

MPI Shared Memory Model

MPI processes behaving as threads

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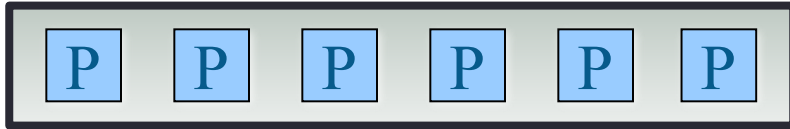
Overview

- Motivation
- Node-local communicators
- Shared window allocation
- Synchronisation

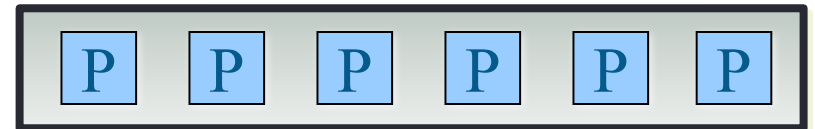
MPI + OpenMP

- In OMP parallel regions, all threads access shared arrays
 - why can't we do this with MPI processes?

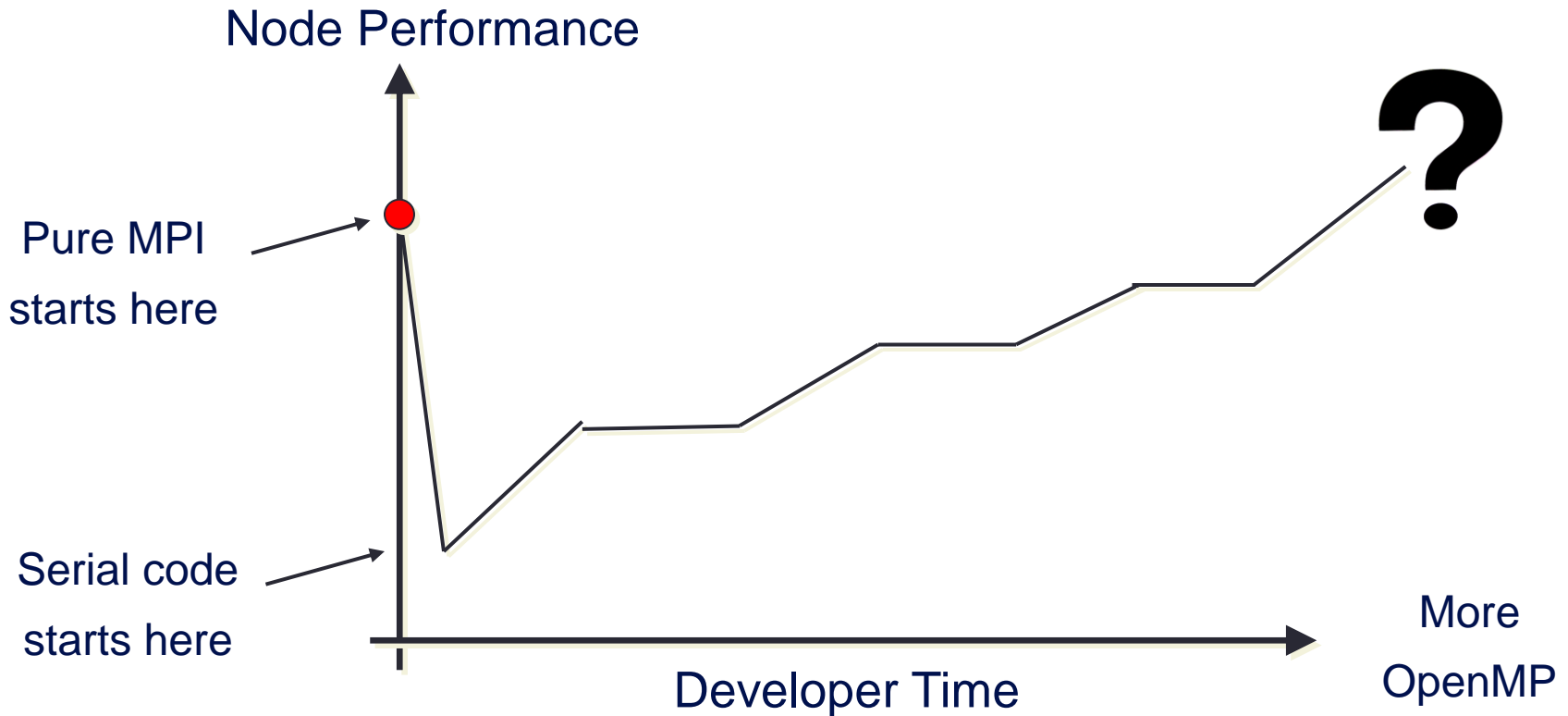
MPI



MPI + OpenMP



Consequences of MPI + OpenMP



- Some successes reported - often due to “threshold” effects
 - not enough memory to use all cores with MPI
 - fixed scalability limit of MPI parallelisation (e.g. slab-based FFTs)

