

A Conceptual Framework for Safe Object Initialization

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Examples

Examples

```
1 class A {  
2   var y = 42 :: this.x  
3   var x = List()  
4 }
```

Initialization errors

- Early field access

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1 class A {  
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4   def m() = 42::this.x  
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- Early method call

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3   var x = List()  
4 }  
5 class B (a:A) {  
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Initialization errors

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Key issue

Objects *under initialization* do not fulfill their class specification yet

Complex initializations

Cyclic data structures

```
1 class A () {  
2     var b = new B(this)  
3     var c = this.b.c  
4 }  
5 class B (arg:A) {  
6     var a = arg  
7     var c = new C(this)  
8 }  
9 class C (arg:B) {  
10    var a = arg.a  
11    var b = arg  
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```

Early method call

```
1 class Server (a: Address) {
2   var address = a
3   var _ = this.broadcast("Init")
4   ... // other fields
5
6   def broadcast(m: String) = {
7     ... // sends a message
8   }
9 }
```


Sound

- No access to uninitialized field

strict initialization ←————→ proof of program

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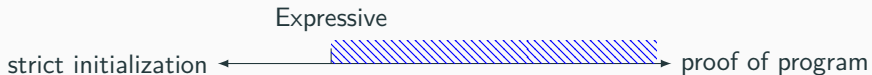
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Expressive

- Authorize controlled escaping

Design space



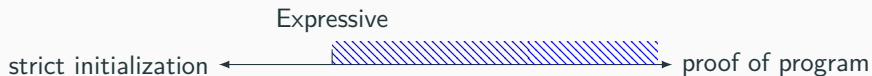
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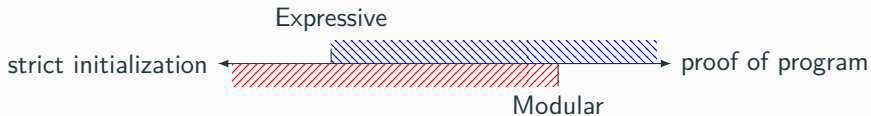
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- Class by class analysis
- Limited footprint

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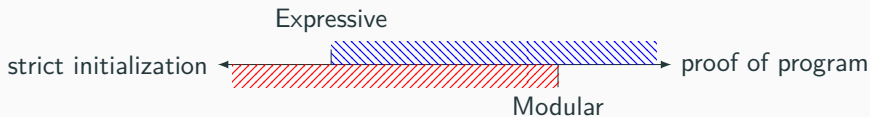
