Practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance

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Why Byzantine Fault Tolerance?

- Traditional fault tolerance:
  - Processes fail by stopping or omitting steps
- Byzantine fault tolerance:
  - “No” assumptions on faulty behavior
  - Robust to increasingly common faults:
    - Hacker-tolerance
    - Bug-tolerance

Previous Work

- Mostly theoretical
  - Few implementations
  - Little analysis
- Rely on synchrony for correctness
  - Attack: delay nodes or communication
- Slow

[Rampart,SecureRing,Phalanx,…]

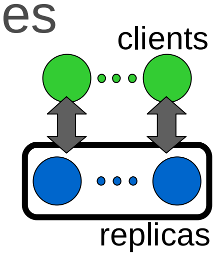
Contributions

- Practical:
  - Correct in asynchronous systems
  - Liveness under attack
  - Fast
- Implementation
  - Generic replication library
  - BFS – a Byzantine-fault-tolerant NFS
- Performance evaluation

Talk Overview

- Algorithm
- Optimizations
- BFS
- Performance evaluation
- Conclusions

What the Algorithm Does

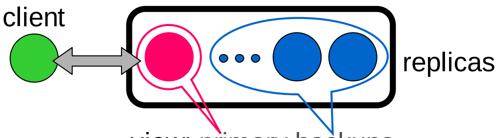


- Arbitrary replicated service
- Safety and liveness:
  - – Service behaves as a correct centralized one
  - – Clients eventually receive replies to requests
- Assumptions:
  - – 3f+1 replicas to tolerate f faults (optimal)
  - – Strong cryptography (reasonable)
  - – Unknown eventual bounds (only for liveness)

Algorithm Overview

State machine replication

- Deterministic replicas start in same state
- Execute same requests in same order
- Client waits for f+1 matching replies



To agree on a total order

- Primary picks ordering
- Backups ensure primary behaves
  - certify correct actions
  - trigger view changes

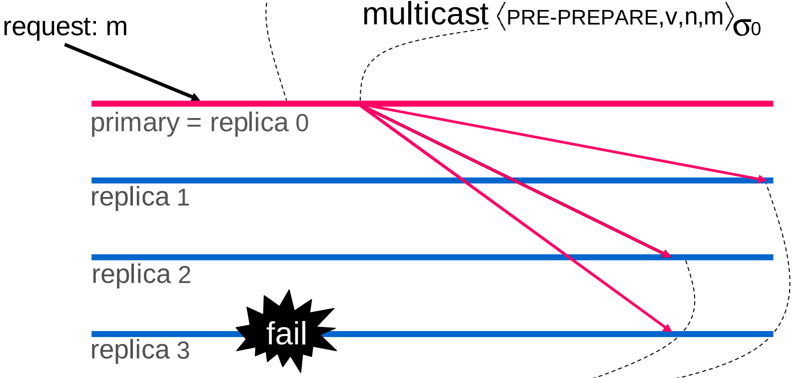
Ensuring Safety

- Three phase protocol:
  - pre-prepare, prepare and commit
  - pre-prepare and prepare order within views
  - prepare and commit order across views
- Messages are authenticated
  - $\langle \bullet \rangle_{\sigma I}$ denotes a messaged signed by I
- Replicas remember messages received in log

Normal Case: Pre-prepare Phase

assign sequence number n to m in view v

multicast $\langle \text{PRE-PREPARE},v,n,m \rangle_{\sigma_0}$



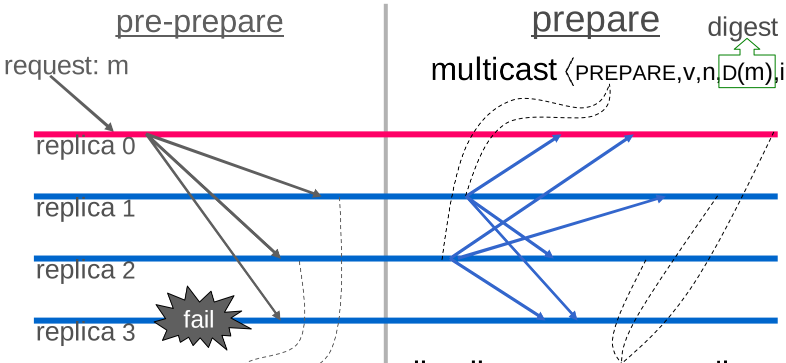
backups accept pre-prepare if:

