

Shared Session Types for Safe, Practical Concurrency¹

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Carnegie Mellon University

Typelevel Summit Philadelphia 2019

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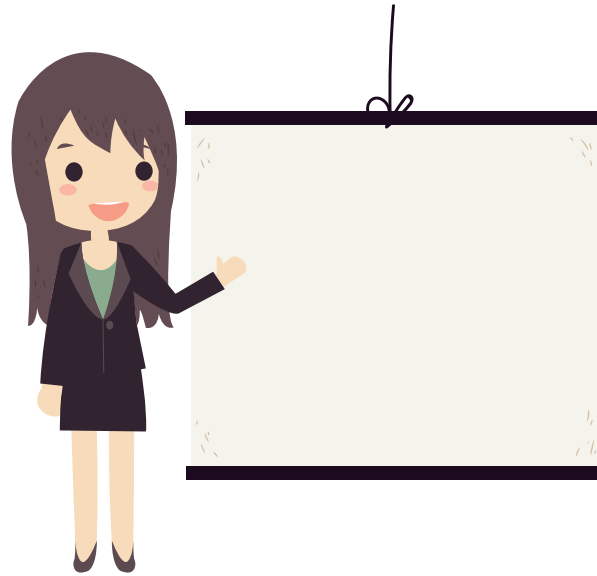
Concurrency is ubiquitous

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The world surrounding us is inherently concurrent

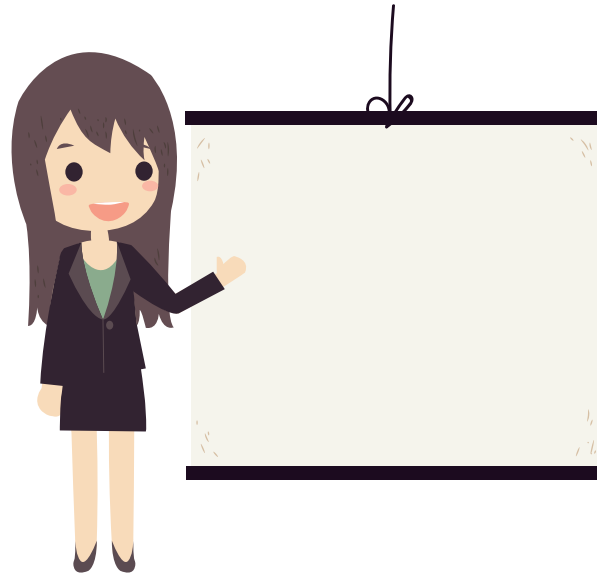
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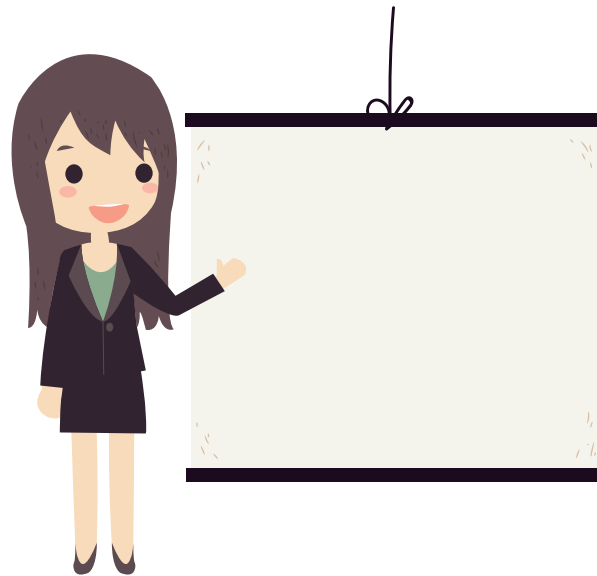
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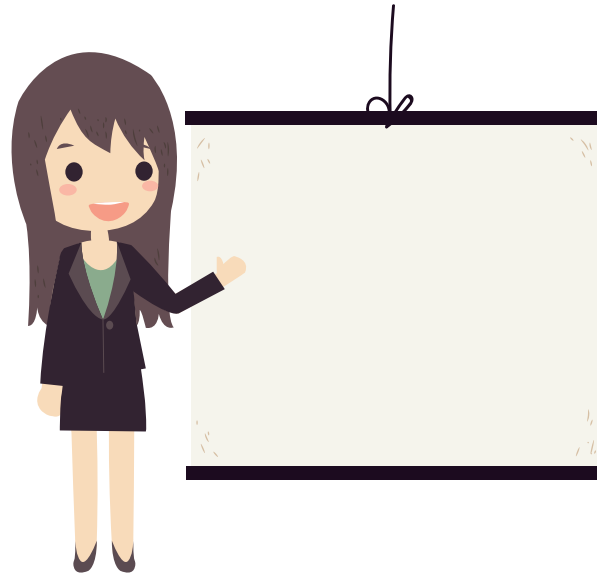
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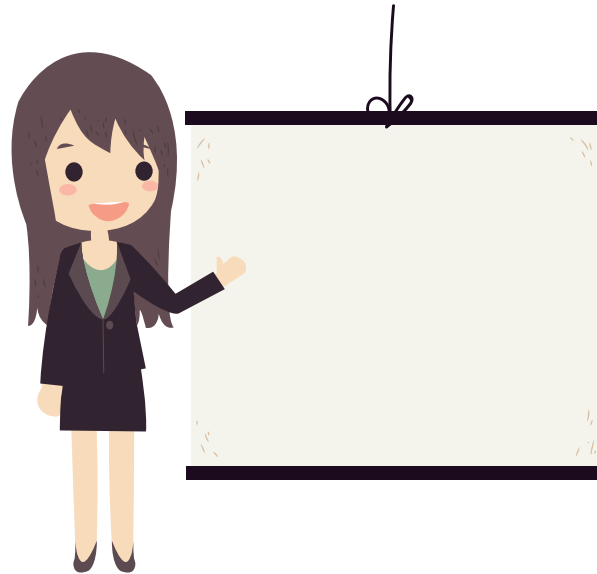
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Many programming problems demand concurrency

- Flight booking system, online store, search engines, etc.

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Computing devices themselves are concurrent

- Run various apps concurrently

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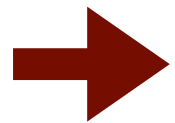


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programming languages must support concurrency

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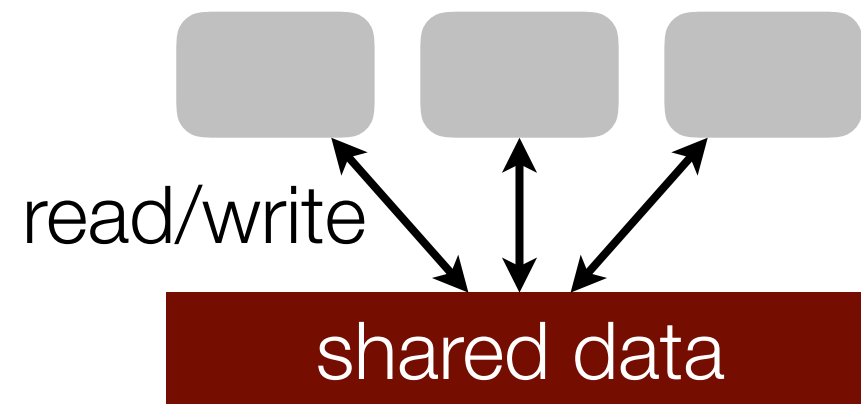
➔ programming languages must support concurrency


➔ concurrent programming is notoriously difficult and error-prone

Two models for concurrent programming

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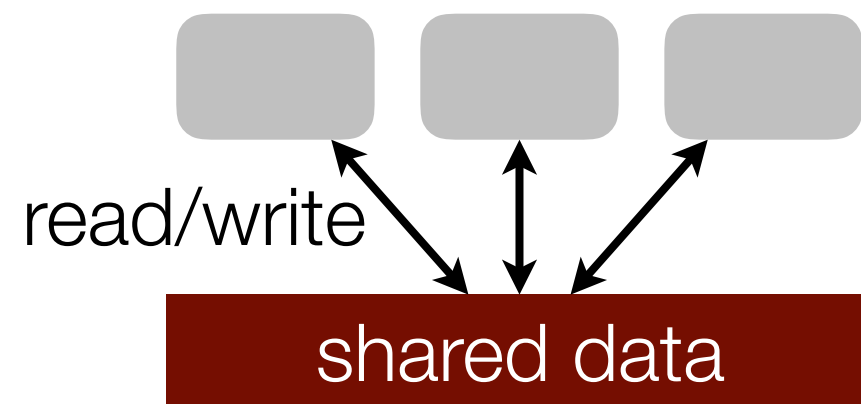
Shared memory



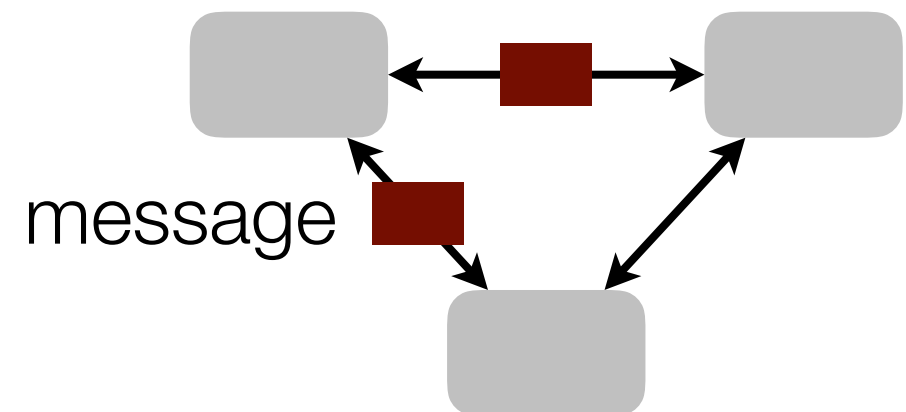
Legend:  concurrently executing component


Two models for concurrent programming

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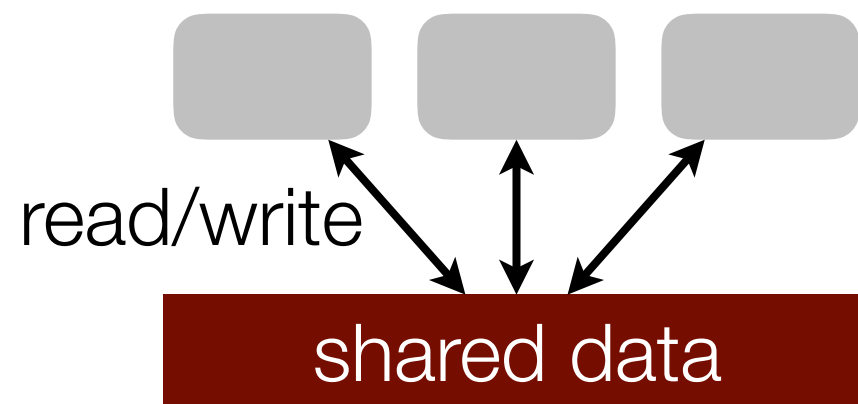
Message-passing



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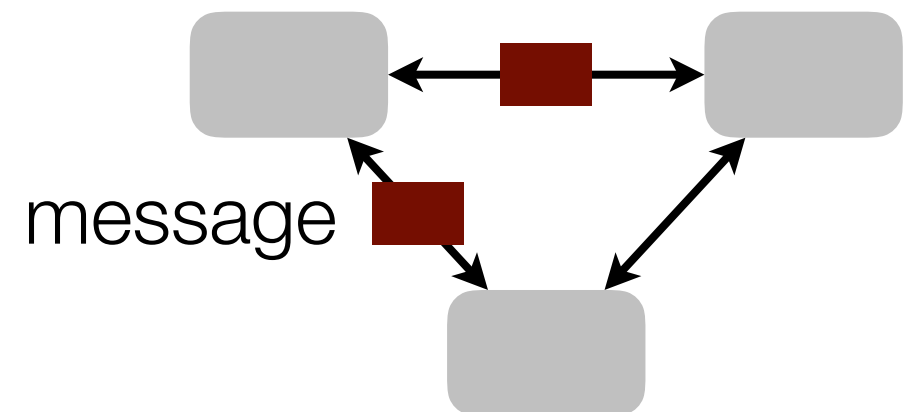
Two models for concurrent programming


Shared memory



- computation by reading from and writing to **shared data**

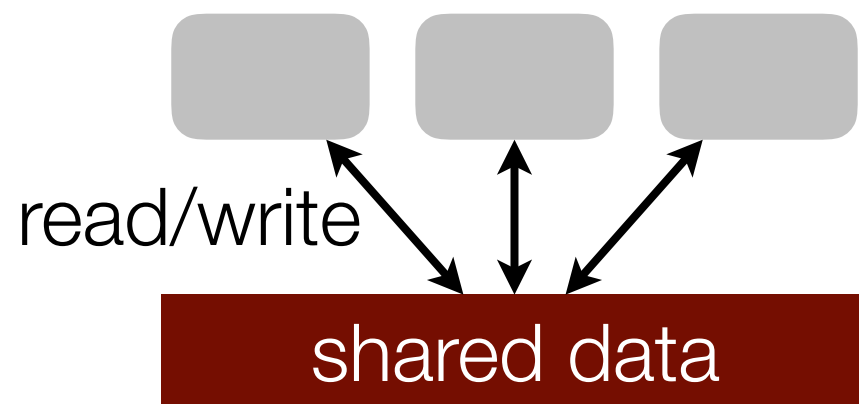
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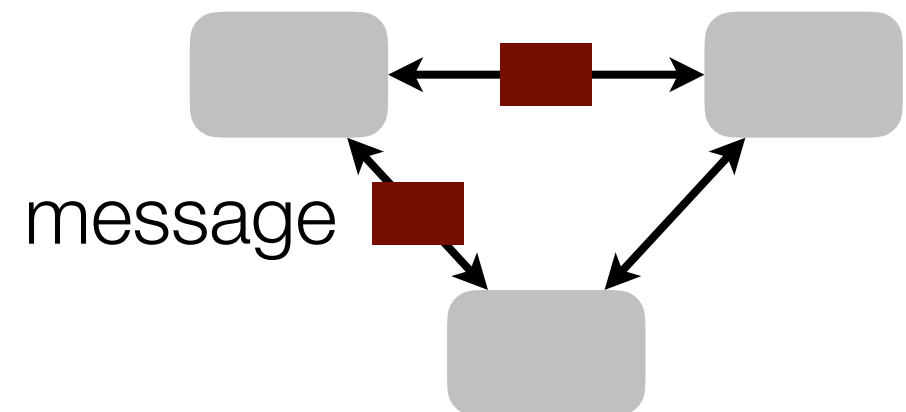
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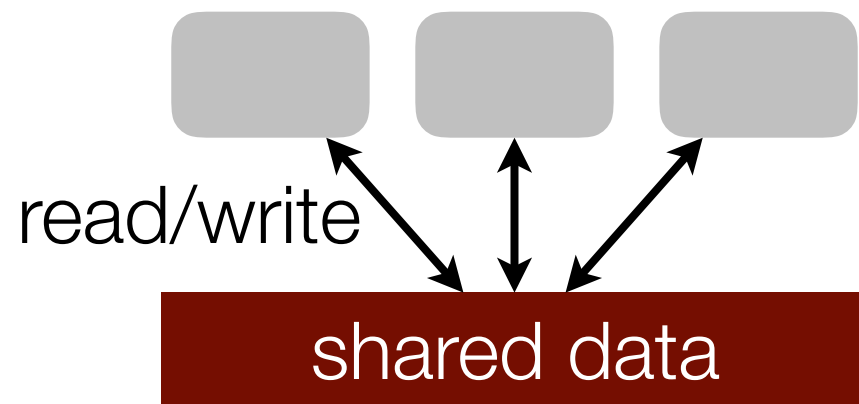


- computation by exchange of **messages**

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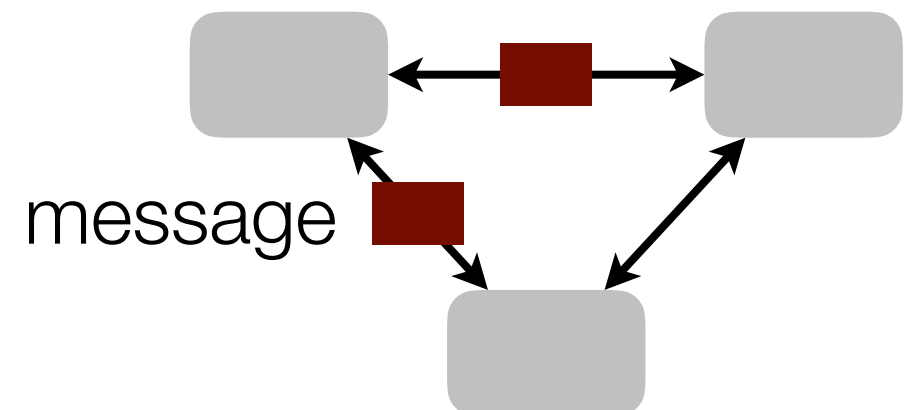
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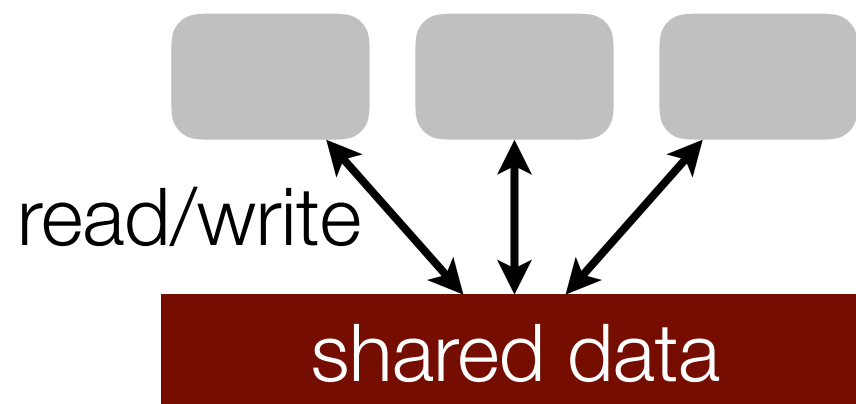
- computation by exchange of **messages**

➔ message-passing offers higher-level of abstraction

Legend:  concurrently executing component

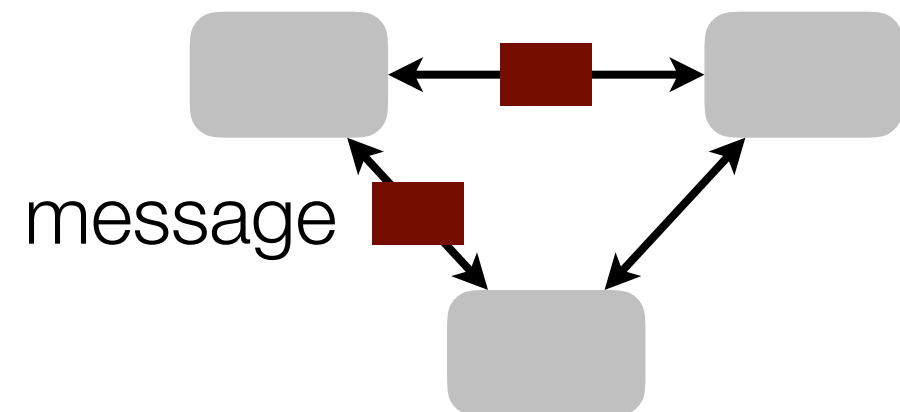
Two models for concurrent programming

Shared memory



- computation by reading from and writing to **shared data**


Message-passing



- computation by exchange of **messages**

➔ message-passing offers higher-level of abstraction

➔ message-passing adopted by practical languages such as Erlang, Go, and Rust.

Legend:  concurrently executing component

My research

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Goal: make concurrent programming safe and practical

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→ message-passing model

→ session types to express protocols of message exchange and reason sequentially about communicating parties

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Contributions:

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Contributions:

→ shared session types

My research

Goal: make concurrent programming safe and practical

- ➔ message-passing model
- ➔ session types to express protocols of message exchange and reason sequentially about communicating parties

Contributions:

- ➔ shared session types
 - ➔ accommodate real-world programming scenarios
 - ➔ guarantee protocol adherence, data-race-freedom, and deadlock-freedom

Session types, what are they? Why do we need them in practice?

Message-passing concurrency in Servo

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- Servo is Mozilla's next-generation browser engine under development and implemented in Rust.
- Servo uses message-passing concurrency for maximal parallelization of tasks, such as loading and rendering of webpage elements.

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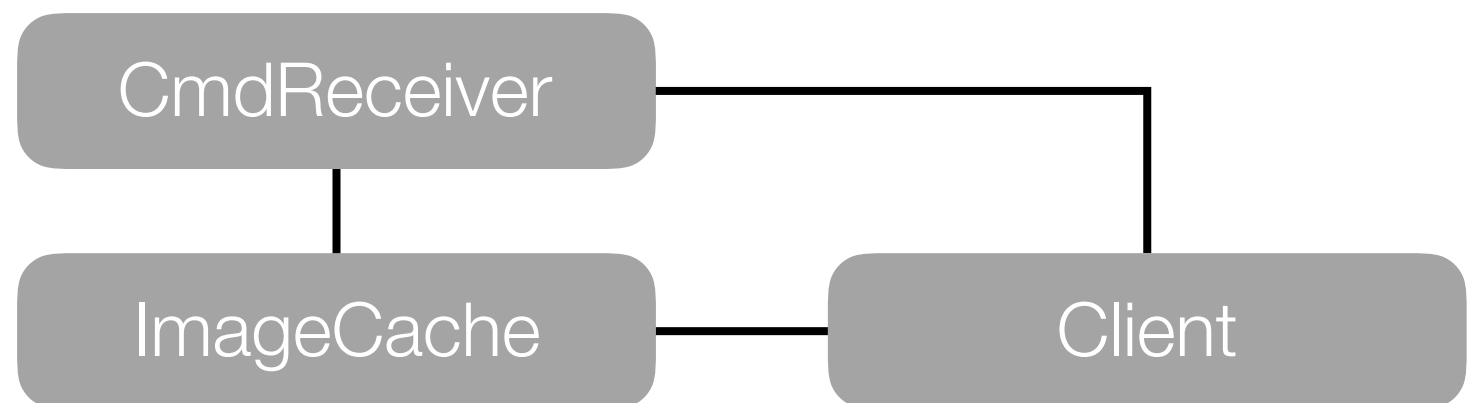


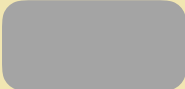
ImageCache

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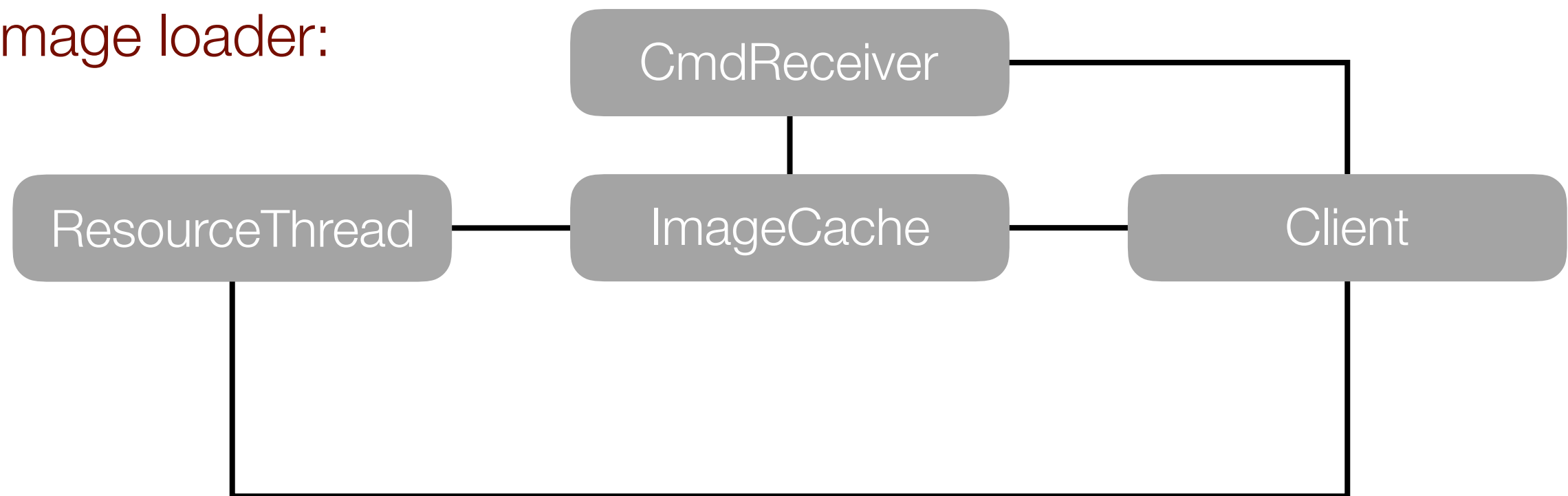


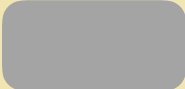
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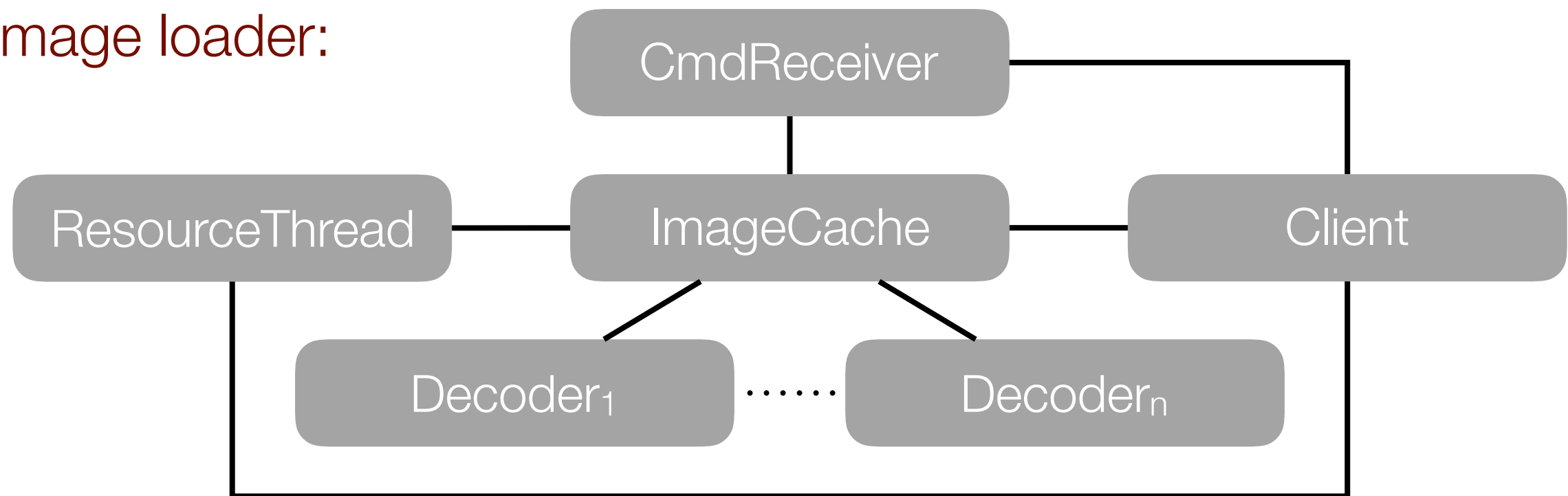



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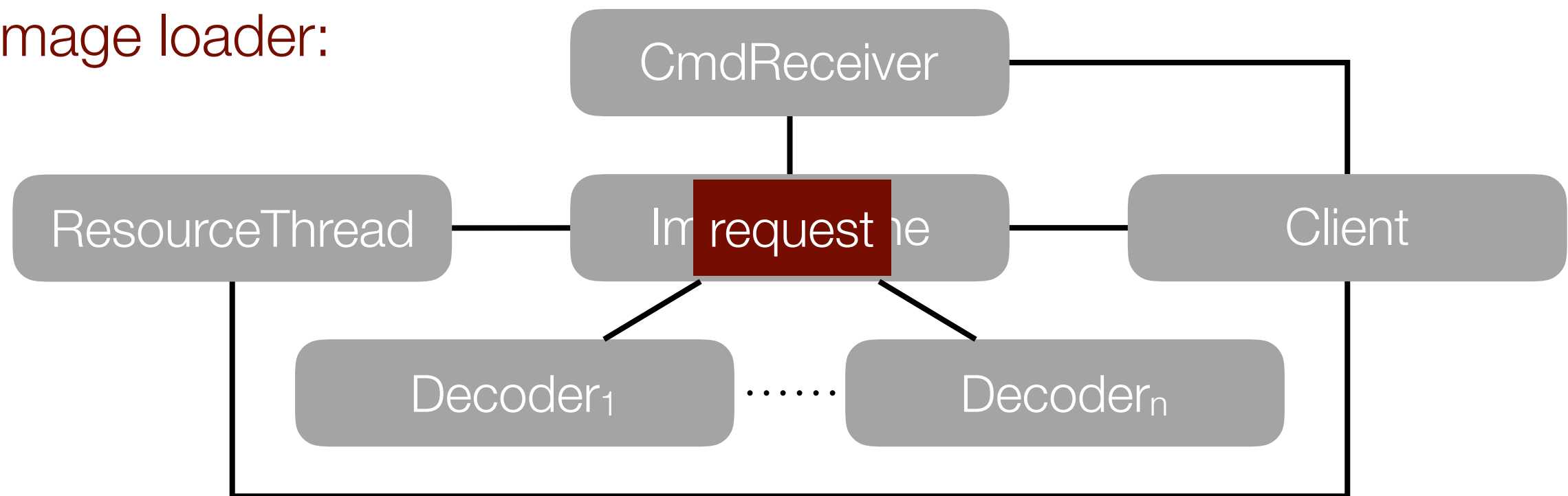


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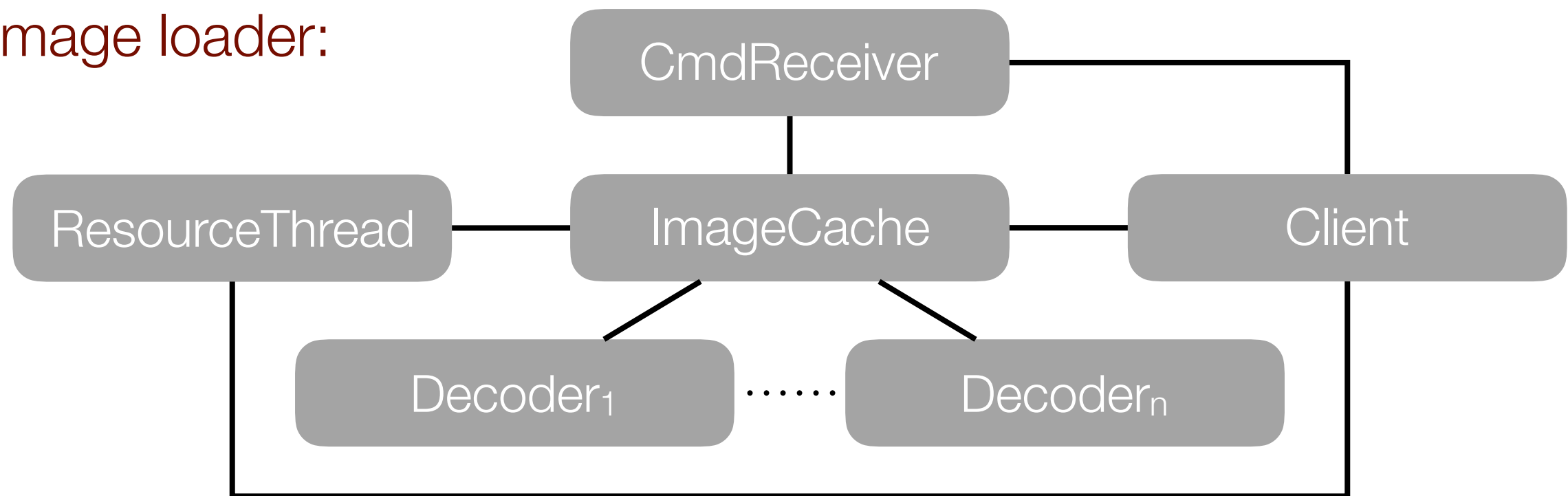



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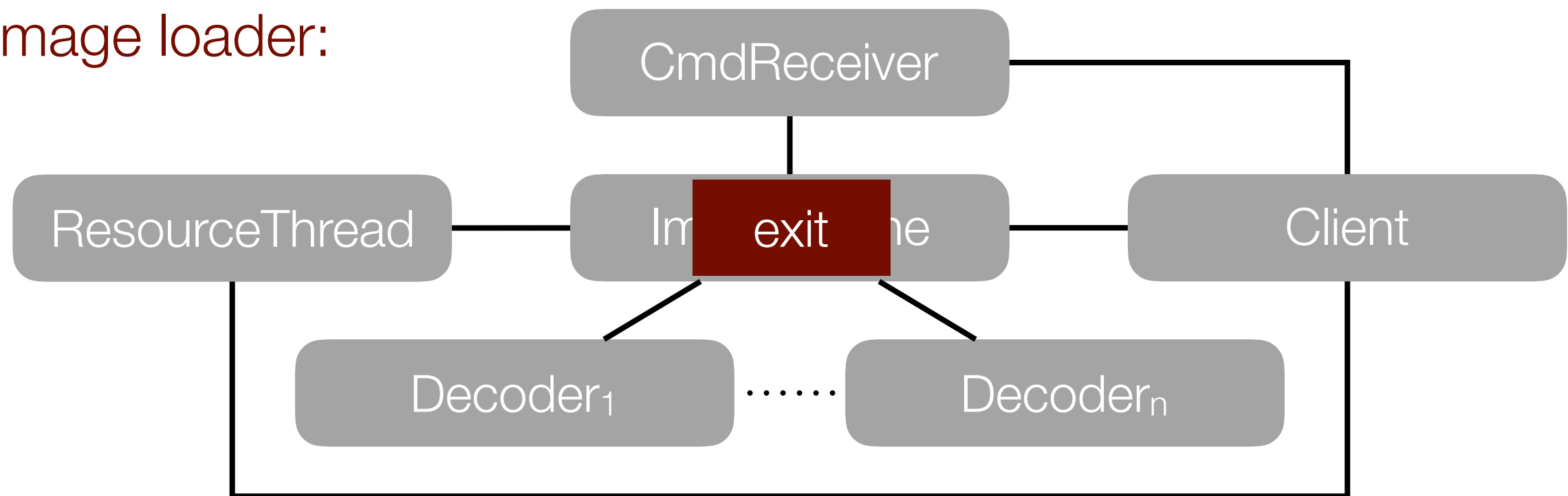


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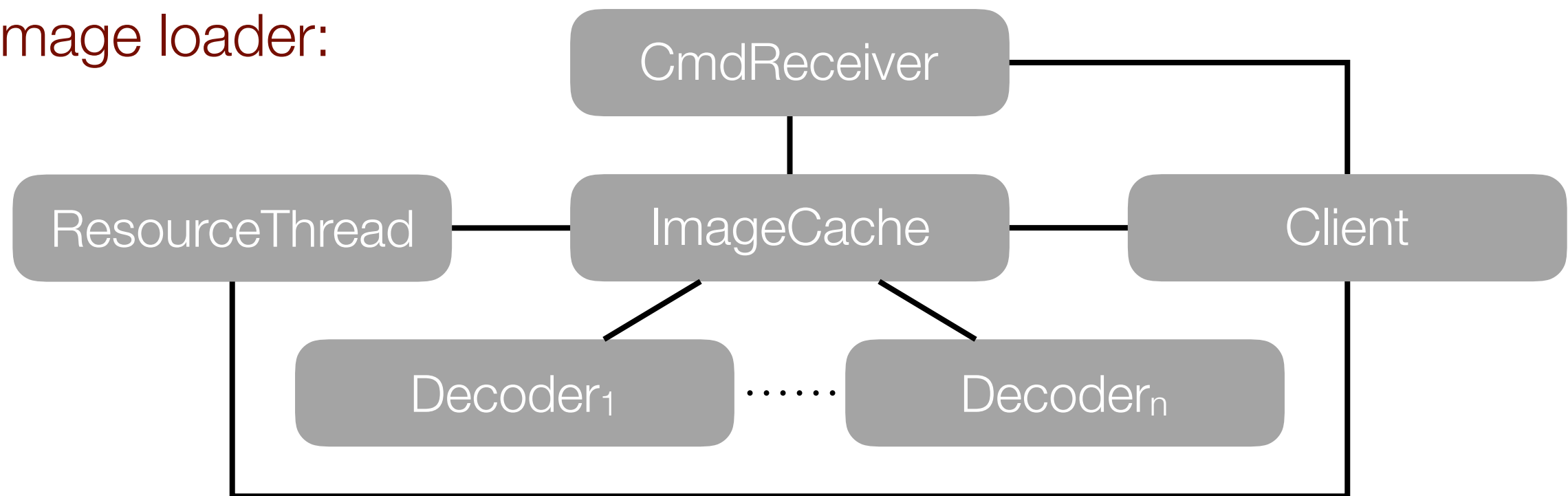



