Scala and the JVM for Big Data: Lessons from Spark - Extended Version

Scala Days Berlin
June 17, 2016

Friday, June 17, 16

This version includes extra material omitted from the Strata Conf talk for time's sake. Photos from Olympic National Park, Washington State, USA, Aug. 2015.

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You can find this and my other talks here. There's an extended version of this talk there, too.

Spark

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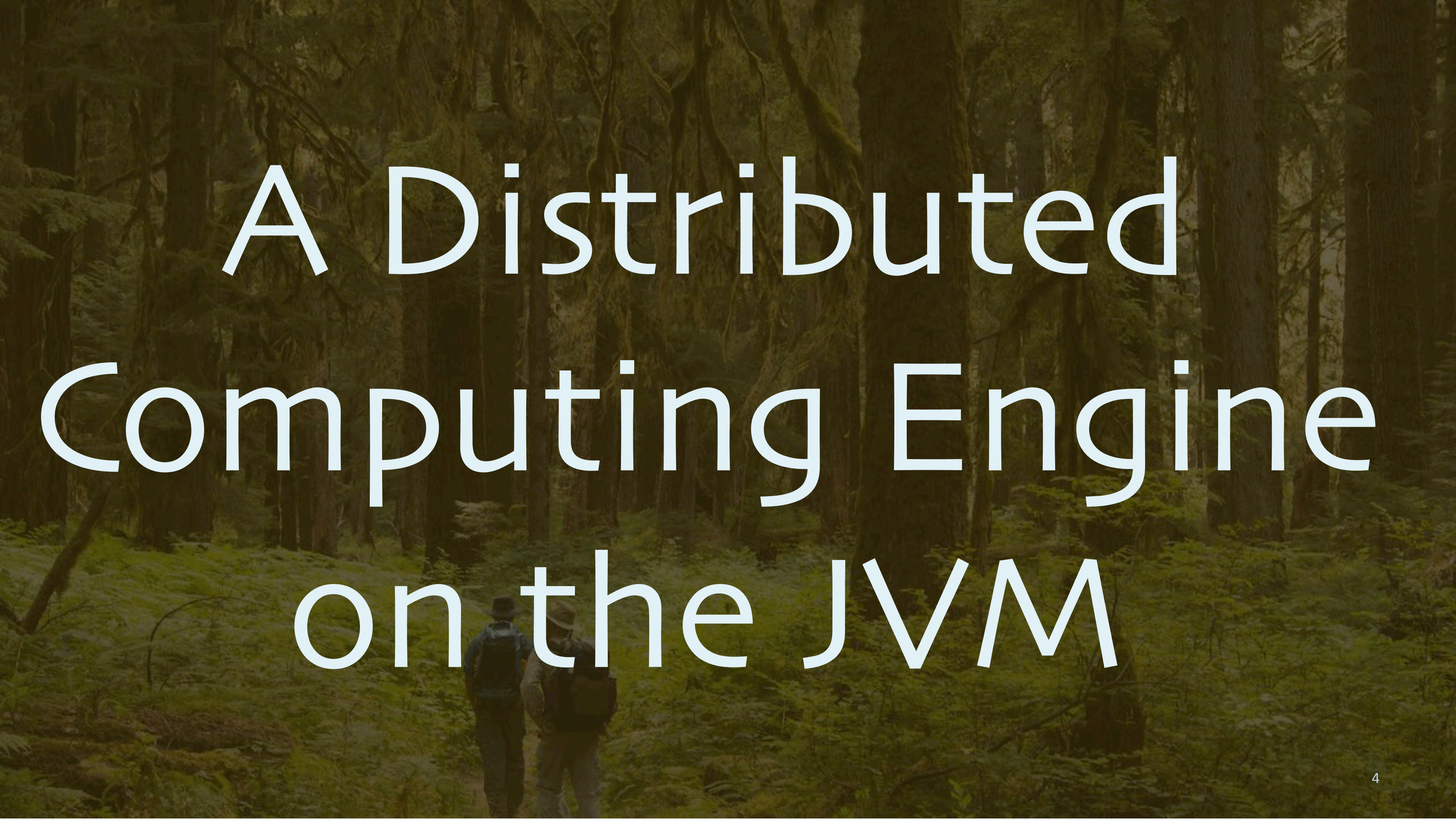
Scala has become popular for Big Data tools and apps, such as Spark. Why is Spark itself so interesting?



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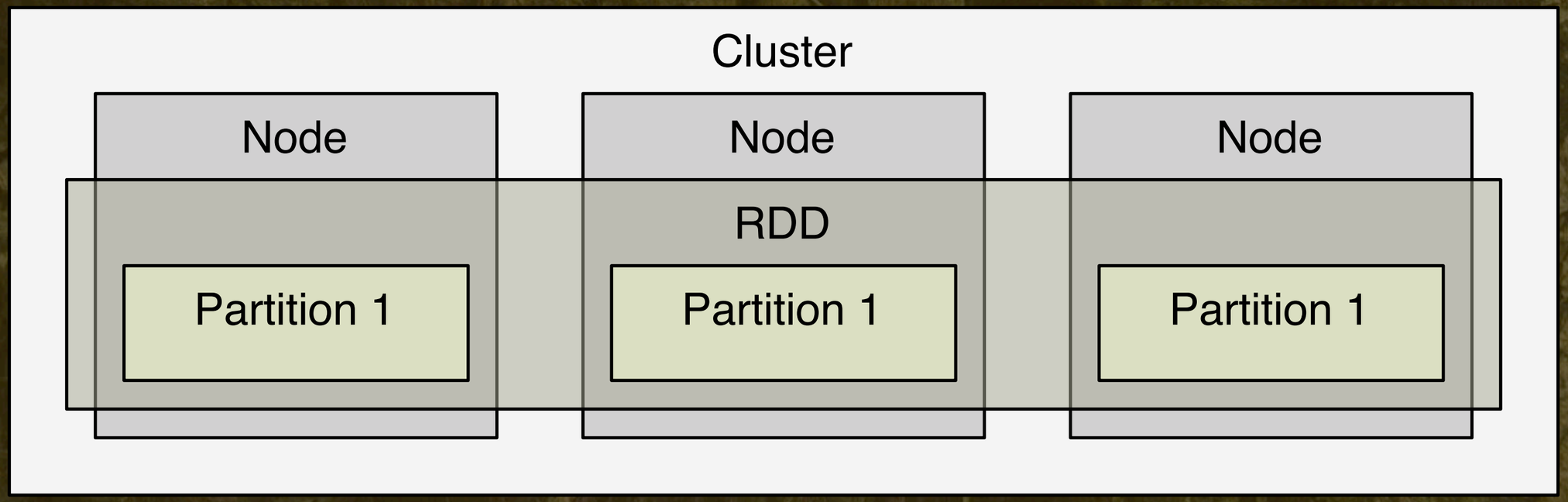
Spark is a general-purpose engine for writing JVM apps to analyze and manipulate massive data sets (although it works well for small ones, too), with the ability to decompose “jobs” into “tasks” that are distributed around a cluster.



Resilient Distributed Datasets

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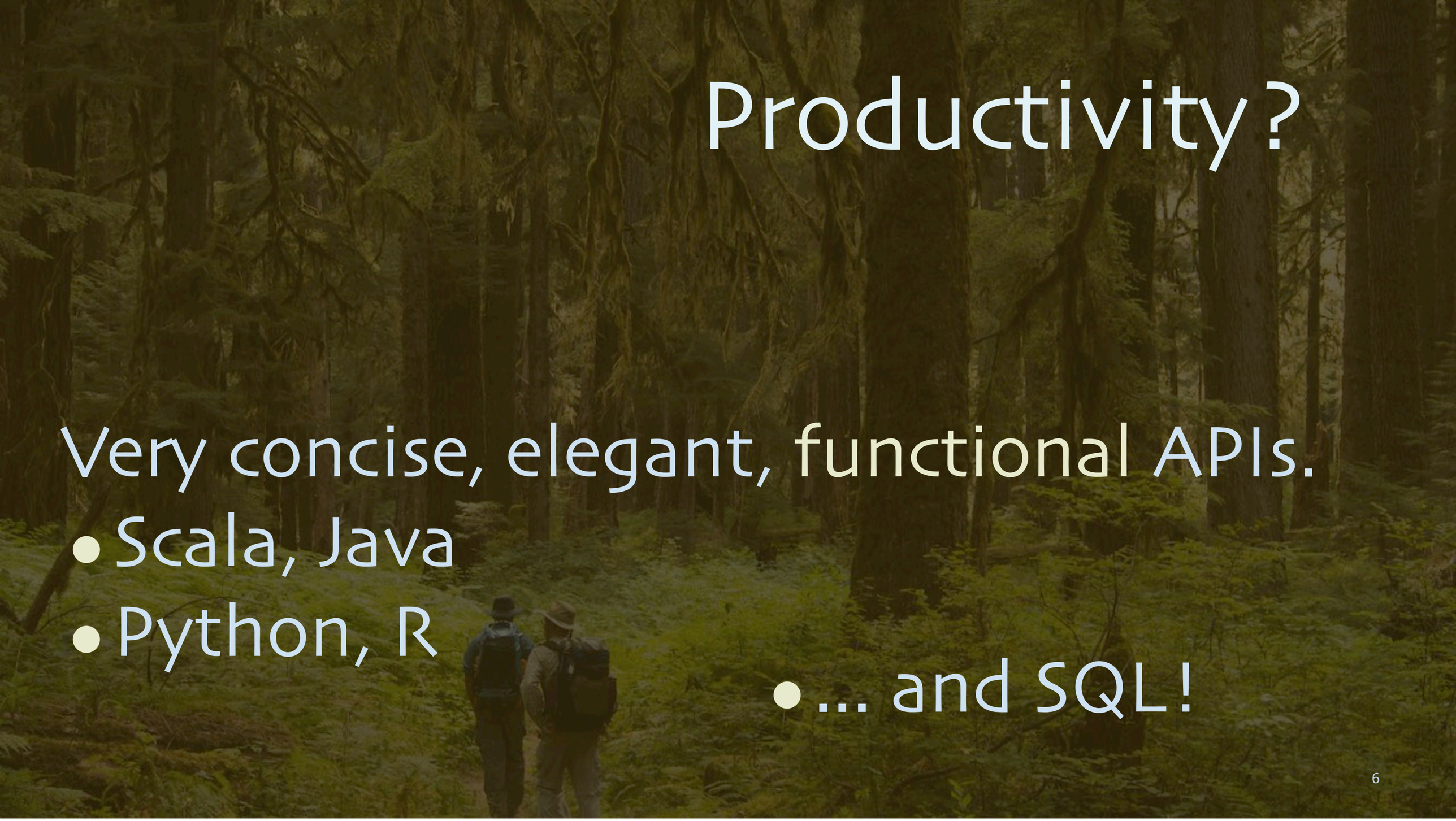
The core concept is a Resilient Distributed Dataset, a partitioned collection. They are resilient because if one partition is lost, Spark knows the lineage and can reconstruct it. However, you can also cache RDDs to eliminate having to walk back too far. RDDs are immutable, but they are also an abstraction, so you don't actually instantiate a new RDD with wasteful data copies for each step of the pipeline, but rather the end of each stage..



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We saw an example why this true.
While Spark was written in Scala, it has Java, Python, R, and even SQL APIs, too, which means it can be a single tool used across a Big Data organization, engineers and data scientists.

Productivity?

Interactive shell (REPL)

- Scala, Python, R, and SQL

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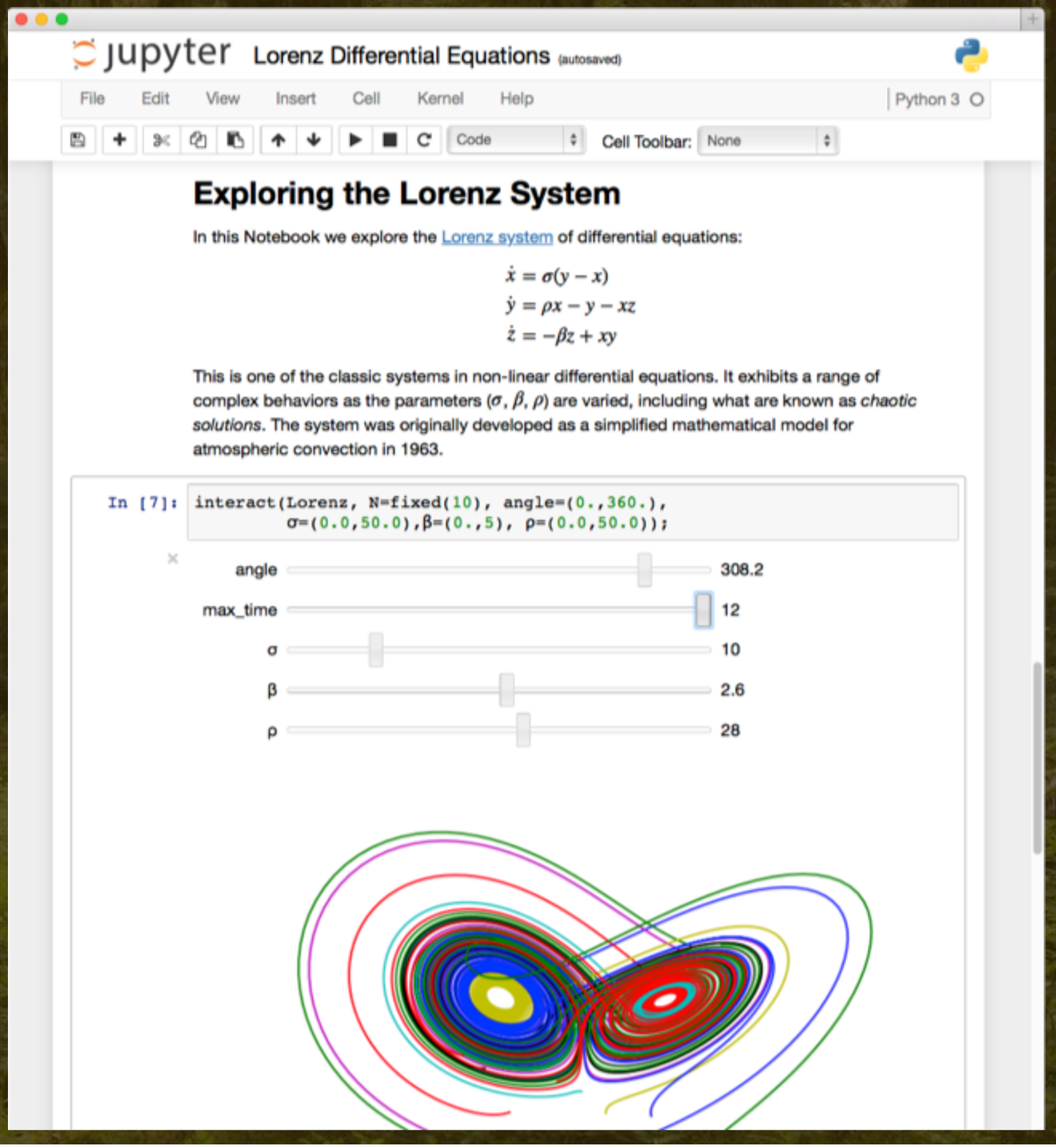
This is especially useful for the SQL queries we'll discuss, but also handy once you know the API for experimenting with data and/or algorithms. In fact, I tend to experiment in the REPL or Spark Notebook (next slide), then copy the code to a more "permanent" form, when it's supposed to be compiled and run as a batch program.

Notebooks

- Jupyter
- Spark Notebook
- Zeppelin
- Databricks



This is especially useful for the SQL queries we'll discuss, but also handy once you know the API for experimenting with data and/or algorithms. In fact, I tend to experiment in the REPL or Spark Notebook, then copy the code to a more "permanent" form, when it's supposed to be compiled and run as a batch program. Databricks is a commercial, hosted notebook offering.

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Example: Inverted Index

Let’s look at a small, real actual Spark program, the Inverted Index.

Web Crawl

wikipedia.org/hadoop

Hadoop provides
MapReduce and HDFS

...

wikipedia.org/hbase

HBase stores data in HDFS

index

block

...	...
wikipedia.org/hadoop	Hadoop provides...
...	...

block

...	...
wikipedia.org/hbase	HBase stores...
...	...

Let’s look at a small, real actual Spark program, the Inverted Index.

Compute Inverted Index

index

block

...	...
wikipedia.org/hadoop	Hadoop provides...
...	...

block

...	...
wikipedia.org/hbase	HBase stores...
...	...

Miracle!!

inve

bloc

...
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Let’s look at a small, real actual Spark program, the Inverted Index.

Compute Inverted Index

inverse index

block

...	...
hadoop	(.../hadoop,1)
hbase	(.../hbase,1),(.../hive,1)
hdfs	(.../hadoop,1),(.../hbase,1),(.../hive,1)
hive	(.../hive,1)
...	...

block

...	...

