

# How to go from partial to full retroactivity in detail

Cristina G. Fernandes, Felipe C. de Noronha

IME-USP – Brazil

LAGOS 25 – November 10-14, 2025

# What is a spanning tree?

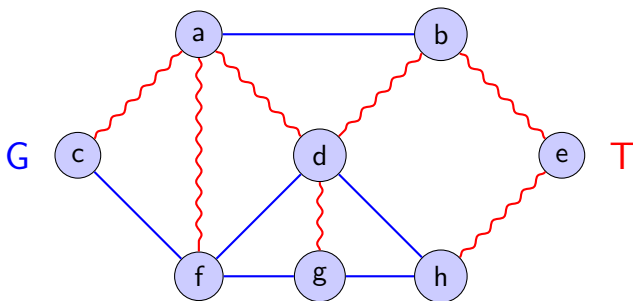
- Let  $G = (V, E)$  be a connected graph
- **Spanning tree:** A tree with all vertices of  $G$

# What is a spanning tree?

- Let  $G = (V, E)$  be a connected graph
- **Spanning tree:** A tree with all vertices of  $G$
- **Properties:**
  - ▶ Connected (path between any two vertices)
  - ▶ Acyclic (no cycles)
  - ▶ Contains exactly  $n - 1$  edges for  $n$  vertices

# What is a spanning tree?

- Let  $G = (V, E)$  be a connected graph
- **Spanning tree:** A tree with all vertices of  $G$
- **Properties:**
  - ▶ Connected (path between any two vertices)
  - ▶ Acyclic (no cycles)
  - ▶ Contains exactly  $n - 1$  edges for  $n$  vertices



# Minimum Spanning Tree and Forest

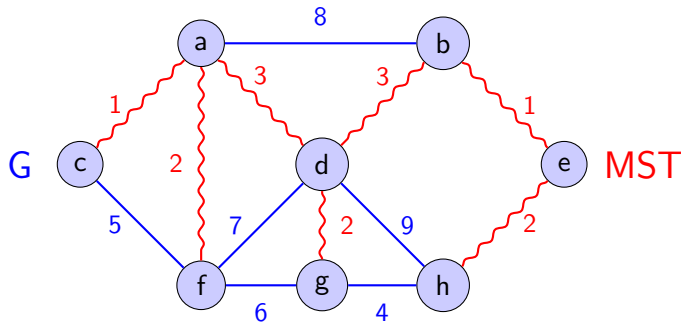
- **Minimum Spanning Tree (MST):** spanning tree in a weighted graph with minimum total cost

# Minimum Spanning Tree and Forest

- **Minimum Spanning Tree (MST):** spanning tree in a weighted graph with minimum total cost
- **Minimum Spanning Forest (MSF):** generalization for disconnected graphs

# Minimum Spanning Tree and Forest

- **Minimum Spanning Tree (MST):** spanning tree in a weighted graph with minimum total cost
- **Minimum Spanning Forest (MSF):** generalization for disconnected graphs



# Incremental MSF problem

- **Problem:** Keep track of an MSF in a graph that grows over time
- Graph starts empty, edges are added one by one



# Incremental MSF problem

- **Problem:** Keep track of an MSF in a graph that grows over time
- Graph starts empty, edges are added one by one
- **Operations:**
  - ▶ `add_edge( $u, v, w$ )`: add edge with cost  $w$  between vertices  $u$  and  $v$
  - ▶ `get_msf()`: return a list with the edges of an MSF of  $G$

# Incremental MSF problem

- **Problem:** Keep track of an MSF in a graph that grows over time
- Graph starts empty, edges are added one by one
- **Operations:**
  - ▶ `add_edge( $u, v, w$ )`: add edge with cost  $w$  between vertices  $u$  and  $v$
  - ▶ `get_msf()`: return a list with the edges of an MSF of  $G$
- **Solution:** Frederickson (1983) using link-cut trees

