

# The DaCapo Benchmarks: Java Benchmarking Development and Analysis (*Extended Version*)<sup>\*</sup>

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## Abstract

Since benchmarks drive computer science research and industry product development, which ones we use and how we evaluate them are key questions for the community. Despite complex runtime tradeoffs due to dynamic compilation and garbage collection required for Java programs, many evaluations still use methodologies developed for C, C++, and Fortran. SPEC, the dominant purveyor of benchmarks, compounded this problem by institutionalizing these methodologies for their Java benchmark suite. This paper recommends benchmarking selection and evaluation methodologies, and introduces the DaCapo benchmarks, a set of open source, client-side Java benchmarks. We demonstrate that the complex interactions of (1) architecture, (2) compiler, (3) virtual machine, (4) memory management, and (5) application require more extensive evaluation than C, C++, and Fortran which stress (4) much less, and do not require (3). We use and introduce new value, time-series, and statistical metrics for static and dynamic properties such as code complexity, code size, heap composition, and pointer mutations. No benchmark suite is definitive, but these metrics show that DaCapo improves over SPEC Java in a variety of ways, including more complex code, richer object behaviors, and more demanding memory system requirements. This paper takes a step towards improving methodologies for choosing and evaluating benchmarks to foster innovation in system design and implementation for Java and other managed languages.

**Categories and Subject Descriptors** C.4 [Measurement Techniques]

**General Terms** Measurement, Performance

**Keywords** methodology, benchmark, DaCapo, Java, SPEC

## 1. Introduction

When researchers explore new system features and optimizations, they typically evaluate them with benchmarks. If the idea does not improve a set of interesting benchmarks, researchers are unlikely to submit the idea for publication, or if they do, the community is unlikely to accept it. Thus, benchmarks set standards for innovation and can encourage or stifle it.

<sup>\*</sup>This technical report is an extended version of [6].

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For Java, industry and academia typically use the SPEC Java benchmarks (the SPECjvm98 benchmarks and SPECjbb2000 [37, 38]). When SPEC introduced these benchmarks, their evaluation rules and the community's evaluation metrics glossed over some of the key questions for Java benchmarking. For example, (1) SPEC reporting of the "best" execution time is taken from multiple iterations of the benchmark within a single execution of the virtual machine, which will typically eliminate compile time. (2) In addition to steady state application performance, a key question for Java virtual machines (JVMs) is the tradeoff between compile and application time, yet SPEC does not require this metric, and the community often does not report it. (3) SPEC does not require reports on multiple heap sizes and thus does not explore the space-time tradeoff automatic memory management (garbage collection) must make. SPEC specifies three possible heap sizes, all of which over-provision the heap. Some researchers and industry evaluations of course do vary and report these metrics, but many do not.

This paper introduces the DaCapo benchmarks, a set of general purpose, realistic, freely available Java applications. This paper also recommends a number of methodologies for choosing and evaluating Java benchmarks, virtual machines, and their memory management systems. Some of these methodologies are already in use. For example, Eeckhout et al. recommend that hardware vendors use multiple JVMs for benchmarking because applications vary significantly based on JVM [19]. We recommend and use this methodology on three commercial JVMs, confirming none is a consistent winner and benchmark variation is large. We recommend here a deterministic methodology for evaluating compiler optimizations that holds the compiler workload constant, as well as the standard steady-state stable performance methodology. For evaluating garbage collectors, we recommend multiple heap sizes and deterministic compiler configurations. We also suggest new and previous methodologies for selecting benchmarks and comparing them. For example, we recommend time-series data versus single values, including heap composition and pointer distances for live objects as well as allocated objects. We also recommend principal component analysis [13, 18, 19] to assess differences between benchmarks.

We use these methodologies to evaluate and compare DaCapo and SPEC, finding that DaCapo is more complex in terms of static and dynamic metrics. For example, DaCapo benchmarks have much richer code complexity, class structures, and class hierarchies than SPEC according to the Chidamber and Kemerer metrics [12]. Furthermore, this static complexity produces a wider variety and more complex object behavior at runtime, as measured by data structure complexity, pointer source/target heap distances, live and allocated object characteristics, and heap composition. Principal component analysis using code, object, and architecture behavior metrics differentiates all the benchmarks from each other.