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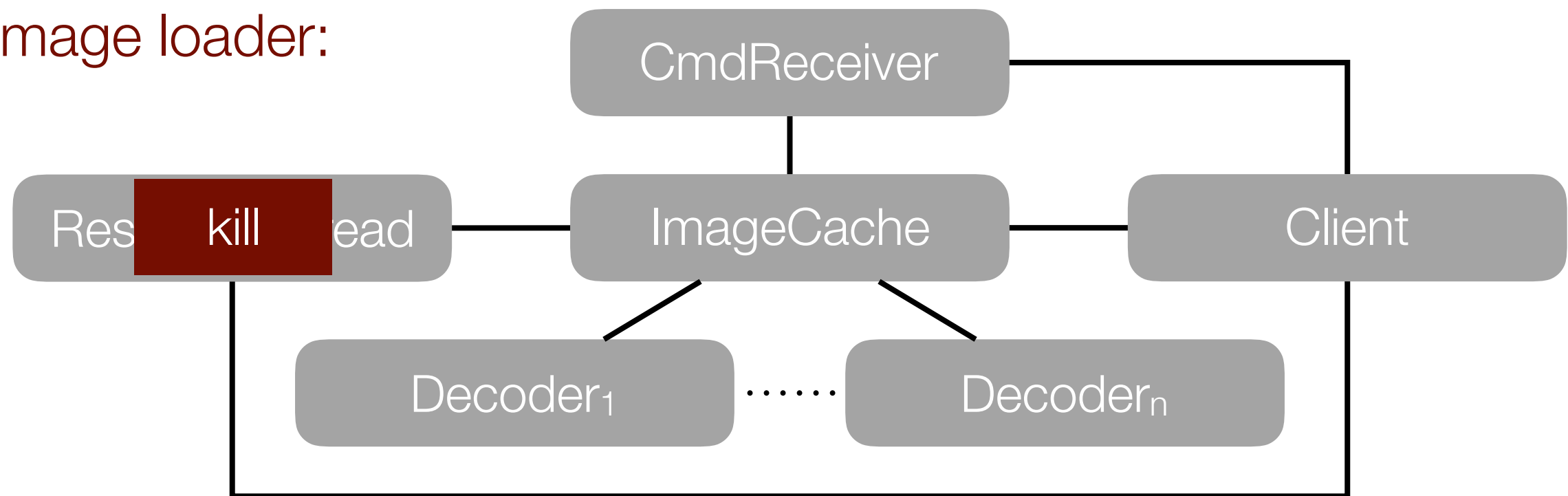



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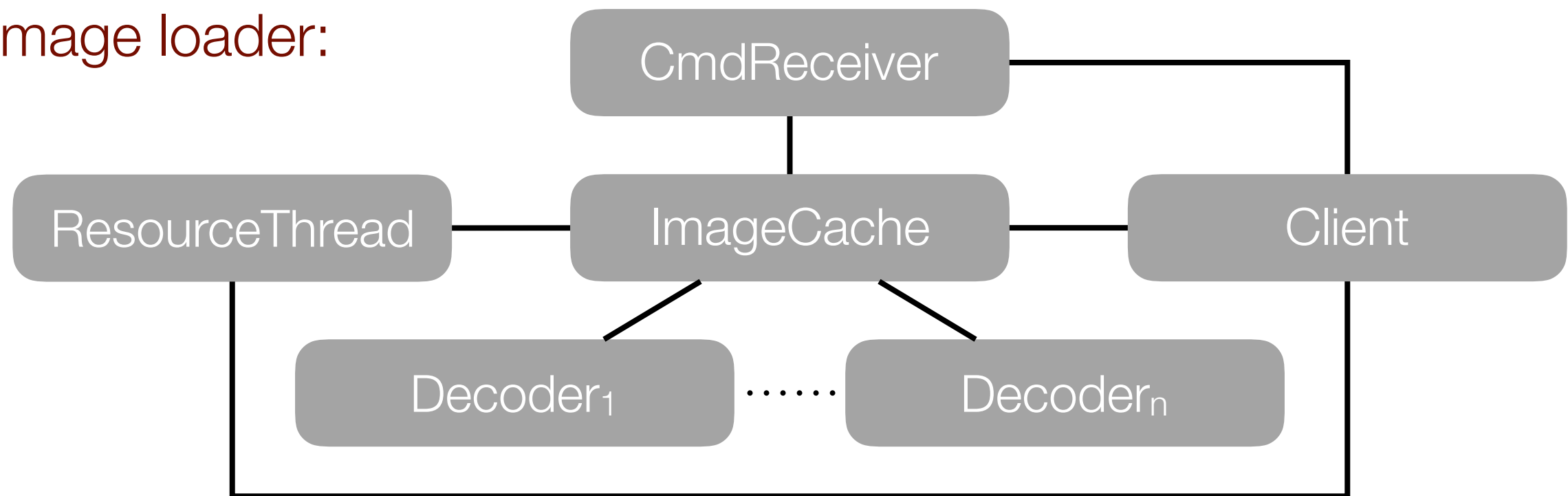
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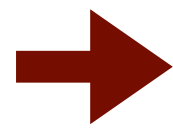


component, runs in separate thread



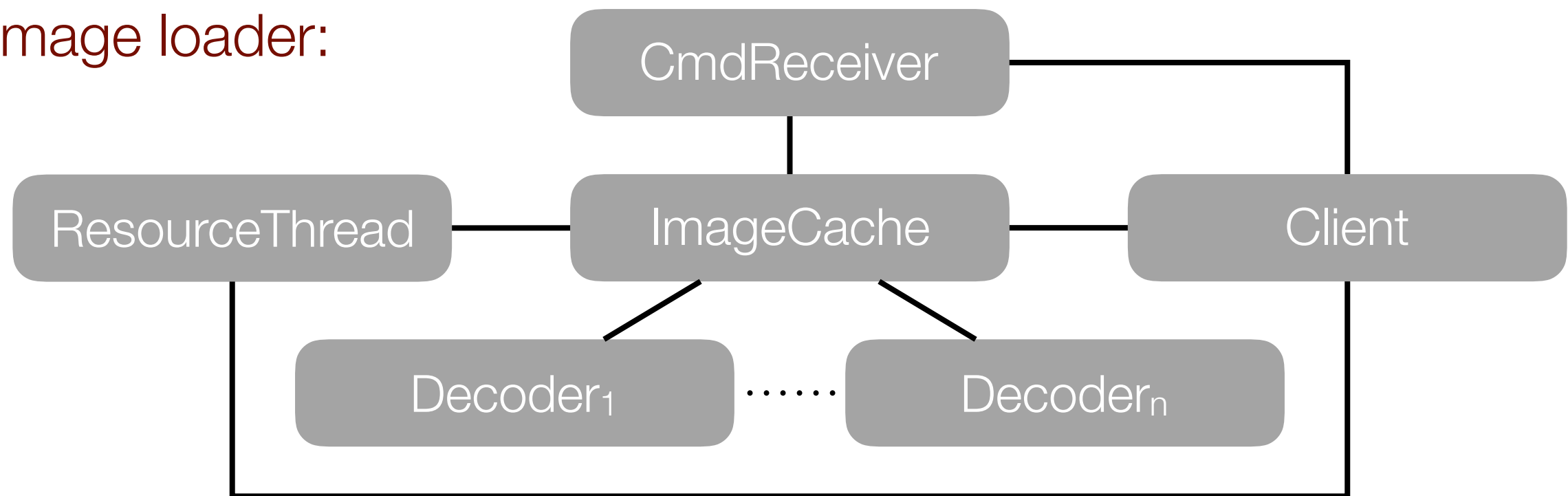
channel

Message-passing concurrency in Servo



To restrict the kinds of messages that can be sent over a channel, Rust channels are typed with enumeration types.

Image loader:



Legend:



component, runs in separate thread

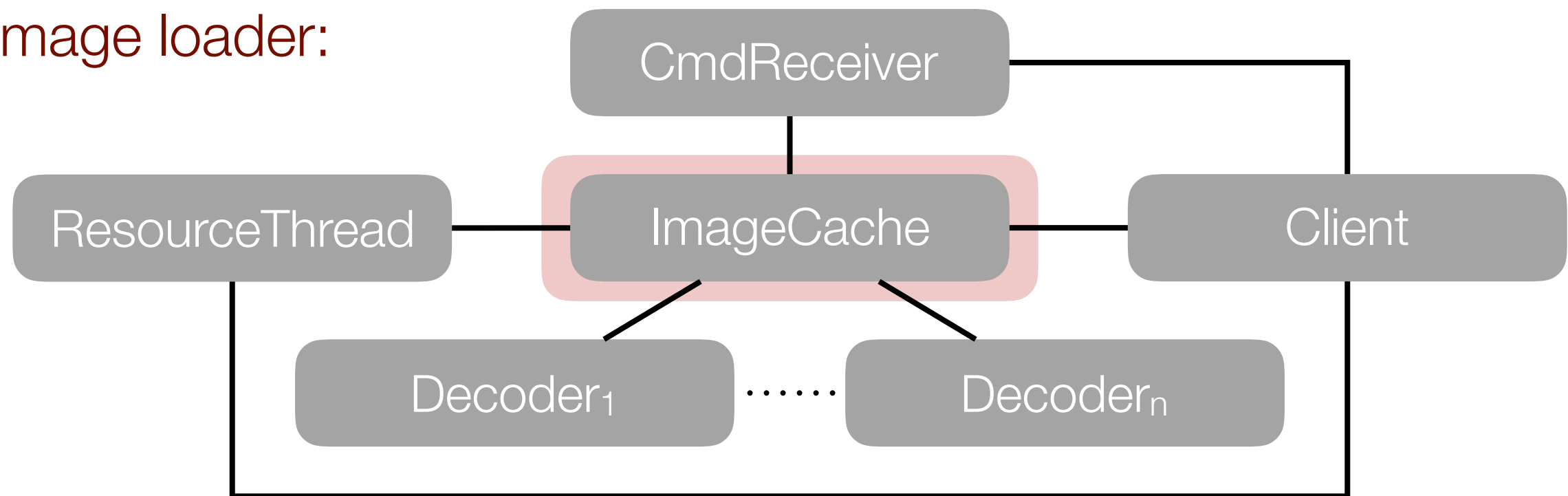


channel

Message-passing concurrency in Servo

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- ➔ Example: enumeration for ImageCache

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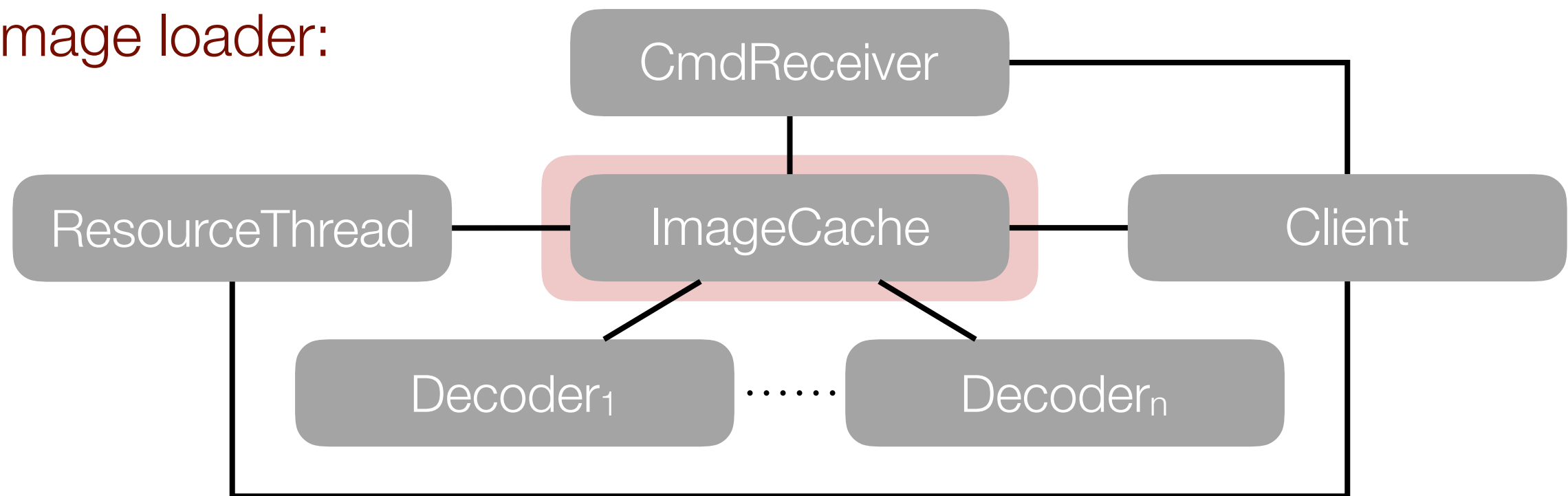

