

# Local reasoning for robust observational equivalence

Koko Muroya

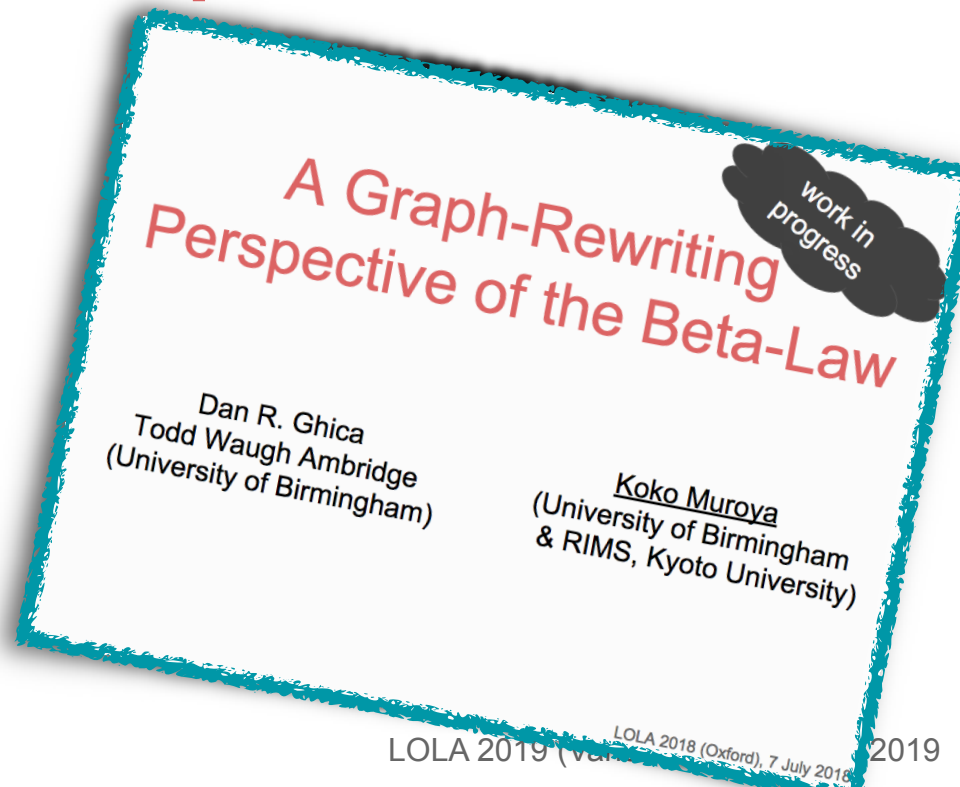
(RIMS, Kyoto University  
& University of Birmingham)

Dan R. Ghica

Todd Waugh Ambridge  
(University of Birmingham)

# Local reasoning for robust observational equivalence

Koko Muroya  
(RIMS, Kyoto University  
& University of Birmingham)



# Reasoning about observational equivalence

*“Do two program fragments behave the same?”*

*“Is it safe to replace a program fragment with another?”*

`let x = 100 in  
let y = 50 in  
y + y`  $\xrightarrow{?}$  `let y = 50 in  
y + y`  $\xrightarrow{?}$  `50 + 50`

`let x = 100 in  
let y = 50 in  
y + y`  $\xrightarrow{?}$  `let x = 100 in  
50 + 50`  $\xrightarrow{?}$  `50 + 50`

# Reasoning about observational equivalence

“Do two program fragments behave the same?”

“Is it safe to replace a program fragment with another?”

`let x = 100 in  
let y = 50 in  
y + y`  $\xrightarrow{?}$  `let y = 50 in  
y + y`  $\xrightarrow{?}$  `50 + 50`

`let x = 100 in  
let y = 50 in  
y + y`  $\xrightarrow{?}$  `let x = 100 in  
50 + 50`  $\xrightarrow{?}$  `50 + 50`

If YES:

- justification of compiler optimisation
- program verification

# Reasoning about observational equivalence

*“Do two program fragments behave the same?”*

# Reasoning about observational equivalence

*“Do two program fragments behave the same?”*

*“**What** program fragments behave the same?”*

the beta-law

$$(\lambda x.M)N \simeq M[x := N]$$

a parametricity law

$$\text{let } a = \text{ref } 1 \text{ in } \lambda x.(a := 2; !a) \simeq \lambda x.2$$

# Reasoning about observational equivalence

*“Do two program fragments behave the same?”*

*“**When do** program fragments behave the same?”*

the beta-law

$$(\lambda x. M) N \simeq M[x := N]$$

Does the beta-law always hold?

# Reasoning about observational equivalence

“Do two program fragments behave the same?”

“**When do** program fragments behave the same?”

the beta-law

$$(\lambda x. M) N \simeq M[x := N]$$

Does the beta-law always hold?

**No**, it's violated if program contexts use OCaml's Gc module:

$$(\lambda x. 0) 100 \not\simeq 0$$

for memory  
management



# Reasoning about observational equivalence

*“Do two program fragments behave the same?”*

*What fragments, in which contexts?*

# Reasoning about observational equivalence

*“Do two program fragments behave the same?”*

*What fragments, in which contexts?*

... in the presence of (arbitrary) language features:

pure vs. effectful (e.g. `50 + 50` vs. `ref 1` )

encoded vs. native (e.g. `State` vs. `ref` )

extrinsics (e.g. `Gc.stat` )

foreign language calls

# Reasoning about observational equivalence

*“Do two program fragments behave the same?”*

*What fragments, in which contexts?*

... in the presence of (arbitrary) language features



Analysing robustness/fragility of observational equivalence,  
with a general framework

# A general framework

to analyse robustness/fragility of observational equivalence:

1. the SPARTAN calculus
2. a universal abstract machine
3. locality & equational reasoning

# 1. the SPARTAN calculus

programming

= copying via variables

+ sharing via atoms/names

+ thunking

+ algebra

$t, u ::=$

$| x | \text{ bind } x \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

$| a | \text{ new } a \multimap u \text{ in } t$

$| x . t$

$| \phi(t, \dots, t; \vec{x} . u, \dots, \vec{x} . u)$

# 1. the SPARTAN calculus

programming

= copying via variables

reference to  
(a copy of) computation

+ sharing via atoms/names

location of  
(shared) computation

+ thunking

+ algebra

$t, u ::=$

$| x | \text{ bind } x \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

$| a | \text{ new } a \multimap u \text{ in } t$

$| x . t$

$| \phi(t, \dots, t; \vec{x} . u, \dots, \vec{x} . u)$

# 1. the SPARTAN calculus

programming

= copying via variables

reference to  
(a copy of) computation

+ sharing via atoms/names

location of  
(shared) computation

+ thunking

delaying  
computation with bound  
variable(s)

+ algebra

$t, u ::=$

$| x | \text{ bind } x \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

$| a | \text{ new } a \multimap u \text{ in } t$

$| x . t$

$| \phi(t, \dots, t; \vec{x} . u, \dots, \vec{x} . u)$

# 1. the SPARTAN calculus

programming

= copying via variables

reference to  
(a copy of) computation

+ sharing via atoms/names

location of  
(shared) computation

+ thunking

delaying  
computation with bound  
variable(s)

