TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT DRESDEN

Faculty of Computer Science Institute for System Architecture, Operating Systems Group

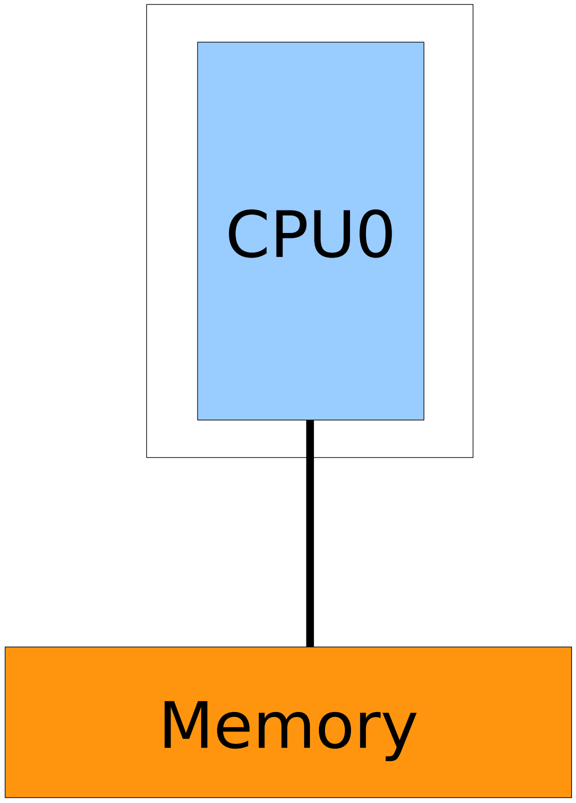
Distributed Operating Systems

Memory Consistency & Cache Coherence

Till Smejkal

(slides by Julian Stecklina, Marcus Völp)

