

# Towards a causal and compositional operational semantics of programming languages

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LSV Seminar

# Message-passing on my computer

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A different **architecture**, much harder to reason about...

## Structure behind traces

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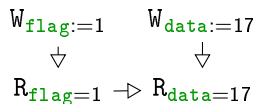
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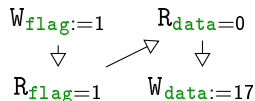


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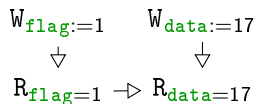
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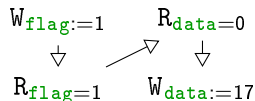
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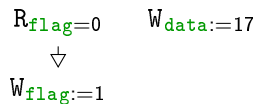
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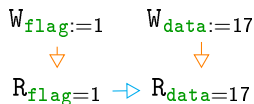


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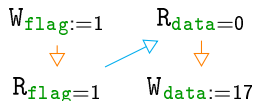


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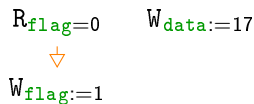
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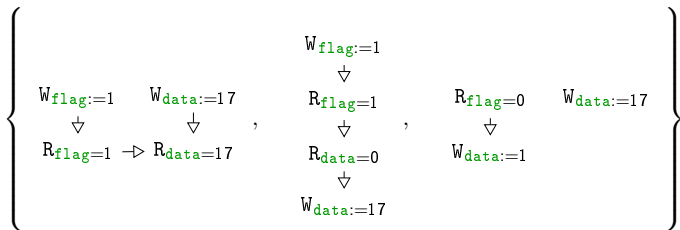


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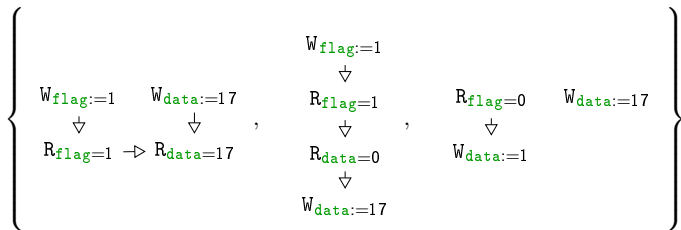
## Sets of partial orders and event structures

The **set of partial orders** describes the semantics of mp:

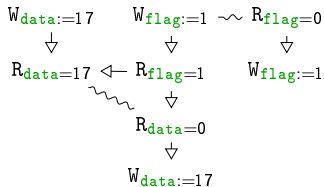


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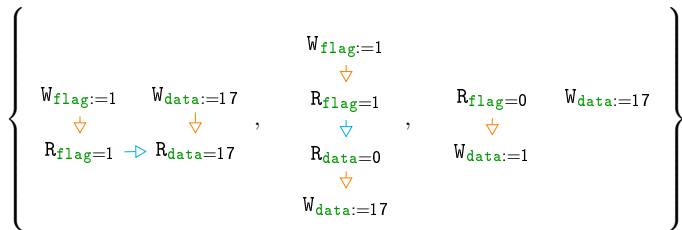


This set of partial orders can be summed by an **event structure**:

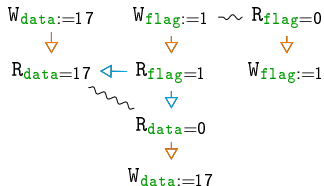


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# This talk

1. **Modelling a first-order programming language.**  
With relaxed shared memory.
2. **When actions become contextual.**  
An introduction to game semantics for higher-order languages.
3. **Interpretating a higher-order language, adequately.**  
With concurrency & non-determinism.

# I. MODELLING A FIRST-ORDER PROGRAMMING LANGUAGE

An ARM-like semantics for a toy language



# An assembly language with relaxed semantics

**Syntax.** Idents split in thread-local **registers** and global **variables**.

$$e ::= r \mid e + e \mid \dots$$

$$t ::= \text{fence}; t \mid \mathbf{x} := e; t \mid r \leftarrow \mathbf{x}; t$$

$$p ::= t \parallel \dots \parallel t$$

**Actions.** We observe the following actions from the programs:

$$\Sigma ::= W_{\mathbf{x}:=k} \mid R_{\mathbf{x}=k} \mid \text{fence}.$$

**Semantics.** Described by a labeled transition system on states  $p, \mu$ :

$$\langle p @ \mu \rangle \xrightarrow{\ell \in \Sigma} \langle p' @ \mu' \rangle. \quad (\mu, \mu' : \mathbf{Var} \rightarrow \mathbb{N})$$

It is **relaxed**: operations on independent variables can be reordered.

