### Stack-sorting: A polynomial decision algorithm

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Joint work with Dominique Rossin, during my PHD at LIAFA

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# Outline

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- 1. Introduction to stack sorting
- 2. Pushall sorting (tri par sas)
- 3. General sorting

### Permutations and patterns

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Remark:  $\sigma$ ,  $\pi$  as input, deciding whether  $\pi \preccurlyeq \sigma$  is NP-complete.

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Av(B): the class of perm. avoiding all the patterns in the set B.

**Prop.**: Every class C is characterized by its **basis**:

 $\mathcal{C} = Av(B)$  for  $B = \{\sigma \notin \mathcal{C} | \forall \pi \preccurlyeq \sigma \text{ with } \pi \neq \sigma, \pi \in \mathcal{C} \}$ 

Basis may be finite or infinite.

Stack: last-in first-out device introduced by Knuth (1968).

Definition:  $\sigma$  is sortable if  $\exists$  a sequence of moves  $m \in \{\rho, \mu\}^*$  s.t. the output  $m(\sigma)$  is the identity. output  $\leftarrow \mu \qquad \rho \qquad \sigma_1 \dots \sigma_n$ 

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 $\rightarrow$  A linear algorithm to test whether a permutation is sortable.

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Question: How many sortable permutations of size *n*?

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Question: How many sortable permutations of size *n*?

 $\sigma$  sortable  $\Leftrightarrow \sigma$  avoids 231

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Question: How many sortable permutations of size *n*?

 $\sigma \text{ sortable} \Leftrightarrow \sigma \text{ avoids } 231$ 

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Question: How many sortable permutations of size *n*?

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Question: How many sortable permutations of size *n*?

 $\sigma \text{ sortable} \Leftrightarrow \sigma \text{ avoids } 231$ 

$$\begin{array}{c|c} \cdots 2 \cdots 3 \cdots 1 \cdots & & & \cdots 1 \cdots \\ & & & 3 \\ \vdots \\ 2 \\ \vdots \\ \end{array}$$

The set of permutations sortable with one stack: Av(231)enumerated by Catalan numbers:  $c_n = \frac{1}{n+1} {n \choose 2n} \approx 4^n << n! \approx n^n$ 

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Generalized by Tarjan, Pratt...
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## Natural questions for sorting devices

- Decision: what is the complexity of the problem consisting of deciding whether a given permutation is sortable or not?
- Characterization: can one characterize permutations that are sortable?

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• Counting: how many sortable permutations of size n?

Definition:  $\sigma$  is sortable if  $\exists m \in \{\rho, \lambda, \mu\}^*$  s.t. the output  $m(\sigma)$  is the identity (Knuth 1973).

Question:  $\sigma$  a given permutation, is  $\sigma$  sortable with two stacks?



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Naive algorithm: Check if  $m(\sigma)$  is the identity  $\forall m \in \{\rho, \lambda, \mu\}^{3n}$ s.t.  $|m(\sigma)|_{\rho} = |m(\sigma)|_{\lambda} = |m(\sigma)|_{\mu} = n$ 

 $\rightarrow$  exponential algorithm (3<sup>3n</sup> tests).

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Is there a polynomial algorithm?

Conjectured NP-complete in the litterature [Atkinson, Murphy, Ruskuc (2002)], [Bona (2003)], [Albert, Atkinson, Linton (2010)]

• Non unique way to sort.



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 $\begin{array}{c} \downarrow \\ H \end{array} \xrightarrow{\rho} \sigma_1 \dots \sigma_n$ 

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- $\mu \Leftrightarrow \text{top of } V \text{ is the next element to be output.}$

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No way to choose between move  $\lambda$  and move  $\rho$ 

Several weaker variants have been studied: Greedy algorithm (West 93), Increasing stacks (Murphy 02)...