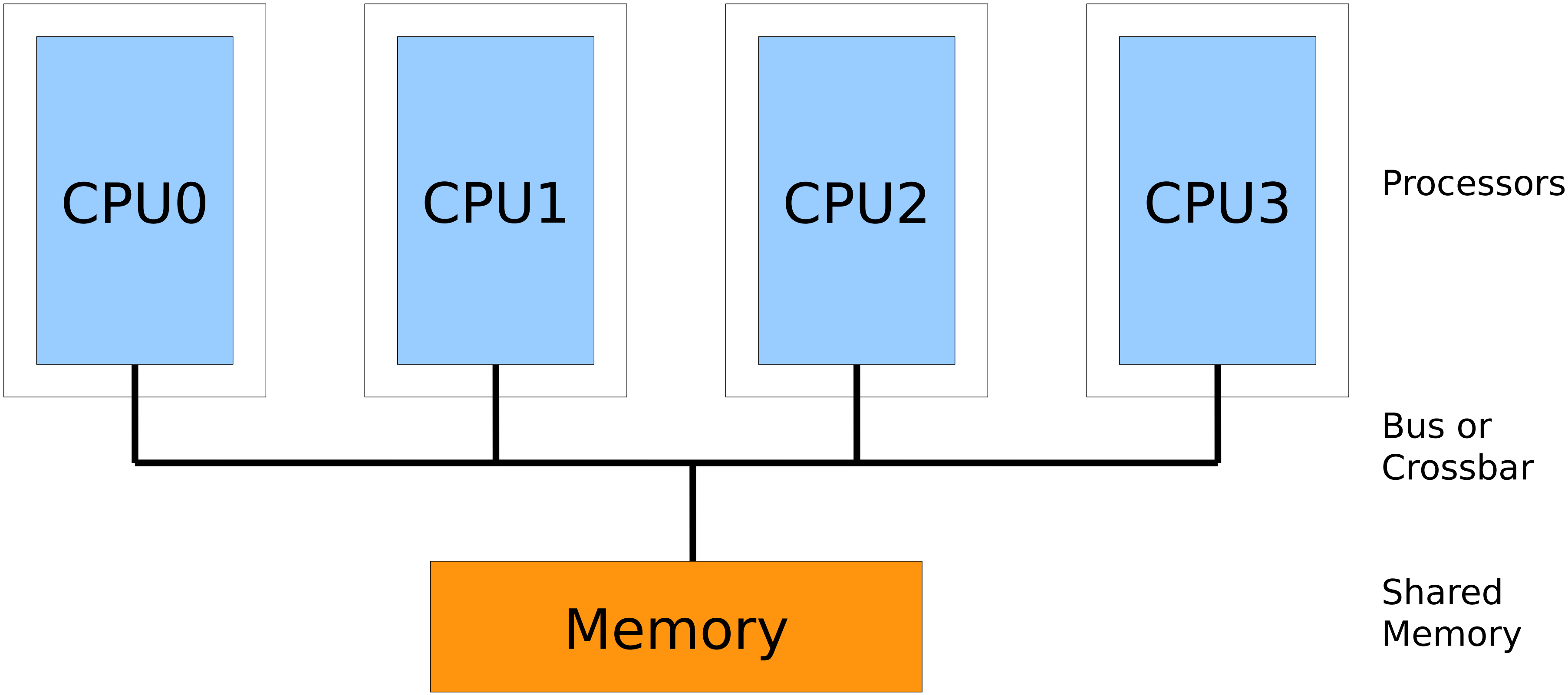
Single Processor



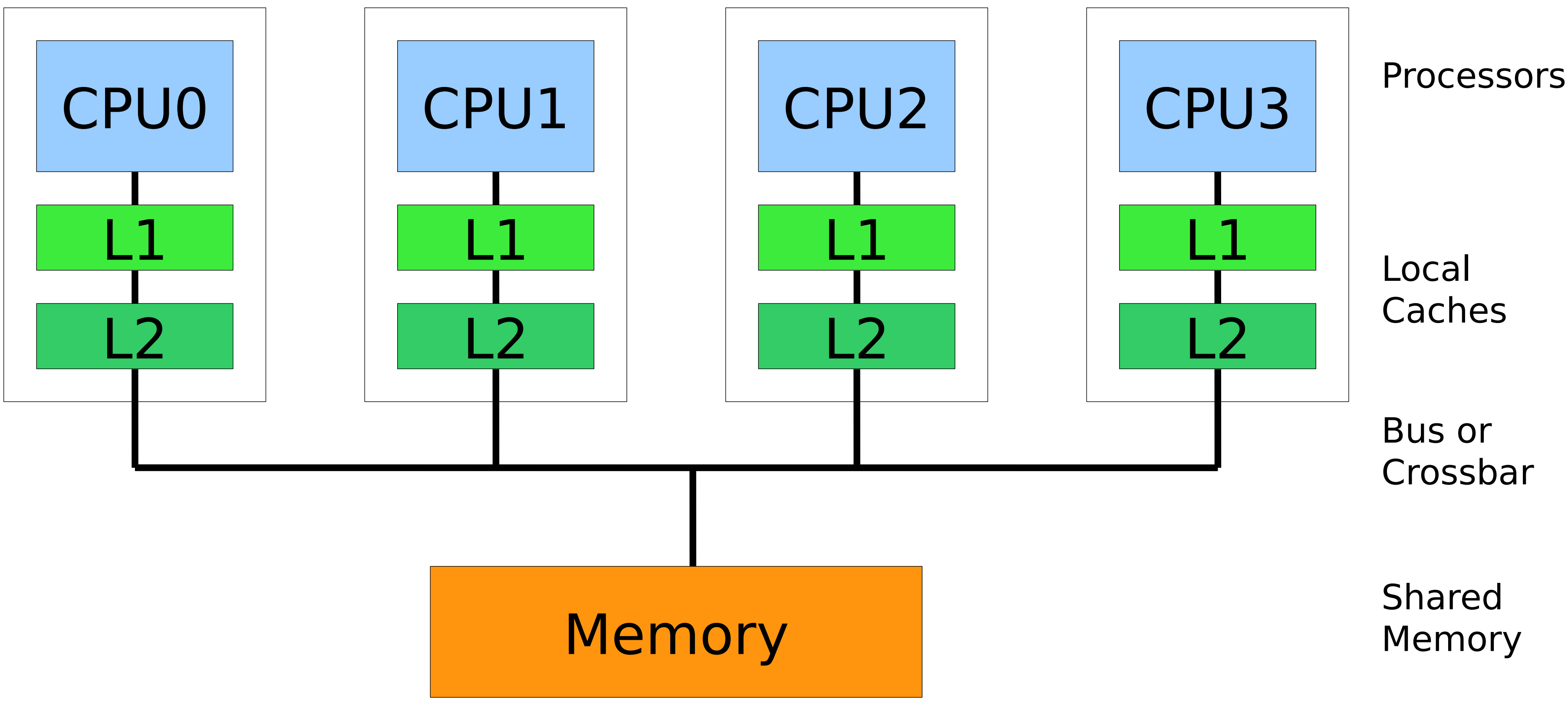
Processor

Shared
Memory

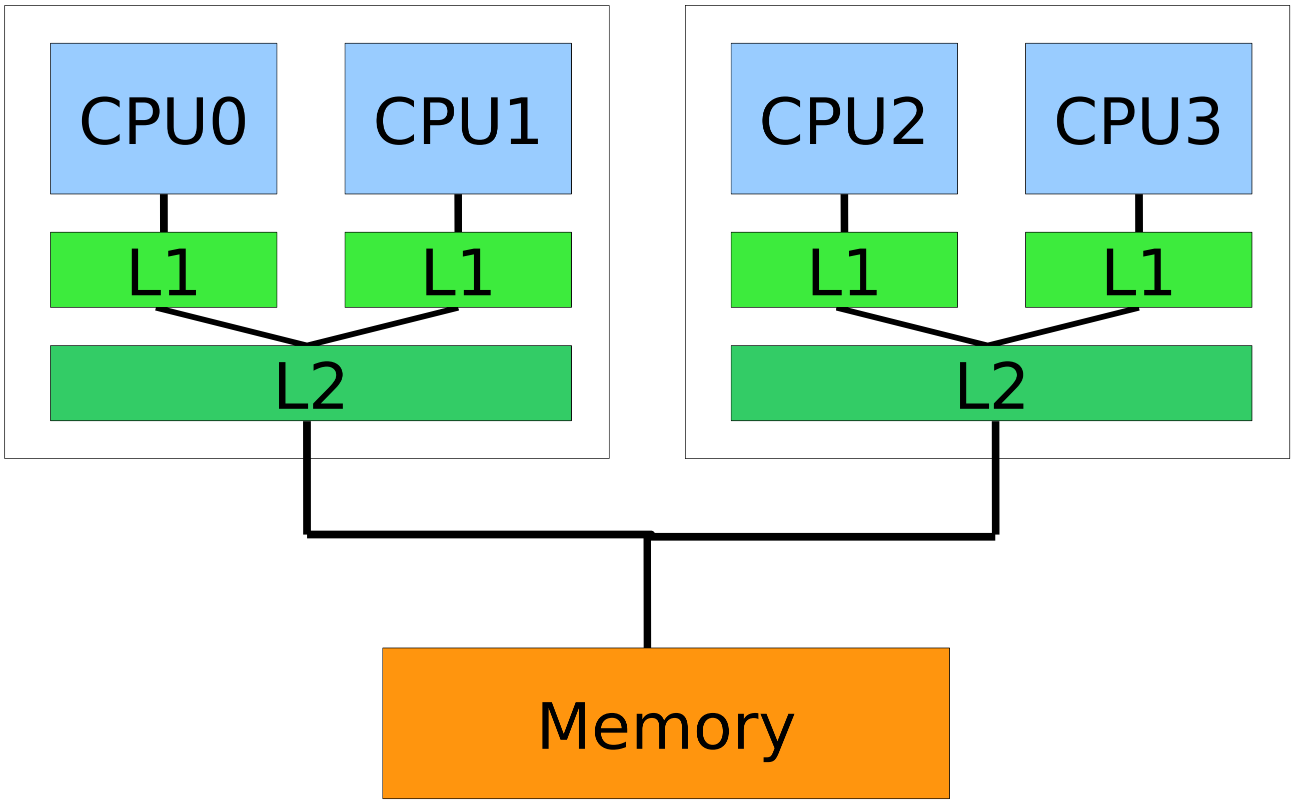
Symmetric Multiprocessor (SMP)



Symmetric Multiprocessor (SMP)



Chip Multiprocessor (CMP)



Processors

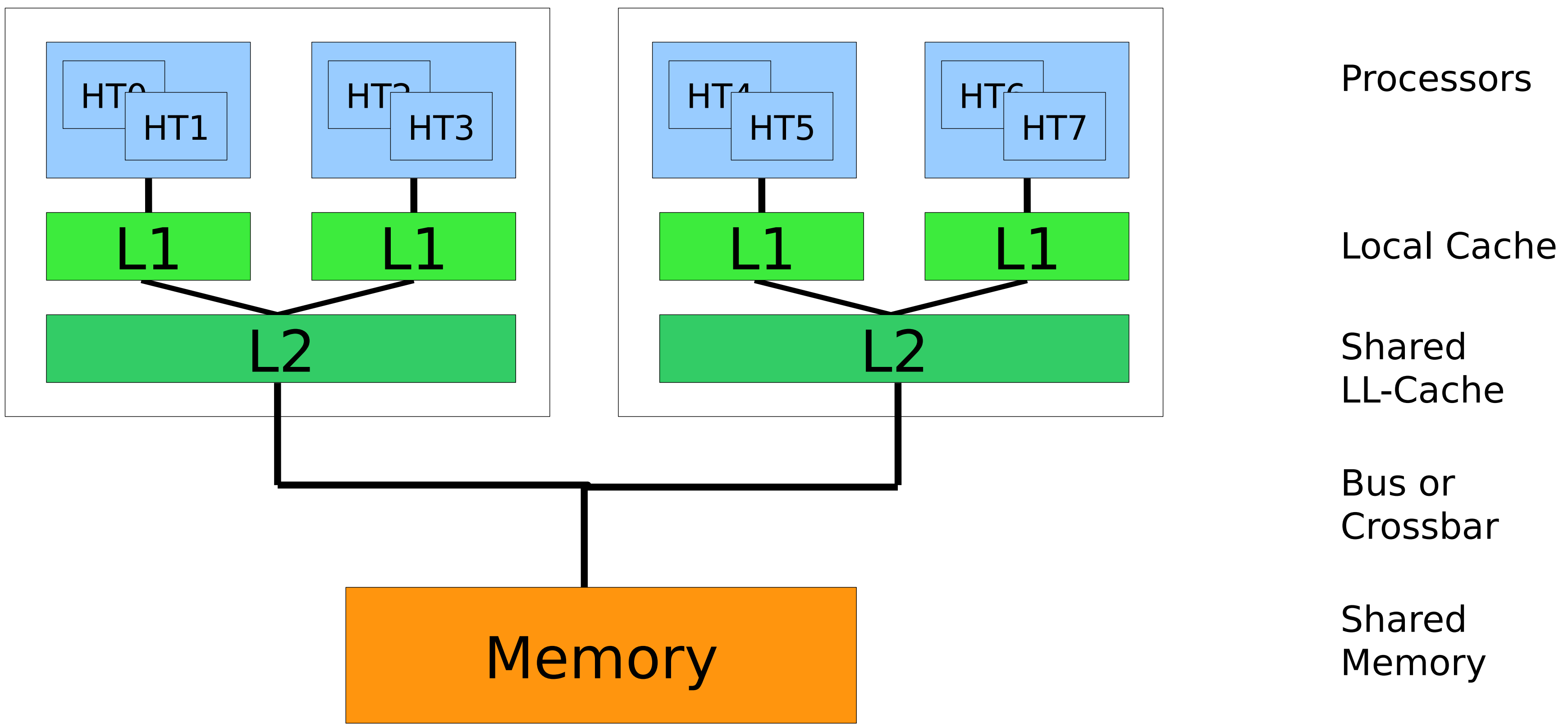
Local Cache

Shared
LL-Cache

Bus or
Crossbar

Shared
Memory

Symmetric Multithreading (SMT), Hyperthreading



Cache Coherency

- Caches lead to multiple copies for the content of a single memory location

- Cache Coherency keeps copies “consistent”
  - locate all copies
  - invalidate/update content

- **Write Propagation**
  writes must eventually become visible to all processors.

- **Write Serialization**
  every processor should see writes to the **same** location in the same order.

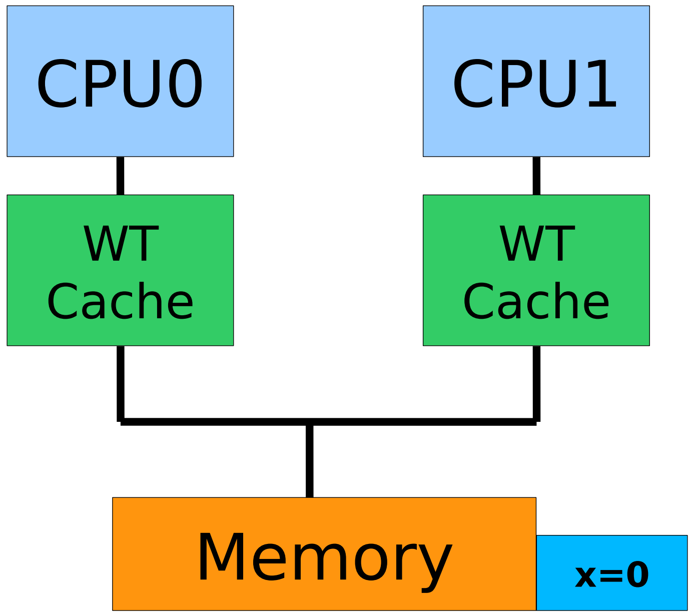
Alternative Definition: SWMR

Single-Writer, Multiple-Reader Invariant
For any memory location A, at any given time,
either only a single core may write (or read-modify-write) the content of A **or** any number of cores may read the content of A.

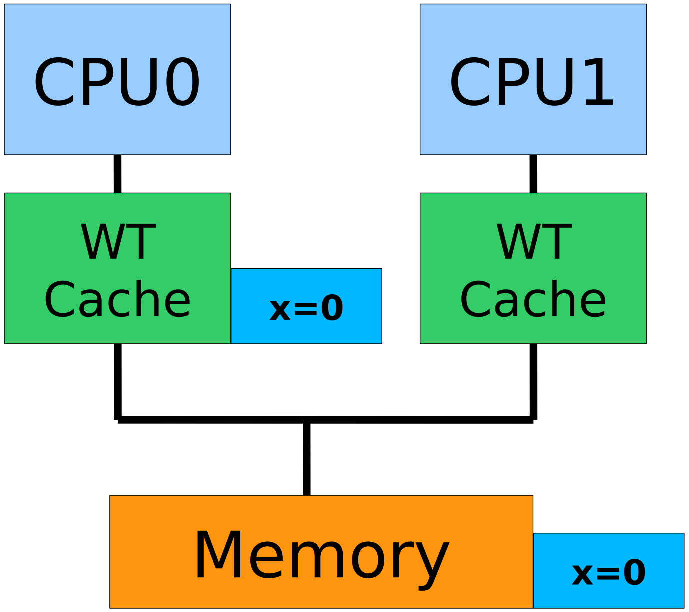
Data-Value Invariant
The value of a memory location at the start of an operation is the same as the value at the end of its ***last*** write (read-modify-write) operation.