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Let’s look at a small, real actual Spark program, the Inverted Index.

```
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext._

val sparkContext = new SparkContext(master, “Inv. Index”)
sparkContext.textFile("/path/to/input").
map { line =>
 val array = line.split(",", 2)
 (array(0), array(1))  // (id, content)
}.flatMap {
 case (id, content) =>
  toWords(content).map(word => ((word,id),1)) // toWords not shown
}.reduceByKey(_ + _).
map {
 case ((word,id),n) => (word,(id,n))
}.groupByKey.
mapValues {
 seq => sortByCount(seq)  // Sort the value seq by count, desc.
}.saveAsTextFile("/path/to/output")
```


All on one slide. A very short program, which means your productivity is high and the “software engineering process” is drastically simpler. See an older version of this talk on polyglotprogramming.com/talks for a walkthrough of this code.

```
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext._

val sparkContext = new
 SparkContext(master, “Inv. Index”)
sparkContext.textFile("/path/to/input").
map { line =>
 val array = line.split(",", 2)
 (array(0), array(1))
}.flatMap {
  case (id, contents) =>
   toWords(contents).map(w => ((w,id),1))
```


Create a SparkContext, specifying the “master” (local for single core on the local machine, “local[*]” for all cores, “mesos://...” for Mesos, “yarn-*” for YARN, etc.)

```
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext._

val sparkCo
 SparkContext(master, "Inv. Index")
sparkContext.textFile("/path/to/input").
map { line =>
 val array = line.split(",", 2)
 (array(0), array(1))
}.flatMap {
 case (id,
  toWords(contents).map(w => ((w,id),1))
```

RDD[String]: .../hadoop, Hadoop provides...

RDD[(String,String)]: (.../hadoop,Hadoop provides...)

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Using the sparkContext, read test data (the web crawl data). Assume it's comma-delimited and split it into the identifier (e.g., URL) and the contents. If the input is very large, multiple, parallel tasks will be spawned across the cluster to read and process each file block as a partition, all in parallel.

```
 val array = line.split(",", 2)
 (array(0), array(1))
}.flatMap {
 case (id, contents) =>
  toWords(contents).map(w => ((w,id),1))
}.reduceByKey(_ + _).
map {
 case ((word,id),n) => (word,(id,n))
}.groupByKey.
mapValues {
 seq => sortByCount(seq)
}.saveAsTextFile("/path/to/output")
```

RDD[((String,String),Int)]: ((Hadoop,.../hadoop),1)

An idiom for counting...
Flat map to tokenize the contents into words (using a “toWords” function that isn’t shown), then map over those words to nested tuples, where the (word, id) is the key, and see count of 1 is the value.
Then use reduceByKey, which is an optimized groupBy where we don’t need the groups, we just want to apply a function to reduce the values for each unique key. Now the records are unique (word,id) pairs and counts >= 1.

```
 val array = line.split(",", 2)
 (array(0), array(1))
}.flatMap {
 case (id, contents) =>
  toWords(contents).map(w => ((w,id),1))
}.reduceByKey(_ + _).
map {
 case ((word,id),n) => (word,(id,n))
}.groupByKey.
mapValues {
 seq => sortByCount(seq)
}.saveAsTextFile("/path/to/output")
```

RDD[(String,Iterable((String,Int))]: (Hadoop,seq(.../hadoop,1),...))

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I love how simple this line is anon. function is; by moving the nested parentheses, we setup the final data set, where the words alone are keys and the values are (path, count) pairs. Then we group over the words (the “keys”).

```
 val array = line.split(",", 2)
 (array(0), array(1))
}.flatMap {
 case (id, contents) =>
  toWords(contents).map(w => ((w,id),1))
}.reduceByKey(_ + _).
map {
 case ((word,id),n) => (word,(id,n))
}.groupByKey
mapValues {
 seq => sortByCount(seq)
}.saveAsTextFile("/path/to/output")
```

RDD[(String,Iterable((String,Int))]: (Hadoop,seq(.../hadoop,1),...))

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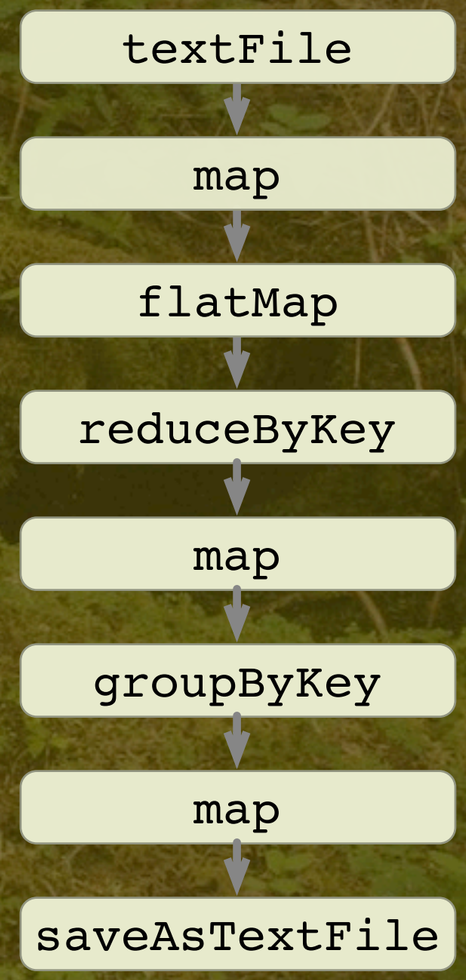
Finally, for each unique word, sort the nested collection of (path,count) pairs by count descending (this is easy with Scala's Seq.sortBy method). Then save the results as text files.

Productivity?

Intuitive API:

- Dataflow of steps.
- Inspired by Scala collections and functional programming.

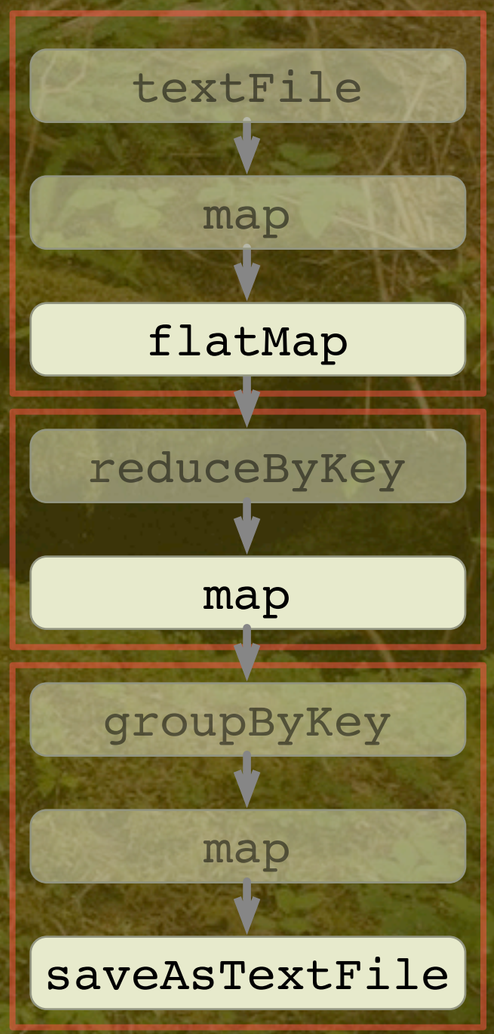


One you learn all these “operators” from functional programming, as expressed first in the Scala collections API and then adapted by Spark, you can quickly construct data flows that are intuitive, yet powerful.

Performance?

Lazy API:

- Combines steps into "stages".
- Cache intermediate data in memory.



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How is Spark more efficient? Spark programs are actually "lazy" dataflows definitions that are only evaluated on demand. Because Spark has this directed acyclic graph of steps, it knows what data to attempt to cache in memory between steps (with programmable tweaks) and it can combine many logical steps into one "stage" of computation, for efficient execution while still providing an intuitive API experience.

The transformation steps that don't require data from other partitions can be pipelined together into a single JVM process (per partition), called a Stage. When you do need to bring together data from different partitions, such as group-bys, joins, reduces, then data must be "shuffled" between partitions (i.e., all keys of a particular value must arrive at the same JVM instance for the next transformation step). That triggers a new stage, as shown. So, this algorithm requires three stages and the RDDs are materialized only for the last steps in each stage.

Higher-Level APIs

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Composable operators, performance optimizations, and general flexibility are a foundation for higher-level APIs...
A major step forward compared to MapReduce. Due to the lightweight nature of Spark processing, it can efficiently support a wider class of algorithms.

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For data with a known, fixed schema.
Like Hive for MapReduce, a subset of SQL (omitting transactions and the U in CRUD) is relatively easy to implement as a DSL on top of a general compute engine like Spark. Hence, the SQL API was born, but it's grown into a full-fledged programmatic API supporting both actual SQL queries and an API similar to Python's DataFrame API for working with structured data in a more type-safe way (errr, at least for Scala).

Example

```
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext._
import org.apache.spark.sql.SQLContext

val sparkContext = new
 SparkContext(master, “...”)
val sqlContext = new
 SQLContext(sparkContext)
val flights =
 sqlContext.read.parquet(".../flights")
val planes =
 sqlContext.read.parquet(".../planes")
flights.registerTempTable("flights")
planes.registerTempTable("planes")
flights.cache(); planes.cache()

val planes_for_flights1 = sqlContext.sql("""
  SELECT * FROM flights f
  JOIN planes p ON f.tailNum = p.tailNum LIMIT 100""")

val planes_for_flights2 =
 flights.join(planes,
  flights("tailNum") ===
  planes ("tailNum")).limit(100)
```


Example using SparkSQL to join two data sets (adapted from Typesafe’s Spark Workshop training), data for flights and information about the planes.

```
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext
import org.apache.spark.SparkContext._
import org.apache.spark.sql.SQLContext

val sparkContext = new
 SparkContext(master, "...")
val sqlContext = new
 SQLContext(sparkContext)
val flights =
 sqlContext.read.parquet("../flights")
val planes =
 sqlContext.read.parquet("../planes")
```


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Now we also need a SQLContext.

```
 SQLContext(sparkContext)
val flights =
 sqlContext.read.parquet(".../flights")
val planes =
 sqlContext.read.parquet(".../planes")
flights.registerTempTable("flights")
planes.registerTempTable("planes")
flights.cache(); planes.cache()
```

```
val planes_for_flights1 =
sqlContext.sql("""
  SELECT * FROM flights f
```


Read the data as Parquet files, which include the schemas. Create temporary tables (purely virtual) for SQL queries, and cache the tables for faster, repeated access.

```
val planes_for_flights1 =
sqlContext.sql("""
  SELECT * FROM flights f
  JOIN planes p
  ON f.tailNum = p.tailNum
  LIMIT 100""")
```

Returns another DataFrame.

```
val planes_for_flights2 =
 flights.join(planes,
 flights("tailNum") ===
 planes ("tailNum")).limit(100)
```


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Use SQL to write the query. There are DataFrame operations we can then use on this result (the next part of the program uses this API to redo the query). A DataFrame wraps an RDD, so we can also all RDD methods to work with the results. Hence, we can mix and match SQL and programmatic APIs to do what we need to do.

```
val planes_for_flights1 =
sqlContext.sql("""
  SELECT * FROM flights f
  JOIN planes p
  ON f.tailNum = p.tailNum
  LIMIT 100""")
```

```
val planes_for_flights2 =
 flights.join(planes,
 flights("tailNum") ===
 planes ("tailNum")).limit(100)
```


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Use the DataFrame DSL to write the query (more type safe). Also returns a new DataFrame.

```
val planes_for_flights2 =
  flights.join(planes,
    flights("tailNum") ===
    planes ("tailNum")).limit(100)
```

Not an “arbitrary” predicate anon. function, but a “Column” instance.

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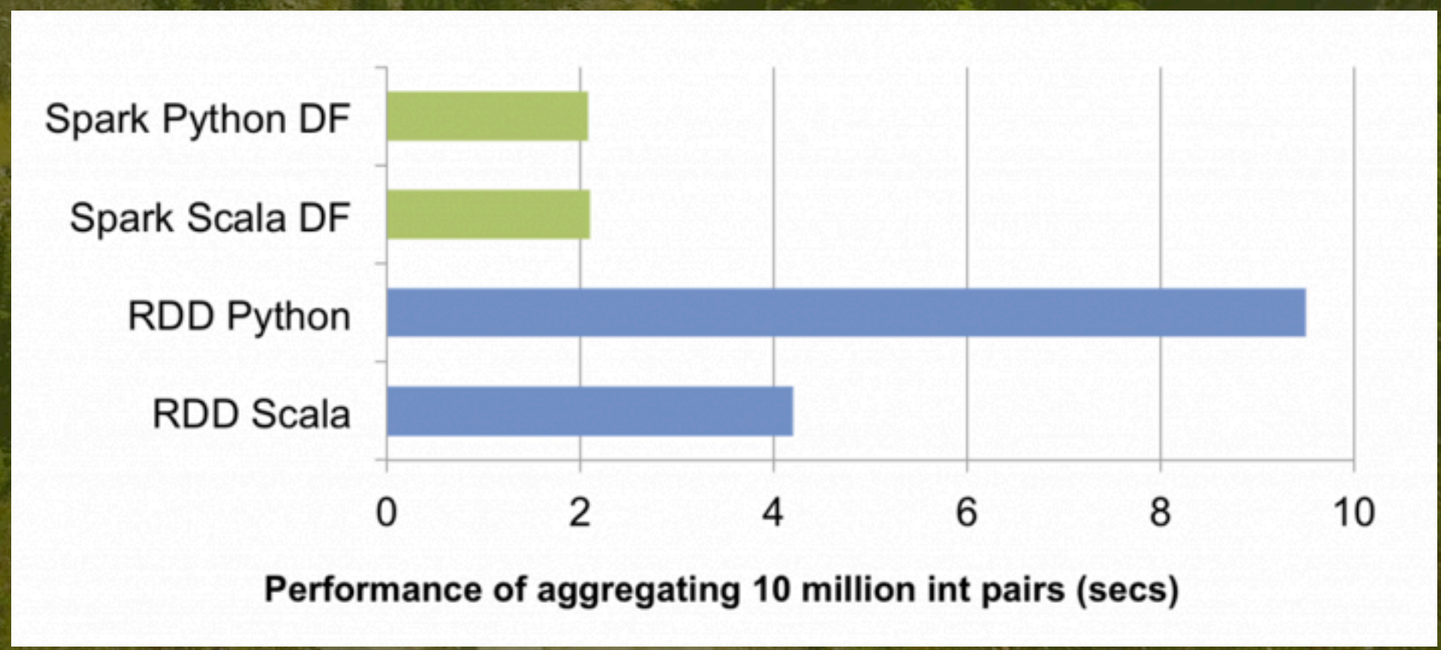
Looks like an anonymous function, but actually it’s actually a join expression that constructs an instance of a “Column” type. By constraining what’s allowed here, Spark knows the exact expression used here and it can apply aggressive optimizations at run time.

Performance

The DataFrame API has the same performance for all languages: Scala, Java, Python, R, and SQL!



All the different language APIs are thin veneers on top of the Catalyst query optimizer and other Scala-based code. This performance independent of language choice is a major step forward. Previously for Hadoop, Data Scientists often developed models in Python or R, then an engineering team ported them to Java MapReduce. Previously with Spark, you got good performance from Python code, but about 1/2 the efficiency of corresponding Scala code. Now, the performance is the same.
Graph from: https://databricks.com/blog/2015/04/24/recent-performance-improvements-in-apache-spark-sql-python-dataframes-and-more.html

```
def join(right: DataFrame, joinExprs: Column): DataFrame = {
def groupBy(cols: Column*): GroupedData = {
def orderBy(sortExprs: Column*): DataFrame = {
def select(cols: Column*): DataFrame = {
def where(condition: Column): DataFrame = {
def limit(n: Int): DataFrame = {
def unionAll(other: DataFrame): DataFrame = {
def intersect(other: DataFrame): DataFrame = {
def sample(withReplacement: Boolean, fraction, seed) = {
def drop(col: Column): DataFrame = {
def map[R: ClassTag](f: Row => R): RDD[R] = {
def flatMap[R: ClassTag](f: Row => Traversable[R]): RDD[R] ={
def foreach(f: Row => Unit): Unit = {
def take(n: Int): Array[Row] = {
def count(): Long = {
def distinct(): DataFrame = {
def agg(exprs: Map[String, String]): DataFrame = {
```


So, the DataFrame exposes a set of relational (-ish) operations, more limited than the general RDD API. This narrower interface enables broader (more aggressive) optimizations and other implementation choices underneath.