### A permutation class

Let  $\pi \prec \sigma$  (pattern)

sorting procedure for  $\sigma \rightarrow$  sorting procedure for  $\pi$ 

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#### A permutation class

Let  $\pi \prec \sigma$  (pattern)

sorting procedure for  $\sigma \rightarrow$  sorting procedure for  $\pi$ 

 $\hookrightarrow$   $\sigma$  sortable and  $\pi \prec \sigma \Rightarrow \pi$  sortable

 $\hookrightarrow$  sortable permutations form a class Av(B)

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#### A permutation class

Let  $\pi \prec \sigma$  (pattern)

sorting procedure for  $\sigma \rightarrow$  sorting procedure for  $\pi$ 

 $\hookrightarrow$   $\sigma$  sortable and  $\pi \prec \sigma \Rightarrow \pi$  sortable

 $\hookrightarrow$  sortable permutations form a class Av(B)

But B infinite and not characterised

length	sortable	unsortable	basis
<i>n</i> ≤ 6	n!	0	0
7	5018	22	22
8	39374	946	51
9	336870	26010	146
10	3066695	562105	604

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• 
$$\sigma = \oplus[\pi_1, \dots, \pi_n]$$
  
. $\frac{\pi_n}{\pi_1}$ .



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•  $\sigma = \oplus[\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_n]$  is sortable  $\Leftrightarrow \forall i, \pi_i$  is sortable.

$$\vdots \overset{\overline{\pi_n}}{\underset{\pi_1}{\overset{\pi_2}{\cdots}}} \cdot \overset{\cdot}{\overset{\pi_n}{\overset{\pi_1}{\cdots}}} s(\pi_1) \cdots s(\pi_n) \overset{\frown}{\overset{\frown}{\overset{\frown}{\cdots}}} \overset{\frown}{\overset{\frown}{\overset{\frown}{\cdots}}} \overset{\frown}{\overset{\frown}{\overset{\frown}{\cdots}}} \pi_1 \cdots \pi_n$$

•  $\sigma = \ominus[\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_n]$  is sortable  $\Rightarrow \forall i, \pi_i$  is sortable.



•  $\sigma = \oplus[\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_n]$  is sortable  $\Leftrightarrow \forall i, \pi_i$  is sortable.





Converse not true:  $\pi_i$  has to admit a special sorting in 2 steps:

•  $\sigma = \oplus[\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_n]$  is sortable  $\Leftrightarrow \forall i, \pi_i$  is sortable.

 $\begin{array}{c} \pi_1 \\ \pi_2 \\ \vdots \\ \pi_n \end{array} \\ \cdot \\ \cdot \\ \pi_n \end{array}$ 

Converse not true:  $\pi_i$  has to admit a special sorting in 2 steps:

 $\sigma = \ominus [\pi_1, \dots, \pi_n]$  is sortable  $\Leftrightarrow \forall i < n, \pi_i$  is pushall sortable and  $\pi_n$  is sortable.



A sorting in 2 parts : first one  $\in \{\rho, \lambda\}^*$ , second one  $\in \{\lambda, \mu\}^*$ 



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Example : 2413 is pushall sortable:



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Example : 2413 is pushall sortable:



A sorting in 2 parts : first one  $\in \{\rho, \lambda\}^*$ , second one  $\in \{\lambda, \mu\}^*$ 

Example : 2413 is pushall sortable:

 $\begin{bmatrix} 3 & 1 \\ 4 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$ 



A sorting in 2 parts : first one  $\in \{\rho, \lambda\}^*$ , second one  $\in \{\lambda, \mu\}^*$ 

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Example : 2413 is pushall sortable:

1 2 3 4

#### total configuration

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Pushall sorting process  $\Leftrightarrow$  valid configuration

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Pushall sorting process  $\Leftrightarrow$  valid configuration  $\Leftrightarrow$  valid coloring

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Pushall sorting process  $\Leftrightarrow$  valid configuration  $\Leftrightarrow$  valid coloring

 $\rightarrow$  Test in linear time whether a coloring is valid.