## A few rules

Thread rules:  $\langle t @ \mu \rangle \xrightarrow{\ell} \langle t' @ \mu' \rangle :$

---

$$\langle \mathbf{x} := k; t @ \mu \rangle \xrightarrow{W_{\mathbf{x}:=k}} \langle t @ \mu[\mathbf{x} := k] \rangle$$

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And then:

$$\frac{\langle t_i @ \mu \rangle \xrightarrow{\ell} \langle t'_i @ \mu' \rangle}{\langle t_1 \parallel \dots \parallel t_i \parallel \dots \parallel t_n @ \mu \rangle \xrightarrow{\ell} \langle t_1 \parallel \dots \parallel t'_i \parallel \dots \parallel t_n @ \mu' \rangle}$$

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This generates the **operational (partial) traces**:

$$\text{Tr}(p, \mu) = \{\ell_1 \dots \ell_n \mid \langle p @ \mu \rangle \xrightarrow{\ell_1} \dots \xrightarrow{\ell_n} \langle p' @ \mu' \rangle\}.$$

# Labeled event structures

## Definition

A ( $\Sigma$ -labeled) **event structure** is a tuple  $(E, \leq_E, \sharp_E, \ell : E \rightarrow \Sigma)$  where  $(E, \leq_E)$  is a partial order and  $\sharp_E$  is a symmetric relation on  $E$ , satisfying *finite causes* and *conflict inheritance*.



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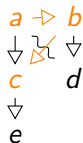
- **Configurations** are downclosed, conflict-free subsets of  $E$ .  
 $\mathcal{C}(E)$  is the set of configurations of  $E$ .



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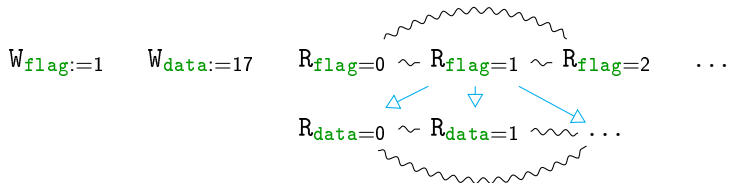
- ▶ **Configurations** are downclosed, conflict-free subsets of  $E$ .  
 $\mathcal{C}(E)$  is the set of configurations of  $E$ .
- ▶ A **trace** of  $E$  is a linearisation of a configuration of  $E$ .  
 $\text{Tr}(E)$  is the set of traces of  $E$  (can be seen as a subset of  $\Sigma^*$ ).

Our goal: a mapping  $\llbracket \cdot \rrbracket$  from states to event structures s.t.:

$$\text{Tr}(\rho, \mu) = \text{Tr} \llbracket \rho, \mu \rrbracket.$$

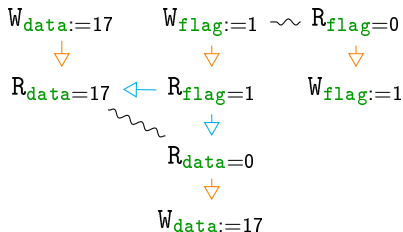
# An overview of the semantics

1. **Thread semantics:** context is left open (and unknown)



2. **Final semantics:** context is assumed empty

Compute interactions with memory:



# Thread semantics

**Fences.**  $\llbracket \text{fence}; t \rrbracket = \text{fence} \cdot \llbracket t \rrbracket$

$(\leq_{l.E} = \leq_E \cup \{(l, l')\})$

fence

↓

$\llbracket t \rrbracket$

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$W_{x:=k}$

$\left( \begin{array}{c} \triangleleft \\ \llbracket t \rrbracket \\ \triangleright \end{array} \right)$

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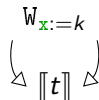
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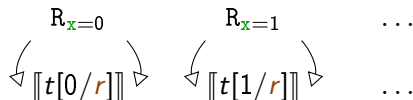
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$R_{x=0}$        $R_{x=1}$       ...  


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 $\llbracket t \rrbracket$

**Reads.**  $\llbracket r \leftarrow x; t \rrbracket = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{N}} R_{x=n}; \llbracket t[n/r] \rrbracket$

$R_{x=0} \quad R_{x=1} \quad \dots$   
 $\swarrow \quad \searrow \quad \swarrow \quad \searrow \quad \dots$   
 $\llbracket t[0/r] \rrbracket \quad \llbracket t[1/r] \rrbracket \quad \dots$

**Program.** No interaction:  $\llbracket t_1 \parallel \dots \parallel t_n \rrbracket = \llbracket t_1 \rrbracket \parallel \dots \parallel \llbracket t_n \rrbracket$ .

## Wiring memory behaviour

The memory behaviour is specified through **consistent traces**:

$$C_\mu ::= W_{x:=k} \cdot C_{\mu[x:=k]} \mid \text{fence} \cdot C_\mu \mid R_{x=\mu(x)} \cdot C_\mu$$

### Theorem

For a machine state  $(p, \mu)$ ,  $Tr(p, \mu) = Tr[[p]] \cap C_\mu$ .

