# A gentle introduction to the Exclusion Process: traffic jams, hydrodynamics and fluctuations

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Traffic jams Arriving to a traffic jam Leaving a traffic jam

Being ageless

Totally Asymmetric Simple Exclusion Process Stationary distribution The infinite model

On large scales Start of the traffic jam End of the traffic jam

Surprise!



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We notice the slow cars ~> strong braking immediately.

Arriving to a traffic jam is always sharp.



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Arriving to a traffic jam is always sharp.

This is one aspect that makes motorways dangerous places.

















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Why is there such a difference between the two ends of a traffic jam?



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Totally asymmetric simple exclusion process: an explanation

We first seek a random time that does not remember its past. Let  $\tau > 0$  be a random time such that

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The same as  $P{\tau > s}$ , regardless of t!We have found the secret of being ageless.

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$$\mathbf{P}\{ au \leq t\} \cdot \mathbf{P}\{ au \leq t\} = t^2 + \mathfrak{o}(t) = \mathfrak{o}(t).$$

 $\rightarrow$  More  ${\mathfrak S}$  's, even smaller probability.

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$$\mathbf{P}\{\text{none of them ring}\} = \mathbf{P}\{\tau > t\}^{k}$$
$$= e^{-kt}$$
$$= (1 - kt) + \mathfrak{o}(t).$$



*m* balls in *N* possible slots.



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*m* balls in *N* possible slots.

Each listening to its own  $\mathfrak{D}$ . When that rings, the ball tries to jump to the right. But sometimes it's blocked. Ageless, independent  $\mathfrak{D}$ 's  $\Rightarrow$  if we know the present, no need to know the past. *Markov property*, makes things handy.

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#### Theorem

With N and m fixed, the distribution that gives equal chance to each (*m*-ball) configuration, is stationary.

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#### 1<sup>st</sup> remark.

In this case every configuration occurs with probability  $1/\binom{N}{m}$ .

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With N and m fixed, the distribution that gives equal chance to each (*m*-ball) configuration, is stationary.

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In this case every configuration occurs with probability  $1/\binom{N}{m}$ .

 $2^{nd}$  remark. With fixed *N*, *m*, there is no other stationary distribution.













### Almost proof



The number of critical clocks for  $\omega$  = the number of pre-images of  $\omega = \mathbf{k}$ 

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- $\mathbf{P}\{\omega \text{ at time } \mathbf{s} + t\}$
- $= \mathbf{P}\{\omega \text{ at time } s \text{ and no jumps within time } t\}$ 
  - + **P**{was a pre-image of  $\omega$  at time s, and jumps to  $\omega$ }
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- $= \mathbf{P}\{\omega \text{ at time } s \text{ and none of the } k \text{ critical } \mathfrak{P} \text{ 's ring}\}$ 
  - $+ \sum_{\eta \text{ is a pre-image of } \omega} \mathbf{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ a$

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 $\begin{aligned} \mathbf{P}\{\omega \text{ at time } s+t\} \\ &= \mathbf{P}\{\omega \text{ at time } s \text{ and none of the } k \text{ critical } \mathfrak{P} \text{ 's ring}\} \\ &+ \sum_{\eta \text{ is a pre-image of } \omega} \mathbf{P}\{\eta \text{ at time } s \text{ and the right critical } \mathfrak{P} \text{ rings}\} \\ &+ \mathfrak{o}(t) \\ &= p \cdot (1-kt) + \sum_{\eta \text{ is a pre-image of } \omega} p \cdot t + \mathfrak{o}(t) \end{aligned}$ 

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Take, say, 1 sec. and  $t = \frac{1}{n}$ . Then the errors  $\mathfrak{o}(t) = \mathfrak{o}(\frac{1}{n})$  stay small even if summed up:  $\sum_{k=1}^{n} \mathfrak{o}(\frac{1}{n}) \to 0$  for large *n*.

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Stationary distribution The infinite model



Stationary distribution The infinite model




























































































































































































































































































































































Stationary distribution The infinite model



















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Stationary distribution The infinite model























































































































































































































































































































































































































































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What is the probability of two neighboring slots with a ball each?