- in view v
- never accepted $\langle \text{PRE-PREPARE},v,n, m' \rangle_{\sigma_0}$ with m’ ≠ m

Normal Case: Prepare Phase

digest of m

multicast $\langle \text{PREPARE},v,n,\boxed{D(m)},i \rangle_{\sigma_i}$

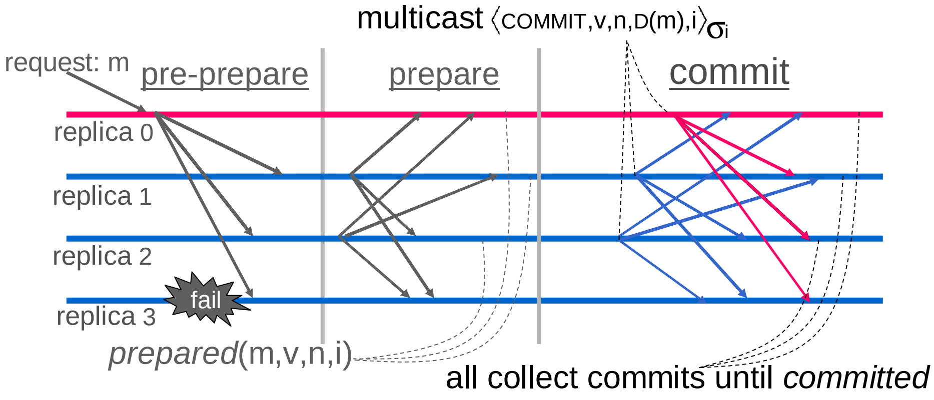


all collect prepares until *prepared*

backups accept $\langle \text{PRE-PREPARE},v,n,m \rangle_{\sigma_0}$

- *prepared*(m,v,n,i) ≡ pre-prepare for m,v,n + 2f matching prepares
- Order within view :
  - Distinct m and m’ are never *prepared* for same v and n

Normal Case: Commit Phase



- *committed*(m,v,n,i) ≡ *prepared* and 2f+1 commits for m,v,n
- Execute after all m' with lower sequence numbers
- If *committed*(m,v,n,i), *prepared*(m,v,n,i) for f+1 non-faulty

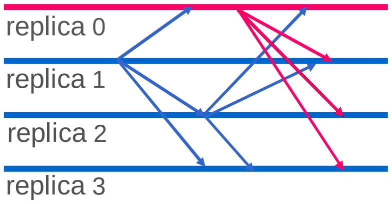
View Changes

- Liveness when primary fails:
  - Backups multicast view-change messages
  - Primary ≡ view number modulo number of replicas
  - New primary multicasts new-view message
- Ordering across views:
  - Information about *prepared* requests in view-changes
  - New-view message:
    - includes 2f+1 view-change messages
    - contains *committed* request information
    - only accept messages consistent with new-view

Distinct m and m' never *committed* for same n

Garbage Collection

- Discard logged information after having proof:
  - request was executed by f+1 non-faulty
  - state after request execution is correct



- periodically checkpoint state
- multicast $\langle \text{CHECKPOINT},v,n,\boxed{D(state)},i\rangle_{\sigma_i}$

digest of checkpoint

- Proof = 2f+1 matching checkpoint messages
- Discard messages and checkpoints that precede proof
- Efficient: copy-on-write and incremental digest of checkpoints

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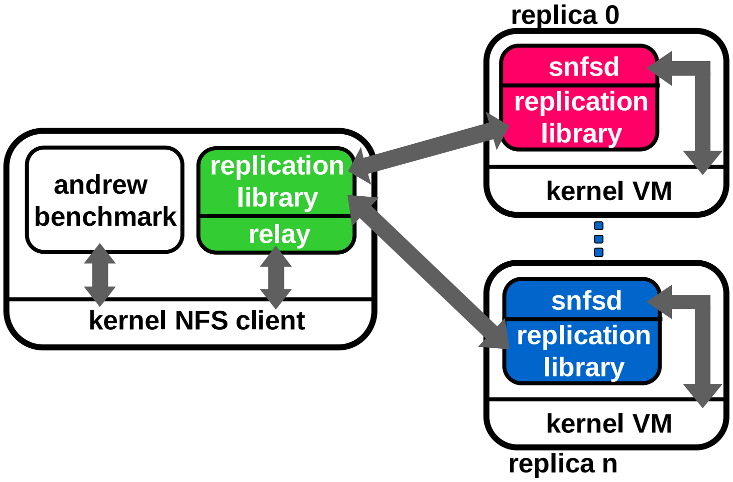
Optimizations