# Frederickson's link-cut tree solution

- **Key insight:** Use link-cut trees to maintain MSF dynamically

# Frederickson's link-cut tree solution

- **Key insight:** Use link-cut trees to maintain MSF dynamically
- **Link-cut tree operations:**
  - ▶ `find_max( $u, v$ )`:  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
  - ▶ `link( $u, v, w$ )`:  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
  - ▶ `cut( $u, v$ )`:  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
  - ▶ `is_connected( $u, v$ )`:  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized

# Frederickson's link-cut tree solution

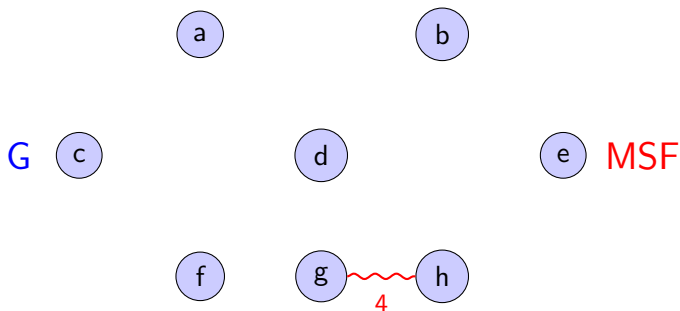
- **Key insight:** Use link-cut trees to maintain MSF dynamically
- **Link-cut tree operations:**
  - ▶  $\text{find\_max}(u, v)$ :  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
  - ▶  $\text{link}(u, v, w)$ :  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
  - ▶  $\text{cut}(u, v)$ :  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
  - ▶  $\text{is\_connected}(u, v)$ :  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
- **Algorithm for adding edge  $(u, v, w)$ :**
  - 1 Check if  $u$  and  $v$  are in connected in the same component
  - 2 If not: add edge  $(u, v, w)$  to forest
  - 3 If yes: find the edge with maximum cost on the  $u$ - $v$  path
  - 4 If  $w < \text{maximum cost}$ : replace maximum cost edge with  $(u, v, w)$

# Frederickson's link-cut tree solution

- **Key insight:** Use link-cut trees to maintain MSF dynamically
- **Link-cut tree operations:**
  - ▶  $\text{find\_max}(u, v)$ :  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
  - ▶  $\text{link}(u, v, w)$ :  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
  - ▶  $\text{cut}(u, v)$ :  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
  - ▶  $\text{is\_connected}(u, v)$ :  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  amortized
- **Algorithm for adding edge  $(u, v, w)$ :**
  - 1 Check if  $u$  and  $v$  are in connected in the same component
  - 2 If not: add edge  $(u, v, w)$  to forest
  - 3 If yes: find the edge with maximum cost on the  $u$ - $v$  path
  - 4 If  $w < \text{maximum cost}$ : replace maximum cost edge with  $(u, v, w)$
- **Total cost:** Amortized  $\mathcal{O}(\log n)$  per edge addition

# Incremental MSF example - Step 1

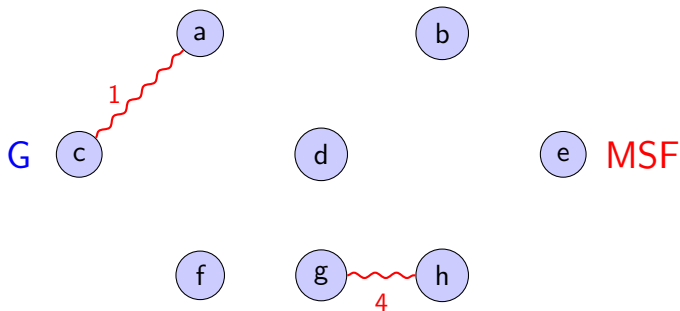
- **add\_edge(g, h, 4):** Add edge  $(g, h)$  with cost 4



