

# Recalling a Witness

## Foundations and Applications of Monotonic State

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joint work with

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# Outline

- Monotonic state and program verification by example
- Overview of our solution (a simple, general interface)
- Extending  $F^*$  with our monotonic state interface
- Example uses of monotonicity
- A glimpse of the meta-theory

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# Monotonic state and 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`
  - sensitive to proving that `c_p` maintains  $\lambda s. w \in s$  for some other `w`
  - does not guarantee that  $\lambda s. v \in s$  holds at every point in `c_p`
- However, if `c_p` **only inserts**, 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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# Other, more substantial examples

- To come later in this talk
  - reasoning about **monotonic counters**
  - using monotonicity to implement **typed** and **untyped references**
  - more flexibility with **monotonic references**
- For other examples of the usefulness of monotonicity,

Recalling a Witness:  
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which includes

- a secure **file-transfer** application
- Ariadne **state continuity** protocol [Strackx, Piessens 2016]
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# Overview of our solution

- We focus on **monotonic** programs and **stable** predicates
  - per verification task, we choose a **preorder** **rel** on states
    - set inclusion, heap inclusion, increasing counters, ...

- a program  $e$  is **monotonic** (wrt. **rel**) when

$$(s, e) \rightsquigarrow^* (s', e') \implies \text{rel } s \ s'$$

- a predicate  $p$  on states 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
  - means for turning a  $p$  into a **state-independent proposition**
  - operation to **witness** the validity of  $p \ s$  in some state  $s$
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# Reasoning about ordinary state in F\*

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

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

where

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

(formally, this type is derived from a WP calculus for state)

- The **get** and **put** actions are typed as follows

$get : \text{unit} \rightarrow ST\ \text{state}\ (\text{requires}\ (\lambda\_.T))\ (\text{ensures}\ (\lambda\ s_0\ s\ s_1.\ s_0 = s = s_1))$

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`MST rel t (requires pre) (ensures post)`

where `t`, `pre`, and `post` are typed as in `ST`

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- We introduce a **logical capability**

witnessed : pred state  $\rightarrow$  Type

together with a **weakening** principle

wk : p,q:pred state  $\rightarrow$  Lemma (requires ( $\forall s. p\ s \implies q\ s$ ))  
(ensures (witnessed p  $\implies$  witnessed q)))

- We introduce an operation for **witnessing** stable predicates

witness : p:pred state  $\rightarrow$  MST unit (requires ( $\lambda s_0. p\ s_0 \wedge$  **stable p**))  
(ensures ( $\lambda s_0 - s_1. s_0 = s_1 \wedge$   
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recall : p:pred state  $\rightarrow$  MST unit (requires ( $\lambda s_0.$ **witnessed p**))  
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# The motivating example revisited

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

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

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

```
insert v; witness ( $\lambda s. v \in s$ ); c_p(); recall ( $\lambda s. v \in s$ ); assert (v ∈ get())
```

- For any other w, wrapping

```
insert w; [ ]; assert (w ∈ get())
```

around the program is handled similarly easily

- Monotonic counters** are analogous, with  $\mathbb{N}$  and  $\leq$

```
create 0; incr(); witness ( $\lambda c. c > 0$ ); c_p(); recall ( $\lambda c. c > 0$ )
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# References: both typed and untyped

- We define **local state** using monotonicity and global state
- We define **heaps** as maps

```
type heap =
```

```
| H : h : (N → cell) → ctr : N { ∀ n . ctr ≤ n ⇒ h n = Unused } → heap
```

where

```
type cell = Unused : cell | Used : a : Type → v : a → t : tag → cell
```

```
type tag = Typed : tag | Untyped : live : bool → tag
```

- The **preorder** on heaps is given by

```
let rel (H h0 _) (H h1 _) = ∀ id . match h0 id, h1 id with
```

```
| Used a _ Typed, Used b _ Typed → a = b
```

```
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# References: both typed and untyped

- We define **local state** using monotonicity and global state
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```
type heap =
```

```
| H : h : (N → cell) → ctr : N { ∀ n . ctr ≤ n ⇒ h n = Unused } → heap
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where

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type cell = Unused : cell | Used : a : Type → v : a → t : tag → cell
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`abstract type` ref t = id:ℕ { `witnessed` ( $\lambda h. \text{has\_used\_typed id t h}$ ) }

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## References: **typed** and **untyped** ctd.

