Towards a Self-Forensics Property in the ASSL Toolset

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ABSTRACT

This preliminary conceptual work discusses a notion of self-forensics as an autonomic property to augment the Autonomic System Specification Language (ASSL) framework of formal specification tools for autonomic systems. The core of the proposed methodology leverages existing designs, theoretical results, and implementing systems to enable rapid completion of and validation of the experiments and their the results initiated in this work. Specifically, we leverage the ASSL toolkit to add the self-forensics autonomic property (SFAP) to enable generation of the Java-based Object-Oriented Intensional Programming (JOOIP) language code laced with traces of Forensic Lucid to encode contextual forensic evidence and other expressions.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

D.3.2 [**Programming Languages**]: Language Classifications—*Very high-level languages; Multiparadigm languages;*; D.3.4 [**Programming Languages**]: Processors—*Compilers; Preprocessors; Run-time environments*; I.2.2 [**Artificial Intelligence**]: Automatic Programming—*Program synthesis; Program transformation; Forensic computing*; D.2.11 [**Software Architectures**]: Domain-specific architectures; Languages

General Terms

Languages, Theory, Design

Keywords

self-forensics, Forensic Lucid, JOOIP, ASSL, forensic computing, autonomic computing, GIPSY

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem and Proposed Solution

The novel concept of self-forensics and the idea of its implementation within ASSL and GIPSY is described through their founding core works. These preliminary findings and discussions are currently at the conceptual level, but the authors are confident to provide a concrete formal model, the complete requirements, design, and implementation of the concept described here by leveraging the resources provided by the previous research work. To the authors' knowledge there is no preceding work other than the authors' own that does attempt something similar to what is described here.

1.2 Organization

First, we give a glimpse overview of the founding background work on ASSL and self-forensics in Section 2.1 and Section 2.2. Then, we describe the core principles and ideas of the methodology of realization of the self-forensics autonomic property (SFAP) within the ASSL framework in Section 3. We provide a quick notion of the syntactical notation of SFAP and where it fits within the generating toolset of ASSL and the run-time environment of the General Intensional Programming System (GIPSY). We conclude in Section 4 for the merits and the future endeavors for the developments in this direction.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 ASSL Formal Specification Toolset

The ASSL framework [44, 39, 32] takes as an input a specification of properties of autonomic systems [6, 7, 9, 8, 1, 26, 22], does formal syntax and semantics checks of the specifications, and if the checks pass, it generates a Java collection of classes and interfaces corresponding to the specification. Subsequently, a developer has to fill in some overridden interface methods corresponding to the desired autonomic policies in a proxy implementation within the generated Java skeleton application or map them to the existing legacy application [44, 39, 32].

The ASSL framework [44] includes the autonomic multi-

```
I. Autonomic System (AS)
 * AS Service-level Objectives
 * AS Self-managing Policies
 * AS Architecture
 * AS Actions
 * AS Events
 * AS Metrics
II. AS Interaction Protocol (ASIP)
 * AS Messages
 * AS Communication Channels
 * AS Communication Functions
III. Autonomic Element (AE)
 * AE Service-level Objectives
 * AE Self-managing Policies
 * AE Friends
 * AE Interaction Protocol (AEIP)
   - AE Messages
   - AE Communication Channels
   - AE Communication Functions
   - AE Managed Elements
 * AE Recovery Protocol
 * AE Behavior Models
 * AE Outcomes
 * AE Actions
 * AE Events
 * AE Metrics
```

Figure 1: ASSL Multi-Tier Model

tier system architecture (AS) including formal language constructs to specify service-level objectives (SLOs), core self-CHOP (i.e. self-configuration, self-healing, self-optimization, and self-protection) autonomic properties, corresponding architecture, allowed actions, events, and metrics to aid the self-management aspect of the system. It also specifies the interaction protocols between the AS' managed autonomic elements, including specification of of messages exchanged and how they are communicated. Finally, it provides for specification of the autonomic element (AE) architecture, like for the whole system, each element is a subject to the SLOs, self-CHOP policies, behavior, actions, metrics, and interaction protocols, the summary of all of which is enumerated in Figure 1.

