

# Membership problems in graph groups

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where  $\equiv$  is the smallest congruence that contains all pairs

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Extreme cases:

- $\mathbb{G}(\Sigma, \emptyset) = F(\Sigma)$  (the **free group** generated by  $\Sigma$ )
- $\mathbb{G}(\Sigma, \Sigma \times \Sigma \setminus \text{Id}_\Sigma) = \mathbb{Z}^{|\Sigma|}$  (the **free abelian group** of rank  $|\Sigma|$ )

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**Rational subset membership problem for  $G$ :**

INPUT: Word  $w \in (\Sigma \cup \Sigma^{-1})^*$  and a finite automaton  $A$  over the alphabet  $\Sigma \cup \Sigma^{-1}$

QUESTION:  $h(w) \in h(L(A))$ ?

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**Decidable** for free groups (Benois) and free abelian groups (folklore)

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INPUT: Finite automata  $A_1, A_2$  over the alphabet  $\Sigma$

QUESTION:  $[L(A_1)]_I \cap [L(A_2)]_I \neq \emptyset?$

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For  $L, K \subseteq \Sigma^*$  we have:  $[L]_I \cap [K]_I \neq \emptyset \iff 1 \in h(LK^{-1})$ .

( $h : (\Sigma \cup \Sigma^{-1})^* \rightarrow \mathbb{G}(\Sigma, I)$  is the canonical morphism)

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A graph  $(\Sigma, I)$  does not contain an induced  $P_4$  or  $C_4$  if and only if it is a **transitive forest**.



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The class of transitive forests is the smallest class of graphs with:

- 1 A graph with one node is a transitive forest.
- 2 The disjoint union of two transitive forests is a transitive forest.
- 3 If  $G$  is a transitive forest and  $H$  results from  $G$  by adding a new node  $v$  and connecting  $v$  with all nodes from  $G$ , then also  $H$  is a transitive forest.

It suffices to show the following:

Let  $\mathcal{G}$  be the smallest class of groups such that:

- 1  $\mathbb{Z} \in \mathcal{G}$
- 2 If  $G_1, G_2 \in \mathcal{G}$  then also  $G_1 * G_2 \in \mathcal{G}$   
(closure under free products)
- 3 If  $G \in \mathcal{G}$  then also  $G \times \mathbb{Z} \in \mathcal{G}$

Then, for every group from  $\mathcal{G}$  the rational subset membership problem is decidable.

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For  $w \in \Theta^*$  and  $\Delta \subseteq \Theta$  define the **Parikh image**  $\Psi_\Delta(w) : \Delta \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ :

$$\Psi_\Delta(w)(a) = \text{number of occurrences of } a \text{ in } w$$

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- 1 If  $G$  is SLI, then  $G$  has a decidable rational subset membership problem.
- 2 If  $G$  is SLI, then  $G \times \mathbb{Z}$  is SLI.
- 3 If  $G$  and  $H$  are SLI, then  $G * H$  is SLI.

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- If  $G$  has a decidable rational subset membership problem, is the same true for  $G \times \mathbb{Z}$ ?