Other use cases

- Saving memory
 - some programs have large, static lookup tables
 - in MPI, need one copy per process
 - on ARCHER2, this means 128 copies on each node!
 - much more efficient to have one copy per node
- NUMA-friendly memory allocation
 - sometimes, rank 0 on a node allocates lots of memory at startup
 - possible to use all the memory on the local NUMA region
 - ARCHER2 has 8 NUMA regions each with 32 MiB
 - subsequent allocations on ranks 0-15 now in different NUMA region
 - can be a disaster for performance
 - MPI shared memory allocation can be collective

Exploiting Shared Memory

- With standard RMA
 - publish local memory in a collective shared window
 - can do read and write with `MPI_Get / MPI_Put`
 - plus appropriate synchronisation, e.g. `MPI_Win_fence()`
- Seems wasteful on a node
 - why can't all processes just read and write directly as in OpenMP?
- Requirement
 - technically requires the Unified model
 - where there is no distinction between RMA and local memory
 - can check this calling `MPI_Win_get_attr` with `MPI_WIN_MODEL`
 - model should be `MPI_WIN_UNIFIED`
 - this is not a restriction in practice for standard CPU architectures

Procedure

- Processes join separate communicators for each node
- Shared array allocation across all processes on a node
 - each process receives a local array
 - OS can arrange for local arrays to be part of a single global array
- Remote access by indexing outside limits of local array
 - e.g. `localarray[-1]` will be last entry on the previous process
- Need appropriate synchronisation for remote accesses
- Still need MPI calls for inter-node communication
 - e.g. standard send and receive

Splitting the communicator

```
int MPI_Comm_split_type(MPI_Comm comm, int split_type,  
    int key, MPI_Info info, MPI_Comm *newcomm)
```

```
MPI_COMM_SPLIT_TYPE(COMM, SPLIT_TYPE, KEY, INFO,  
    NEWCOMM, IERROR)
```

```
INTEGER COMM, SPLIT_TYPE, KEY, INFO, NEWCOMM, IERROR
```

- comm: parent communicator, e.g. MPI_COMM_WORLD
- split_type: MPI_COMM_TYPE_SHARED
- key: controls rank ordering within sub-communicator
- info: can just use default: MPI_INFO_NULL

Example

```
MPI_Comm_split_type(MPI_COMM_WORLD, MPI_COMM_TYPE_SHARED,  
rank, MPI_INFO_NULL, &nodecomm);
```

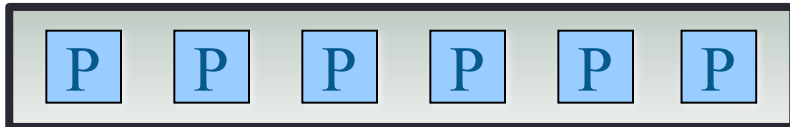
COMM_WORLD

size = 12

rank

0 1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 10 11



0 1 2 3 4 5

0 1 2 3 4 5

rank

size = 6

nodecomm

rank

size = 6

nodecomm

Allocating the array

```
int MPI_Win_allocate_shared (MPI_Aint size, int disp_unit,  
    MPI_Info info, MPI_Comm comm, void *baseptr, MPI_Win *win)
```

```
MPI_WIN_ALLOCATE_SHARED(SIZE, DISP_UNIT, INFO, COMM, BASEPTR,  
    WIN, IERROR)
```

```
INTEGER(KIND=MPI_ADDRESS_KIND) SIZE, BASEPTR
```

```
INTEGER DISP_UNIT, INFO, COMM, WIN, IERROR
```

- size: window size in bytes
- disp_unit: basic counting unit in bytes, e.g. sizeof(int)
- info: can just use default: MPI_INFO_NULL
- comm: parent comm (must be within a single node)
- baseptr: allocated storage
- win: allocated window

