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Chapter 3: Distributed Systems: Synchronization

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Chapter Outline

- Clocks and time
- Global state
- Mutual exclusion
- Election algorithms



Time and Clocks

What we need?

How to solve?

Real time	Universal time (Network time)
Interval length	Computer clock
Order of events	Network time (Universal time)

NOTE: *Time* is *monotonous*



Measuring Time

- Traditionally time measured astronomically
 - Transit of the sun (highest point in the sky)
 - Solar day and solar second
- Problem: Earth's rotation is slowing down
 - Days get longer and longer
 - 300 million years ago there were 400 days in the year ;-)
- Modern way to measure time is atomic clock
 - Based on transitions in Cesium-133 atom
 - Still need to correct for Earth's rotation
- Result: **Universal Coordinated Time (UTC)**
 - UTC available via radio signal, telephone line, satellite (GPS)



Hardware/Software Clocks

- Physical clocks in computers are realized as crystal oscillation counters at the hardware level
 - Correspond to counter register $H(t)$
 - Used to generate interrupts
- Usually scaled to approximate **physical time t** , yielding software clock $C(t)$, $C(t) = \alpha H(t) + \beta$
 - $C(t)$ measures time relative to some reference event, e.g., 64 bit counter for # of nanoseconds since last boot
 - Simplification: $C(t)$ carries an approximation of real time
 - Ideally, $C(t) = t$ (never 100% achieved)
 - Note: Values given by two consecutive clock queries will differ only if clock resolution is sufficiently smaller than processor cycle time

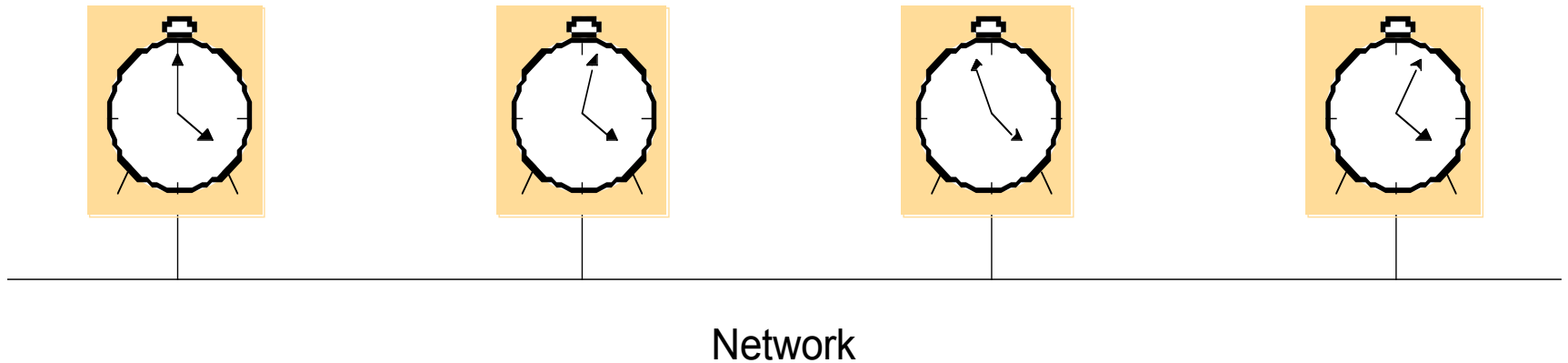


Problems with Hardware/Software Clocks

- **Skew:** Disagreement in the reading of two clocks
- **Drift:** Difference in the rate at which two clocks count the time
 - Due to physical differences in crystals, plus heat, humidity, voltage, etc.
 - Accumulated drift can lead to significant skew
- **Clock drift rate:** Difference in precision between a prefect reference clock and a physical clock,
 - Usually, 10^{-6} sec/sec, 10^{-7} to 10^{-8} for high precision clocks

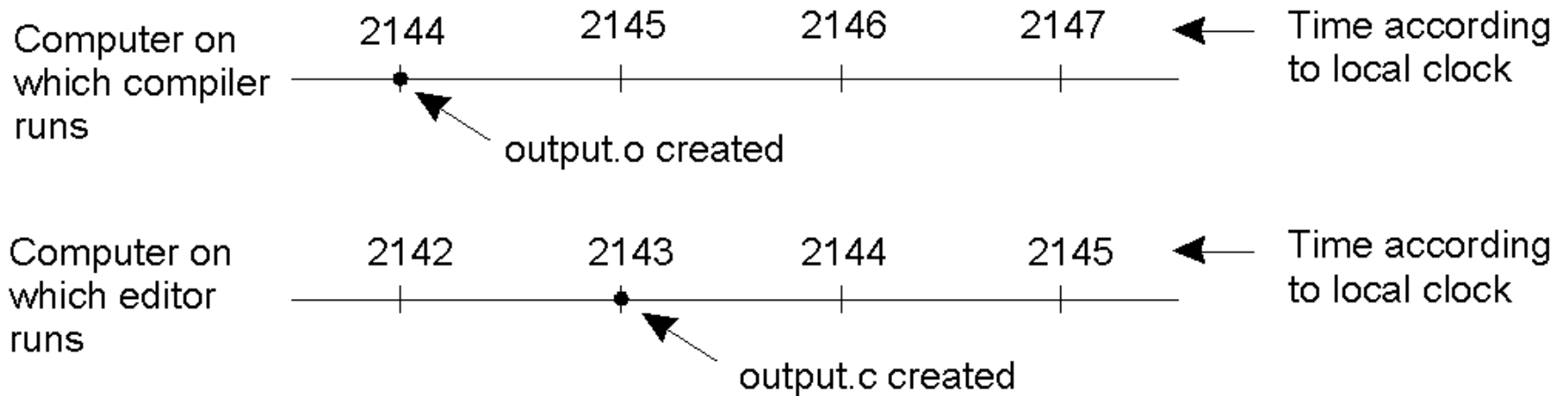


Skew between computer clocks in a distributed system

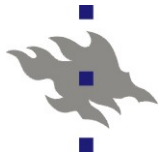




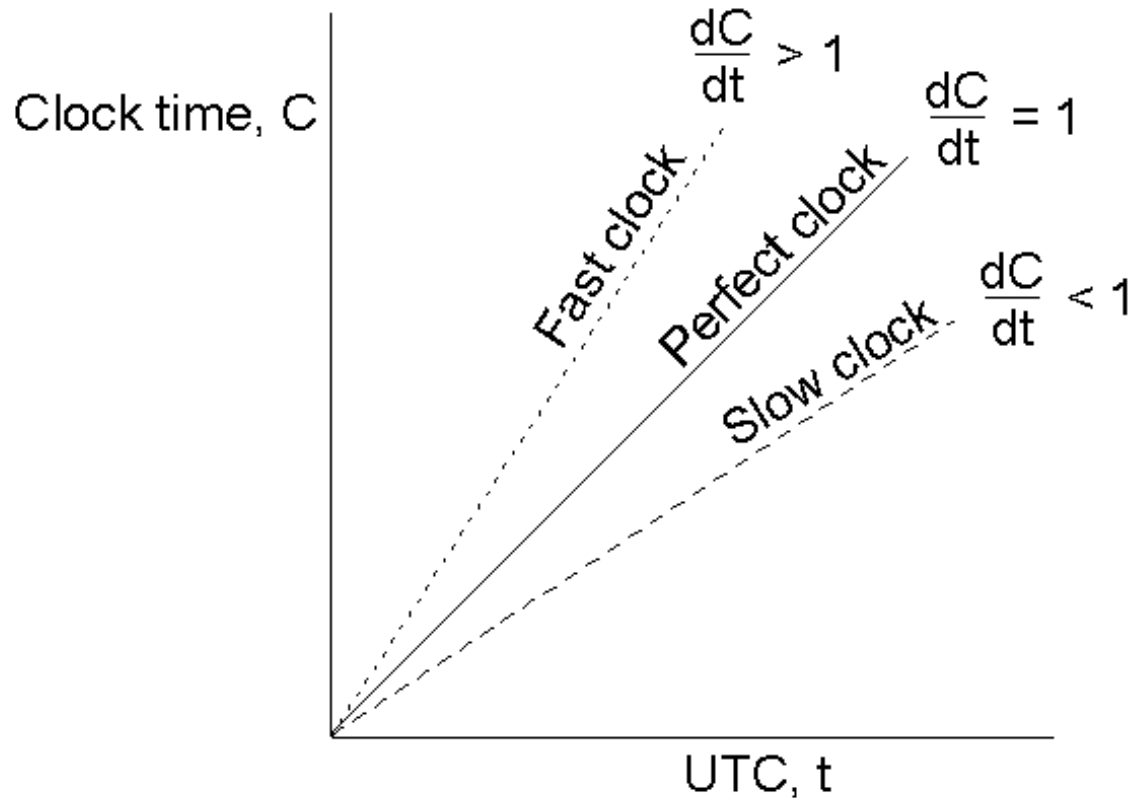
Clock Synchronization



When each machine has its own clock, an event that occurred after another event may nevertheless be assigned an earlier time.



Clock Synchronization Problem



drift rate: 10^{-6}

1 ms \sim 17 min

1 s \sim 11.6 days

*UTC: coordinated
universal time*

accuracy:

radio 0.1 – 10 ms,

GPS 1 μ s

The relation between clock time and UTC when clocks tick at different rates.



Synchronizing Clocks

■ External synchronization

- Synchronize process' s clock with an authoritative external reference clock $S(t)$ by limiting skew to a delay bound $D > 0$
 - $|S(t) - C_i(t)| < D$ for all t
- For example, synchronization with a UTC source

■ Internal synchronization

- Synchronize the local clocks within a distributed system to disagree by not more than a delay bound $D > 0$, without necessarily achieving external synchronization
 - $|C_i(t) - C_j(t)| < D$ for all i, j, t

■ Obviously:

- For a system with external synchronization bound of D , the internal synchronization is bounded by $2D$



Clock Correctness

- When is a clock correct?
 1. If drift rate falls within a bound $r > 0$, then for any t and t' with $t' > t$ the following error bound in measuring t and t' holds:
 - $(1-r)(t' - t) \leq H(t') - H(t) \leq (1+r)(t' - t)$
 - Consequence: No jumps in hardware clocks allowed
 2. Sometimes monotonically increasing clock is enough:
 - $t' > t \Rightarrow C(t') > C(t)$
 3. Frequently used condition:
 - Monotonically increasing
 - Drift rate bounded between synchronization points
 - Clock may jump ahead at synchronization points



Synchronization of Clocks: Software-Based Solutions

- Techniques:
 - time stamps of real-time clocks
 - message passing
 - round-trip time (local measurement)
- Cristian's algorithm
- Berkeley algorithm
- Network time protocol (Internet)



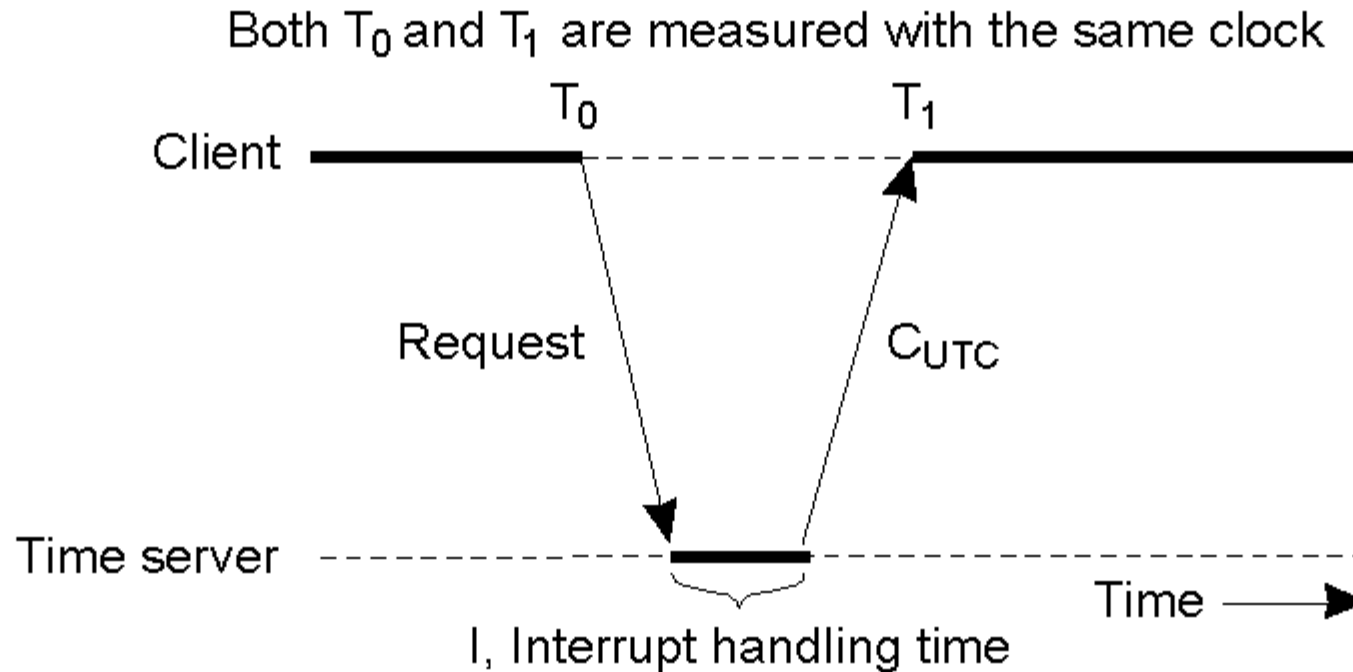
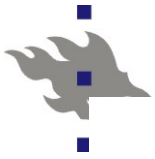
Christian' s Algorithm

■ Observations

- Round trip times between processes are often reasonably short in practice, yet theoretically unbounded
- Practical estimate possible if round-trip times are sufficiently short in comparison to required accuracy

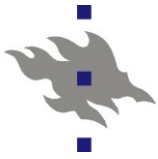
■ Principle

- Use UTC-synchronized time server S
- Process P sends requests to S
- Measures round-trip time T_{round}
 - In LAN, T_{round} should be around 1-10 ms
 - During this time, a clock with a 10^{-6} sec/sec drift rate varies by at most 10^{-8} sec
 - Hence the estimate of T_{round} is reasonably accurate
- Naive estimate: Set clock to $t + \frac{1}{2}T_{\text{round}}$



Current time from a time server: UTC from radio/satellite etc
Problems:

- time must never run backward
- variable delays in message passing / delivery



Christian' s Algorithm: Analysis

■ Accuracy of estimate?

