Towards Formal Verification of Autonomous Systems

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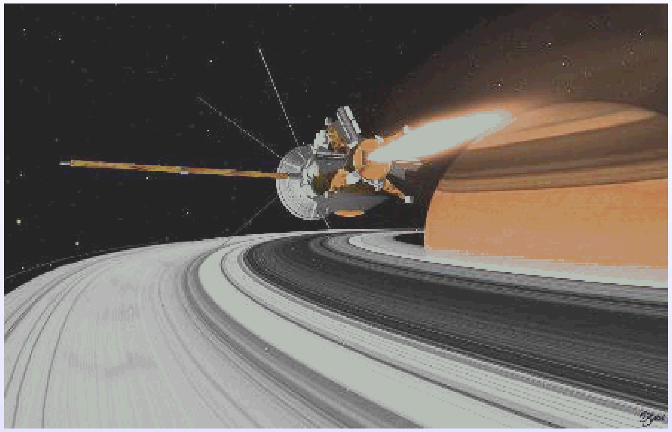
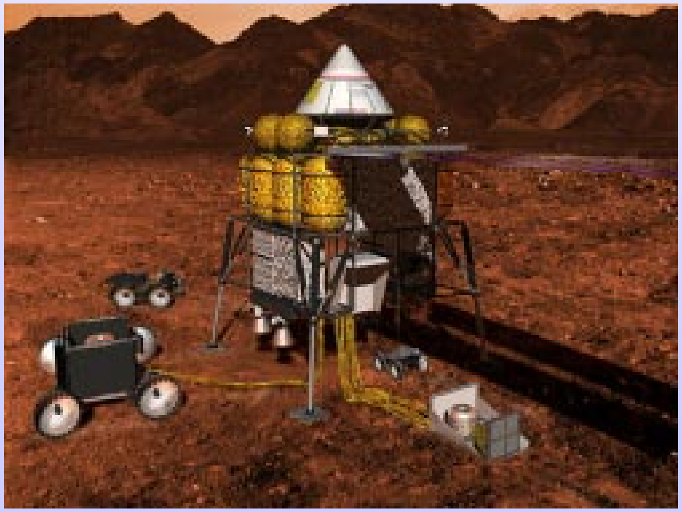
Autonomous Systems

Autonomous space explorers

"Faster, better, cheaper"

- Reduced human supervision
  => reduced cost
- Local reactions
  => no com delays/blackouts
- From self-diagnosis
  to on-board science.



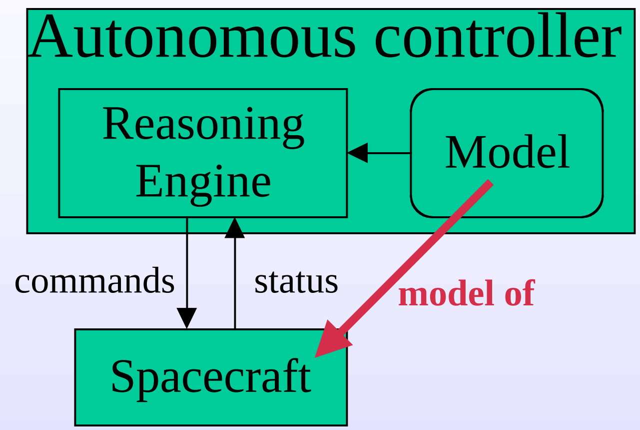


Model-Based Autonomy

- Based on AI technology
- General reasoning engine + application-specific model
- Use model to respond to unanticipated situations
- Example: Remote Agent
  - Model-based planner/scheduler
  - AI-based executive
  - Model-based fault recovery

First run on DS-1:

May 17, 1999



The Challenge

V&V of autonomous systems ?

- Critical for NASA to keep risk low.
- Huge state space and branching factor:
  – complex algorithms and data structures
  – internal decisions (no open control loop)
  – agent-based, knowledge-based, adaptive

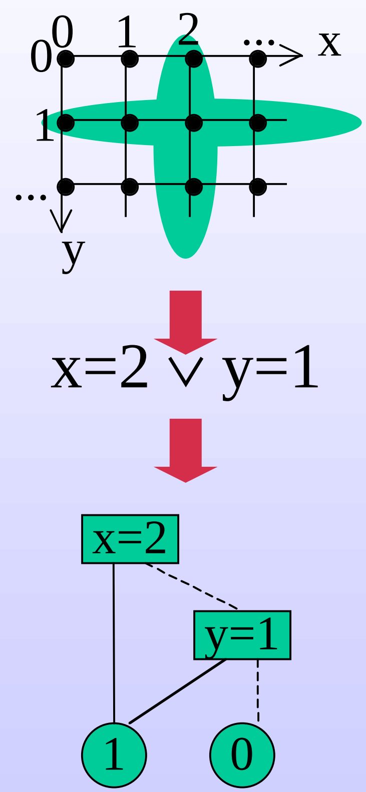
=> Conventional testing methods yield a very poor coverage.