- **MSF:**  $\{g-h\}$

## Incremental MSF example - Step 2

- **add\_edge(c, a, 1):** Add edge with cost 1

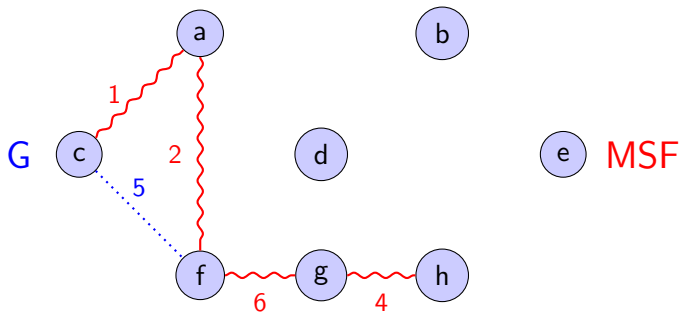


- **MSF:**  $\{g-h, c-a\}$



## Incremental MSF example - Step 3 (Cycle Check)

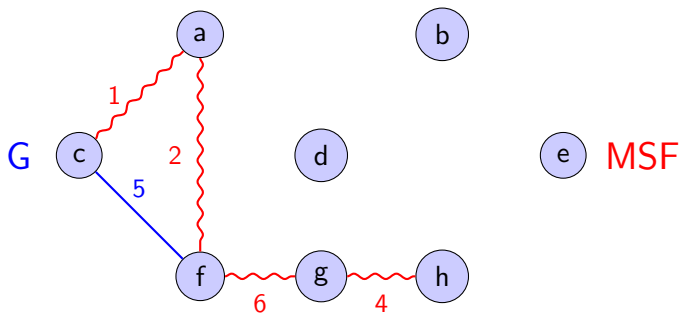
- **add\_edge(c, f, 5):** Add edge with cost 5



- **MSF:**  $\{g-h, c-a, f-g, a-f\}$

## Incremental MSF example - Step 3 (Result)

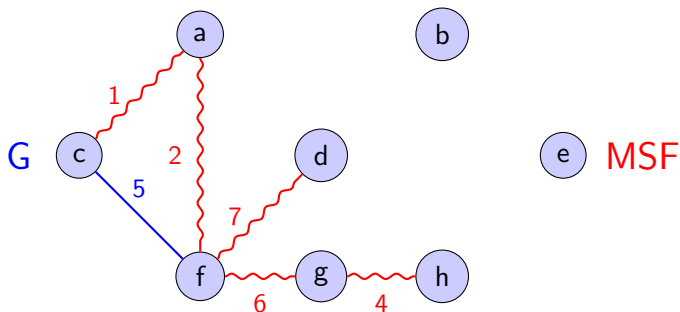
- **add\_edge(c, f, 5):** Edge cost is greater than max cost (2), not added



- **MSF:**  $\{g-h, c-a, f-g, a-f\}$

## Incremental MSF example - Step 4

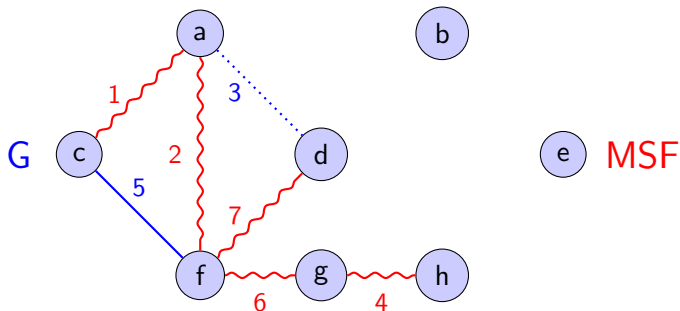
- **add\_edge(f, d, 7):** Add edge with cost 7