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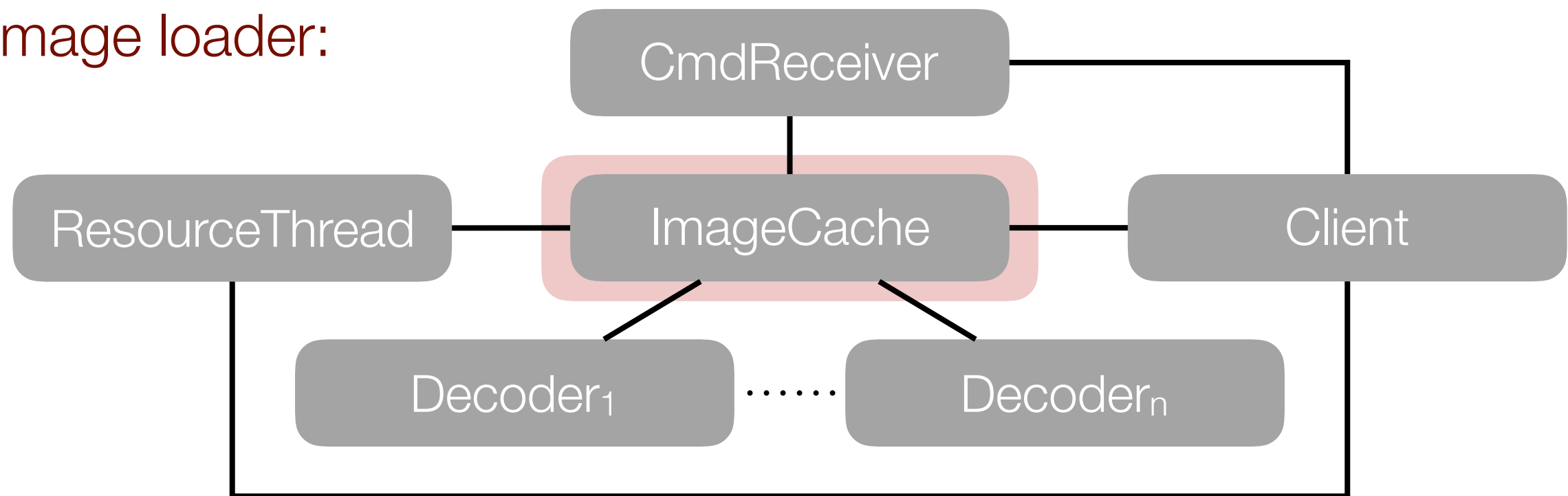
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pub enum ImageCacheCommand {
    RequestImage (Url, ImageCacheChan, Option<ImageResponder>),
    GetImageIfAvailable (Url, UsePlaceholder, IpcSender<Result<Arc<Image>, ImageState>>),
    StoreDecodeImage (Url, Vec<u8>),
    ...
    // Clients must wait for a response before shutting down ResourceThread
    Exit ()
}

```

Image loader:



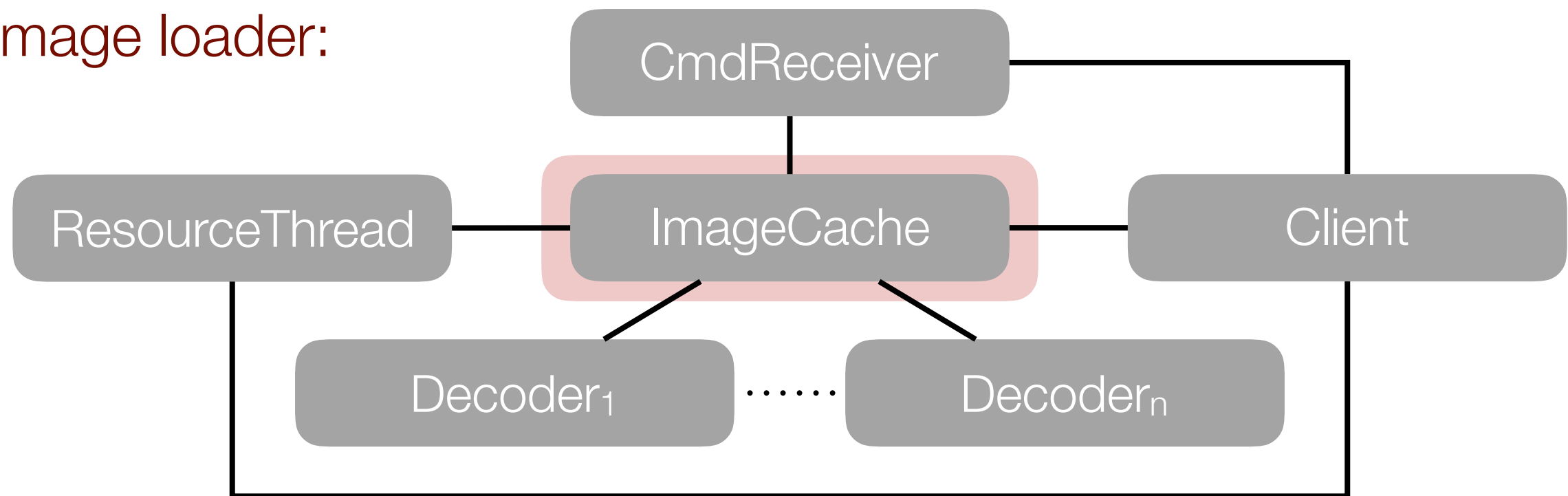
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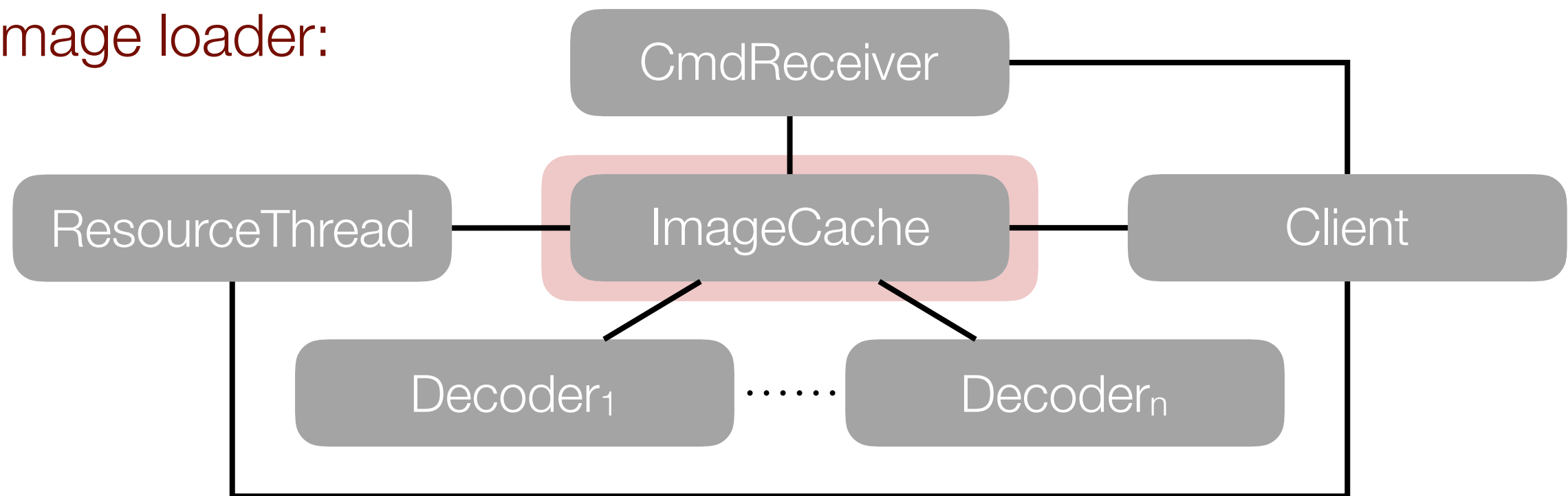
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```

one variant for each message

Image loader:



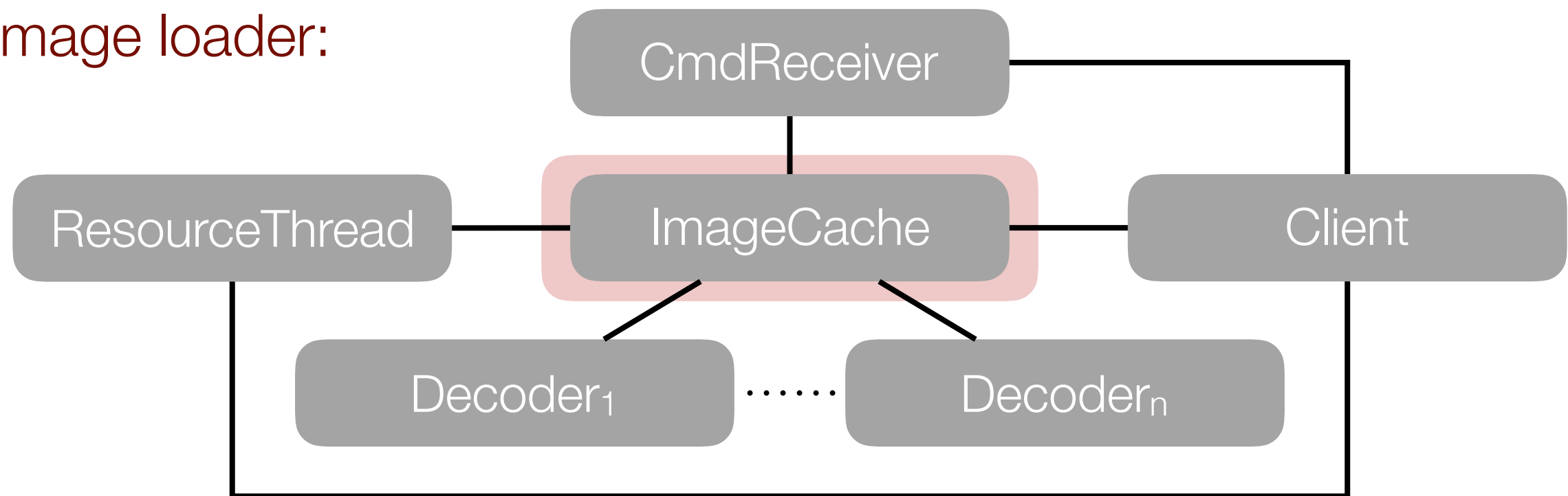
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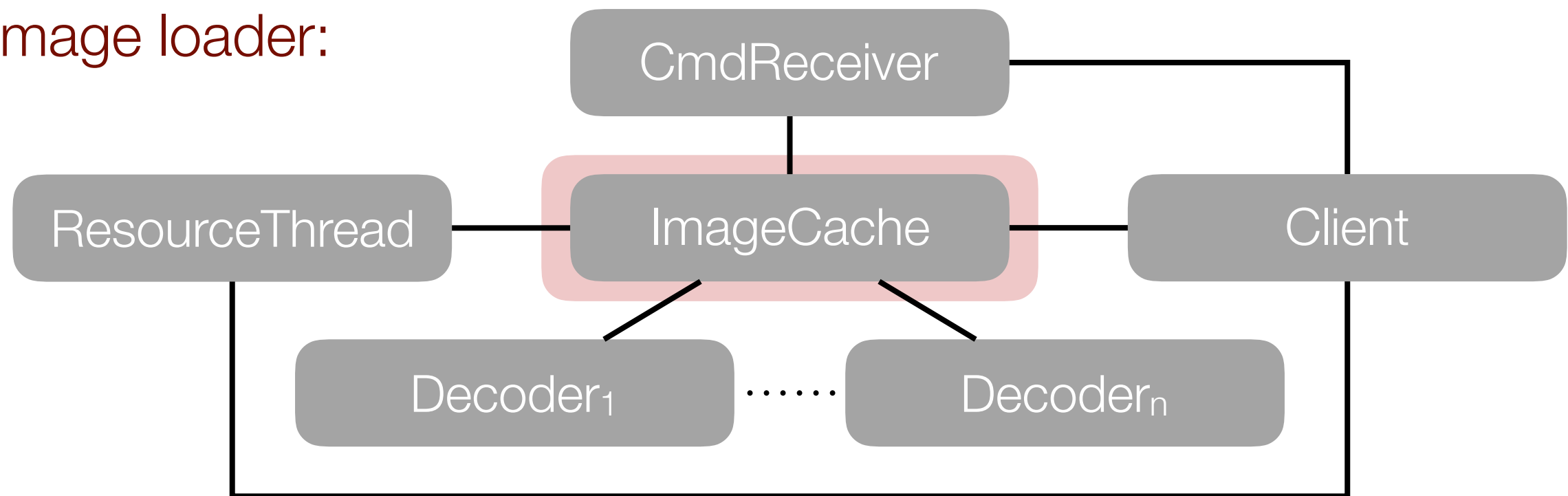
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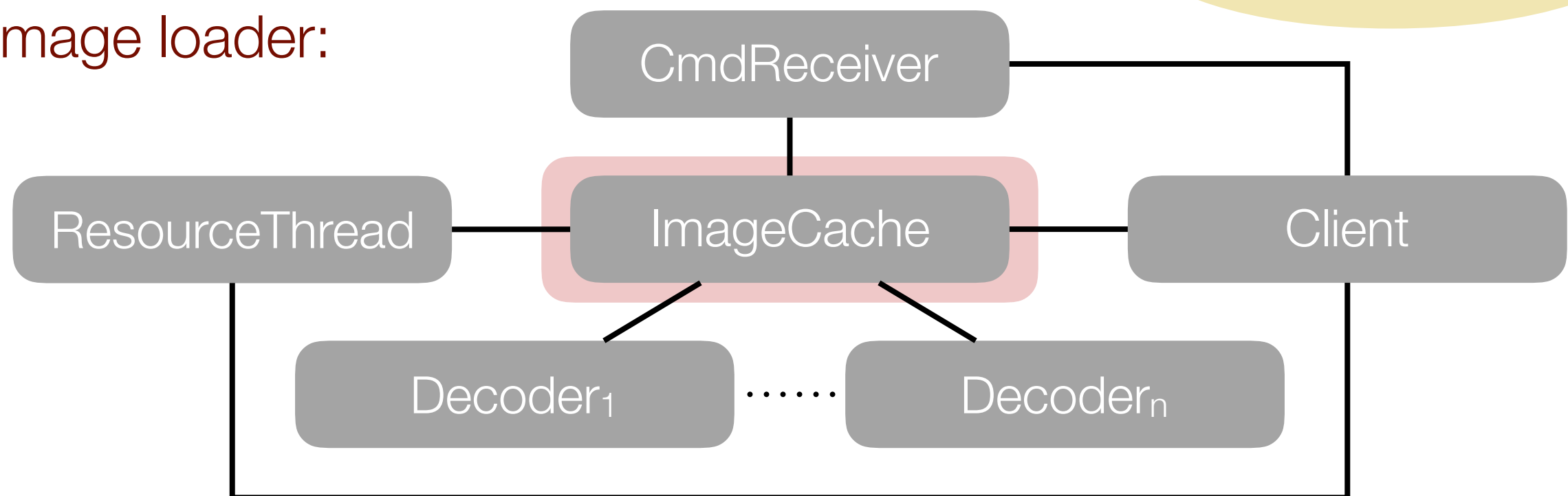

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implicit protocol

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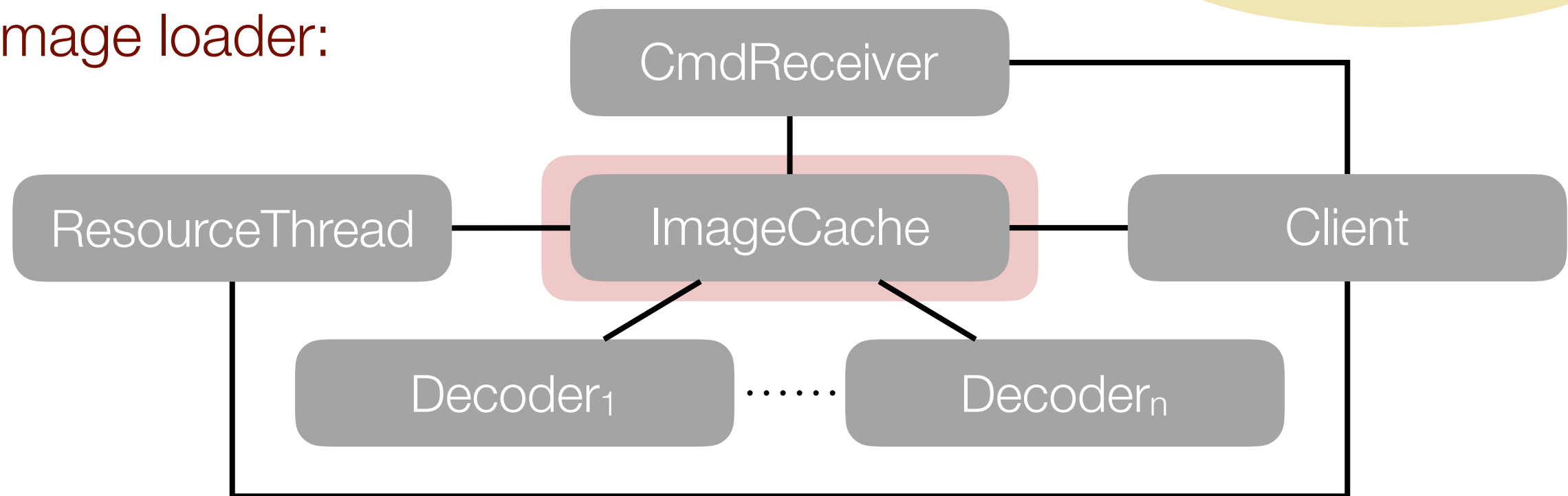
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```

protocol breaches
result in proliferation of panic! and
infinite waiting

implicit protocol

Image loader:



Legend: component, runs in separate thread — channel

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pub enum ImageCacheCommand {  
    RequestImage (Url, ImageCacheChan, Option<ImageCacheKey>),  
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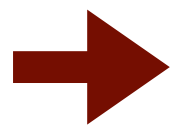
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enumeration types ensure that only defined messages can be communicated along a channel

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→ enumeration types ensure that only defined messages can be communicated along a channel

→ enumeration types fail to ensure that messages are sent according to the intended protocol

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→ let's use session types!

Session types

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A, B	\triangleq	$\&\{\overline{l_i} : A_i\}$	external choice
		$\oplus\{\overline{l_i} : A_i\}$	internal choice
		$A \multimap B$	channel input
		$A \otimes B$	channel output
		1	termination

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client
chooses among sending
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provider
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client
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provider terminates

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		$A \otimes B$	channel output
		$\mathbf{1}$	termination
		$T \rightarrow A$	value input
		$T \times A$	value output
T	\triangleq	$\text{int} \mid \text{string} \mid \dots$	

Session types

- ➔ Session types define protocols of message exchange.
- ➔ “protocol = sequence of actions”

support communication of values	A, B	\triangleq	$\&\{\overline{l_i : A_i}\}$	external choice
			$\oplus\{\overline{l_i : A_i}\}$	internal choice
			$A \multimap B$	channel input
			$A \otimes B$	channel output
			$\mathbf{1}$	termination
			$T \rightarrow A$	value input
			$T \times A$	value output
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Session type for image loader

A, B	\triangleq	$\&\{\overline{l_i : A_i}\}$	external choice
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ImgCacheCmd =

Session type for image loader

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$\text{ImgCacheCmd} = \& \{$

 $\}$

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$\text{ImgCacheCmd} = \& \{ \text{RequestImage} : \\ \dots \\ \text{Exit} : \\ \}$

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$\text{ImgCacheCmd} = \& \{ \text{RequestImage} : \text{string} \rightarrow \text{Requester} \multimap \text{ImgCacheCmd},$
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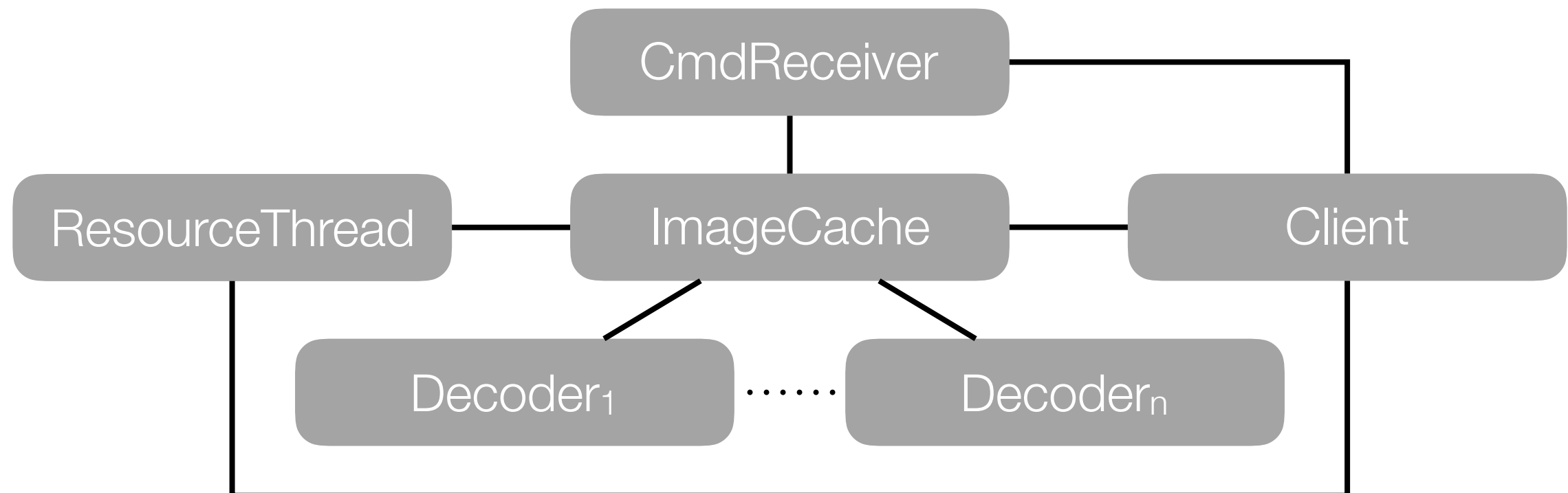
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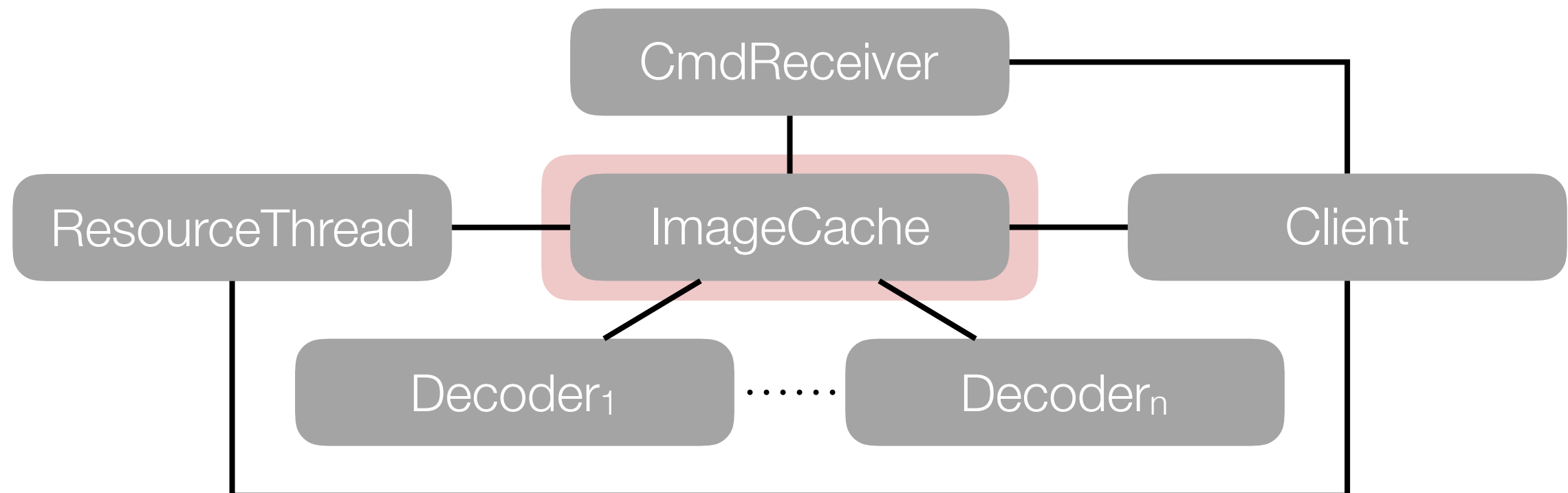
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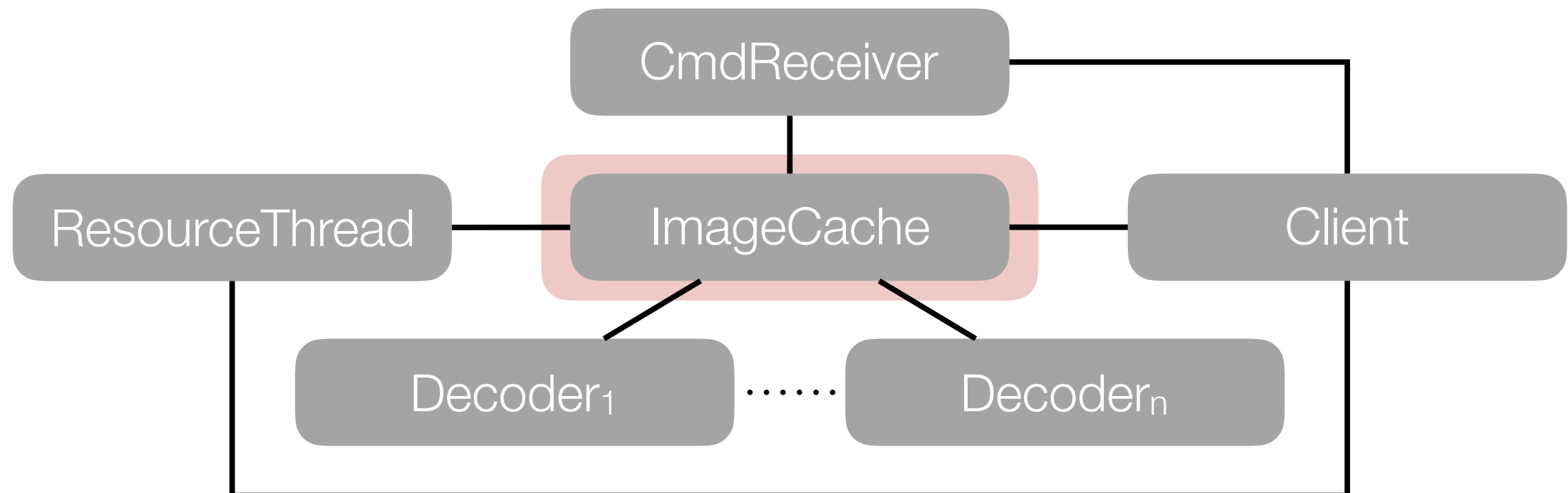
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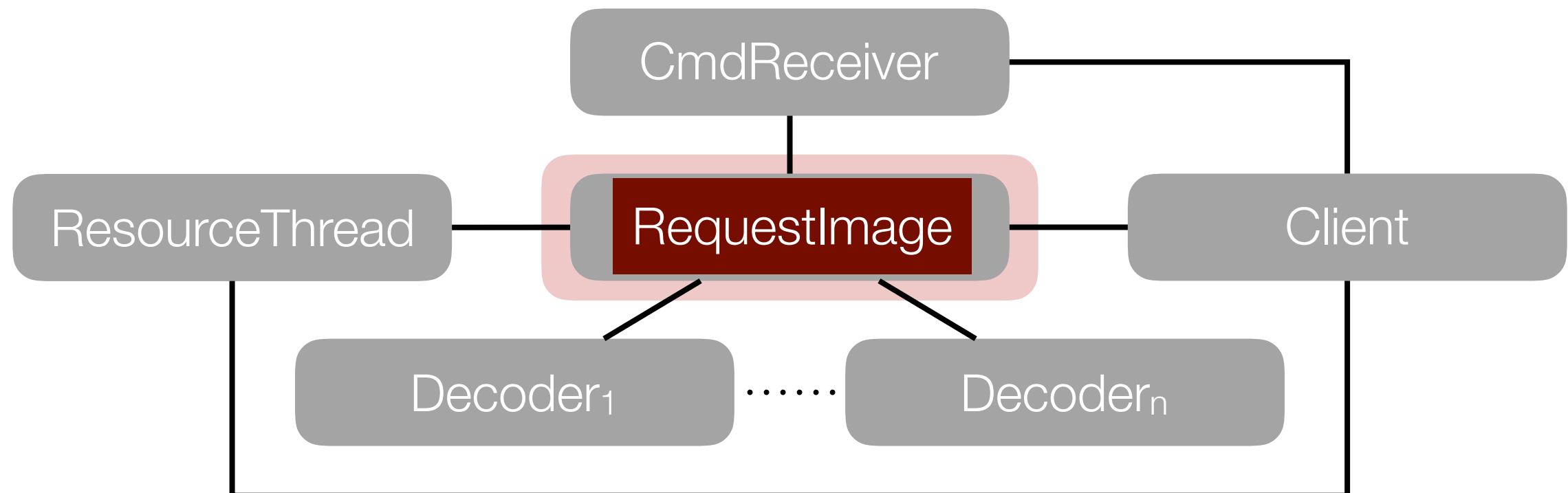
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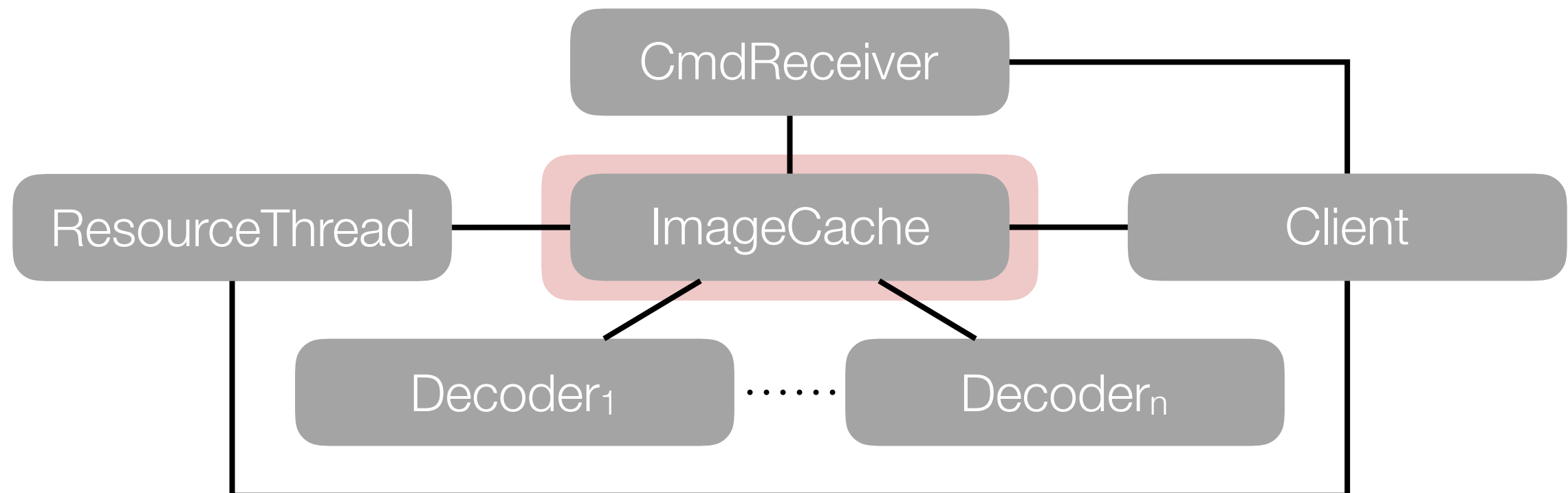
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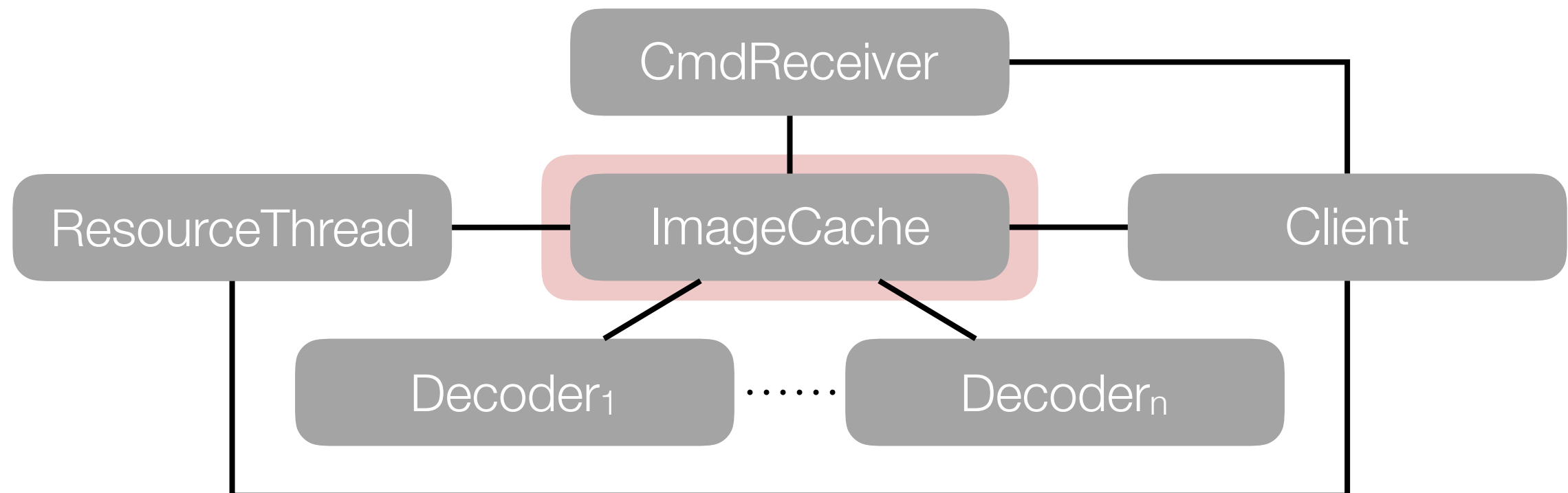
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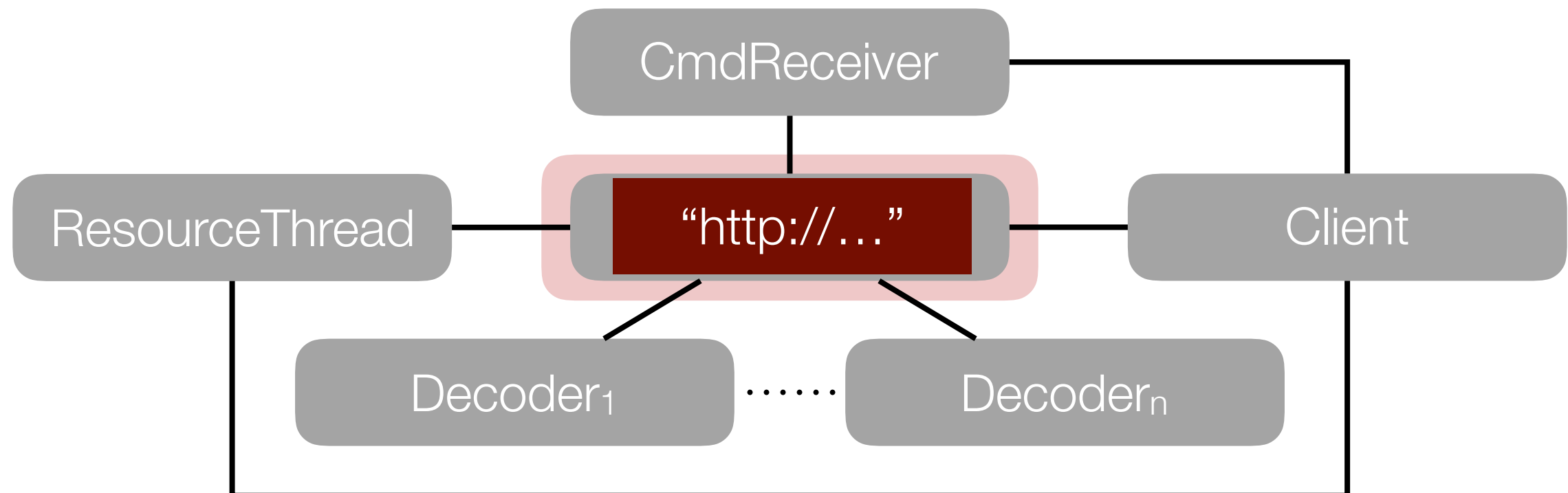
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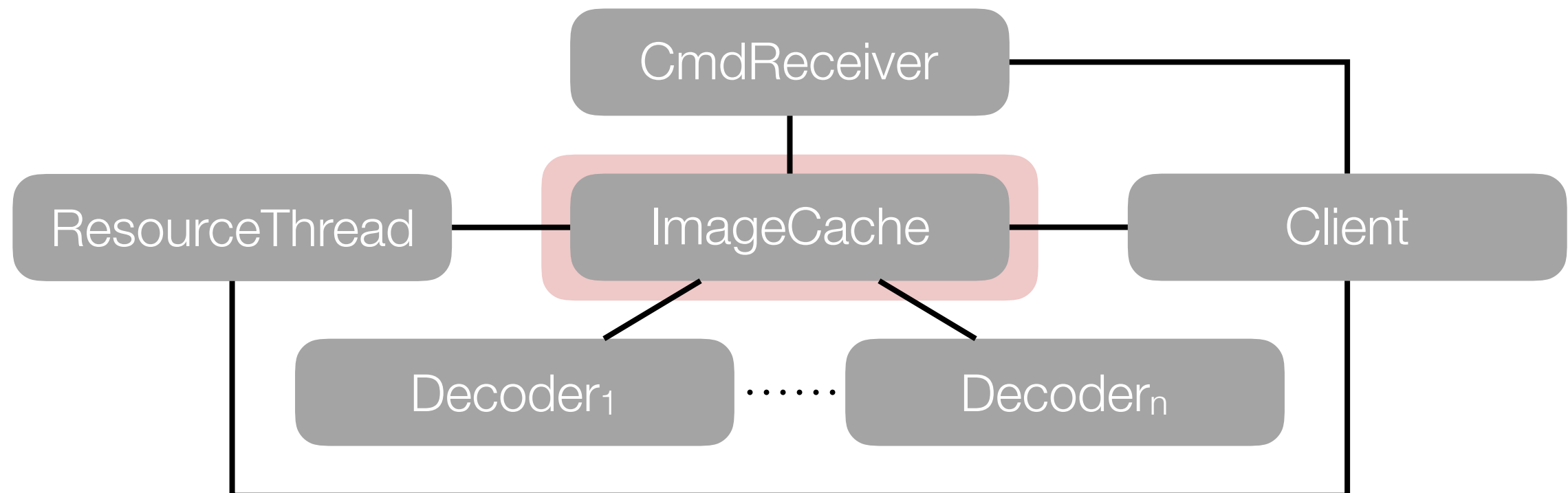
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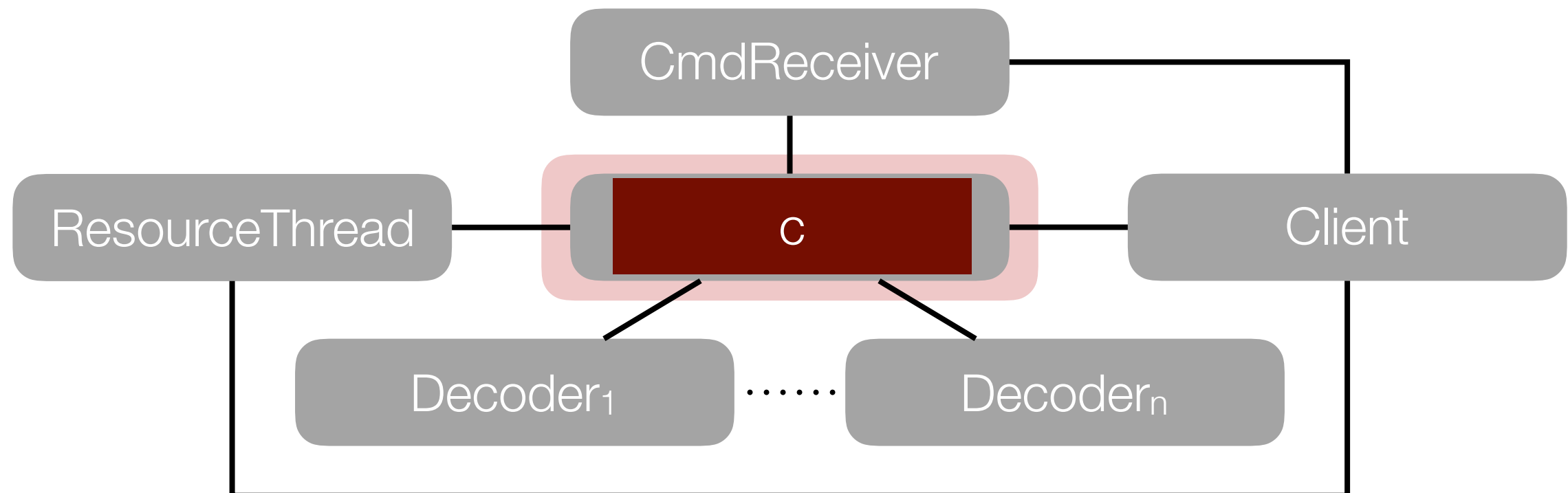
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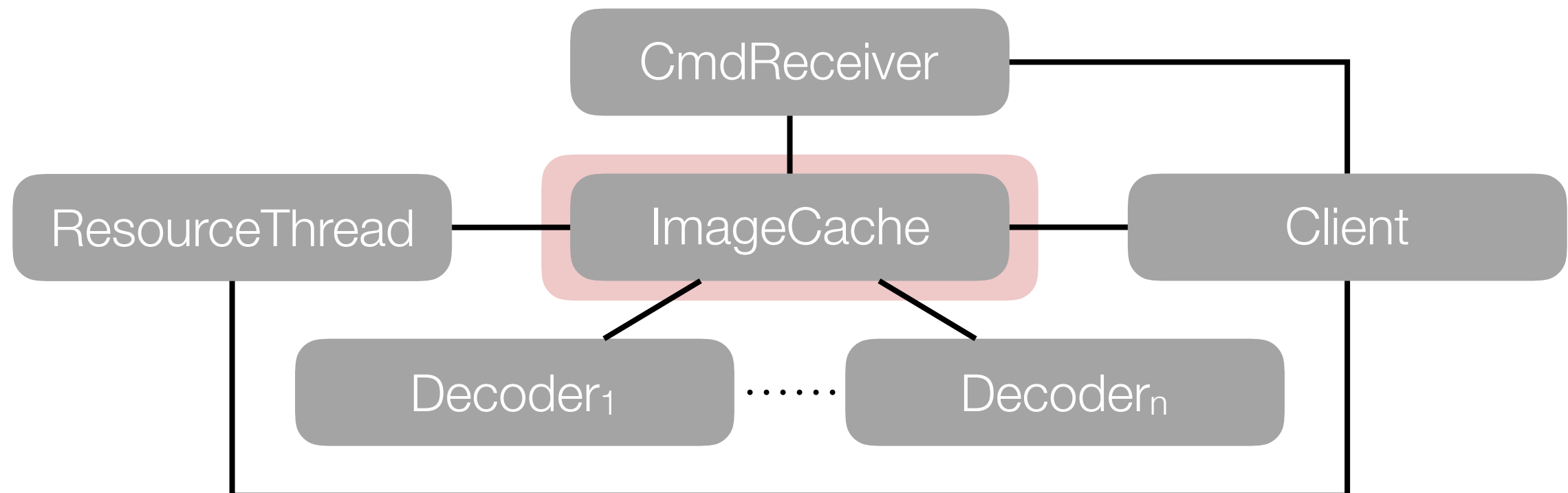
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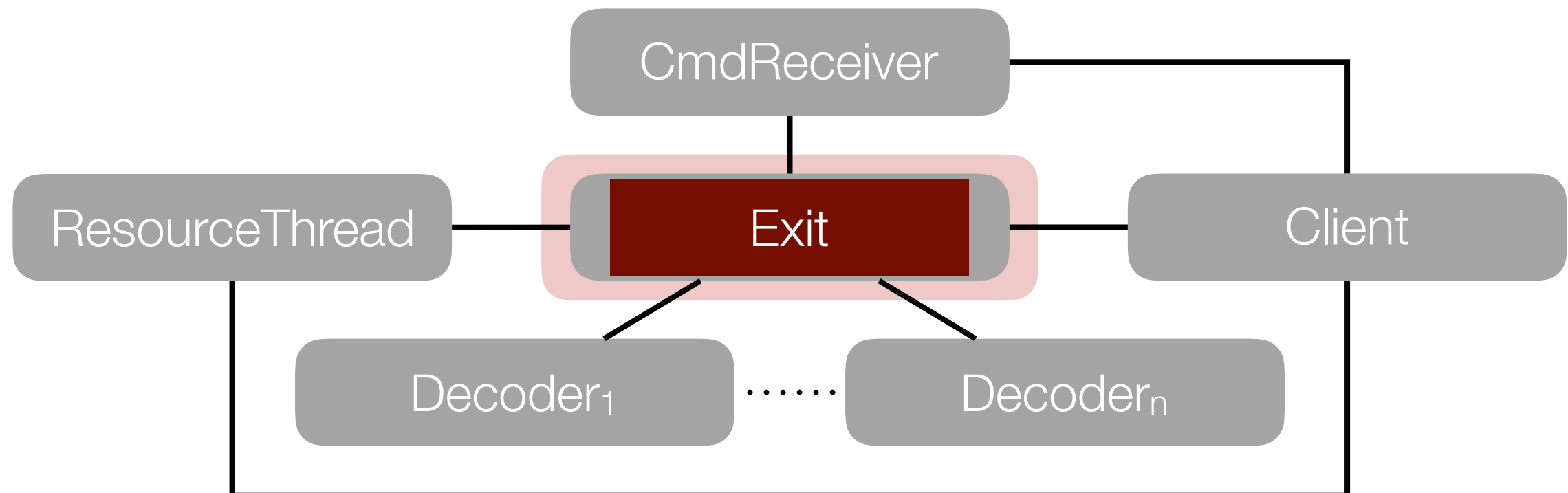
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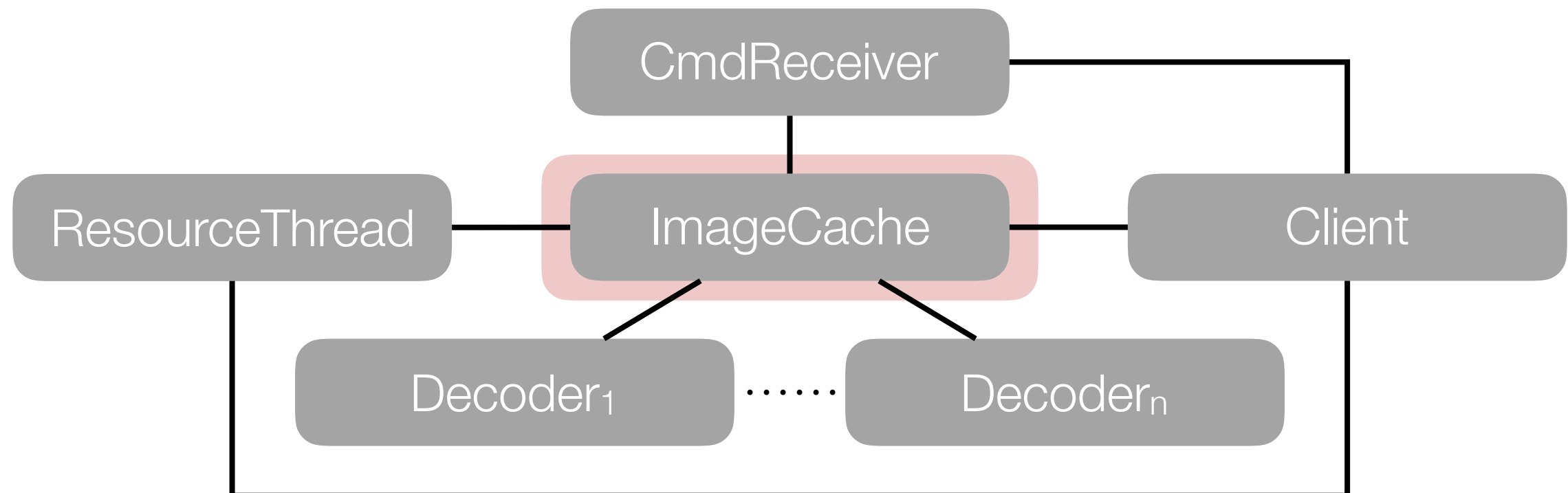
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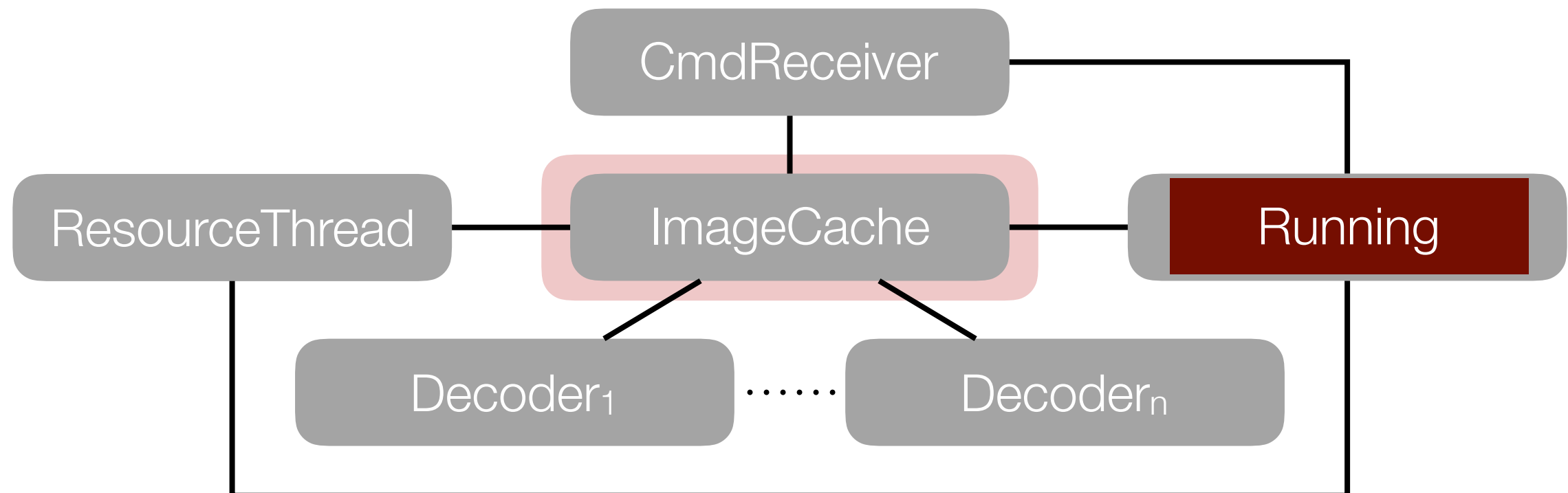
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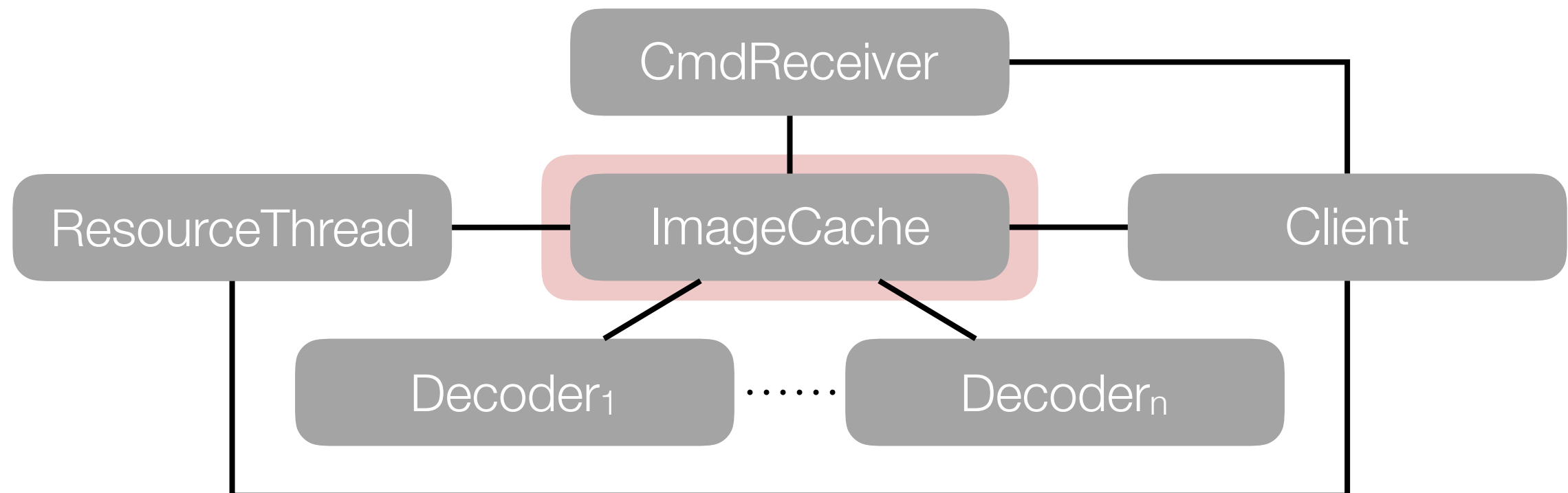
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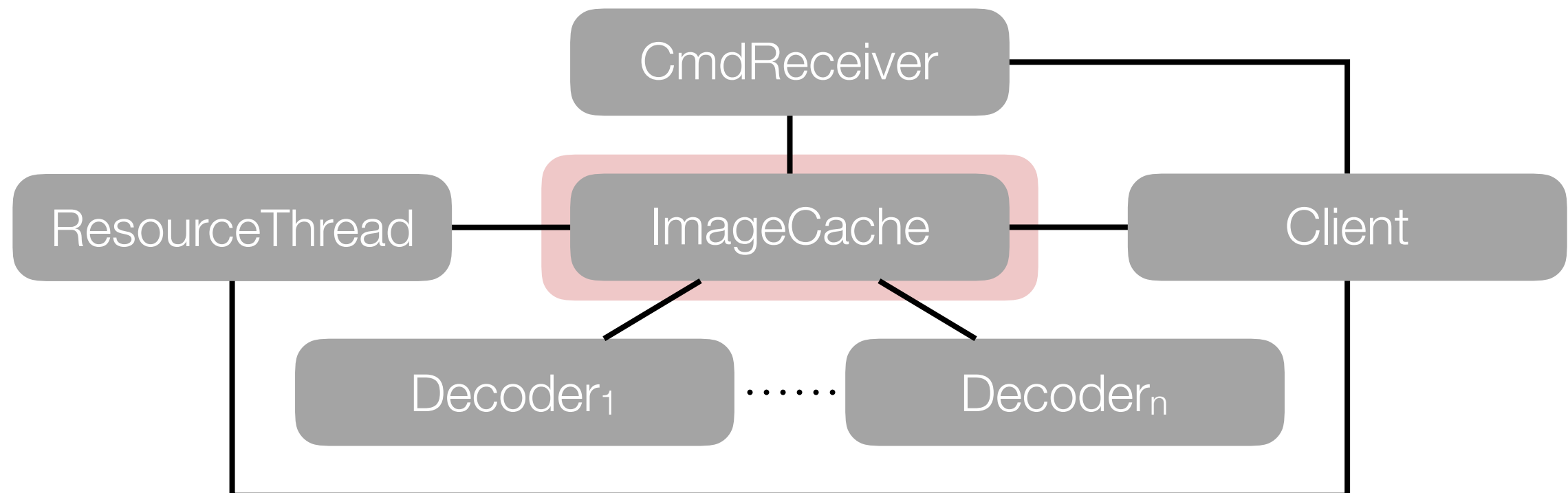
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ImageCache: ImgCacheCmd



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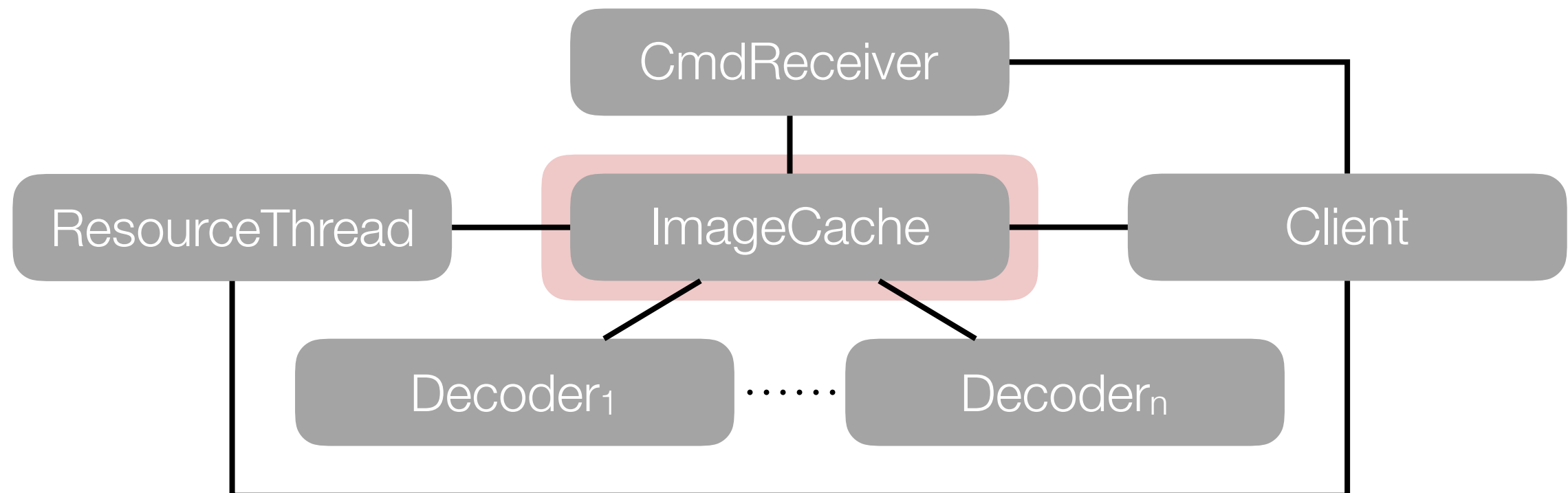