■ Assumptions:

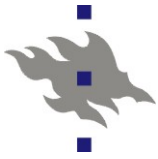
- requests and replies via same net
- *min* delay is either known or can be estimated conservatively

■ Calculation:

- Earliest time that S can have sent reply: $t_0 + min$
- Latest time that S can have sent reply: $t_0 + T_{round} - min$
- Total time range for answer: $T_{round} - 2 * min$
- Accuracy is $\pm (\frac{1}{2}T_{round} - min)$

■ Discussion

- Really only suitable for LAN environment or Intranet
- Problem of failure of S



Alternative Algorithm

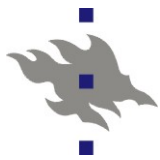
■ Berkeley algorithm (Gusella&Zatti '89)

- No external synchronization, but one master server
- Master polls slaves periodically about their clock readings
- Estimate of local clock times using round trip estimation
- Averages the values obtained from a group of processes
 - Cancels out individual clock's tendencies to run fast
- Tells slave processes by which amount of time to adjust local clock
- Master failure: Master election algorithm (see later)

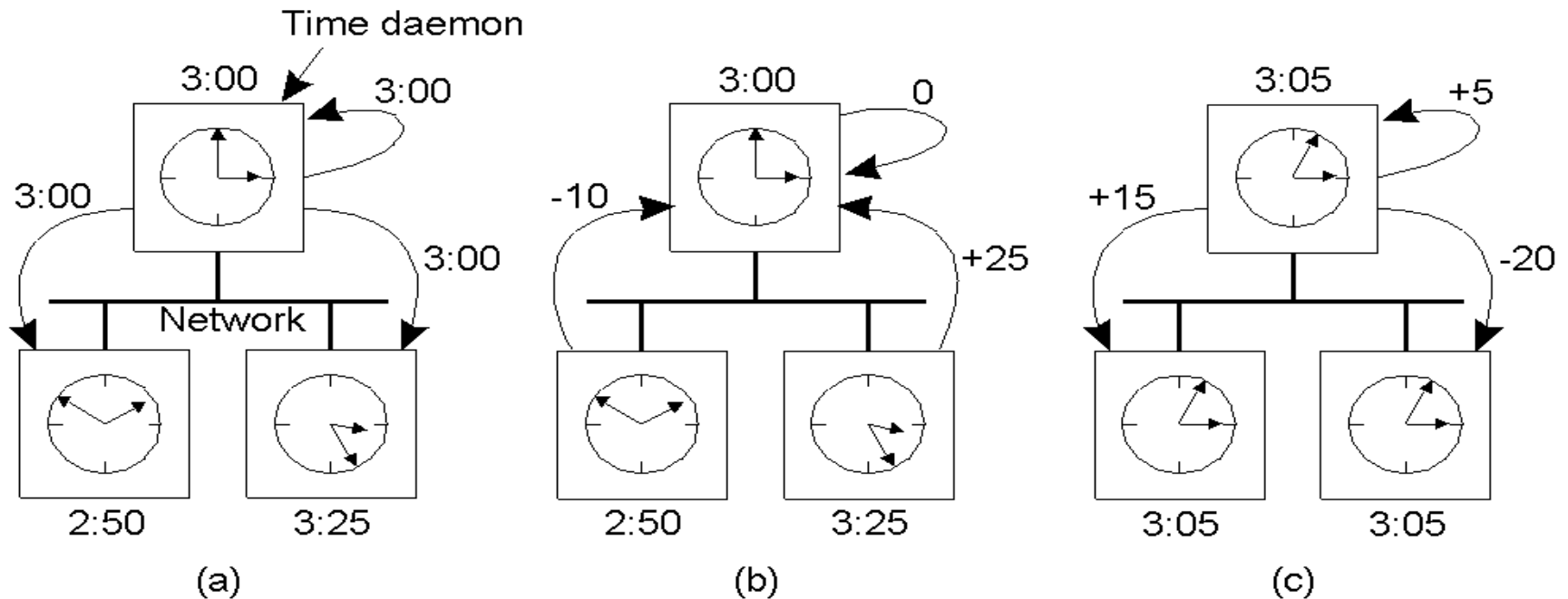
■ Experiment

- 15 computers, local drift rate $< 2 \times 10^{-5}$, max round-trip 10 ms
- Clocks were synchronized to within 20-25 ms

■ Note: Neither algorithm is really suitable for Internet



The Berkeley Algorithm



- a) The **time daemon asks** all the other machines for their clock values
- b) The machines answer
- c) The time daemon tells everyone how to adjust their clock

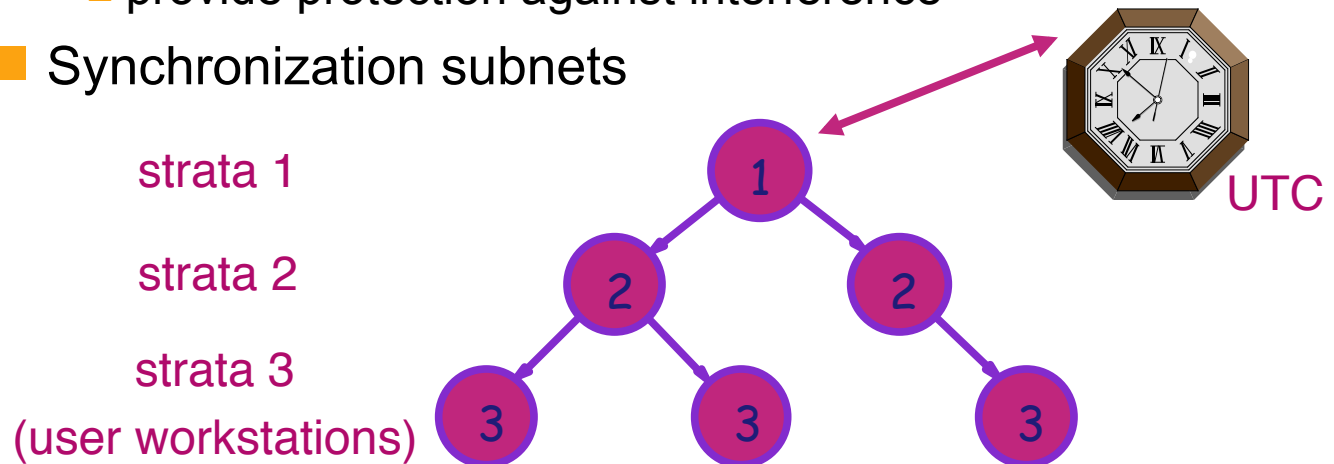


Clock Synchronization: NTP

■ Goals

- ability to externally synchronize clients via Internet to UTC
- provide reliable service tolerating lengthy losses of connectivity
- enable clients to resynchronize sufficiently frequently to offset typical HW drift rates
- provide protection against interference

■ Synchronization subnets





NTP Basic Idea

- Layered client-server architecture, based on UDP message passing
- Synchronization at clients with higher strata number less accurate due to increased latency to strata 1 time server
- Failure robustness: if a strata 1 server fails, it may become a strata 2 server that is being synchronized though another strata 1 server



NTP Modes

■ Multicast:

- One computer periodically multicasts time info to all other computers on network
- These adjust clock assuming a very small transmission delay
- Only suitable for high speed LANs; yields low but usually acceptable sync.

■ Procedure-call: similar to Christian's protocol

- Server accepts requests from clients
- Applicable where higher accuracy is needed, or where multicast is not supported by the network's hard- and software

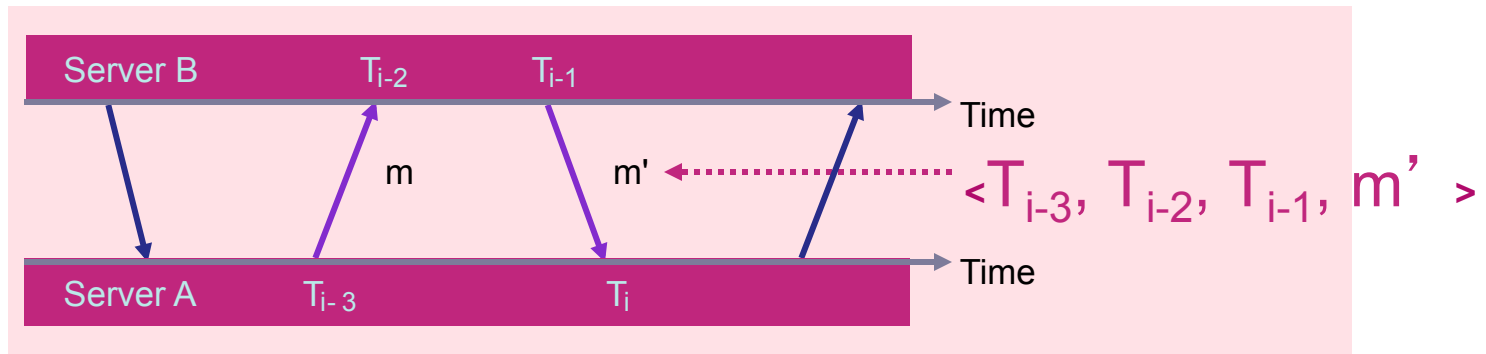
■ Symmetric:

- Used where high accuracy is needed



Procedure-Call and Symmetric Modes

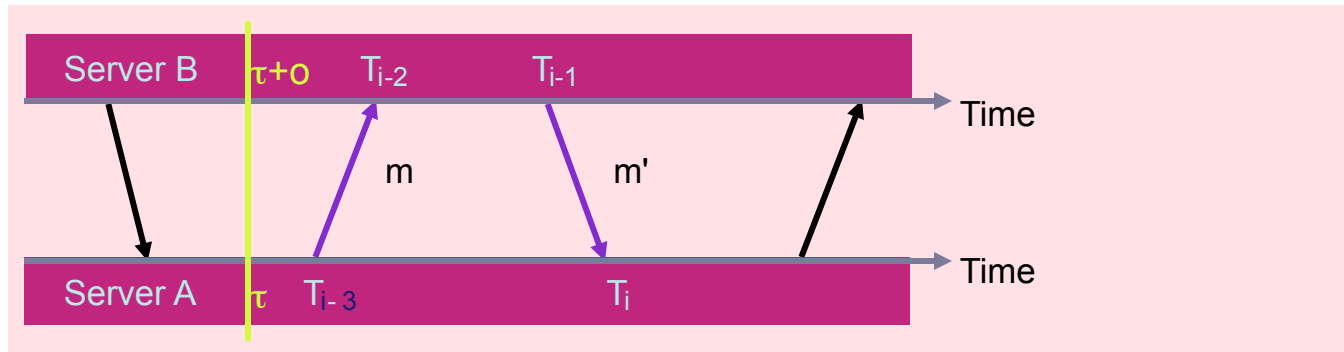
- All messages carry timing history information
 - local timestamps of send and receive of the previous NTP message
 - local timestamp of send of this message



- For each pair i of messages (m, m') exchanged between two servers the following values are being computed
(based on 3 values carried w/ msg and 4th value obtained via local timestamp):
 - offset o_i : **estimate** for the actual offset between two clocks
 - **delay** d_i : **true** total transmission time for the pair of messages