Pushall sorting process  $\Leftrightarrow$  valid configuration  $\Leftrightarrow$  valid coloring

 $\rightarrow$  Test in linear time whether a coloring is valid. 2<sup>n</sup> colorings to test  $\rightarrow$  reduce this number.

## Valid coloring: characterization

Valid coloring: coloring of  $\sigma$  with two colors G and R s.t.

- no pattern 132 in R
- no pattern 213 in G
- no point of R lying vertically between a pattern 12 of G
- no point of G lying horizontally between a pattern 12 of R



 $\Rightarrow$  coloring with forbidden patterns 132, 213, 1X2 and 2/13

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 $\Rightarrow$  coloring with forbidden patterns 132, 213, 1X2 and 2/13

*Proof*: R = right stack and G = left stack  $\Rightarrow$  bijection between these colorings and valid stack-configurations.

# Sortable stack-configuration $\Leftrightarrow$ avoids $\begin{bmatrix} 2\\1\\1 \end{bmatrix}$ , $\begin{bmatrix} 2\\3\\1\\1 \end{bmatrix}$ and $\begin{bmatrix} 2\\3\\1 \end{bmatrix}$

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Recall: Forbidden colored patterns = 132, 213, 1X2 and 2/13. Correspondence between stack-patterns and colored patterns.

• If the coloring comes from a sorting process, then it avoids the colored patterns:

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213

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1**X**2

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21 3

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1 32

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#### Decomposition

Forbidden colored patterns:



 $Col(\sigma) =$  the set of valid colorings of  $\sigma$ 

 $\#Col(n(n-1)\ldots 1)=2^n$ 

#### Decomposition

Forbidden colored patterns:



 $\mathit{Col}(\sigma) = \mathsf{the set of valid colorings of } \sigma$ 

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#### Restrict the number of bicolorings to test

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Add hypothesis to ensure a polynomial number of bicolorings to test.

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• Assume  $\sigma$  is  $\ominus$ -indecomposable.

Otherwise  $\sigma = \ominus [\pi_1 \dots \pi_n]$  with  $\pi_i \ominus$ -indecomposable  $\sigma = \ominus [\pi_1, \dots, \pi_k] \Rightarrow Col(\sigma) \approx Col(\pi_1) \times \dots \times Col(\pi_k)$ So replace  $\sigma$  by the  $\pi_i$ .

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 Separate distinct cases: Each pattern 12 is unicolor There are patterns 12 but no pattern 12 There are patterns 12 but no pattern 12 There are patterns 12 and patterns 12.



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Proposition:  $\sigma \ominus$ -indecomposable and *C* a right coloring of  $\sigma$  where each pattern 12 is unicolor  $\Rightarrow C$  is unicolor.

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Consequence: We just have to check the 2 unicolor colorings (all points in R or all points in G ).

#### Other cases

• There are patterns 12 but no pattern 12: Position of the down-rightmost pattern 12 determines all colors:



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Moreover, knowing the position of  $\sigma_i$  is sufficient to recover  $\sigma_j$  and determine all colors.

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Moreover, knowing the position of  $\sigma_i$  is sufficient to recover  $\sigma_j$  and determine all colors.

• Similar results for the other cases.