ImageCache: ImgCacheCmd



Session type for image loader

→ components change their session type along with message exchange

ImageCache: ImgCacheCmd



Taking stock

Taking stock

- Session types make explicit the protocols of message exchange between concurrently executing components.

Taking stock

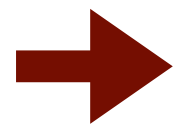
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Session types are the types of message-passing concurrency.

Session types in research and practice

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Research

- active research area since inception in 90s [Honda 1993]
- logical reconstruction based on linear logic, providing strong guarantees [Caires & Pfenning 2010, Wadler 2012]
- extension of logical session types to sharing [Balzer & Pfenning ICFP 2017, Balzer et al. CONCUR 2018, Balzer et al. ESOP 2019]

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- Lightweight integration of session types or session libraries (with varying static guarantees) into Scala, Java, Haskell, OCaml, Go, Rust, Python.
- Collaboration with Mozilla Research on integrating our work.

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Logic-based shared session types

Linear logic session types

Linear logic session types

Provide strong guarantees:

- Data-race-freedom
- Protocol adherence (a.k.a. session fidelity, preservation)
- Deadlock-freedom (a.k.a. progress)

Linear logic session types



exactly one client

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exactly one client

processes graph forms
a tree at run-time

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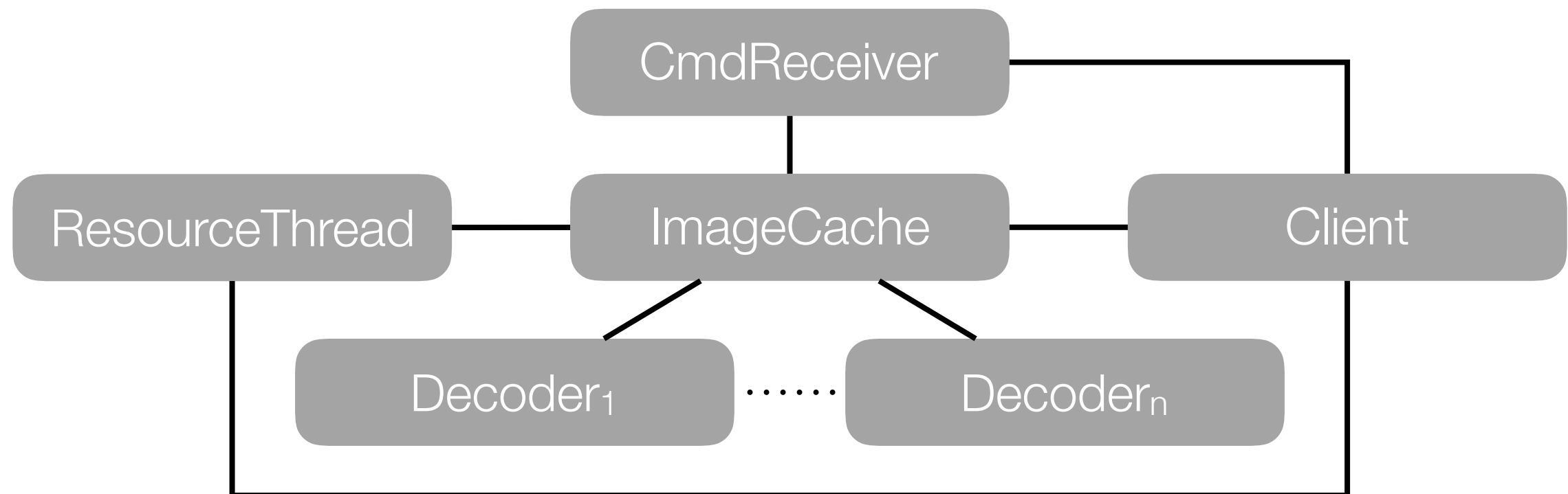
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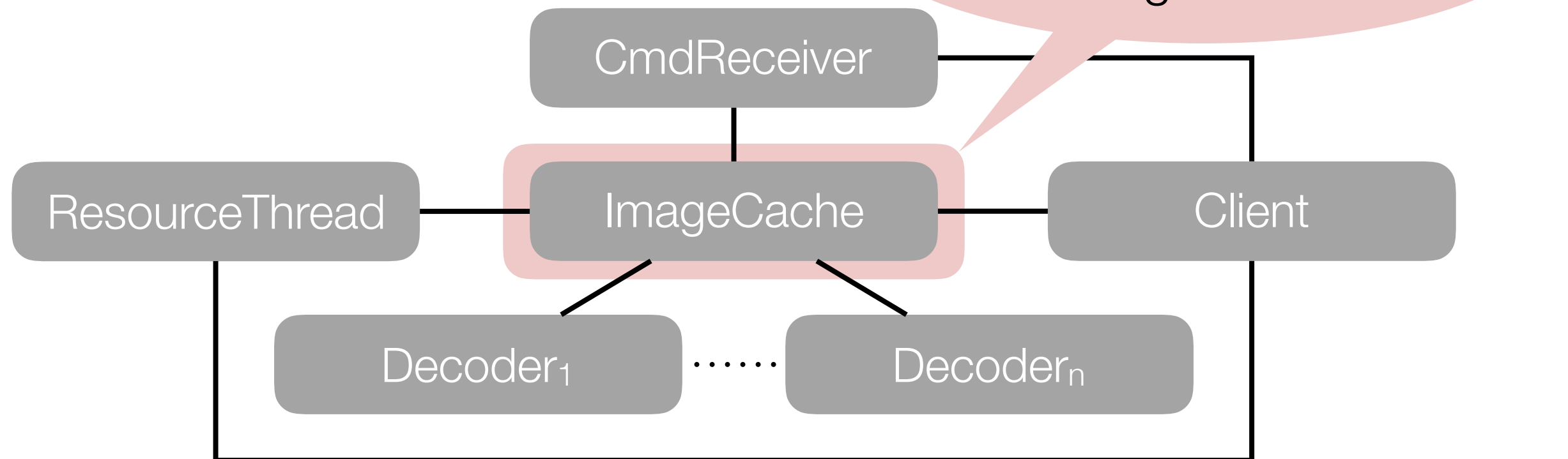


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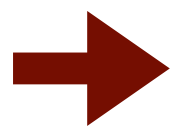


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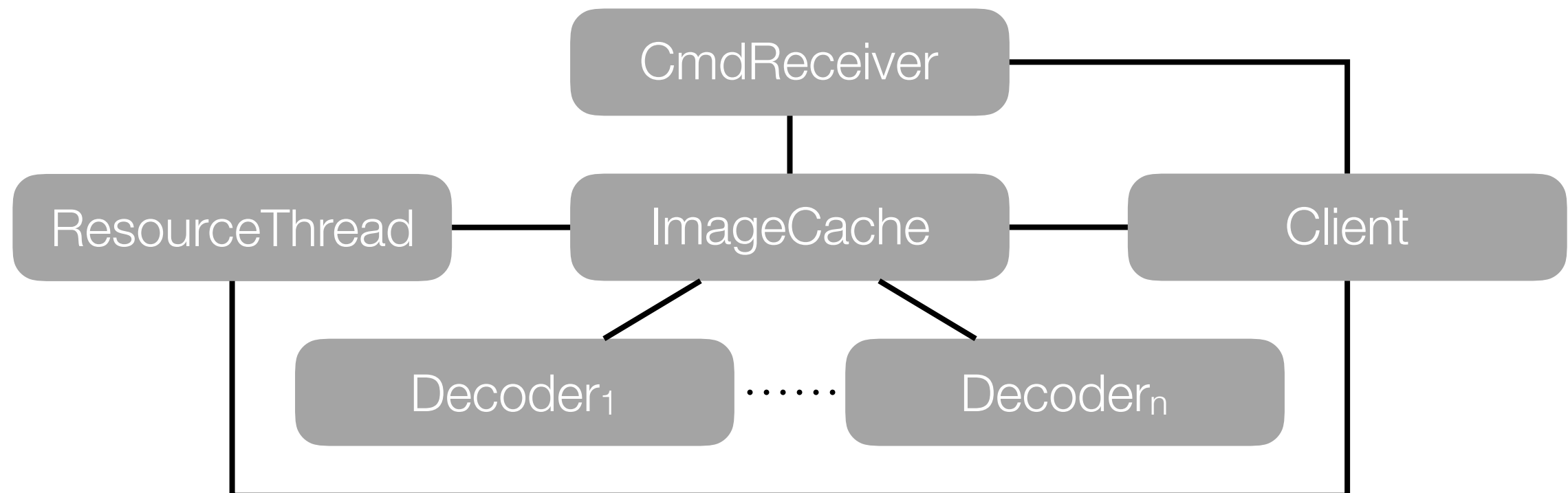
➔ Linear logic session types cannot accommodate certain practical programming scenarios.

➔ Let's introduce sharing while maintaining above guarantees.

Challenges of sharing

Challenges of sharing

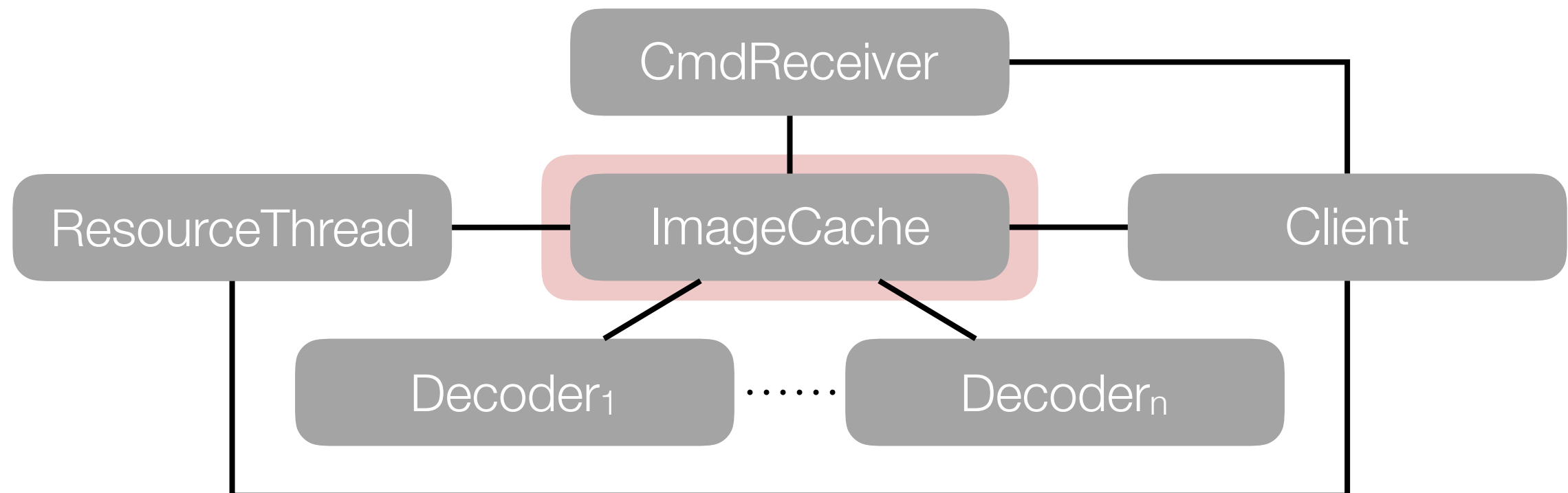
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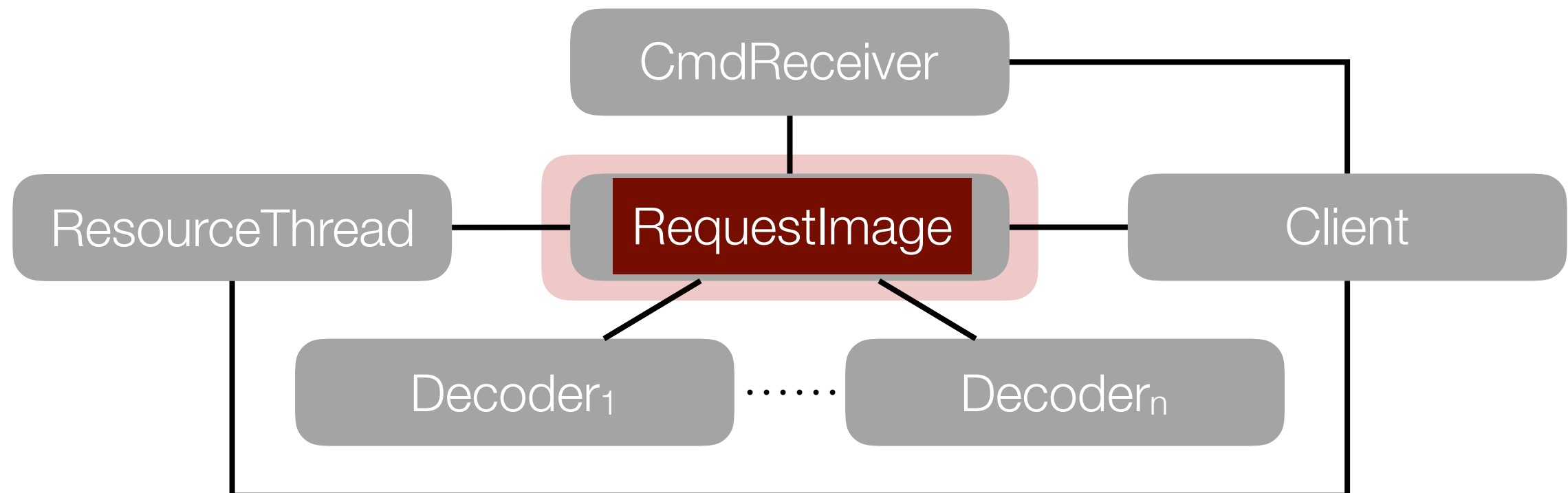
ImageCache: ImgCacheCmd



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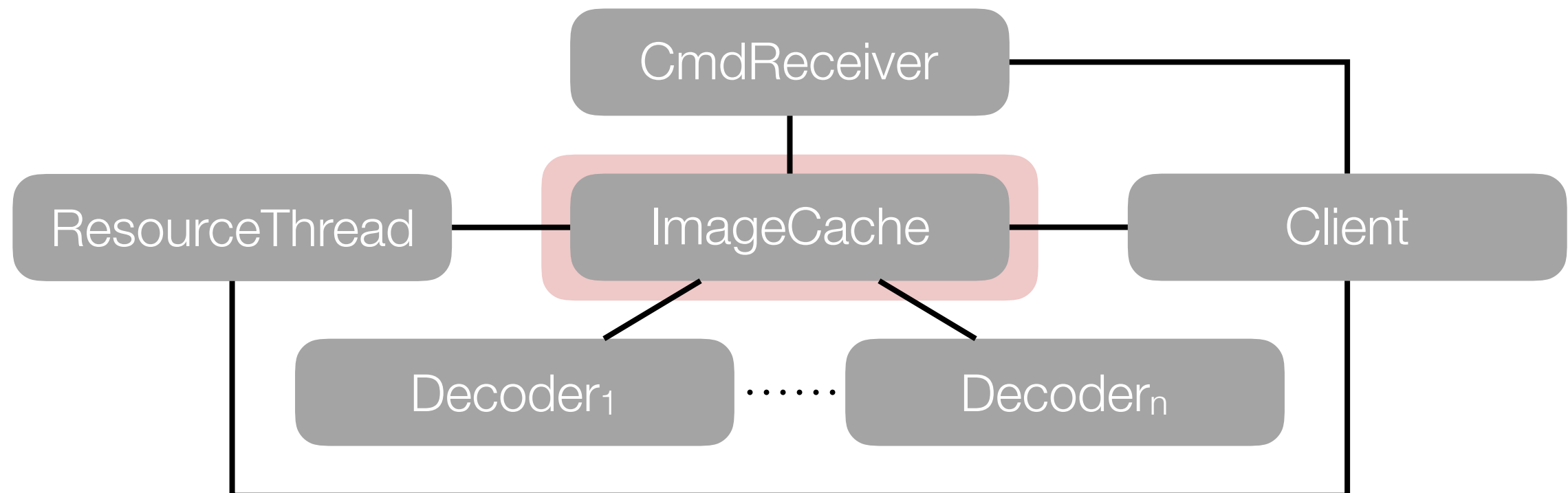
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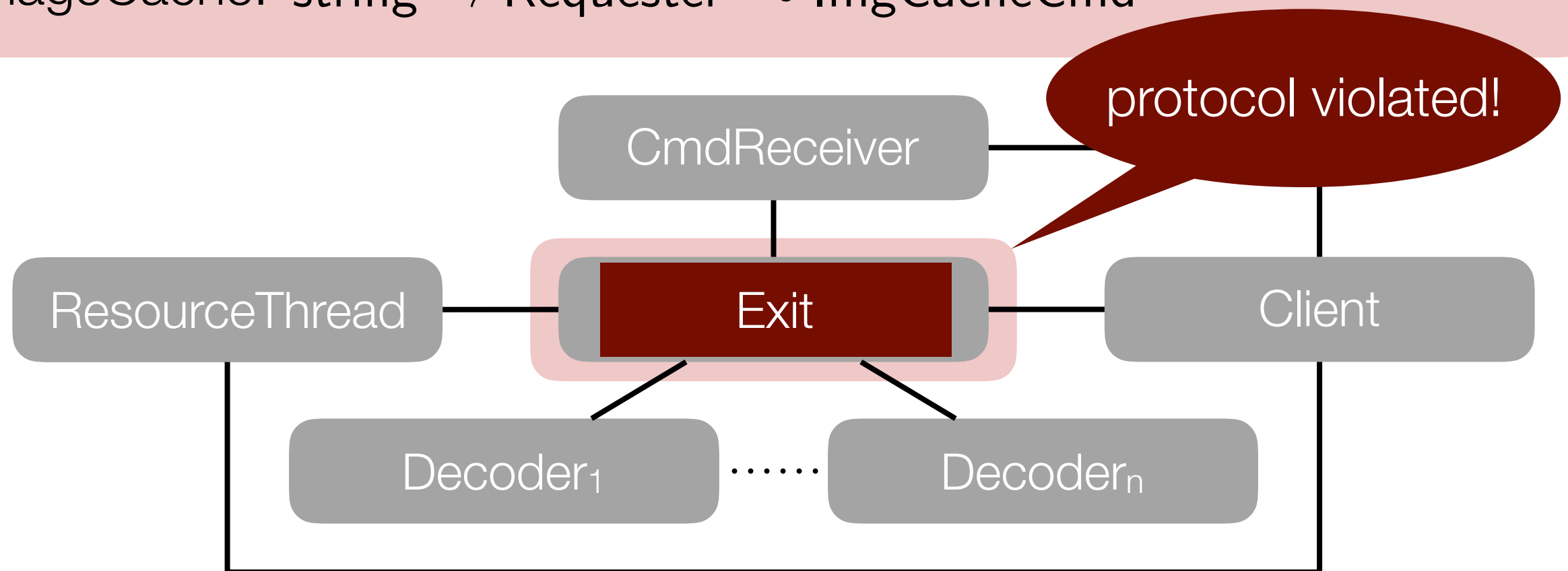
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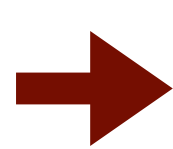
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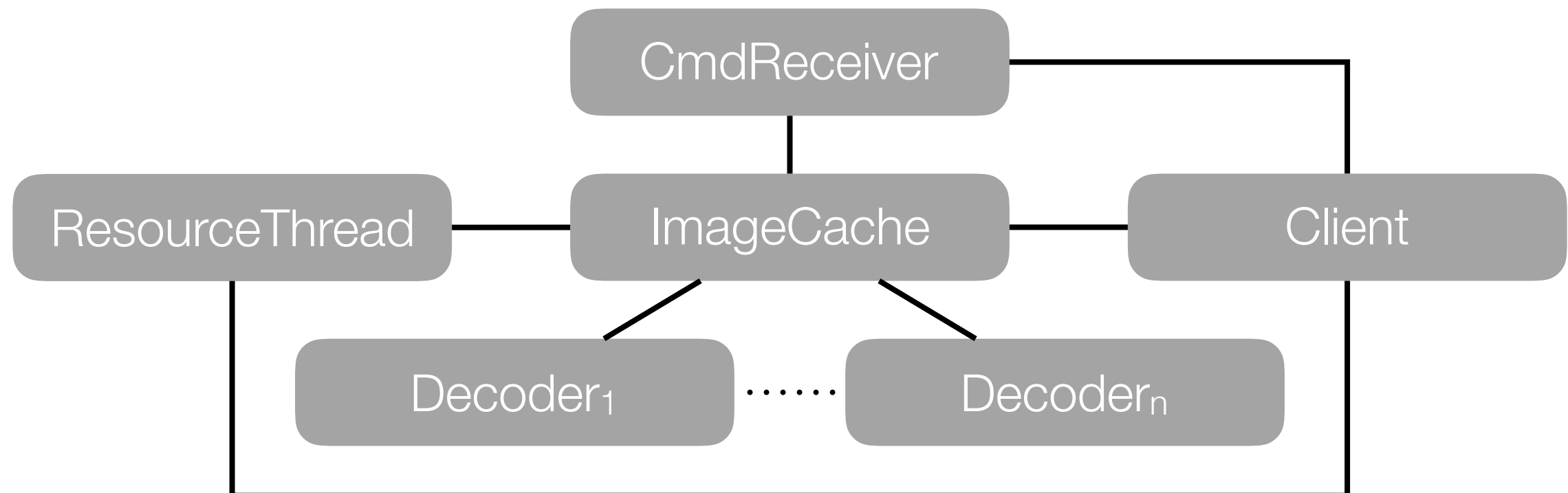


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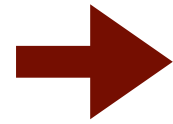


How to restore protocol adherence in the presence of sharing (a.k.a. aliasing)?



Idea: acquire-release

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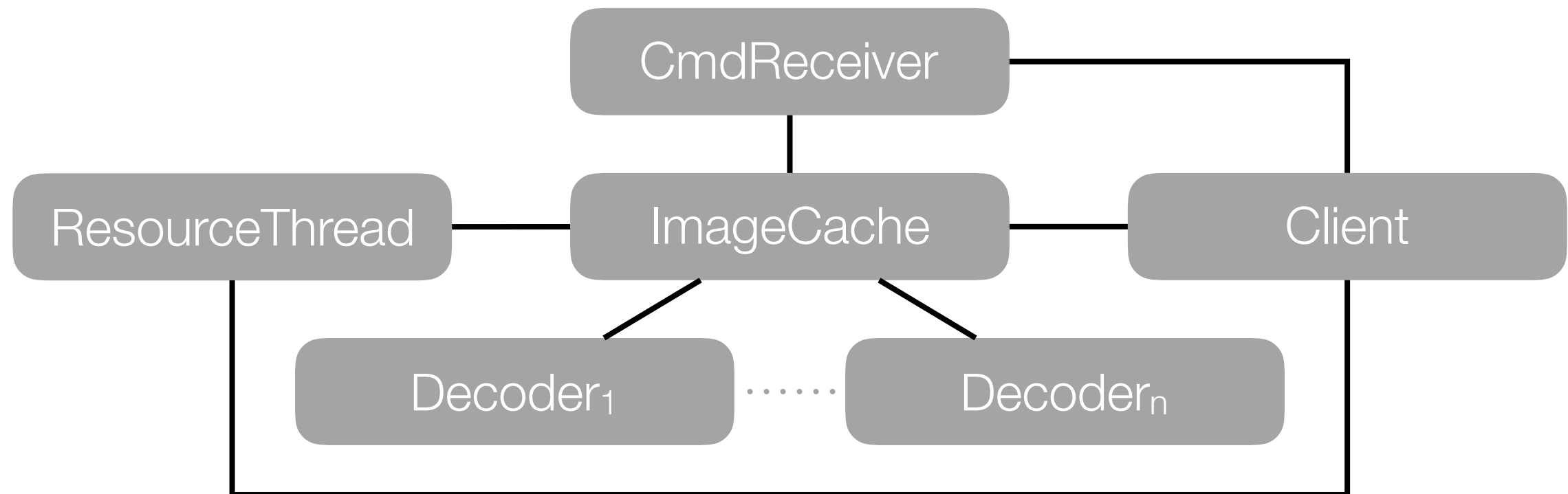
Clients of shared channels must communicate along that channel in mutual exclusion from each other.

Idea: acquire-release

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- ➔ Acquiring a shared channel gives exclusive access, releasing an acquired channel relinquishes exclusive access.

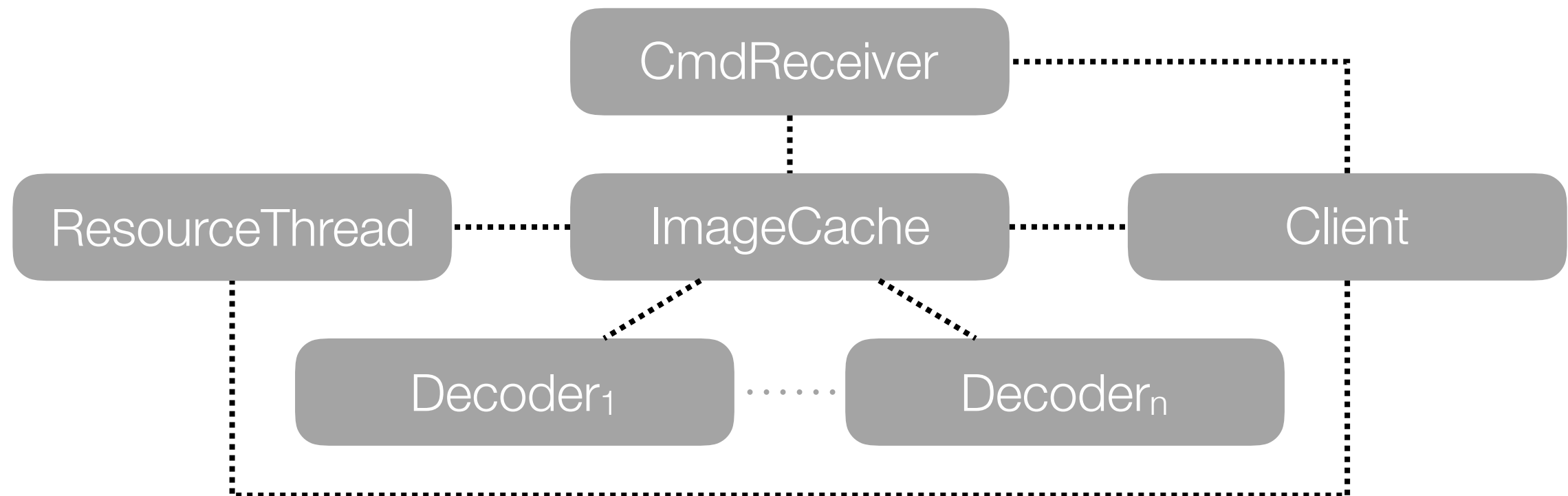
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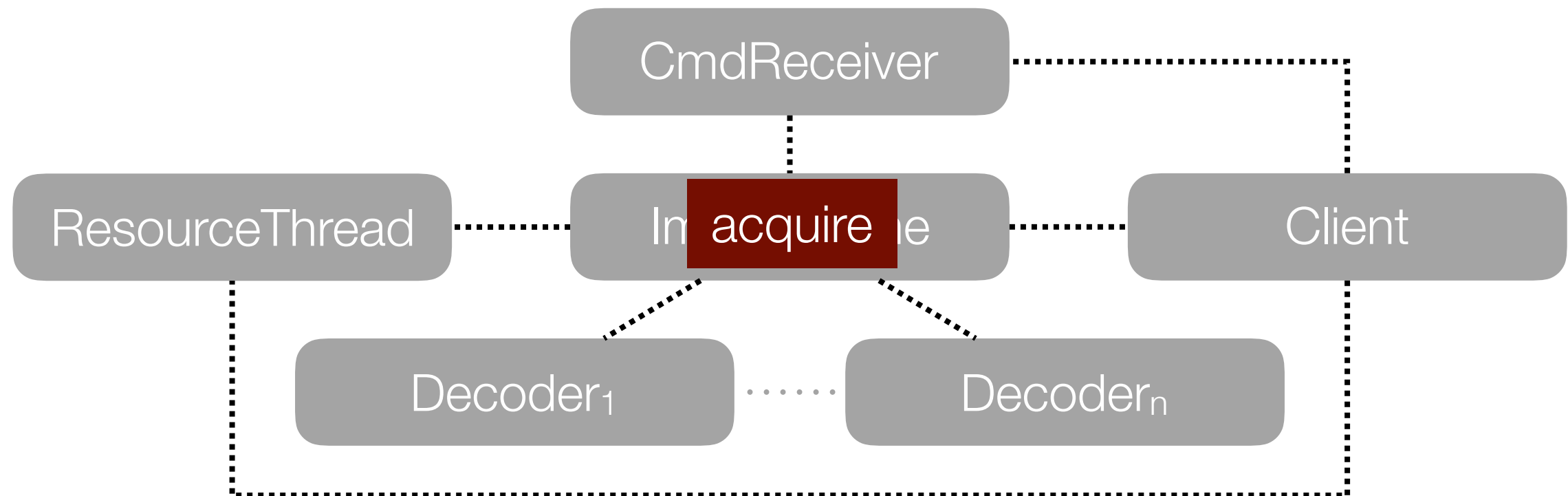
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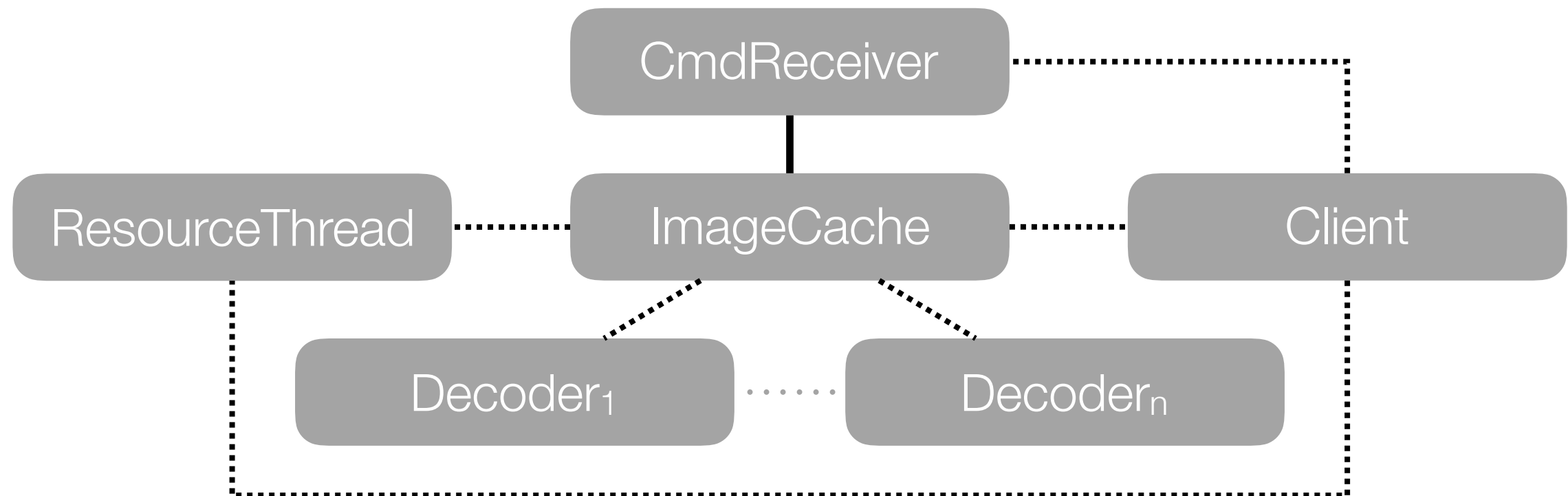
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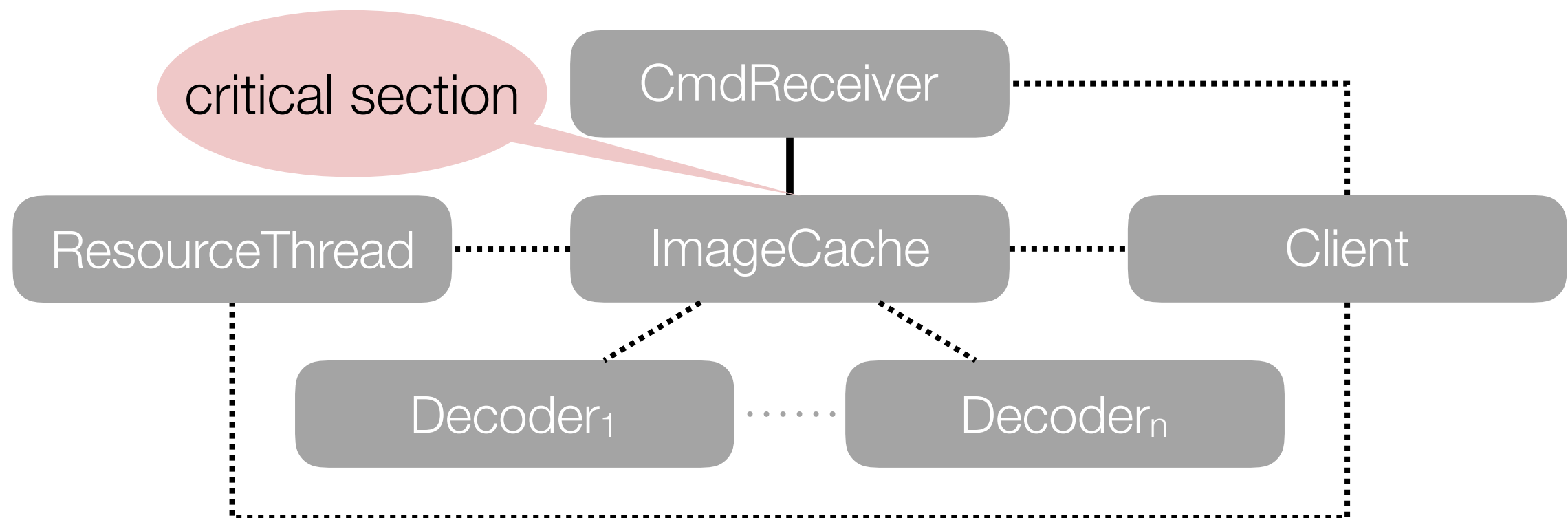
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Legend: shared channel — linear channel

Idea: acquire-release

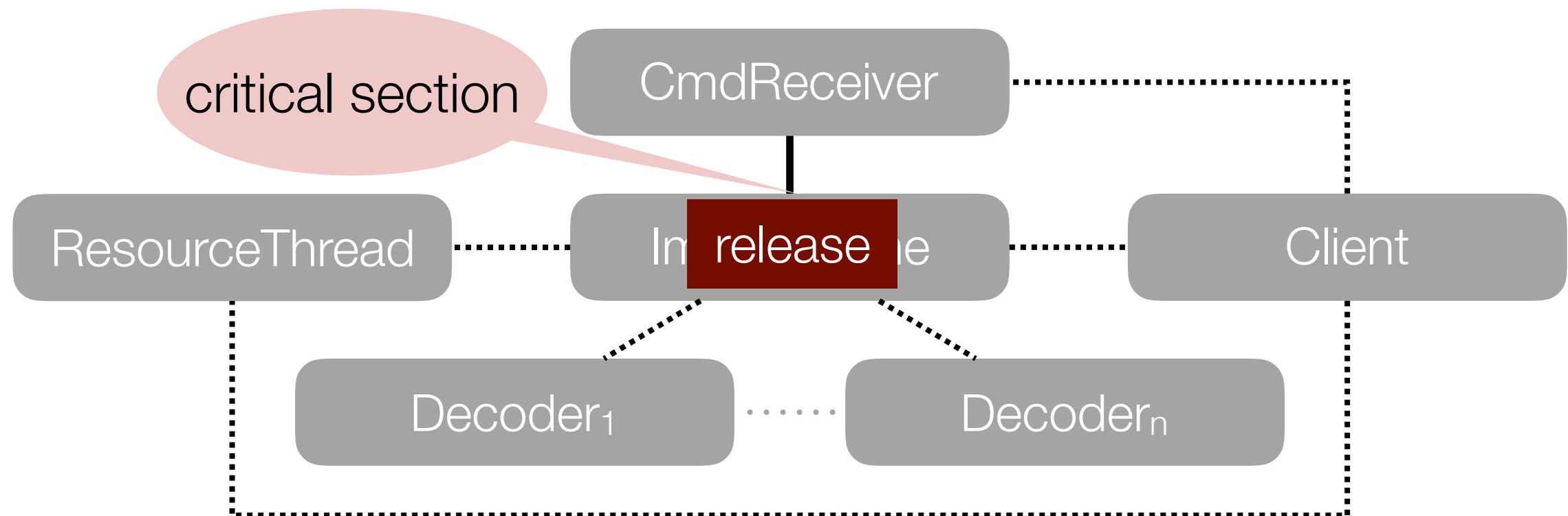
- ➔ Clients of shared channels must communicate along that channel in mutual exclusion from each other.
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Legend: shared channel — linear channel

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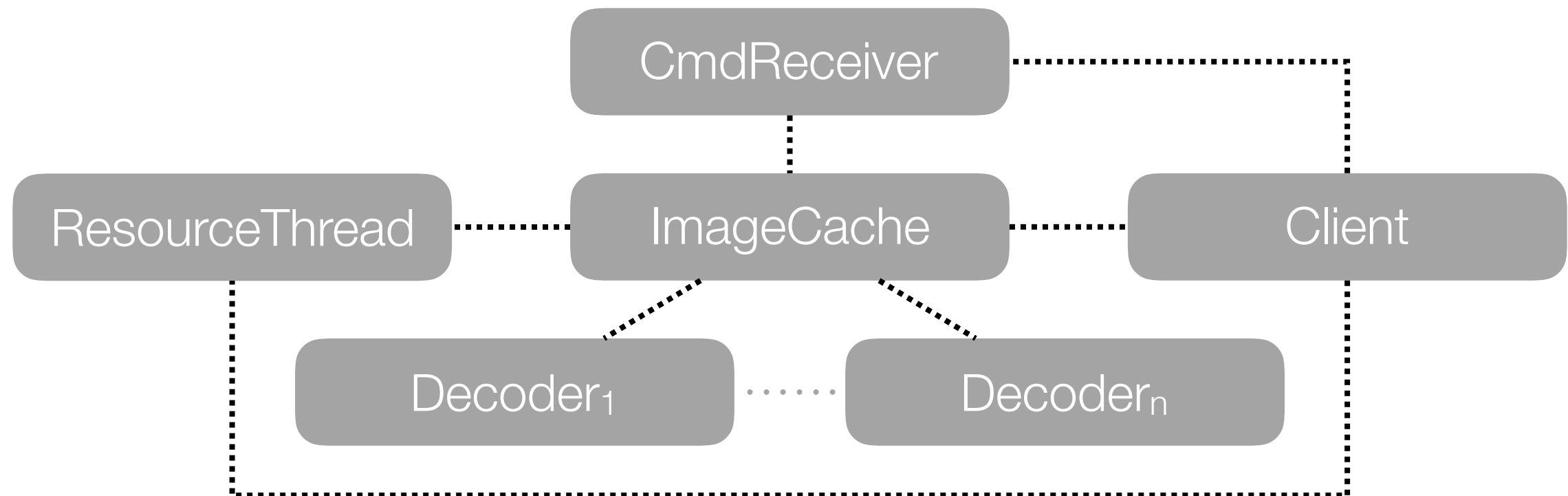
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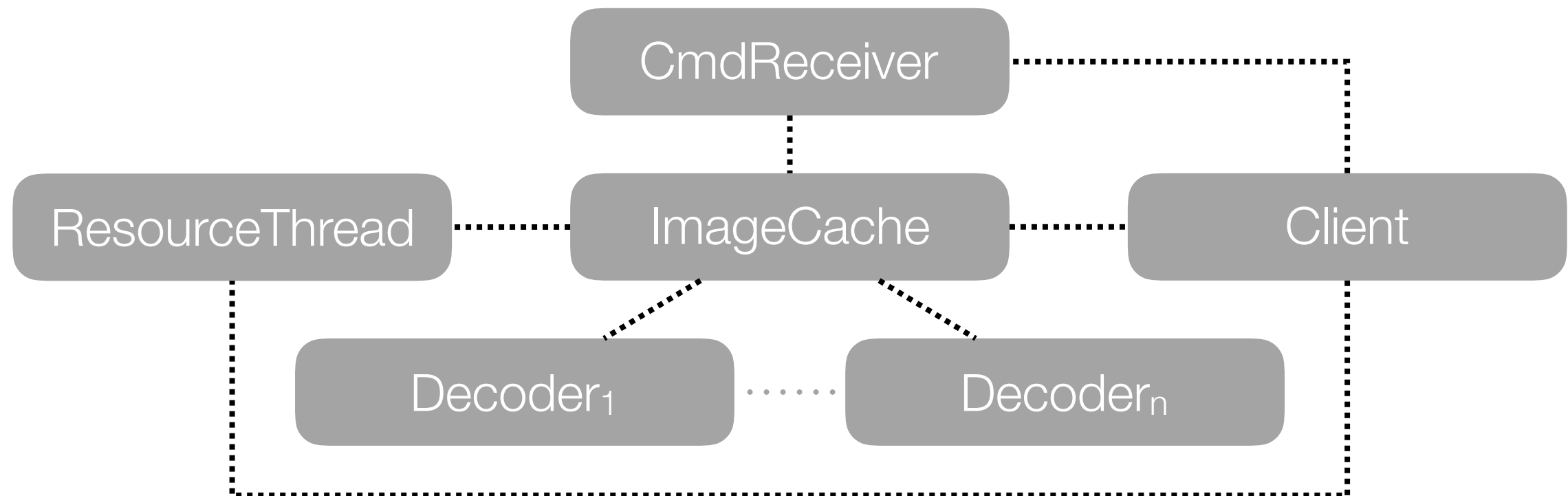


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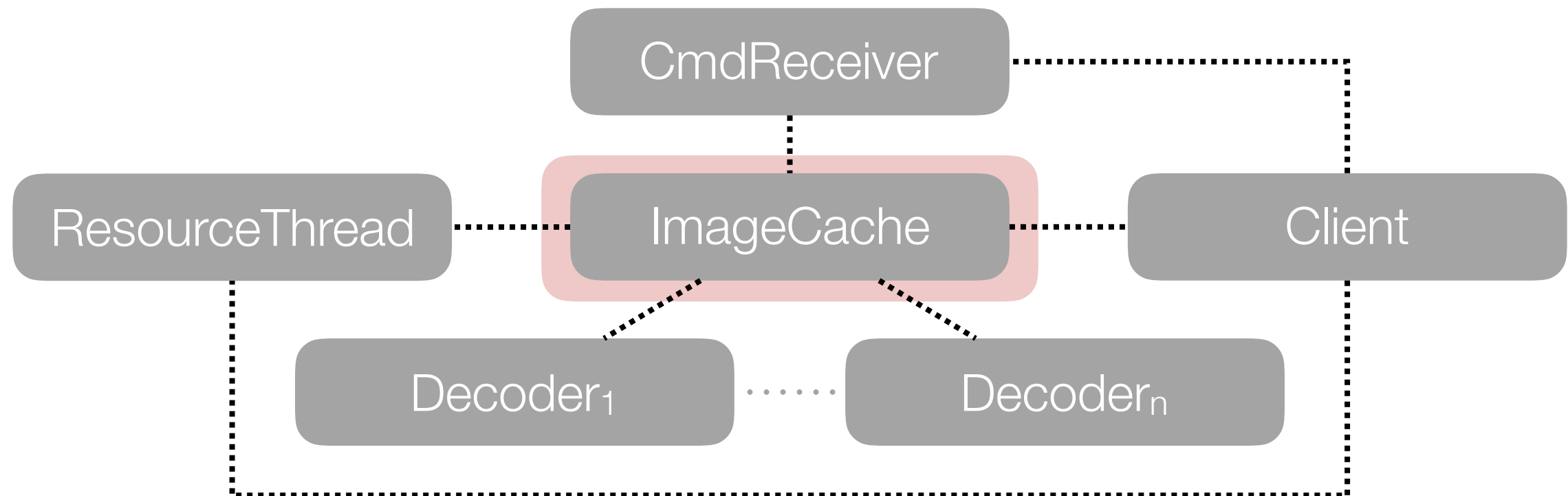


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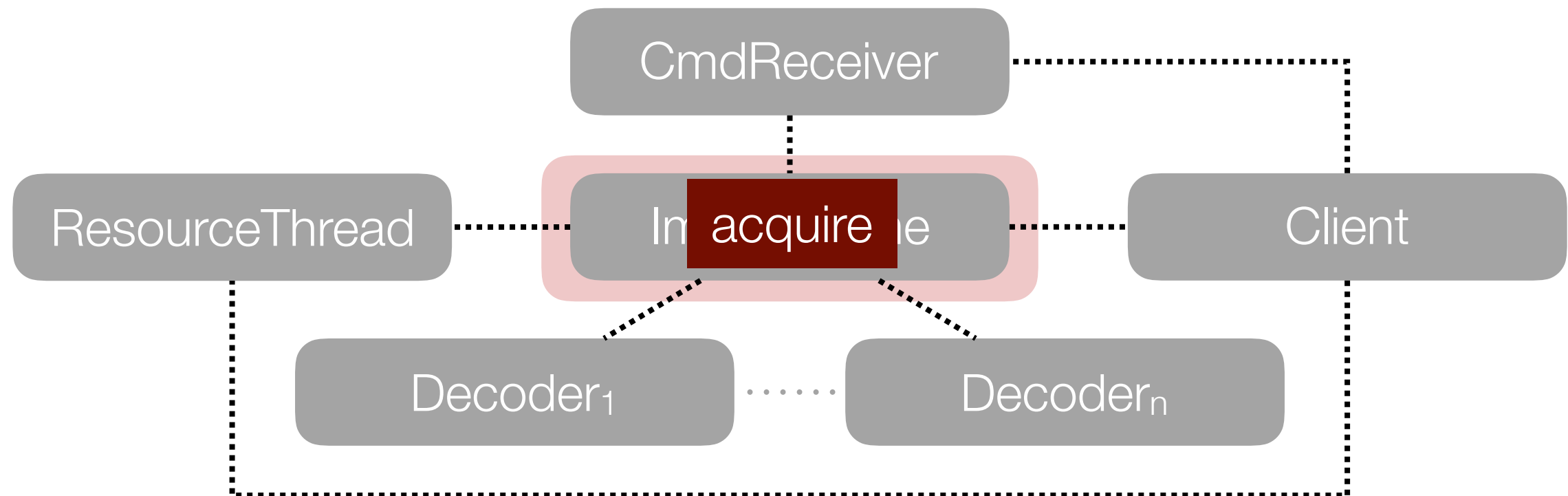


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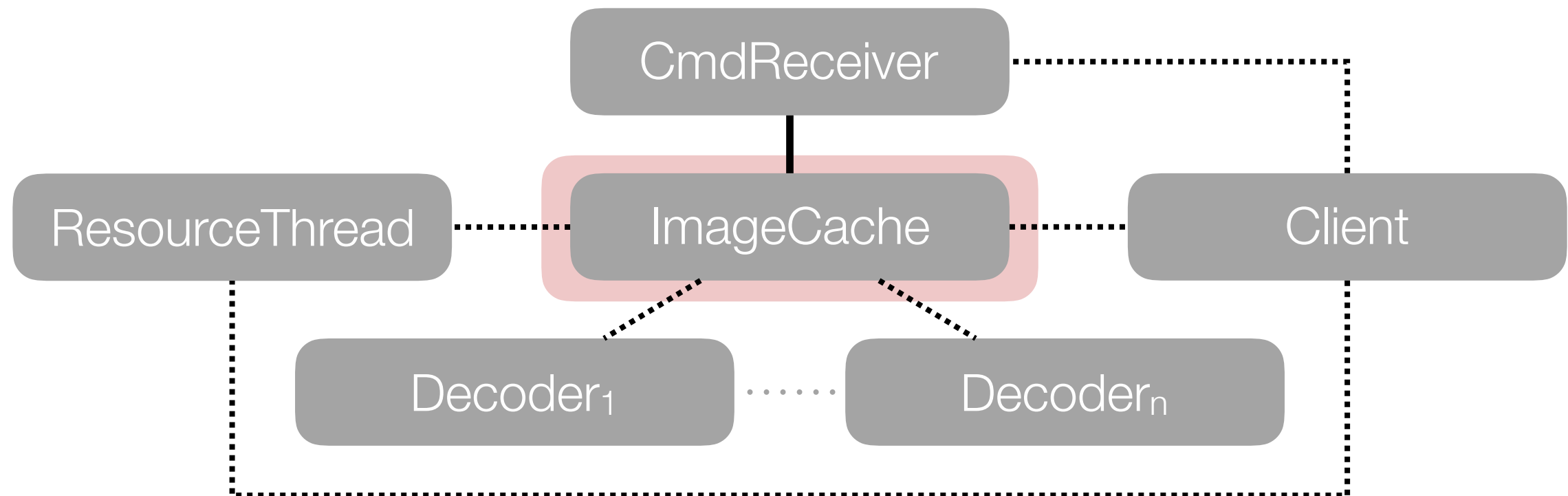


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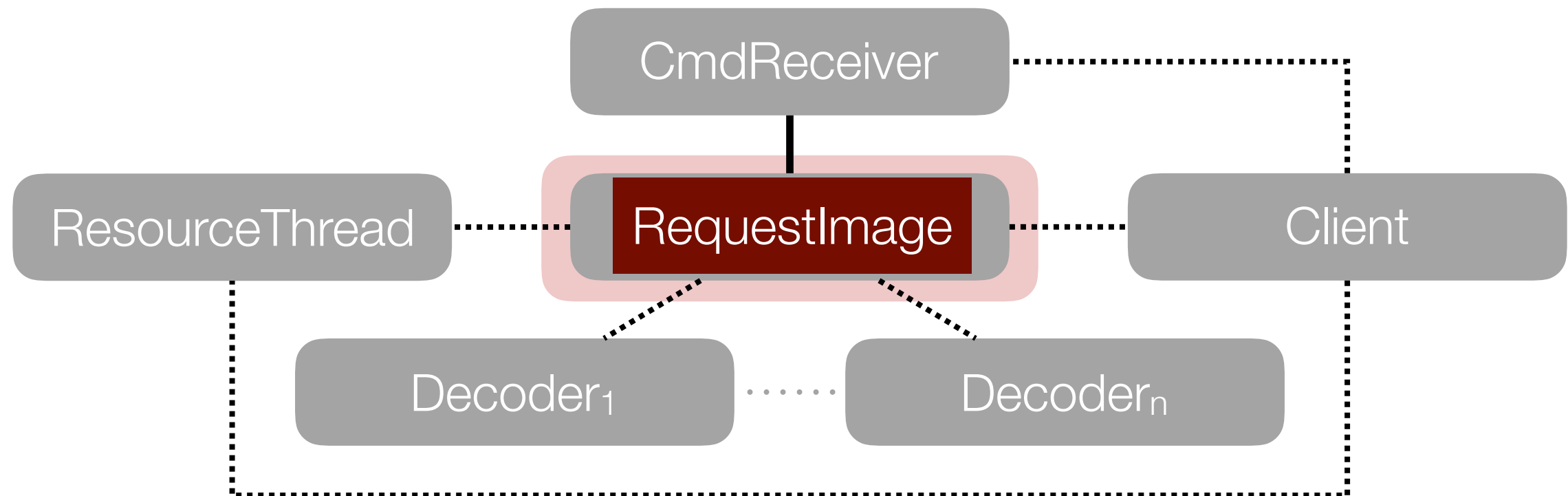


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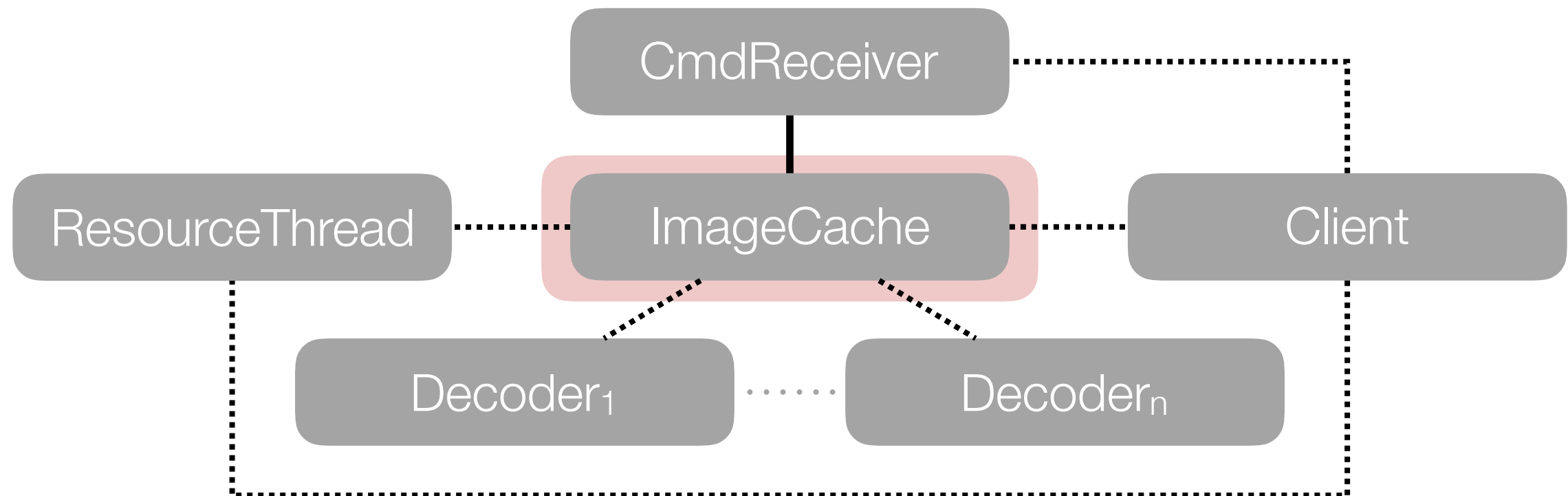


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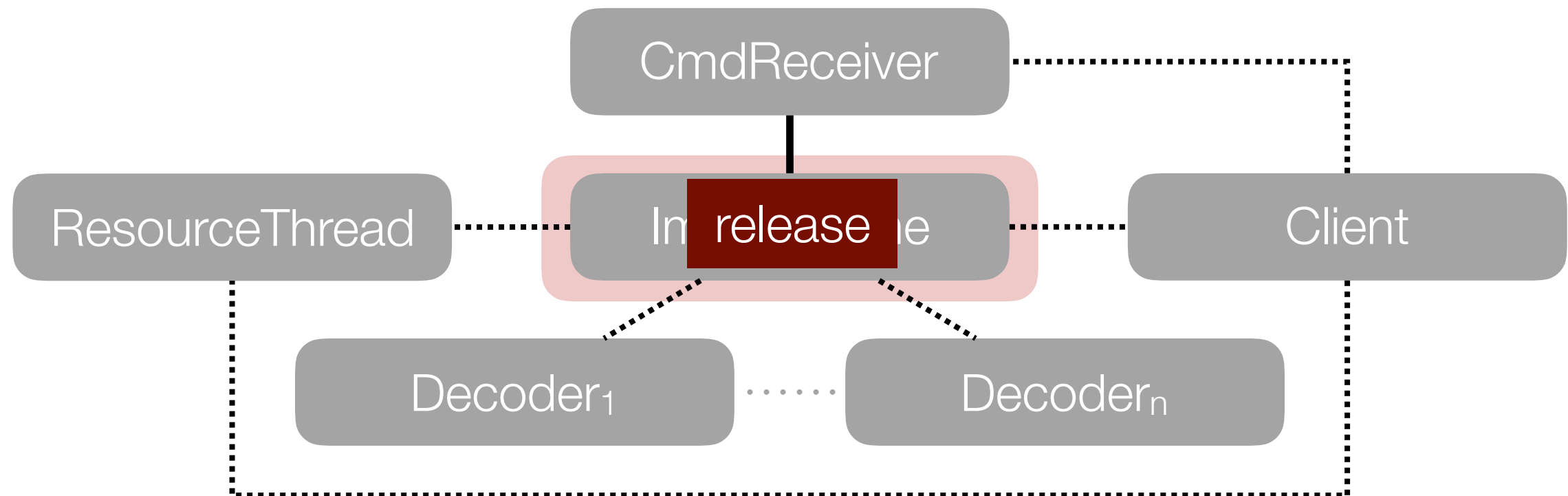


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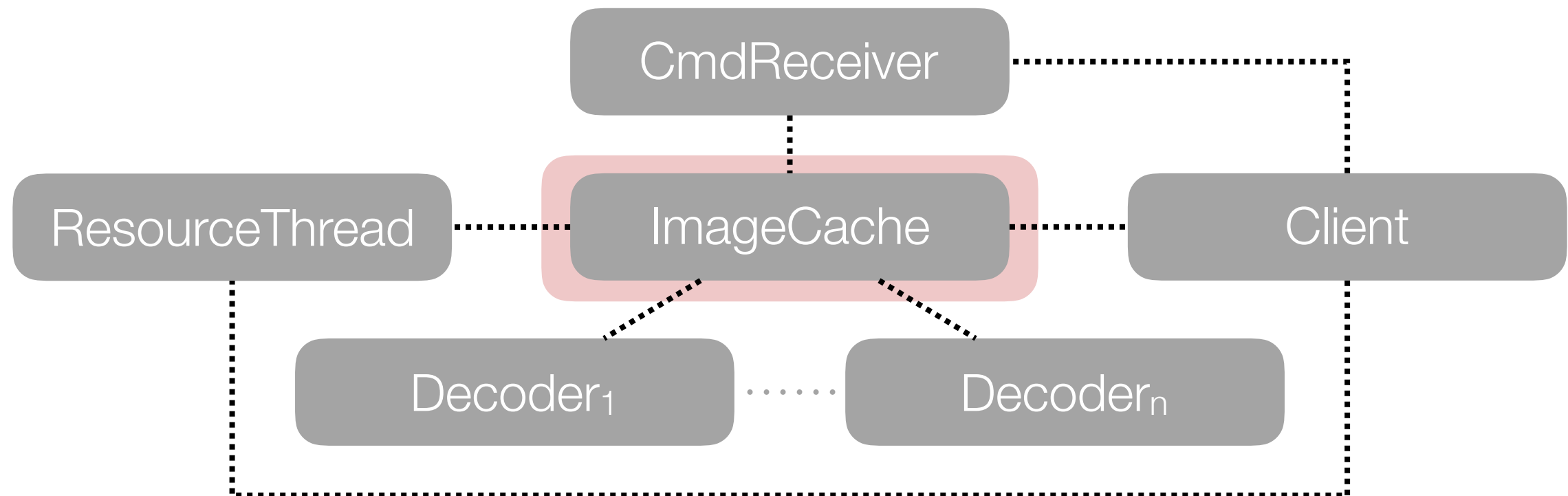


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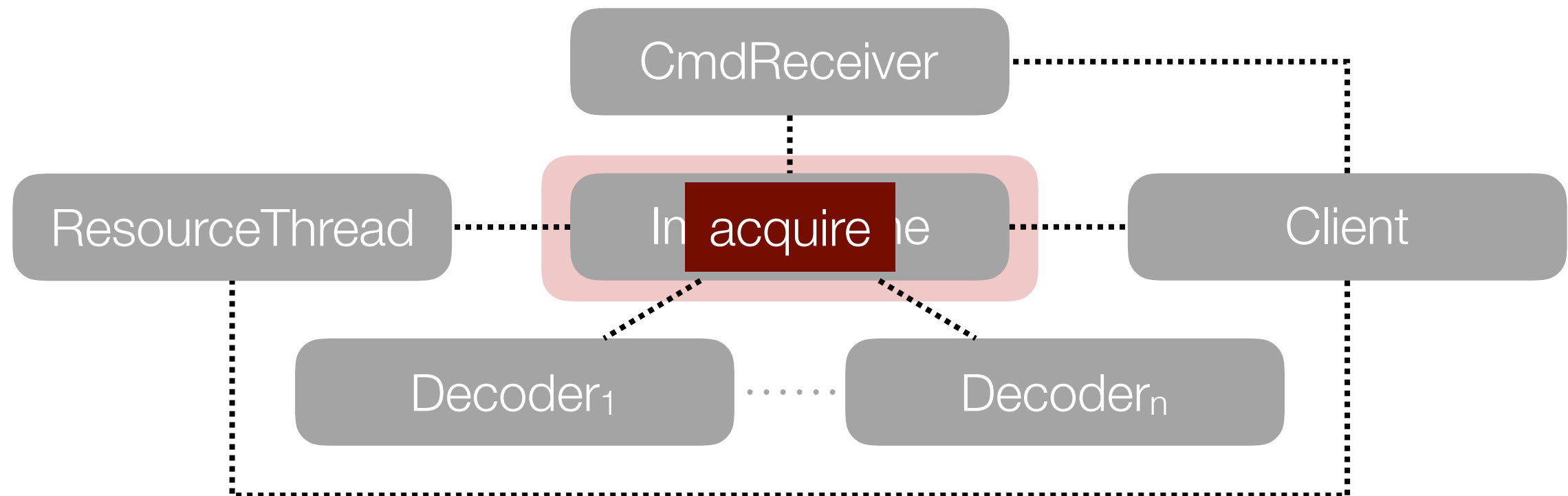


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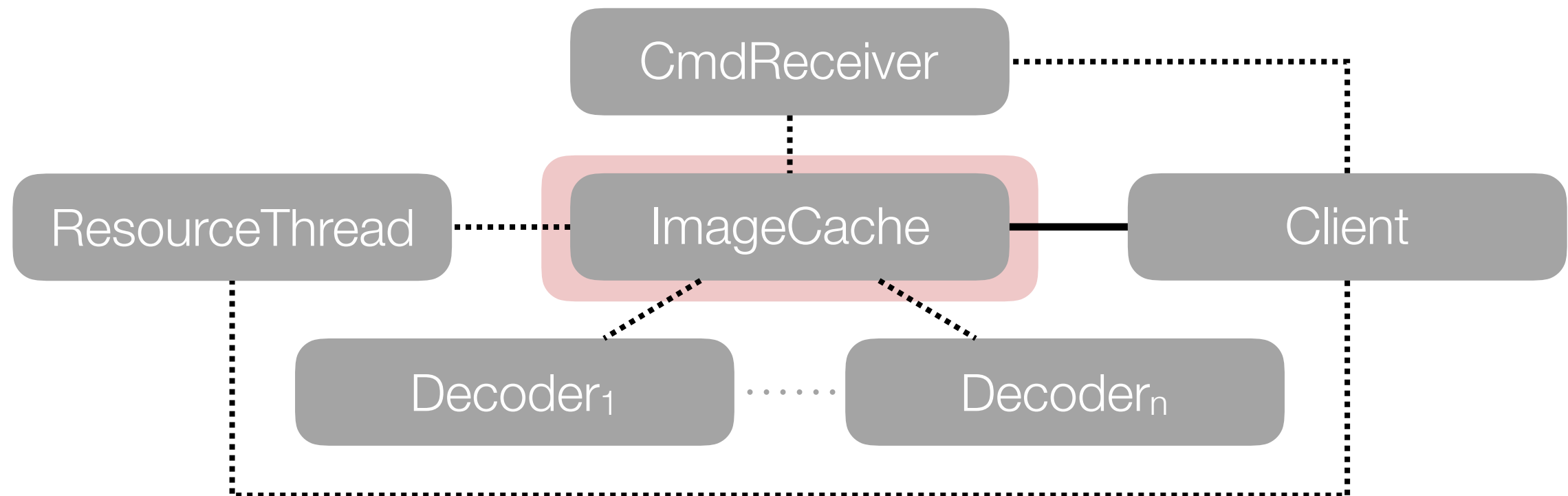


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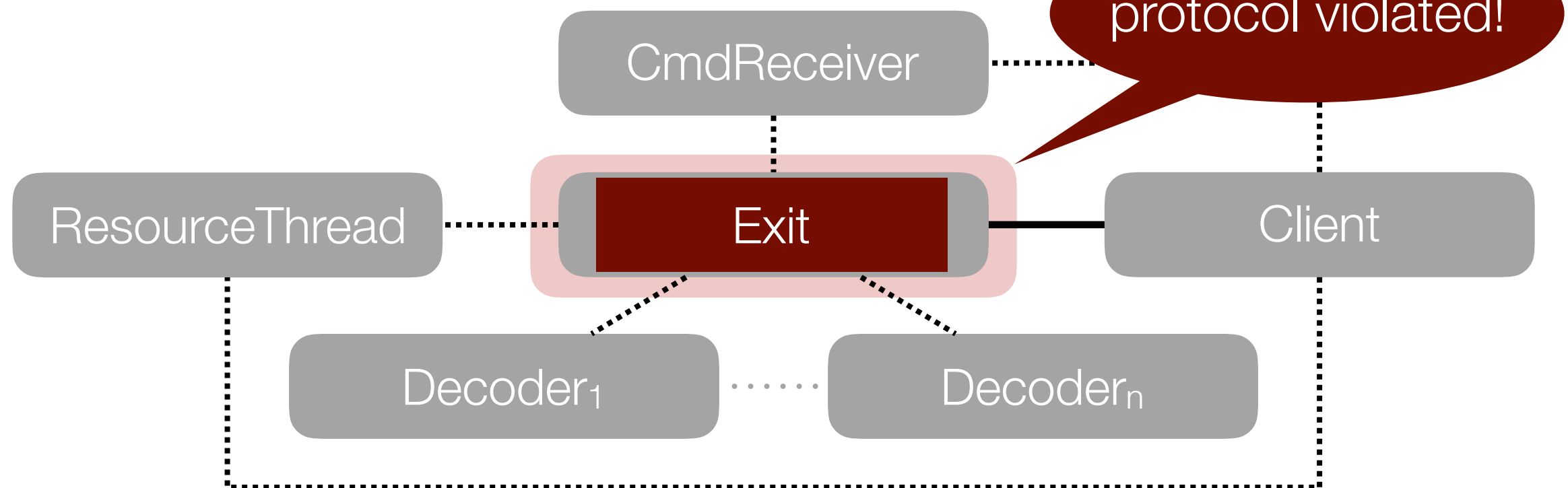


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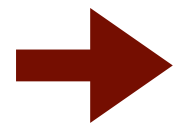
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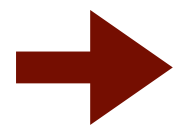
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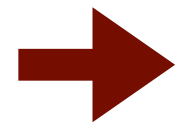


