

Contracts in Trinity

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- PhD at Utrecht University, 2004: “Exploring Generic Haskell”
- currently PostDoc at Bonn University, working with Ralf Hinze
- interests:
 - functional programming (Haskell),
 - polytypic / datatype-generic programming,
 - type systems

- 1 **Trinity**
 - Background
 - Examples
- 2 **Contracts**
 - Motivation
 - Syntax
 - Examples
 - Semantics
- 3 **Conclusions**

- While teaching “Concepts of Programming Languages” to third- and fourth-year students, Ralf Hinze devised fragments of a language together with static and dynamic semantics.
- An idea came up at Bonn university to redesign the curriculum and have an introductory first-year course on PL concepts.
- Another idea came up that while it would be ok to reuse the work already done for the other course, it would be extremely nice to have an implementation for the students to play with, to make the course less theoretical.

History of Trinity – contd.

- I joined the project at that point. With the implementation came a redesign of most language concepts.
- By now, the course has passed, with mixed reactions from the students. The language is still in development and will probably be used for other courses and projects.
- This talk is also about one of these projects: A master student is currently working on adding contracts to Trinity.

- Different paradigms:
 - value-oriented (functional) programming
 - effect-oriented (imperative) programming
 - object-oriented programming

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- Types!
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 - object-oriented programming
- Simple, orthogonal concepts. No artificial restrictions.
- Minimalistic. (Writing large programs is not a goal.)
- Types!
- Clearly defined static and dynamic semantics.
- Presentable in an incremental way.

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- We reinvented ML ...
- ... with some syntactic influences from Haskell.
- ... with some variations in the type system.
- Natural numbers are the only built-in numerical type.

Example – factorial

```
function factorial (n : Nat) : Nat =  
  if n == 0 then 1  
    else n * factorial (n - 1)
```


Example – factorial

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```

- Nat, not Int ...
- Limited type inference: type annotations required for **all** recursive functions.

Example – factorial, imperatively

```
local  
  open System.Control  
in  
  function factorial (n : Nat) : Nat =  
    let  
      val result = ref 1  
    in  
      for (1, n) (fun i  $\Rightarrow$  result := ! result * i);  
      ! result  
    end  
end
```

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  open System.Control  
in  
  function factorial (n : Nat) : Nat =  
    let  
      val result = ref 1  
    in  
      for (1, n) (fun i  $\Rightarrow$  result := ! result * i);  
      ! result  
    end  
end
```

- Modules and references similar to ML.
- 'for' is a function defined in System.Control.

Example – data types

```
data Tree ⟨a⟩ = Empty  
             | Node (Tree ⟨a⟩, a, Tree ⟨a⟩)  
data Maybe ⟨a⟩ = Nothing  
              | Just a
```

Example – data types

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```

- Haskell-inspired syntax.
- Constructors have zero or one argument.
- Type application: generally angle brackets.

Example – polymorphism

```
function leaf <a : Type> (elem : a) = Node (Empty, elem, Empty)
```

```
val a-bst =
```

```
  Node (Node (leaf ("Andres", "U Bonn"),  
             ("John", "U Chicago"),  
             leaf ("Matthias", "TTI-C")),  
        ("Ralf", "U Bonn"),  
        leaf ("Robby", "U Chicago"))
```

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        ("Ralf", "U Bonn"),
        leaf ("Robby", "U Chicago"))
```

- Polymorphism is introduced explicitly via type abstractions (but constructors are implicitly polymorphic).
- `leaf : <a : Type> → a → Tree <a>`
- If a polymorphic function is applied to a value, missing type arguments are inferred.
- Equivalent to the value restriction.

Type abbreviations

```
type Environment ⟨a, b⟩ = List ⟨(a, b)⟩  
type Int                = (Nat, Nat)
```


Type abbreviations

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```

- No new data types are generated.
- No recursion.

- Simple IO functions
- Records
- Arrays
- Exceptions
- Continuations
- Objects
- Modules, Signatures, Functors (not as advanced as in ML)

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An important criterion for the quality of software is **reliability**:

- **correctness**: the software does what it is supposed to do
- **robustness**: the software can deal with unexpected situations

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There are different approaches in order to improve the reliability of software:

- formal proof of correctness,
- type systems (static, dynamic),
- systematic testing,
- “design by contract”.

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- formal proof of correctness,
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- systematic testing,
- “design by contract”.

These approaches are not competing. They can be used simultaneously.

simple properties

complex properties

static checking

static types

theorem proving

dynamic checking

dynamic types

contracts

- Contracts are integrated into the type system.
- Types have a static and a dynamic component.
- Contract types are translated into run-time checks.
- Contracts can be applied to higher-order functions and to polymorphic functions.
- Abstractions can be defined.