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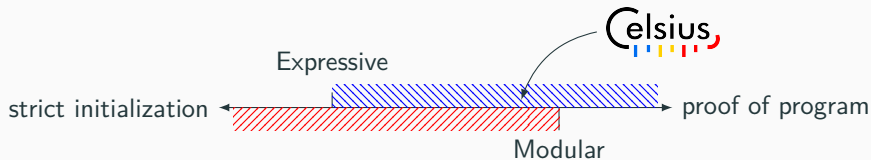
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Usable

- Understandable annotations
- Inference

Design space



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In this presentation

1. The Celsius model of initialization

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2. The Core principles

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 - High-level, language agnostic

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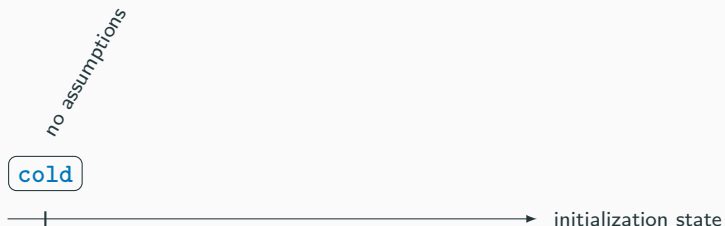
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- The Coq artifact

The Celsius Model

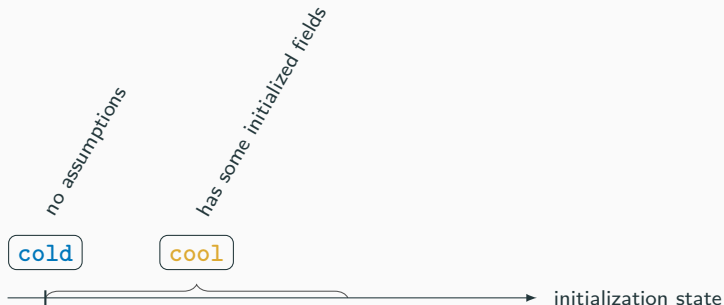
The Celsius model

—————▶ initialization state

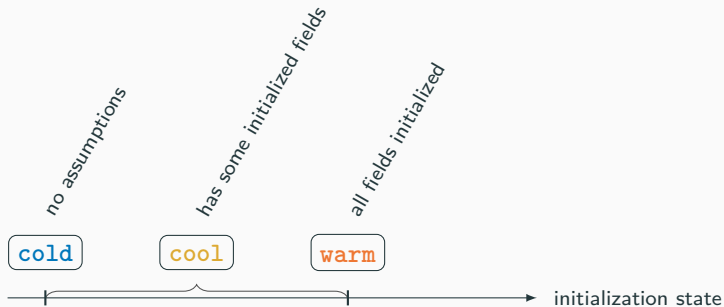
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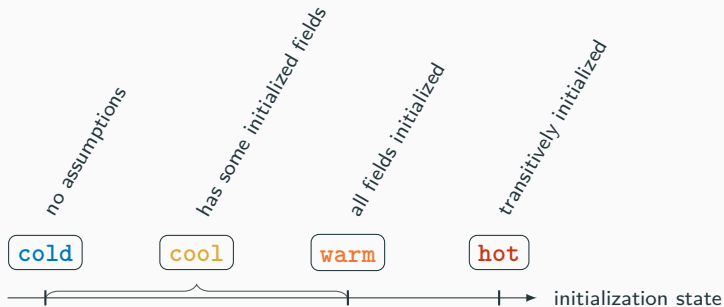
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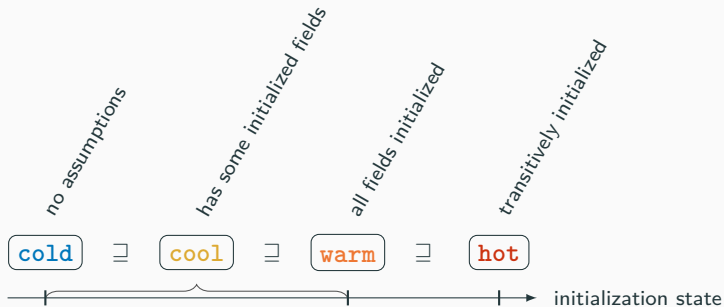
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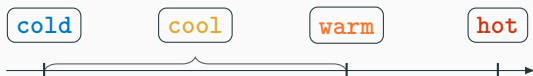


The Celsius model



The core principles

Principle 1/4: Monotonicity



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Partial monotonicity \preceq

Fields cannot be un-initialized

Principle 1/4: Monotonicity



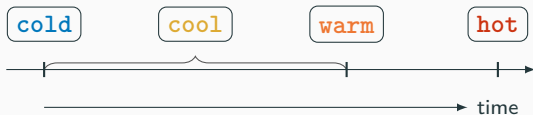
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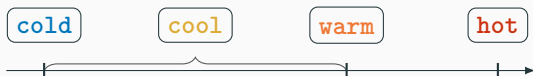
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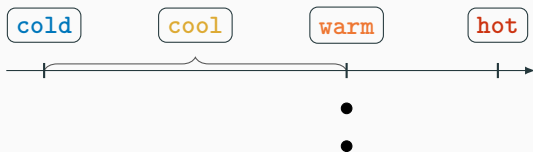
Design choices (for the calculus)

- No de-initialization
- Update fields only with hot values

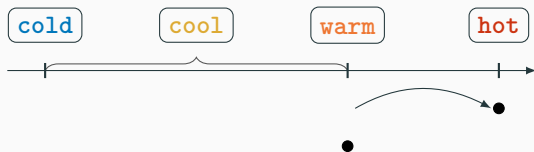
Principle 2/4: Authority



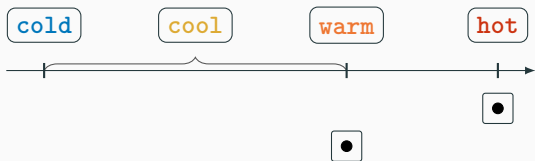
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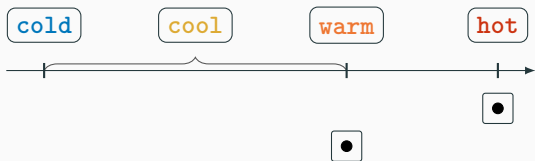


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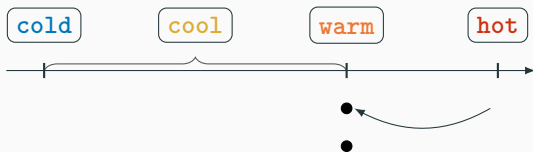