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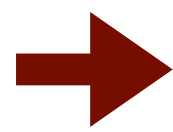


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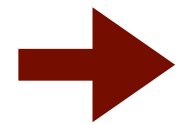


i.e., shared channels must be released back to the same type at which they were acquired, if released.

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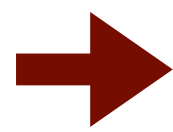
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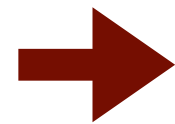
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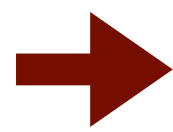


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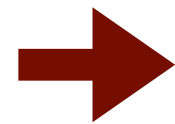
acquire


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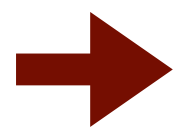


release

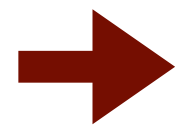


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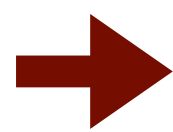
acquire

release ✓

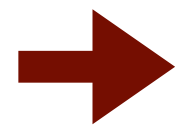
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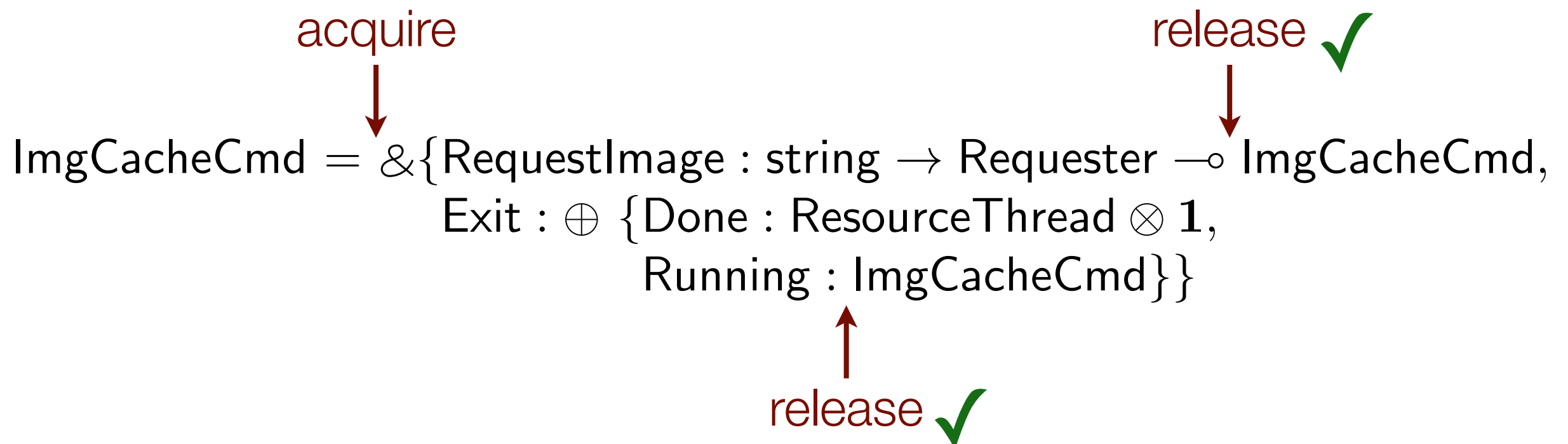
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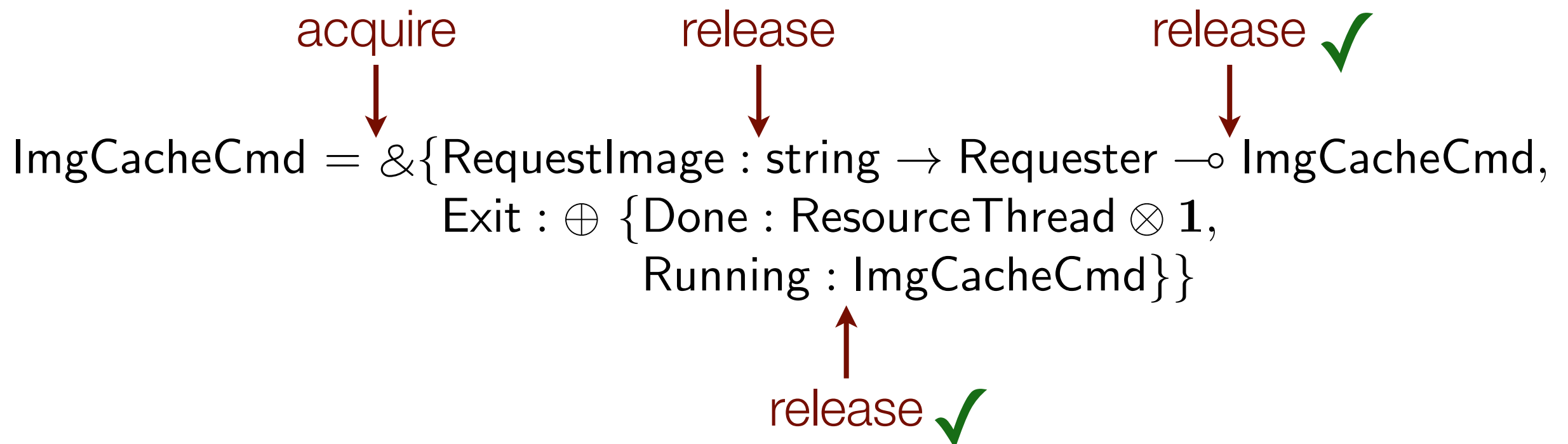
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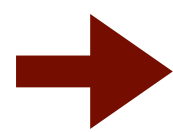
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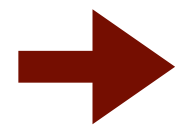
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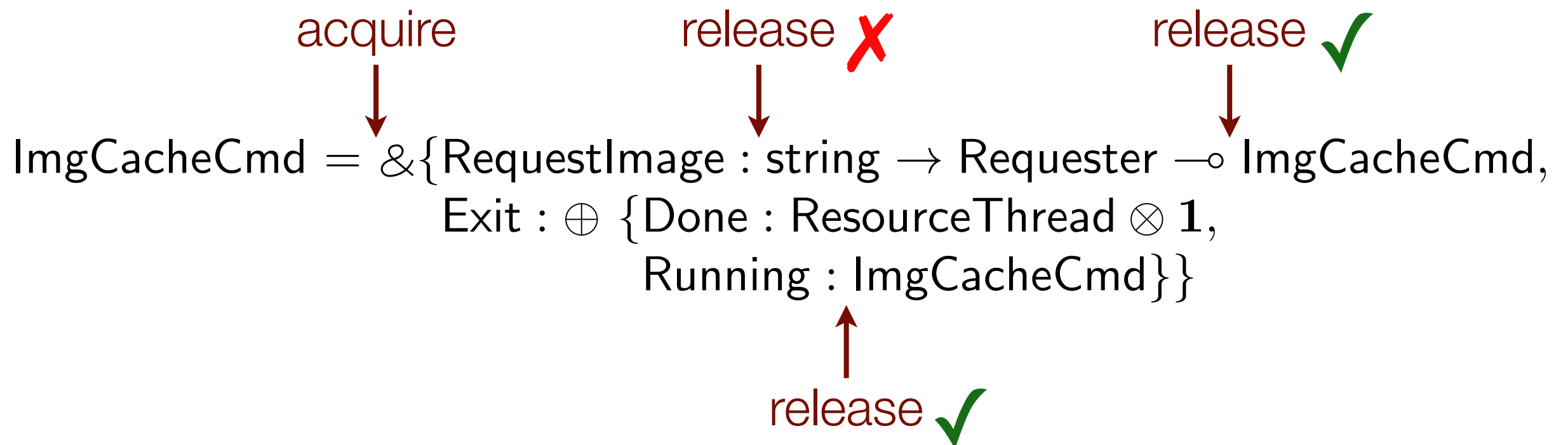
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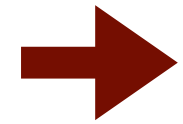


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Acquire-release + equi-synchronizing:

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- ➔ But, why not lift this policy to the type level and have it enforced statically?

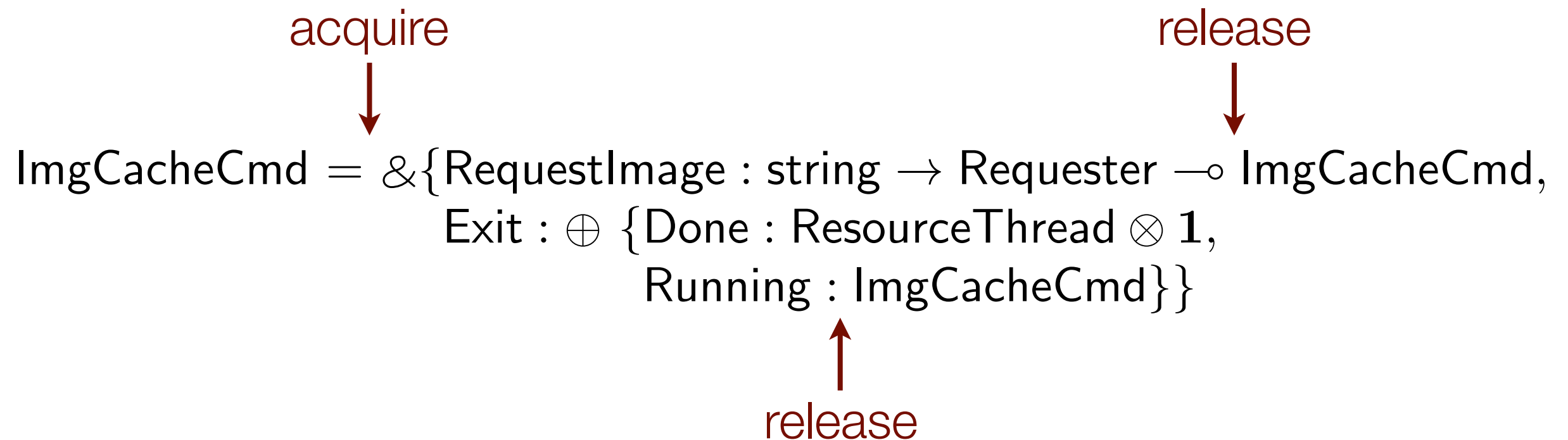
Manifest sharing



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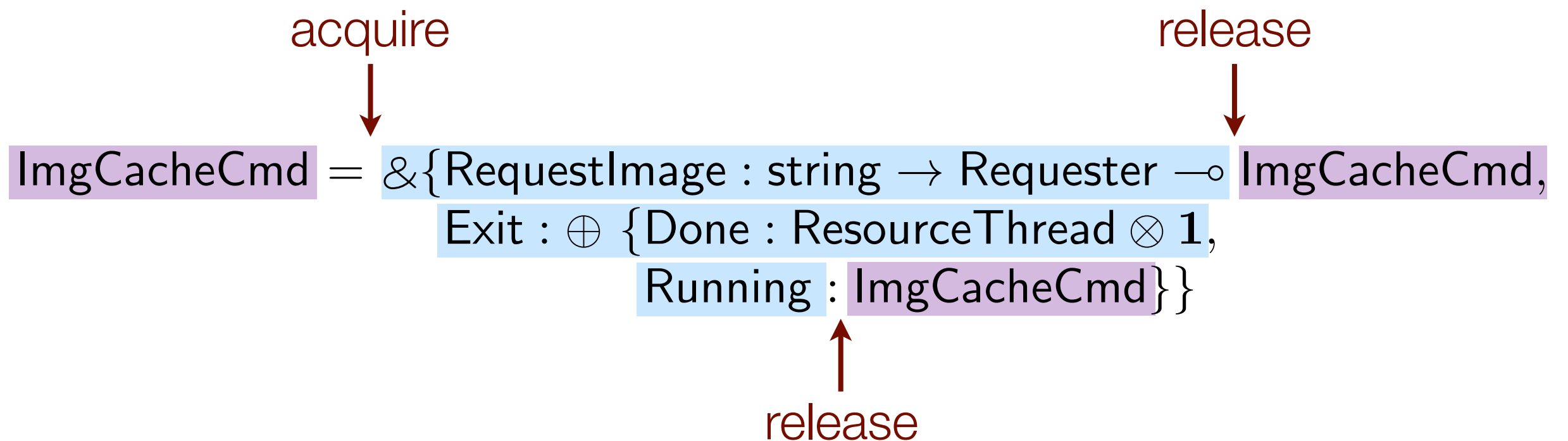


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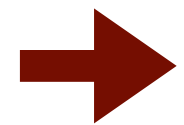
Legend: shared phase linear phase



Manifest sharing



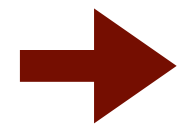
Manifest sharing



Stratify session types into a linear and shared layer



Manifest sharing



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Manifest sharing

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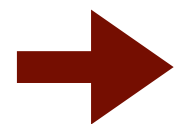


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Up and down shifts denote acquire and release, resp.



Typing judgments

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Based on correspondence between intuitionistic linear logic and session-typed pi-calculus:



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$$\Gamma \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_S : A_S)$$

$$\Gamma; \Delta \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_L : A_L)$$



Typing judgments

$$A_S \triangleq \uparrow_L^S A_L$$

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“Process P provides session of type A_m along x_m using channels in $(\Gamma$ and) Δ .”



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Based on correspondence between intuitionistic linear logic and session-typed pi-calculus:

shared (structural)
context

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Based on correspondence between intuitionistic linear logic and session-typed pi-calculus:

linear (substructural)
context

$$\Gamma \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_S : A_S)$$

$$\Gamma; \Delta \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_L : A_L)$$

“Process P provides session of type A_m along x_m using channels in $(\Gamma$ and) Δ .”



Typing of acquire



Typing of acquire

$$\frac{\Gamma, x_S : \uparrow_L^S A_L; \Delta, x_L : A_L \vdash_{\Sigma} Q_{x_L} :: (z_L : C_L)}{\Gamma, x_S : \uparrow_L^S A_L; \Delta \vdash_{\Sigma} x_L \leftarrow \text{acquire } x_S ; Q_{x_L} :: (z_L : C_L)} \quad (\text{T-}\uparrow_{LL}^S)$$



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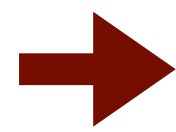
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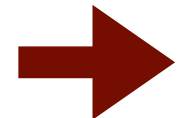
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Taking stock

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We have a session type system that allows shared and linear channels to coexist and guarantees:



data-race-freedom (low-level and high-level)



protocol adherence

Taking stock

- We have a session type system that allows shared and linear channels to coexist and guarantees:
 - data-race-freedom (low-level and high-level)
 - protocol adherence
- What about deadlock-freedom?

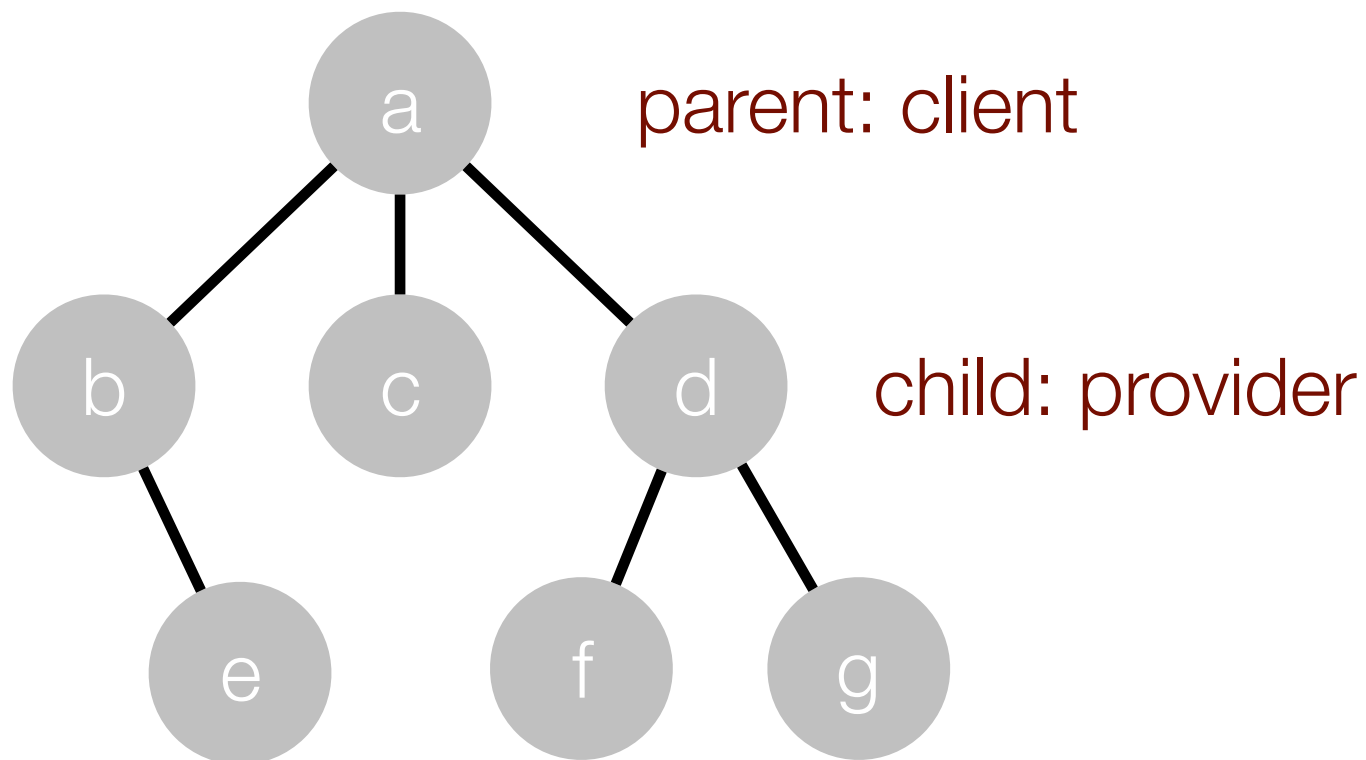
Why are linear session types deadlock-free?

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Linearity (“exactly one client”) turns process graph into a tree.

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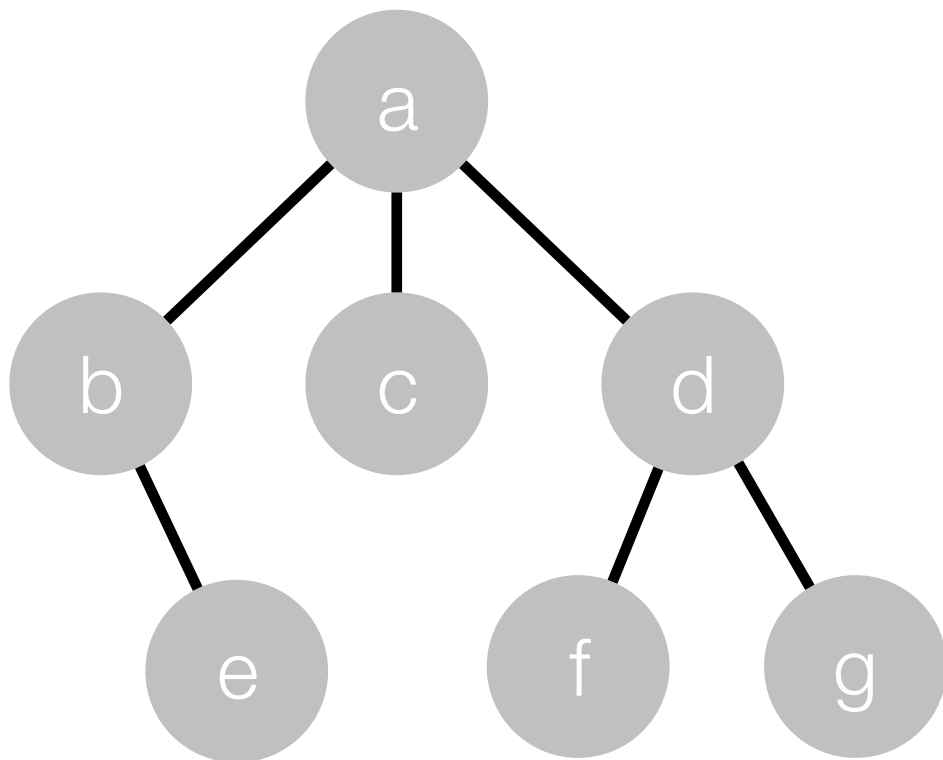
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Legend: — linear channel

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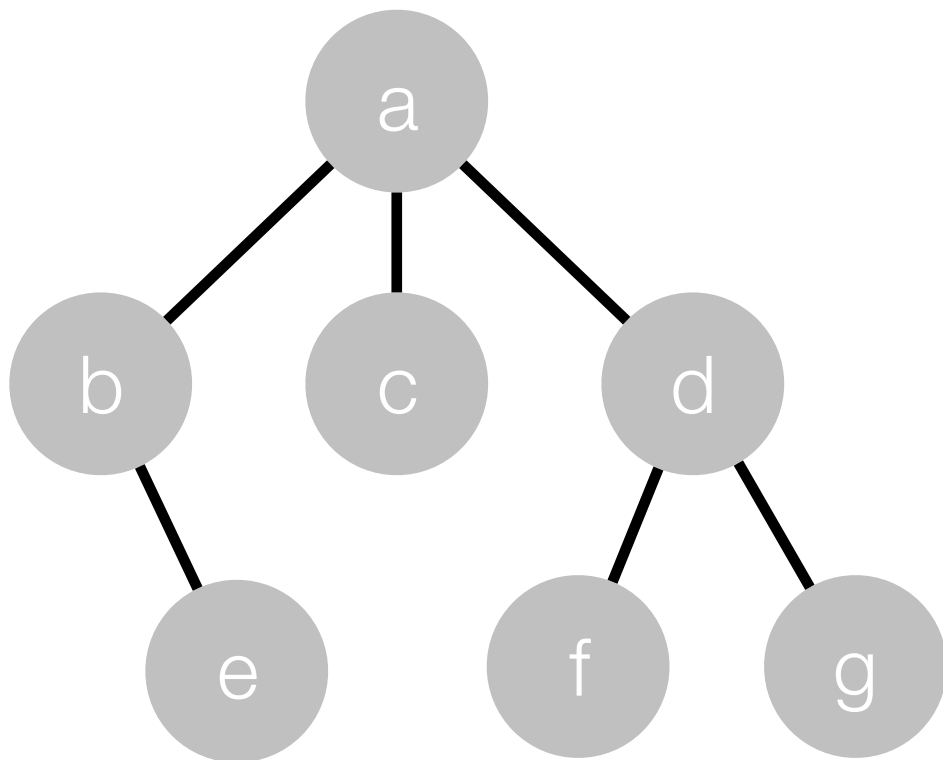
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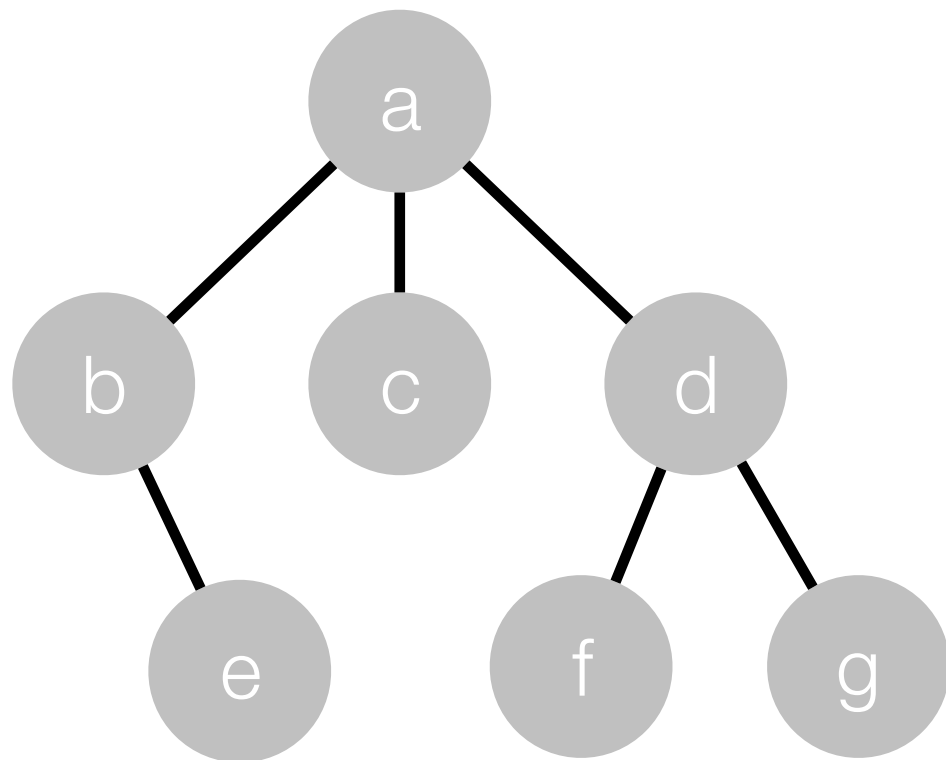


What are the threats to progress?

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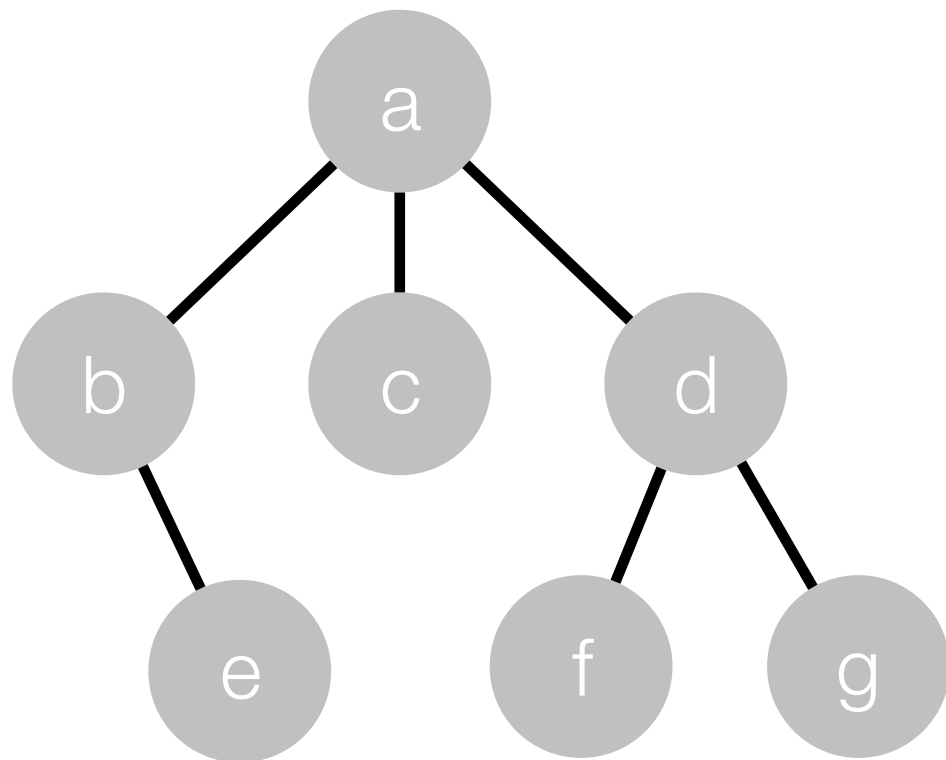
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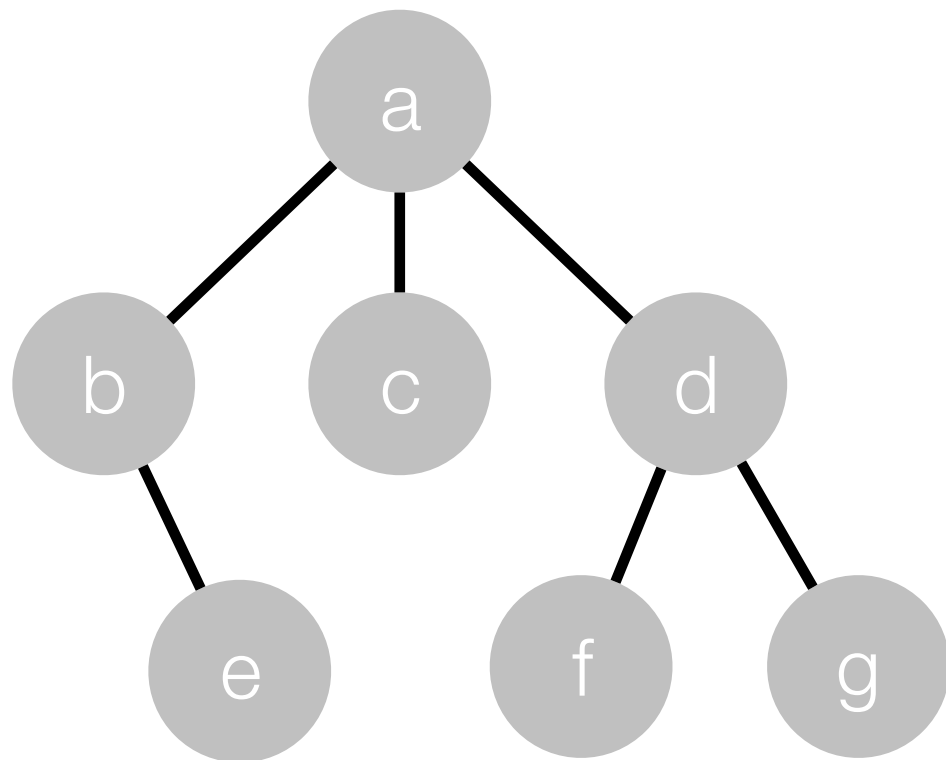