[based on Sorin et al., 2011]

Attempt 1: write through all caches



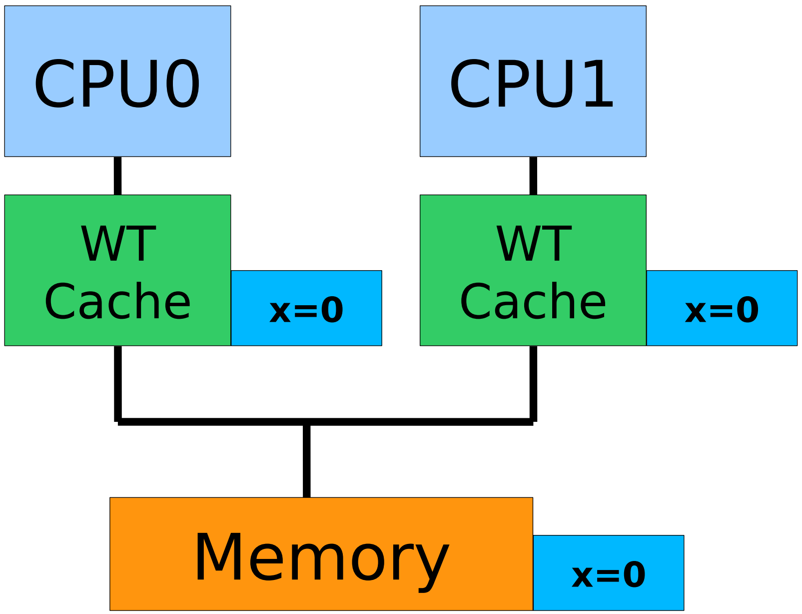
Attempt 1: write through all caches



CPU0: read x

x=0 stored in cache

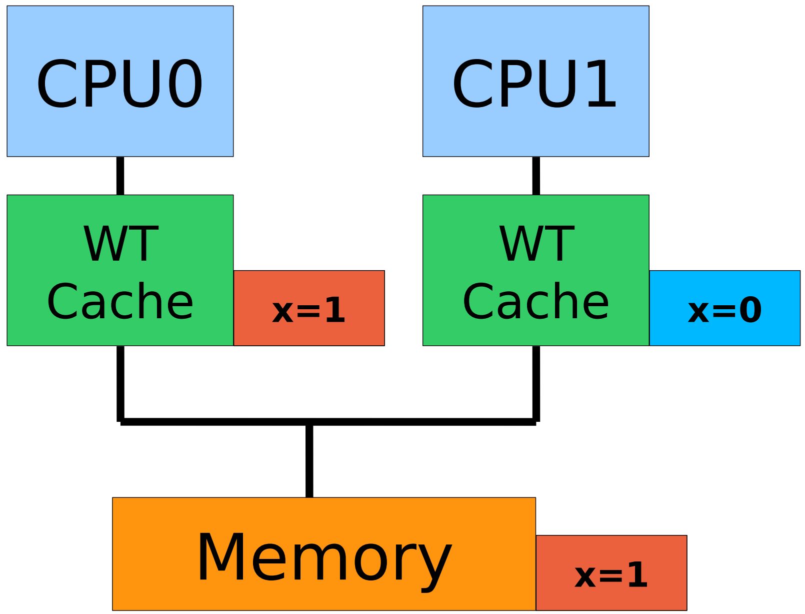
Attempt 1: write through all caches



CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

Attempt 1: write through all caches

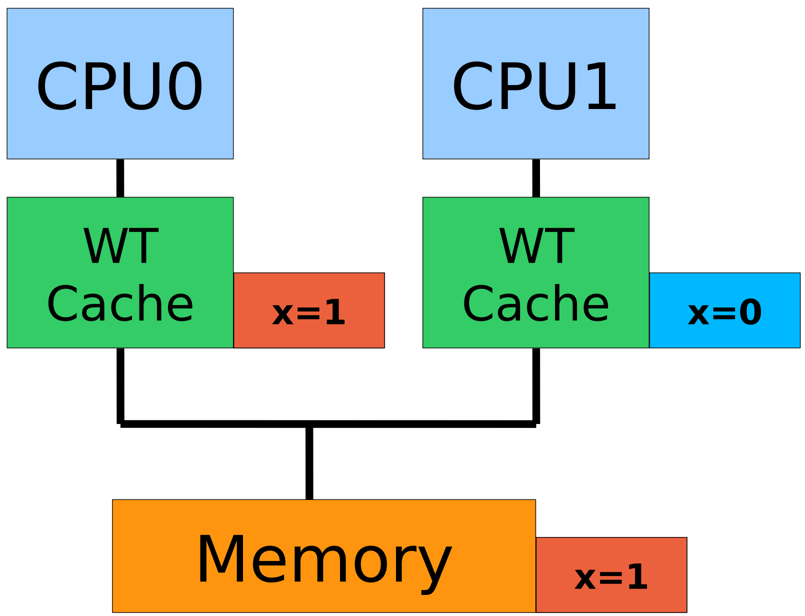


CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU0: write x=1
x=1 stored in cache
x=1 stored in memory

Attempt 1: write through all caches



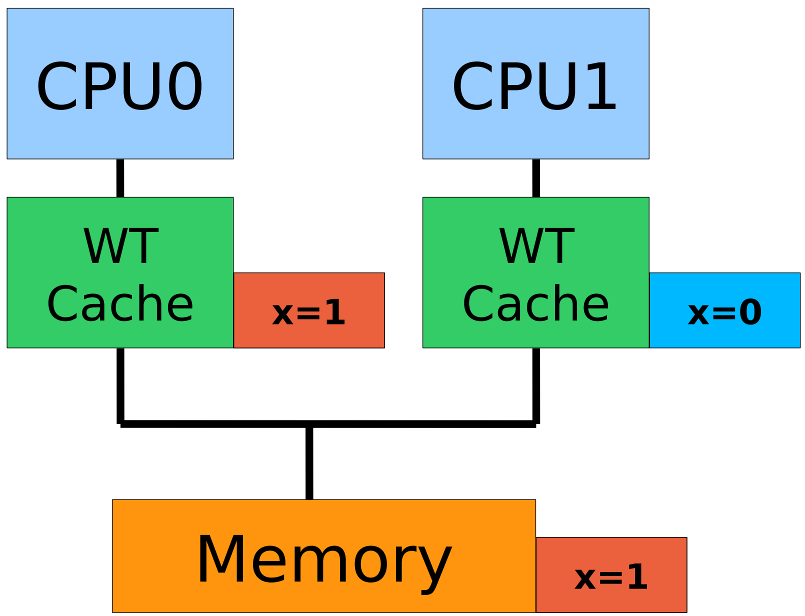
CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU0: write x=1
x=1 stored in cache
x=1 stored in memory

CPU1: read x
x=0 retrieved from cache

Attempt 1: write through all caches



Write not visible to CPU1!

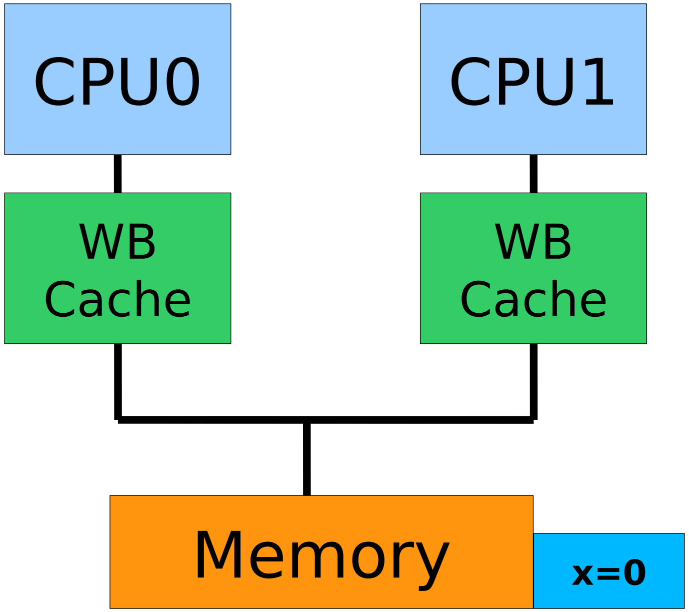
CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

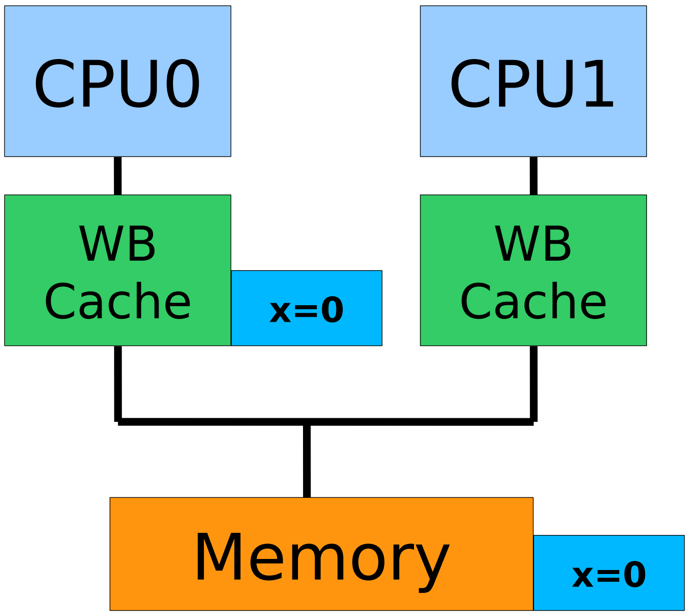
CPU0: write x=1
x=1 stored in cache
x=1 stored in memory