- Digest replies: only one reply with full result
- Optimistic execution: execute *prepared* requests
  - Operations execute in 2 round-trips
- Read-only operations: executed in current state
  - Read-only operations execute in 1 round-trip
- Fast authentication: MACs in normal case
  - MAC 1000x faster than public-key signatures
  - Non-trivial: cannot prove authenticity to third party

BFS - A Byzantine-Fault-Tolerant NFS


replica 0

snfsd

replication library

kernel VM

andrew benchmark

replication library

relay

kernel NFS client

snfsd

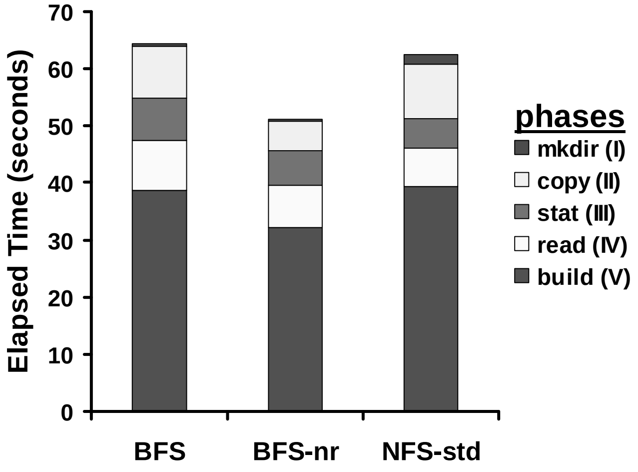
replication library

kernel VM

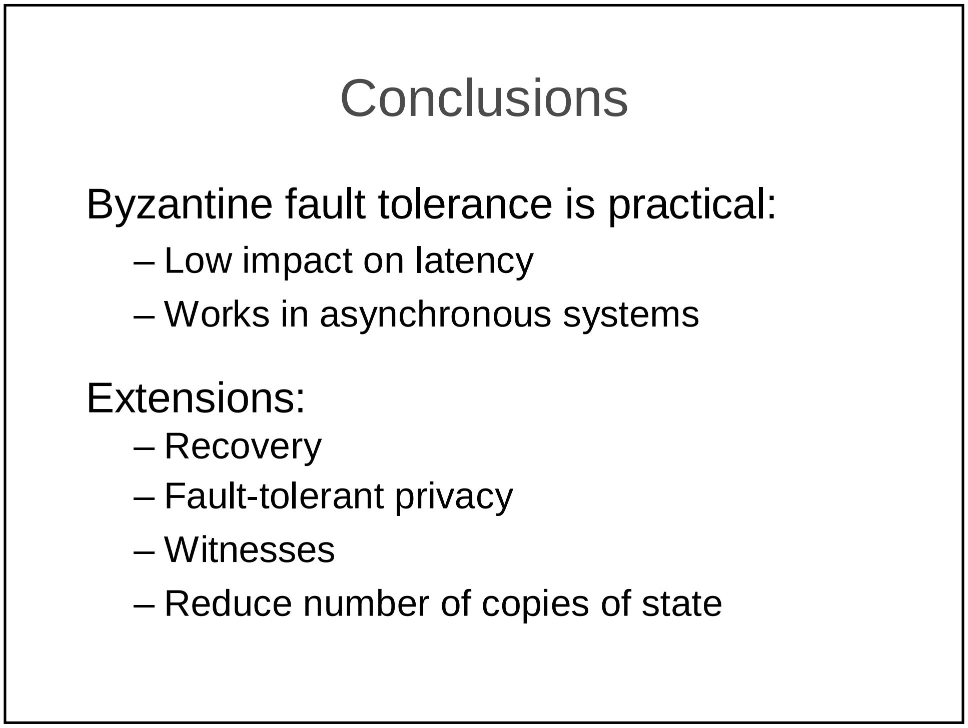
replica n

No synchronous writes – stability through replication

Andrew Benchmark



- BFS-nr is like BFS but without replication
- NFS-std is the Digital Unix NFS V2 implementation



Conclusions

Byzantine fault tolerance is practical:

- Low impact on latency
- Works in asynchronous systems

Extensions:

- Recovery
- Fault-tolerant privacy
- Witnesses
- Reduce number of copies of state