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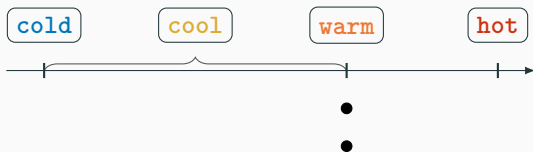
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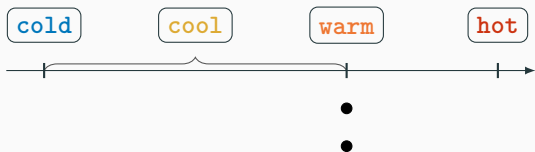


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State updates are only authorized on a distinguished alias

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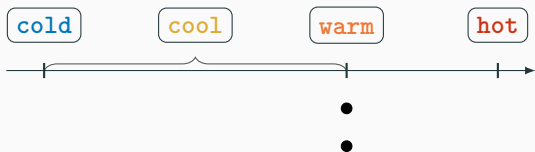


Local vision of the initialization state might differ between aliases

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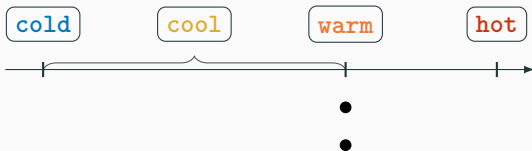
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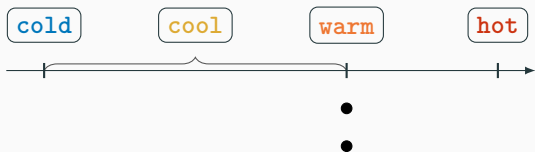
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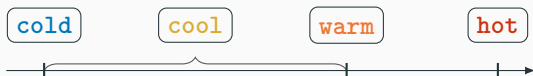
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State updates are only authorized on a distinguished alias : **this**

Design choices

- Distinguish 1st assignment / update
- Type updates (up to warm) only inside the constructor

Principle 3/4: Stackability



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Stackability

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Stackability

All fields must be initialized at the end of their constructor

→ constructors form a *call stack*

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Principle 3/4: Stackability



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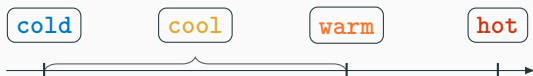
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→ constructors form a *call stack*

Design choices

- Mandatory field initializers
- No control effects

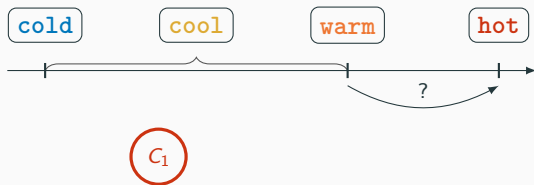
Principle 4/4: Scopability



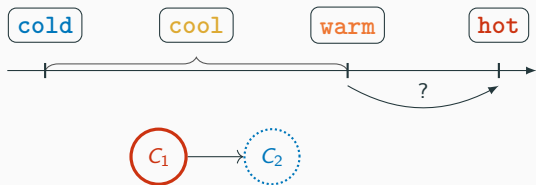
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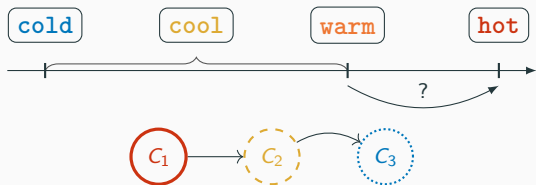
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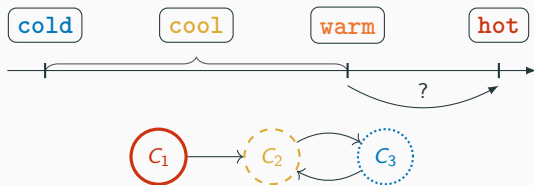
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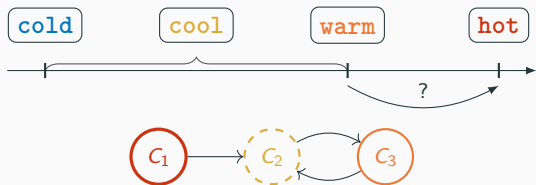