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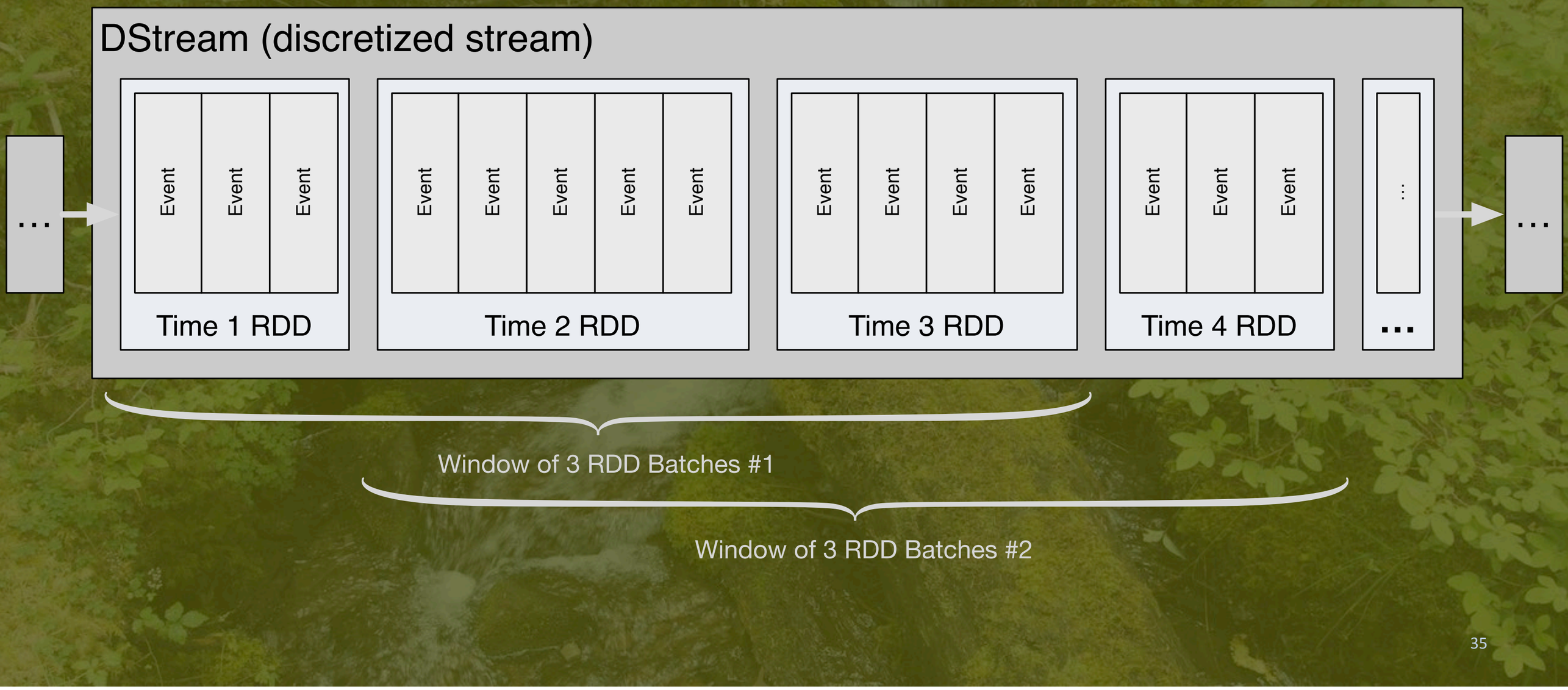
DStreams: Spark Streaming



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For streaming, one RDD is created per batch iteration, with a DStream (discretized stream) holding all of them, which supports window functions. Spark started life as a batch-mode system, just like MapReduce, but Spark's dataflow stages and in-memory, distributed collections (RDDs - resilient, distributed datasets) are lightweight enough that streams of data can be timesliced (down to ~1 second) and processed in small RDDs, in a "mini-batch" style. This gracefully reuses all the same RDD logic, including your code written for RDDs, while also adding useful extensions like functions applied over moving windows of these batches.

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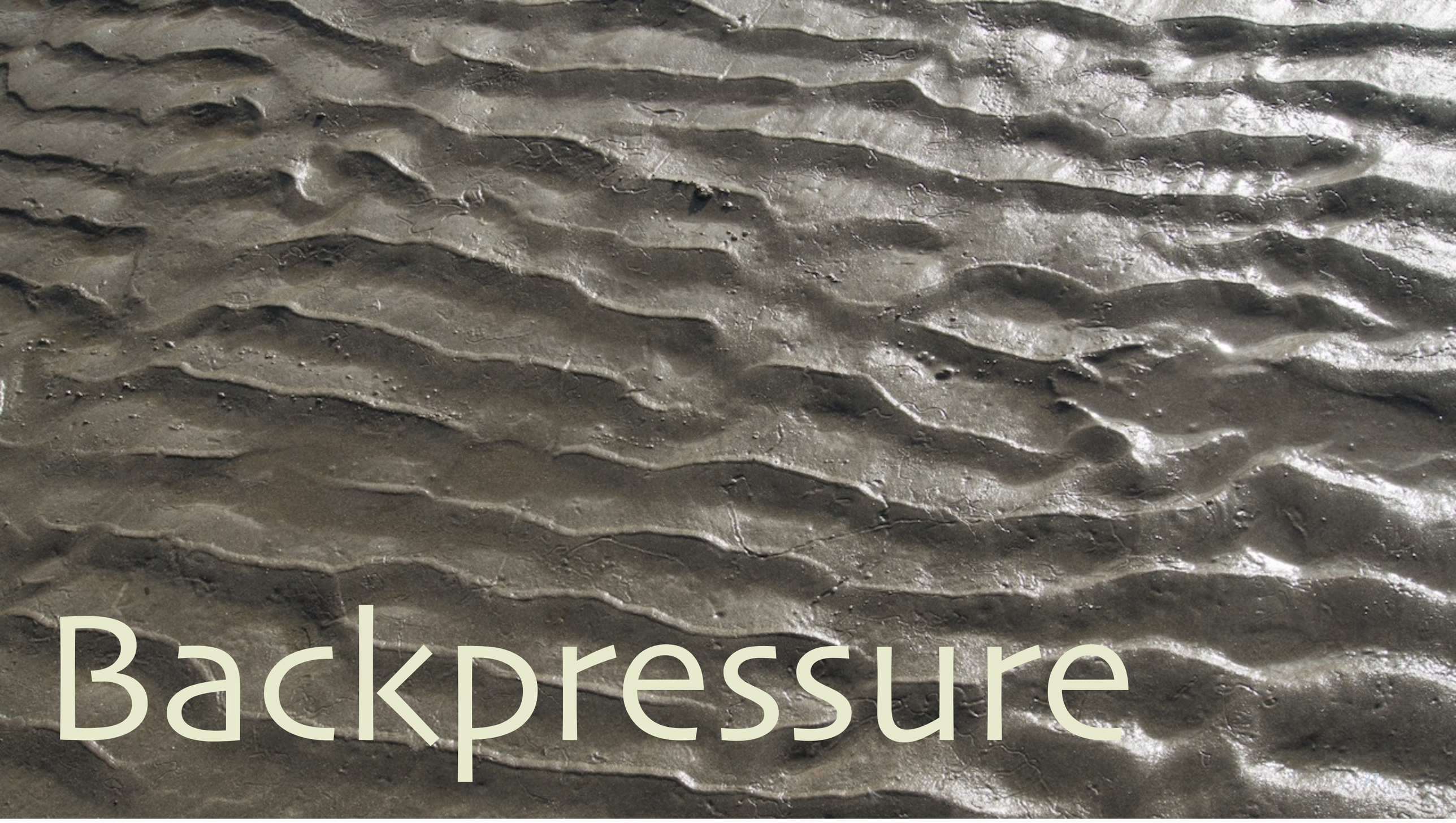
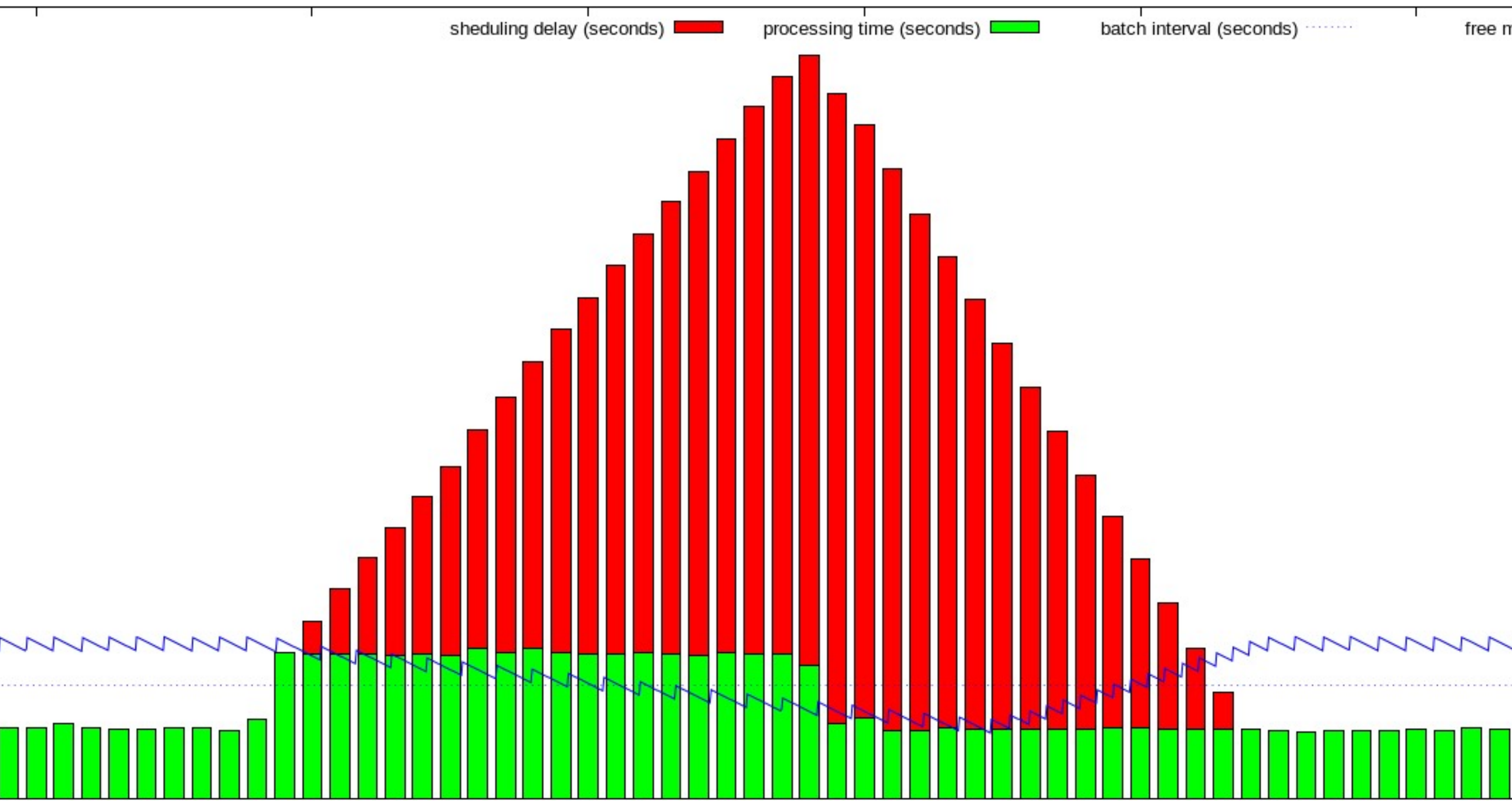
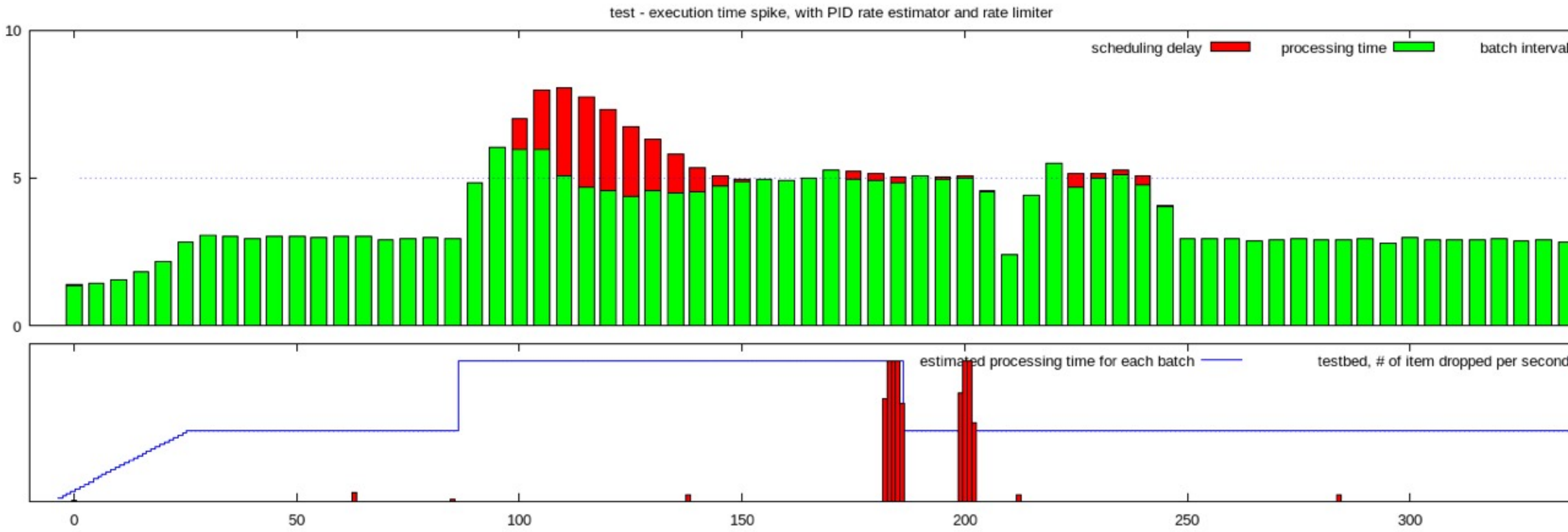
Streams can run a very long time. Lots of problems can arise, such as consumers getting backed up or producers producing more and more stuff...

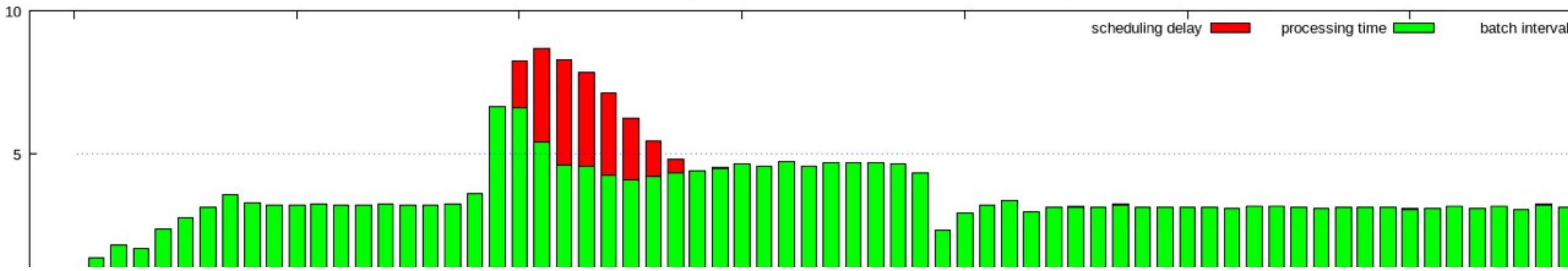


What about backpressure in Spark? In v1.5, Typesafe contributed a dynamic backpressure mechanism for flow control.



This is what can happen without backpressure. If the rate of incoming data increases to the point where each minibatch job can’t finish before the next batch is ready, then it backs up and will eventually exhaust the heap. In this case, the rate of incoming data dropped again, causing the red peak.





This is what can happen with backpressure. The producer of data is told to slow down (eg., the connection to Kafka pulls fewer events/interval). The algorithm uses previous intervals data to adjust the flow rate.

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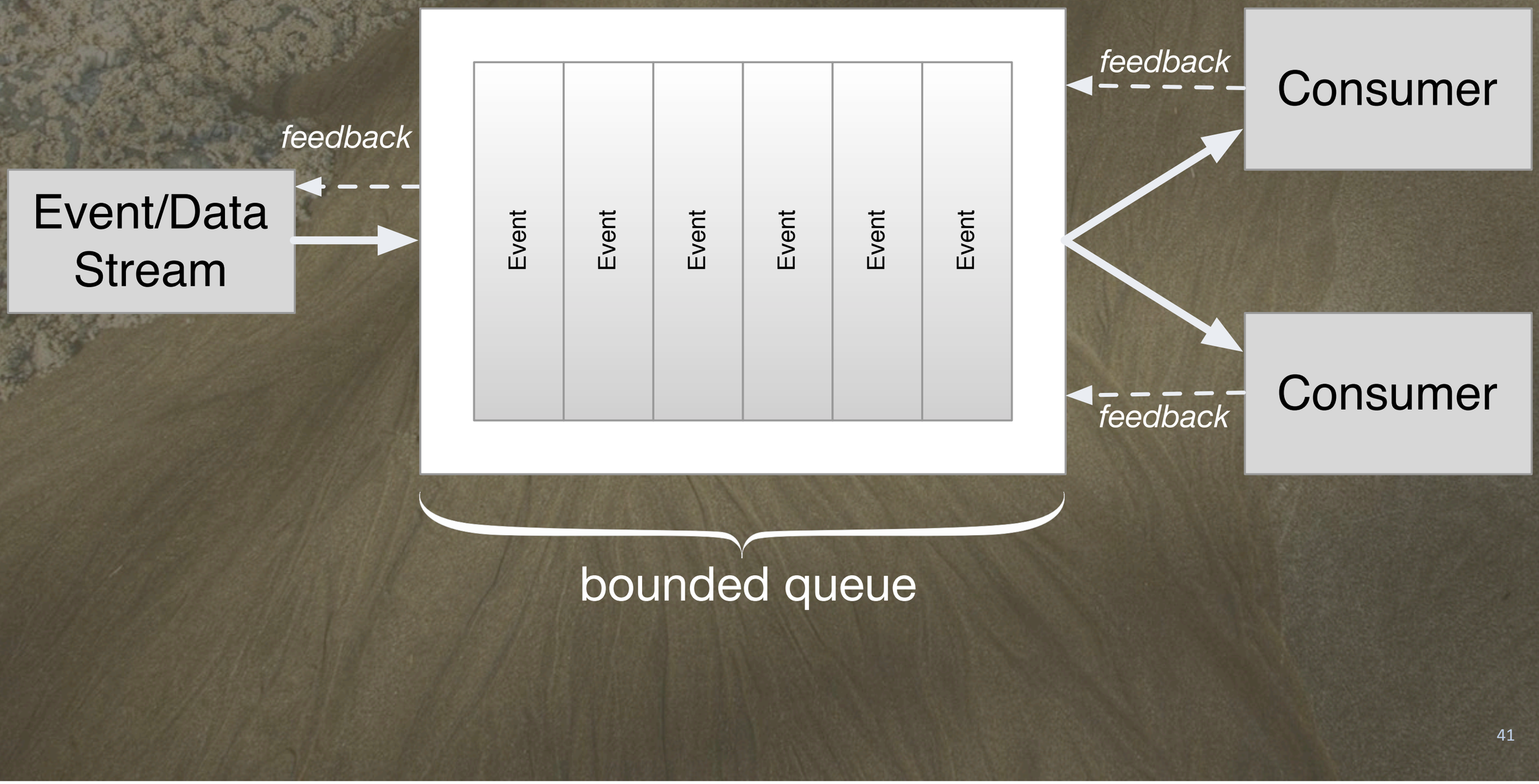
There's a standard for addressing this problem, called Reactive Streams, which will be part of Java 9. reactive-streams.org. It's mechanism is out-of-band messaging between the consume and the producer to control the flow rate. Hence, it implements backpressure, but also allows the consumers and producers of different stream implementations to interoperate.



