

Recalling a Witness

Foundations and Applications of Monotonic State

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Monotonicity is really useful!

Its essence can be captured very neatly!

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**

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insert v; complex_procedure(); assert (v ∈ get())
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- 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` never removes, then $\lambda s. v \in s$ is **stable**, and we would like the program logic to give us `v ∈ get()` “for free”

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Monotonicity in programming

- **Programming** also relies on **monotonicity**, even if you don't realise it!
- Consider ML-style typed references $r:\text{ref } a$
 - 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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- 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 in F^*
 - 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]
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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 to **witness** the validity of $p s$ in some state s
 - a means for turning a p into a **state-independent proposition**
 - a means to **recall** the validity of $p s'$ in any future state s'
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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

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

- 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

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

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

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

where pre and post are typed as in ST

- The **get** action is typed as in ST

$\text{get} : \text{unit} \rightarrow \text{MST state (requires } (\lambda _ . \top))$
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- To ensure **monotonicity**, the **put** action gets a precondition

$\text{put} : s:\text{state} \rightarrow \text{MST unit (requires } (\lambda s_0 . \text{rel } s_0\ s))$
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- So intuitively, MST is an **abstract** pre-postcondition refinement of

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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**)

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

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

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

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

$\text{recall} : p : (\text{state} \rightarrow \text{Type}) \rightarrow \text{MST unit}$ (requires $(\lambda _. \text{witnessed}\ p)$)
(ensures $(\lambda s_0\ s_1. s_0 = s_1 \wedge p\ s_1)$)

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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

```
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** by

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`create 0; incr(); witness ($\lambda c. c > 0$); c.p(); recall ($\lambda c. c > 0$)`

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ML-style typed references (local state)

- First, we define a type of **heaps** as a finite map

```
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 → cell
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- Next, we define a **preorder** on heaps (**heap inclusion**)

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let heap_inclusion (H h0 _) (H h1 _) = ∀ id. match h0 id, h1 id with
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- As a result, we can define new **local state effect**

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

- 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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- Important: contains is **stable** wrt. heap_inclusion

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- Finally, we define **MLST's actions** using **MST's actions**
 - `let alloc (a:Type) (v:a) : MLST (ref a) ... = ...`
 - `get` the current heap
 - `create` a fresh ref., and add it to the heap
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 - `witness` that the created ref. is in the heap
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 - `select` the given reference from the heap
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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

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 - is **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!

Interested in doing an F* internship?

Get in touch with the F* team!

www.fstar-lang.org

Appendix: witnessed as a modality

- Part of **ongoing work** into improving **mon. reification** for **MST**
- state-indexed **Kripke-semantics**

$$\llbracket \text{witnessed } p \rrbracket (s) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \forall s'. \text{rel } s \ s' \implies \llbracket p \ s' \rrbracket (s)$$

- Allows us to validate **additional properties**, such as

$$p \iff \text{witnessed } (\text{fun } _ \rightarrow p)$$

$$\text{witnessed } p \iff \text{witnessed } (\text{fun } _ \rightarrow \text{witnessed } p)$$

$$\text{witnessed } p \wedge \text{witnessed } q \iff \text{witnessed } (\text{fun } s \rightarrow p \ s \wedge q \ s)$$

...