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But I promised an e.s.  $\llbracket p, \mu \rrbracket!$  (**causally** account for memory)

The causal account of memory can be defined as:

$$\mathcal{C}_\mu = \{\mathbf{q} \mid \text{Tr}(\mathbf{q}) \in C_\mu\} \in \text{Set}(\mathbf{PO}).$$

How to combine  $\llbracket p \rrbracket$  and  $\mathcal{C}_\mu$ ?

# Briding a gap: event-based and execution-based models

**ES**

$\llbracket \rho \rrbracket$

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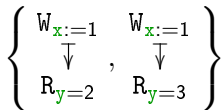
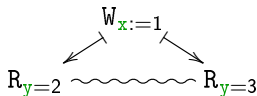
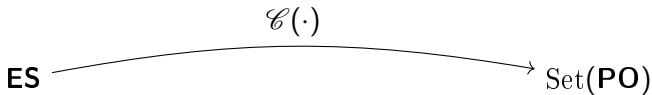
**ES**

Set(**PO**)

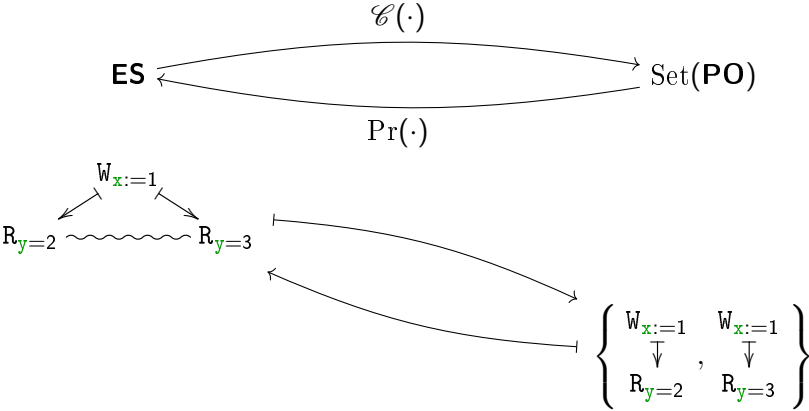
$\llbracket \rho \rrbracket$

$\mathcal{E}_\mu$

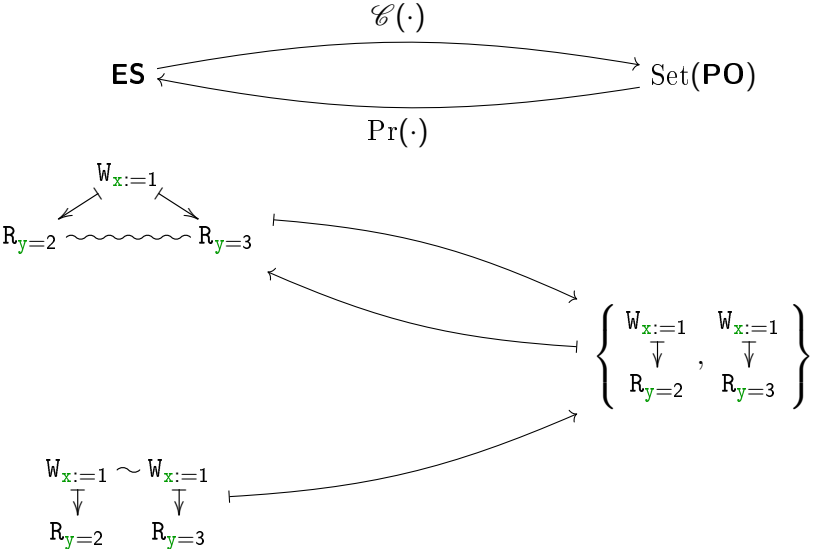
# Bridging a gap: event-based and execution-based models



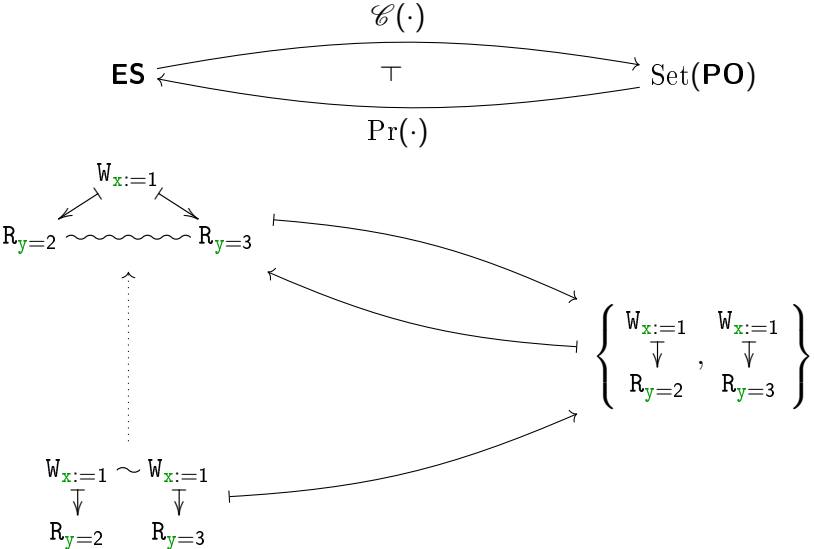
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## A partial product on partial orders