ASSL formal modeling, specification, and model checking [36, 35] has been applied to a number open-source, academic, and research software system specifications, e.g. such as Voyager imagery processing [34], the Distributed Modular Audio Recognition Framework (DMARF) [41, 20, 40], and the General Intensional Programming System (GIPSY) [43] reliability of self-assessment, distributed, and other autonomic aspects of the autonomic system-time reactive model (AS-TRM) [38, 42], self-adapting properties of NASA swarm missions [31, 5, 37] and others [33].

2.2 Self-Forensics Concept

The study of self-forensics [12, 21, 13], is an additional property one of the authors is investigating throughout his ongoing PhD thesis work with the contextual forensic logging with Forensic Lucid and case specification [14, 16, 10, 18, 17]. Forensic Lucid is an intensional context-oriented forensic case specification, modeling, and evaluation language. Forensic Lucid was initially proposed for specification and automatic deduction and event reconstruction in the cybercrime domain of digital forensics [23]. It has been proposed to extend its use onto other domains such as investigation of incidents in various vehicle crash investigations, and autonomous software and hardware systems. Its primary feature inherited from the Lucid family of languages is to be able to specify and work with context [45, 25, 30] as a first-class value, and the context represents the evidence and stories told by witnesses.

Forensic Lucid's primary experimental platform for compilation (Forensic Lucid compiler is a member of the General Intensional Programming Compiler (GIPC) framework) and evaluation is the General Intensional Programming System (GIPSY) [24, 4, 15]. GIPSY's run-time system, the General Eduction Engine (GEE), is designed to be flexible to allow various modes of execution, including the planned used of the evaluation by the PRISM- [29] and AspectJ-based [2] backends as illustrated in Figure 2 [19] and Figure 3.

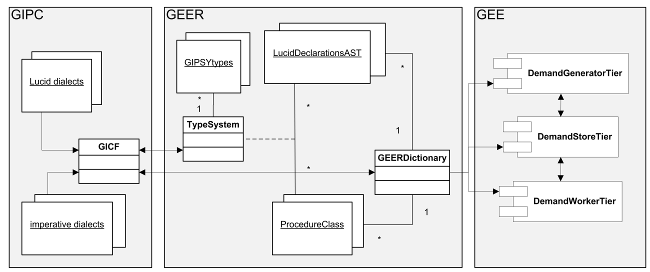

Figure 2: GIPSY High Level Overview

3. SELF-FORENSICS AUTONOMIC PROPERTY (SFAP)

First, we add a notion of a `SELF_FORENSICS` policy specification for AS tier and AE, just like it is done for the self-CHOP properties. The property introduction consists of two major parts: (1) adding the syntax and semantical support to the lexical analyzer, parser, and semantic checker of ASSL as well as (2) adding the appropriate code generator for JOOIP and Forensic Lucid to translate forensic events. The JOOIP code is mostly Java with embedded fragments of Forensic Lucid-encoded evidence [10, 21].

We use ASSL's managed-element (ME) specification of AE to encode any module or subsystem of any software system under study to increase or reduce the amount of forensic evidence logged as Forensic Lucid events depending on the criticality of faults (that can be expressed as ASSL metrics).

A very high-level example of the generic self-forensic specification is in Figure 4. Many details are presently omitted due to the preliminary work on this novel concept and will be provided in our subsequent publication.

Wu and the GIPSY team came up with a hybrid intensional OO language, JOOIP [47, 46], to allow mixing Java and Lucid code by placing Lucid fragments nearly anywhere within Java classes (as data members or within methods. As a part of this conceptual research work, we propose that the ASSL toolset in this instance be augmented with a code-generation plug-in that generates JOOIP [47, 46] code laced with Forensic Lucid contextual expressions for forensic analysis. The evaluation of the JOOIP+Forensic Lucid code further is to be performed by the GIPSY's general eduction engine (GEE), described in detail elsewhere [24, 4, 15].