- **MSF:** {g-h, c-a, f-g, a-f, f-d}

## Incremental MSF example - Step 5 (Cycle Check)

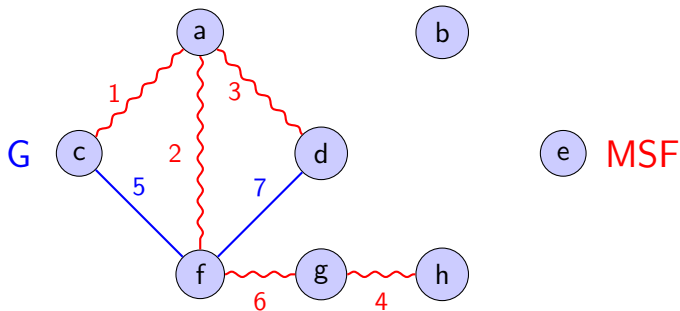
- **add\_edge(a, d, 3):** Add edge with cost 3



- **MSF:**  $\{g-h, c-a, f-g, a-f, f-d\}$

## Incremental MSF example - Step 5 (Result)

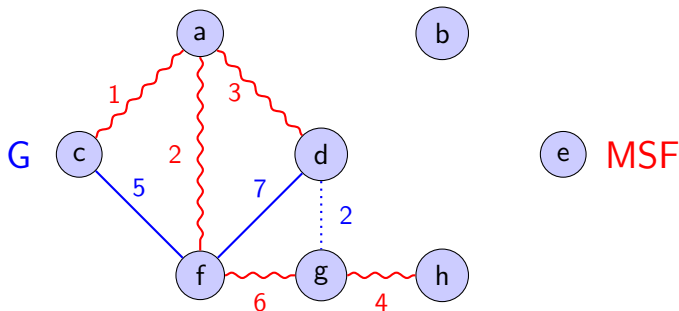
- **add\_edge(a, d, 3):** Cost 3 ; max cost 7, swap edges



- **MSF:** {g-h, c-a, f-g, a-f, a-d}

## Incremental MSF example - Step 6 (Cycle Check)

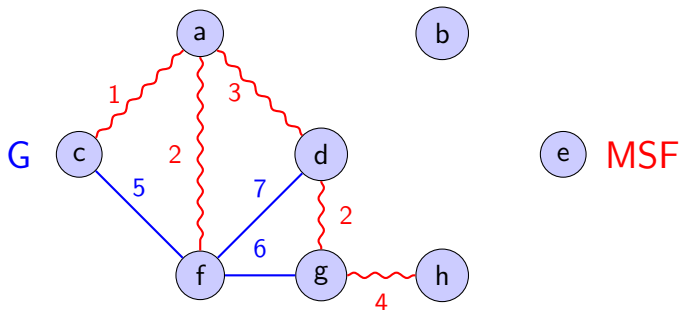
- **add\_edge(d, g, 2):** Add edge with cost 2



- **MSF:**  $\{g-h, c-a, f-g, a-f, a-d\}$

## Incremental MSF example - Step 6 (Result)

- **add\_edge(d, g, 2):** Cost 2 ; max cost 6, swap edges



- **MSF:** {g-h, c-a, a-f, a-d, d-g}

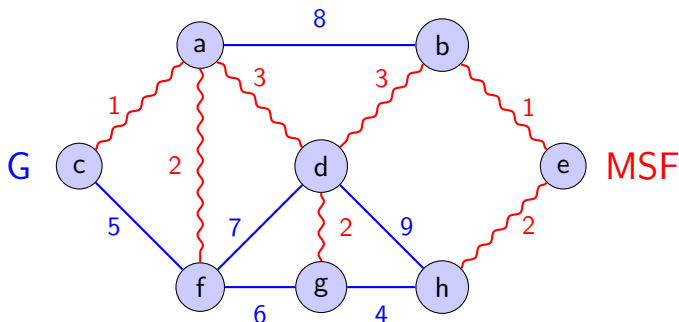
# Incremental MSF example - Step 7 (Final Result)

- **Continue adding edges...**



# Incremental MSF example - Step 7 (Final Result)

- **Continue adding edges...**
- **Final MSF:** Minimum spanning forest with optimal cost