Given two partial orders  $\leq_{\mathbf{q}}, \leq_{\mathbf{q}'}$  on the same carrier set, write:

$$\mathbf{q} \wedge \mathbf{q}' = \begin{cases} (\mathbf{q} \cup \mathbf{q}')^* & \text{if a partial order} \\ \text{undefined} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} .$$



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... generating a product on event structures

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### Theorem

*Both operations are categorical products.*

Note:

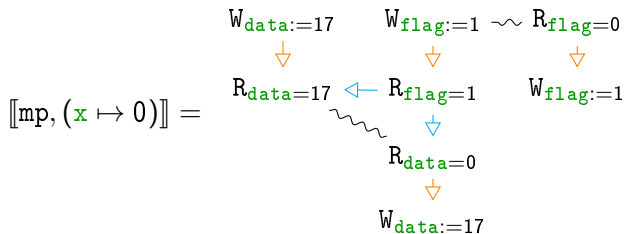
$$\text{Tr}(E \star E') = \text{Tr}(E) \cap \text{Tr}(E')$$

## A final model

Define  $\llbracket \rho, \mu \rrbracket = \Pr(\mathcal{C}(\llbracket \rho \rrbracket) \star \mathcal{C}_\mu)$ . We have:

$$\text{Tr}\llbracket \rho, \mu \rrbracket = \text{Tr}\llbracket \rho \rrbracket \cap \text{Tr}\llbracket \mathcal{C}_\mu \rrbracket = \text{Tr}\llbracket \rho \rrbracket \cap C_\mu = \text{Tr}(\rho, \mu).$$

Yields the desired result:



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- ▶ By changing  $\mathcal{C}_\mu$  we get more or less compact event structures that can be useful for verification.  
(Implementation in Herd in progress)
- ▶ The treatment of reorderings should make the model useful to prove properties of architectures (eg. Data-Race-Freedom theorems.)

## II. WHAT ABOUT NON-FIRST ORDER LANGUAGES?

5mins of game semantics a day keeps the syntax away

## Nontrivial scopes

Imagine now our threads look like:

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alloc(x);  
alloc(y);  
r ← x;  
if(r = 1){y := 1}  
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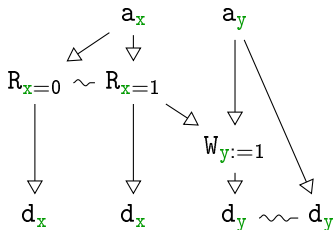
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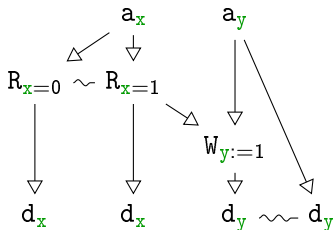
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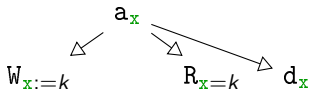
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$$\Sigma ::= \dots | a_x | d_x$$

*Implicit allocation rules* give  $\Sigma$  some structure:



## Protocols as types

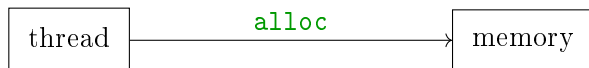
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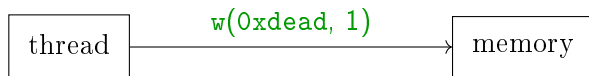
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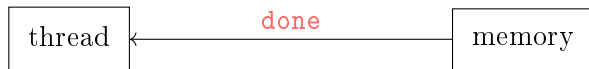
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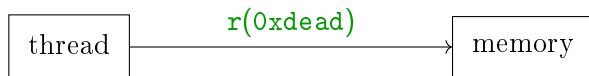
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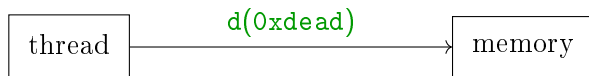
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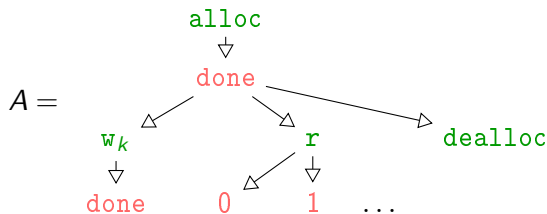
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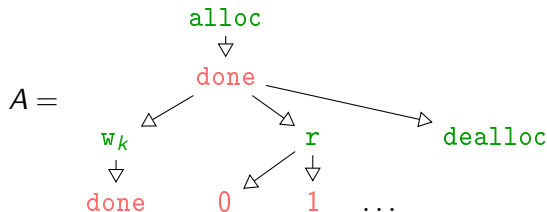
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Such a partial order with polarity annotations is a **game**.