CPU1: read x
x=0 retrieved from cache

Attempt 2: write back



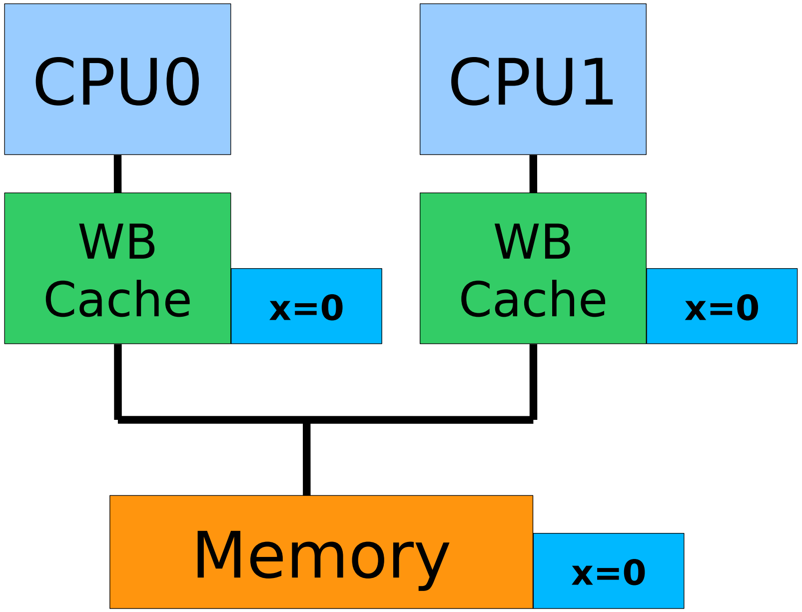
Attempt 2: write back



CPU0: read x

x=0 stored in cache

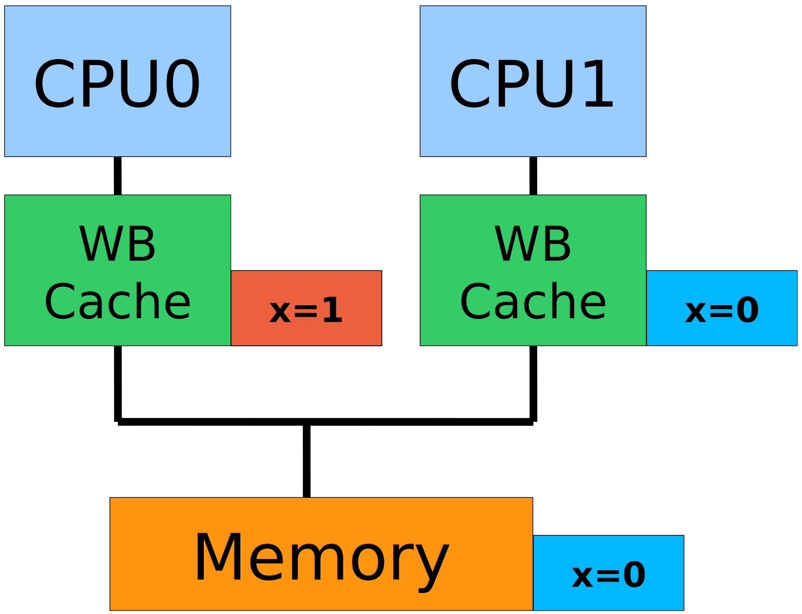
Attempt 2: write back



CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

Attempt 2: write back

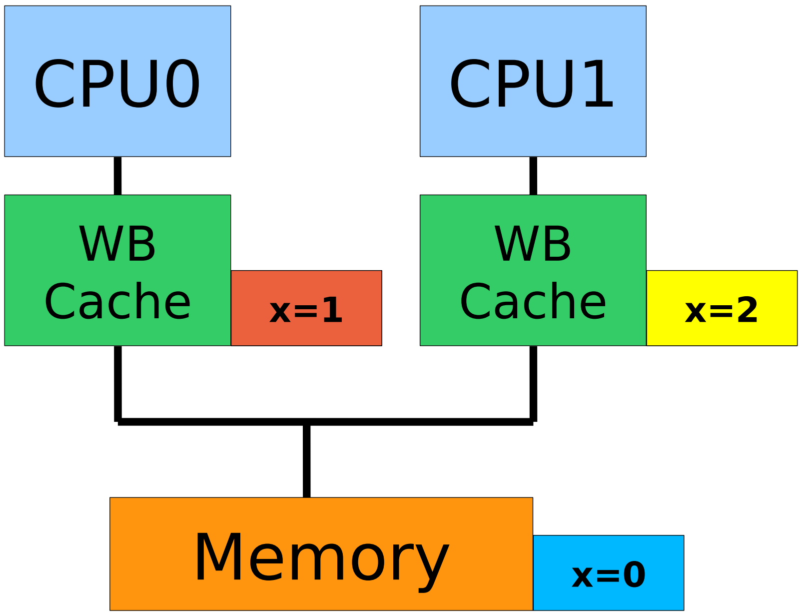


CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU0: write x=1
x=1 stored in cache

Attempt 2: write back



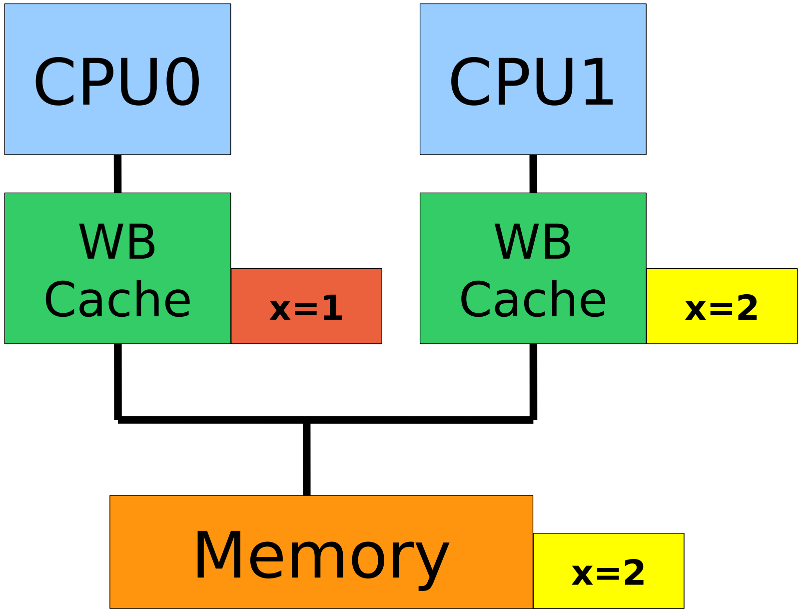
CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU0: write x=1
x=1 stored in cache

CPU1: write x=2
x=2 stored in cache

Attempt 2: write back



CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

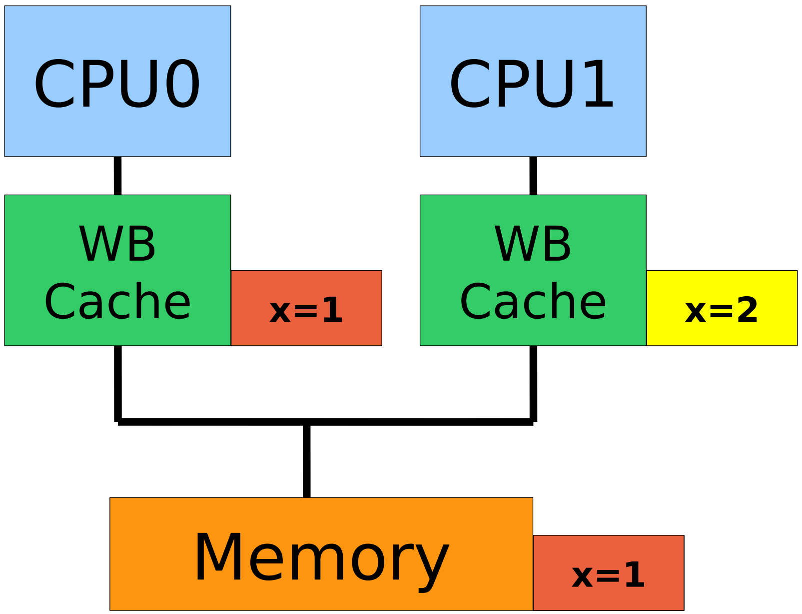
CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU0: write x=1
x=1 stored in cache

CPU1: write x=2
x=2 stored in cache

CPU1: writeback
x=2 stored in memory

Attempt 2: write back



CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

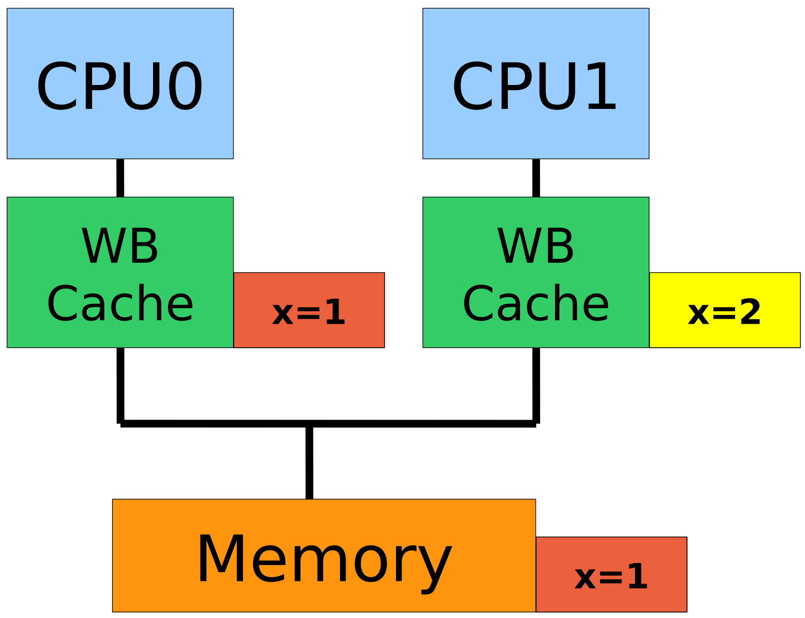
CPU0: write x=1
x=1 stored in cache

CPU1: write x=2
x=2 stored in cache

CPU1: writeback
x=2 stored in memory

CPU0: writeback
x=1 stored in memory

Attempt 2: write back



Later store x=2 lost!

CPU0: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU1: read x
x=0 stored in cache

CPU0: write x=1
x=1 stored in cache

CPU1: write x=2
x=2 stored in cache

CPU1: writeback
x=2 stored in memory

CPU0: writeback
x=1 stored in memory

Coherency Problems & Solutions

Both examples violate SWMR!

Problem 1

CPU1 used stale value that had already been modified by CPU0.

- Solution: Invalidate copies before write proceeds!

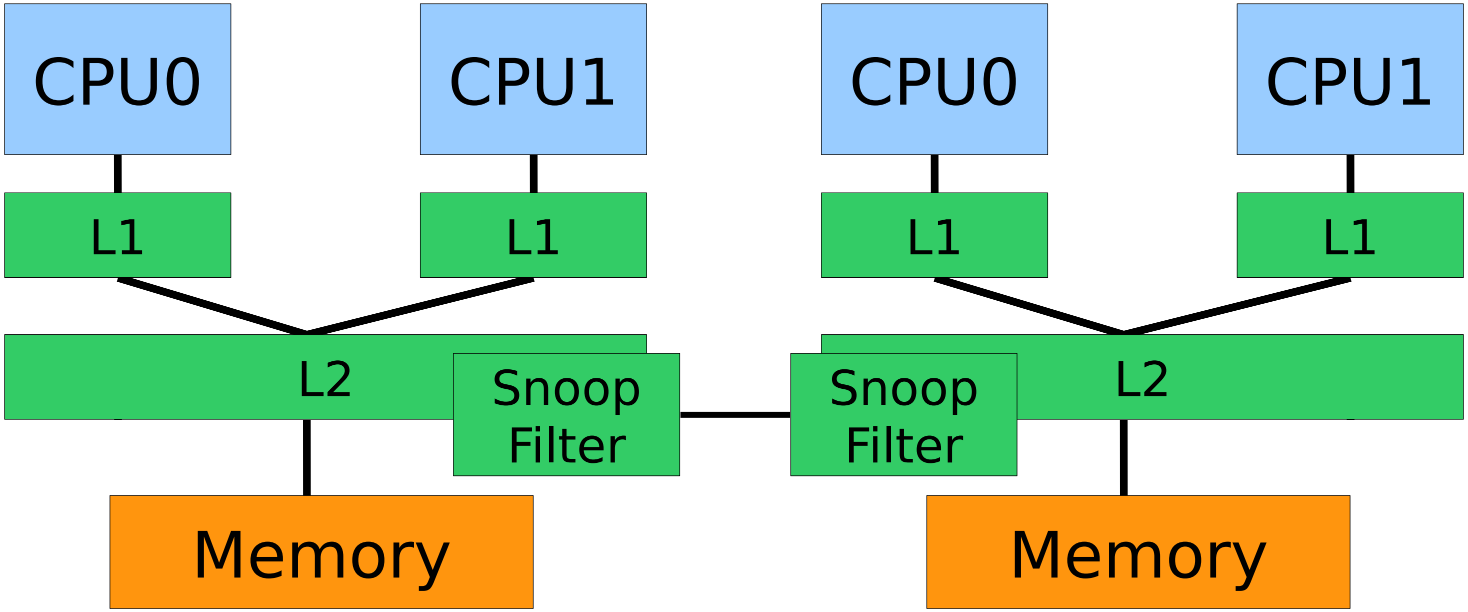
Problem 2

Incorrect write-back order of modified cache lines.