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Typesafe is contributing an RS-compliant consumer implementation to Spark, hopefully in the 1.6 or 1.7 release.

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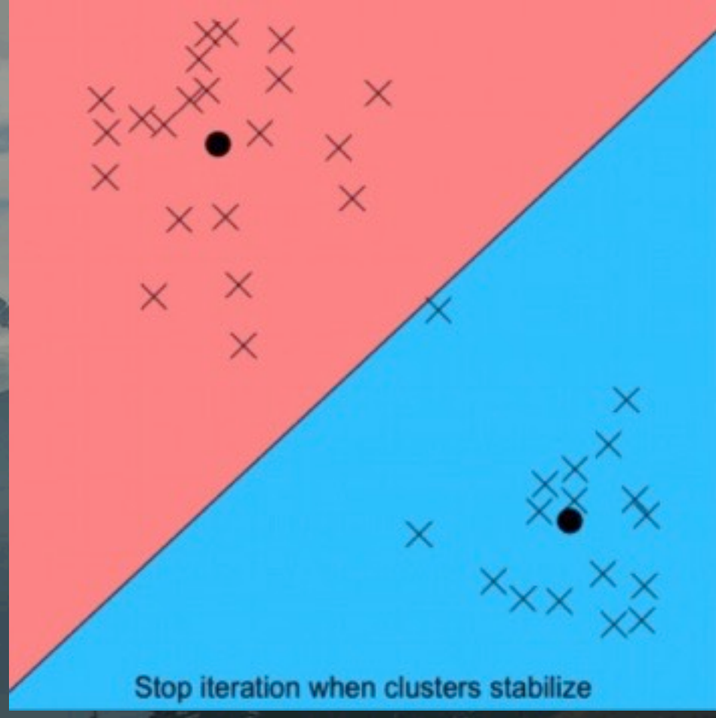
Many machine learning libraries are being implemented on top of Spark. An important requirement is the ability to do linear algebra and iterative algorithms quickly and efficiently, which is used in the training algorithms for many ML models.

K-Means



- Machine Learning requires:
- Iterative training of models.
- Good linear algebra perf.

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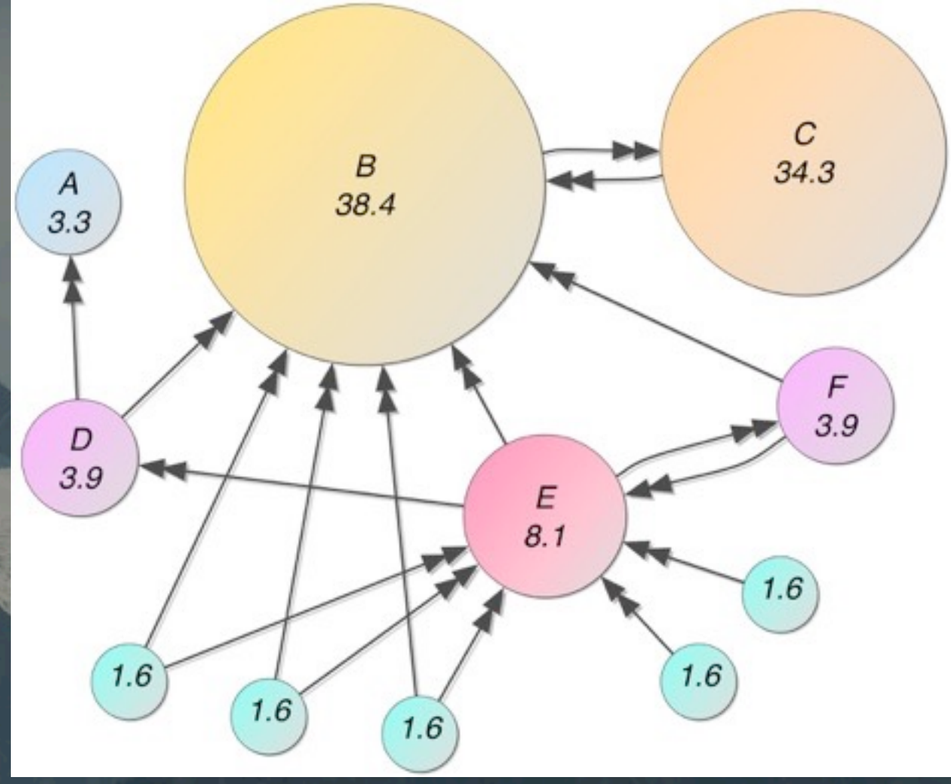
Many machine learning libraries are being implemented on top of Spark. An important requirement is the ability to do linear algebra and iterative algorithms quickly and efficiently, which is used in the training algorithms for many ML models.
K-Means Clustering simulation: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/K-means_clustering

Similarly, efficient iteration makes graph traversal algorithms tractable, enabling “first-class” graph representations of data, like social networks.

PageRank



- Graph algorithms require:
- Incremental traversal.
- Efficient edge and node reps.

Similarly, efficient iteration makes graph traversal algorithms tractable, enabling “first-class” graph representations of data, like social networks.
Page Rank example: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PageRank

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With that introduction, let’s step back and look at the larger context, starting at the bottom; why is the JVM the platform of choice for Big Data?

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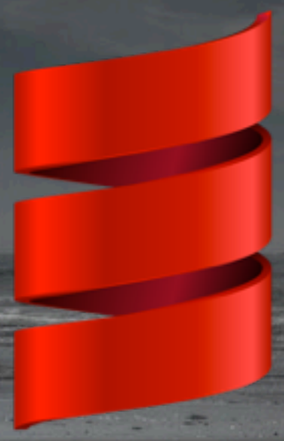
We have 20 years of operations experience running JVM-based apps in production. We have many Java developers, some with 20 years of experience, writing JVM-based apps.

Tools and Libraries



Akka
Breeze
Algebird
Spire & Cats
Axle

...

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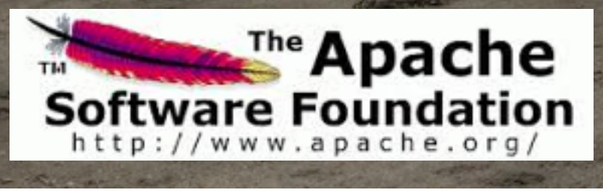
We have a rich suite of mature(-ish) languages, development tools, and math-related libraries for building data applications...

http://akka.io - For resilient, distributed middleware.
https://github.com/scalanlp/breeze - A numerical processing library around LAPACK, etc.
https://github.com/twitter/algebird - A big data math library, developed at Twitter
https://github.com/non/spire - A numerical library
https://github.com/non/cats - A Category Theory library
http://axle-lang.org/ - DSLs for scientific computing.

Big Data Ecosystem



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All this is why most Big Data tools in use have been built on the JVM, including Spark, especially those for OSS projects created and used by startups.

http://spark.apache.org
https://github.com/twitter/scalding
https://github.com/twitter/summingbird
http://kafka.apache.org
http://hadoop.apache.org
http://cassandra.apache.org
http://storm.apache.org
http://samza.apache.org
http://lucene.apache.org/solr/
http://h2o.ai

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But no system is perfect. The JVM wasn't really designed with Big Data systems, as we call them now, in mind.

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First, a small, but significant issue; since Python and R have longer histories as Data Science languages, they have much richer and more mature libraries, e.g., statistics, machine learning, natural language processing, etc., compared to the JVM.

Garbage Collection

Garbage collection is a wonder thing for removing a lot of tedium and potential errors from code, but the default settings in the JVM are not ideal for Big Data apps.

GC Challenges

- Typical Spark heaps: 10s-100s GB.
- Uncommon for "generic", non-data services.

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We'll explain the details shortly, but the programmer controls which data sets are cached to optimize usage.
See https://databricks.com/blog/2015/05/28/tuning-java-garbage-collection-for-spark-applications.html for a detailed overview of GC challenges and tuning for Spark.

GC Challenges

- Too many cached RDDs leads to huge old generation garbage.
- Billions of objects => long GC pauses.

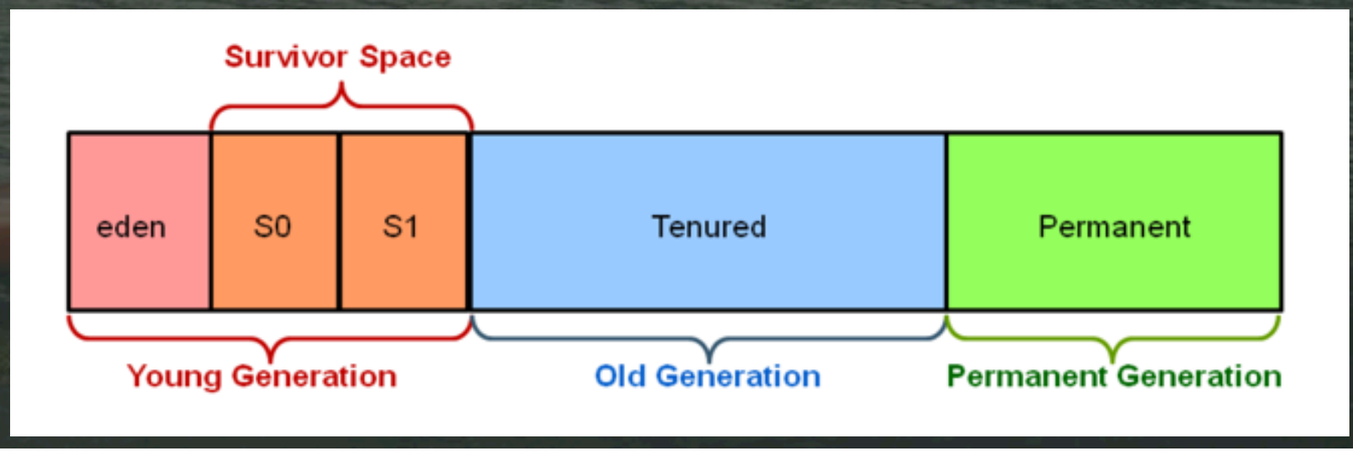

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Image from http://www.oracle.com/webfolder/technetwork/tutorials/obe/java/gc01/index.html.
Another example is the Hadoop Distributed File System Name Node service, which holds the file system's metadata in memory, often 10s-100sGB. At these sizes, there have been occurrences of multi-hour GC pauses. Careful tuning is required.

Tuning GC

- Garbage First GC (G1 - JVM 1.6).
  - Balance latency and throughput.
  - More flexible mem. region mgmt.

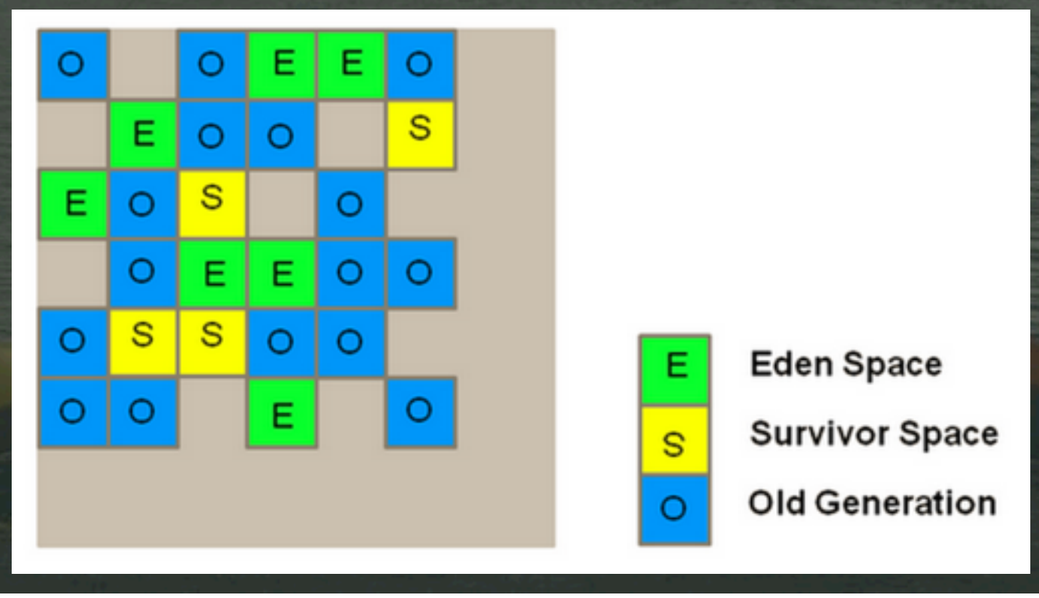

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Image: http://www.oracle.com/webfolder/technetwork/tutorials/obe/java/G1GettingStarted/index.html
Much better for Spark it turns out...

Tuning GC

- Best for Spark:
  - -XX:UseG1GC -XX:-ResizePLAB -Xms... -Xmx... -XX:InitiatingHeapOccupancyPercent=... -XX:ConcGCThread=...

databricks.com/blog/2015/05/28/tuning-java-garbage-collection-for-spark-applications.html

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Summarizing a long, detailed blog post (https://databricks.com/blog/2015/05/28/tuning-java-garbage-collection-for-spark-applications.html) in one slide!
Their optimal settings for Spark for large data sets, before the “Tungsten” optimizations. The numbers elided (“...”) are scaled together.

JVM Object Model

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For general-purpose management of trees of objects, Java works well, but not for data orders of magnitude larger, where you tend to have many instances of the same “schema”.

Java Objects?

- "abcd": 4 bytes for raw UTF8, right?
- 48 bytes for the Java object:
  - 12 byte header.
  - 8 bytes for hash code.
  - 20 bytes for array overhead.
  - 8 bytes for UTF16 chars.