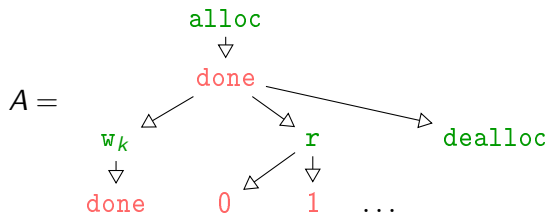
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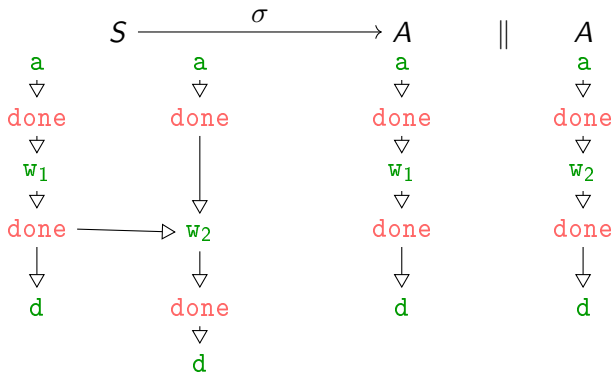


Such a partial order with polarity annotations is a **game**.  
What is an event structure labelled by a game?

## Agent (or pre-strategy)

A **agent** on a  $A$  is an e.s.  $S$  and a labelling  $\sigma : S \rightarrow A$  s.t.:

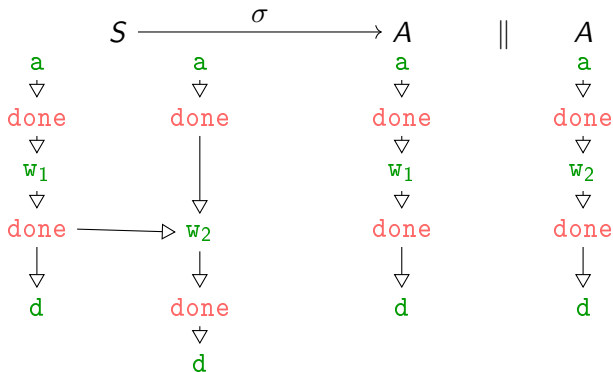
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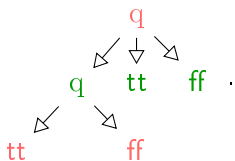
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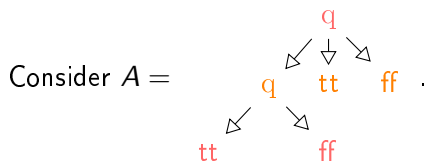
No explicit names: each event is below a unique **a**, in the game

# Agents and $\pi$ -calculus

Consider  $A =$



# Agents and $\pi$ -calculus

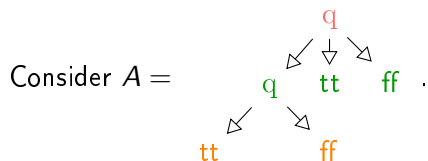


Agents can be described by terms of the pi-calculus:

$$a : A \vdash a(x, rtt, rff).$$

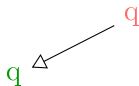
q

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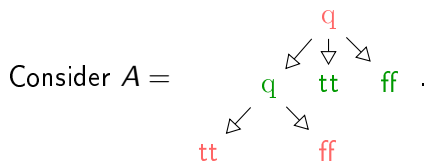


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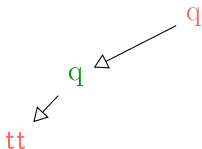


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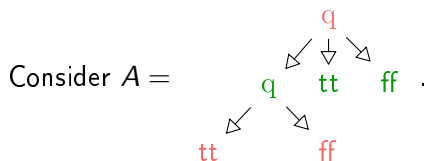


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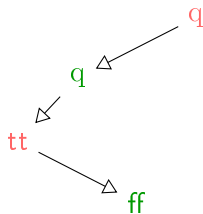


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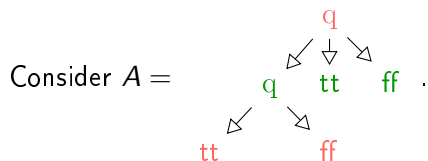
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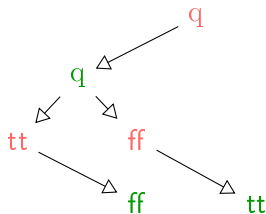