Furthermore, in this proposed prototype the `EVENTS` members would be the basic building blocks of the contextual specification of the Forensic Lucid observation sequences. The `INITIATED_BY` and `TERMINATED_BY` clauses would corre-

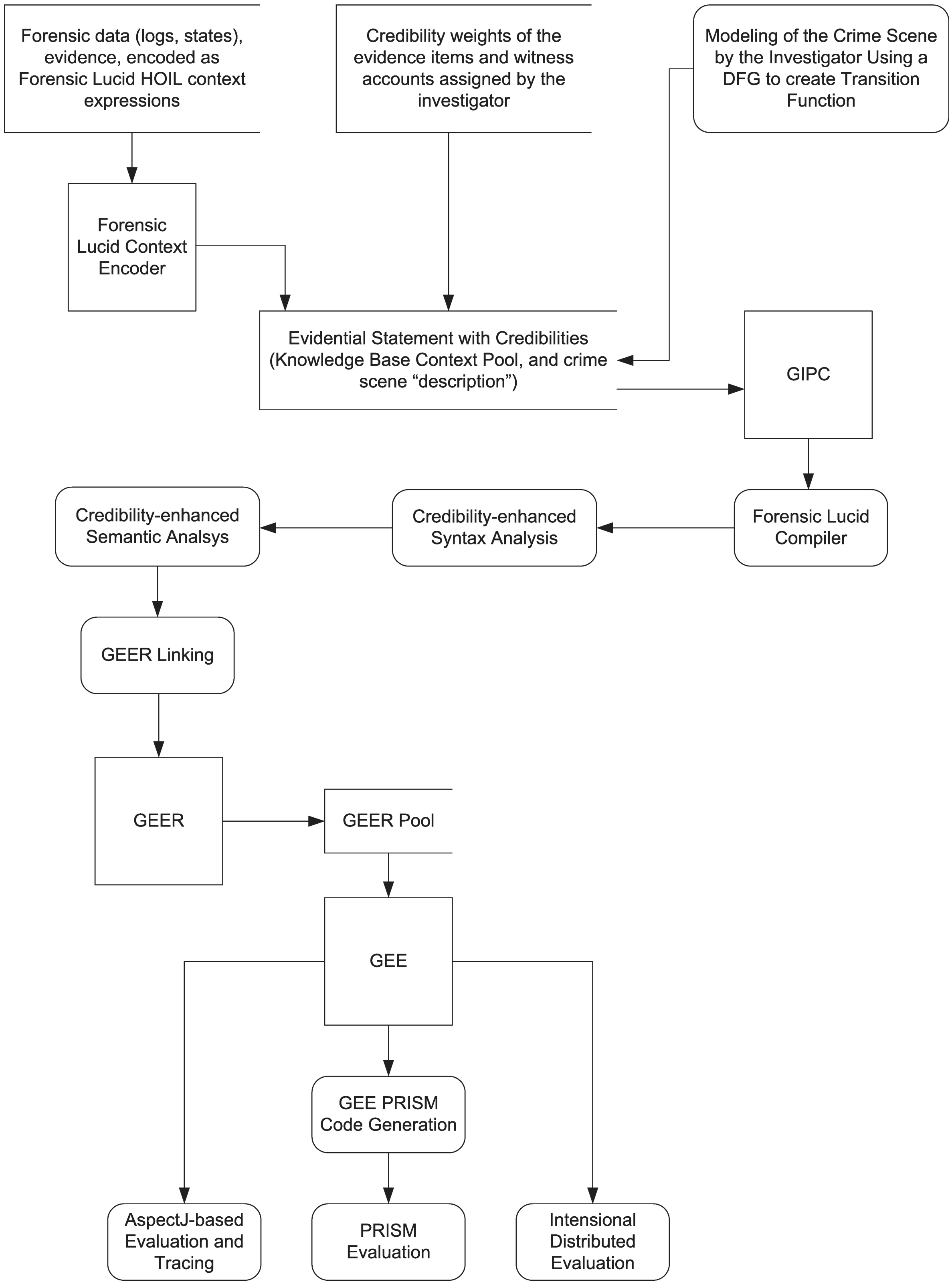

Figure 3: Forensic Lucid Compilation and Evaluation Flow in GIPSY

spond to the beginning and end of data stream Lucid operators `bod` and `eod`. ASSL fluents would map to the Lucid streams of the observation sequences where each stream is a witness account of systems behavior. All fluents constitute an evidential statement. The mapping and actions correspond to the handling of the anomalous states within the JOOIP's Java code.

Once JOOIP code with Forensic Lucid fragments is generated by the ASSL toolset, it is passed on to the hybrid compiler of GIPSY, the GIPC to properly compile the JOOIP and Forensic Lucid specifications, link them together in a executable code inside the GEE engine resources (GEER), which then would have three choices of evaluation of it – the traditional eduction model of GEE, AspectJ-based eduction model, and probabilistic model checking with the PRISM backend.

4. CONCLUSION

We laid out some preliminary groundwork of requirements to implement formally the self-forensics autonomic property within the ASSL toolset in order to allow any implementation of the self-forensics property added to the legacy small-to-medium open-source and academic software systems.

Our future work will be to complete the implementation of the said property and export it onto the target example software systems of ADMARF, AGIPSY [43], and others described conceptually in [21].

We will investigate the use of the open-source PRISM tool [29], for probabilistic model-checking of the produced Forensic Lucid specifications as Forensic Lucid forensic case specification models include credibility and trustworthiness factors of the evidence and witnesses based on the Dempster-Shafer mathematical theory of evidence [11, 3, 27] into the ASSL specifications.