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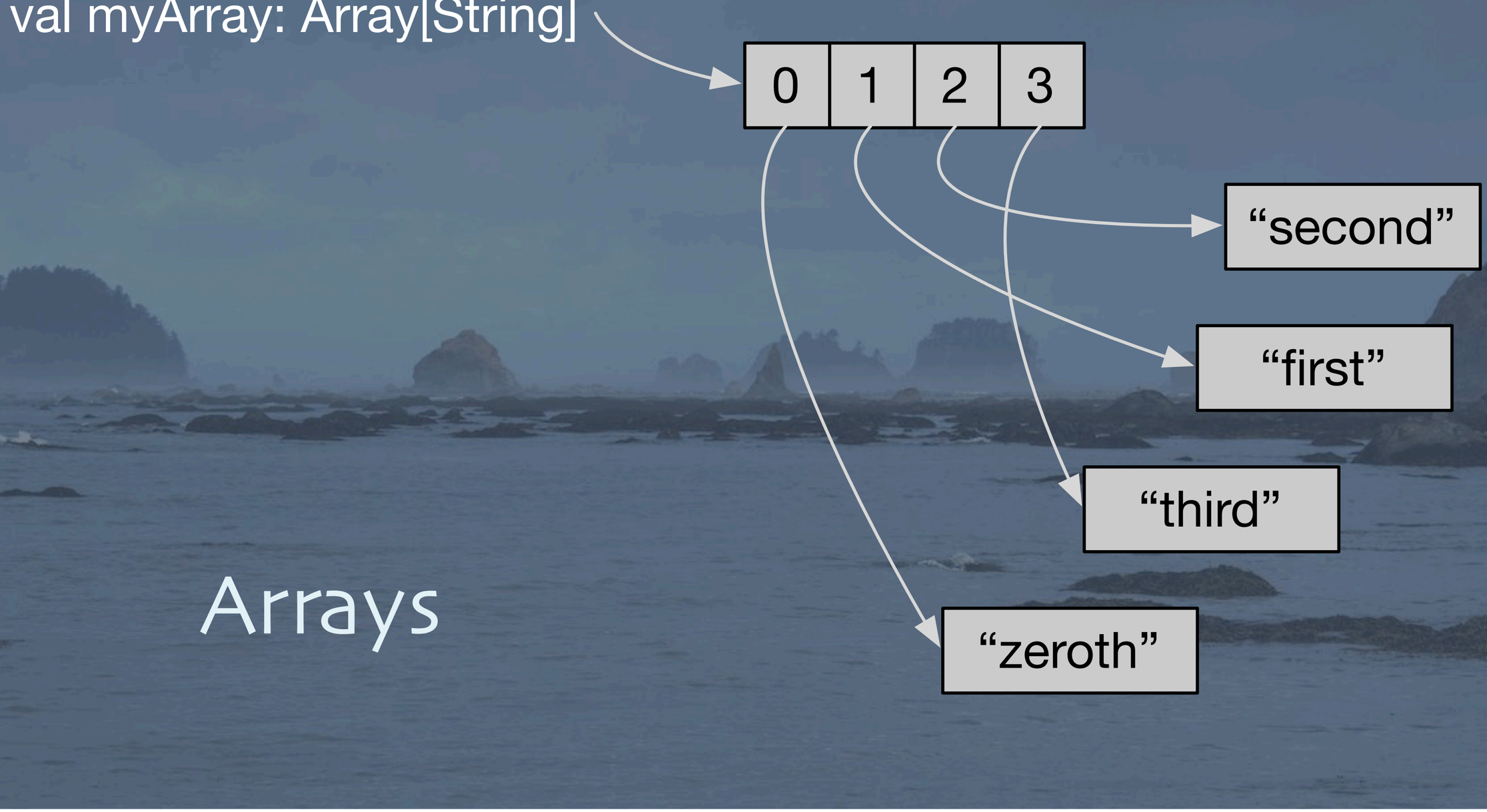
From http://www.slideshare.net/SparkSummit/deep-dive-into-project-tungsten-josh-rosen

Arrays



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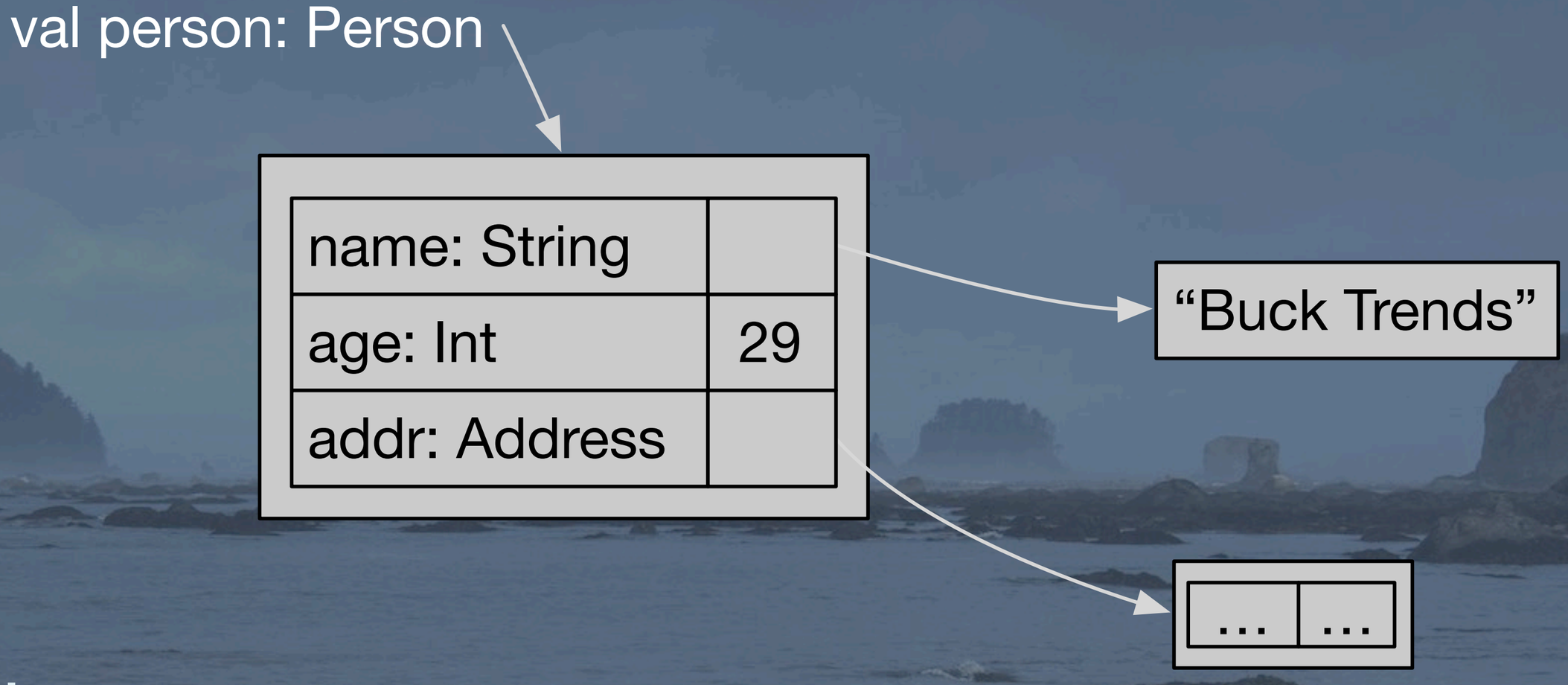
There’s the memory for the array, then the references to other objects for each element around the heap.

Class Instances



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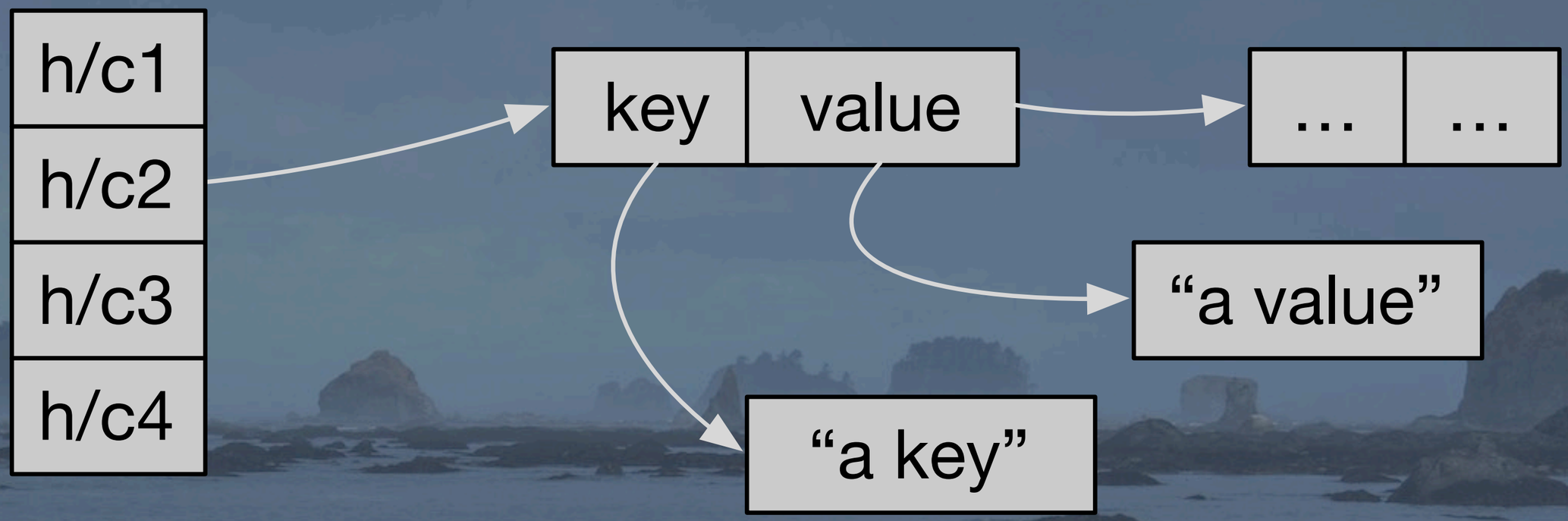
An example of the type that might represent a record for a “persons” table.
There’s the memory for the array, then the references to other objects for each element around the heap.

Hash Maps

Hash Map



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For a given hash bucket, there’s the memory for the array, then the references to other objects for each element around the heap.

Performance?

Why obsess about this?
Spark jobs are CPU bound:

- Improve network I/O? ~2% better.
- Improve disk I/O? ~20% better.

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Okay, so memory handling is an issue, but is it the major issue? Aren't Big Data jobs I/O bound anyway? MapReduce jobs tend to be CPU bound, but research by Kay Ousterhout (http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/~keo/talks/2015_06_15_SparkSummit_MakingSense.pdf) and other observers indicate that for Spark, optimizing I/O only improve performance ~5% for network improvements and ~20% for disk I/O. So, Spark jobs tend to be CPU bound.

What changed?

- Faster HW (compared to ~2000)
  - 10Gbs networks
  - SSDs.

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These are the contributing factors that make today's Spark jobs CPU bound while yesterday's MapReduce jobs were more I/O bound.

What changed?

- Smarter use of I/O
  - Pruning unneeded data sooner.
  - Caching more effectively.
  - Efficient formats, like Parquet.

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These are the contributing factors that make today's Spark jobs CPU bound while yesterday's MapReduce jobs were more I/O bound.
We also use compression more than we used to.

What changed?

- But more CPU use today:
  - More Serialization.
  - More Compression.
  - More Hashing (joins, group-bys).

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These are the contributing factors that make today's Spark jobs CPU bound while yesterday's MapReduce jobs were more I/O bound.

Performance?

To improve performance, we need to focus on the CPU, the:

- Better algorithms, sure.
- And optimize use of memory.

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Okay, so memory handling is an issue, but is it the major issue? Aren't Big Data jobs I/O bound anyway? MapReduce jobs tend to be CPU bound, but research by Kay Ousterhout (http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/~keo/talks/2015_06_15_SparkSummit_MakingSense.pdf) and other observers indicate that for Spark, optimizing I/O only improve performance ~5% for network improvements and ~20% for disk I/O. So, Spark jobs tend to be CPU bound.

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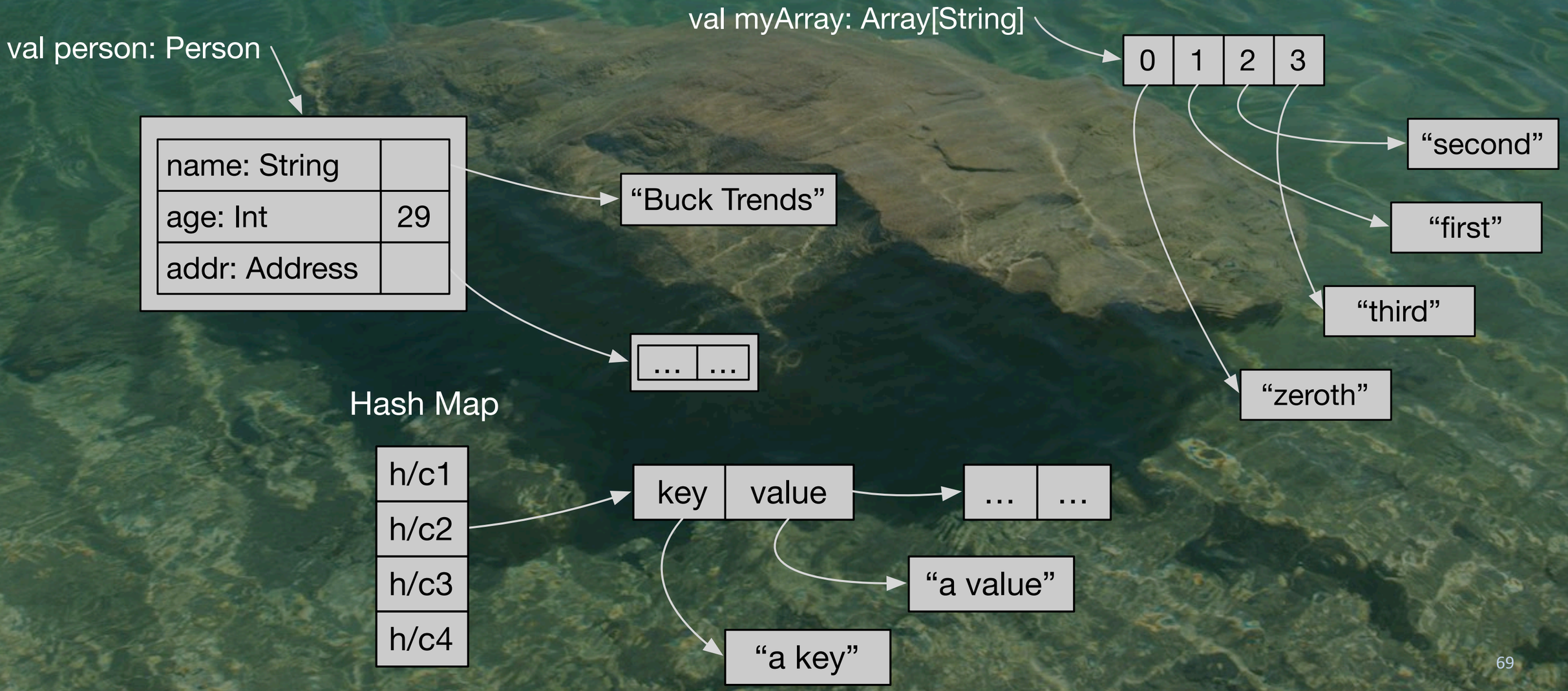
Project Tungsten is a multi-release initiative to improve Spark performance, focused mostly on the DataFrame implementation. References:
http://www.slideshare.net/databricks/2015-0616-spark-summit
http://www.slideshare.net/SparkSummit/deep-dive-into-project-tungsten-josh-rosen
https://databricks.com/blog/2015/04/28/project-tungsten-bringing-spark-closer-to-bare-metal.html

Goals

Reduce the # of References



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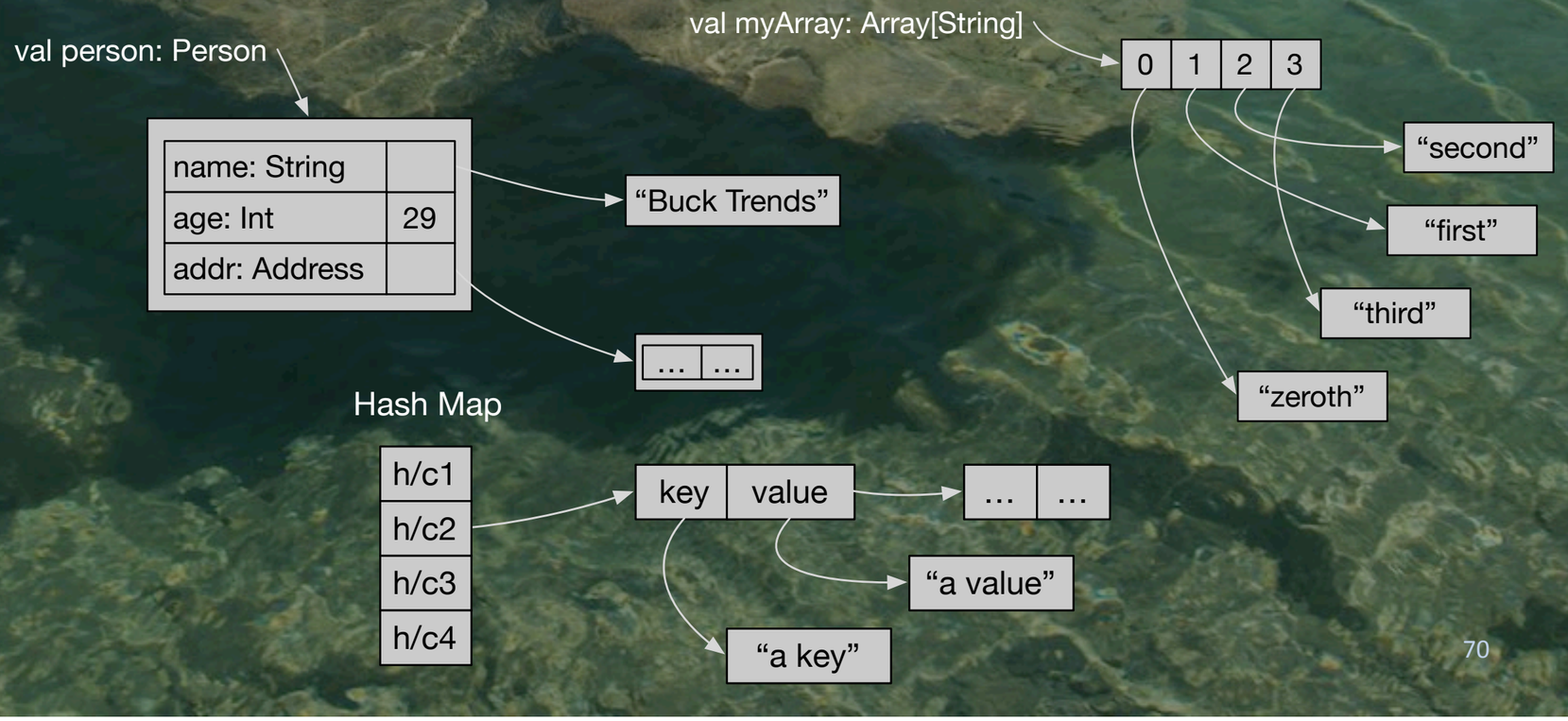
While this general-purpose model has given us the flexibility we need, it’s bad for big data, where we have a lot of data with the same format, same types, etc.