+ algebra

language features as  
(extrinsic) operations

$t, u ::=$

$| x | \text{ bind } x \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

$| a | \text{ new } a \multimap u \text{ in } t$

$| x . t$

$| \phi(t, \dots, t; \vec{x} . u, \dots, \vec{x} . u)$



# 1. the SPARTAN calculus

programming

= copying via variables

+ sharing via atoms/names

+ thunking

+ algebra

language features as  
(extrinsic) operations

$t, u ::=$

$| x | \text{ bind } x \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

$| a | \text{ new } a \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

$| x . t$

$| \phi(t, \dots, t; \vec{x} . u, \dots, \vec{x} . u)$

# 1. the SPARTAN calculus

programming

= copying via variables

+ sharing via atoms/names

+ thunking

+ algebra

language features as (extrinsic) operations

$t, u ::=$

$| x | \text{ bind } x \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

$| a | \text{ new } a \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

eager arguments

deferred arguments (thunks)

$| \phi(\underline{t}, \dots, \underline{t}; \underline{\vec{x}} \cdot u, \dots, \underline{\vec{x}} \cdot u)$

# 1. the SPARTAN calculus

language features as  
(extrinsic) operations

0,1,2,3,...

PLUS( $t, u$ )

LAMBDA( $; x . t$ )

IF( $t; u_1, u_2$ )

APP( $t, u$ )

LOOKUP( $t; x . u$ )

DEREF( $t$ )

ASSIGN( $t, u$ )

+ algebra

$t, u ::=$

$| x | \text{bind } x \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

$| a | \text{new } a \rightarrow u \text{ in } t$

eager arguments

deferred arguments (thunks)

$| \phi(\underline{t}, \dots, \underline{t}; \underline{\vec{x}} . u, \dots, \underline{\vec{x}} . u)$

# A general framework

to analyse robustness/fragility of observational equivalence:

1. the SPARTAN calculus

*programming = copying + sharing + thunking + algebra*

2. a universal abstract machine

3. locality & equational reasoning

## 2. A universal abstract machine

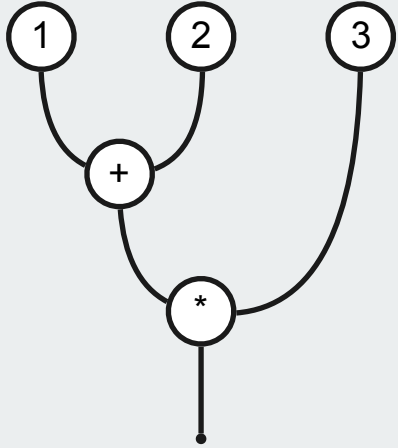
computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

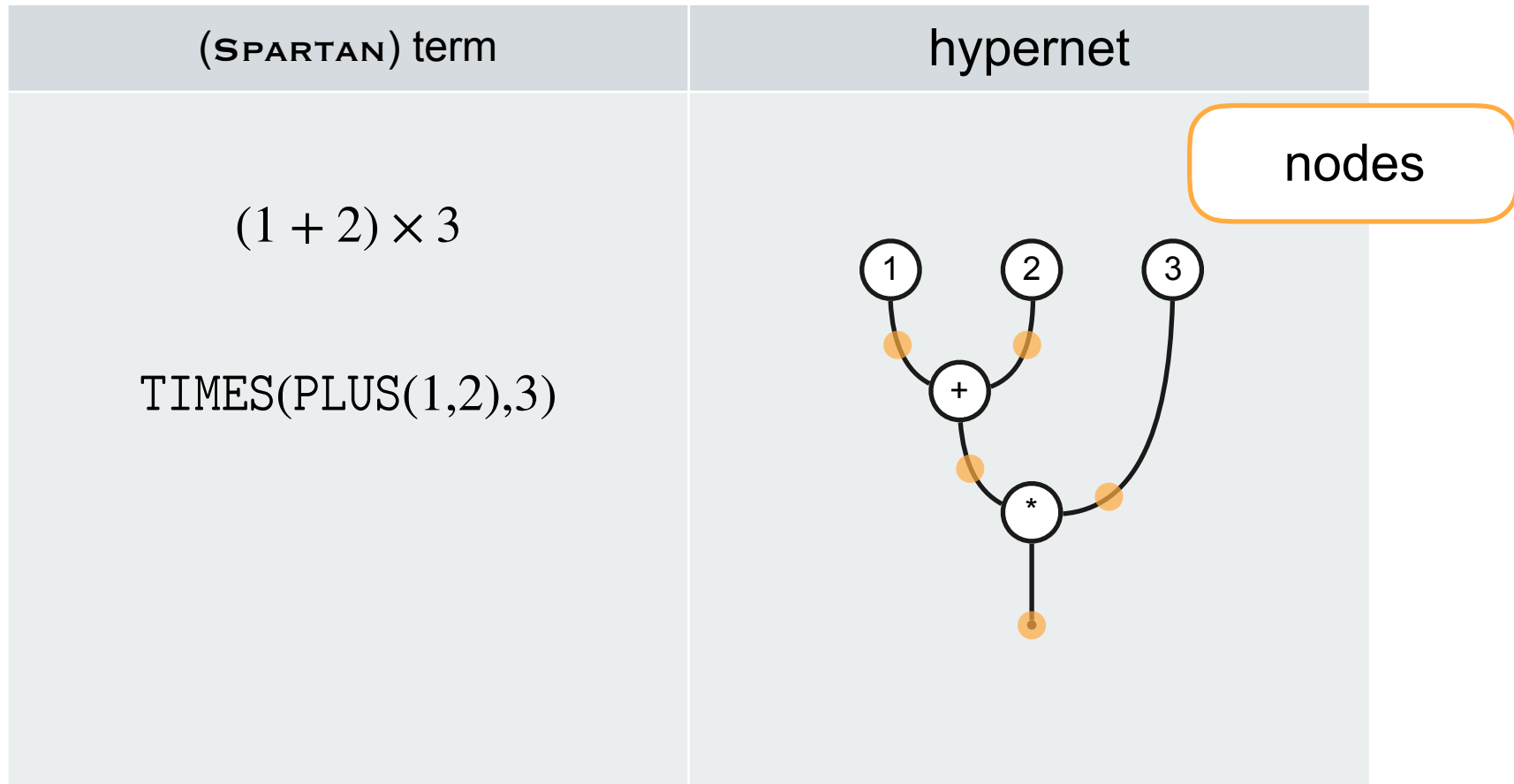
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$  TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