- Solution: Disallow more than one modified copy!

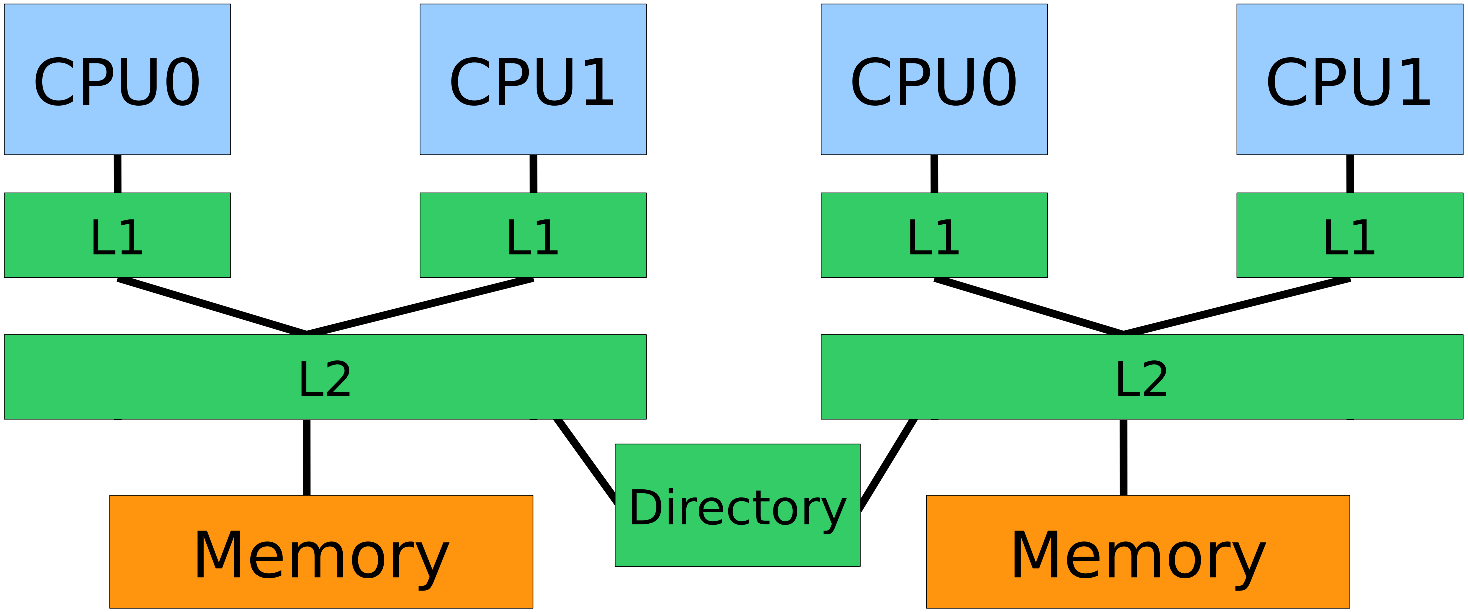
Coherency Protocol Design Space

- **Snooping-based vs. Directory-based**



Coherency Protocol Design Space

- **Snooping-based vs. Directory-based**



Coherency Protocol Design Space

- **Snooping-based**
  - All coherency related traffic broadcasted to all CPUs
  - Each processor snoops and acts accordingly:
    - Invalidate lines written by other CPUs
    - Signal sharing for lines currently in cache
  - Straightforward for bus-based systems
  - Suited for small-scale systems
- **Directory-based**
  - Uses central directory to track cache line owner
  - Update copies in other caches
    - Can update all CPUs at once
      (less traffic for alternating reads and writes)
    - Multiple writes need multiple updates
      (more traffic for subsequent writes)
  - Suited for large-scale systems

Invalidation vs. Update Protocols

- **Invalidation-based**
  - Only write misses hit bus (suited for WB caches)
  - Subsequent writes are write hits
  - Good for multiple writes to same cache line by same CPU
- **Update-based**
  - All shares of a cache line continue to hit in the cache after a write by one CPU
  - Updates have to be propagated between the individual CPUs

- Hybrid forms are possible!

A Basic Coherency Protocol: MSI

- Modified (M)
  - No copies on other caches; local copy modified
  - Memory is stale
- Shared (S)
  - Unmodified copies in one or more caches
  - Memory is up-to-date
- Invalid (I)
  - Not in cache

- States tracked from the view of the cache controller. Sees events from:
  - Local processor → processor transactions
  - Other processors → snoop transactions

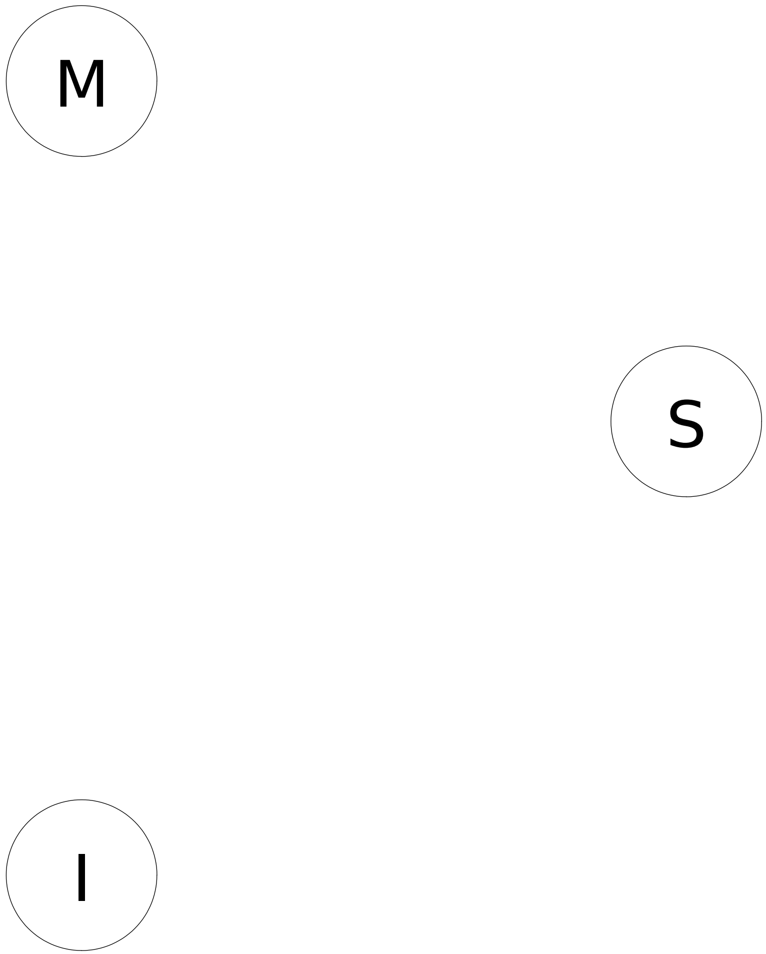
MSI: Processor Transitions

- State is I, CPU reads (PrRd)
  - Generate bus read request (BusRd)
  - Go to S
- State is S or M, CPU reads (PrRd)
  - No transition
- State is S, CPU writes (PrWr)
  - Upgrade cache line for exclusive ownership (BusRdX)
  - Go to M
- State is M, CPU writes (PrWr)
  - No transition