- **Solution:** Frederickson (1983) using link-cut trees

# What is retroactivity?

- **Problem:** Data structures usually support updates and queries
- The order of updates affects the state of the data structure

# What is retroactivity?

- **Problem:** Data structures usually support updates and queries
- The order of updates affects the state of the data structure
- **Retroactivity:** Manipulate the sequence of updates

# What is retroactivity?

- **Problem:** Data structures usually support updates and queries
- The order of updates affects the state of the data structure
- **Retroactivity:** Manipulate the sequence of updates
- **Operations:**
  - ▶ Insert update at time  $t$  (possibly in the past)
  - ▶ Remove update at time  $t$
  - ▶ Query at time  $t$  (not just present)

# Partial vs Full retroactivity

## Fully Retroactive

- Queries at **any** time  $t$
- Insert/remove updates at any time

# Partial vs Full retroactivity

## Fully Retroactive

- Queries at **any** time  $t$
- Insert/remove updates at any time

## Partially Retroactive

- Queries only on **current** state
- Insert/remove updates at any time

# Partial vs Full retroactivity

## Fully Retroactive

- Queries at **any** time  $t$
- Insert/remove updates at any time

## Partially Retroactive

- Queries only on **current** state
- Insert/remove updates at any time

## Semi-Retroactive

- Queries at **any** time  $t$
- Insert updates at any time
- **No removal** of updates

# The challenge

## Challenge

How to transform partial  $\rightarrow$  full retroactivity?



# The challenge

## Challenge

How to transform partial  $\rightarrow$  full retroactivity?

- **Problem:** Need to support queries at any time  $t$
- **Solution approach:** Square-root decomposition

# The challenge

## Challenge

How to transform partial  $\rightarrow$  full retroactivity?

- **Problem:** Need to support queries at any time  $t$
- **Solution approach:** Square-root decomposition
- **Key insight:** Keep checkpoints with data structure states
- **Implementation:** Demaine, Iacono & Langerman (2007)

# Demaine, Iacono & Langerman's solution

## Theorem (Theorem 05)

*Any partially retroactive data structure can be transformed into a fully retroactive one with:*

- $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{m})$  slowdown per operation
- $\mathcal{O}(m)$  space usage
- **Requirement:** Need persistent version of the data structure

*Where  $m$  is the number of updates.*

# Demaine, Iacono & Langerman's solution

## Theorem (Theorem 05)

*Any partially retroactive data structure can be transformed into a fully retroactive one with:*

- $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{m})$  slowdown per operation
- $\mathcal{O}(m)$  space usage
- **Requirement:** Need persistent version of the data structure

*Where  $m$  is the number of updates.*

- **Key idea:** Square-root decomposition
- Keep  $\sqrt{m}$  checkpoints with data structure states

# Demaine, Iacono & Langerman's solution

## Theorem (Theorem 05)

*Any partially retroactive data structure can be transformed into a fully retroactive one with:*

- $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{m})$  slowdown per operation
- $\mathcal{O}(m)$  space usage
- **Requirement:** Need persistent version of the data structure

*Where  $m$  is the number of updates.*

- **Key idea:** Square-root decomposition
- Keep  $\sqrt{m}$  checkpoints with data structure states
- **Query at time  $t$ :**
  - 1 Find closest checkpoint before  $t$
  - 2 Apply updates from checkpoint to  $t$
  - 3 Answer query, then rollback

# The space problem

- **Naive approach:** Keep  $\sqrt{m}$  independent copies
- Space usage:  $\Theta(m\sqrt{m})$

# The space problem

- **Naive approach:** Keep  $\sqrt{m}$  independent copies
- Space usage:  $\Theta(m\sqrt{m})$
- **Demaine et al. solution:** Use persistent data structures
- Space usage:  $\mathcal{O}(m)$

# The space problem

- **Naive approach:** Keep  $\sqrt{m}$  independent copies
- Space usage:  $\Theta(m\sqrt{m})$
- **Demaine et al. solution:** Use persistent data structures
- Space usage:  $\mathcal{O}(m)$

## Problem

What if we don't have or don't want to use persistent data structures?