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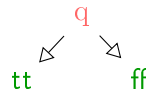
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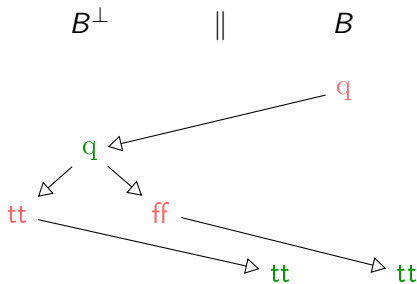
$$a : A \vdash a(x, rtt, rff). \bar{x}(tt, ff). (tt()). \overline{rff} \parallel ff(). \overline{rtt}.$$



## Copycat, or the asynchronous forwarder

Given a game  $A$ , we write  $A^\perp$  for its **dual**. (polarity reversed)

For  $B =$ 

, the **copycat** on  $B$  is the agent  $\mathfrak{c}_B$ :



(corresponding to the term:

$$a : B^\perp, b : B \vdash b(rtt, rff). \bar{a}(tt, ff). (tt(). \overline{rtt} \parallel tt(). \overline{rtt}).$$

## Restriction and composition

An agent on  $A^\perp \parallel B$  can be viewed as an agent **from**  $A$  **to**  $B$ :

$$\sigma : S \rightarrow A^\perp \parallel B \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad \iota : A^\perp, o : B \vdash P.$$

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Such agents can be **composed**:

$$\sigma : S \rightarrow A^\perp \parallel B \quad \tau : T \rightarrow B^\perp \parallel C \quad \Longrightarrow \quad \tau \odot \sigma : T \odot S \rightarrow A^\perp \parallel C$$

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In two steps:

1. **Interaction** of the common parts of  $\sigma$  and  $\tau$
2. **Hiding** of the events on  $B$ , invisible after composition.

## Composition: a bird's eye view

1. **Interaction** relies on the **product** of agents, generalizing the product of labelled e.s.  
→ Interaction  $\sigma$  and  $\tau$  gives

$$\tau \circledast \sigma : T \circledast S \rightarrow A \parallel B \parallel C.$$

2. **Hiding** relies on **projection** of event structures: events in  $B$  become invisible.

$$\tau \odot \sigma : T \circledast S \downarrow V \rightarrow A \parallel B \parallel C \quad V = \tau \circledast \sigma^{-1}(A \parallel C).$$

## An example

Consider:

$$\sigma = \begin{array}{ccc} & \text{q} & \\ & \swarrow & \\ \text{tt} & \longrightarrow & \text{ff} \end{array} : \emptyset^\perp \parallel B \quad \tau = \mathbf{c}_B : B^\perp \parallel B.$$

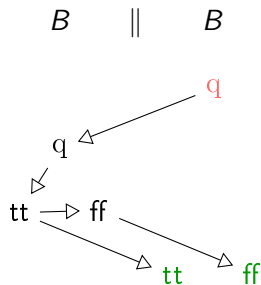


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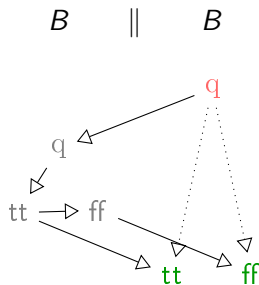


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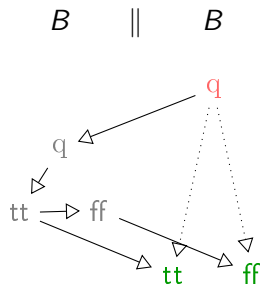


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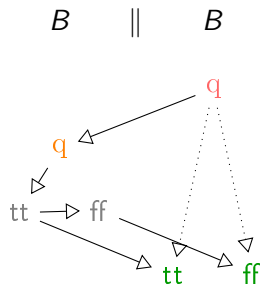
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The interaction gives:



$$(\nu a) \left( \begin{array}{l} a(\text{tt}, \text{ff}). \overline{\text{tt}}. \overline{\text{ff}} \\ \parallel b(\text{rtt}, \text{rff}). \overline{a}(\text{tt}, \text{ff}). \left( \begin{array}{l} \text{tt}(). \overline{\text{rtt}} \\ \parallel \text{ff}(). \overline{\text{rff}} \end{array} \right) \end{array} \right)$$

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The interaction gives:

$$B \parallel B$$

$$(\nu a) \left( \begin{array}{l} \overline{tt}. \overline{ff} \\ \parallel b(rtt, rff). \left( \begin{array}{l} tt(). \overline{rtt} \\ \parallel ff(). \overline{rff} \end{array} \right) \end{array} \right)$$

## An example

Consider:

$$\sigma = \begin{array}{c} \text{q} \\ \swarrow \\ \text{tt} \longrightarrow \text{ff} \end{array} : \emptyset^\perp \parallel B \quad \tau = \mathbf{c}_B : B^\perp \parallel B.$$

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$\sigma$  *not* invariant under the asynchronous forwarder.