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```
AS ADMARF {

    TYPES { MonitoredElement }

    ASSELF_MANAGEMENT {
        SELF_FORENSICS {
            FLUENT inIntensiveForensicLogging {
                INITIATED_BY { EVENTS.anomalyDetected }
                TERMINATED_BY {
                    EVENTS.anomalyResolved,
                    EVENTS.anomalyFailedToResolve
                }
            }

            MAPPING {
                CONDITIONS { inIntensiveForensicLogging }
                DO_ACTIONS { ACTIONS.startForensicLogging }
            }
        }
    }

    ACTIONS {
        ACTION startForensicLogging {
            GUARDS { ASSELF_MANAGEMENT.SELF_FORENSICS.inIntensiveForensicLogging }
              VARS { Boolean ... }
              DOES {
                  ...
                  FOREACH member in AES {
                    ...
                  };
              }
              ONERR_DOES {
                  // if error then log it too
                  ...
              }
        }
    } // ACTIONS

    EVENTS { // these events are used in the fluents specification
        EVENT anomalyDetected {
            ACTIVATION { SENT { ASIP.MESSAGES.... } }
        }
        ...
    } // EVENTS

    METRICS {
        METRIC thereIsInsecurePublicMessage {
            METRIC_TYPE { CREDIBILITY }
            DESCRIPTION { "sets event's trustworthiness/credibility AE" }
            VALUE { ... }
            ...
        }
    }
} // AS ADMARF

// ...

MANAGED_ELEMENTS
{
   MANAGED_ELEMENT STAGE_ME
   {
       INTERFACE_FUNCTION logForensicEvent
       {
           PARAMETERS { ForensicLucidEvent poEvent }
           RETURNS { Boolean }
       }
   }
}
```

Figure 4: The Prototype Syntactical Specification of the SELF_FORENSICS in ASSL for ADMARF

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