# The space problem

- **Naive approach:** Keep  $\sqrt{m}$  independent copies
- Space usage:  $\Theta(m\sqrt{m})$
- **Demaine et al. solution:** Use persistent data structures
- Space usage:  $\mathcal{O}(m)$

## Problem

What if we don't have or don't want to use persistent data structures?

## Our contribution

Simple rebuilding strategy without persistent data structures

- Same time complexity:  $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{m})$  per operation
- Space usage:  $\Theta(m\sqrt{m})$

# Starting point

- **Junior & Seabra's solution:** Semi-retroactive incremental MSF
- **Operations:**
  - ▶ `add_edge( $u, v, w, t$ )`: add edge at time  $t$
  - ▶ `get_msf( $t$ )`: get MSF at time  $t$

# Starting point

- **Junior & Seabra's solution:** Semi-retroactive incremental MSF
- **Operations:**
  - ▶ `add_edge( $u, v, w, t$ )`: add edge at time  $t$
  - ▶ `get_msf( $t$ )`: get MSF at time  $t$
- **Implementation:** Square-root decomposition
- **Checkpoints:**  $t_i = i\sqrt{m}$  for  $i = 1, \dots, \sqrt{m}$

# Starting point

- **Junior & Seabra's solution:** Semi-retroactive incremental MSF
- **Operations:**
  - ▶ `add_edge( $u, v, w, t$ )`: add edge at time  $t$
  - ▶ `get_msf( $t$ )`: get MSF at time  $t$
- **Implementation:** Square-root decomposition
- **Checkpoints:**  $t_i = i\sqrt{m}$  for  $i = 1, \dots, \sqrt{m}$
- **Data structures:**  $D_i$  contains edges before time  $t_i$
- **Time:**  $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{m} \log n)$  per operation

## Limitations → Key Insight

### Problems with the existing static approach

- **Fixed  $m$ :** Requires knowing the maximum sequence length ( **$m$** ) beforehand. Meaning that it cannot handle arbitrary growth or dynamic operation counts.

# Limitations → Key Insight

## Problems with the existing static approach

- **Fixed  $m$ :** Requires knowing the maximum sequence length ( $m$ ) beforehand. Meaning that it cannot handle arbitrary growth or dynamic operation counts.

## Our dynamic goal and solution

**Goal:** Remove the **Fixed  $m$**  dependency while preserving time complexity.

- **Key Insight:** Introduce a dynamic rebuilding process to handle arbitrary growth.
- **Challenge:** Rebuilding  $\sqrt{m}$  checkpoints must be fast, avoiding complex persistent data structures.
- **Solution:** Reuse the existing data structures to efficiently reconstruct new checkpoints.

## Our solution - Rebuilding strategy

- **Key idea:** Reuse existing data structures during rebuilding
- **Rebuilding moments:** When  $m = k^2$  (perfect square)

# Our solution - Rebuilding strategy

- **Key idea:** Reuse existing data structures during rebuilding
- **Rebuilding moments:** When  $m = k^2$  (perfect square)
- **Strategy:**
  - 1 Create new empty structures  $D'_0, D'_1$
  - 2 Reuse  $D_i \rightarrow D'_{i+2}$  for  $i = 0, \dots, k-1$
  - 3 Apply missing updates to each  $D'_i$



# Our solution - Rebuilding strategy

- **Key idea:** Reuse existing data structures during rebuilding
- **Rebuilding moments:** When  $m = k^2$  (perfect square)
- **Strategy:**
  - 1 Create new empty structures  $D'_0, D'_1$
  - 2 Reuse  $D_i \rightarrow D'_{i+2}$  for  $i = 0, \dots, k-1$
  - 3 Apply missing updates to each  $D'_i$

## Key Lemma

Every update in  $D_i$  is within the first  $(i+2)(k+1)$  updates in the new sequence.