Syntax: predicate contracts

A contract specifies a desired property. For example:

```
type Pos           = { i : Nat | i ≥ 0 }
```

```
type True ⟨a⟩     = { _ : a | true }
```

```
type Nonempty ⟨a⟩ = { x : List ⟨a⟩ | length x ≠ 0 }
```

Syntax: predicate contracts

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```

Formation rule for **predicate contracts**:

$$\frac{\Sigma \vdash \tau : \text{Type} \quad \Sigma, x : \tau \vdash e : \text{Bool}}{\Sigma \vdash \{x : \tau \mid e\} : \text{Type}}$$

Parameterized contracts

Type synonyms now also be parameterized over values.

```
type Between (m : Nat) (n : Nat) = { x : Nat | m ≤ x && x ≤ n }
```

Recall: we always use angle brackets for **type application**, and no brackets for **expression application**.

Syntax: assigning contracts

We can assert a contract by annotating an expression:

```
function factors n = filter (fun i  $\Rightarrow$  n % i == 0) (between (1, n))  
type Prime = { n : Nat | eqList (fun x y  $\Rightarrow$  x == y)  
                                (factors n) (Cons (1, Cons (n, Nil))) }  
val mersenne = power (2, 30402457) - 1 : Prime
```

Static and dynamic checking

Each type has a static and a dynamic part. For a predicate contract such as

```
type Prime = { n : Nat | eqList (fun x y => x == y)
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the static part is **Nat**.

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```
type Prime = { n : Nat | eqList (fun x y  $\Rightarrow$  x == y)
                    (factors n) (Cons (1, Cons (n, Nil))) }
```

the static part is `Nat`.

The dynamic part is a **code transformation** that wraps the expression in a run-time test:

```
power (2, 30402457) - 1
```

is transformed into

```
(fun n  $\Rightarrow$  if eqList (fun x y  $\Rightarrow$  x == y)
                    (factors n) (Cons (1, Cons (n, Nil))))
  then n
  else throw Contract)
(power (2, 30402457) - 1)
```

Syntax: contracts on functions

Contracts can be embedded into type expressions, for example into function types:

| **type** $F \langle a \rangle = \text{Nonempty} \langle a \rangle \rightarrow \text{Pos}$

A function with type $F \langle a \rangle$ requires its argument to be a non-empty list with element of type a and ensures that its result is a positive number; **Nonempty** is the **precondition**, **Pos** the **postcondition**.

Syntax: contracts on functions – contd.

The postcondition may depend on the function argument:

```
type Inc = forall (n : Nat) => { r : Nat | n ≤ r }
```

The variable n is bound in the construct and may be used in predicate contracts to the right.

Syntax: contracts on functions – contd.

The postcondition may depend on the function argument:

type `Inc` = **forall** (`n` : `Nat`) \Rightarrow { `r` : `Nat` | `n` \leq `r` }

The variable `n` is bound in the construct and may be used in predicate contracts to the right.

Formation rule for **dependent function contracts**:

$$\frac{\Sigma \vdash \tau : \text{Type} \quad \Sigma, x : \tau \vdash \tau' : \text{Type}}{\Sigma \vdash \mathbf{forall} (x : \tau) \Rightarrow \tau' : \text{Type}}$$

Contracts: obligations, benefits, violations

A function contract $\tau_1 \rightarrow \tau_2$ is like a business contract, with obligations and benefits for both parties.

| party | obligations | benefits |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| client | ensure precondition τ_1 | require postcondition τ_2 |
| supplier | ensure postcondition τ_2 | require precondition τ_1 |

The obligations of one party are the benefits of the other.

Contracts: obligations, benefits, violations

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| client | ensure precondition τ_1 | require postcondition τ_2 |
| supplier | ensure postcondition τ_2 | require precondition τ_1 |

The obligations of one party are the benefits of the other.

If a contract is violated at runtime, the software is erroneous.

If the **precondition** is violated, the **client is to blame**.

If the **postcondition** is violated, the **supplier is to blame**.