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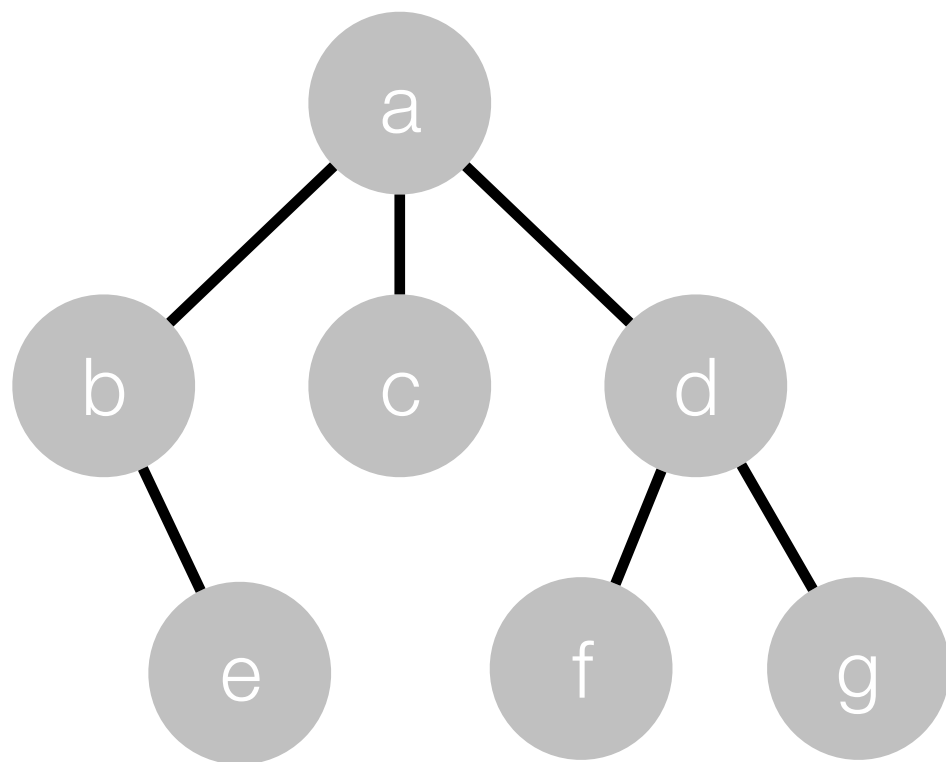
What are the threats to progress?

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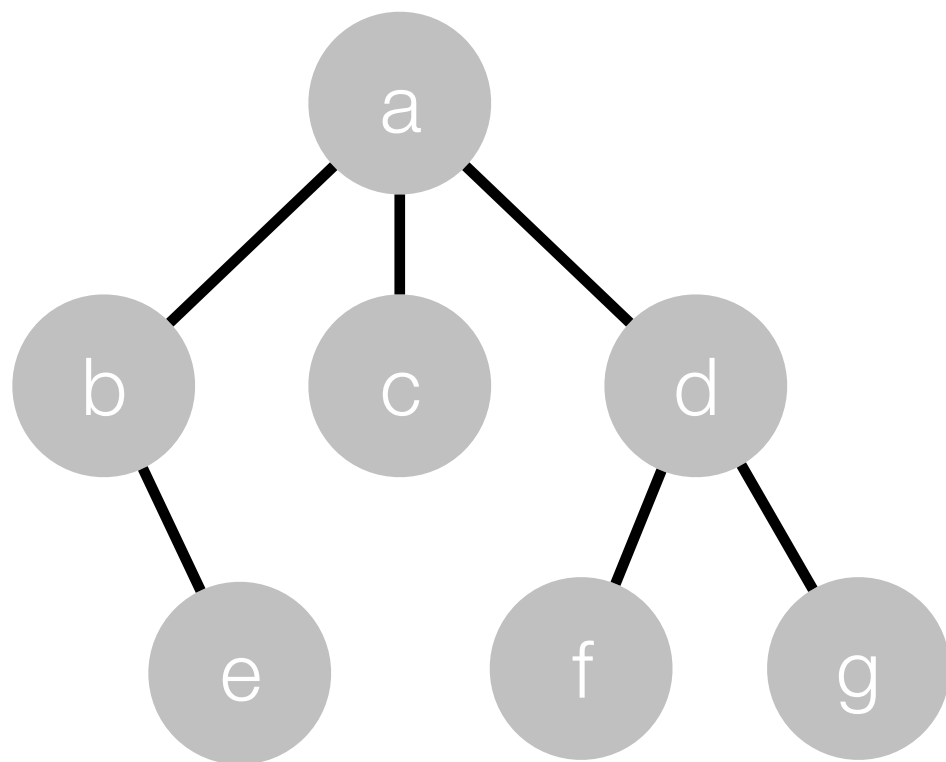
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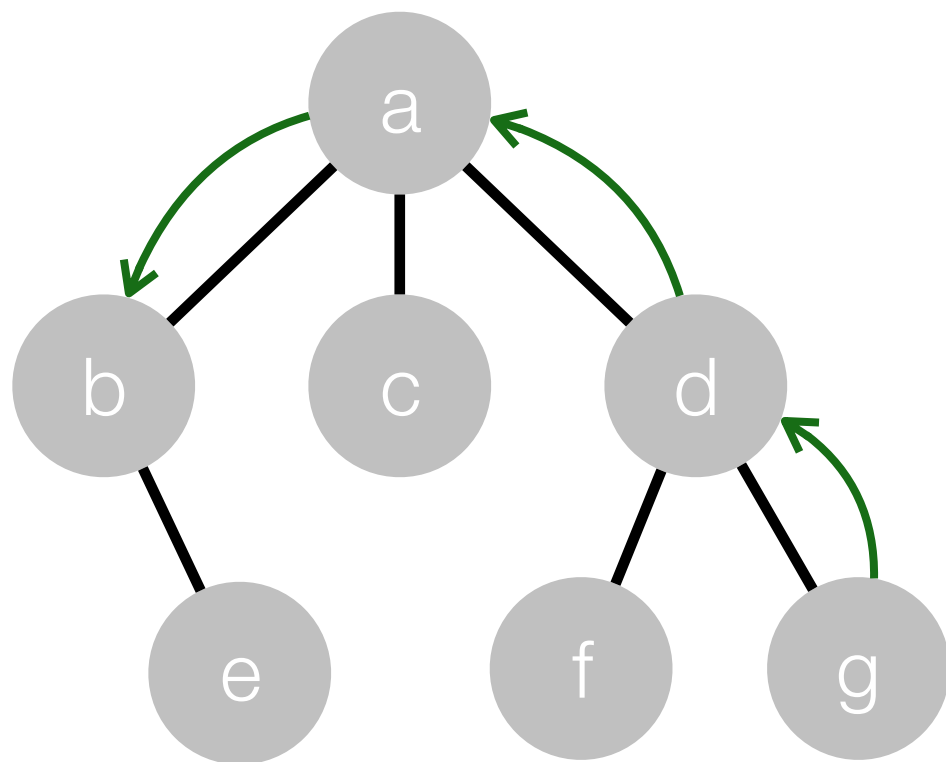
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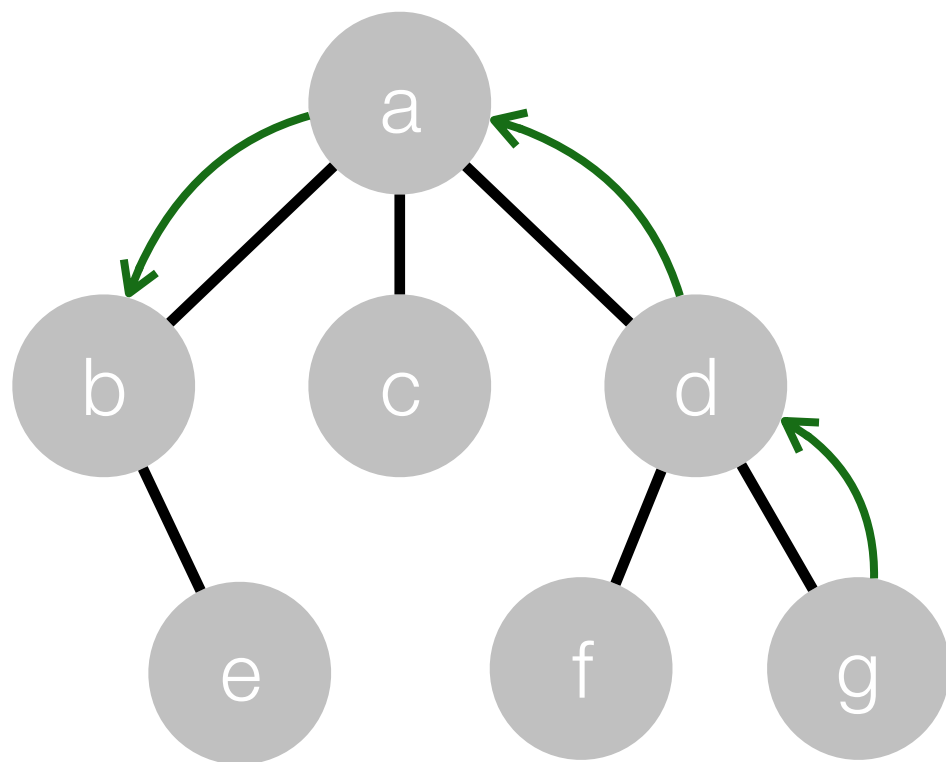
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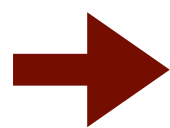
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No green cycles: green arrows can only go along linear channels, and client and provider cannot both be waiting for each other.

Legend: — linear channel



“a waits for b”

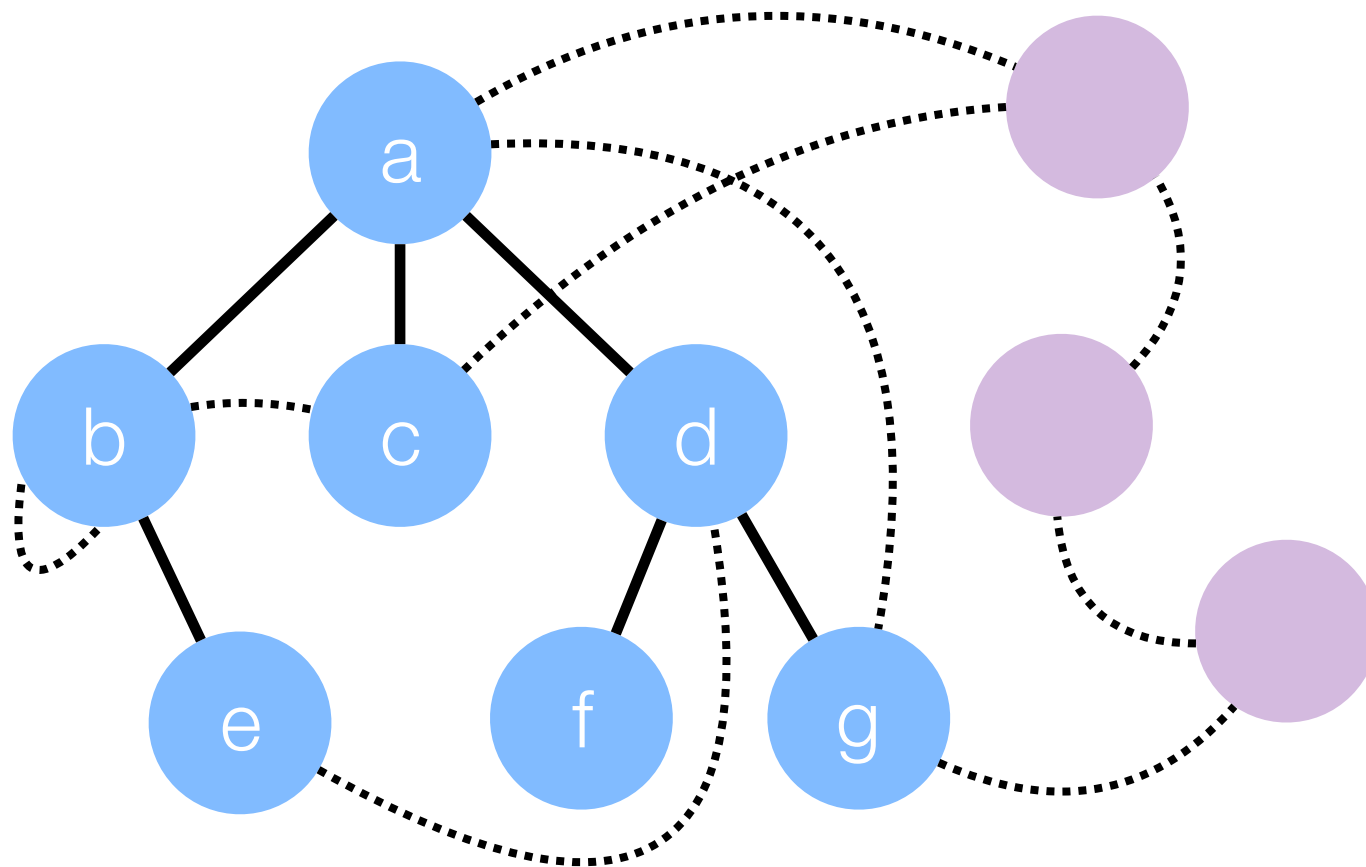
Let's add sharing

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We get a graph of linear and shared processes, with a linear tree inside.

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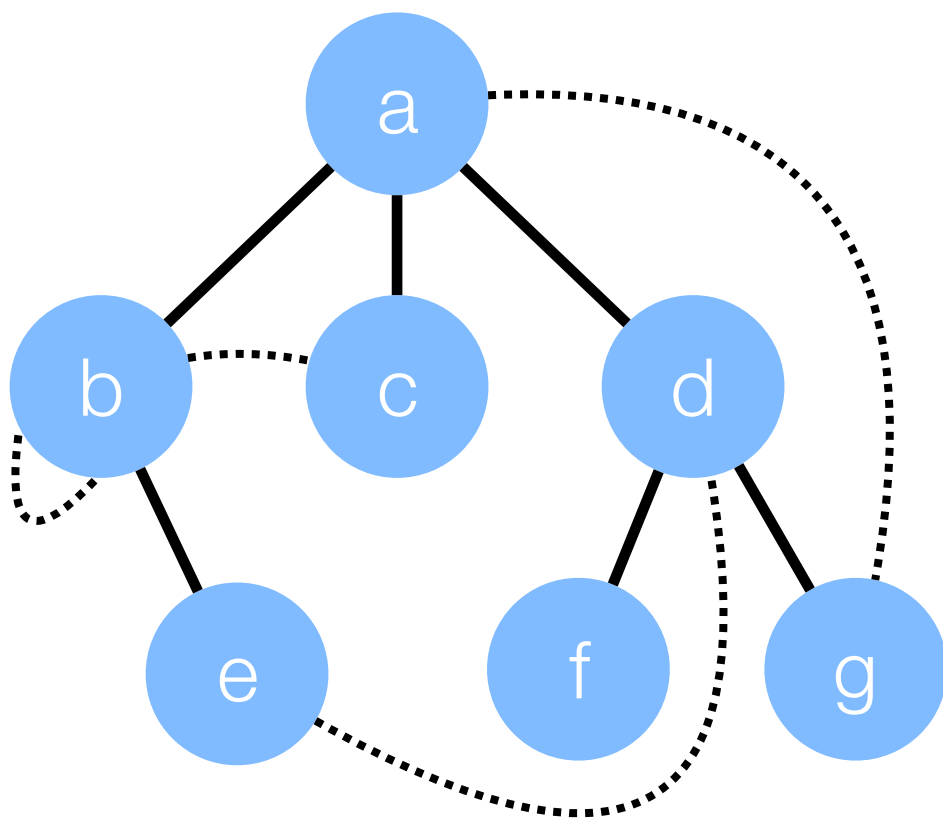
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Legend: — linear channel ● linear process ● shared process
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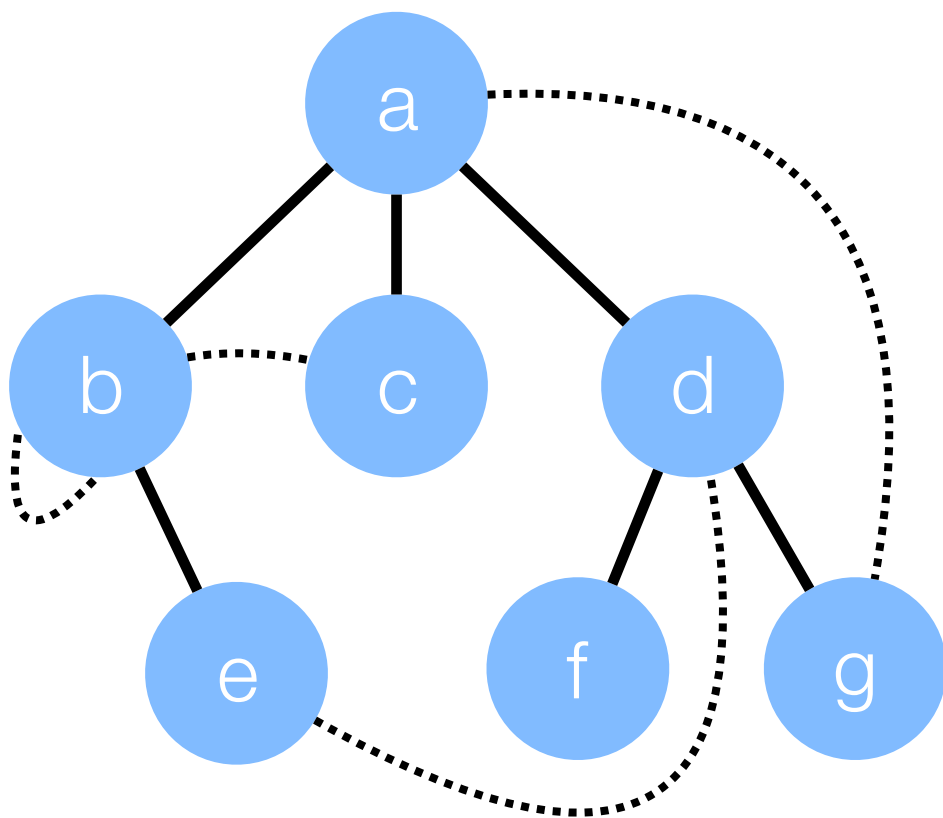
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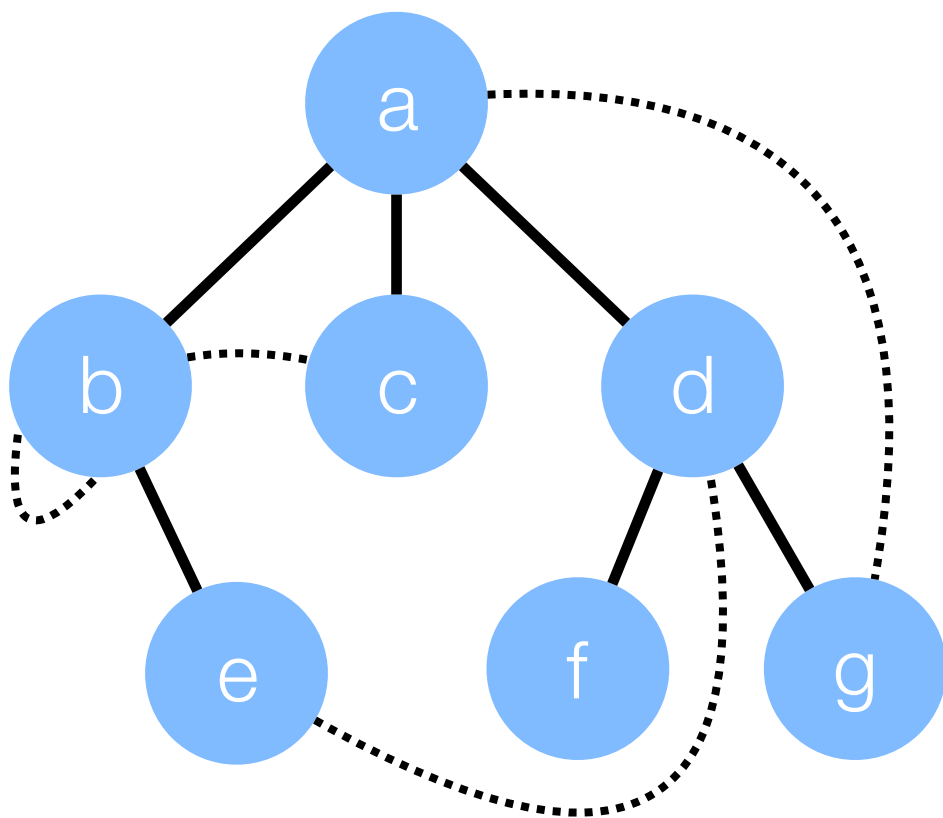
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We get a graph of linear and shared processes, with a linear tree inside.



Acquire-release amounts to “locking”

Legend: — linear channel



linear process

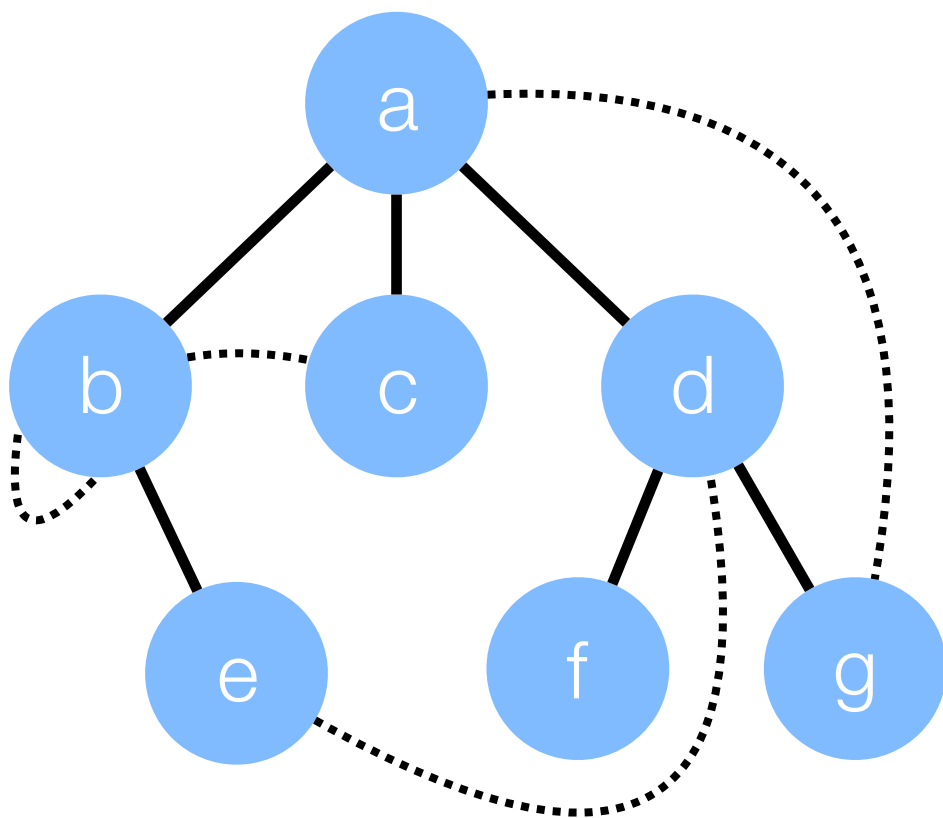


shared process

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Acquire-release amounts to “locking”

- Possibility of cyclic dependencies

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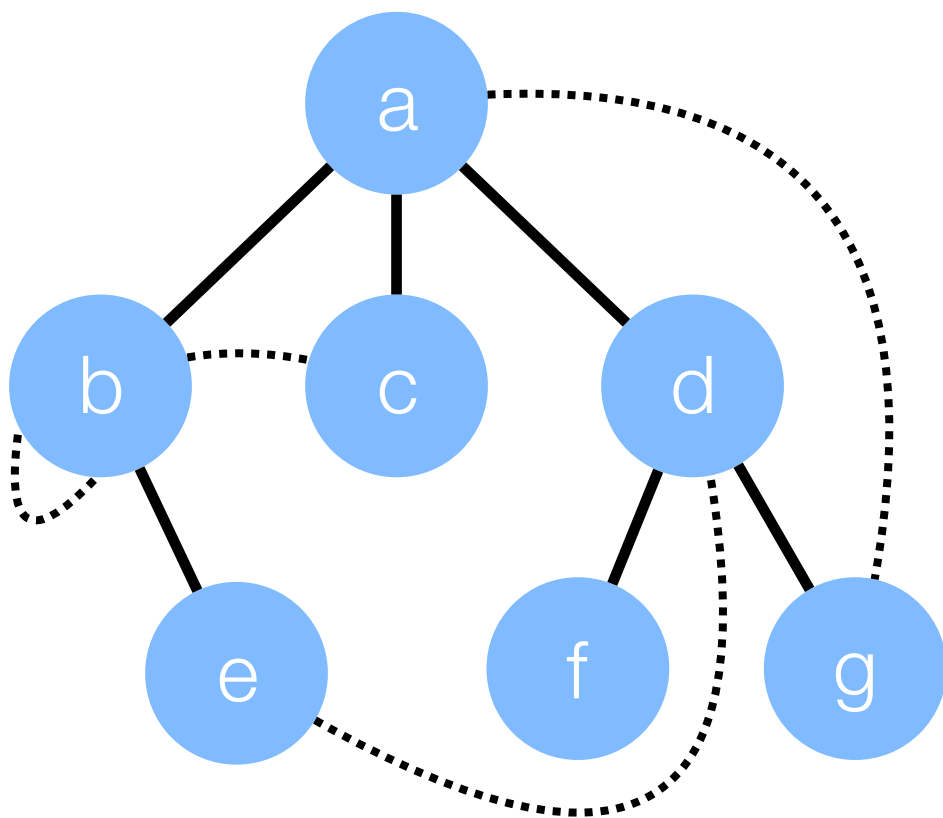
linear process



shared process

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Acquire-release amounts to “locking”

- Possibility of cyclic dependencies
- Let's visualize this waiting dependency with a red arrow

Legend: — linear channel

..... shared channel



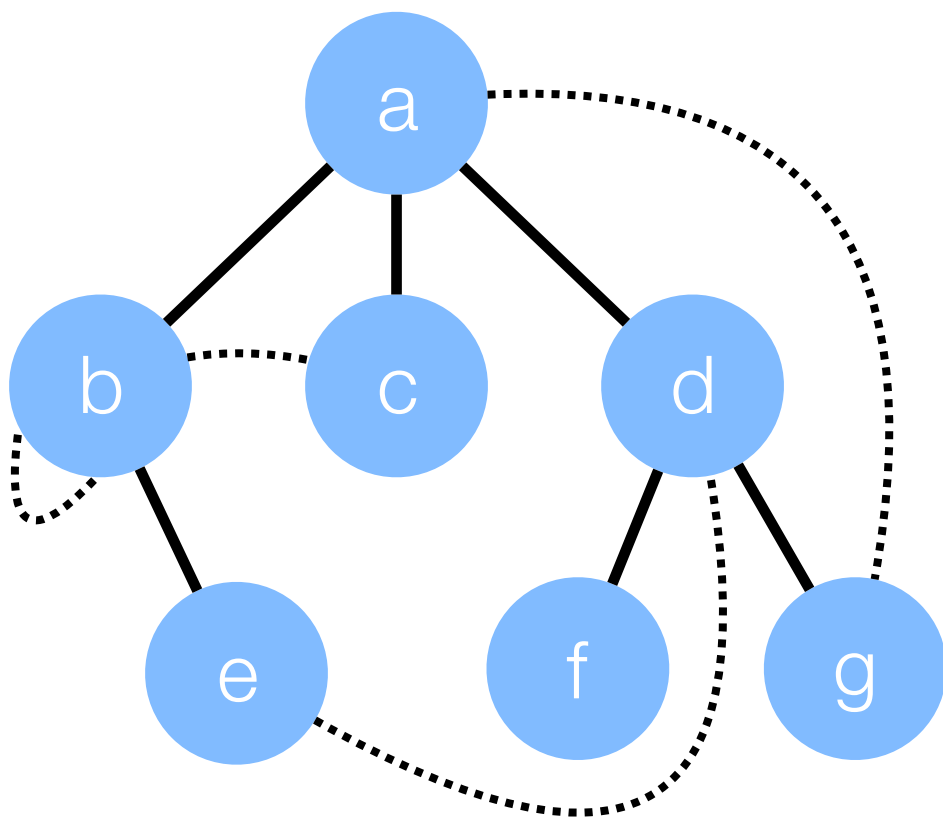
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linear process



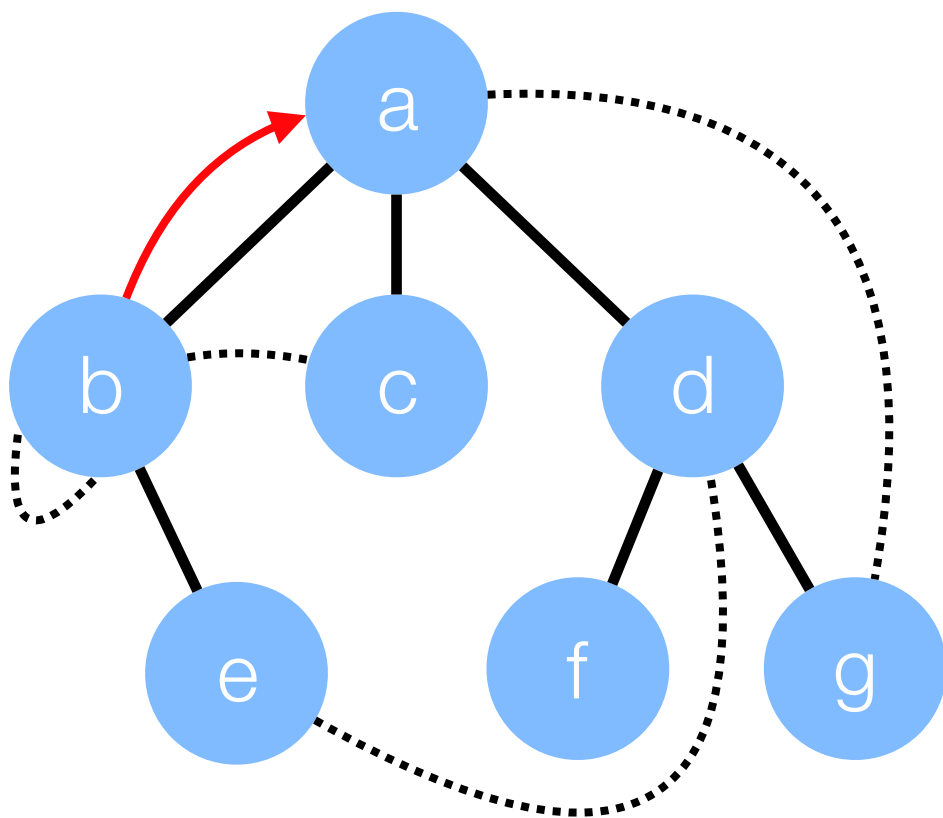
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“a waits for b to release resource”

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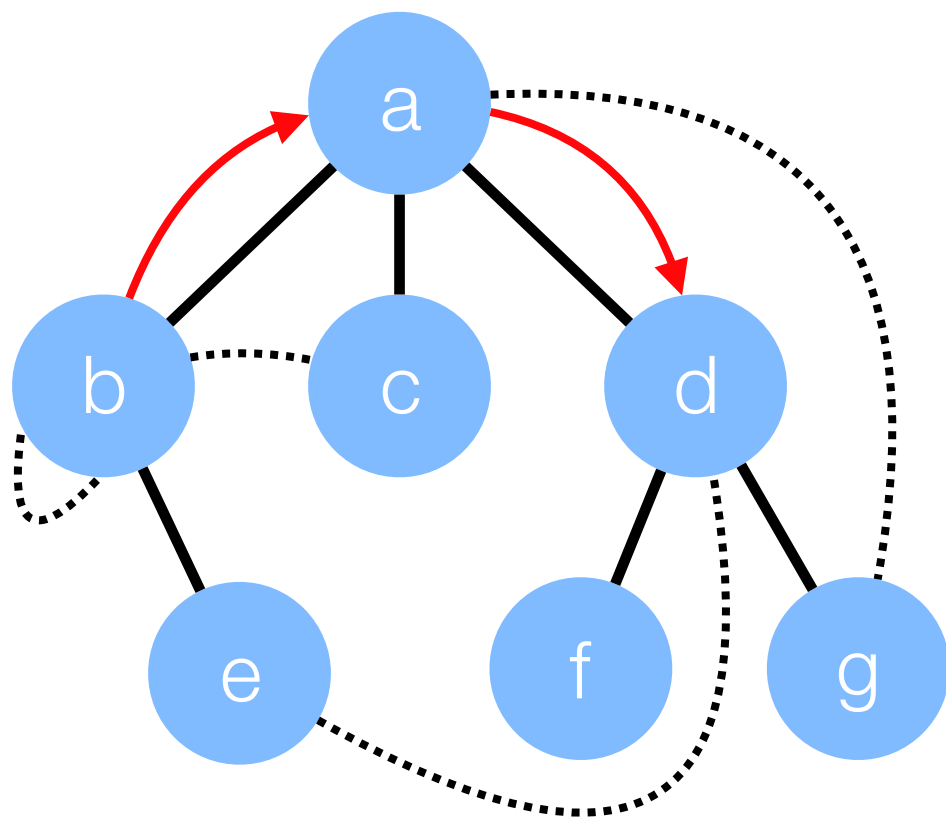
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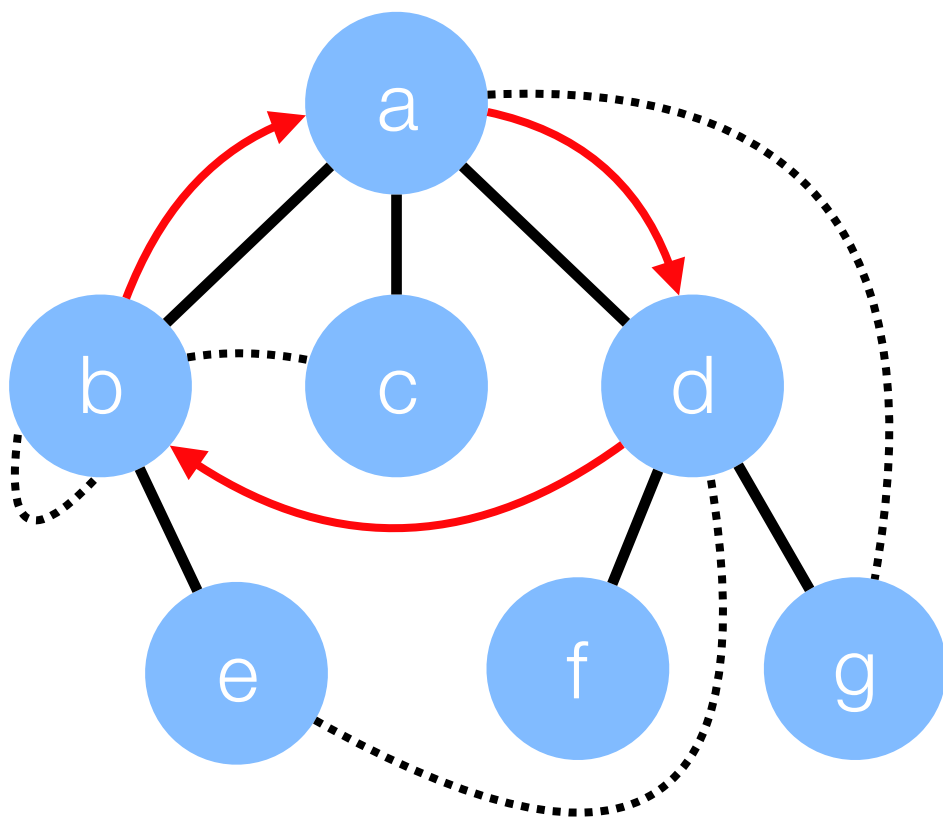
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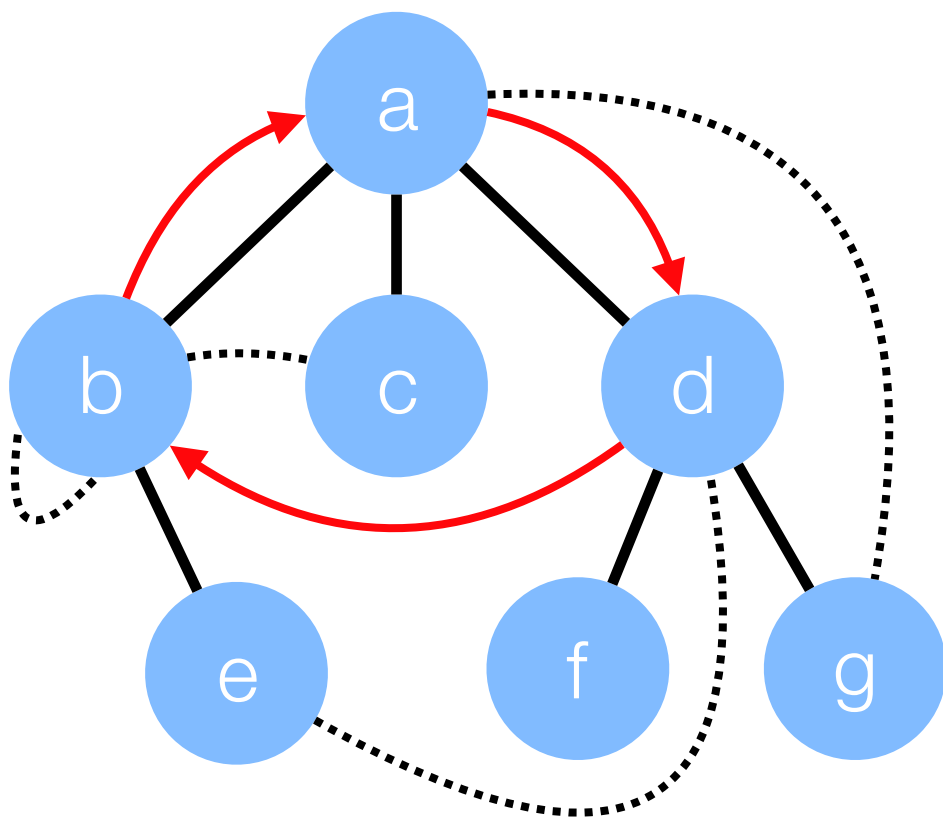
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Acquire-release amounts to “locking”

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- Let's visualize this waiting dependency with a red arrow
- Note: red arrows can connect arbitrary nodes

Legend: — linear channel

..... shared channel



linear process



shared process



“a waits for b to release resource”

Can we re-establish deadlock-freedom?

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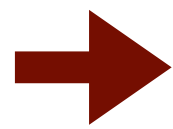
An enticing solution: “locking up”

- Impose a partial order on resources.
- Ensure that resources are acquired (“locked”) in increasing order.

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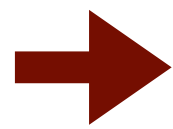


However, cyclic dependencies between acquire requests are not the only source of deadlock!

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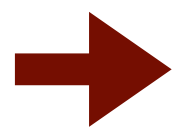
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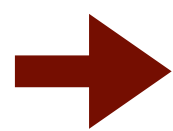
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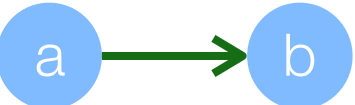

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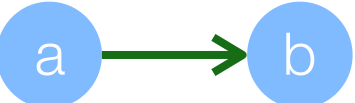

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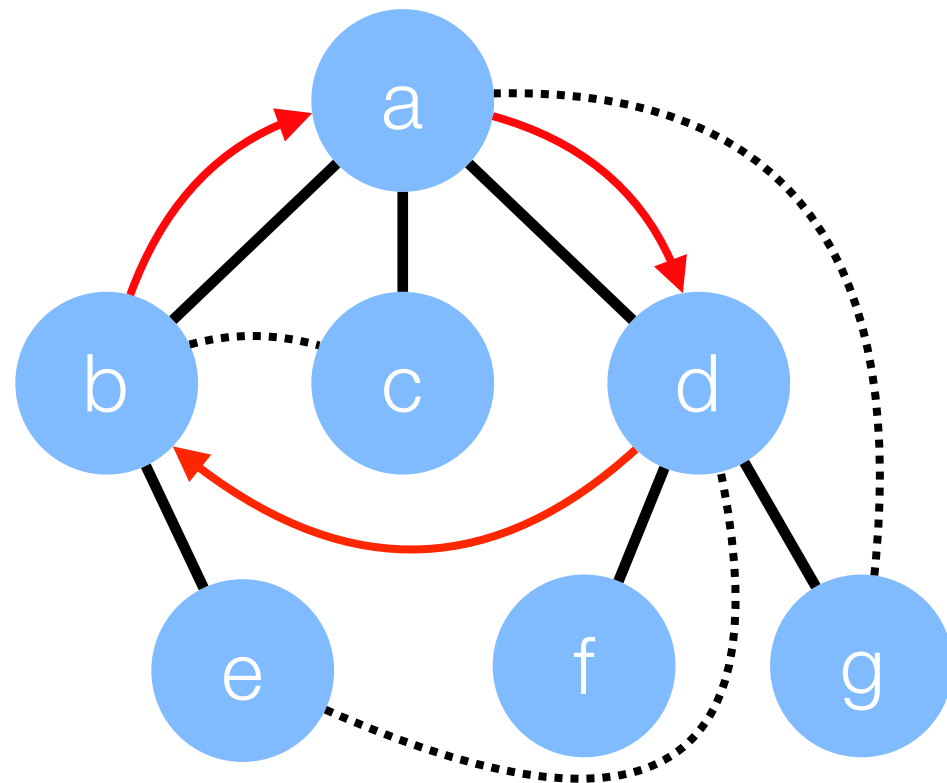
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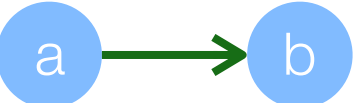

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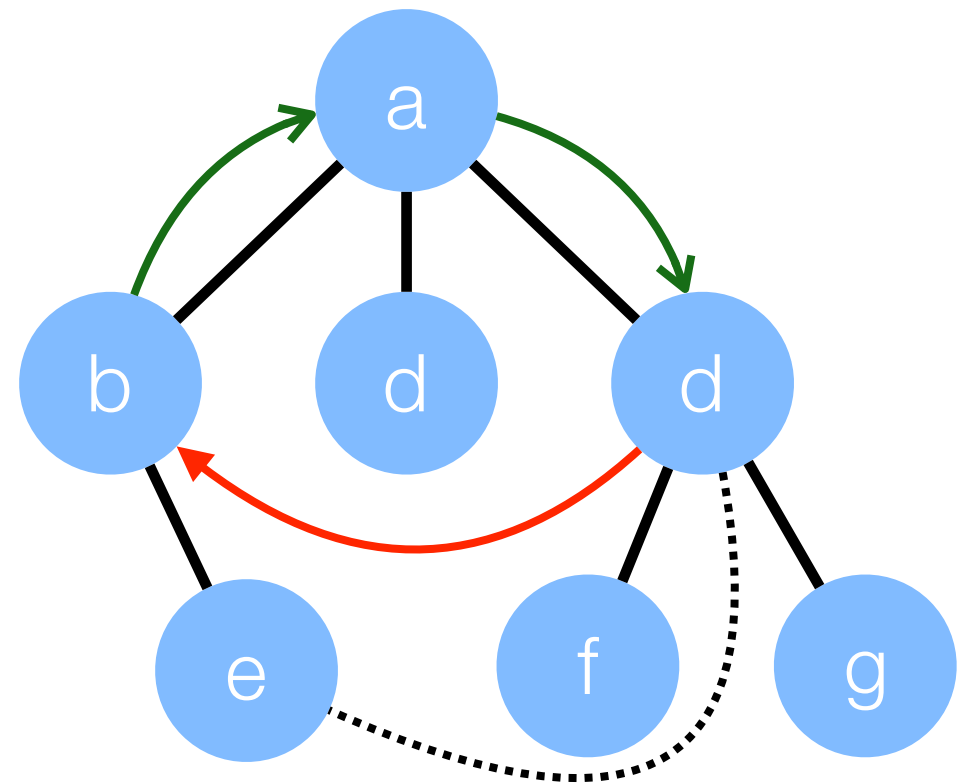
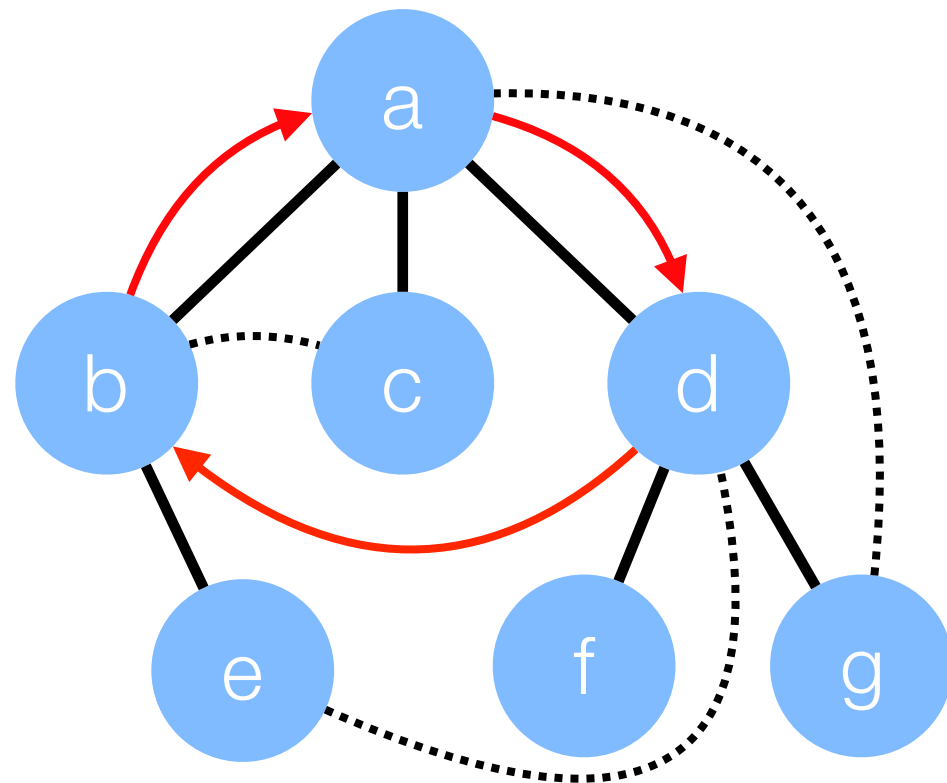
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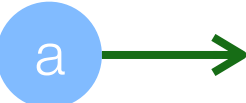
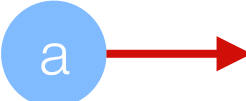
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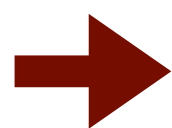
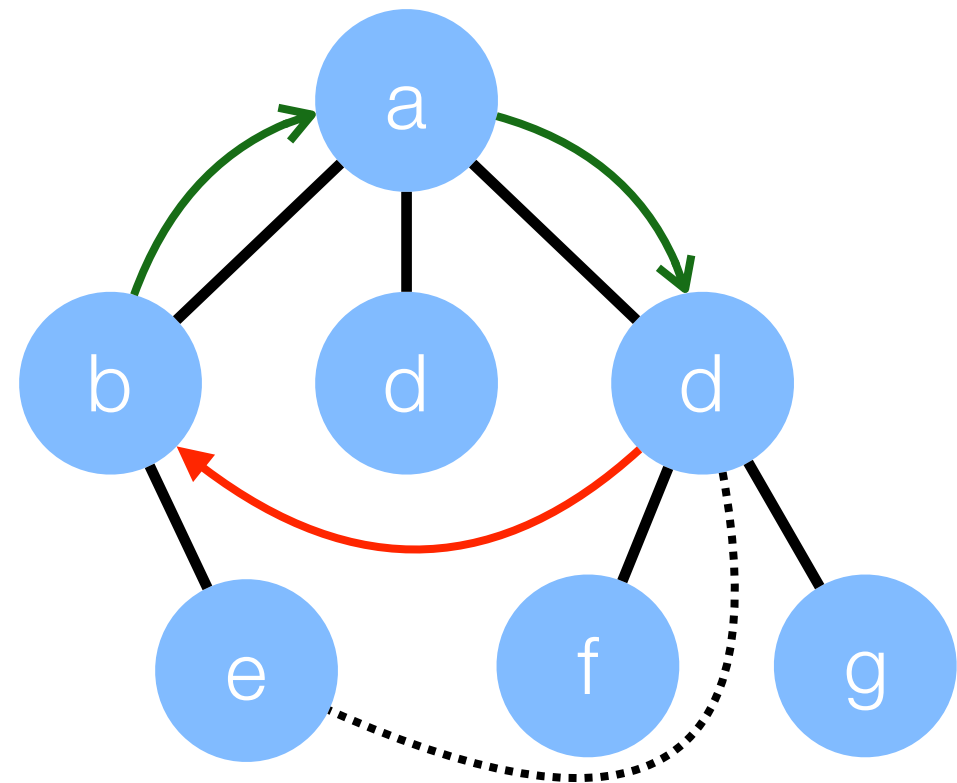
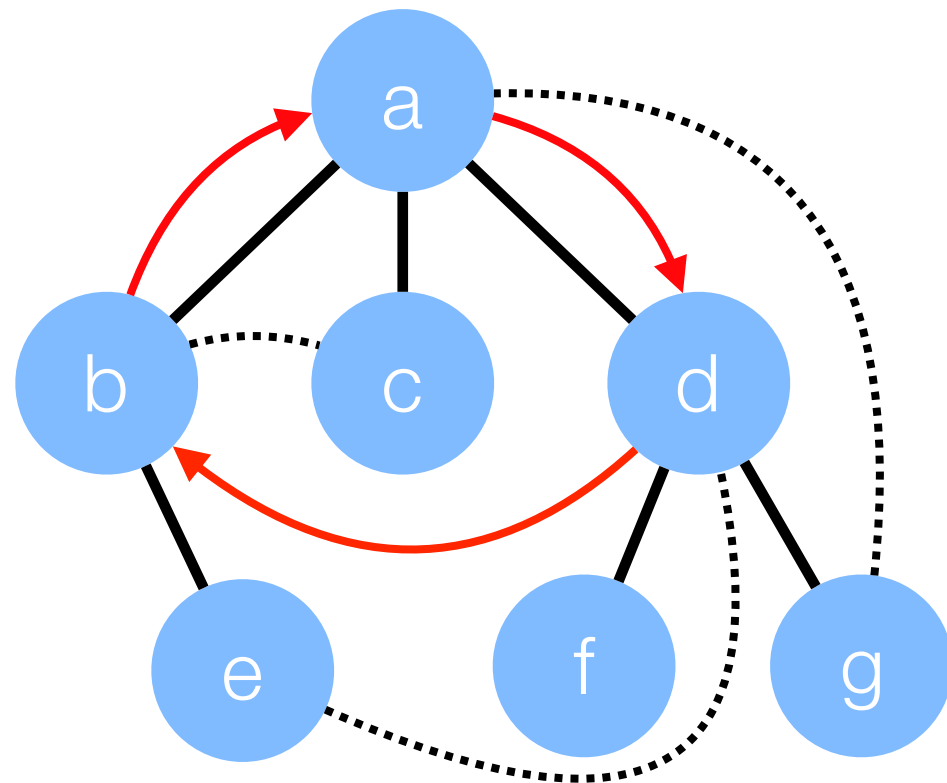
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Cycles can consist of red arrows only or a combination of red and green arrows.

Idea: competitors and collaborators

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➔ Competitors: overlap in set of resources acquired

Idea: competitors and collaborators

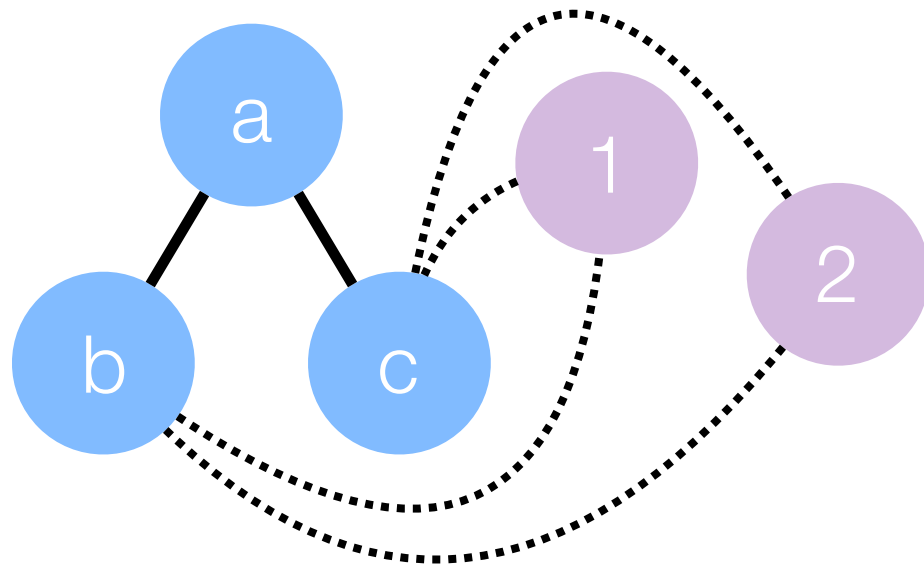
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Idea: competitors and collaborators

- ➔ Competitors: overlap in set of resources acquired
- ➔ Collaborators: do not overlap in set of resources acquired
- ➔ Notice: a resource acquired becomes a child of the acquirer

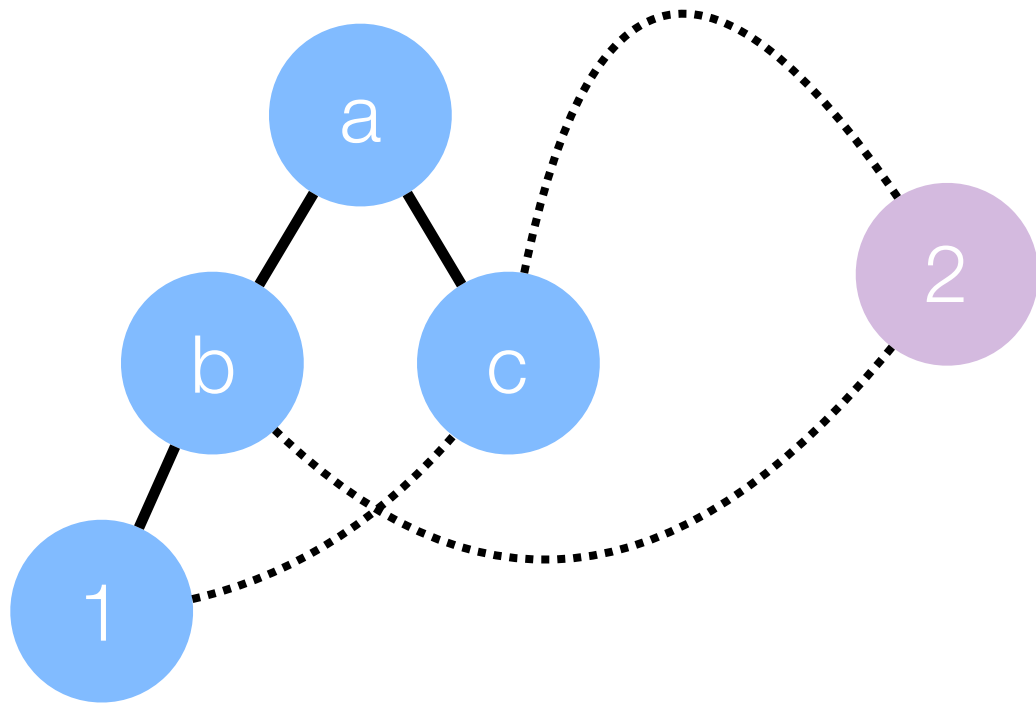
Idea: competitors and collaborators

- ➔ Competitors: overlap in set of resources acquired
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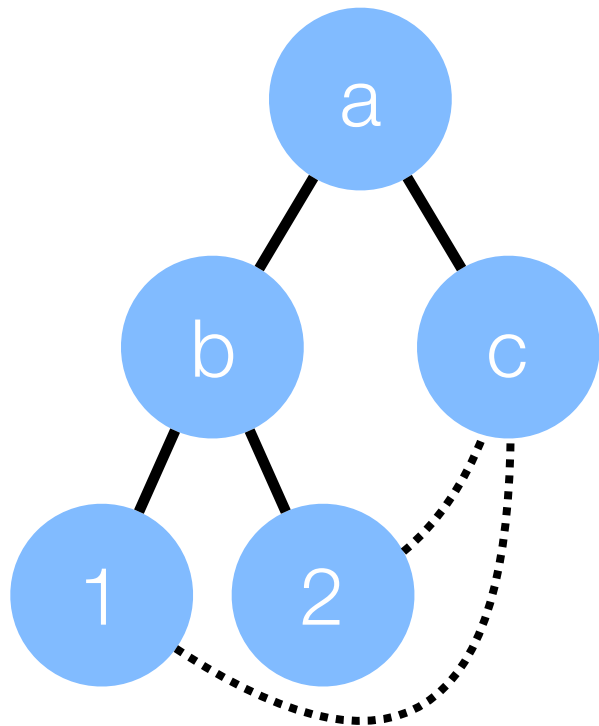
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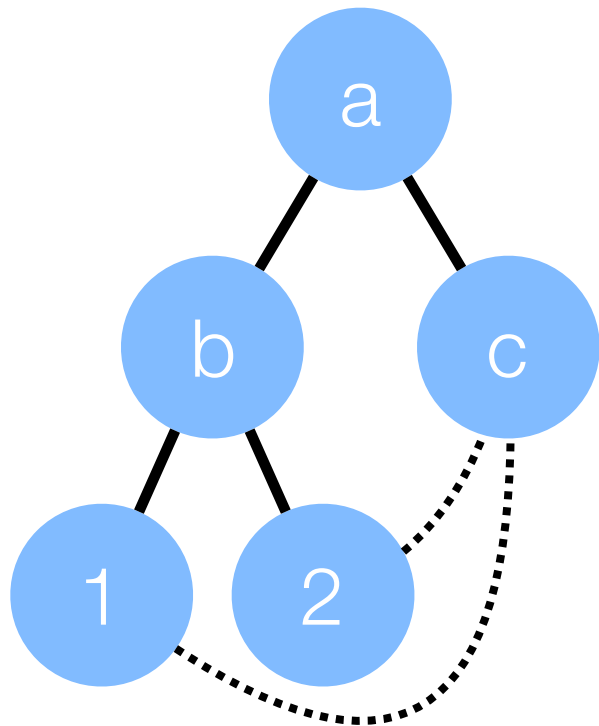