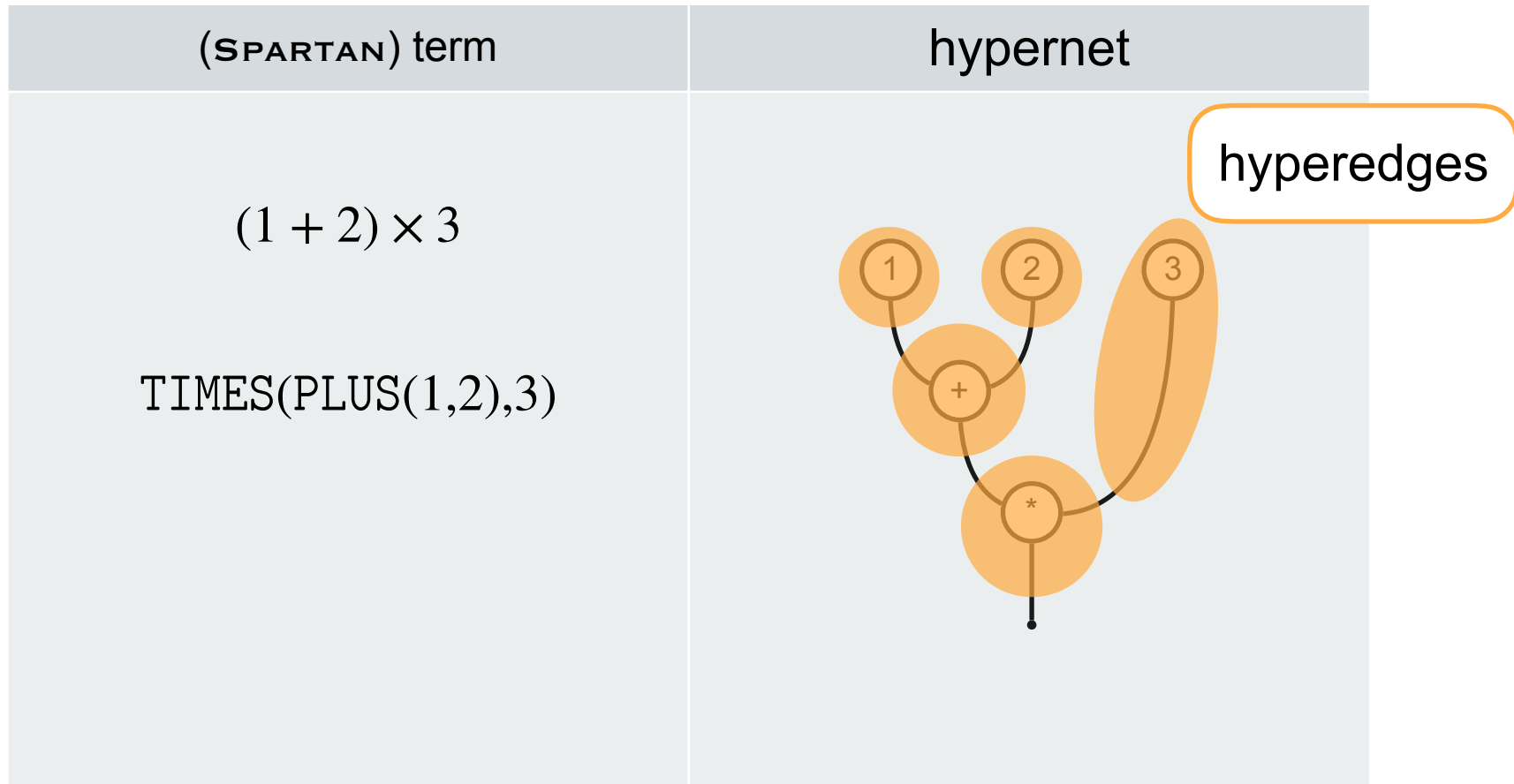
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph



## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

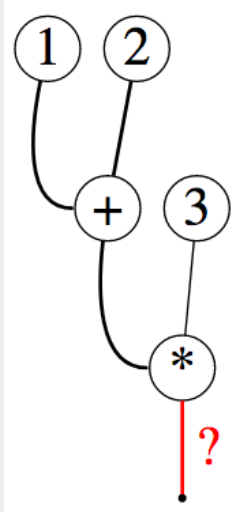




## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

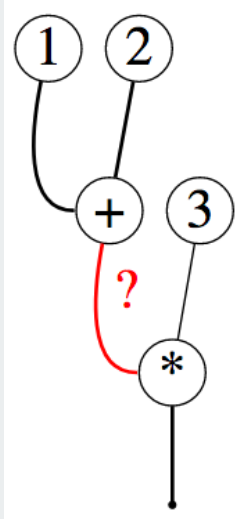
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
<code>TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)</code>	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↵ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↵</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

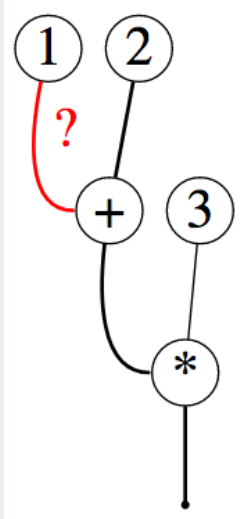
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↯ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↯</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

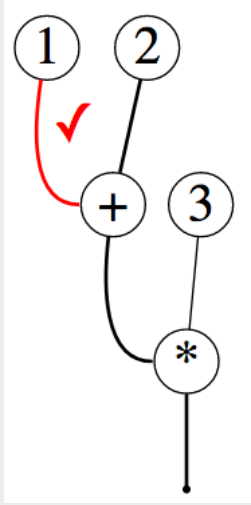
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↴ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↴</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↵ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↵</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

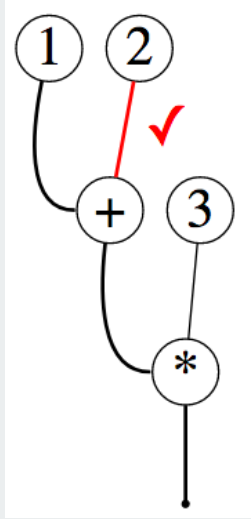
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↴ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↴</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
<code>TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)</code>	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↩ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↩</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

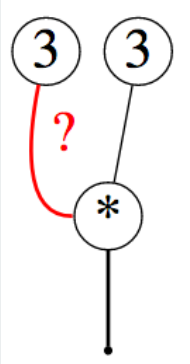
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/⚡ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ⚡</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

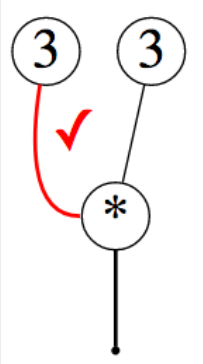
(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↩ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↩</li></ul>	



## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↵ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↵</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

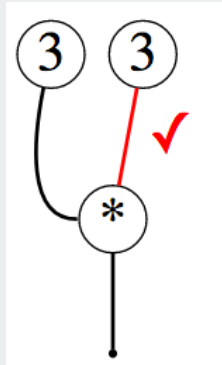
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↵ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↵</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↵ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↵</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

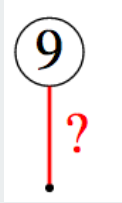
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/⚡ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ⚡</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting


- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↩ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↩</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