NTP: Delay and Offset



- Let o be the **true** offset of B's clock relative to A's clock, and let t and t' the **true** transmission times of m and m' ($T_i, T_{i-1} \dots$ are **not** true time)

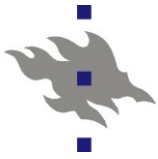
- Delay

$T_{i-2} = T_{i-3} + t + o$ (1) and $T_i = T_{i-1} + t' - o$ (2) which leads to

$d_i = t + t' = T_{i-2} - T_{i-3} + T_i - T_{i-1}$ (clock errors zeroed out \rightarrow (almost) **true** d)

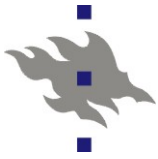
- Offset

$o_i = \frac{1}{2} (T_{i-2} - T_{i-3} + T_{i-1} - T_i)$ (only an estimate)



NTP Implementation

- Statistical algorithms based on 8 most recent $\langle o_i, d_i \rangle$ pairs: \rightarrow determine quality of estimates
- The value of o_i that corresponds to the minimum d_i is chosen as an estimate for o
- Time server communicates with multiple peers, eliminates peers with unreliable data, favors peers with higher strata number (e.g., for primary synchronization partner selection)
- NTP phase lock loop model: modify local clock in accordance with observed drift rate
- Experiments achieve synchronization accuracies of 10 msec over Internet, and 1 msec on LAN using NTP



Clocks and Synchronization

Requirements:

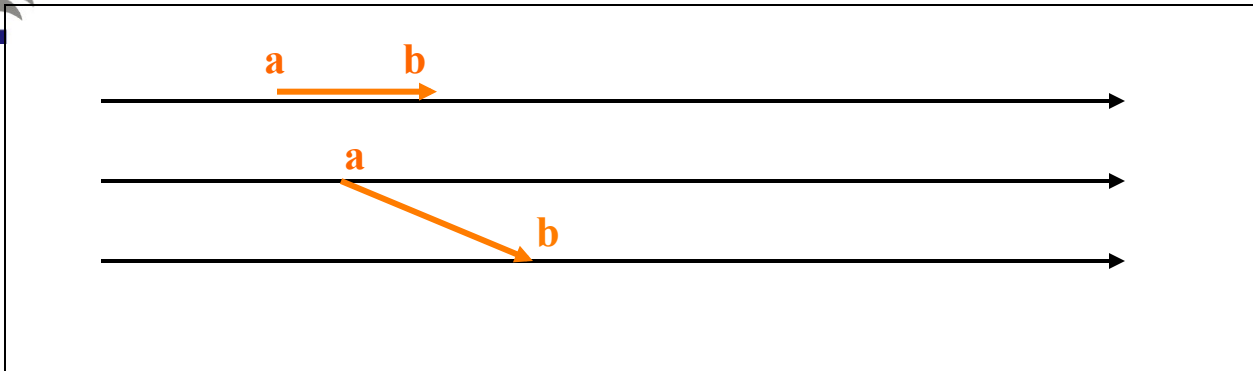
- *"causality"*: real-time order ~ timestamp order ("behavioral correctness" – seen by the user)
- *groups / replicates*: all members see the events in the same order
- *"multiple-copy-updates"*: order of updates, consistency conflicts?
- *serializability of transactions*: bases on a common understanding of transaction order

A perfect physical clock is sufficient!

A perfect physical clock is impossible to implement!

Above requirements met with much lighter solutions!

Happened-Before Relation "a \rightarrow b"

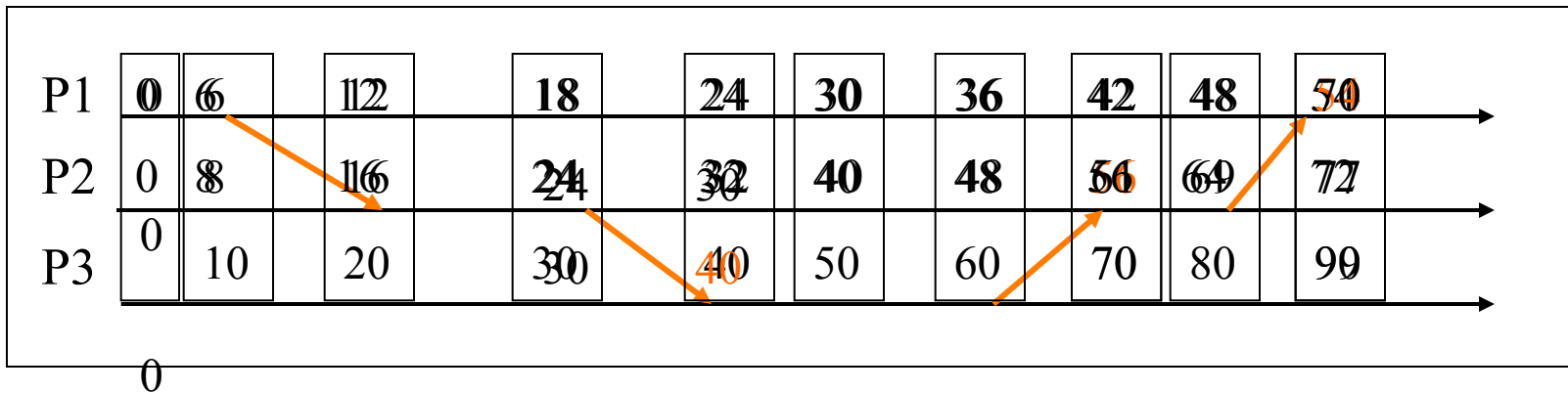


- if a, b are events in the same process, and a occurs before b , then $a \rightarrow b$
- if a is the event of a *message being sent*, and b is the event of the *message being received*, then $a \rightarrow b$
- $a \parallel b$ if neither $a \rightarrow b$ nor $b \rightarrow a$ (a and b are *concurrent*)

Note: if $a \rightarrow b$ and $b \rightarrow c$ then $a \rightarrow c$



Logical Clocks: Lamport Timestamps



process p_i , event e , clock L_i , timestamp $L_i(e)$

- **at p_i** : before each event $L_i = L_i + 1$
- when p_i sends a **message** m to p_j
 1. p_i : ($L_i = L_i + 1$); $t = L_i$; message = (m, t) ;
 2. p_j : $L_j = \max(L_j, t)$; $L_j = L_j + 1$;
 3. $L_j(\text{receive event}) = L_j$;



Lamport Clocks: Problems

1. Timestamps do not specify the order of events

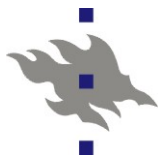
- $e \rightarrow e' \Rightarrow L(e) < L(e')$

BUT

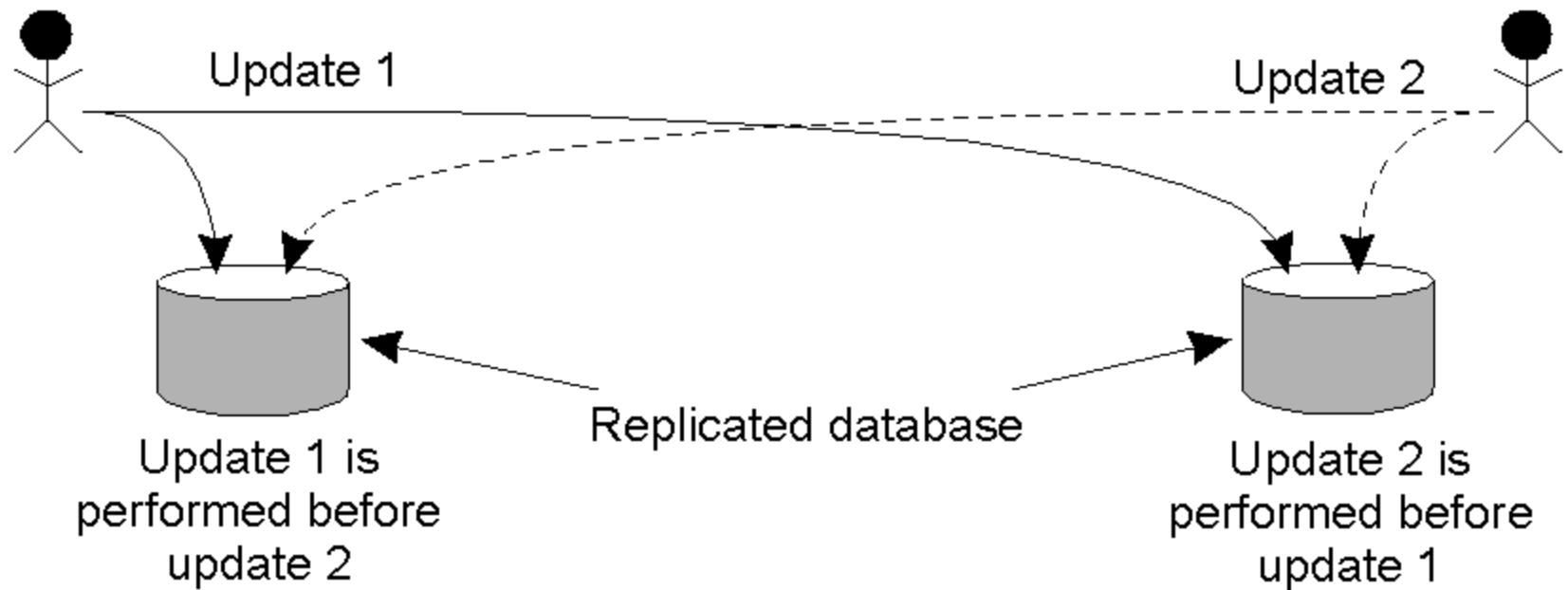
- $L(e) < L(e')$ does not imply that $e \rightarrow e'$

2. Total ordering

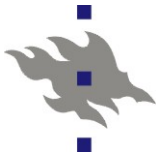
- problem: define order of e, e' when $L(e) = L(e')$
- solution: extended timestamp (T_i, i) , where T_i is $L_i(e)$
- definition: $(T_i, i) < (T_j, j)$
if and only if
either $T_i < T_j$
or $T_i = T_j$ and $i < j$



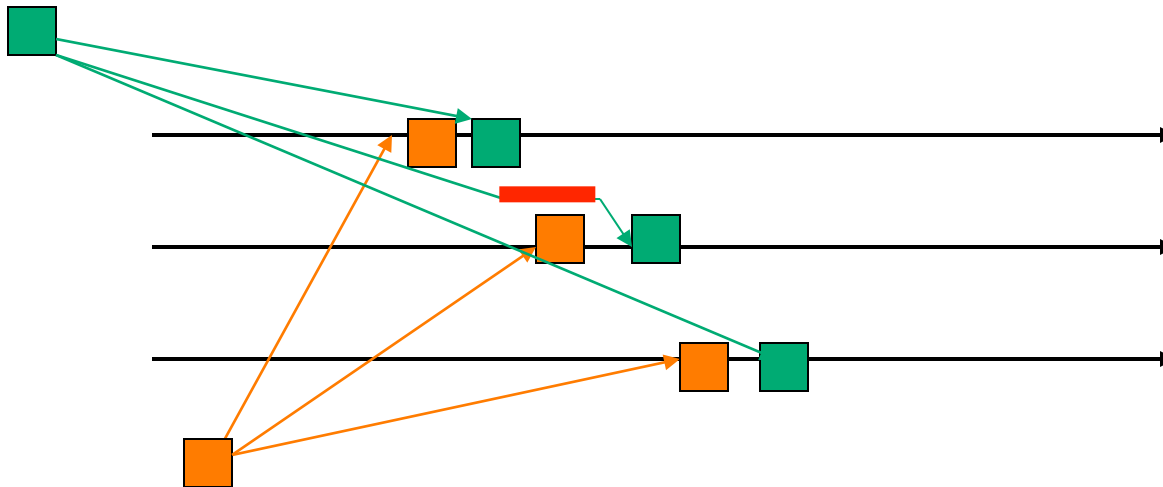
Example: Totally-Ordered Multicasting (1)



Updating a replicated database and leaving it in an inconsistent state.