Reduce the # of References

- Fewer, bigger objects to GC.
- Fewer cache misses



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Eliminating references (the arrows) means we have better GC performance, because we'll have far fewer (but larger) to manage and collect. The size doesn't matter; it's just as efficient to collect a 1MB block as a 1KB block.
With fewer arrows, it's also more likely that the data we need is already in the cache!

Less Expression Overhead

```
sql("SELECT a + b FROM table")
```

- Evaluating expressions billions of times:
  - Virtual function calls.
  - Boxing/unboxing.
  - Branching (if statements, etc.)

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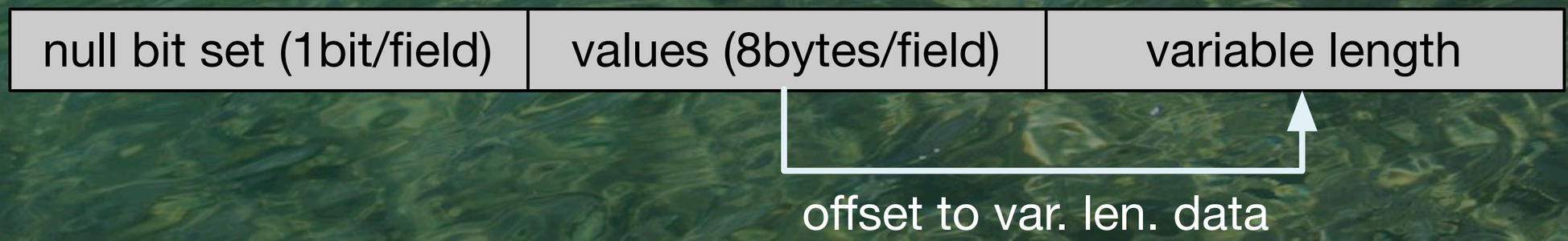
This is perhaps less obvious, but when you evaluate an expression billions of times, then the overhead of virtual function calls (even with the JVMs optimizations for polymorphic dispatch), the boxing and unboxing of primitives, and the evaluate of conditions adds up to noticeable overhead.

Implementation

Object Encoding

New CompactRow type:



- Compute hashCode and equals on raw bytes.

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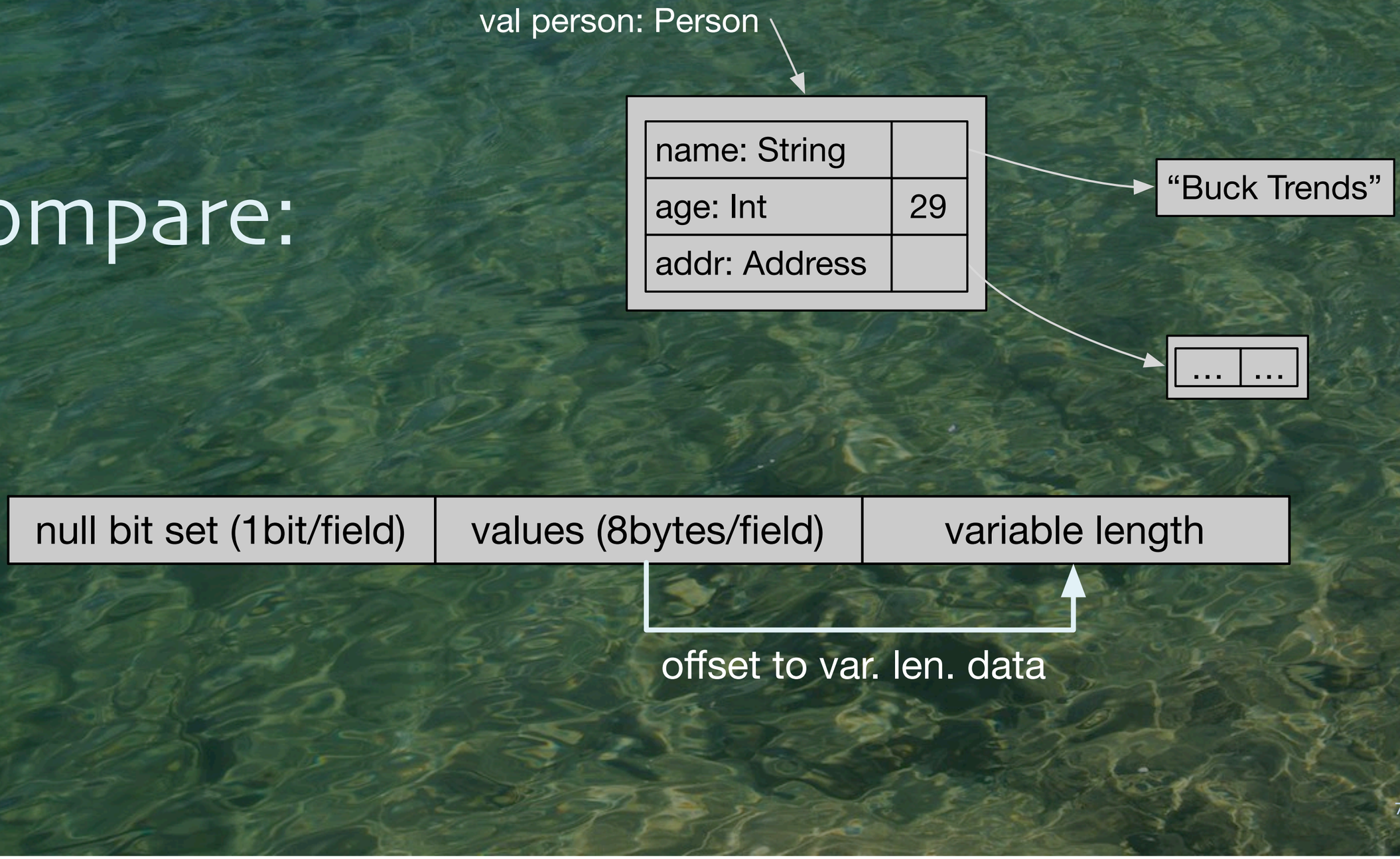
The new Compact Row format (for each record) uses a bit vector to mark values that are null, then packs the values together, each in 8 bytes. If a value is a fixed-size item and fits in 8 bytes, it's inlined. Otherwise, the 8 bytes holds a reference to a location in variable-length segment (e.g., strings).
Rows are 8-byte aligned. Hashing and equality can be done on the raw bytes.

- Compare:



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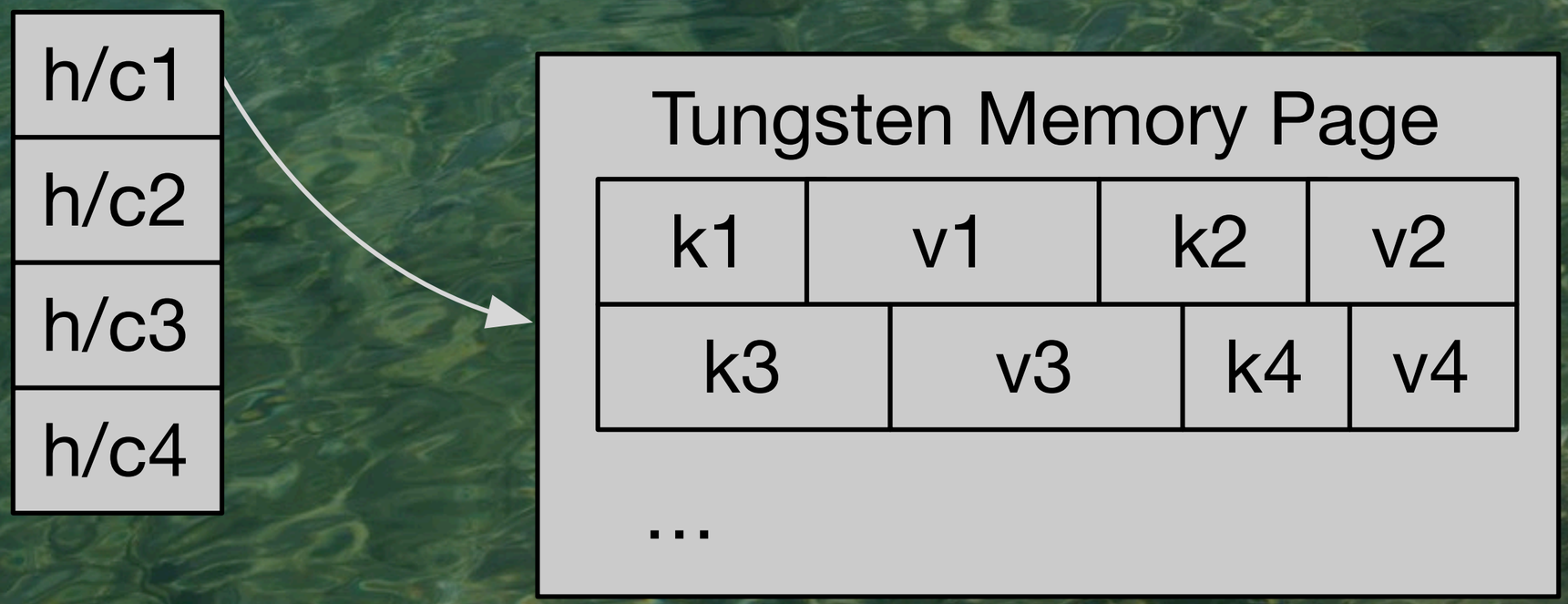
An object spread over the heap vs. a single byte array encoding.

- BytesToBytesMap:



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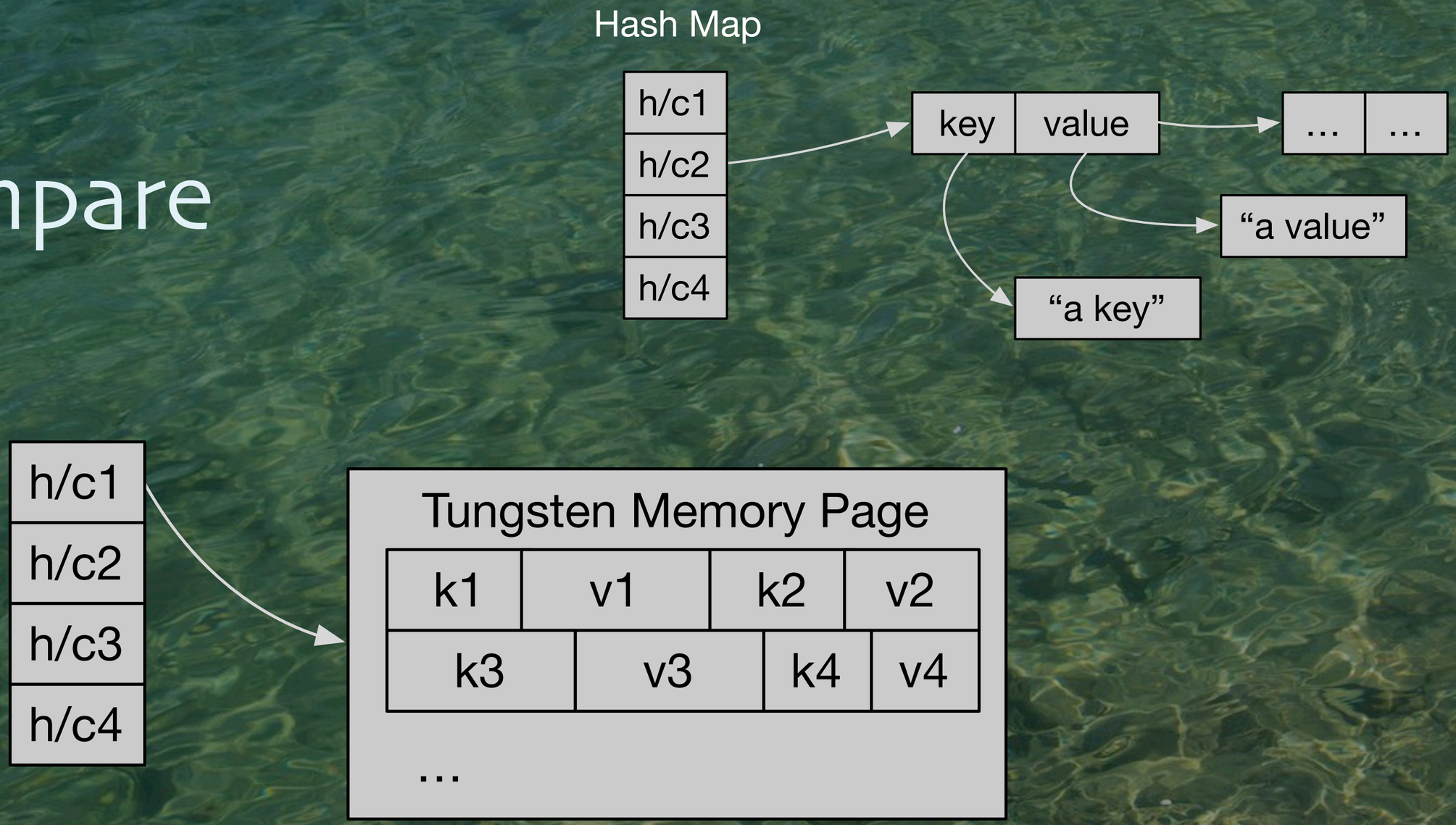
BytesToBytesMap eliminates almost all the reference indirections. The memory pages are on or off heap, but managed by Tungsten using sun.misc.Unsafe.

- Compare



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Many fewer arrows!

Memory Management

- Some allocations off heap.
  - sun.misc.Unsafe.

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Unsafe allows you to manipulate memory directory, like in C/C++.

Less Expression Overhead

```
sql("SELECT a + b FROM table")
```

- Solution:
  - Generate custom byte code.

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To eliminate virtual function calls, boxing overhead and branching, generate custom byte code for expressions.

Less Expression Overhead

```
sql("SELECT a + b FROM table")
```

- Solution:
  - Generate custom byte code.
  - (Spark 2.0 - custom code for whole queries.)

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To eliminate virtual function calls, boxing overhead and branching, generate custom byte code for expressions.

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No Value Types (Planned for Java)

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Value types would let you write simple classes with a single primitive field, then the compiler doesn't heap allocate instances, but puts them on the stack, like primitives today. Under consideration for Java 10. Limited support already in the Scala compiler.

```
case class Timestamp(epochMillis: Long) {

  def toString: String = { ... }

  def add(delta: TimeDelta): Timestamp = {
    /* return new shifted time */
  }

  ...
}
```

Don’t allocate on the heap; just push the primitive long on the stack. (scalac does this now.)

Value types would let you write simple classes with a single primitive field, then the compiler doesn’t heap allocate instances, but puts them on the stack, like primitives today. Under consideration for Java 10. Limited support already in the Scala compiler.

Long operations aren't atomic

According to the JVM spec

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That is, even though longs are quite standard now and we routinely run 64bit CPUs (small devices the exception), long operations are not guaranteed to be atomic, unlike int operations.

No Unsigned Types

What's factorial(-1)?

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Back to issues with the JVM as a Big Data platform...
Unsigned types are very useful for many applications and scenarios. Not all integers need to be signed!
Arrays are limited to 2^(32-1) elements, rather than 2^(32)!

Arrays Indexed with Ints

Byte Arrays limited to 2GB!