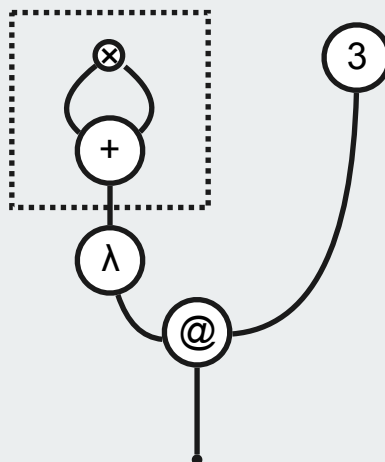
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(1 + 2) \times 3$	
TIMES(PLUS(1,2),3)	
<p><b>“focus”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• bring query ? up</li><li>• bring answer ✓/↩ down</li><li>• trigger rewrite ↩</li></ul>	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

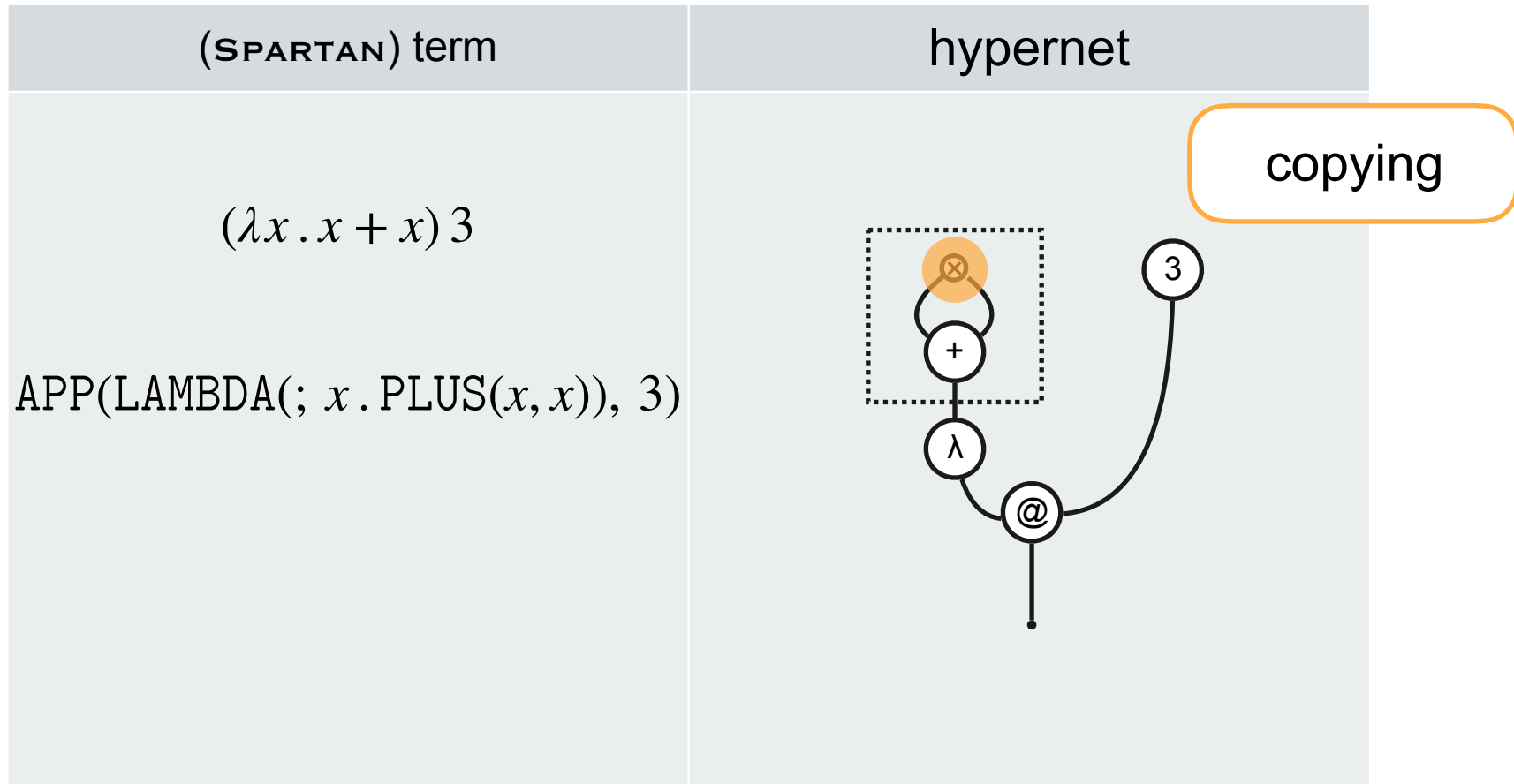
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$(\lambda x . x + x) 3$  APP(LAMBDA(; x . PLUS(x, x)), 3)	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