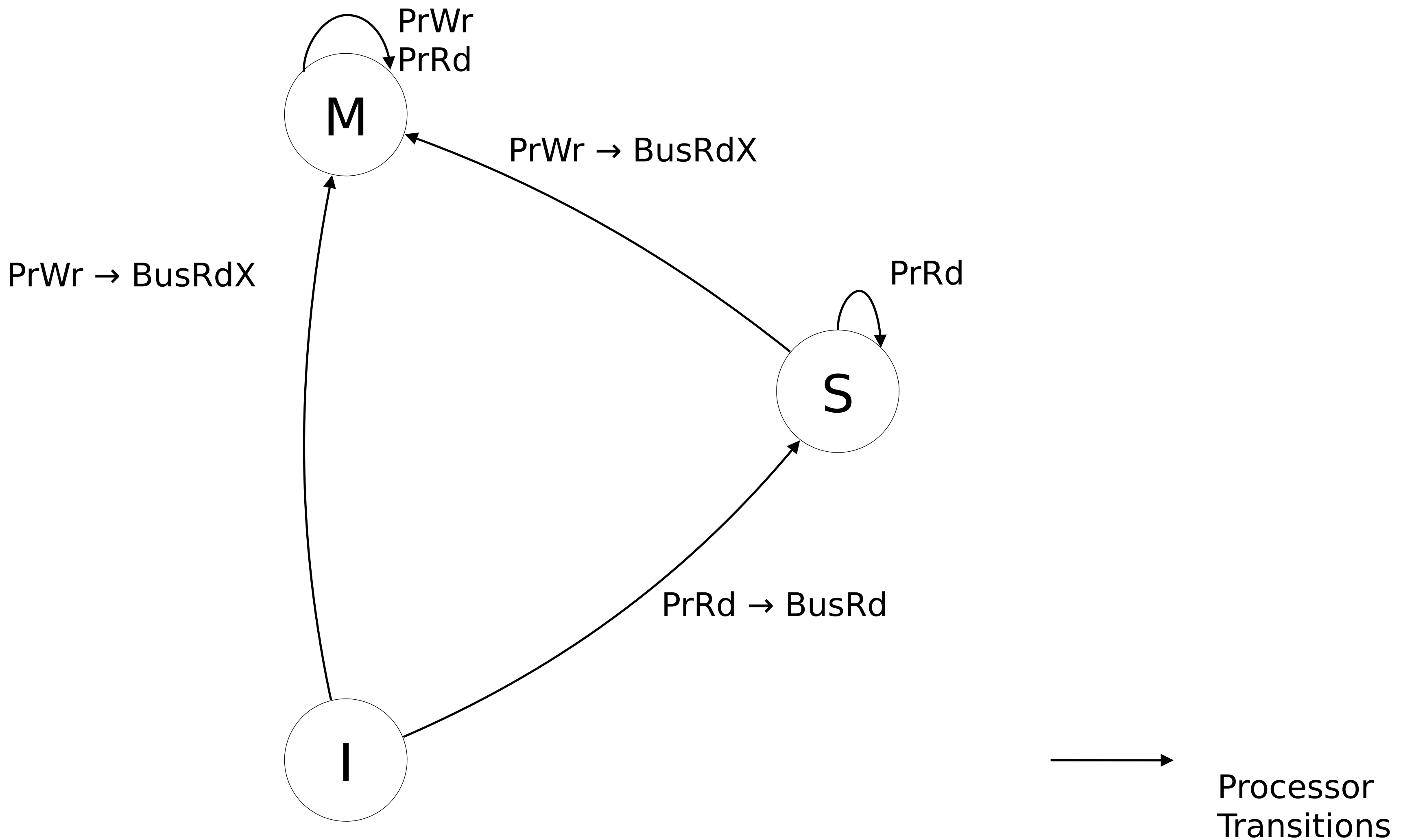
MSI: Snoop Transitions

- Receiving a read snoop (BusRd) for a cache line
  - If M, write cache line back to memory (WB), transition to S
  - If S, no transition
- Receiving a exclusive ownership snoop (BusRdX)
  - If M, write cache line back to memory (WB), discard it, transition to I
  - If S, discard cache line, transition to I

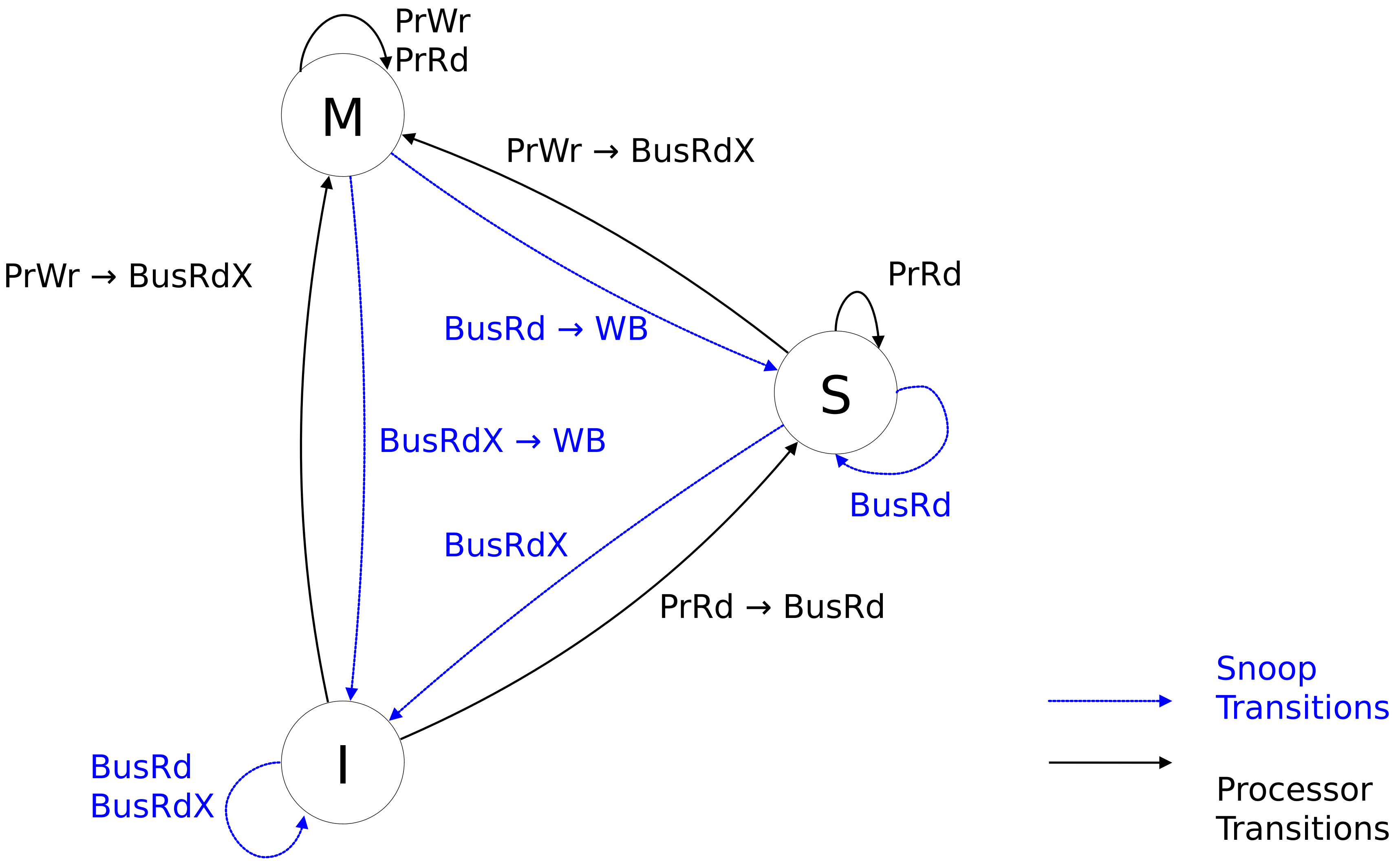
MSI State Transitions



MSI State Transitions



MSI State Transitions



MESI: Solving problems in MSI

A common use case is to:

- read variable A:S
- Modify A: BusRdX sent, S → M

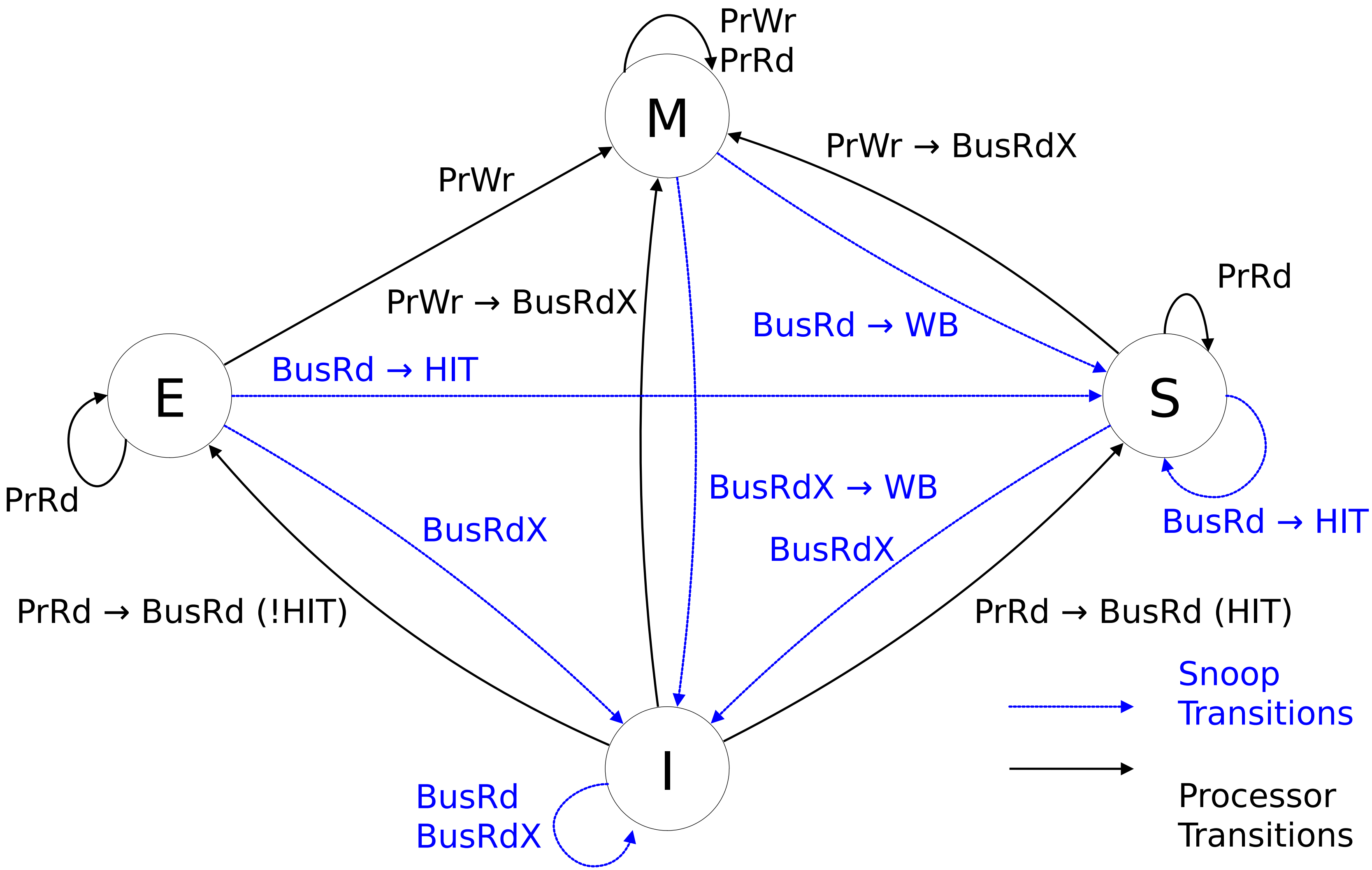
Invalidation message pointless, if no other cache holds A.

Solved by adding Exclusive (E) state → MESI protocol

- No copies exist in other caches
- Memory is up-to-date

Variants of MESI are used by most popular processors.