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2GB is quite small in modern big data apps and servers now approaching TBs of memory! Why isn't it 4GB, because we *signed* ints, not *unsigned* ints!

```
scala> val N = 1100*1000*1000
N2: Int = 1100000000 // 1.1 billion

scala> val array = Array.fill[Short](N)(0)
array: Array[Short] = Array(0, 0, ...)

scala> import
org.apache.spark.util.SizeEstimator

scala> SizeEstimator.estimate(array)
res3: Long = 2200000016  // 2.2GB
```


One way this bites you is when you need to serialize a data structure larger than 2GB. Keep in mind that modern Spark heaps could be 10s of GB and 1TB of memory per server is coming on line!
Here's a real session that illustrates what can happen.

```
scala> val b = sc.broadcast(array)
...broadcast.Broadcast[Array[Short]] = ...

scala> SizeEstimator.estimate(b)
res0: Long = 2368

scala> sc.parallelize(0 until 100000).
     | map(i => b.value(i))
```


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```
scala> SizeEstimator.estimate(b)
res0: Long = 2368

scala> sc.parallelize(0 until 100000).
     | map(i => b.value(i))

java.lang.OutOfMemoryError:
        Requested array size exceeds VM limit
    at java.util.Arrays.copyOf(...)
    ...
```

Boom!

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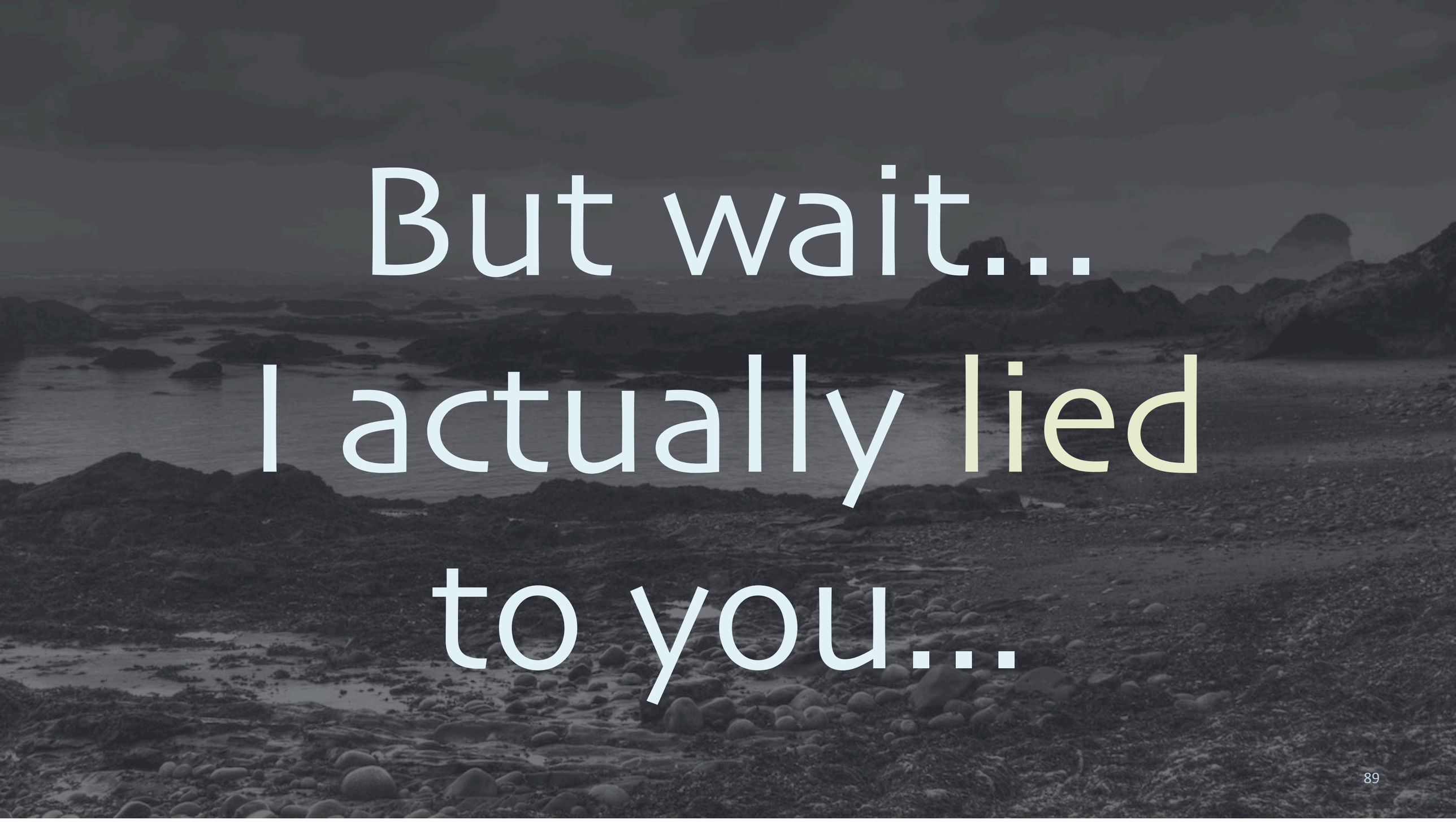
Even though a 1B-element Short array is fine, as soon as you attempt to serialize it, it won't fit in a 2B-element Byte array. Our 2.2GB short array can't be serialized into a byte array, because it would take more than 2^31-1 bytes and we don't have that many available elements, due to (signed) integer indexing.



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I implied this is a problem with broadcast variables, but it's not...

Spark handles large broadcast variables by breaking them into blocks.

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Spark serializes and distributes smaller blocks for broadcast variables (and also when shuffling data between tasks), so it doesn't attempt to create an Array[Byte] that's larger than 2B elements. So what really happened?

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This is actually a limitation of the Scala REPL (“read, evaluate, print, loop” - i.e., the interpreter), which was never intended to support very large heaps. Let’s see what actually happened...

```
java.lang.OutOfMemoryError:
      Requested array size exceeds VM limit

  at java.util.Arrays.copyOf(...)
  ...
  at java.io.ByteArrayOutputStream.write(...)
  ...
  at java.io.ObjectOutputStream.writeObject(...)
  at ...spark.serializer.JavaSerializationStream
          .writeObject(...)
  ...
  at ...spark.util.ClosureCleaner$.ensureSerializable(..)
  ...
  at org.apache.spark.rdd.RDD.map(...)
```


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This is actually a limitation of the Scala REPL (shell), which was never intended to support very large heaps. Let's see what actually happened...

```
java.lang.OutOfMemoryError:
      Requested array size exceeds VM limit

  at java.util.Arrays.copyOf(...)
  ...
  at java.io.ByteArrayOutputStream.write(...)
  ...
  at java.io.ObjectOutputStrea
  at ...spark.serializer.JavaS
          .writeObject(...)
  ...
  at ...spark.util.ClosureClea
  ...
  at org.apache.spark.rdd.RDD.map(...)
```

Pass this closure to RDD.map:

```
i => b.value(i)
```


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When RDD.map is called, Spark verifies that the “closure” (anonymous function) that’s passed to it is clean, meaning it can be serialized. Note that it references “b” outside its body, i.e., it “closes over” b.

```
java.lang.OutOfMemoryError:
      Requested array size exceeds VM limit

  at java.util.Arrays.copyOf(...)
  ...
  at java.io.ByteArrayOutputSt
  ...
  at java.io.ObjectOutputStrea
  at ...spark.serializer.JavaS
          .writeObject(...)
  ...
  at ...spark.util.ClosureCleaner$.ensureSerializable(..)
  ...
  at org.apache.spark.rdd.RDD.map(...)
```

Verify that it's "clean" (serializable).

```
i => b.value(i)
```


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ClosureCleaner does this serialization check (among other things).

```
java.lang.OutOfMemoryError:
      Requested array size exceeds VM limit

  at java.util.Arrays.copyOf(...)
  ...
  at java.io.ByteArrayOutputStream.write(...)
  ...
  at java.io.ObjectOutputStream.writeObject(...)
  at ...spark.serializer.JavaSerializationStream
          .writeObject(...)
  ...
  at ...spark.util.ClosureClea
  ...
  at org.apache.spark.rdd.RDD.r
```

...which it does by serializing to a byte array...

ClosureCleaner does this serialization check (among other things).

```
java.lang.OutOfMemoryError:
      Requested array size exceeds VM limit

  at java.util.Arrays.copyOf(...)
  ...
  at java.io.ByteArrayOutputSt
  ...
  at java.io.ObjectOutputStrea
  at ...spark.serializer.JavaSe
          .writeObject(...)
  ...
  at ...spark.util.ClosureClea
```

...which requires copying an array...

What array???

```
i => b.value(i)
```

```
...
scala> val array = Array.fill[Short](N)(0)
...
```


ClosureCleaner does this serialization check (among other things).

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It’s because of the way Scala has to wrap your REPL expressions into objects...

- You write:

```
scala> val array = Array.fill[Short](N)(0)
scala> val b = sc.broadcast(array)
scala> sc.parallelize(0 until 100000).
     | map(i => b.value(i))
```


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I'm greatly simplifying the actual code that's generated. In fact, there's a nested object for every line of REPL code! The synthesized name $iwC is real.

```
scala> val array = Array.fill[Short](N)(0)
scala> val b = sc.broadcast(array)
scala> sc.parallelize(0 until 100000).
     | map(i => b.value(i))
```

- Scala compiles:

```
class $iwC extends Serializable {
 val array = Array.fill[Short](N)(0)
 val b = sc.broadcast(array)

 class $iwC extends Serializable {
   sc.parallelize(...).map(i => b.value(i))
 }
}
```


Friday, June 17, 16

I'm greatly simplifying the actual code that's generated. In fact, there's a nested object for every line of REPL code! The synthesized name $iwC is real.

```
scala> val array = Array.fill[Short](N)(0)
scala> val b = sc.broadcast(array)
scala> sc.parallelize(0 until 100000).
     | ma
```

- Scala compiles:

... sucks in all this!

```
class $iwC extends Serializable {
  val array = Array.fill[Short](N)(0)
  val b = sc.broadcast(array)

  class $iwC extends Se
    sc.parallelize(...).map(i => b.value(i))
  }
}
```

So, this closure over “b”...

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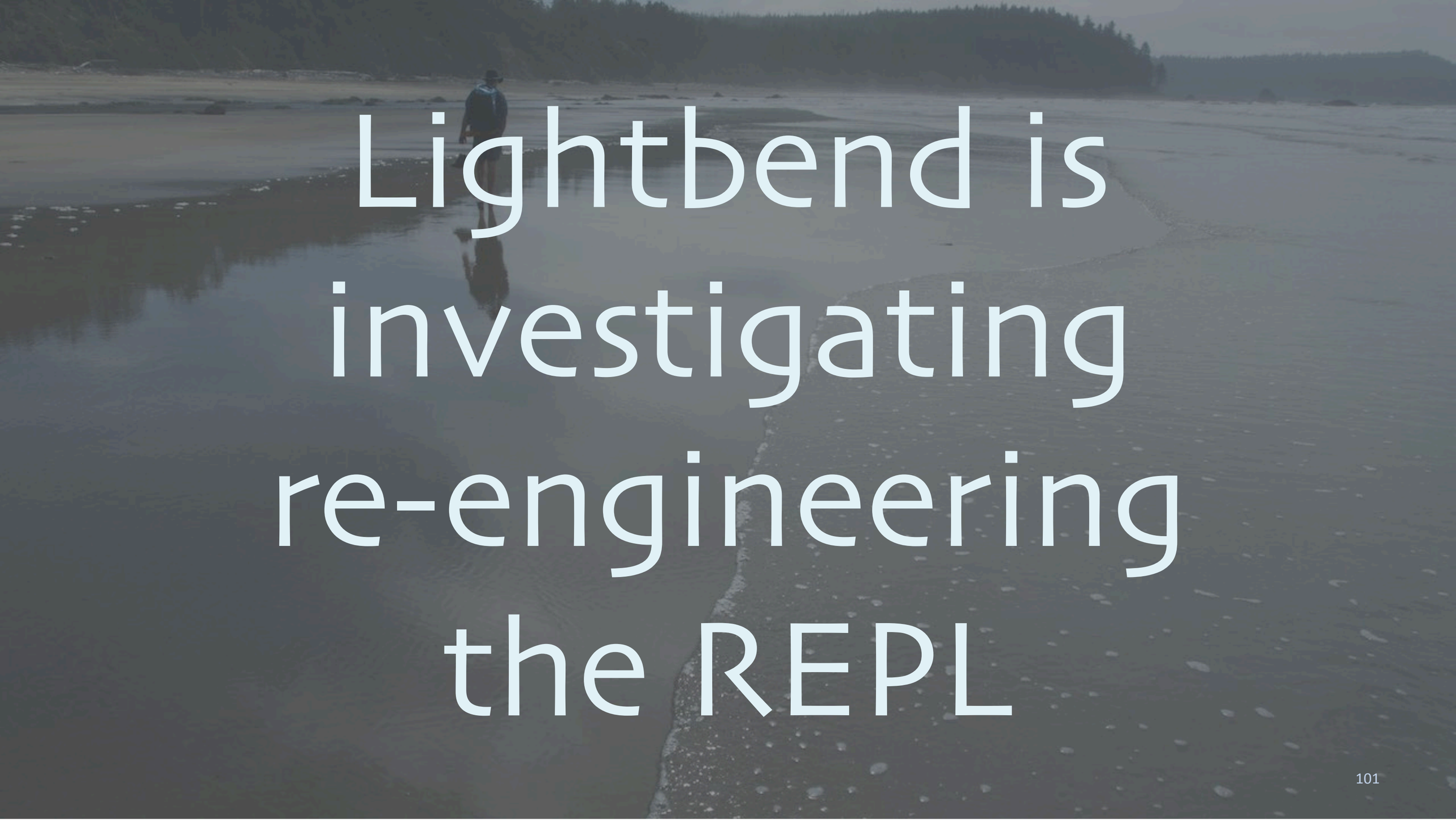
I’m greatly simplifying the actual code that’s generated. In fact, there’s a nested object for every line of REPL code!
The synthesized name $iwC is real.
Note that “array” and “b” become fields in these classes.



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We’re looking into design changes that would better support Big Data scenarios and avoid these issue.


Workarounds:
Use @transient,
local vals,
and objects

- Transient is often all you need:

```
scala> @transient val array =
     |   Array.fill[Short](N)(0)
scala> ...
```


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This is enough in this example because when serializing over those generated objects, the array will be skipped.