#### 8 kinds of colorings for $\sigma \ominus$ -indecomposable

**Theorem** : *c* valid coloring of  $\sigma \Rightarrow \exists m, p \text{ s.t. } c = C_m(p)$ .



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Algorithm :

```
Input: \sigma \ominus-indecomposable.

Output: All valid colorings of \sigma:

For i from 1 to 8

For p from 1 to n = |\sigma|

Test if C_i(p) is a valid coloring of \sigma
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#### Complexity :

- Test if a coloring is valid = linear
- $\sigma \ominus$ -indecomposable  $\Rightarrow |Col(\sigma)| \leq 8|\sigma|$  computed in  $\mathcal{O}(|\sigma|^2)$

- $\sigma = \ominus [\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_k] \Rightarrow \operatorname{Col}(\sigma) \approx \operatorname{Col}(\pi_1) \times \cdots \times \operatorname{Col}(\pi_k)$
- $\rightarrow$  Col( $\sigma$ ) described by  $(Col(\pi_1), \ldots, Col(\pi_k))$

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- $\rightarrow$  Col( $\sigma$ ) described by  $(Col(\pi_1), \ldots, Col(\pi_k))$
- $\rightarrow$  computed in quadratic time:  $8|\pi_1|^2 + \cdots + 8|\pi_k|^2 \le 8|\sigma|^2$ .

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## Outline

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- 1. Introduction to stack sorting
- 2. Pushall sorting (tri par sas)
- 3. General sorting

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Configuration when  $\sigma_{k_i}$  enters the stacks = total for  $\sigma^{(i)}$ 



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 $\sigma$  sortable  $\Rightarrow \sigma^{(i)}$  push-all sortable  $\forall i$ 

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Compatibility test = linear. Exponentiel number of tests?

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$$Col(\sigma^{(i)}) \approx$$
  
 $Col(B_1^{(i)}) \times \cdots \times Col(B_k^{(i)})$ 

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It is enough to test compatibility on  $B^{(i)}$  and  $D^{(i+1)}$ 

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 $\rightarrow$  linear number of tests



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Configurations of  $C^{(i+1)}$  linked to those of  $D^{(i+1)}$ 

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 $\rightarrow$  sorting graph

# Sorting graph for $\sigma^{(i)}$

$$\sigma^{(i)} = \ominus [B_1, B_2, \dots B_s]$$



Links between compatibles stack configurations

 $\rightarrow$  a path gives a valid stack configuration of  $\sigma^{(i)}$  which is a part of a sorting procedure of  $\sigma_1 \dots \sigma_{k_i}$ .

# Algorithm

 $\sigma = \ldots \sigma_{k_1} \ldots \sigma_{k_2} \ldots \sigma_{k_\ell}$  ( $\sigma_{k_i}$  = right-to-left minima of  $\sigma$ )

At step *i*, the algorithm returns false if  $\sigma_1 \dots \sigma_{k_i}$  is not 2-stack sortable.

Otherwise it computes the sorting graph of  $\sigma^{(i)}$  describing all the possible stack configurations when  $\sigma_{k_i}$  enters the stacks in a sorting procedure of  $\sigma$  verifying some conditions.

Sorting graph of  $\sigma^{(i)}$  computed from the one of  $\sigma^{(i-1)}$  by checking compatibility between configurations.

# Conclusion

Polynomial decision algorithm for 2 stacks in series

- New notion: push-all sorting
- Characterization through bicolorings with excluded patterns
- Optimal quadratic algorithm to compute all push-all sortings

- Decomposition along right-left minima
- One gets all sortings satisfying a property P.

• Simplify the algorithm?

- Simplify the algorithm?
- Characterize the permutations sortable with 2 stacks in series? Enumeration?

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• Enumerate the push-all sortable permutations?

- Simplify the algorithm?
- Characterize the permutations sortable with 2 stacks in series? Enumeration?
- Enumerate the push-all sortable permutations?
- Complexity of the decision algorithm for k stacks in series:

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• Generalize to more than 2 stacks?

- Simplify the algorithm?
- Characterize the permutations sortable with 2 stacks in series? Enumeration?
- Enumerate the push-all sortable permutations?
- Complexity of the decision algorithm for k stacks in series:
  - Generalize to more than 2 stacks?
  - For fixed *k*, is the problem still polynomial? Is there a threshold?

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- Simplify the algorithm?
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- Enumerate the push-all sortable permutations?
- Complexity of the decision algorithm for k stacks in series:
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#### Thank you for your attention

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