Contract violations: first-order functions

```
type PosInc = forall (n : Pos)  $\Rightarrow$  { r : Pos | n  $\leq$  r }
```

```
val inc = (fun n  $\Rightarrow$  n + 1) : PosInc
```

```
val dec = (fun n  $\Rightarrow$  n - 1) : PosInc
```

Contract violations: first-order functions

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```

```
val dec = (fun n  $\Rightarrow$  n - 1) : PosInc
```

Another possibility to define inc is

```
function inc (n : Pos) : { r : Pos | n  $\leq$  r } = n + 1
```

Contract violations: first-order functions

```
type PosInc = forall (n : Pos) => { r : Pos | n <= r }
```

```
val inc = (fun n => n + 1) : PosInc
```

```
val dec = (fun n => n - 1) : PosInc
```

Another possibility to define inc is

```
function inc (n : Pos) : { r : Pos | n <= r } = n + 1
```

Note: Contract violations are only detected if a value is **used** outside of its specification.

Function contracts versus flat contracts

It is possible to define flat function contracts:

```
type PreserveZero = { f : Nat → Nat | f 0 == 0 }
```

Syntax: contracts in datatypes

In principle, contract types can be embedded arbitrarily in other types:

| List ⟨Pos⟩

describes a list of positive numbers. In general, this requires ‘mapping’ the assertion over the elements of arbitrary data structures (polytypic programming).

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Formation rule for **contract application**:

$$\frac{\Sigma \vdash \tau : \text{Type} \rightarrow \kappa \quad \Sigma \vdash \tau' : \text{Type}}{\Sigma \vdash \tau \langle \tau' \rangle : \kappa}$$

Syntax: composing contracts

Contracts can be combined using “and”:

| Pos & { n : Nat | n ≤ 4711 }

Formation rule for **contract composition**:

$$\frac{\Sigma \vdash \tau : \text{Type} \quad \Sigma \vdash \tau' : \text{Type}}{\Sigma \vdash \tau \& \tau' : \text{Type}}$$

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Example: factorization

Let f' be the 'contracted' variant of f .

```
val prime-factors' = prime-factors  
: forall (n : Pos) => List <Prime> & { fs : List <Nat> | product fs == n }
```

Example: factorization

Let f' be the 'contracted' variant of f .

```
val prime-factors' = prime-factors  
  : forall (n : Pos) => List <Prime> & { fs : List <Nat> | product fs == n }
```

The function `prime-factors` is an inverse of `product`. This idiom can be captured using a 'higher-order' function:

```
type Inverse <a, b> (f : a -> b) (eq : b -> b -> b) =  
  forall (x : b) => { y : a | eq (f y) x }  
val prime-factors' = prime-factors  
  : Pos -> (List <Prime> & Inverse product (fun x y => x == y))
```

Example: until

Polymorphic functions such as `until` do not need to be treated in any special way:

```
function until ⟨a⟩ (p : a → Bool) (f : a → a) (a : a) : a =  
  if p a then a else until p f (f a)
```

Type arguments can be inferred, but can also be explicitly supplied. A polymorphic function can therefore be instantiated with a contract type (an invariant).

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Type arguments can be inferred, but can also be explicitly supplied. A polymorphic function can therefore be instantiated with a contract type (an invariant).

The expression

```
until ⟨Pos⟩
```

is equivalent to

```
until ⟨Nat⟩ : (Pos → Bool) → (Pos → Pos) → Pos → Pos
```

Type rules for contracts

Type-checking introduces run-time contract checks, therefore type rules are of the form:

$$\Sigma \vdash e : \sigma \rightsquigarrow e'$$

where σ is a **static type**, i.e., it does not contain any contract constructs.

Type rules for contracts

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where σ is a **static type**, i.e., it does not contain any contract constructs.

We use two built-in functions:

- **static** computes the “static part” of a type
- **assert** computes an expression that asserts a contract

Type rules for contract – contd.

$$\frac{\mathbf{static} \langle \tau \rangle = \sigma \quad \Sigma \vdash e : \sigma \rightsquigarrow e'}{\Sigma \vdash (e : \tau) : \sigma \rightsquigarrow \mathbf{assert} \langle \tau \rangle e'}$$

Type rules for contract – contd.

$$\frac{\text{static } \langle \tau \rangle = \sigma \quad \Sigma \vdash e : \sigma \rightsquigarrow e'}{\Sigma \vdash (e : \tau) : \sigma \rightsquigarrow \text{assert } \langle \tau \rangle e'}$$

$$\frac{\text{static } \langle \tau \rangle = \sigma \quad \Sigma \vdash e : \langle a : \text{Type} \rangle \rightarrow \sigma' \rightsquigarrow e'}{\Sigma \vdash e \langle \tau \rangle : \sigma' [a \mapsto \sigma] \rightsquigarrow \text{assert } \langle \sigma' [a \mapsto \tau] \rangle (e' \langle \sigma \rangle)}$$

Type rules for contract – contd.