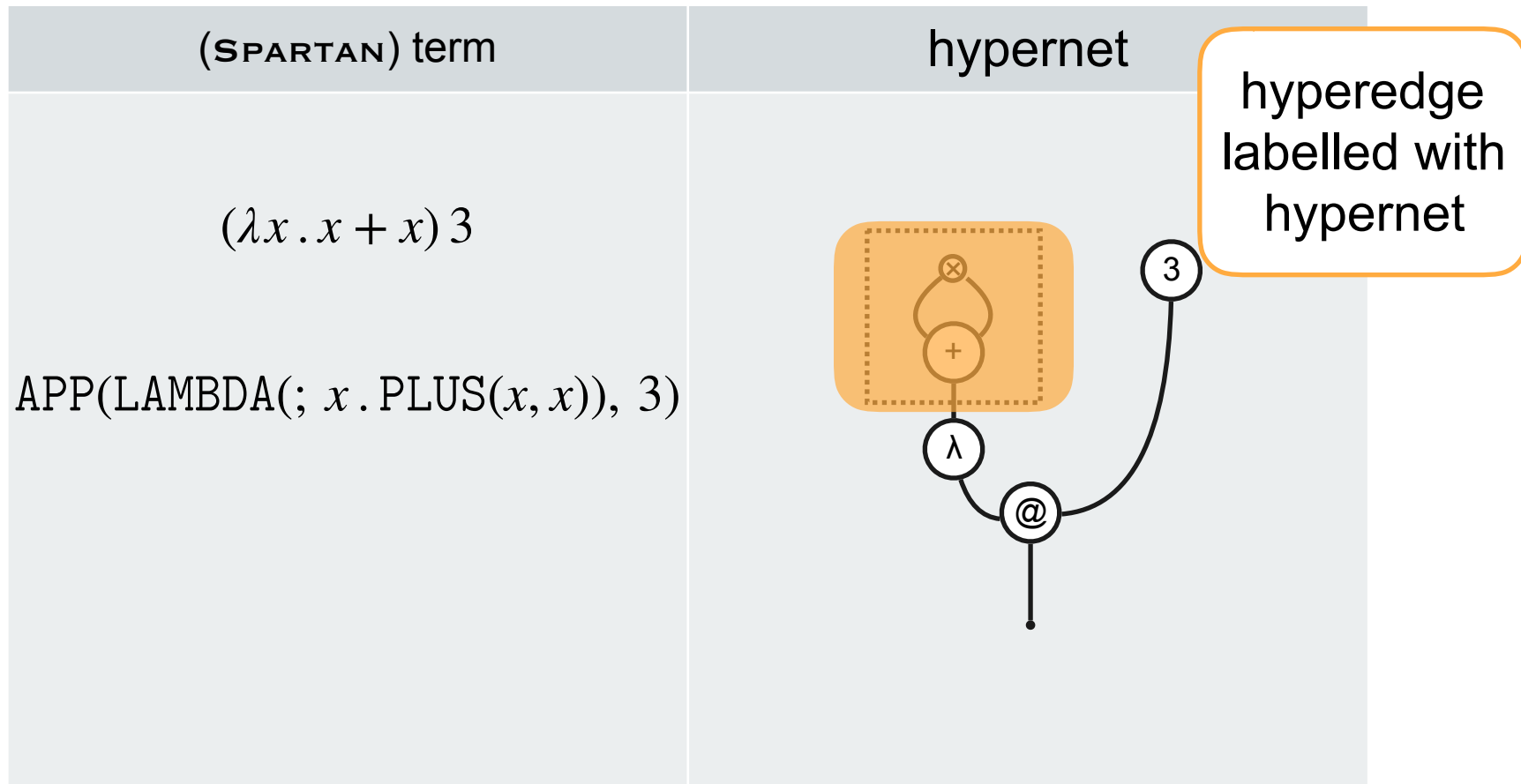




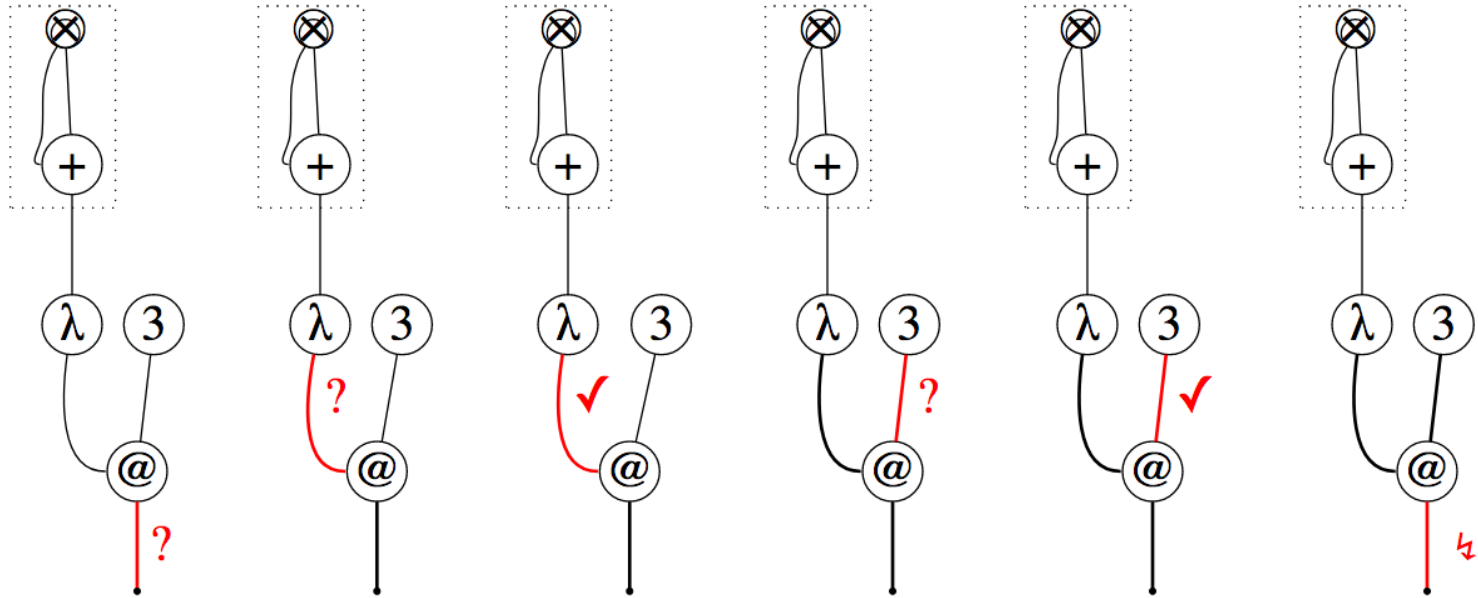
## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

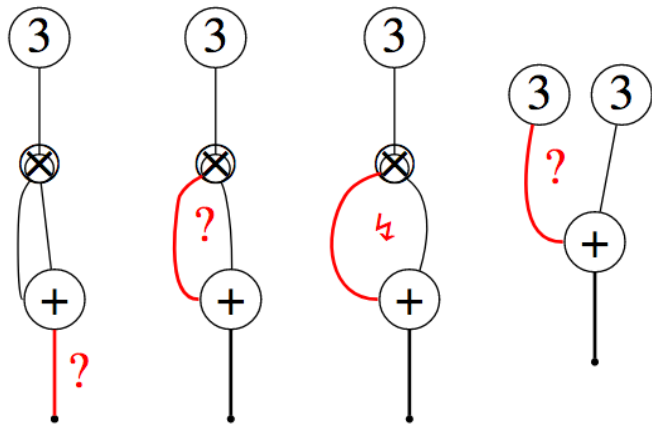
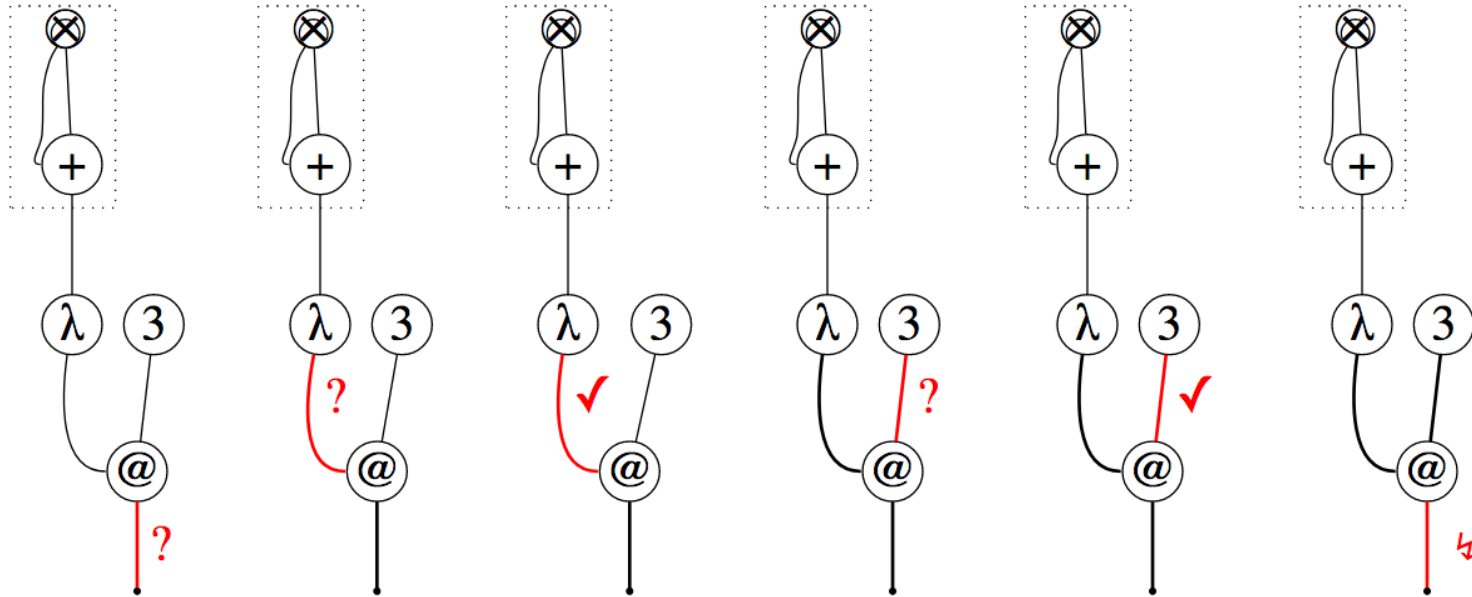
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph



