Next, we define the type of **references** using monotonicity

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abstract type ref a = id:N{witnessed ( $\lambda h$ . contains h id a)}
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where

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let contains (H h _) id a =  
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- Important: contains is **stable** wrt. heap_inclusion

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- Finally, we define **LST**'s **actions** using **MST**'s actions

- `let alloc (a:Type) (v:a) : LST (ref a) ... = ...`
 - get the current heap
 - create a fresh ref., and add it to the heap
 - put the updated heap back
 - witness that the created ref. is in the heap
- `let read (r:ref a) : LST t ... = ...`
 - recall that the given ref. is in the heap
 - get the current heap
 - select the given reference from the heap
- `let write (r:ref a) (v:a) : LST unit ... = ...`
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Adding untyped and monotonic references

- **Untyped references** (`uref`) with strong updates

- Used heap cells are extended with **tags**

| `Used : a:Type → v:a → t:tag → cell`
where
`type tag = Typed : tag | Untyped : tag`

- `urefs` can be extended to also support **deallocation**

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Conclusion

- In conclusion
 - making use of monotonicity is very **useful** in verification
 - using monotonicity can be distilled into a **simple** interface
 - useful for **programming** (refs.) and **verification** (Prj. Everest)
- See the paper for
 - further **examples** and **case studies**
 - **meta-theory** and **correctness results** for MST
 - based on an instrumented operational semantics
$$(\text{witness } x.\varphi, s, W) \rightsquigarrow (\text{return } (), s, W \cup \{x.\varphi\})$$
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Thank you!

Questions?