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Gul Agha · Benny Van Houdt (Eds.)

Quantitative Evaluation of Systems

13th International Conference, QEST 2016
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Proceedings

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Preface

Welcome to the proceedings of QEST 2016, the 13th International Conference on Quantitative Evaluation of Systems. QEST is a leading forum on quantitative evaluation and verification of computer systems and networks, through stochastic models and measurements. QEST was first held in Enschede, The Netherlands (2004), followed by meetings in Turin, Italy (2005), Riverside, USA (2006), Edinburgh, UK (2007), St. Malo, France (2008), Budapest, Hungary (2009), Williamsburg, USA (2010), Aachen, Germany (2011), London, UK (2012), Buenos Aires, Argentina (2013), Florence, Italy (2014) and, most recently, in Madrid, Spain (2015).

This year's QEST was held in Quebec City, Canada, and colocated with the 27th International Conference on Concurrency Theory (CONCUR 2016) and the 14th International Conference on Formal Modeling and Analysis of Timed Systems (FORMATS 2016).

As one of the premier fora for research on quantitative system evaluation and verification of computer systems and networks, QEST covers topics including classic measures involving performance and reliability, as well as quantification of properties that are classically qualitative, such as safety, correctness, and security. QEST welcomes measurement-based studies and analytic studies, diversity in the model formalisms and methodologies employed, as well as development of new formalisms and methodologies. QEST also has a tradition in presenting case studies, highlighting the role of quantitative evaluation in the design of systems, where the notion of system is broad. Systems of interest include computer hardware and software architectures, communication systems, embedded systems, infrastructural systems, and biological systems. Moreover, tools for supporting the practical application of research results in all of the aforementioned areas are also of interest to QEST. In short, QEST aims to encourage all aspects of work centered around creating a sound methodological basis for assessing and designing systems using quantitative means.

The Program Committee (PC) consisted of 30 experts and we received a total of 46 submissions. Each submission was reviewed by three reviewers, either PC members or external reviewers. The review process included a one-week PC discussion phase. In the end, 21 full papers and three tool demonstration papers were selected for the conference program. The program was greatly enriched by the QEST keynote talk of Carey Williamson (University of Calgary, Canada), the joint keynote talk with FORMATS 2016 of Ufuk Topcu (University of Texas at Austin, USA), and the joint FORMATS 2016 and CONCUR 2016 keynote of Scott A. Smolka (Stony Brook University, USA). We believe the overall result is a high-quality conference program of interest to QEST 2016 attendees and other researchers in the field.

We would like to thank a number of people. Firstly, thanks to all the authors who submitted papers, as without them there simply would not be a conference. In addition, we would like to thank the PC members and the additional reviewers for their hard work and for sharing their valued expertise with the rest of the community, as well as

EasyChair for supporting the electronic submission and reviewing process. We are also indebted to our proceedings chair, Karl Palmskog, and to Alfred Hofmann and Anna Kramer for their help in the preparation of this volume. Thanks also to the Web manager, Andrew Bedford, the local organization chair, and general chair, Josée Desharnais, for their dedication and excellent work. Finally, we would like to thank Joost-Pieter Katoen, chair of the QEST Steering Committee, for his guidance throughout the past year, as well as the members of the QEST Steering Committee.

We hope that you find the conference proceedings rewarding and will consider submitting papers to QEST 2017.

August 2016

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Abstracts of Invited Talks

A Stroll Down Speed-Scaling Lane

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Abstract. This talk provides a retrospective look at the past, present, and future of speed scaling systems. Such systems have the ability to auto-scale their service capacity based on demand, which introduces many interesting tradeoffs between response time (a classic performance metric) and energy efficiency (a relatively recent performance metric of growing interest).

The talk highlights key results and observations from the past two decades of speed scaling research, which appears in both the theory and systems research communities. One theme in the talk is the dichotomy between the assumptions, approaches, and results in these two research communities. Another theme is that modern processors support surprisingly sophisticated speed scaling functionality, which is not yet well-harnessed by current algorithms or operating systems.

During the stroll, I will also share some insights and observations from our own work on speed scaling designs, including coupled, decoupled, and turbo-charged systems. This work includes analytical and simulation modeling, as well as empirical system measurements. The talk closes with thoughts about future opportunities in speed scaling research.

V-Formation as Optimal Control

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Abstract. In this talk, I will present a new formulation of the V-formation problem for migrating birds in terms of model predictive control (MPC). In this approach, to drive a flock towards a desired formation, an optimal *velocity adjustment* (acceleration) is performed at each time-step on each bird's current velocity using a model-based prediction window of T time-steps. I will present both centralized and distributed versions of this approach. The optimization criteria used is based on fitness metrics of candidate accelerations that V-formations are known to exhibit. These include *velocity matching*, *clear view*, and *upwash benefit*. This MPC-based approach is validated by showing that for a significant majority of simulation runs, the flock succeeds in forming the desired formation. These results help to better understand the emergent behavior of formation flight, and provide a control strategy for flocks of autonomous aerial vehicles. This talk represents joint work with Radu Grosu, Ashish Tiwari, and Junxing Yang.

Adaptable Yet Provably Correct Autonomous Systems

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Abstract. Acceptance of autonomous systems at scales at which they can make societal and economical impact hinges on factors including how capable they are in delivering complicated missions in uncertain and dynamic environments and how much we can trust that they will operate safely and correctly. In this talk, we present a series of algorithms recently developed to address this need. In particular, these algorithms are for the synthesis of control protocols that enable agents to learn from interactions with their environment and/or humans while verifiably satisfying given formal safety and other high-level mission specifications in nondeterministic and stochastic environments.

We take two complementing approaches. The first approach merges data efficiency notions from learning (e.g., so-called probably approximate correctness) with probabilistic temporal logic specifications. The second one leverages permissiveness in temporal-logic-constrained strategy synthesis with reinforcement learning.

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