Example: Totally-Ordered Multicasting (2)



Total ordering:

all receivers (applications) see all messages in the same order
(which is not necessarily the original sending order)

Example: multicast operations, group-update operations

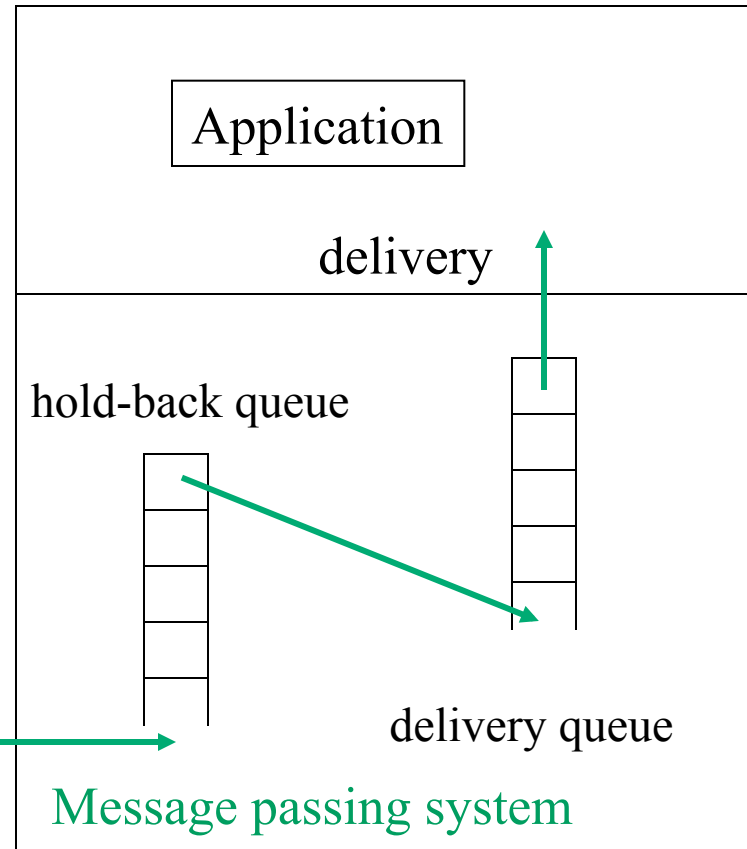


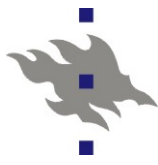
Example: Totally-Ordered Multicasting (3)

Guaranteed delivery order

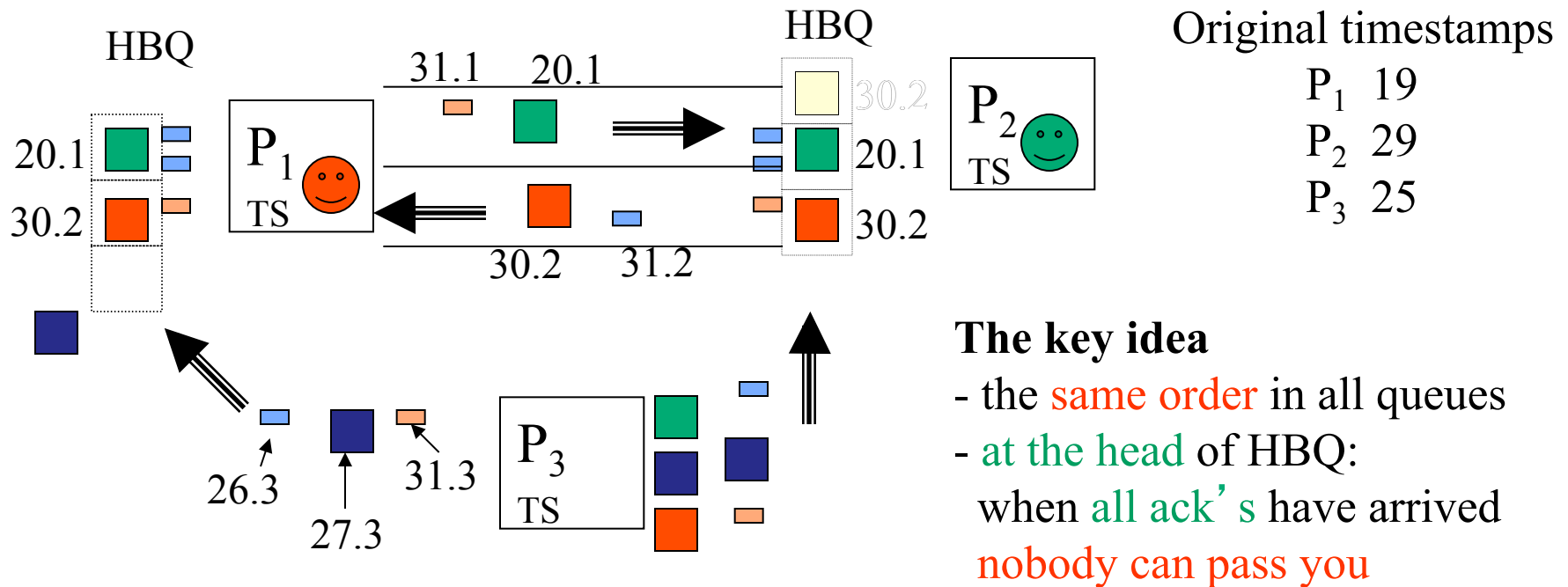
- *new* message \Rightarrow HBQ
- when *all predecessors* have arrived: message \Rightarrow DQ
- when *at the head of DQ*: message \Rightarrow application (application: *receive ...*)

Algorithms:
see. Defago et al ACM CS, Dec. 2004



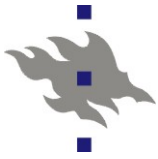


Example: Totally-Ordered Multicasting (4)



Multicast:

- everybody receives the message (incl. the sender!)
- messages from one sender are received in the sending order
- no messages are lost

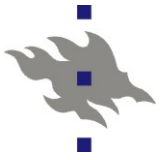


Various Orderings

- Total ordering
- Causal ordering
- FIFO (First In First Out)

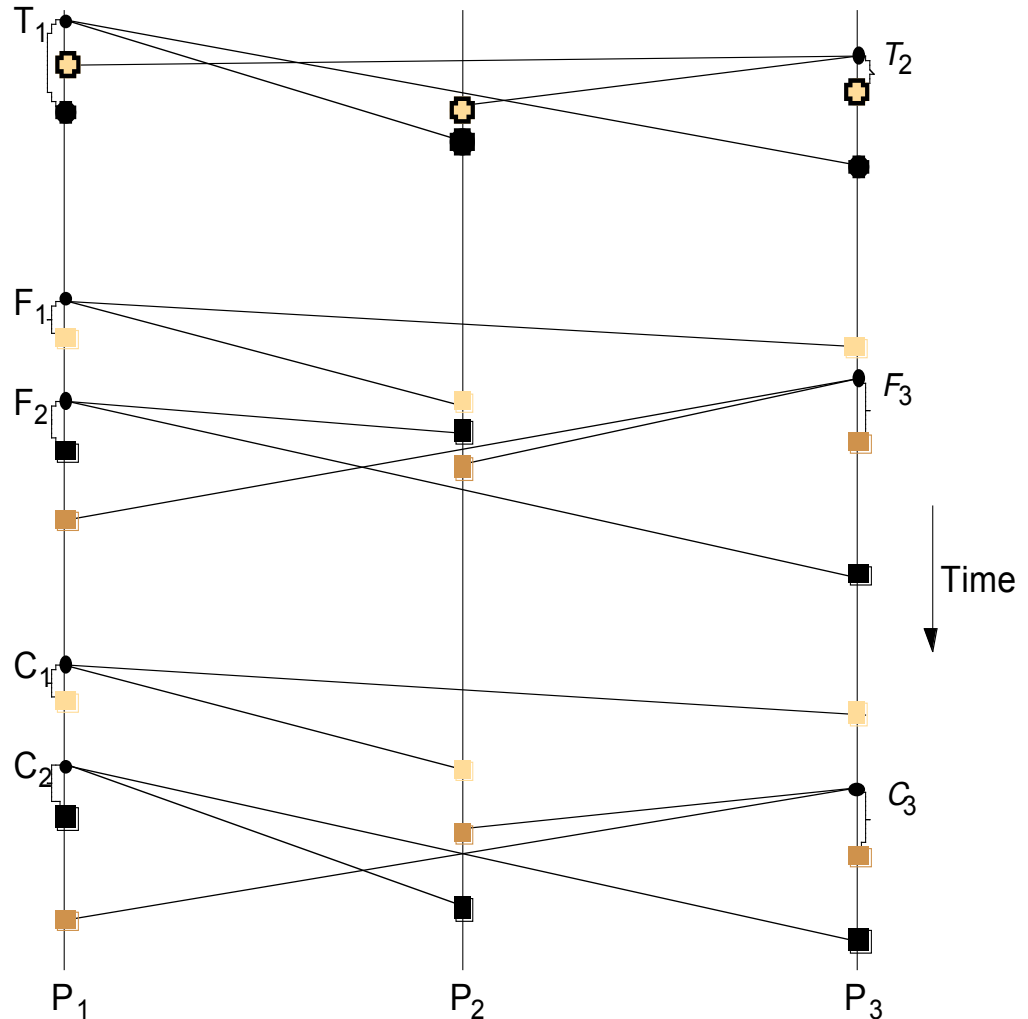
(wrt an individual communication channel)

Total and causal ordering are independent:
neither induces the other;
Causal ordering induces FIFO



Total, FIFO and Causal Ordering of Multicast Messages

Notice the consistent ordering of **totally ordered** messages T_1 and T_2 , the **FIFO-related** messages F_1 and F_2 and the **causally related** messages C_1 and C_2 – and the otherwise arbitrary delivery ordering of messages.





Vector Timestamps

Goal:

timestamps should reflect *causal ordering*

$L(e) < L(e') \Rightarrow$ “ e happened before e’ “

\Rightarrow

Vector clock

each process P_i maintains a vector V_i :

1. $V_i[i]$ is the number of events that have occurred at P_i
(the current local time at P_i)
2. if $V_i[j] = k$ then P_i knows about (the first) k events that have occurred at P_j
(the local time at P_j was k, as P_j sent the last message that P_i has received from it)



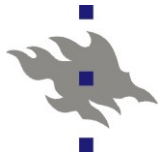
Order of Vector Timestamps

Order of timestamps

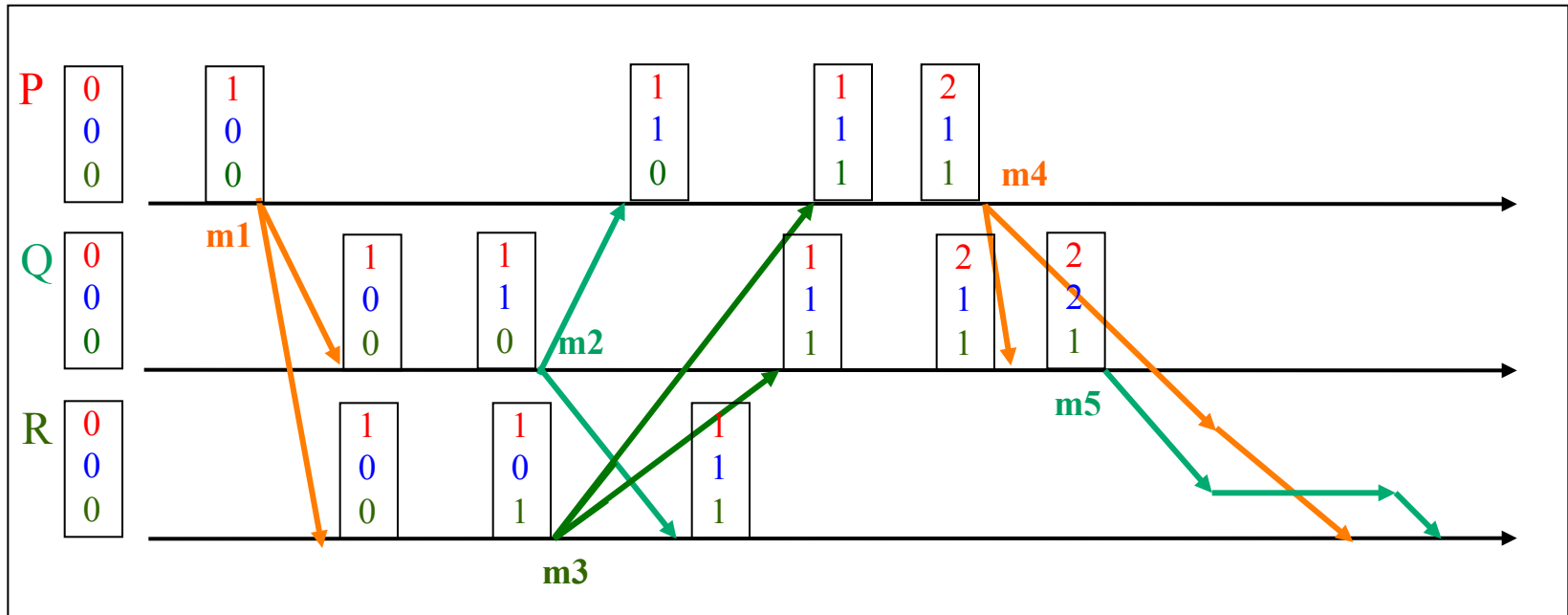
- $V = V'$ iff $V[j] = V'[j]$ for all j
- $V \leq V'$ iff $V[j] \leq V'[j]$ for all j
- $V < V'$ iff $V \leq V'$ and $V \neq V'$

Order of events (*causal order*)