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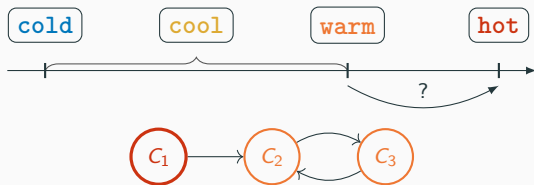
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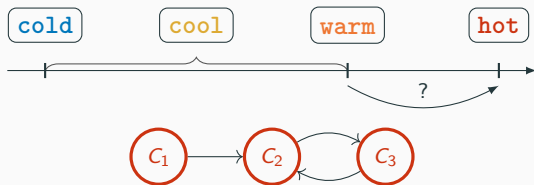
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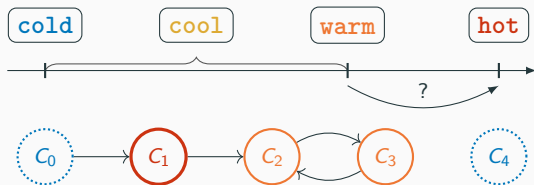
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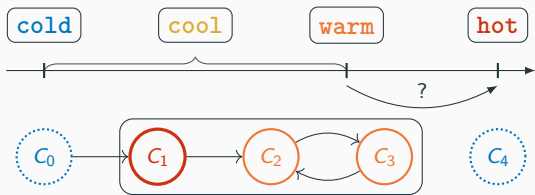


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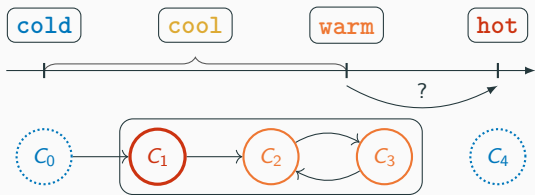
Nested/parallel initializations

Principle 4/4: Scopability



Nested/parallel initializations → Control the accessible part of the heap

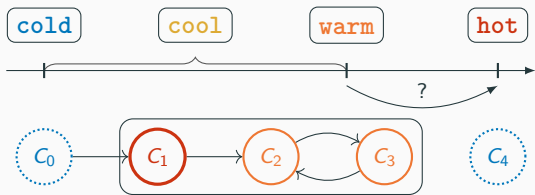
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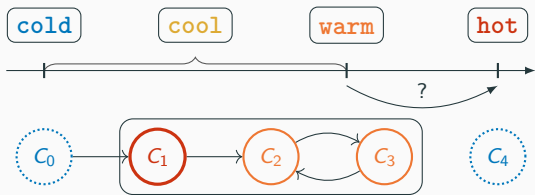


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Access to *objects under initialization* must go through controlled channels, i.e. be controlled by static scoping

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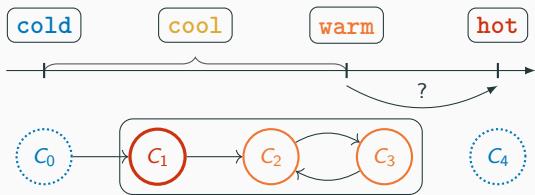
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Design choices

- No global variables (see Liu 2023)

Principle 4/4: Scopability



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Design choices

- No global variables (see Liu 2023)
- Over-approximate reachable objects

Theorem (Local reasoning)

Executing an expression in an hot environment results in an hot object

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→ gives rises to a typing system with *hot-bypasses*:

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→ gives rises to a typing system with *hot-bypasses*: you can safely ignore initialization issues when handling hot objects

Take away

A **conceptual framework** for safe initialization based on four principles

- the Celsius model (cold, cool, warm, hot)

A **conceptual framework** for safe initialization based on four principles

- the Celsius model (cold, cool, warm, hot)