## Asynchronous agents, or *strategies*

Which agents  $\sigma$  satisfy  $\mathbf{c}_A \odot \sigma \cong \sigma$  ?

### Definition

A **strategy** is an agent  $\sigma : S \rightarrow A$  such that

1.  $S$  only adds immediate causal links  $\ominus \rightarrow \oplus$
2.  $S$  cannot ignore (or duplicate) negative events.

### Theorem (Rideau, Winskel)

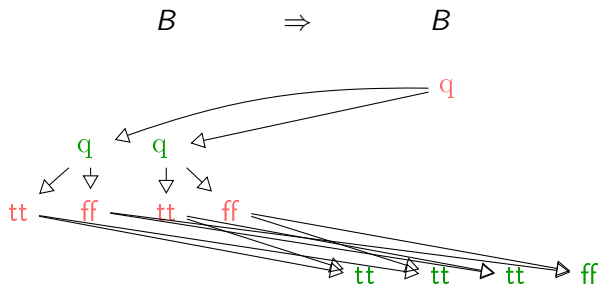
An agent  $\sigma$  is a strategy if and only if  $\mathbf{c}_A \odot \sigma \cong \sigma$ .

→ Games and strategies model *linear* languages (compact-closed category).

### III. INTERPRETING FUNCTIONAL PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

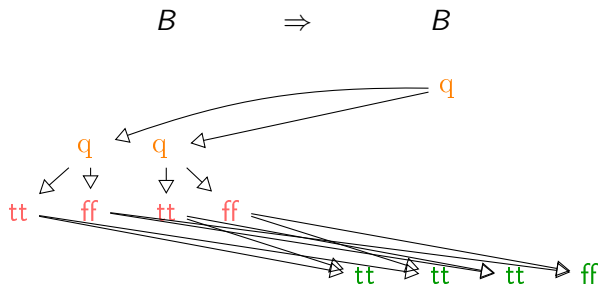
## Local injectivity and copy indices

To represent nonlinear agents:



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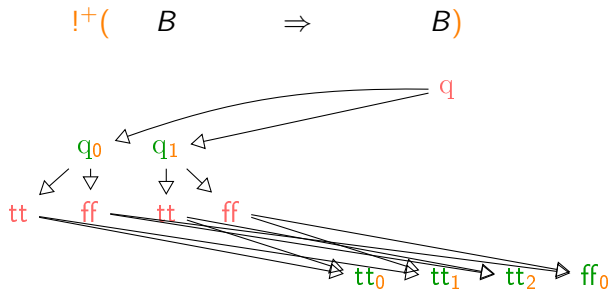
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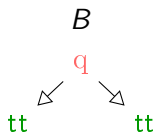


The labelling to  $B \Rightarrow B$  fails local injectivity.

→ We make the game bigger.

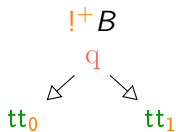
# Uniformity

To compose, Opponent must be allowed to be nonlinear as well:



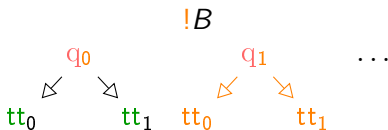
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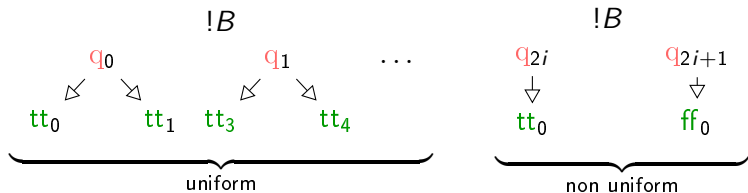
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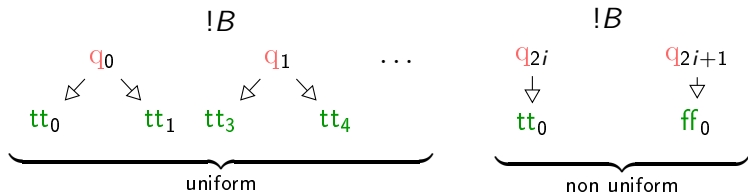


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(Uniformity is defined by using *event structures with symmetry*.)