- $e \rightarrow e' \Rightarrow V(e) < V(e')$
- $V(e) < V(e') \Rightarrow e \rightarrow e'$
- concurrency:
 $e \parallel e'$ if **not** $V(e) \leq V(e')$
and **not** $V(e') \leq V(e)$



Causal Ordering of Multicasts (1)



Event:
message sent

Timestamp [i,j,k] :
 i messages sent from P
 j messages sent from Q
 k messages sent from R

R: m1 [100] m4 [211]
 m2 [110] m5 [221]
 m3 [101]

m4 [211] vs. 111



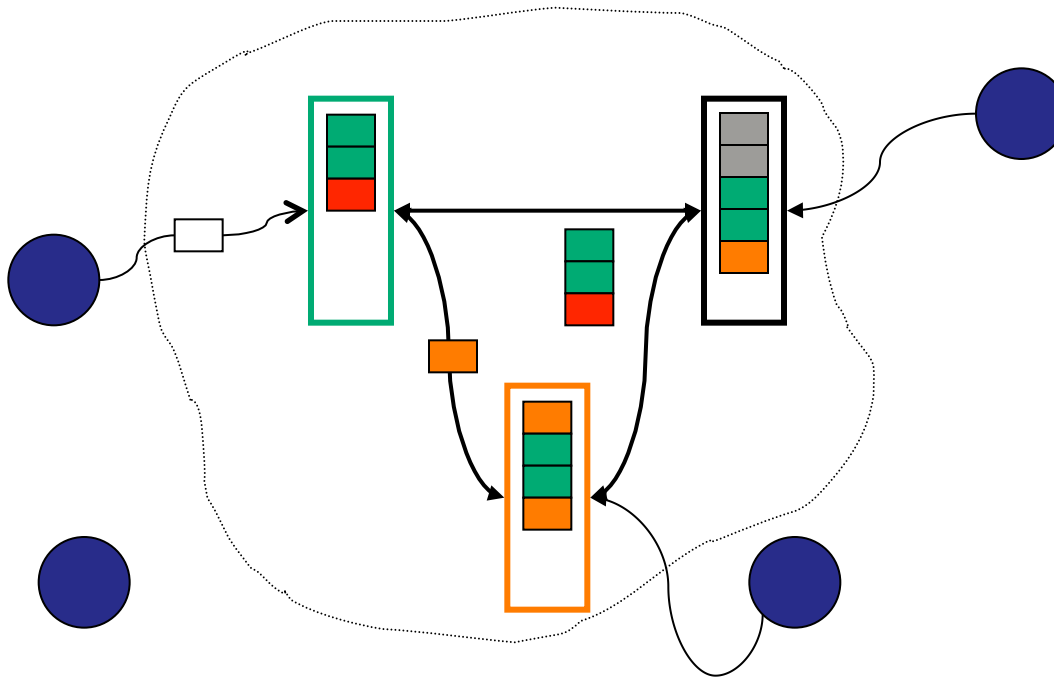
Causal Ordering of Multicasts (2)

Use of timestamps in causal multicasting

- 1) P_s multicast: $V_s[s] = V_s[s] + 1$
- 2) Message: include $vt = V_s[*]$
- 3) Each receiving P_r : the message **can be delivered when**
 - $vt[s] = V_r[s] + 1$ (all previous messages from P_s have arrived)
 - for each component k ($k \neq s$): $V_r[k] \geq vt[k]$
(P_r has now seen all the messages that P_s had seen when the message was sent)
- 4) When the message from P_s becomes deliverable at P_r the message is inserted into the delivery queue
(note: the delivery queue preserves causal ordering)
- 5) **At delivery:** $V_r[s] = V_r[s] + 1$



Causal Ordering of a Bulletin Board (1)



Assumption:
reliable, order-preserving
BB-to-BB transport

User \Leftrightarrow **BB** (*“local events”*)

■ read: $bb \leq BB_i$ (any BB)

■ write: to a BB_j that
contains all causal
predecessors of all bb
messages

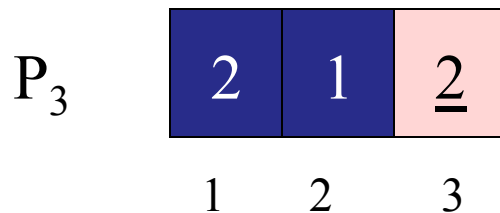
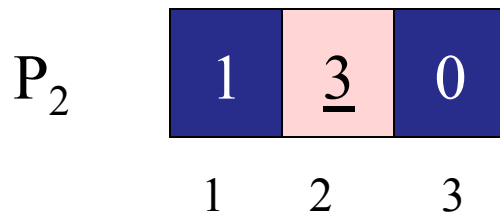
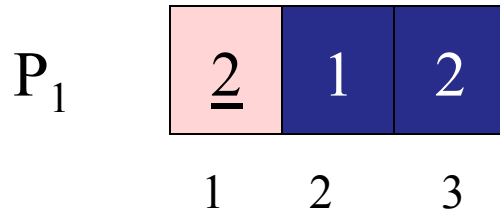
$BB_i \Rightarrow BB_j$ (*“messages”*)

■ BB_j must contain all
nonlocal predecessors of
all BB_i messages

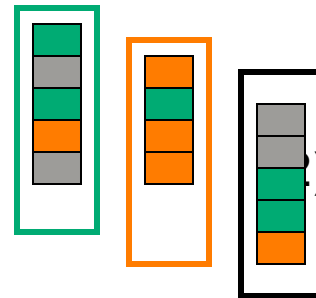


Causal Ordering of a Bulletin Board (2)

timestamps



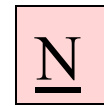
Lazy propagation of messages betw.
bulletin boards



1) user $\Rightarrow P_i$

$P_i \Leftrightarrow P_j$

vector clocks: counters



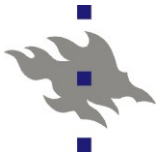
i

messages from
users to node i

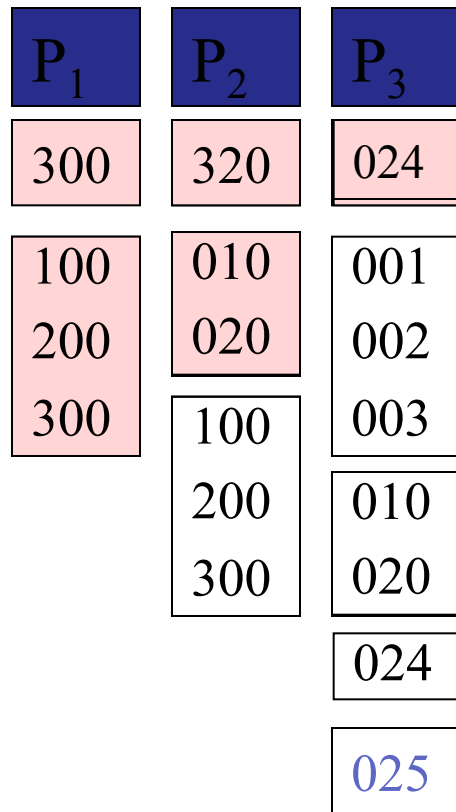


j

messages originally
received by node j



Causal Ordering of a Bulletin Board (3)



nodes

clocks (value: visible user messages)

bulletin boards (timestamps shown)

user: read and reply

- read stamp:

023

- reply can be delivered to:

1, 2, 3

023

025



Causal Ordering of a Bulletin Board (4)

Updating of vector clocks

Process P_i

- Local vector clock $V_i[*]$

- Update due to a local event: $V_i[i] = V_i[i] + 1$

What is a “local event”? (See exercises)

- Receiving a message with the timestamp $vt[*]$

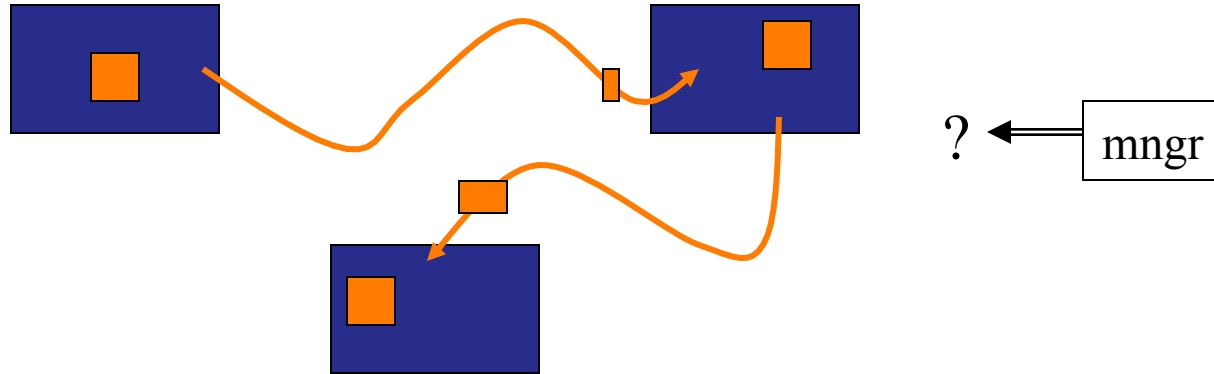
- Condition for delivery (to P_r from P_s):

- wait until for all k : $k \neq s$: $V_r[k] \geq vt[k]$

- Update at delivery: $V_r[s] = vt[s]$



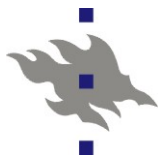
Global State (1)



■ Needs: checkpointing, garbage collection, deadlock detection, termination, testing

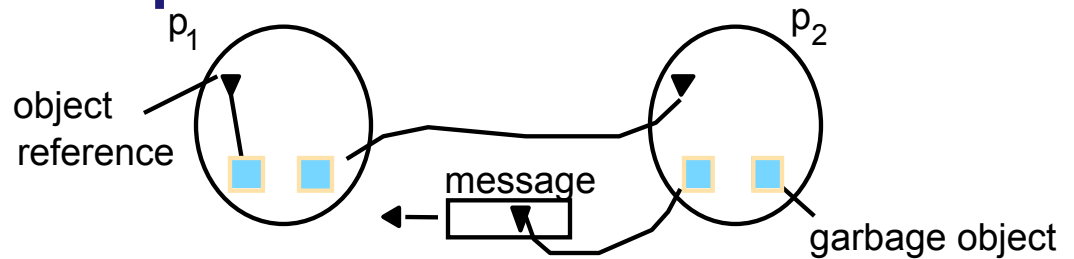
- How to observe the state
 - states of processes
 - messages in transfer

A **state**: application-dependent specification

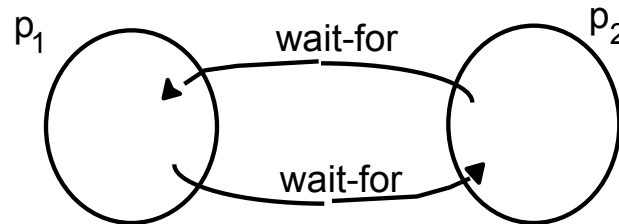


Detecting Global Properties

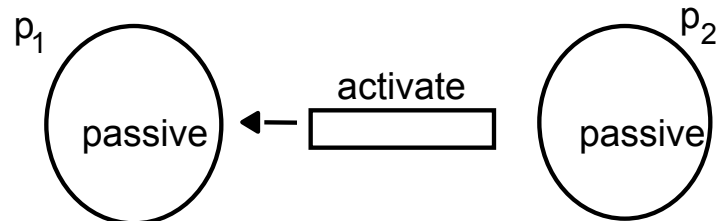
a. Garbage collection



b. Deadlock



c. Termination

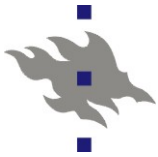




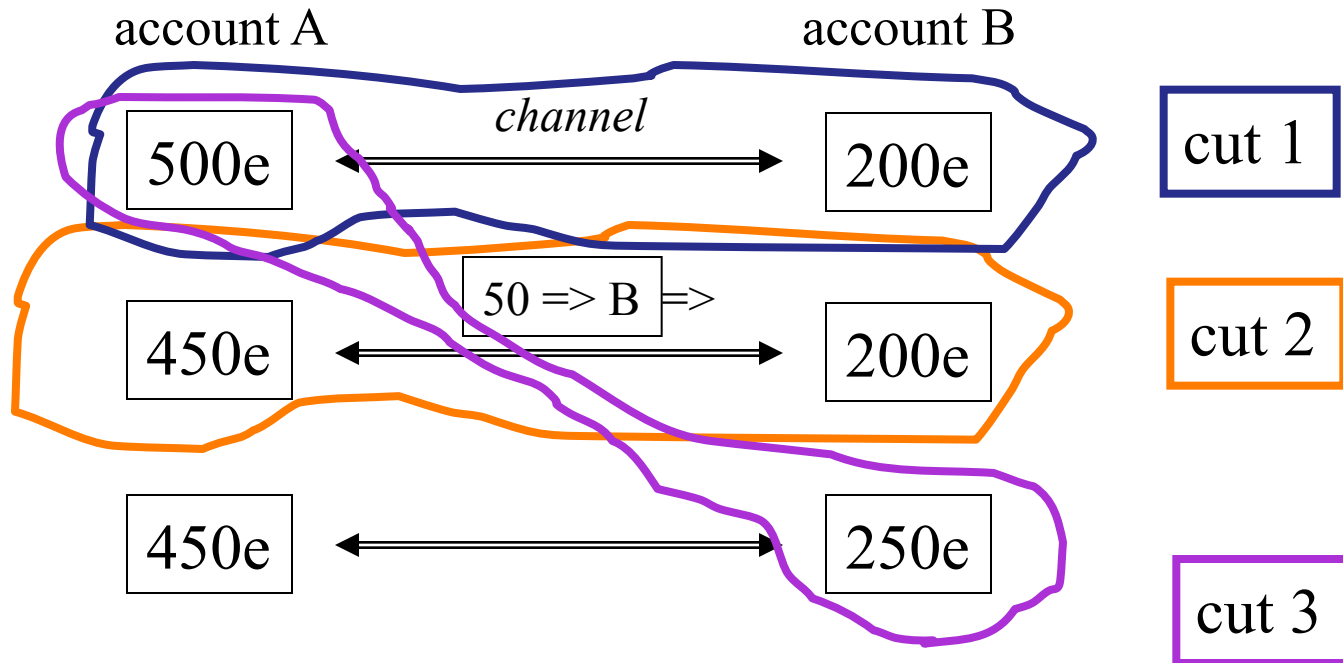
Distributed Snapshot

- Each node: history of important events
- Observer: at each node i
 - time: the local (logical) clock " T_i "
 - state S_i (history: {event, timestamp})