Traffic Model Example

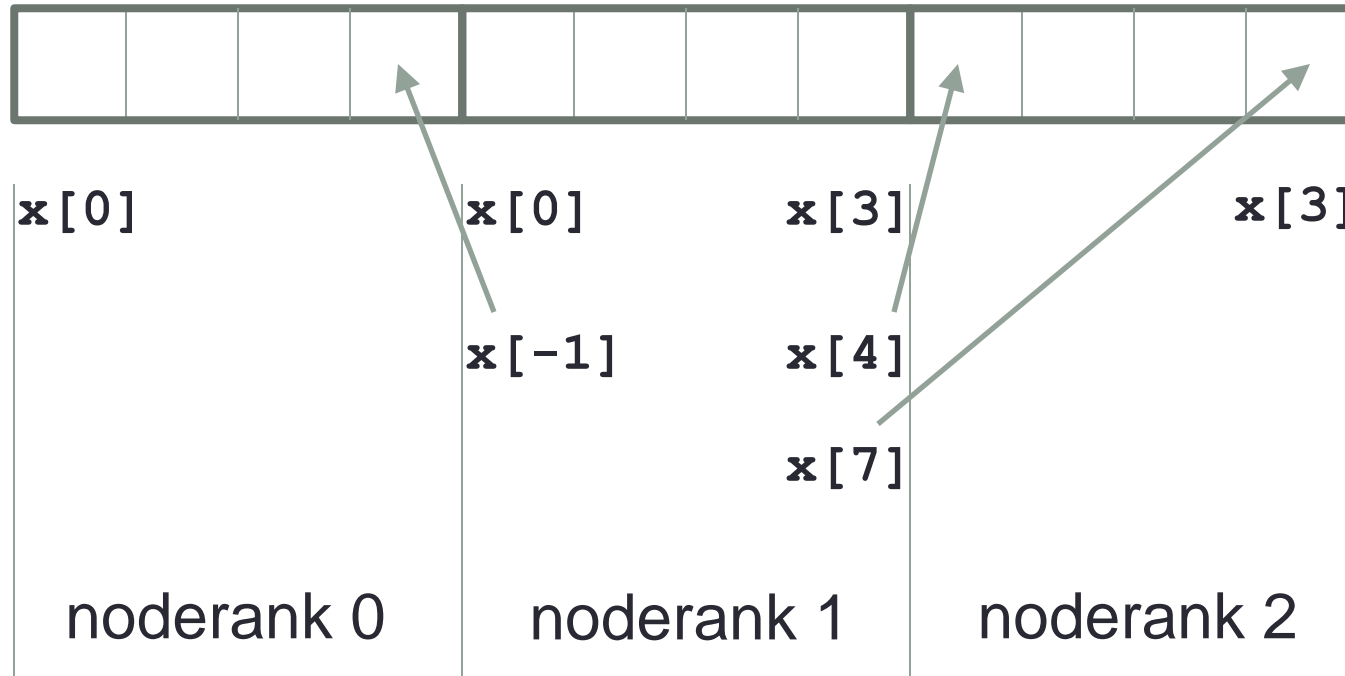
```
MPI_Comm nodecomm;
int *oldroad;
MPI_Win nodewin;
MPI_Aint winsize;
int displ_unit;

winsize = (nlocal+2)*sizeof(int);

// displacements counted in units of integers
disp_unit = sizeof(int);

MPI_Win_allocate_shared(winsize, displ_unit,
                        MPI_INFO_NULL, nodecomm, &oldroad, &nodewin);
```

Shared Array with nlocal = 2



- Default is contiguous block of memory across processes
 - use value of info, `alloc_shared_noncontig = true`, to relax this

Accessing another rank's memory

- In previous diagram
 - rank 1 can access rank 0's $x[0]$ by referencing its own $x[-4]$
- Might be more convenient to reference as $x_0[0]$
 - but how do we find out address for x_0 ?
 - or perhaps data is only allocated on rank 0 – what is its address?
- Rank 0 could `MPI_Send` its value of x to rank 1
 - will not work in general!
- Separate processes can have different virtual addresses (i.e. pointer values) for the same physical location
 - OS may do this deliberately to foil buffer overflow hacking attacks
- Must use special call
 - see `MPI_Win_shared_query()`
 - gives us a local pointer which we can use to access remote data

Synchronisation

- Can do halo swapping by direct copies
 - need to ensure data is ready beforehand and available afterwards
 - requires synchronisation, e.g. `MPI_Win_fence()`
 - takes hints – can just set to default of 0
- Entirely analogous to OpenMP
 - bracket remote accesses with `omp_barrier` or `begin / end parallel`

```
MPI_Win_fence(0, nodewin);  
oldroad[nlocal+2] = oldroad[nlocal]  
oldroad[-1]      = oldroad[1];  
MPI_Win_fence(0, nodewin);
```

Off-node comms

- Direct read / write only works within node
- Still need MPI calls for inter-node
 - e.g. `noderank = 0` and `noderank = nodesize-1` call `MPI_Send / Recv`
 - could actually use *any* rank to do this ...
- This must take place in `MPI_COMM_WORLD`

Conclusion

- Relatively simple syntax for shared memory in MPI
 - much better than roll-your-own solutions
- Possible use cases
 - on-node communications without needing MPI
 - one copy of static data per node (not per process)
- Advantages
 - an incremental “plug and play” approach unlike MPI + OpenMP
- Disadvantages
 - no automatic support for splitting up parallel loops
 - global array may have halo data sprinkled inside
 - so may not help in some memory-limited cases