- Four language agnostic principles

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See the paper for precise definitions, typing system and soundness proof!

The Celsius calculus

Grammar

Expressions

- $e ::= x$ (Local variable)
- | this (Self-reference)
- | $e.f$ (Field access)
- | $e.m(\bar{e})$ (Method call)
- | $\text{new } C(\bar{e})$ (Instance creation)
- | $e.f \leftarrow e; e$ (Assignment)

Mode

$\mu ::= \text{cold} \mid \text{cool } \bar{f} \mid \text{warm} \mid \text{hot}$

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Mode

$\mu ::= \text{cold} \mid \text{cool } \bar{f} \mid \text{warm} \mid \text{hot}$

Type

$T ::= C^\mu$

Class

$\mathbb{C} ::= \text{class } C(\overline{x : T})\{\text{fields} = \overline{\mathbb{F}}, \text{methods} = \overline{\mathbb{M}}\}$

Field

$\mathbb{F} ::= \text{var } f : T = e$

Method

$\mathbb{M} ::= @\mu \text{def } m(\overline{x : T}) : T = \{e\}$

Program

$\mathbb{P} ::= \{\text{ct} = \overline{\mathbb{C}}, \text{entry} = \mathbb{C}\}$

Examples in Celsius syntax

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1 class A () {  
2     var b: B@warm = new B(this)  
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4 }
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5 class B (arg: A@cold) {  
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9 class C (arg: B@cool(a)) {
10    var a: A@cold = arg.a
11    var b: B@cool(a) = arg
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Examples in Celsius syntax

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4 }
5 class B (arg: A@cold) {
6   var a: A@cold = arg
7   var c: C@warm = new C(this)
8 }
9 class C (arg: B@cool(a)) {
10  var a: A@cold = arg.a
11  var b: B@cool(a) = arg
12 }
```

```
1 class Server (a: Address@hot) {
2   var address : Address@hot = a
3   var _ = this.broadcast("Init");
4   ... // other fields
5
6   @cool(address)
7   def broadcast(m: String) = {
8     ... // sends a message
9   }
10 }
```