=> system state $\{ S_i \}$
- A *cut*: the system state $\{ S_i \}$ "at time T "
- Requirement:
 - $\{S_i\}$ might have existed \Leftrightarrow consistent with respect to some criterion
 - one possibility: consistent wrt "happened-before relation"

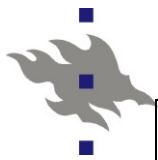


Ad-hoc State Snapshots

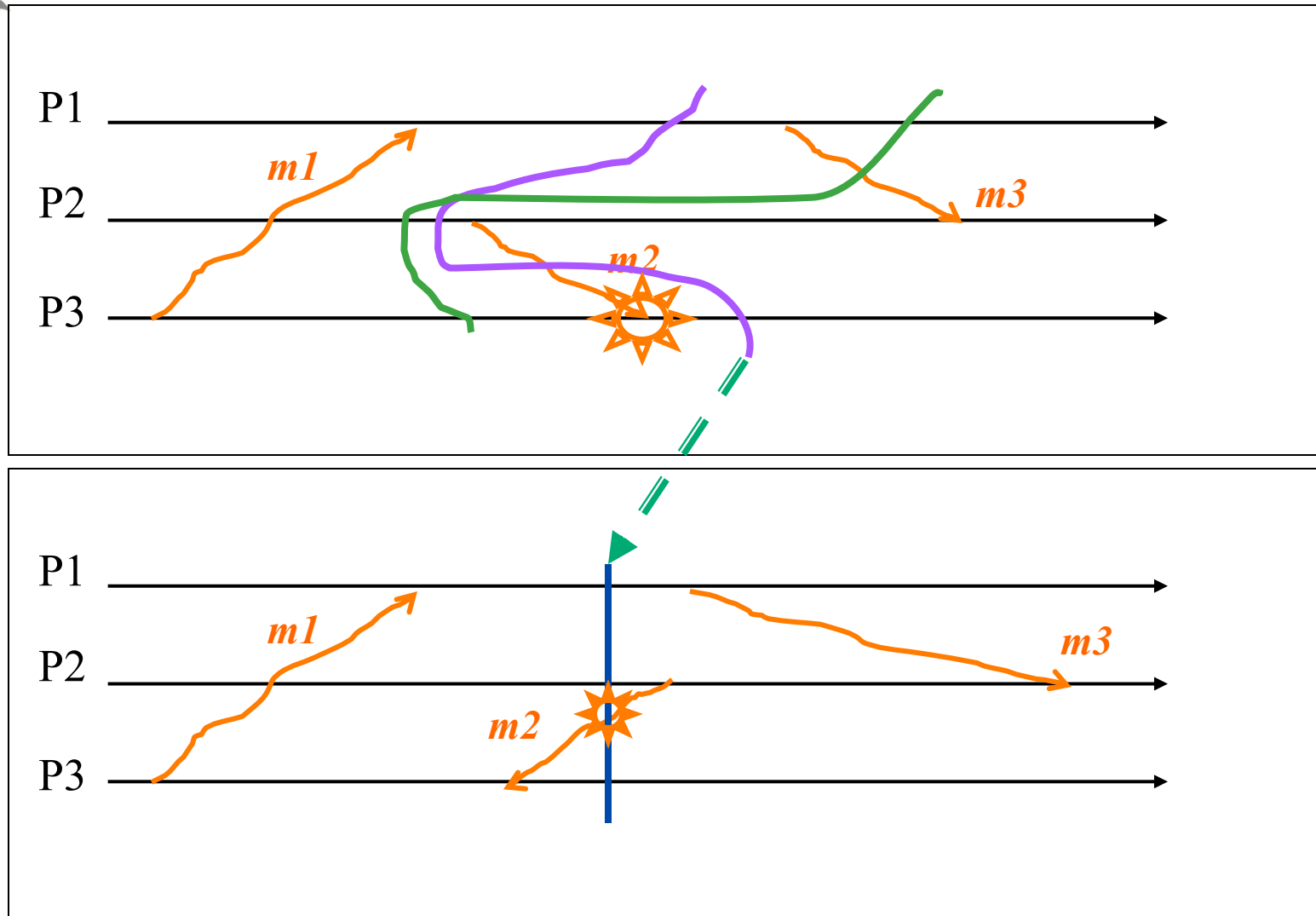


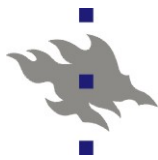
(*inconsistent or*)
strongly consistent

state changes: money transfers $A \Leftrightarrow B$
invariant: $A+B = 700$

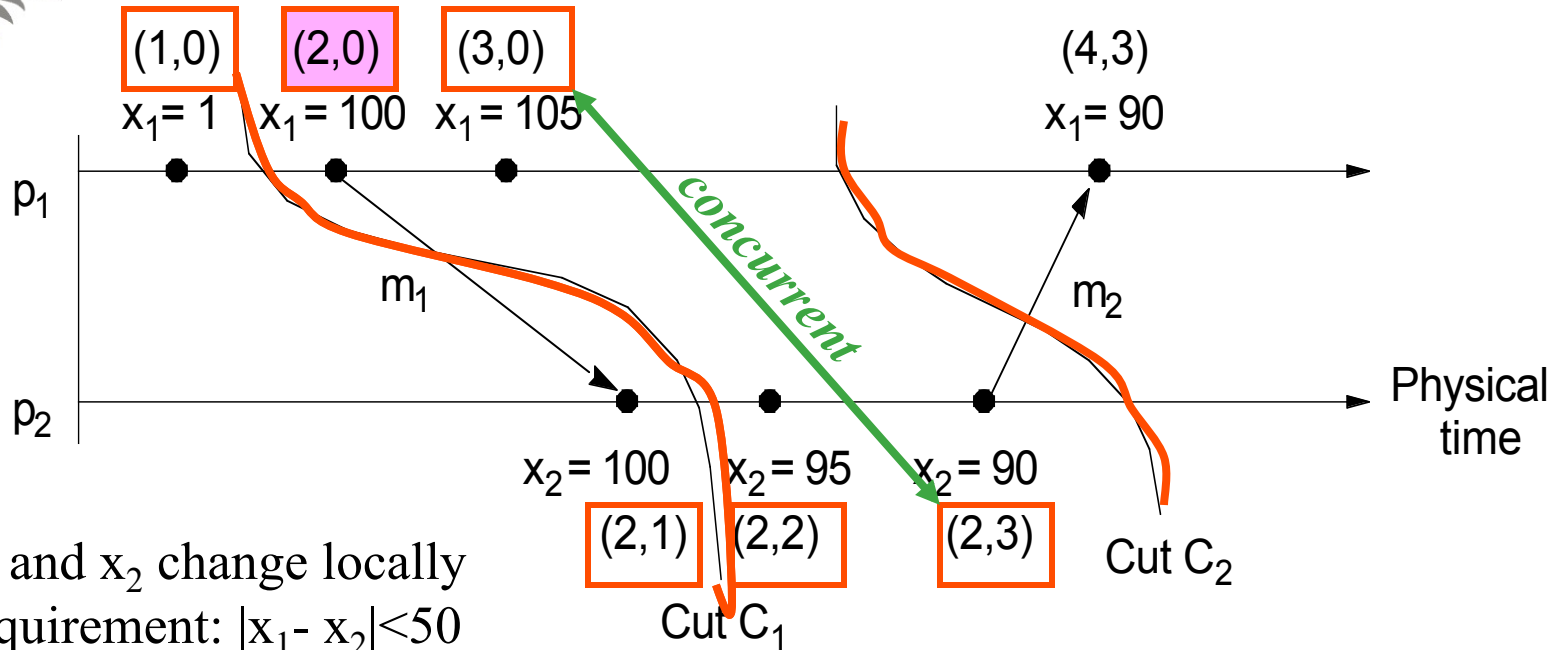


Consistent and Inconsistent Cuts





Cuts and Vector Timestamps



x_1 and x_2 change locally
 requirement: $|x_1 - x_2| < 50$
 a "large" change (" >9 ") \Rightarrow
 send the new value to the other process

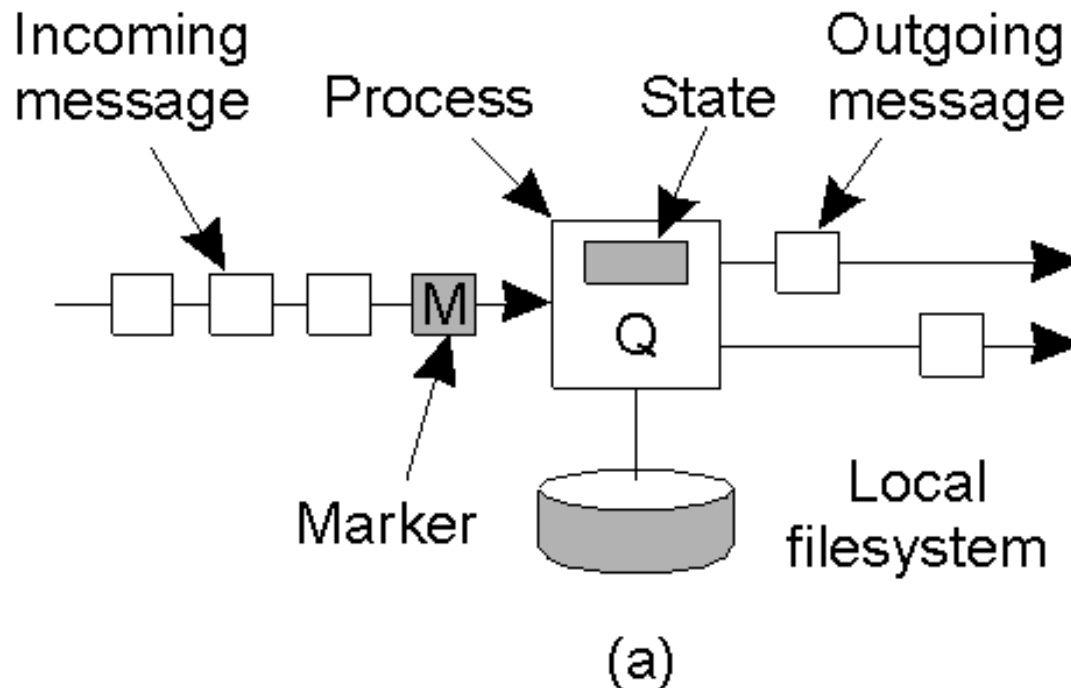
event: a change of the local x
 \Rightarrow increase the vector clock

$\{S_i\}$ system state history: all events
 Cut: all events before the "cut time"

A cut is consistent if, for each event, it also contains all the events that "happened-before".