Model checking

- Checks whether S satisfies P, where:
  - S = model of the system, as a finite-state machine
  - P = property to verify, in temporal logic
- By exhaustive exploration
  - + Full coverage (incl. non-determinism)
  - – Limited by state space explosion
- At early stage => less costly
- Widely used in hardware, coming in software
- e.g. Spin (Bell Labs), Murphi (Stanford)

Symbolic Model Checking

- Manipulates sets of states,
  Represented as boolean formulas,
  Encoded as binary decision diagrams.
- Can handle large state spaces
- BDD computations: good in average but exponential in worst case.
- e.g. SMV (Carnegie Mellon)



Verification of DS-1 executive

(Lowry, Havelund and Penix)

- Smart executive system with AI features
- Modeled (1.5 month) and
  Model-checked with Spin (less than a week)

  NB: costly modeling phase
  => need automated translation
- 5 concurrency bugs found, that would not have been found through traditional testing

Verification of Model-Based Autonomy

- Reasoning Engine
  - Relatively small, generic algorithm => use prover
  - Requires V&V expert level but done once and for all
  - At application level, assume correctness (cf. compiler)
- Model
  - Complex assembly of interacting components
    => model checking
  - Should require no V&V expert => automated translation
    Not too hard because models are abstract
- Reasoning Engine + Model ???

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The Planner/Scheduler

- High-level mission planning in DS-1, model-based.
- Produces a plan for achieving a given high-level goal (e.g. take snapshot of asteroid)
- Models = declarations of components (OO) + temporal constraints on values of variables

  Example:

  ((Robot.Task=Fix) starts_before (10 20)
    (Hole.Status = Fixed))

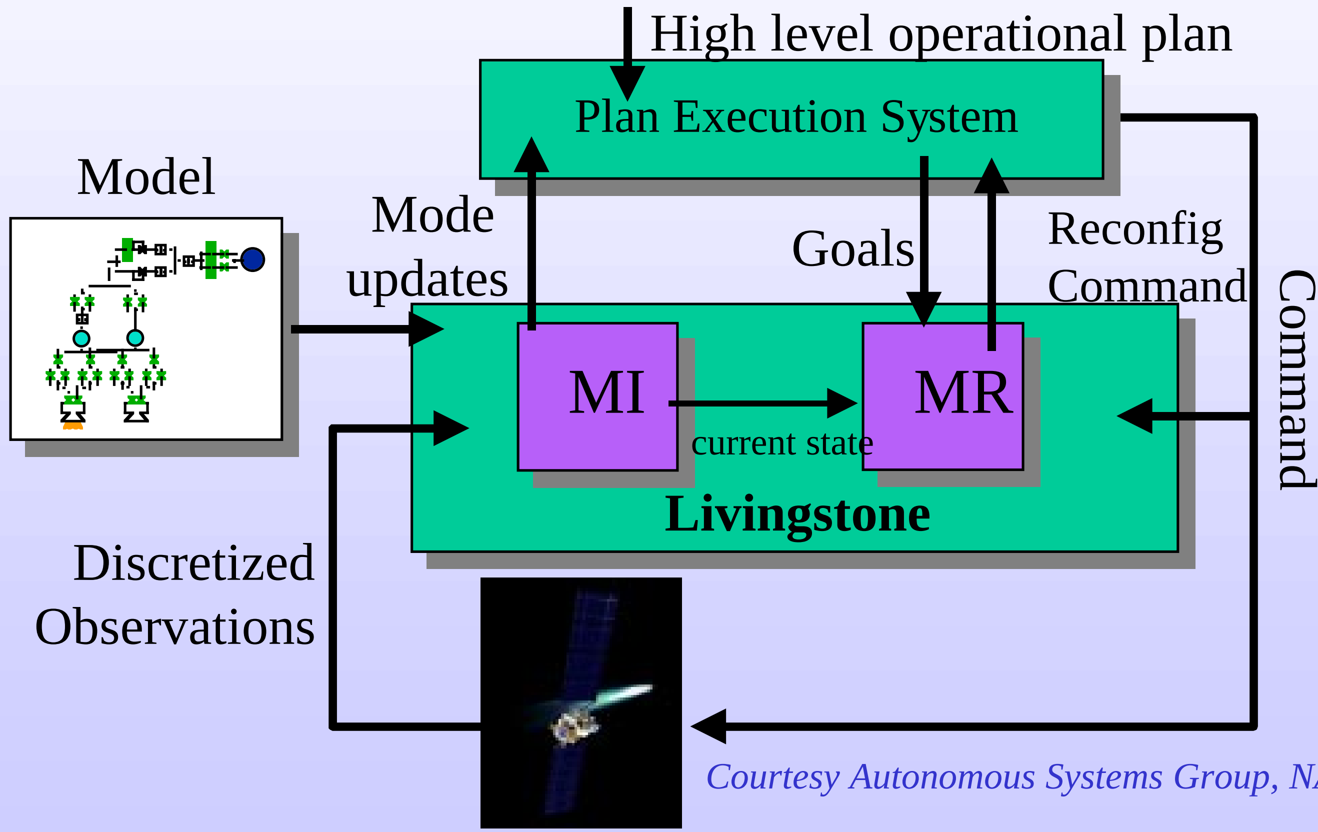
Verification of Planner/Scheduler models