- The state actions for **typed references** use **witness** and **recall**
  - `let alloc t (v:t) : MST (ref t) ... = ...`
    - **get** the current heap (using global state `get`)
    - **create** a fresh ref., and **add** it to the heap
    - **put** the updated heap back (using global state `put`)
    - **witness** that the created ref. is in the heap
  - `let read t (r:ref t) : MST t ... = ...`
    - **recall** that the given ref. is in the heap
    - **get** the current heap (using global state `get`)
    - **select** the given reference from the heap
  - `let write t (r:ref t) (v:t) : MST unit ... = ...`
    - **recall** that the given ref. is in the heap
    - **get** the current heap (using global state `get`)
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# Monotonic references: more flexibility

- The heap now associates a **local preorder** with each reference type tag  $a = \text{Typed} : \text{rel} : \text{preorder } a \rightarrow \text{tag } a \mid \text{Untyped} : \text{live} : \text{bool} \rightarrow \text{tag } a$

- The **global preorder** is a point-wise lifting of the individual ones

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let rel (H h0 _) (H h1 _) =  $\forall \text{id}.$  match h0 id, h1 id with  
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- Monotonic references** are then given as

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```

- State actions

- The **write** action is constrained by rel of the given mref.
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# Outline

- Monotonic state and program verification by example
- Overview of our solution (a simple, general interface)
- Extending  $F^*$  with our monotonic state interface
- Example uses of monotonicity
- A glimpse of the meta-theory

# A glimpse of the meta-theory

- We formalize **MST** in a small dependently typed CBV calculus

$$t ::= \text{state} \mid x:t_1 \rightarrow \mathbf{Tot} \ t_2 \mid x:t_1 \rightarrow \mathbf{MST} \ t_2 \ (s.\varphi_{\text{pre}}) \ (s.y.s'.\varphi_{\text{post}})$$
$$e ::= \text{get} \mid \text{put } v \mid \text{witness } s.\varphi \mid \text{recall } s.\varphi \mid \dots$$
$$\varphi ::= \text{rel } v_1 \ v_2 \mid \text{witnessed } s.\varphi \mid \dots$$

- Consistency and props. of the logic via seq. calc. and cut-adm.

- Operational semantics on configurations  $(e, \sigma, W)$

$$(\text{witness } s.\varphi, \sigma, W) \rightsquigarrow (\text{return } (), \sigma, W \cup \{s.\varphi\})$$
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- Total correctness via progress, preservation, and SN

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \vdash e : \mathbf{MST} \ t \ (s.\varphi_{\text{pre}}) \ (s.x.s'.\varphi_{\text{post}}) & & (e, \sigma, W) \rightsquigarrow^* (\text{return } v, \sigma', W') \quad \vdash v : t \\ \Rightarrow & & W \subseteq W' \quad \text{witnessed } W' \vdash \text{rel } \sigma \ \sigma' \\ \text{witnessed } W \vdash \varphi_{\text{pre}}[\sigma/s] & & \text{witnessed } W' \vdash \varphi_{\text{post}}[\sigma/s, v/x, \sigma'/s'] \end{array}$$

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  - making use of monotonicity is quite useful in verification
  - using monotonicity can be distilled into a simple interface
  - useful for both programming (refs.) and verification (crypto,TLS)
- Not in this talk (see the draft paper on arXiv)
  - temporarily **escaping the preorder** via snapshots
  - **revealing the representation** via selective monadic reification
- Future work
  - indexed effects in  $F^*$
  - combining preorders (e.g., ala graded monads)
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Thank you!

Questions?

Recalling a Witness:  
Foundations and Applications of Monotonic State  
(arXiv:1707.02466)