# Our solution - Rebuilding strategy

- **Key idea:** Reuse existing data structures during rebuilding
- **Rebuilding moments:** When  $m = k^2$  (perfect square)
- **Strategy:**
  - 1 Create new empty structures  $D'_0, D'_1$
  - 2 Reuse  $D_i \rightarrow D'_{i+2}$  for  $i = 0, \dots, k-1$
  - 3 Apply missing updates to each  $D'_i$

## Key Lemma

Every update in  $D_i$  is within the first  $(i+2)(k+1)$  updates in the new sequence.

- **Time per rebuilding:**  $\mathcal{O}(m \log n)$
- **Amortized cost:**  $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{m} \log n)$  per operation

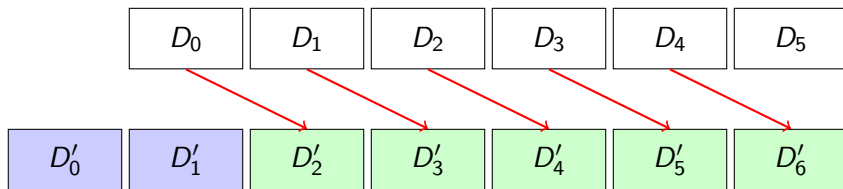
# Rebuilding algorithm

- ①  $D'_0 \leftarrow \text{NEWINCREMENTALMSF}()$
- ②  $D'_1 \leftarrow \text{NEWINCREMENTALMSF}()$
- ③ For  $i = 2$  to  $k + 1$ :  $D'_i \leftarrow D_{i-2}$  ▷ reuse existing
- ④ For  $i = 1$  to  $k + 1$ :
  - ▶  $p \leftarrow \text{KTH}(S, i(k + 1))$  ▷  $i(k + 1)$ th item in the sequence of updates
  - ▶  $t'_i \leftarrow p.\text{time}$
  - ▶  $\text{ADDEDGES}(S, t_{i-2}, t'_i, D'_i)$
- ⑤ Return  $k + 1, D', t'$

# Rebuilding algorithm

- ①  $D'_0 \leftarrow \text{NEWINCREMENTALMSF}()$
- ②  $D'_1 \leftarrow \text{NEWINCREMENTALMSF}()$
- ③ For  $i = 2$  to  $k + 1$ :  $D'_i \leftarrow D_{i-2}$  ▷ reuse existing
- ④ For  $i = 1$  to  $k + 1$ :
  - ▷  $p \leftarrow \text{KTH}(S, i(k + 1))$  ▷  $i(k + 1)$ th item in the sequence of updates
  - ▷  $t'_i \leftarrow p.\text{time}$
  - ▷  $\text{ADDEDGES}(S, t_{i-2}, t'_i, D'_i)$
- ⑤ Return  $k + 1, D', t'$

Original



$$D_i \rightarrow D'_{i+2}$$

# Results

## Our contribution

- **General transformation:** Partial  $\rightarrow$  Full retroactivity
- **No persistent data structures needed**
- **Same time complexity:**  $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{m})$  per operation
- **Space trade-off:**  $\Theta(m\sqrt{m})$  vs  $\mathcal{O}(m)$

# Results

## Our contribution

- **General transformation:** Partial  $\rightarrow$  Full retroactivity
- **No persistent data structures needed**
- **Same time complexity:**  $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{m})$  per operation
- **Space trade-off:**  $\Theta(m\sqrt{m})$  vs  $\mathcal{O}(m)$

## Semi-retroactive MSF implementation

- **Operations:** `add_edge( $u, v, w, t$ )`, `get_msf( $t$ )`
- **Time:**  $\mathcal{O}(\sqrt{m} \log n)$  per operation
- **Space:**  $\Theta(m\sqrt{m})$
- **No fixed  $m$  or time range restrictions**

# Thank you!

# Questions?