```
object Data {   // Encapsulate in objects!
  val N = 1100*1000*1000
  val array = Array.fill[Short](N)(0)
  val getB = sc.broadcast(array)
}
object Work {
  def run(): Unit = {
    val b = Data.getB // local ref!
    val rdd = sc.parallelize(...).
      map(i => b.value(i)) // only needs b
    rdd.take(10).foreach(println)
}}
```


It's not shown, but you could paste this into the REPL. A more robust approach. You don't need to wrap everything in objects. "Work" is probably not needed, but the local variable "b" is very valuable to grabbing just what you need inside an object and not serialiazing the whole "Data.

Why Scala?

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Okay, all things considered, the JVM is a great platform for Big Data.
Scala has emerged as the de facto “data engineering” language, as opposed to data science, where Python, R, SAS, Matlab, and Mathematica still dominate (although Scala has its passionate advocates here, too.)

Pragmatic OOP + FP

While some people hate the fact that Scala embraces OOP (and I know that you know that I know who you are...), this is pragmatic to make Scala accessible to Java developers and it provides a convenient, familiar modularity tool. However, data science is the killer app for FP, IMHO, so the core problem needs to use FP, which Scala enables nicely.

- Abstractions vs. implementations:
  - Pure functional abstractions?
  - Mutable implementations, when necessary.
  - Performance is critical.

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Raw performance is extremely important for competitive data computation systems. Providing ~pure, high-level abstractions with well-defined semantics, enabling flexibility in the implementations to exploit mutability for performance (but hopefully not prematurely applied).

Scala Big Data Sandwich

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Image: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamburger#/media/File:NCI_Visuals_Food_Hamburger.jpg

Scala Big Data Sandwich

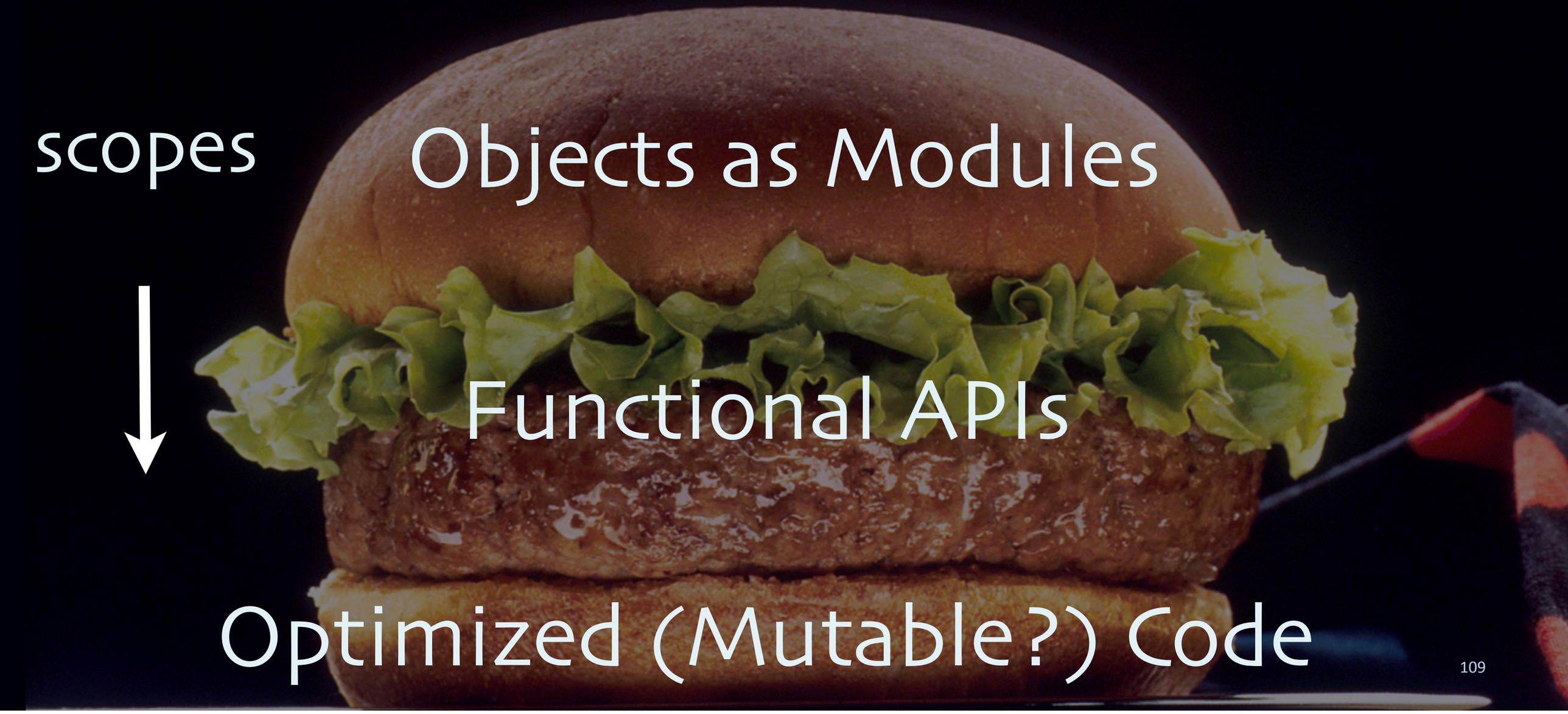

Image: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamburger#/media/File:NCI_Visuals_Food_Hamburger.jpg

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Interactive exploration is a powerful tool for exploring data, algorithms, and analysis approaches. Data scientists are familiar with notebook metaphors, such as iPython. Now Spark Notebook brings this way of using the REPL to Scala and Spark, providing a richer experience the REPL or IDE alone.

Collections API

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Collections API a natural foundation for data flows.

* Powerful, yet concise.
* Abstracts over implementation – can be parallelized, distributed.
* Generalizes to streaming or a fixed collection.

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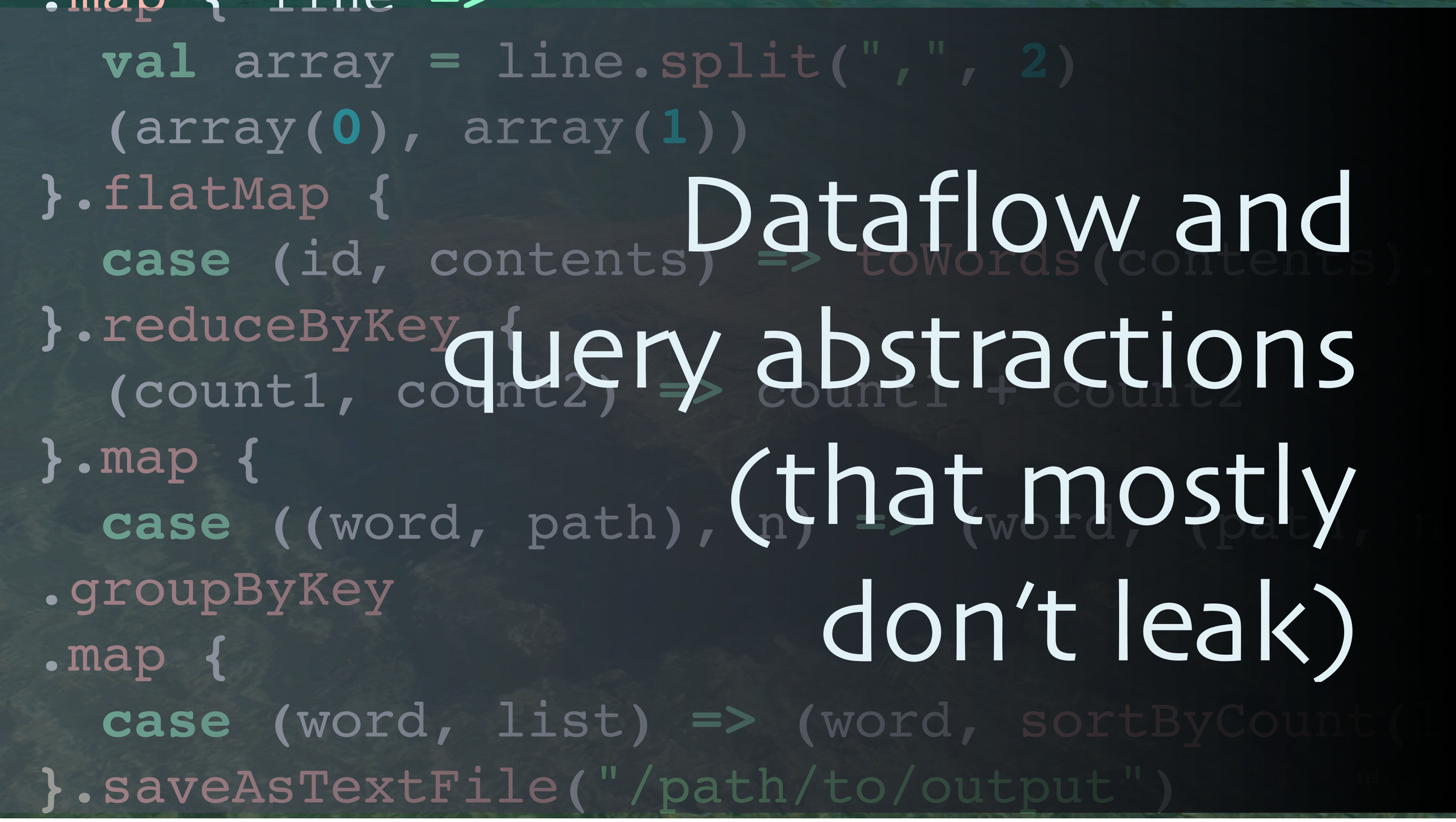
Spark's API looks very similar to the "conceptual" abstractions of Scala's collections API, i.e., what you see in the simplified method signatures shown in the Scaladoc, as opposed to the actual signatures with the extra type parameters, CanBuildFrom implicit, etc.
Arguably, Spark's API offers a cleaner separation between interface and implementation.



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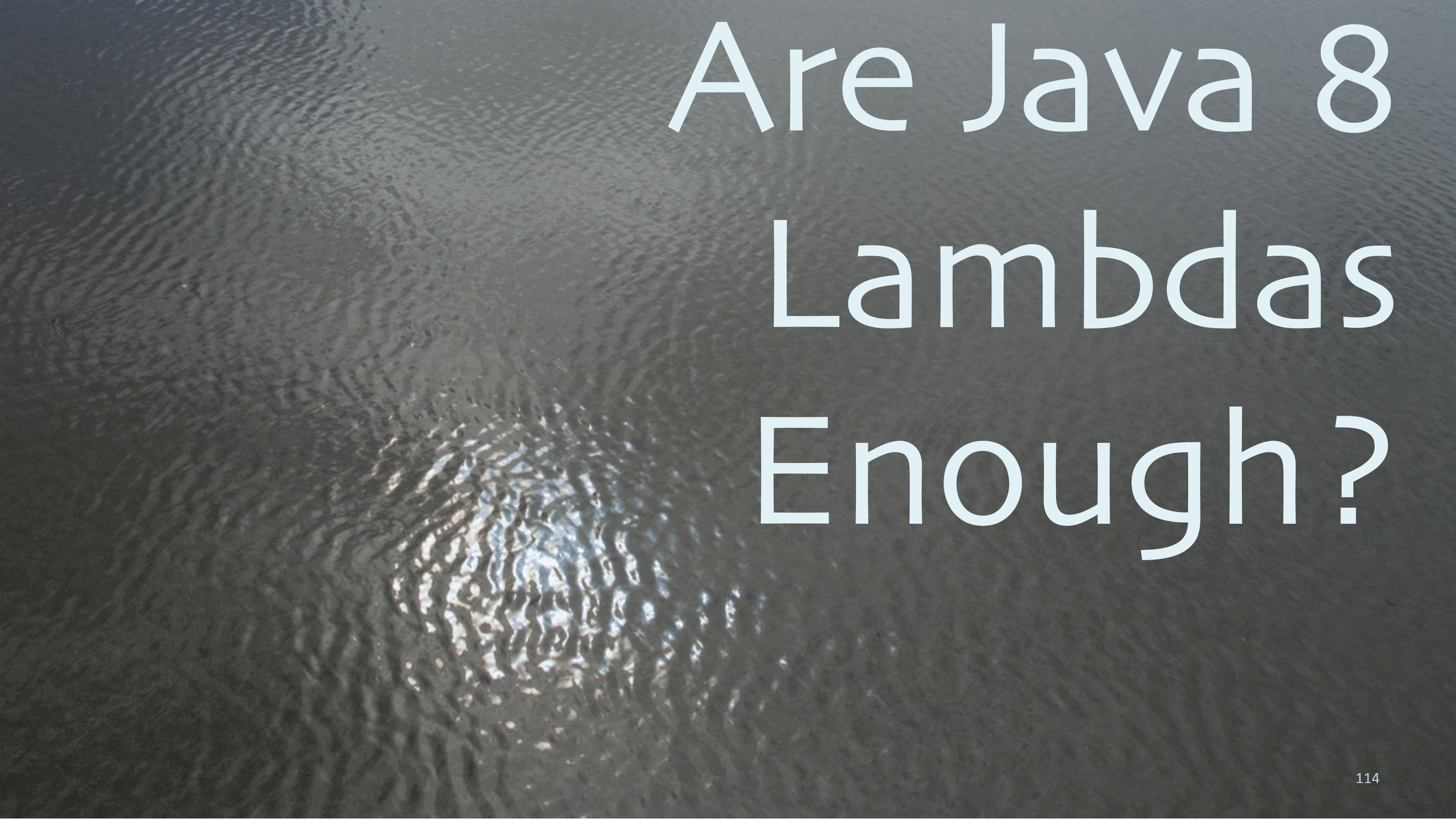
Spark does a good job exposing a reasonably intuitive model of dataflow and query abstractions so developers can focus on the problems at hand without a lot of ceremony. It's not completely leak free. There are implementation concerns developers have to think about, such as when to explicitly cache results in memory for subsequent reuse. There are far too may configuration properties, too.



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Spark is untenable in Java 7. The verbosity of anonymous inner classes started a flight to Scala. Then Java 8 added lambdas. Do they make Java good enough? No...

Tuples

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First, Tuples are very useful for writing concise code, as we saw in the previous example.

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Pattern matching makes it easy to extract fields in records, match strings with regular expressions, test types, etc.

Type Inference

Type inference removes the tedium of explicit typing, as in Java, while providing type safety and useful feedback in interactive sessions.

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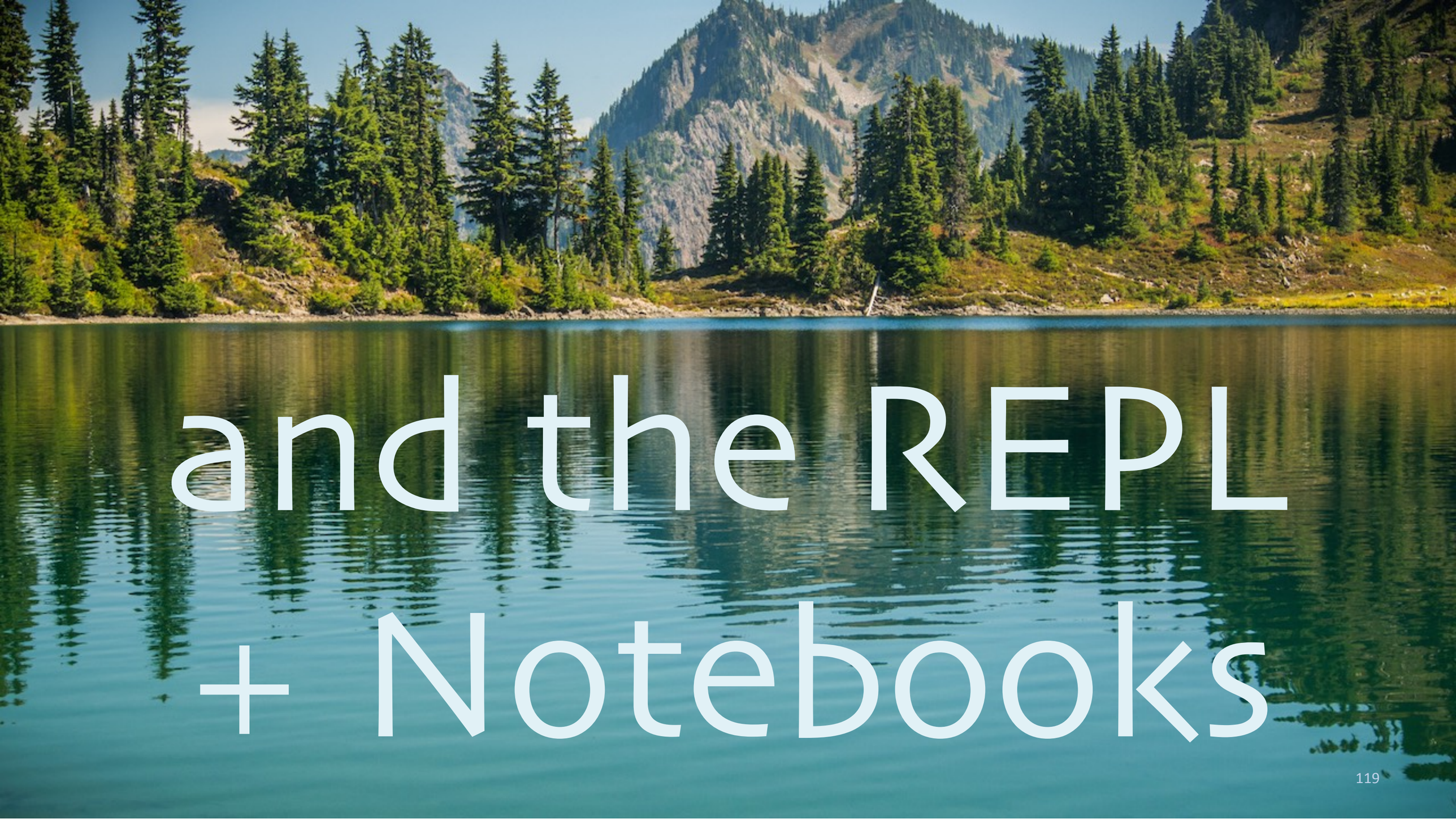
Expressive DSLs are relatively easy to create in Scala. The collections API itself is a DSL of sorts for data flows. Another simple example is the ability to define your own mathematical types, like vectors, matrices, complex numbers, etc. and operators for them, like +, -, *, and / that you use as if the types were built in. We'll another Spark DSL shortly.



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Finally, the REPL and Notebook UIs for it are essential for exploring data and experimenting with algorithms.

Conclusions


Spark Is Driving
Scala Adoption

Spark has some technical debt.

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The Spark project is adding features rapidly and accumulating technical debt. This is a threat to its long term success. Test coverage also needs to be better.

Scala collections need a refresh.

spark-summit.org/eu-2015/events/spark-the-ultimate-scala-collections/

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Implementation details leak in Scala's collections API; it could more cleanly separate implementation from abstraction. Bringing some of Spark's operations, like joins, and distributed processing would benefit all Scala projects. Martin Odersky has said publicly that Scala's collections API could adopt extensions in Spark.
In fact, a rewrite is planned for Scala 2.13, the next major version (after the current one in RC status).

```
✔ grep 'def.*ByKey' ~/projects/spark/spark-git/core/src/main/scala/org/apache/spark/rdd/PairRDD
def combineByKey[C](createCombiner: V => C,
def combineByKey[C](createCombiner: V => C,
def aggregateByKey[U: ClassTag](zeroValue: U, partitioner: Partitioner)(seqOp: (U, V) => U,
def aggregateByKey[U: ClassTag](zeroValue: U, numPartitions: Int)(seqOp: (U, V) => U,
def aggregateByKey[U: ClassTag](zeroValue: U)(seqOp: (U, V) => U,
def foldByKey(
def foldByKey(zeroValue: V, numPartitions: Int)(func: (V, V) => V): RDD[(K, V)] = self.withScop
def foldByKey(zeroValue: V)(func: (V, V) => V): RDD[(K, V)] = self.withScope {
def sampleByKey(withReplacement: Boolean,
def sampleByKeyExact(
def reduceByKey(partitioner: Partitioner, func: (V, V) => V): RDD[(K, V)] = self.withScope {
def reduceByKey(func: (V, V) => V, numPartitions: Int): RDD[(K, V)] = self.withScope {
def reduceByKey(func: (V, V) => V): RDD[(K, V)] = self.withScope {
def reduceByKeyLocally(func: (V, V) => V): Map[K, V] = self.withScope {
def reduceByKeyToDriver(func: (V, V) => V): Map[K, V] = self.withScope {
def countByKey(): Map[K, Long] = self.withScope {
def countByKeyApprox(timeout: Long, confidence: Double = 0.95)
def countApproxDistinctByKey(
def countApproxDistinctByKey(
def countApproxDistinctByKey(
def countApproxDistinctByKey(relativeSD: Double = 0.05): RDD[(K, Long)] = self.withScope {
def groupByKey(partitioner: Partitioner): RDD[(K, Iterable[V])] = self.withScope {
def groupByKey(numPartitions: Int): RDD[(K, Iterable[V])] = self.withScope {
def combineByKey[C](createCombiner: V => C, mergeValue: (C, V) => C, mergeCombiners: (C, C) =>
def groupByKey(): RDD[(K, Iterable[V])] = self.withScope {
def subtractByKey[W: ClassTag](other: RDD[(K, W)]): RDD[(K, V)] = self.withScope {
def subtractByKey[W: ClassTag](
def subtractByKey[W: ClassTag](other: RDD[(K, W)], p: Partitioner): RDD[(K, V)] = self.withScop
```

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Here's a subset of possibilities, "by key" functions that assume a schema of (key,value).

Scala should adopt some Tungsten optimizations...

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More specifically, Scala could adopt Tungsten optimizations, such as the optimized Record and HashMap types and off-heap memory management.

… & could the JVM adopt Tungsten's object encoding?

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I'm not sure this is possible, but it would be great. Perhaps "Record Types"?

The JVM needs long indexing, value types & unsigned types

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We discussed these three limitations of the JVM today.

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You can find this talk and an extended version of it with more details at polyglotprogramming.com/talks

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Thank You!

Lightbend

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I've thought a lot about the evolution of big data to more stream-oriented "fast data". Please follow this link for a whitepaper to learn more.