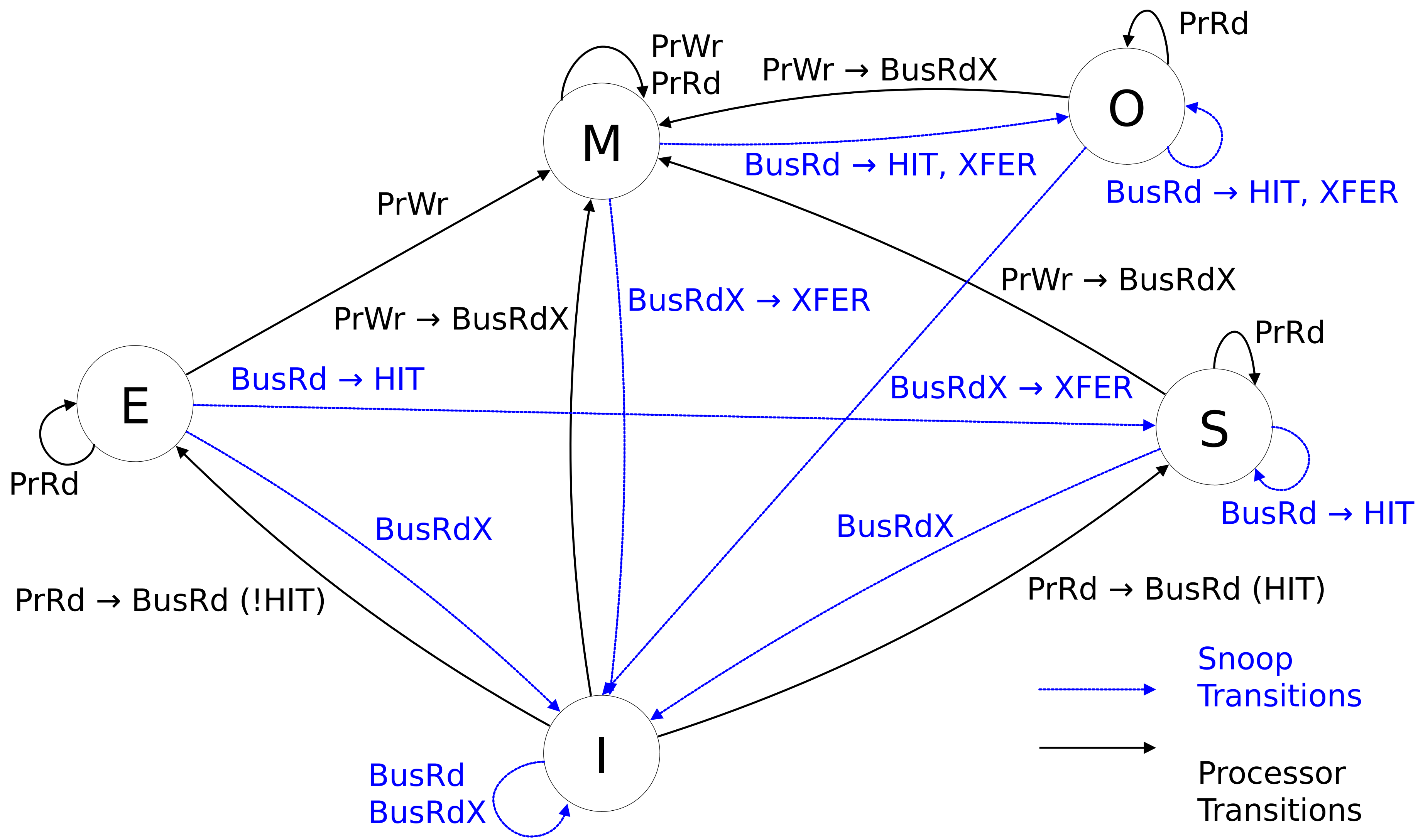
MESI State Transitions



MOESI: Adding Owned to MESI

- Similar to MESI, with some extensions
- Cache-to-Cache transfers of modified cache lines
  - Modified cache lines not written back to memory, but supplied to other CPUs on BusRd
  - CPU that had initial modified copy becomes “owner”
- Avoids writeback to memory when another CPU accesses cache line
  - Beneficial when cache-to-cache latency/bandwidth is better than cache-to-memory latency/bandwidth

MOESI State Transitions



Coherency in Multi-Level Caches

- Bus only connected to last-level cache (e.g. L2)
  - Snoop requests are relevant to inner-level caches (e.g. L1)
  - Modifications in L1 may not be visible to L2 (and the bus)
- Idea: L2 forwards filtered transactions for L1:
  - On BusRd check if line is M/O in L1 (may be S or E in L2)
  - On BusRdX, send invalidate to L1
- Only easy for inclusive caches!

- **Inclusion property**

Outer cache contains a superset of the content of its inner caches.

Memory Consistency

Concurrent programs

global variables:
```
int i = 0;
int k = 0;
```

```
i = 1;                    ||    i = i + 1;
if (i > 1) k = 3;               if (k == 0) k = 4;
```

Concurrent programs

global variables:

```
int i = 0;
int k = 0;
```

```
i = 1;                      ||      i = i + 1;
if (i > 1) k = 3;                   if (k == 0) k = 4;
```

```
mov $1, [%i]                        inc   [%i]
cmp [%i], $1                        cmp [%k], $0
jgt    end                  ||      jne   end
mov $3, [%k]                        mov $4, [%k]
end:                                end:
```

Concurrent programs

global variables:

```
int i = 0;
int k = 0;
```

```
i = 1;                       ||      i = i + 1;
if (i > 1) k = 3;                    if (k == 0) k = 4;
```

```
mov $1, [%i]                 lock; inc   [%i]
cmp [%i], $1                       cmp [%k], $0
jgt    end               ||        jne   end
mov $3, [%k]                       mov $4, [%k]
end:                               end:
```

Memory Consistency Models

Memory Consistency Model
defines correct shared memory behavior in terms of loads and stores in terms of how operations to different memory locations may become visible with respect to each other.

Different memory consistency models exist

- Complex models can expose more performance
- Some platforms support multiple models (SPARC)

Terminology

- **Program Order** (of a processor's operations)
  Per-processor order of memory accesses determined by the program (software)
- **Visibility Order** (of all operations)
  Order of memory accesses observed by one or more processors.

Sequential Consistency (SC)

"The result of any execution is the same as if the operations of all the processors were executed in some sequential order, and the operations of each individual processor appear in this sequence in the order specified by its program. A multiprocessor satisfying this condition will be called **sequentially consistent**." [Lamport 1979]

- Program Order Requirement
  - Each CPU issues memory operations in program order.
- Atomicity Requirement
  - Memory services operations one at a time
  - Memory operations appear to execute atomically with respect to other memory operations
- Implemented by MIPS R10k

Examples for Sequential Consistency

CPU0	**CPU1**	
[A] = 1; (a1)	u = [B]; (a2)	[A] [B] Memory
[B] = 1; (b1)	v = [A]; (b2)	u, v Registers

Examples for Sequential Consistency

CPU0	**CPU1**	
[A] = 1; (a1)	u = [B]; (a2)	[A] [B] Memory
[B] = 1; (b1)	v = [A]; (b2)	u, v Registers

(u,v) = (1,1)

- Sequentially consistent: a1, b1, a2, b2

Examples for Sequential Consistency

CPU0	**CPU1**	
[A] = 1; (a1)	u = [B]; (a2)	[A] [B] Memory
[B] = 1; (b1)	v = [A]; (b2)	u, v Registers

(u,v) = (1,1)

- Sequentially consistent: a1, b1, a2, b2

(u,v) = (1,0)

- Not sequentially consistent: b1, a2, b2, a1
- Violates program order for CPU0 (or 1)

Examples for Sequential Consistency

CPU0	**CPU1**	
[A] = 1; (a1)	[B] = 1; (a2)	[A] [B] Memory
u = [B]; (b1)	v = [A]; (b2)	u, v Registers

Examples for Sequential Consistency

CPU0	**CPU1**	
[A] = 1; (a1)	[B] = 1; (a2)	[A] [B] Memory
u = [B]; (b1)	v = [A]; (b2)	u, v Registers

(u,v) = (1,1)

- Sequentially consistent: a1, a2, b1, b2

Examples for Sequential Consistency

CPU0	**CPU1**	
[A] = 1; (a1)	[B] = 1; (a2)	[A] [B] Memory
u = [B]; (b1)	v = [A]; (b2)	u, v Registers

(u,v) = (1,1)

- Sequentially consistent: a1, a2, b1, b2

(u,v) = (0,0)

- Not sequentially consistent: b1, b2, a1, a2
- Violates program order for CPU0/1

TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT DRESDEN

SC vs. weaker consistency models

In-order memory operations in SC:

- Read→Read
- Read→Write
- Write→Read
- Write→Write

Describes which program order relations hold in the visibility order of memory operations.

Weaker models relax some or all of these orderings.

Relaxing Write→Read or Write→Write

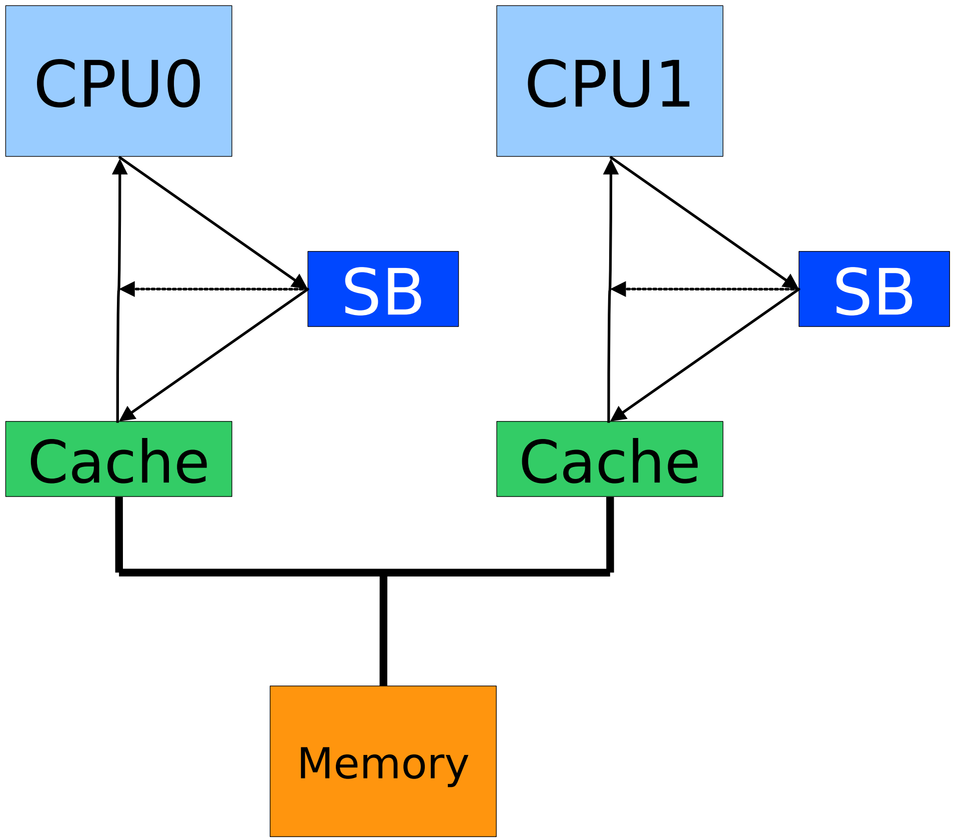
Relaxing Write→Read (later reads can bypass earlier writes)

- Write followed by a read can execute out-of-order
- Typical hardware usage: Store Buffer
  - Writes must wait for cache line ownership
  - Reads can bypass writes in the buffer
  - Hides write latency

Relaxing Write→Write (later writes can bypass earlier writes)

- Write followed by a write can execute out-of-order
- Typical hardware usage: Coalescing store buffer

Store Buffer



SB optimizes writes to memory and/or caches to optimize interconnect accesses.