$(\lambda x. x + x) 3$

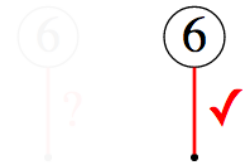


$(\lambda x. x + x) 3$



**“focus”**

- bring query  $?$  up
- bring answer  $\checkmark / \zeta$  down
- trigger rewrite  $\zeta$



## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

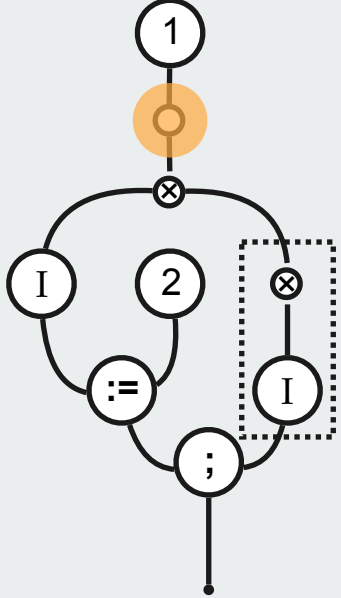

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
<p><code>new <math>a \multimap 1</math> in (<math>a := 2; !a</math>)</code></p> <p><code>new <math>a \multimap 1</math> in SEC(ASSIGN(<math>a, 2</math>); Deref(<math>a</math>))</code></p>	<p>hyperedge labelled with hypernet</p>

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

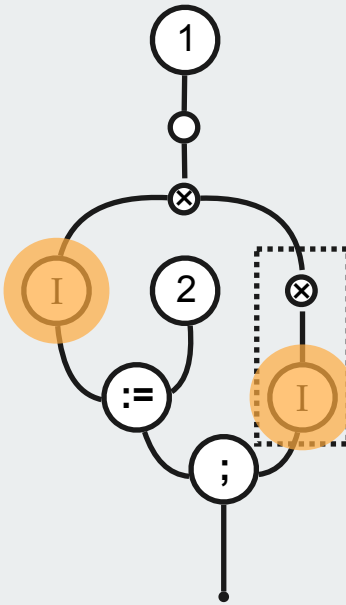
- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$\text{new } a \multimap 1 \text{ in } (a := 2; !a)$	
$\text{new } a \multimap 1 \text{ in } \text{SEC}(\text{ASSIGN}(a,2); \text{DEREF}(a))$	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

(SPARTAN) term	hypernet
$\text{new } a \multimap 1 \text{ in } (a := 2; !a)$	
$\text{new } a \multimap 1 \text{ in } \text{SEC}(\text{ASSIGN}(a,2); \text{DEREF}(a))$	

## 2. A universal abstract machine

computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting

- higher-order hypergraph
- hierarchical hypergraph

<b>program</b>	hypernet
<b>program fragment</b>	sub-hypernet (sub-graph)
<b>program execution</b>	moves of focus (query / answer) & focussed rewrites

# A general framework

to analyse robustness/fragility of observational equivalence:

1. the SPARTAN calculus

*programming = copying + sharing + thunking + algebra*

2. a universal abstract machine

*computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting*

3. locality & equational reasoning



### 3. Locality & equational reasoning

*“Do two program fragments behave the same?”*

### 3. Locality & equational reasoning

~~“Do two program fragments behave the same?”~~

“Do two sub-graphs behave the same in focussed rewriting?”

# 3. Locality & equational reasoning

## Locality of graph syntax

“Does  $\text{new } a \dashv\circ 1$  in  $\lambda x.(a := 2; !a)$  behave the same as  $\lambda x.2$ ?”

# 3. Locality & equational reasoning

## Locality of graph syntax

“Does  $\text{new } a \multimap 1$  in  $\lambda x.(a := 2; !a)$  behave the same as  $\lambda x.2$ ?”

with linear syntax:

...	$\text{new } a \multimap 1$ in	...	$\lambda x.(a := 2; !a)$	...	$\lambda x.(a := 2; !a)$	...
...			$\lambda x.2$	...	$\lambda x.2$	...

# 3. Locality & equational reasoning

## Locality of graph syntax

“Does  $\text{new } a \multimap 1$  in  $\lambda x.(a := 2; !a)$  behave the same as  $\lambda x.2$ ?”

with linear syntax: ~~comparison between sub-terms~~

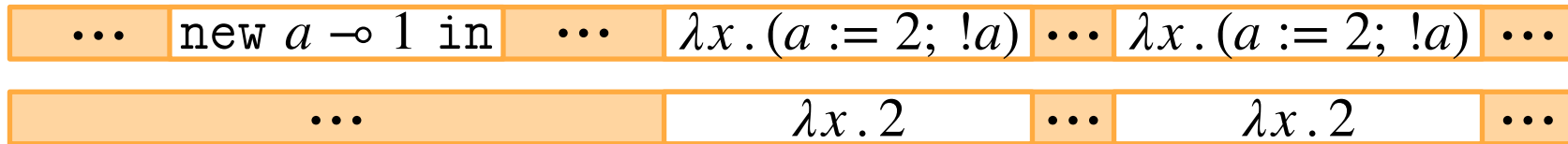
...	$\text{new } a \multimap 1$ in	...	$\lambda x.(a := 2; !a)$	...	$\lambda x.(a := 2; !a)$	...
...			$\lambda x.2$	...	$\lambda x.2$	...