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Etc.

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**Etc.** In the limit, on  $\mathbb{Z}$ : ball with probability  $\varrho$ , no ball with probability  $1 - \varrho$ , independently for each slot.

$$\frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\varrho_i = \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\mathbf{E}\omega_i$$

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$$= \varrho_{i-1}[1 - \varrho_{i}] - \varrho_{i}[1 - \varrho_{i+1}].$$

Let us now allow the density to change slowly in space. The change of density at position *i*:

$$\frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\varrho_i = \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\mathbf{E}\omega_i$$

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$$\varepsilon \frac{\partial}{\partial T} \hat{\varrho} = \hat{\varrho}(T, X - \varepsilon) \big[ 1 - \hat{\varrho}(T, X) \big] - \hat{\varrho}(T, X) \big[ 1 - \hat{\varrho}(T, X + \varepsilon) \big]$$

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$$\frac{\partial}{\partial T}\hat{\varrho} + \frac{\partial}{\partial X}[\hat{\varrho}(1-\hat{\varrho})] = 0 \qquad (Burgers \ eq.).$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial T}\hat{\varrho} + \frac{\partial}{\partial X}[\hat{\varrho}(1-\hat{\varrho})] = 0 \qquad \text{Burgers eq.: nonlinear PDE.}$$

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Characteristics: find a path X(T) where  $\hat{\varrho}(T, X(T))$  is a constant:

$$\frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}T}\hat{\varrho}\big(T,\,X(T)\big)=0$$

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$$\frac{\partial}{\partial T}\hat{\varrho} + (1 - 2\hat{\varrho}) \cdot \frac{\partial}{\partial X}\hat{\varrho} = 0$$

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Characteristics: find a path X(T) where  $\hat{\varrho}(T, X(T))$  is a constant:

$$\frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}T}\hat{\varrho}(T, X(T)) = 0$$
$$\frac{\partial}{\partial T}\hat{\varrho} + \dot{X}(T) \cdot \frac{\partial}{\partial X}\hat{\varrho} = 0$$
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The characteristic velocity:  $\dot{X}(T) = 1 - 2\hat{\varrho}$ .




























































































































 $\dot{X}(T) = 1 - 2\hat{\varrho}$ 

The start of the jam: sharpens.
































































 $\dot{X}(T) = 1 - 2\hat{\varrho}$ 

End of the jam: smoothens.

In general, non-linear differential equations are fun. (And difficult.)

E.g., solitary waves were discovered by John Scott Russell in 1834: he chased one along a channel for miles!



http://youtu.be/MADnglfqECY

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- But TASEP is already very interesting from the mathematics point of view, with many nice theorems and interesting open questions.

Add many iid. variables  $Y_k$  (with finite second moment), rescale, and you converge to the Normal distribution:

$$\frac{Y_1 + \dots + Y_n - n \cdot \mathbf{E} \, Y_1}{\sqrt{n \cdot \operatorname{Var} Y_1}} \Longrightarrow_{n \to \infty} \mathcal{N}(0, \, 1).$$

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Example. Take a single car on an empty road (the US still has those...), and  $Y_k$  the distance covered in the  $k^{\text{th}}$  second,  $Y_1 + \cdots + Y_t$  is the position at time *t*.

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# Tracy-Widom

#### Take an $N \times N$ Hermitian matrix with

$$\begin{split} M_{jk} &\sim \mathcal{N}\big(0, \, \frac{1}{2}\big) + i \cdot \mathcal{N}\big(0, \, \frac{1}{2}\big), & 1 \leq j < k \leq N, \\ M_{jj} &\sim \mathcal{N}(0, \, 1), & 1 \leq j \leq N, \end{split}$$

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#### (all $\mathcal{N}$ 's independent).

Denote the largest eigenvalue by  $\lambda_{max}$ . Then

$$\frac{\lambda_{\max} - \sqrt{2N}}{\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \cdot N^{-1/6}} \underset{N \to \infty}{\Longrightarrow} \operatorname{Tracy-Widom(II) distribution.}$$

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Thank you.