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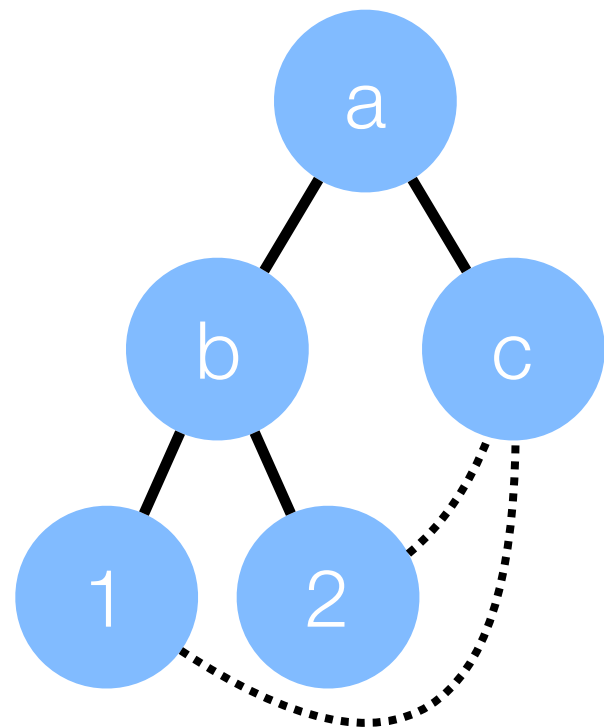
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➔ competitors tend to be siblings



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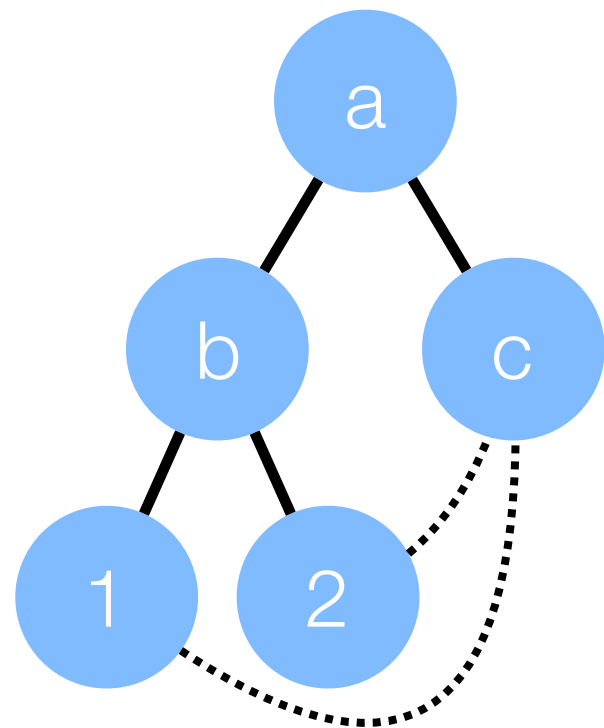


➔ competitors tend to be siblings

{b, c}

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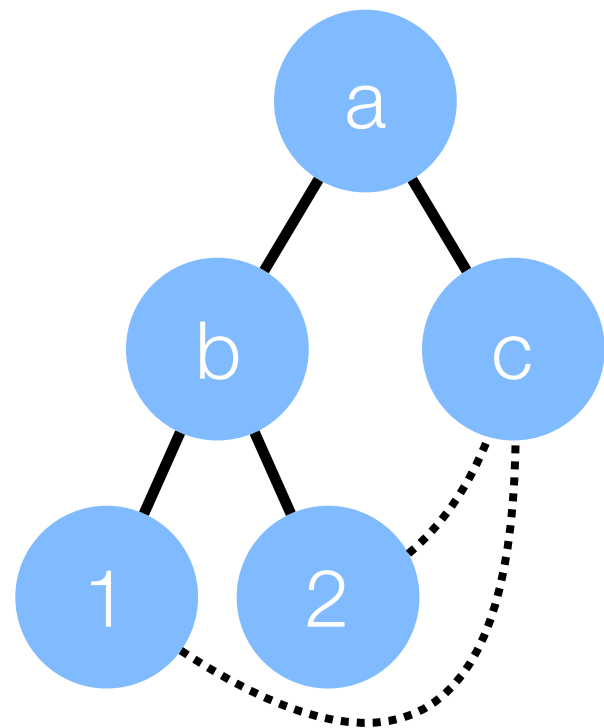
- ➔ competitors tend to be siblings

{b, c}

- ➔ collaborators tend to be in the same branch

Idea: competitors and collaborators

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- ➔ competitors tend to be siblings

$\{b, c\}$

- ➔ collaborators tend to be in the same branch

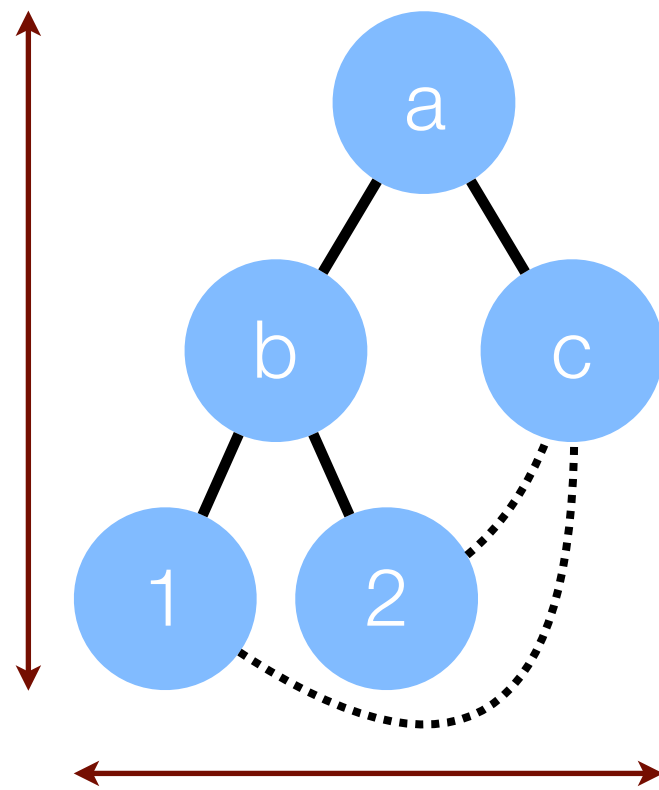
$\{a, b, 1\}$ $\{a, b, 2\}$ $\{a, c\}$

Manifest deadlock-freedom

Manifest deadlock-freedom

➔ Define type system enforcing the following invariants:

collaborators

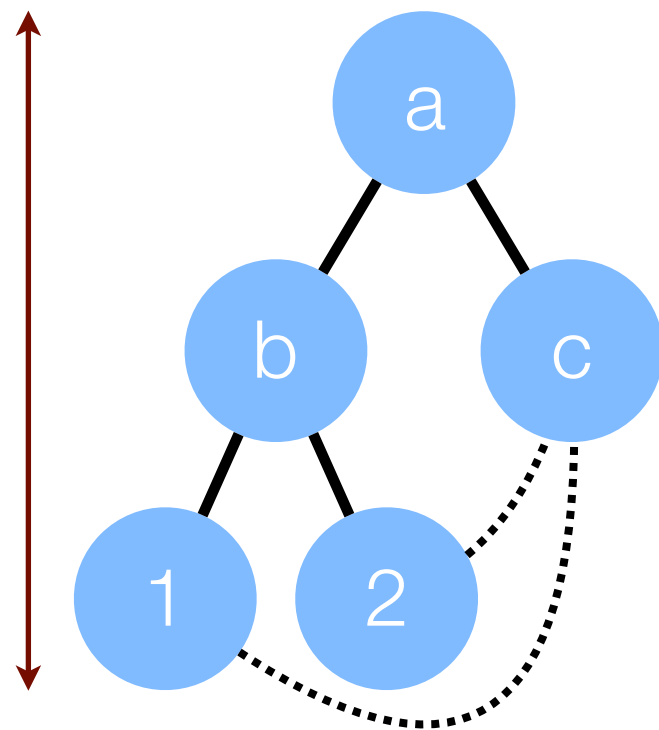


competitors

Manifest deadlock-freedom

➔ Define type system enforcing the following invariants:

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A

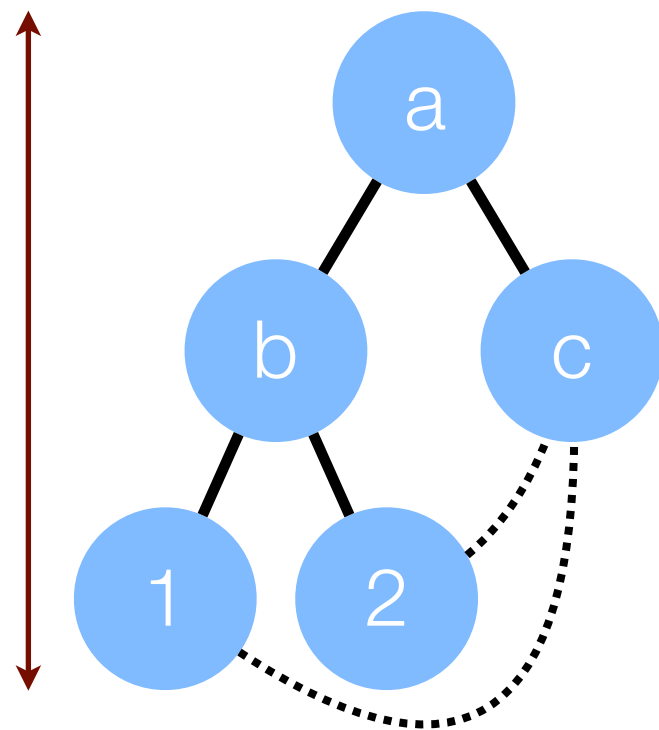
competitors employ locking-up for resources they compete for

competitors

Manifest deadlock-freedom

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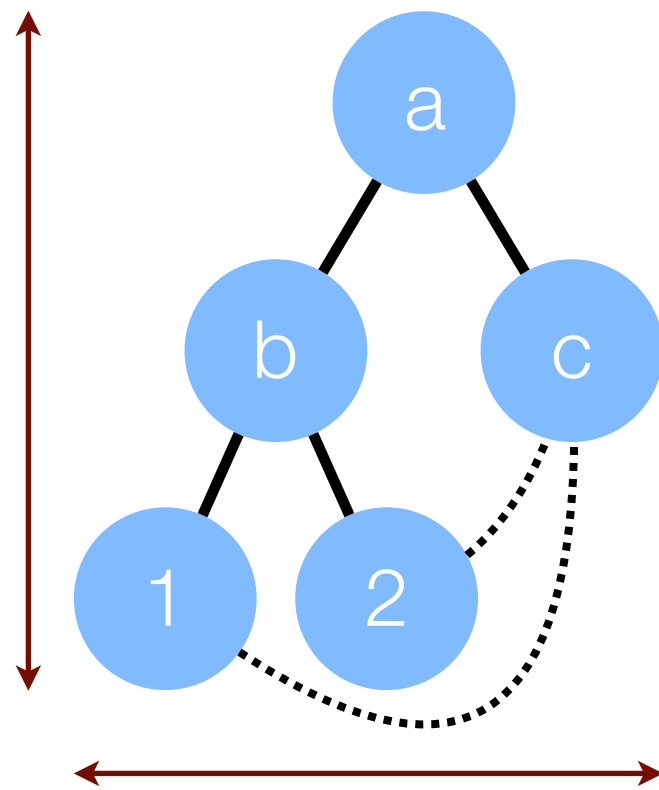
B

collaborators acquire mutually disjoint sets of resources

Manifest deadlock-freedom

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A

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collaborators acquire mutually disjoint sets of resources

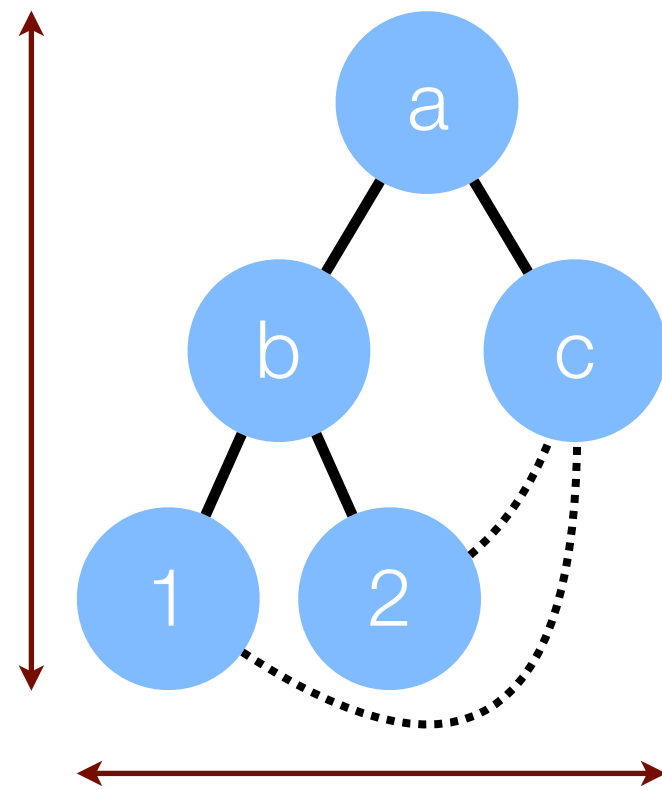
C

competitors have released all acquired resources when synchronizing with other competitors (“talking-up”)

Manifest deadlock-freedom

➔ Define type system enforcing the following invariants:

collaborators



competitors

A

competitors employ locking-up for resources they compete for

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collaborators acquire mutually disjoint sets of resources

C

competitors have released all acquired resources when synchronizing with other competitors (“talking-up”)

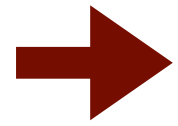
➔ A rules out red-arrow cycles, B and C rule out red-green-arrow cycles.



Manifest deadlock-freedom



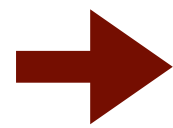
Manifest deadlock-freedom



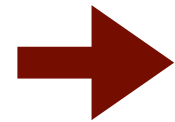
Introduce a world, an abstract value equipped with a partial order.



Manifest deadlock-freedom



Introduce a world, an abstract value equipped with a partial order.



Every process invariantly resides at a world.



Manifest deadlock-freedom

- Introduce a world, an abstract value equipped with a partial order.
- Every process invariantly resides at a world.
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Manifest deadlock-freedom

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$\Psi; \Gamma \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_s : A_s[\omega_k \uparrow_{\omega_l}^{\omega_n}])$ (where Ψ^+ irreflexive)

$\Psi; \Gamma; \Phi; \Delta \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_l : A_l[\omega_k \uparrow_{\omega_l}^{\omega_n}])$ (where Ψ^+ irreflexive)



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worlds associated
with process



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self-world:
world at which process
resides



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min-world:
world of minimal resource
to be acquired



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max-world: world
of maximal resource to be
acquired



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world order



Manifest deadlock-freedom

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possibly “aliased”
linear channels



Manifest deadlock-freedom

$\Psi; \Gamma \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_s : A_s[\omega_k \uparrow_{\omega_l}^{\omega_n}])$ (where Ψ^+ irreflexive)

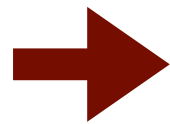
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Express invariants A, B, and C in terms of:



Manifest deadlock-freedom

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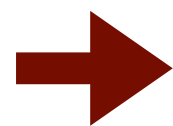
→ $\text{min}(\text{parent}) \leq \text{self}(\text{acquired_child}) \leq \text{max}(\text{parent})$



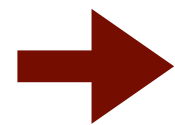
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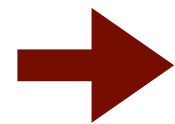
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Manifest deadlock-freedom

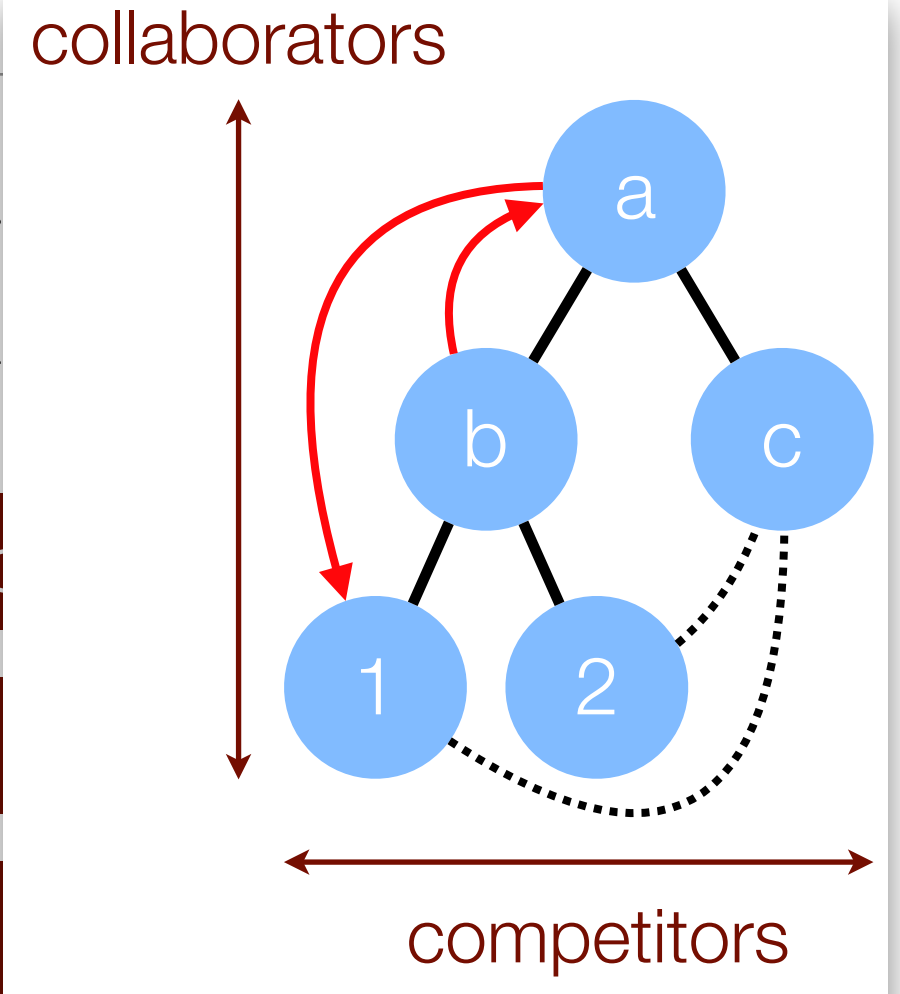
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$\Psi; \Gamma; \Phi; \Delta \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_L : A_L[\omega_k \uparrow_{\omega_l}^{\omega_n}])$ (w

→ Express invariants A, B, and C in terms of

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no vertical red arrows



Manifest deadlock-freedom

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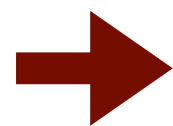
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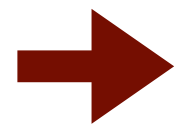
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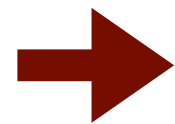
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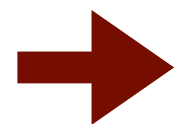
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for an acquire: lock-up



Manifest deadlock-freedom