# 3. Locality & equational reasoning

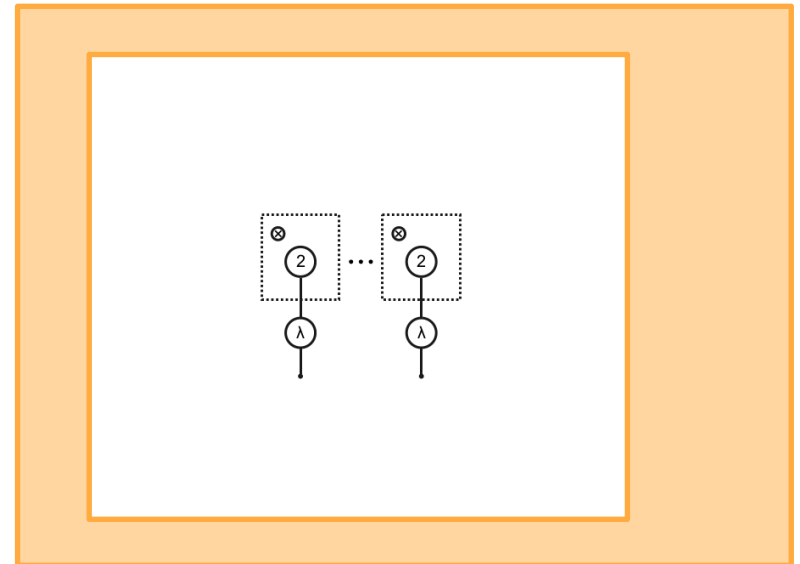
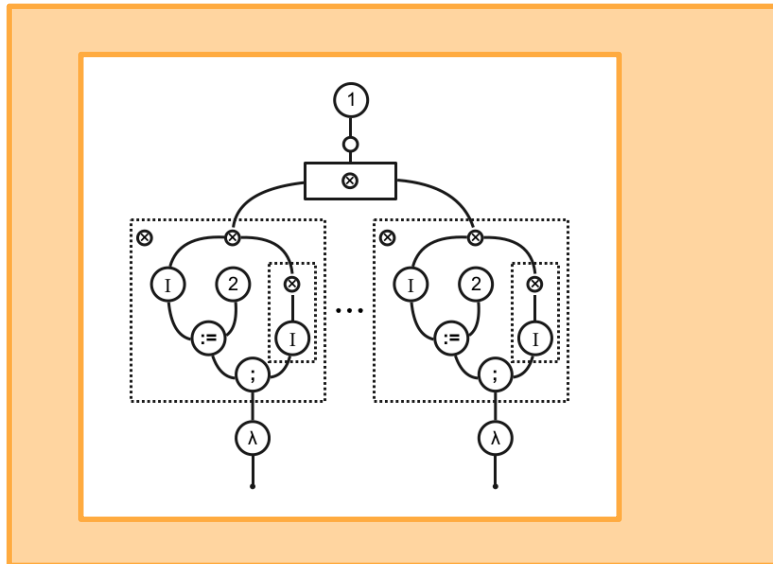
## Locality of graph syntax

“Does  $\text{new } a \multimap 1$  in  $\lambda x.(a := 2; !a)$  behave the same as  $\lambda x.2$ ?”

with linear syntax: ~~comparison between sub-terms~~



with graph syntax: comparison between sub-graphs



### 3. Locality & equational reasoning

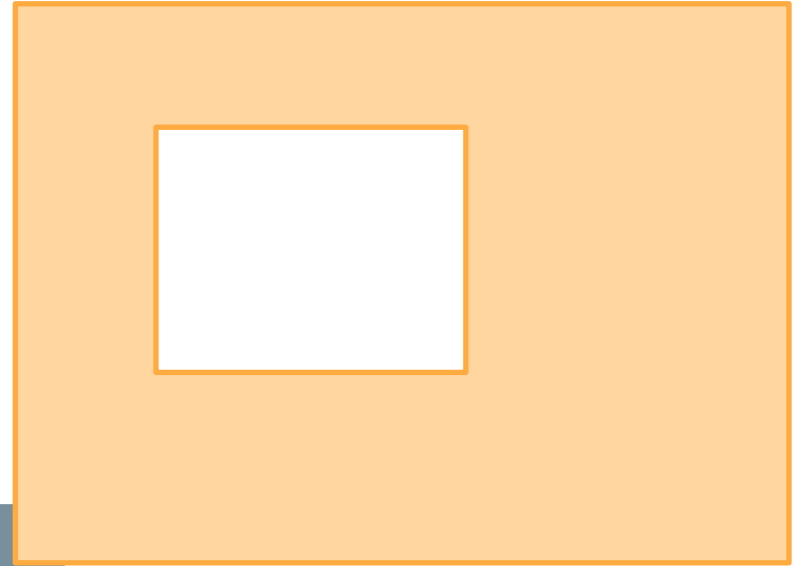
~~“Do two program fragments behave the same?”~~

“Do two sub-graphs behave the same in focussed rewriting?”

# 3. Locality & equational reasoning

**Locality** of focussed rewriting

“How does a sub-graph behave?”



## Case analysis

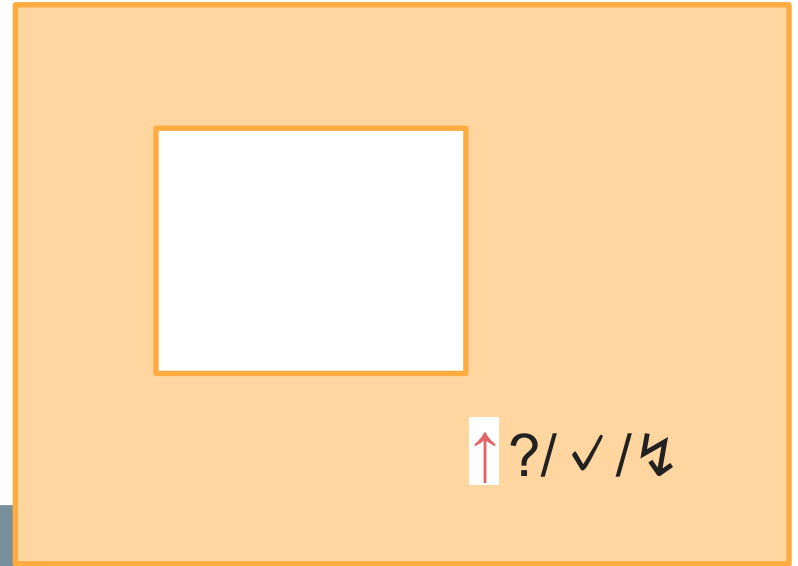
1. query/answer in context
2. query to the sub-graph
3. answer to the sub-graph
4. focussed rewrite in context



# 3. Locality & equational reasoning

**Locality** of focussed rewriting

“How does a sub-graph behave?”



## Case analysis

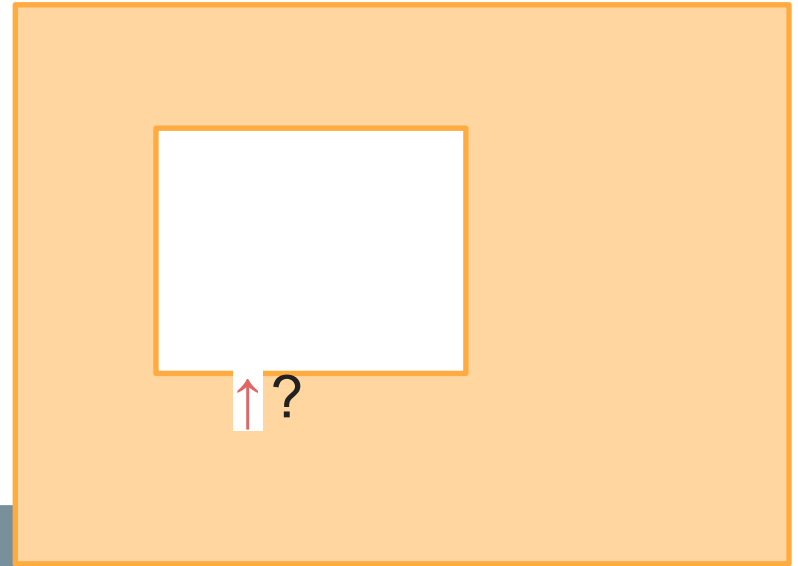
1. query/answer in context
2. query to the sub-graph
3. answer to the sub-graph
4. focussed rewrite in context

(no interference)

# 3. Locality & equational reasoning

**Locality** of focussed rewriting

“How does a sub-graph behave?”