Semantics - Big steps

Semantics - Big steps

Store

$$\sigma : l \mapsto (C, \omega)$$

Semantics - Big steps

Store

$$\sigma : l \mapsto (C, \omega)$$

Expressions

Semantics - Big steps

Store

$$\sigma : l \mapsto (C, \omega)$$

Expressions

$$\llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi) \longrightarrow (v, \sigma')$$

Semantics - Big steps

Store

$$\sigma : l \mapsto (C, \omega)$$

Expressions

e expression

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Semantics - Big steps

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$$\sigma : l \mapsto (C, \omega)$$

Expressions

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Initialization

Semantics - Big steps

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Initialization

$$\text{init}_C(\psi, i, \rho, \sigma) \longrightarrow \sigma'$$

Semantics - Big steps

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E-NEW

E-NEW

$$\llbracket \text{new } C(\bar{e}_a) \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi) \longrightarrow (\quad , \quad)$$

Semantic rules

E-NEW

$$\llbracket \bar{e}_a \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi) \longrightarrow (\bar{l}_a, \sigma_1)$$

$$\llbracket \text{new } C(\bar{e}_a) \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi) \longrightarrow (\quad , \quad)$$

Semantic rules

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$$\llbracket \bar{e}_a \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi) \longrightarrow (\bar{l}_a, \sigma_1) \quad l_{\text{fresh}} \notin \text{dom}(\sigma_1)$$

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$$\llbracket \bar{e}_a \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi) \longrightarrow (\bar{l}_a, \sigma_1) \quad l_{\text{fresh}} \notin \text{dom}(\sigma_1) \quad \text{args}(C) = \overline{(x : T)}$$

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$$\text{fields}(C)(i) = \text{var } f_i : T = e$$

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E-INIT-END

$$\text{init}_C(\psi, \text{length}(\text{fields}(C)), \rho, \sigma) \longrightarrow \sigma$$

Typing and soundness

Soundness (1/3)

Definitional interpreter [Amin and Rompf(2017)]

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$\llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = r$ with $r := \text{success}(v, \sigma') \mid \text{error} \mid \text{timeout}$
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$$\llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi) \longrightarrow (v, \sigma') \iff \exists n. \llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = \text{success}(v, \sigma') \quad (1)$$

$$\text{init}_C(\psi, i, \rho, \sigma) \longrightarrow \sigma' \iff \exists n. \text{init}_C(\psi, i, \rho, \sigma, n) = \text{success}(\sigma') \quad (2)$$

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Soundness invariant (structure)

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$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = r \\ r \neq \text{timeout} \end{array} \right\}$$

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$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = r \\ r \neq \text{timeout} \\ \vdash e : T \end{array} \right\}$$

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$$\text{init}_C(\psi, i, \rho, \sigma) \longrightarrow \sigma' \iff \exists n. \text{init}_C(\psi, i, \rho, \sigma, n) = \text{success}(\sigma') \quad (2)$$

Soundness invariant (structure)

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = r \\ r \neq \text{timeout} \\ \vdash e : T \end{array} \right\} \implies \exists \sigma', v. \left\{ \begin{array}{l} r = \text{success}(v, \sigma') \\ \models v : T \\ \text{Monotonicity} \\ \text{Authority} \\ \text{Stackability} \end{array} \right.$$

Soundness (1/3)

Definitional interpreter [Amin and Rompf(2017)]

$\llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = r$ with $r := \text{success}(v, \sigma') \mid \text{error} \mid \text{timeout}$
 $\text{init}_C(\psi, i, \rho, \sigma, n) = r$ with $r := \text{success}(\sigma') \mid \text{error} \mid \text{timeout}$

$$\llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi) \longrightarrow (v, \sigma') \iff \exists n. \llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = \text{success}(v, \sigma') \quad (1)$$

$$\text{init}_C(\psi, i, \rho, \sigma) \longrightarrow \sigma' \iff \exists n. \text{init}_C(\psi, i, \rho, \sigma, n) = \text{success}(\sigma') \quad (2)$$

Soundness invariant (structure)

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = r \\ r \neq \text{timeout} \\ \vdash e : T \end{array} \right\} \implies \exists \sigma', v. \left\{ \begin{array}{l} r = \text{success}(v, \sigma') \\ \vDash v : T \\ \text{Monotonicity} \\ \text{Authority} \\ \text{Stackability} \\ \text{Scopability} \end{array} \right.$$

Reachability and Scopability

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Reachability - $\sigma \models l \rightsquigarrow l'$

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Transitive closure of field access

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Scopability - $(\sigma, L) \triangleleft (\sigma', L')$

Every location reachable from L' in σ' is either new or already reachable from L in σ :

$$\forall l \in \text{dom}(\sigma), \sigma' \vDash L' \rightsquigarrow l \implies \sigma \vDash L \rightsquigarrow l$$