CPU can continue before write is completed.

Store forwarding allows reads from local CPU to see pending writes in the SB.

SB invisible to remote CPUs.

FIFO vs. non-FIFO. Writes can be combined, may reorder writes on some architectures.

IBM 370 (z Series)

- In-order memory operations:
  - Read→Read
  - Read→Write
  - Write→Write
- Out-of-order memory operations:
  - Write→Read (later reads can bypass earlier writes)
    - Unless both to same location
    - Breaks Dekker's algorithm for mutual exclusion
  - Write→Read to same location must execute in-order
    - No forwarding from the store buffer

Dekker's Algorithm on z Series

```
bool flag[2] = {false,false};     // Intention to enter
int turn = 0;                     // Who's next?
```

CPU0

```
P: flag[0] = true;
while (flag[1]) {
    If (turn == 1) {
        flag[0] = false;
        goto P;
    }
 }
// Critical section
flag[0] = false;
turn = 1;
```

CPU1

```
P: flag[1] = true;
while (flag[0]) {
    If (turn == 0) {
        flag[1] = false;
        goto P;
    }
 }
// Critical section
flag[1] = false;
turn = 0;
```

Dekker's Algorithm on z Series

```
bool flag[2] = {false,false};      // Intention to enter
int turn = 0;                      // Who's next?
```

CPU0

```
P: flag[0] = true;
while (flag[1]) {
     If (turn == 1) {
          flag[0] = false;
          goto P;
     }
 }
// Critical section
flag[0] = false;
turn = 1;
```

CPU1

Buffered

```
P: flag[1] = true;
while (flag[0]) {
     If (turn == 0) {
          flag[1] = false;
          goto P;
     }
 }
// Critical section
flag[1] = false;
turn = 0;
```

SPARC v8 Total Store Order (TSO)

- In-order memory operations:
  - Read→Read
  - Read→Write
  - Write→Write
- Out-of-order memory operations:
  - Write→Read (later reads can bypass earlier writes)
    - Forwarding of pending writes in the store buffer to successive reads to the same location
    - Store buffer is FIFO
    - Breaks Peterson's algorithm for mutual exclusion

Peterson's Algorithm on TSO

```
bool flag[2] = {false,false};     // Intention to enter
int turn = 0;                     // Who's next?
```

CPU0

```
flag[0] = true;
turn = 1;
while (turn == 1 && flag[1]) {}
// Critical section
flag[0] = false;
```

CPU1

```
flag[1] = true;
turn = 0;
while (turn == 0 &&  flag[0]) {}
// Critical section
flag[1] = false;
```

Peterson's Algorithm on TSO

```
bool flag[2] = {false,false};      // Intention to enter
int turn = 0;                      // Who's next?
```

CPU0

```
flag[0] = true;
turn = 1;
while (turn == 1 && flag[1]) {}
// Critical section
flag[0] = false;
```

Buffered

CPU1

```
flag[1] = true;
turn = 0;
while (turn == 0 &&  flag[0]) {}
// Critical section
flag[1] = false;
```

Peterson's Algorithm on TSO

```
bool flag[2] = {false,false};     // Intention to enter
int turn = 0;                     // Who's next?
```

CPU0

```
flag[0] = true;
turn = 1;
while (turn == 1 && flag[1]) {}
// Critical section
flag[0] = false;
```

Buffered

CPU1

```
flag[1] = true;
turn = 0;
while (turn == 0 &&  flag[0]) {}
// Critical section
flag[1] = false;
```

Loading *turn* orders accesses on zSeries, but not on TSO!

TSO vs. SC and z Series

CPU0	**CPU1**
[A] = 1; (a1)	[B] = 1; (a2)
u = [A]; (b1)	v = [B]; (b2)
w = [B]; (c1)	x = [A]; (c2)

- (u,v,w,x) = (1,1,0,0)
  - Not possible with SC and z Series
  - Possible with TSO

TSO vs. SC and z Series

CPU0	**CPU1**
[A] = 1; (a1)	[B] = 1; (a2)
u = [A]; (b1)	v = [B]; (b2)
w = [B]; (c1)	x = [A]; (c2)

- (u,v,w,x) = (1,1,0,0)
  - Not possible with SC and z Series
  - Possible with TSO
    - b1, b2, c1, c2, a1, a2
    - b1 reads [A] from write buffer

Processor Consistency (PC)

- Similar to Total Store Order (TSO)
- Additionally supports multiple cached memory copies
  - Relaxed atomicity for write operations
    - Each write broken into suboperations to update cached copies of other CPUs
  - Non-unique write order: **per-CPU visibility order**

- Additional coherency requirement
  - All write suboperations to the same location complete in the same order across all memory copies (or in other words: each processor sees writes to the same location in the same order)

PC vs. SC, z Series, TSO

CPU0	**CPU1**	**CPU2**
[A] = 1; (a1)	u = [A]; (a2)	v = [B]; (a3)
	[B] = 1; (b2)	w = [A]; (b3)

- (u,v,w) = (1,1,0)
  - Not possible with SC, z Series, TSO
  - Possible with Processor Consistency (PC)

PC vs. SC, z Series, TSO

CPU0	**CPU1**	**CPU2**
[A] = 1; (a1)	u = [A]; (a2)	v = [B]; (a3)
	[B] = 1; (b2)	w = [A]; (b3)

- (u,v,w) = (1,1,0)
  - Not possible with SC, z Series, TSO
  - Possible with Processor Consistency (PC)
    - CPU0 sets [A], sends update to other CPUs
    - CPU1 gets update, sets [B], sends update
    - CPU2 sees update from CPU1, but hasn't seen update from CPU0 yet

Causality

CPU0	**CPU1**	**CPU2**
[A] = 1;	while ([A] == 0);	while ([B] == 0);
	[B] = 1;	print [A];

Write Atomicity

All cores see writes at the same time (and the same order).

Relaxing write atomicity

- CPU0 writes [A]; sends update to CPU1/2
- CPU1 receives; writes [B]; sends update to CPU2
- CPU2 receives update from CPU1, prints [A] = 0
- CPU2 receives update from CPU0

Not sequentially consistent!

TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT DRESDEN

SPARC V8 Partial Store Order (PSO)

- In-order memory operations:
  - Read→Read
  - Read→Write
- Out-of-order memory operations:
  - Write→Read (later reads can bypass earlier writes)
    - Forwarding of pending writes to successive reads to the same location
  - Write→Write (later writes can bypass earlier writes)
    - Unless both are to the same location
    - Breaks naive producer-consumer code
- Write atomicity is maintained → single visibility order

PSO vs. SC, z Series, TSO, PC

CPU0	**CPU1**	
[A] = 1; (a1)	while ([Flag] == 0);	(a2)
[B] = 1; (b1)	u = [A];	(b2)
[Flag] = 1; (c1)	v = [B];	(c2)

- (u,v) = (0,0) or (0,1) or (1,0)
  - Not possible with SC, z Series, TSO, PC
  - Possible with PSO

PSO vs. SC, z Series, TSO, PC

CPU0	CPU1	
[A] = 1; (a1)	while ([Flag] == 0);	(a2)
[B] = 1; (b1)	u = [A];	(b2)
[Flag] = 1; (c1)	v = [B];	(c2)

- (u,v) = (0,0) or (0,1) or (1,0)
  - Not possible with SC, z Series, TSO, PC
  - Possible with PSO
    - c1,a2,b2,c2,a1,b1

Relaxing all Program Orders

- In addition to previous relaxations:
  - Read→Read (later reads can bypass earlier reads)
    - Read followed by read can execute out-of-order
  - Read→Write (later writes can bypass earlier reads)
    - Read followed by a write can execute out-of-order
- Examples
  - Weak Ordering (WO)
  - Release Consistency (RC)
  - DEC Alpha
  - SPARC V9 Relaxed Memory Model (RMO)
  - PowerPC
  - Itanium (IA-64)

TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT DRESDEN

Release Consistency (RC)

- Distinguishes memory operations as
  - Ordinary (data)
  - Special
    - Sync (synchronization)
    - Nsync (asynchronous data)
- Sync operations classified as
  - Acquire
    - Read operation for gaining access to a shared resource
    - e.g., spinning on a flag to be set, reading a pointer
  - Release
    - Write operation for granting permission to a shared resource
    - e.g., setting a synchronization flag

Flavors of Release Consistency

- RC_{SC}
  - Sequential consistency between special operations
  - Program order enforced between:
    - acquire → all
    - all → release
    - special → special
- RC_{PC}
  - Processor consistency between special operations
  - Program order enforced between:
    - acquire → all
    - all → release
    - special → special, **except** release followed by acquire

How do we program this?!

Standardized memory models for HLL:

- C / C++ 2011
- Java

Basic model: Sequential Consistency for data-race free programs (SC-DRF)

A data-race free program will execute sequentially consistent.

Data Race (informal)

Multiple threads access a memory location without synchronization, one of them is a writer.

References

- A Primer on Memory Consistency and Cache Coherence
  Sorin, Hill, Wood; 2011
- atomic<> Weapons: The C++ Memory Model and Modern Hardware (Video)
  Sutter; 2013
- Shared memory consistency models: a tutorial
  Adve, Gharachorloo; 1996
- IA Memory Model
  Richard Hudson; Google Tech Talk 2008
- Memory Ordering in Modern Microprocessors
  McKenney; Linux Journal 2005
- How to Make a Multiprocessor Computer That Correctly Executes Multiprocess Programs
  Lamport, 1979
- PowerPC Storage Model