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$$\text{static } \langle \text{Nat} \rangle = \text{Nat}$$

$$\text{static } \langle \{x : \tau \mid e\} \rangle = \tau$$

$$\text{static } \langle \text{forall } (x : \tau) \Rightarrow \tau' \rangle = \text{static } \langle \tau \rangle \rightarrow \text{static } \langle \tau' \rangle$$

Type rules for contract – contd.

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static $\langle \text{Nat} \rangle = \text{Nat}$

static $\langle \{x : \tau \mid e\} \rangle = \tau$

static $\langle \text{forall } (x : \tau) \Rightarrow \tau' \rangle = \text{static } \langle \tau \rangle \rightarrow \text{static } \langle \tau' \rangle$

assert $\langle \text{Nat} \rangle = \text{id}$

assert $\langle \{x : \tau \mid e\} \rangle = \text{fun } x \Rightarrow \text{if } e \text{ then assert } \langle \tau \rangle x$
else throw Contract

assert $\langle \text{forall } (x : \tau) \Rightarrow \tau' \rangle = \text{fun } f \ x \Rightarrow \text{assert } \langle \tau' \rangle (f (\text{assert } \langle \tau \rangle x))$

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We have introduced a type system for contracts.

- Trinity is a very beautiful language,
- contracts are an integral part of Trinity (contracts have a much better status than for example in Eiffel),
- implemented (still ongoing work, but available on request),
- we can define our own abstractions,
- higher-order functions are handled in a natural way,
- polymorphic functions can be instantiated to invariants,
- data types can be treated generically,
- future work: perform some contract checks statically and thereby optimize the contracts,
- future work: formalize the metatheory of Trinity,
- future work: control effects in contracts

```
{x : () | let function r () : Bool = put-line "Thank you"; r () in r () end }
```


Example: sorting

```
function fast-sort'  $\langle a \rangle$  (cmp :  $a \rightarrow a \rightarrow \text{Ordering}$ )  
      :  $\text{List } \langle a \rangle \rightarrow \text{Sorted } \langle a \rangle$  cmp =  
  fast-sort cmp
```

The contract `Sorted` restricts lists to sorted lists.

Example: sorting

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```

The contract `Sorted` restricts lists to sorted lists.

We have not (yet) specified that the output list is a permutation of the input list.

Example: sorting, continued

Let $\text{bag} : \text{List } \langle a \rangle \rightarrow \text{Bag } \langle a \rangle$ be a function that turns a list into a bag.

```
function fast-sort'  $\langle a \rangle$  (cmp :  $a \rightarrow a \rightarrow \text{Ordering}$ )  
  : forall (x : List  $\langle a \rangle$ )  $\Rightarrow$   
    ( Sorted  $\langle a \rangle$  cmp  
      & { s : List  $\langle a \rangle$  | eqBag (cmp2eq cmp) (bag x) (bag s) } )  
  = fast-sort cmp
```

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      & { s : List  $\langle a \rangle$  | eqBag (cmp2eq cmp) (bag x) (bag s) } )  
  = fast-sort cmp
```

The function `fast-sort` does not change the number of occurrences of the elements. This idiom can again be captured by a 'higher-order' contract:

```
type Preserve  $\langle a, b \rangle$  (eq :  $b \rightarrow b \rightarrow \text{Bool}$ ) (f :  $a \rightarrow b$ ) =  
  forall (x : a)  $\Rightarrow$  { y : a | eq (f x) (f y) }  
function fast-sort'  $\langle a \rangle$  (cmp :  $a \rightarrow a \rightarrow \text{Ordering}$ )  
  : (List  $\langle a \rangle \rightarrow$  Sorted  $\langle a \rangle$ ) & Preserve (cmp2eq cmp) bag  
  = fast-sort cmp
```

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function fast-sort'  $\langle a \rangle$  (cmp :  $a \rightarrow a \rightarrow \text{Ordering}$ )  
  : (List  $\langle a \rangle \rightarrow$  Sorted  $\langle a \rangle$ ) & Preserve (cmp2eq cmp) bag  
  = fast-sort cmp
```

A weaker assertion: `Preserve (cmp2eq cmp) length`.

Example: sorting, continued

Alternatively, we can specify fast-sort using a trusted sorting function:

```
type Is ⟨a, b⟩ (eq : b → b → Bool) =  
  fun (x : a) ⇒ { y : b | eq y (f x) }  
function fast-sort' ⟨a⟩ (cmp : a → a → Ordering)  
  : Is (cmp2eq cmp) (trusted-sort ⟨a⟩)  
  = fast-sort cmp
```