(Penix, Pecheur and Havelund)

- Compare 3 model checkers: Spin, Murphi, SMV
- Small sample model
- Translation by hand but systematic
  => can be automated
- General translation rules for a subset of the modeling language – Full language is for further study (non-local constraints, quantitative time)
- SMV gives easier translation and faster verification (≈0.05s vs. ≈30s for Spin or Murphi)

The Livingstone MIR

Remote Agent's model-based fault recovery sub-system



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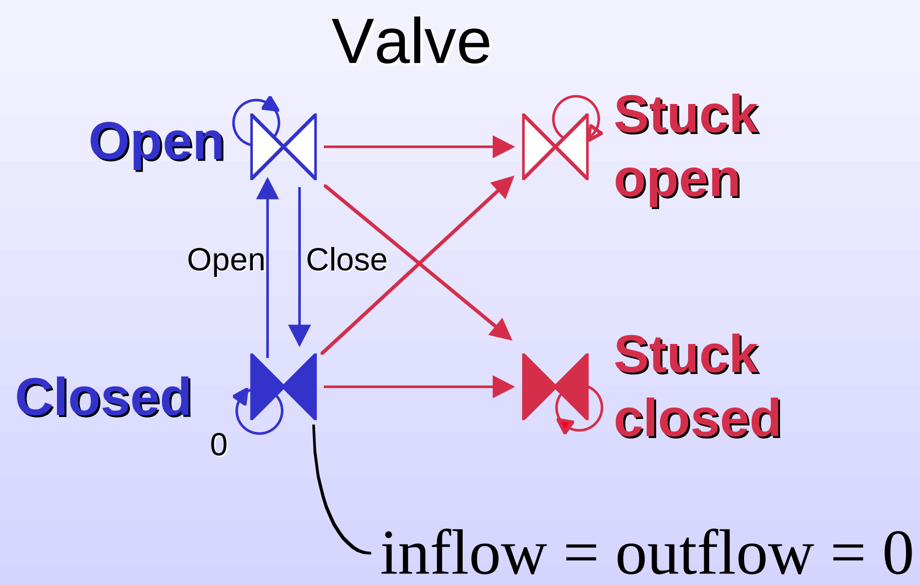
Livingstone Models

- Models = concurrent transition systems
- qualitative values => finite state
- nominal/fault modes



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From Livingstone to SMV

- Translate Livingstone models to SMV models
  similar languages => translation is easy
- Add property specifications
  - In temporal logic (CTL)
  - Using application-level extensions
- Initial work from CMU (Reid Simmons)
- Application: ISPP autonomous controller (KSC)
- Improvements in progress:
  - Correctness (=> formalize Livingstone)
  - Ease of use (more application-level extensions)

Verification of Model-Based Systems

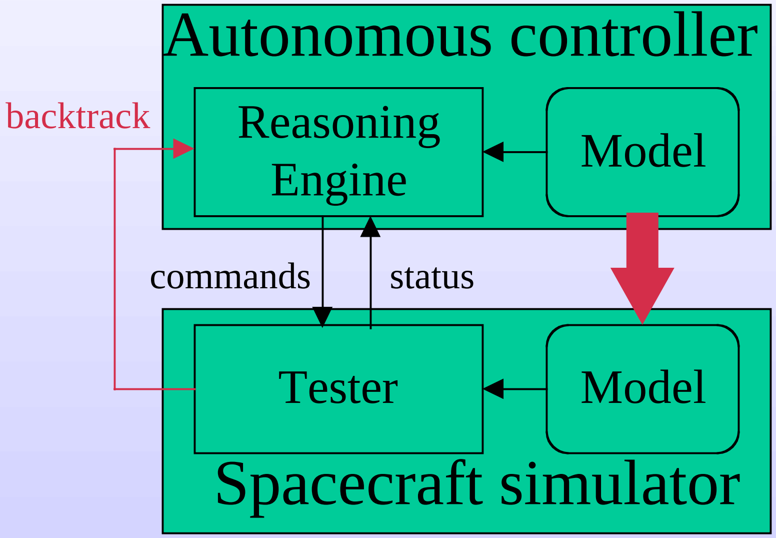
- Model-based system = engine + model
- correct engine + correct plan ≠> good system !
  e.g. can fail to properly recognize a fault
- Model check? Very hard!

  Need (abstract) model of reasoning engine
  => complex, error-prone, huge state space
- Model-driven white-box testing?

Model-driven Testing

- Testing the real system
  => no abstraction/modeling
- Tester uses (non-symbolic) model-checking approach
  => exhaustive exploration
  of the model (not the system)
- If possible, backtrack
  => avoid full reset before each test sequence.

To be explored...



Conclusions

- Autonomy needs advanced V&V techniques
- Model checking for autonomous systems based on automated reasoning over discrete models (need to scale up)
- Translators to bridge the gap between design and V&V
- System-level V&V => model-driven testing?
- For further study:
  - Continuous models (real-time, hybrid, neural nets)
    New mathematics required
  - Learning/adaptive systems *after* training
  - Learning/adaptive systems *including* training capabilities