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Scopability theorem

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Scopability theorem

The heap reachable from the result location v is scoped in the result store σ' by the *execution environment* $(\text{codom}(\rho) \cup \{\psi\})$ in the starting store σ :

$$\llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi) \longrightarrow (v, \sigma') \implies (\sigma, \rho \cup \{\psi\}) \triangleleft (\sigma', \{v\})$$

Typing (1/2) - typing rules

Mode lattice - $\mu \sqsubseteq \mu'$

cold \sqsubseteq cool \bar{f} \sqsubseteq warm \sqsubseteq hot

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Typing - $(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : T$

- Local environment

$$\frac{\text{T-E-VAR} \quad \Gamma(x) = T}{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash x : T}$$

$$\text{T-E-THIS} \\ (\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash \text{this} : T_{\text{this}}$$

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Typing - $(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : T$

- Local environment
- Ambient subtyping

$$\frac{\text{T-E-SUB} \quad (\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : C^\mu \quad \mu \sqsubseteq \mu'}{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : C^{\mu'}}$$

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- Local environment
- Ambient subtyping
- Stackability (T-E-NEW)

T-E-FLD

$$\frac{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : D^{\text{cool } \bar{f}} \quad f \in \bar{f} \quad \text{fieldType}(D, f) = T}{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e.f : T}$$

T-E-CALL

$$\frac{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : C^\mu \quad \text{lookup}(C, m) = @\mu \text{ def } m : \overline{(x : T)} \rightarrow T \quad (\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash \bar{e}_a : \bar{T}}{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e.m(\bar{e}_a) : T}$$

T-E-NEW

$$\frac{\text{ct}(C) = \text{class } C(\overline{x : T}) \{ \dots \} \quad (\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash \bar{e} : \bar{T}}{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash \text{new } C(\bar{e}) : C^{\text{warm}}}$$

Typing (1/2) - typing rules

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- Local environment
- Ambient subtyping
- Stackability (T-E-NEW)
- Hot shortcuts

T-E-FLD-HOT

$$\frac{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : D^{\text{hot}} \quad \text{fieldType}(D, f) = C^{\mu}}{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e.f : C^{\text{hot}}}$$

T-E-CALL-HOT

$$\frac{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : C_0^{\text{hot}} \quad \text{lookup}(C_0, m) = @\mu \text{ def } m : \overline{(x : D^{\mu})} \rightarrow C^{\mu} \quad (\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash \bar{e}_a : \overline{D^{\text{hot}}}}{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e.m(\bar{e}_a) : C^{\text{hot}}}$$

T-E-NEW-HOT

$$\frac{\text{ct}(C) = \text{class } C(x : \overline{D^{\mu}}) \{ \dots \} \quad (\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash \bar{e} : \overline{D^{\text{hot}}}}{(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash \text{new } C(\bar{e}) : C^{\text{hot}}}$$

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Mode lattice - $\mu \sqsubseteq \mu'$

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Typing - $(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : T$

- Local environment
- Ambient subtyping
- Stackability (T-E-NEW)
- Hot shortcuts
- **Monotonicity (T-E-BLOCK)**

T-E-BLOCK

$(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e_1.f : C^\mu$

$(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e_2 : C^{\text{hot}}$

$(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e_3 : T$

$(\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e_1.f \leftarrow e_2; e_3 : T$

Typing (2/2) - Store typing

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Store typing - $\Sigma : I \mapsto T$

Prevent cyclic dependencies

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Lower bound of actual initialization state

Typing (2/2) - Store typing

Store typing - $\Sigma : l \mapsto T$

Prevent cyclic dependencies

Abstraction of the store - $\Sigma \models \sigma$

Object typing - $\Sigma \models (C, \omega) : (C, \mu)$

Lower bound of actual initialization state

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Abstraction of the store - $\Sigma \vDash \sigma$

$$\frac{\text{dom}(\sigma) = \text{dom}(\Sigma) \quad \forall l \in \text{dom}(\sigma). \Sigma \vDash \sigma(l) : \Sigma(l)}{\Sigma \vDash \sigma}$$

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Environment typing - $\Sigma \models \rho : \Gamma$