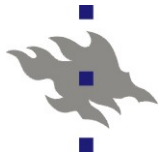


Chandy Lamport (1)

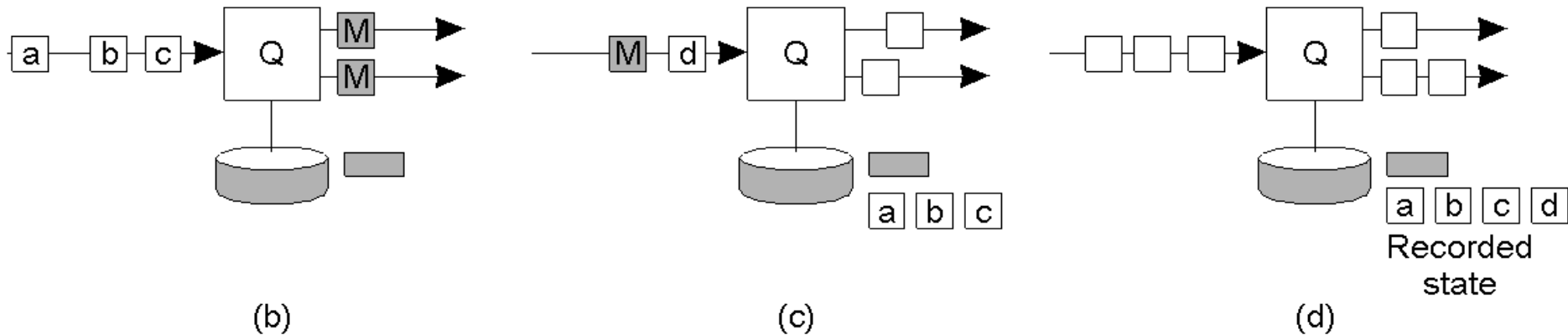


The snapshot algorithm of Chandy and Lamport

a) Organization of a process and channels for a distributed snapshot



Chandy Lamport (2)



- b) Process Q receives a marker for the first time, records its local state, and sends marker on every outgoing channel
- c) Q records all incoming messages
- d) Q receives a marker for its incoming channel and finishes recording the state of this incoming channel



Chandy and Lamport's 'Snapshot' Algorithm

Marker receiving rule for process p_i

On p_i 's receipt of a *marker* message over channel c :

if (p_i has not yet recorded its state) *it*

records its process state now;

records the state of c as the empty set;

turns on recording of messages arriving over other incoming channels;

else

p_i records the state of c as the set of messages it has received over c
since it saved its state.

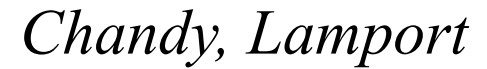
end if

Marker sending rule for process p_i

After p_i has recorded its state, for each outgoing channel c :

p_i sends one marker message over c

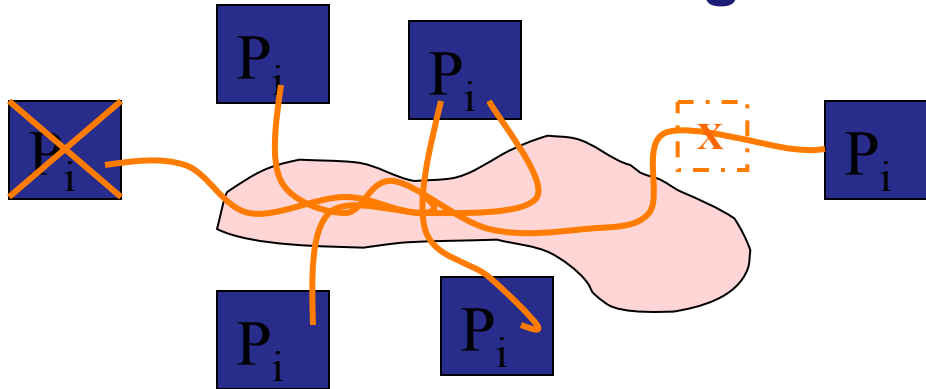
(before it sends any other message over c).



point-to-point, order-preserving connections



Coordination and Agreement



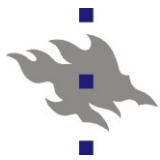
Coordination of functionality

- reservation of resources (*distributed mutual exclusion*)
- elections (coordinator, initiator)
- multicasting
- distributed transactions

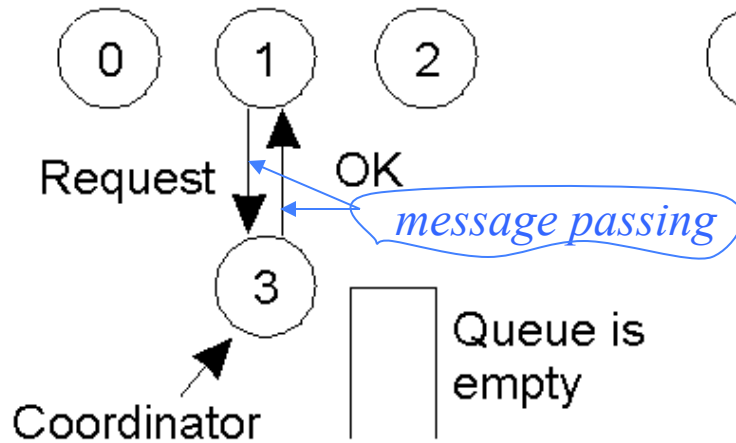


Decision Making

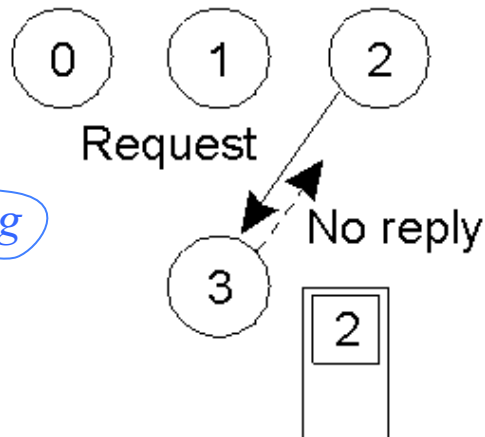
- Centralized: one coordinator (decision maker)
 - algorithms are simple
 - no fault tolerance (*if the coordinator fails*)
- Distributed decision making
 - algorithms tend to become complex
 - may be extremely fault tolerant
 - behaviour, correctness ?
 - assumptions about failure behaviour of the platform !
- Centralized role, changing “population of the role”
 - easy: one decision maker at a time
 - challenge: management of the “role population”



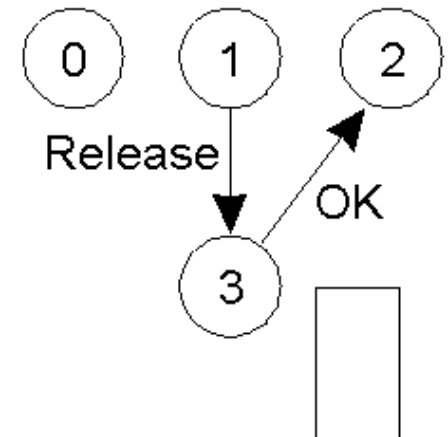
Mutual Exclusion: A Centralized Algorithm (1)



(a)

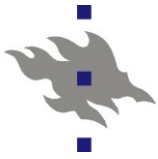


(b)



(c)

- a) Process 1 asks the coordinator for permission to enter a critical region. Permission is granted
- b) Process 2 then asks permission to enter the same critical region. The coordinator does not reply.
- c) When process 1 exits the critical region, it tells the coordinator, which then replies to 2



Mutual Exclusion: A Centralized Algorithm (2)

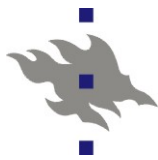
■ Examples of usage

- a stateless server (e.g., Network File Server)
- a separate lock server

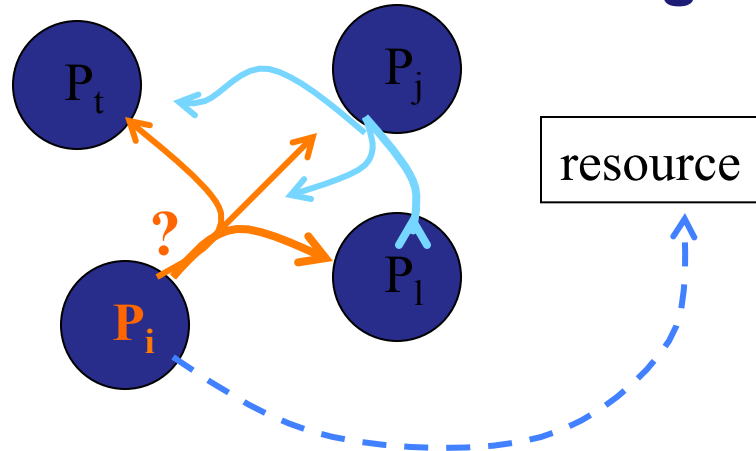
■ General **requirements** for mutual exclusion

1. **safety**: at most one process may execute in the critical section at a time
2. **liveness**: requests (enter, exit) eventually succeed (*no deadlock, no starvation*)
3. **fairness** (ordering): if the request A *happens before* the request B then A is honored before B

— **Problems**: fault tolerance, performance



A Distributed Algorithm (1)



Ricart – Agrawala

- The general idea:
 - ask everybody
 - wait for permission from everybody

The problem:

- several simultaneous requests (e.g., P_i and P_j)
- all members have to agree (*everybody*: “first P_i then P_j ”)

■ A Distributed Algorithm (2)

■ *On initialization*

state := RELEASED;

To enter the section

state := WANTED;

T := request's timestamp;

Multicast *request* to all processes;

Wait until (number of replies received = $(N-1)$);

state := HELD;

} request processing deferred here

On receipt of a request $\langle T_i, p_i \rangle$ at p_j ($i \neq j$)

if (*state* = HELD or (*state* = WANTED and $(T, p_j) < (T_i, p_i)$))
then

 queue *request* from p_i without replying;

else

 reply immediately to p_i ;

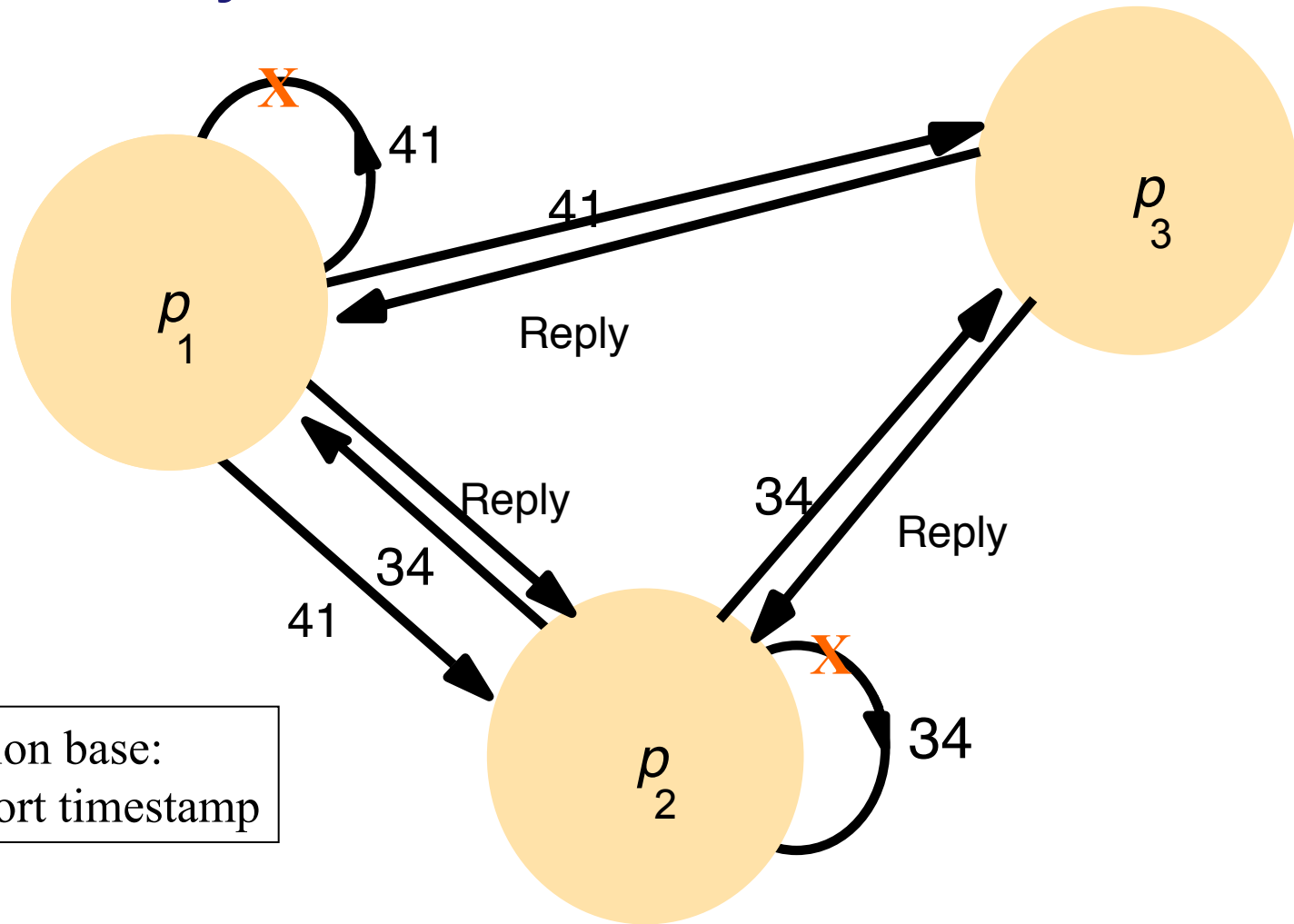
end if;