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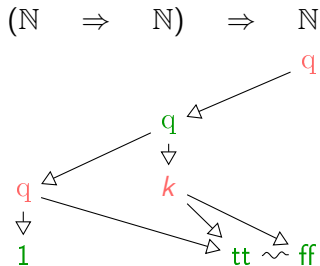
## Theorem (C., Clairambault, Winskel)

*The following structure CHO is a model of higher-order computation:*

- ▶ *Types are interpreted by games,*
- ▶ *Terms  $\Gamma \vdash M : A$  are interpreted by uniform strategies  $!([\Gamma]^\perp \parallel [A])$ ,*
- ▶ *Composition is: interaction + hiding.*

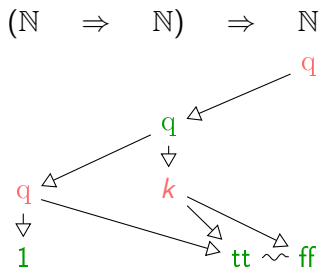
## An example of higher-order

Consider the *call-by-name* program

$$\text{strict} = \lambda f. \text{new } r \text{ in } f(r := 1; 1); !r = 1 : (\mathbb{N} \Rightarrow \mathbb{N}) \Rightarrow \mathbb{B}.$$


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If  $f$  is concurrent with control operators, `strict` exhibits a race.

### Theorem

*CHO can interpret concurrent languages, adequately for may:*

$$M \Downarrow \Leftrightarrow \llbracket M \rrbracket \text{ contains a positive move.}$$

## Hidden divergences

However, in nondeterministic languages convergence is more subtle:

$$M = \lambda b. (\text{if } b \text{ then loop else tt}).$$

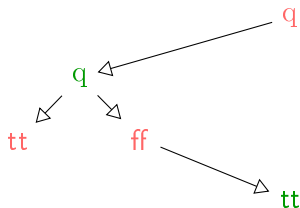
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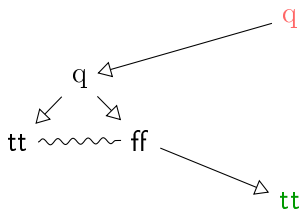
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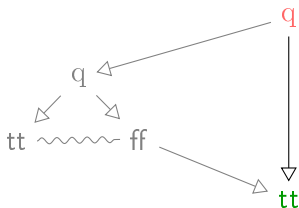
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As a result:  $\llbracket M \text{ choice} \rrbracket = \llbracket \text{tt} \rrbracket$ .

Model inadequate for *non-angelic* convergences!

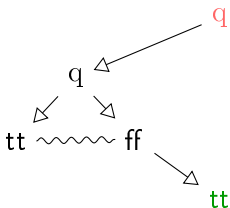


## Essential events

**Idea:** never hide *essential events* appearing in a conflict:

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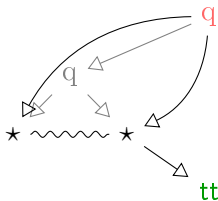


## Essential events

**Idea:** never hide *essential events* appearing in a conflict:

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$\mathbb{B}$



Strategies become **partial maps**  $S \rightarrow A$  (with internal events).

**Theorem (C., Clairambault, Hayman, Winskel)**

*The partial strategies  $\tau \circledast \sigma$  and  $\tau \odot \sigma$  are weakly bisimilar.*

→ Partial hiding does not lose behaviour up to weak bisimilarity.

## The category $\text{CHO}_{\odot}$

Despite not hiding *everything*, we still get a category:

### Theorem (C.)

*The following model  $\text{CHO}_{\odot}$  is a model of higher-order computation:*

- ▶ *Types are interpreted as in  $\text{CHO}$ ,*
- ▶ *Terms are interpreted by strategies with internal events,*
- ▶ *Composition is: interaction + partial hiding.*

*Moreover  $\text{CHO}_{\odot}$  interprets nondeterministic languages, adequately for non-angelic convergences (must, fair), ...*

In  $\text{CHO}_{\odot}$ , one can define *intensional, causal, compositional* semantics for a wide variety of languages.

## Related work

Earlier work / inspirations:

- ▶ Melliès's **asynchronous games**.  
Traces augmented with 2-dimensional tiles representing independence.
- ▶ Curien, Faggian, Piccolo, **I-nets**.  
Partial order representation for ludics.

Parallel works:

- ▶ Hirschowitz *et. al.*: **preseheaves over graphs**. (no hiding)  
Gives intensional models of  $\pi$ -calculus fully abstract for fair convergence.
- ▶ Ong, Tsukada: **presheaves over plays**.  
Models of nondeterministic, concurrent languages.

On causal models for **weak memory models**:

- ▶ Jeffrey & Riley, Brookes *et. al.*, Pichon *et. al.*

# Extensions / Other work

Axis of development:

## 1. **Understanding the structure of strategies.**

Which strategies are expressible using which effects?

→ Fully abstract models of extensions of PCF. (With Clairambault, and Winskel)

## 2. **Adding quantitative information.**

- ▶ probabilities (full abstraction for probabilistic PCF) (With Clairambault, Paquet and Winskel)
- ▶ quantum (WIP by Clairambault, De Visme, Winskel)

## 3. **Modelling complex languages.** Work in progress:

- ▶ Complex memory models (with Alglave and Madiot),
- ▶ Session  $\pi$ -calculus (with Clairambault and Yoshida).