$\Psi; \Gamma \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_s : A_s[\omega_k \uparrow_{\omega_l}^{\omega_n}])$ (where collaborators

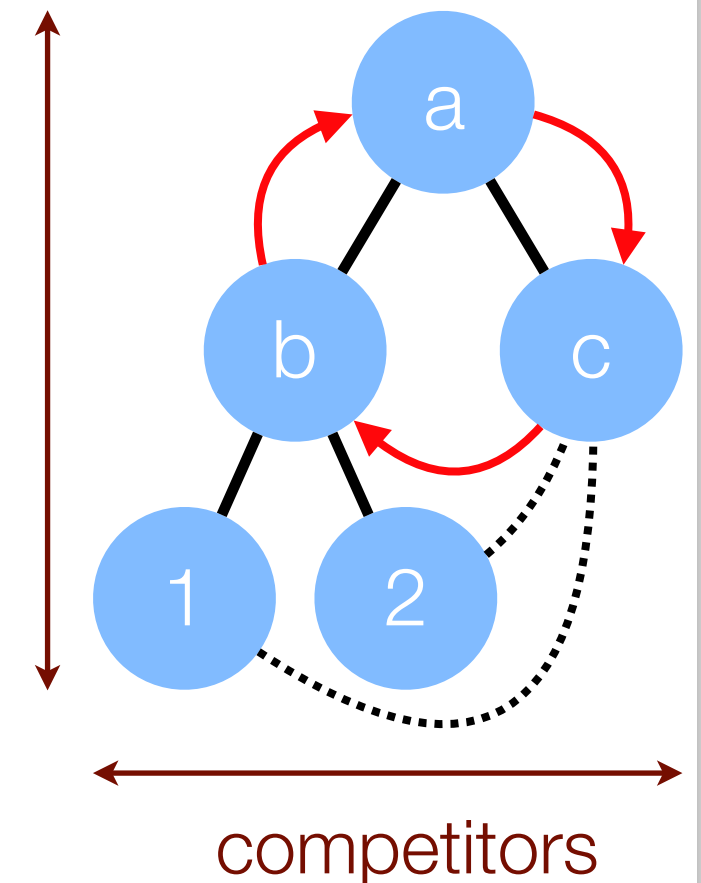
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→ for an acquire: lock-up



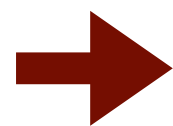
no red cycles



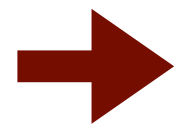
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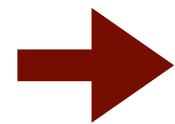
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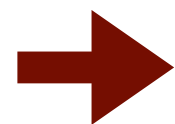
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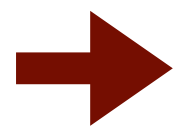
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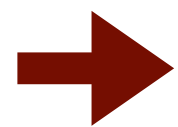
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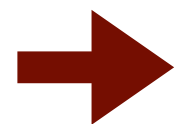
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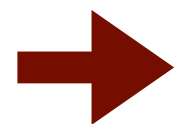
Express invariants A, B, and C in terms of:



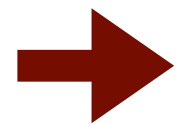
$\text{min}(\text{parent}) \leq \text{self}(\text{acquired_child}) \leq \text{max}(\text{parent})$



$\text{max}(\text{parent}) < \text{min}(\text{child})$



for an acquire: lock-up



for right-rule: Φ must be empty



Manifest deadlock-freedom

$\Psi; \Gamma \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_s : A_s[\omega_k \uparrow_{\omega_l}^{\omega_n}])$ (where Ψ^+ irreflexive)

$\Psi; \Gamma; \Phi; \Delta \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_L : A_L[\omega_k \uparrow_{\omega_l}^{\omega_n}])$ (w collaborators

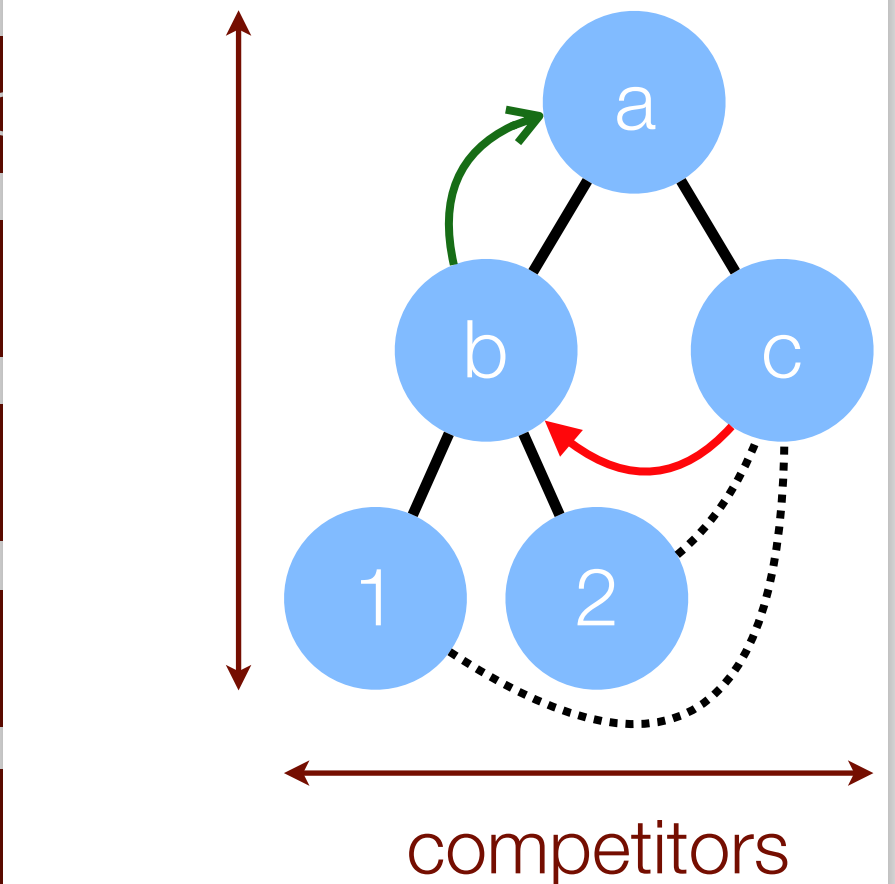
→ Express invariants A, B, and C in terms of

→ $\min(\text{parent}) \leq \text{self}(\text{acquired_child}) \leq$

→ $\max(\text{parent}) < \min(\text{child})$

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no ingoing red and up-going green arrow



Manifest deadlock-freedom

$\Psi; \Gamma \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_s : A_s[\omega_k \uparrow_{\omega_l}^{\omega_n}])$ (where Ψ^+ irreflexive)

$\Psi; \Gamma; \Phi; \Delta \vdash_{\Sigma} P :: (x_l : A_l[\omega_k \uparrow_{\omega_l}^{\omega_n}])$ (where Ψ^+ irreflexive)

→ Express invariants A, B, and C in terms of:

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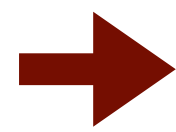
Manifest deadlock-freedom

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- ➔ Express invariants A, B, and C in terms of:
 - ➔ $\text{min}(\text{parent}) \leq \text{self}(\text{acquired_child}) \leq \text{max}(\text{parent})$
 - ➔ $\text{max}(\text{parent}) < \text{min}(\text{child})$
 - ➔ for an acquire: lock-up
 - ➔ for right-rule: Φ must be empty
- ➔ These low-level invariants are enforced by typing.

Taking stock

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We have a session type system that allows shared and linear channels to coexist and guarantees:



data-race-freedom (low-level and high-level)



protocol adherence



deadlock-freedom

Taking stock

- We have a session type system that allows shared and linear channels to coexist and guarantees:
 - data-race-freedom (low-level and high-level)
 - protocol adherence
 - deadlock-freedom
- We have increased practicality of linear session types while maintaining their guarantees.

Current & future work

Digital contracts (with Hoffmann, Pfenning, and Das)

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➔ Unique application field for shared session types:

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$$\begin{aligned} \text{auction} = \uparrow_L^s \oplus \{ & \text{running} : \&\{\text{bid} : \text{id} \rightarrow \text{money} \multimap \downarrow_L^s \text{auction}, \\ & \text{cancel} : \downarrow_L^s \text{auction}\}, \\ & \text{ended} : \text{id} \rightarrow \oplus\{\text{won} : \text{lot} \otimes \downarrow_L^s \text{auction}, \\ & \text{lost} : \text{money} \otimes \downarrow_L^s \text{auction}\} \} \end{aligned}$$

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➔ Resource analysis for static prediction of execution cost.

Digital contracts (with Hoffmann, Pfenning, and Das)

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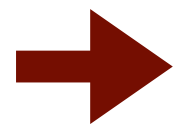
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➔ Resource analysis for static prediction of execution cost.

➔ Under development: Nomos, a digital contract language based on resource-aware shared session types.

Unifying parallelism and concurrency

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Shared session types recover expressiveness of untyped asynchronous pi-calculus [Balzer et al. CONCUR 2018]

Unifying parallelism and concurrency

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Unifying parallelism and concurrency

- Shared session types recover expressiveness of untyped asynchronous pi-calculus [Balzer et al. CONCUR 2018]
 - introduce nondeterminism
 - linear logic session types are deterministic
- Opportunity for unifying framework that combines both deterministic (parallel) and nondeterministic (concurrent) computation.

Thank you for your attention!

Papers for this talk:

- Stephanie Balzer and Frank Pfenning: [Manifest Sharing with Session Types](#). ICFP 2017.
- Stephanie Balzer, Bernardo Toninho, and Frank Pfenning: [Manifest Deadlock-Freedom for Shared Session Types](#). ESOP 2019.
- Stephanie Balzer, Frank Pfenning, and Bernardo Toninho: [A Universal Session Type for Untyped Asynchronous Communication](#). CONCUR 2019.