To exit the critical section

state := RELEASED;

reply to all queued requests;

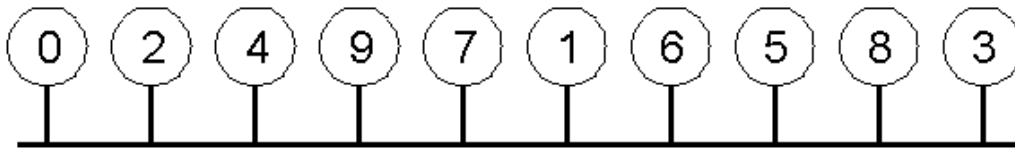
■ Multicast Synchronization



Decision base:
Lamport timestamp

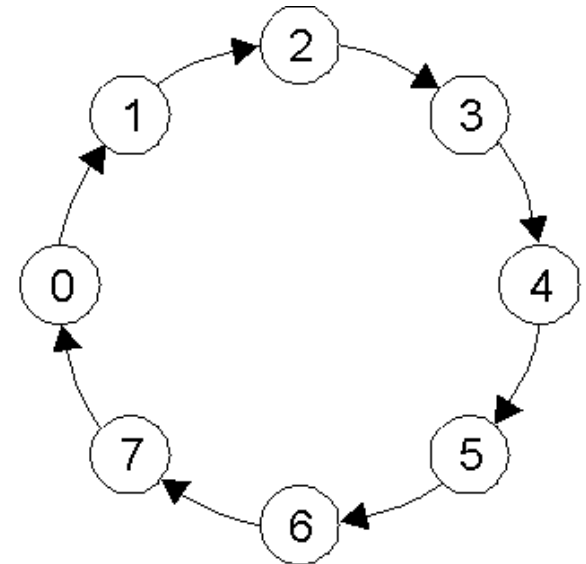


A Token Ring Algorithm



An unordered group of processes on a network.

(a)



(b)

A logical ring constructed in software.

Algorithm:

- token passing: straightforward
- lost token: 1) detection? 2) recovery?



Comparison

Algorithm	Messages per entry/ exit	Delay before entry (in message times)	Problems
Centralized	3	2	Coordinator crash
Distributed	$2 (n - 1)$	$2 (n - 1)$	Crash of any process
Token ring	1 to ∞	0 to $n - 1$	Lost token, process crash

A comparison of three mutual exclusion algorithms.



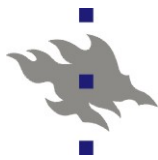
Election Algorithms

- Need:
 - computation: a group of concurrent actors
 - algorithms based on the activity of a special role (coordinator, initiator)
 - election of a coordinator: initially / after some special event (e.g., the previous coordinator has disappeared)
- Premises:
 - each member of the group $\{P_i\}$
 - knows the identities of all other members
 - does not know who is up and who is down
 - all electors use the same algorithm
 - election rule: the member with the highest P_i
- Several algorithms exist

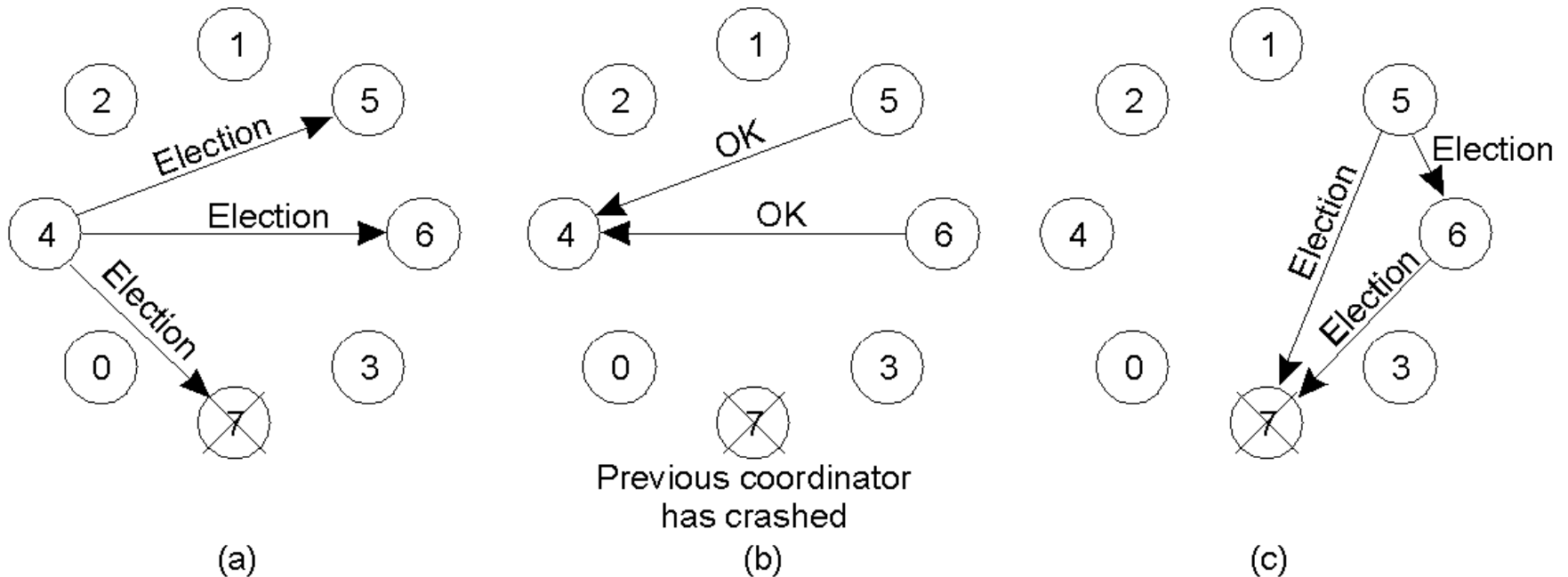


The Bully Algorithm (1)

- P_i notices: coordinator lost
 1. P_i to $\{ \text{all } P_j \text{ st } P_j > P_i \}$: **ELECTION!**
 2. if no one responds $\Rightarrow P_i$ is the coordinator
 3. some P_j responds $\Rightarrow P_j$ takes over, P_i 's job is done
- P_i gets an **ELECTION!** message:
 1. reply **OK** to the sender
 2. if P_i does not yet participate in an ongoing election: hold an election
- The new coordinator P_k to everybody: “ **P_k COORDINATOR**”
- P_i : ongoing election & no “ P_k COORDINATOR”: hold an election
- P_j recovers: hold an election

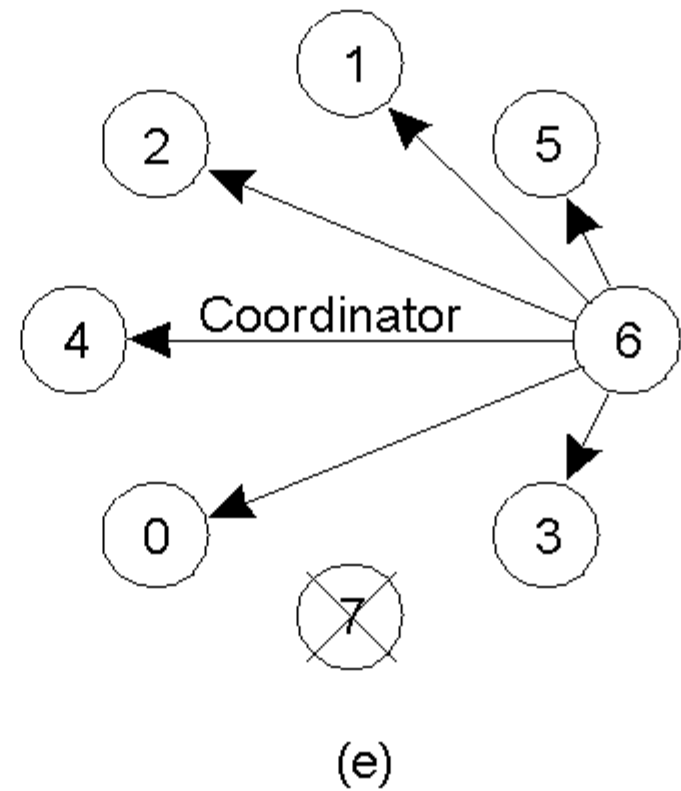
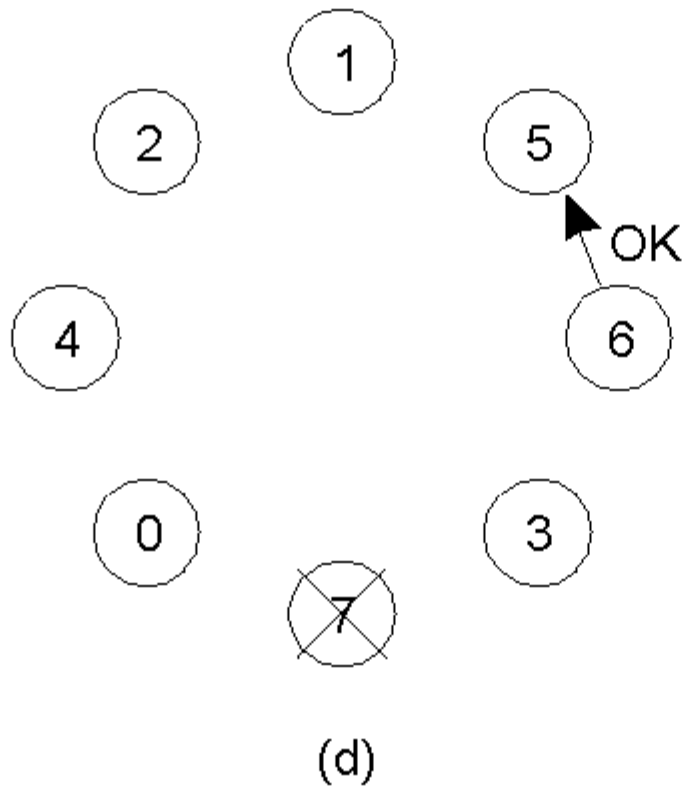
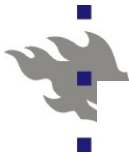


The Bully Algorithm (2)



The bully election algorithm

- a) Process 4 holds an election
- b) Process 5 and 6 respond, telling 4 to stop
- c) Now 5 and 6 each hold an election

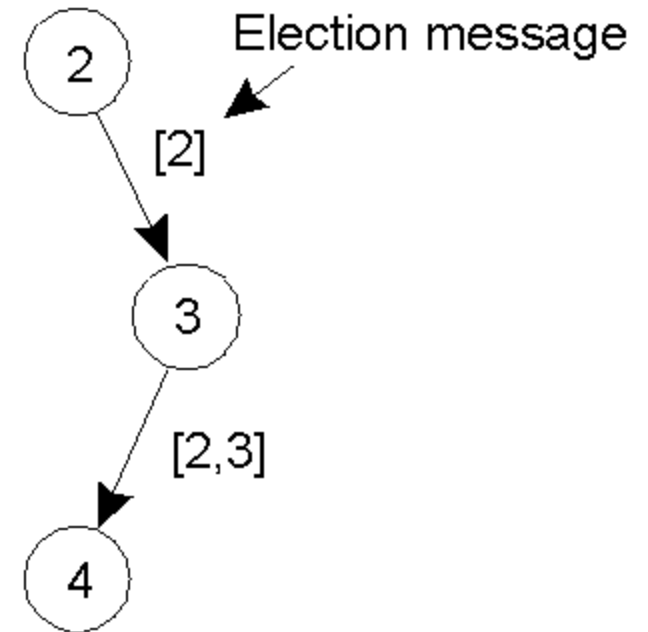


- d) Process 6 tells 5 to stop
- e) Process 6 wins and tells everyone



A Ring Algorithm (1)

- Group $\{P_i\}$ "fully connected"; election: ring
- P_i notices: coordinator lost
 - send **ELECTION**(P_i) to the next P
- P_j receives **ELECTION**(P_i)
 - send **ELECTION**(P_i, P_j) to successor
- ...
- P_i receives **ELECTION**(..., P_i , ...)
 - $\text{active_list} = \{\text{collect from the message}\}$
 - $\text{NC} = \max \{\text{active_list}\}$
 - send **COORDINATOR**(NC; active_list) to the next P
- ...



Kangasharju: Distributed Systems



Chapter Summary

- Synchronization
- Clocks
- Logical and vector clocks
- Coordination, elections