Typing (2/2) - Store typing

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Environment typing - $\Sigma \vDash \rho : \Gamma$

$$\Sigma \vDash \emptyset : \emptyset$$

$$\frac{\Sigma \vDash \rho : \Gamma \quad \Sigma \vDash l : T}{\Sigma \vDash (x \mapsto l) \cup \rho : (x \mapsto T) \cup \Gamma}$$

Soundness (2/3)

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = r \\ r \neq \text{timeout} \\ \vdash e : T \end{array} \right\} \Rightarrow \exists \sigma', v \cdot \left\{ \begin{array}{l} r = \text{success}(v, \sigma') \\ \vDash v : T \\ \text{Monotonicity} \\ \text{Authority} \\ \text{Stackability} \\ \text{Scopability} \end{array} \right.$$

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Authority

$$\Sigma \triangleright \Sigma' := \forall l. \Sigma(l) = C^{\text{cool} \bar{f}} \implies \Sigma'(l) = \Sigma(l)$$

Soundness (3/3)

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = r \\ r \neq \text{timeout} \\ \Sigma \vDash \sigma \\ \Sigma \vDash \rho : \Gamma \\ \Sigma \vDash \psi : T_{\text{this}} \\ (\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : T \end{array} \right\} \Longrightarrow \exists \sigma', v, \Sigma'. \left\{ \begin{array}{l} r = \text{success}(v, \sigma') \\ \Sigma' \vDash \sigma' \\ \Sigma' \vDash v : T \\ \Sigma \preceq \Sigma' \\ \Sigma \triangleright \Sigma' \\ \Sigma \ll \Sigma' \end{array} \right. \quad (3)$$

Soundness (3/3)

$$\left. \begin{array}{l}
 \llbracket e \rrbracket(\sigma, \rho, \psi, n) = r \\
 r \neq \text{timeout} \\
 \Sigma \vDash \sigma \\
 \Sigma \vDash \rho : \Gamma \\
 \Sigma \vDash \psi : T_{\text{this}} \\
 (\Gamma, T_{\text{this}}) \vdash e : T
 \end{array} \right\} \Longrightarrow \exists \sigma', v, \Sigma'. \left\{ \begin{array}{l}
 r = \text{success}(v, \sigma') \\
 \Sigma' \vDash \sigma' \\
 \Sigma' \vDash v : T \\
 \Sigma \preceq \Sigma' \\
 \Sigma \triangleright \Sigma' \\
 \Sigma \ll \Sigma'
 \end{array} \right. \quad (3)$$

$$\left. \begin{array}{l}
 \text{init}_C(\psi, i, \rho, \sigma, n) = r \\
 r \neq \text{timeout} \\
 \Sigma \vDash \sigma \\
 \Sigma \vDash \rho : \Gamma \\
 \Sigma(\psi) = \text{cool} \{f_0, \dots, f_{i-1}\} \\
 \Gamma <: \Gamma_a
 \end{array} \right\} \Longrightarrow \exists \sigma', \Sigma'. \left\{ \begin{array}{l}
 r = \text{success}(\sigma') \\
 \Sigma' \vDash \sigma' \\
 \Sigma \preceq \Sigma' \\
 \Sigma \ll \Sigma' \\
 \left[\psi \mapsto C^{\text{cool}(\text{fields}(C))} \right] \Sigma \triangleright \Sigma'
 \end{array} \right. \quad (4)$$

Theorem (Program Soundness)

A well typed program cannot run into an error

$$\vdash \mathbb{P} \implies \forall n, \llbracket \mathbb{P} \rrbracket(n) \neq \text{error} \quad (5)$$

Conclusion

Take-away

- Four principles for the safe initialization of objects

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- Four principles for the safe initialization of objects
 - Monotonicity (invariants progress)
 - Authority (distinguished alias)
 - Stackability (all fields initialized at the end of the constructor)
 - Scopability (control the access to un-initialized objects)
- A minimal calculus to illustrate the principles
- A modular proof, mechanized in Coq



N. Amin and T. Rompf.

Type soundness proofs with definitional interpreters, 2017.

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