## Case analysis

1. query/answer in context
2. query to the sub-graph
3. answer to the sub-graph
4. focussed rewrite in context

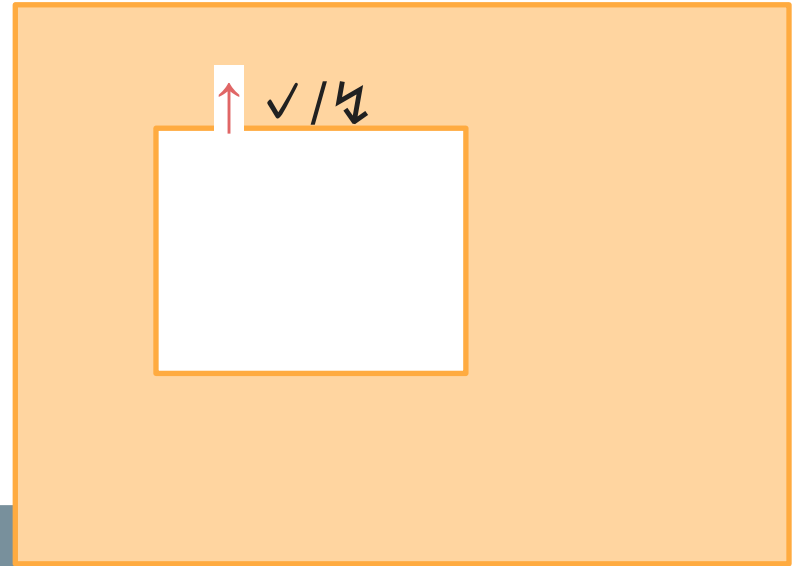
(no interference)

interference

# 3. Locality & equational reasoning

**Locality** of focussed rewriting

“How does a sub-graph behave?”



## Case analysis

1. query/answer in context
2. query to the sub-graph
3. answer to the sub-graph
4. focussed rewrite in context

(no interference)

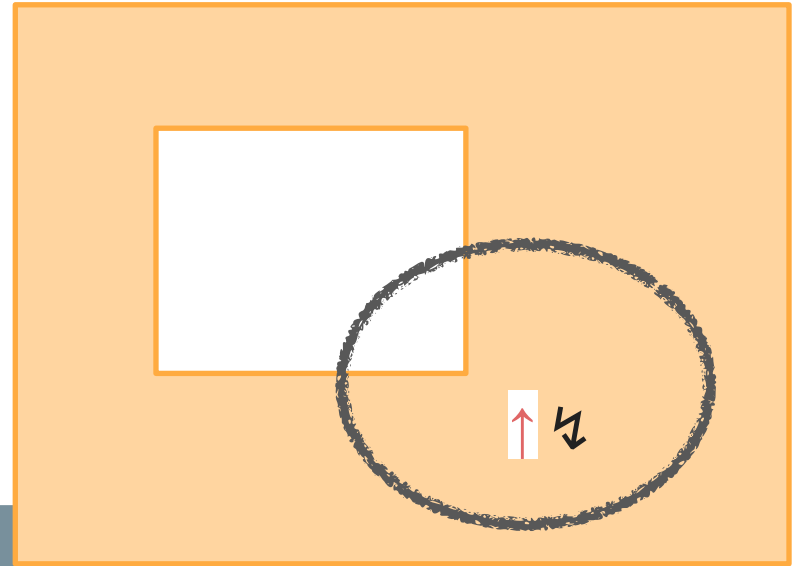
interference

interference

# 3. Locality & equational reasoning

**Locality** of focussed rewriting

“How does a sub-graph behave?”



## Case analysis

1. query/answer in context
2. query to the sub-graph
3. answer to the sub-graph
4. focussed rewrite in context

(no interference)

interference

interference

possible interference

### 3. Locality & equational reasoning

*“Do two sub-graphs behave the same in focussed rewriting?”*

#### Case analysis

1. query/answer in context
2. query to the sub-graphs
3. answer to the sub-graphs
4. focussed rewrite in context

with the sub-graphs:

(no interference)

interference

interference

possible interference

### 3. Locality & equational reasoning

“Do two sub-graphs behave the same in focussed rewriting?”

#### Case analysis

1. query/answer in context
2. query to the sub-graphs
3. answer to the sub-graphs
4. focussed rewrite in context

the sub-graphs are  
interfered the same:

(always)

if *input-safe*

if *output-closed*

if *robust*

#### **Characterisation Theorem**

*Robust templates induce observational equivalences.*

### 3. Locality & equational reasoning

“Do two sub-graphs behave the same in focussed rewriting?”

#### Case analysis

1. query/answer in context
2. query to the sub-graphs
3. answer to the sub-graphs
4. focussed rewrite in context

the sub-graphs are  
interfered the same:

(always)

if *input-safe*

if *output-closed*

if *robust*

#### Characterisation Theorem

*Robust templates induce observational equivalences.*

### 3. Locality & equational reasoning

“Do two sub-graphs behave the same in focussed rewriting?”

#### Case analysis

1. query/answer in context
2. query to the sub-graphs
3. answer to the sub-graphs
4. focussed rewrite in context

the sub-graphs are  
interfered the same:

(always)

if *input-safe*

if *output-closed*

if *robust*

#### Characterisation Theorem

*Robust templates induce observational equivalences.*



# A general framework

to analyse robustness/fragility of observational equivalence:

1. the SPARTAN calculus

*programming = copying + sharing + thunking + algebra*

2. a universal abstract machine

*computation = focussed “hypernet” rewriting*

3. locality & equational reasoning

## **Characterisation Theorem**

*Robust templates induce observational equivalences.*

# Directions

- beyond determinism
  - nondeterminism, probability, I/O
  - refined notion of observational equivalence
- concurrency
  - rewriting with multiple focusses (cf. multi-token GoI)
- types
  - weak notion of safety
- tooling
  - <https://tntodda.github.io/Spartan-Visualiser/>
- cost analysis
  - observational equivalence with cost improvement (*improvement theory*)
  - cost model of focussed hypernet rewriting (cf. dynamic GoI)
- strengthening mathematics
  - hypernets = trees + hierarchy + copying + sharing
  - *focussed* DPO rewriting
  - reasoning with graph contexts