The main contributions of this paper are new, more realistic Java benchmarks, an evaluation methodology for developing benchmark suites, and performance evaluation methodologies. Needless to say,

the DaCapo benchmarks are not definitive, and they may or may not be representative of workloads that vendors and clients care about most. Regardless, we believe this paper is a step towards a wider community discussion and eventual consensus on how to select, measure, and evaluate benchmarks, VMs, compilers, runtimes, and hardware for Java and other managed languages.

## 2. Related Work

We build on prior methodologies and metrics, and go further to recommend how to use them to select benchmarks and for best practices in performance evaluation.

### 2.1 Java Benchmark Suites

In addition to SPEC (discussed in Section 3), prior Java benchmarks suites include Java Grande [26], Jolden [11, 34], and Ashes [17]. The Java Grande Benchmarks include programs with large demands for memory, bandwidth, or processing power [26]. They focus on array intensive programs that solve scientific computing problems. The programs are sequential, parallel, and distributed. They also include microbenchmark tests for language and communication features, and some cross-language tests for comparing C and Java. DaCapo also focuses on large, realistic programs, but not on parallel or distributed programs. The DaCapo benchmarks are more general purpose, and include both client and server side applications.

The Jolden benchmarks are single-threaded Java programs rewritten from parallel C programs that use dynamic pointer data structures [11, 34]. These programs are small kernels (less than 600 lines of code) intended to explore pointer analysis and parallelization, not complete systems. The Soot project distributes the Ashes benchmarks with their Java compiler infrastructure, and include the Jolden benchmarks, a few more realistic benchmarks such as their compiler, and some interactive benchmarks [17]. The DaCapo benchmarks contain many more realistic programs, and are more ambitious in scope.

### 2.2 Benchmark Metrics and Characterization

Dufour et al. recommend characterizing benchmarks with architecture independent value metrics that summarize: (1) size and structure of program, (2) data structures, (3) polymorphism, (4) memory, and (5) concurrency into a single number [17]. We do not consider concurrency metrics to limit the scope of our efforts. We use metrics from the first four categories and add metrics, such as filtering for just the live objects, that better expose application behavior. Our focus is on continuous metrics, such as pointer distributions and heap composition graphs, rather than single values. Dufour et al. show how to use these metrics to drive compiler optimization explorations, whereas we show how to use these metrics to develop methodologies for performance and benchmark evaluation.

Prior work studied some of the object properties we present here [4, 15, 21, 39], but not for the purposes of driving benchmark selection and evaluation methodologies. For example, Dieckmann and Hölzle [15] measure object allocation properties, and we add to their analysis live object properties and pointer demographics. Stefanović pioneered the use of heap composition graphs which we use here to show inherent object lifetime behaviors [39].

### 2.3 Performance Evaluation Methodologies

Eeckhout et al. study SPECjvm98 and other Java benchmarks using a number of virtual machines on one architecture, AMD’s K7 [19]. Their cluster analysis shows that methodologies for designing new hardware should include multiple virtual machines and benchmarks because each widely exercises different hardware aspects. One limitation of their work is that they use a fixed heap size, which as we show masks the interaction of the memory manager’s space-time tradeoff in addition to its influence on mutator locality. We

add to Eeckhout et al.’s good practices in methodology that the hardware designers should include multiple heap sizes and memory management strategies. We confirm Eeckhout et al.’s finding. We present results for three commercial JVMs on one architecture that show a wide range of performance sensitivities. No one JVM is best across the suite with respect to compilation time and code quality, and there is a lot a variation. These results indicate there is plenty of room for improving current commercial JVMs.

Many recent studies examine and characterize the behavior of Java programs in simulation or on hardware [19, 21, 23, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33]. This work focuses on workload characterization, application behavior on hardware, and key differences with C programs. For example, Hauswirth et al. mine application behavior to understand performance [21]. The bulk of our evaluation focuses on benchmark properties that are independent of any particular hardware or virtual machine implementation, whereas this prior work concentrates on how applications behave on certain hardware with one or more virtual machines. We extend these results to suggest that these characteristics can be used to separate and evaluate the benchmarks in addition to the software and hardware running them. Much of this Java performance analysis work either disables garbage collection [15, 35], which introduces unnecessary memory fragmentation, or holds the heap size and/or garbage collector constant [19, 28], which may hide locality effects.

A number of researchers examine garbage collection and its influence on application performance [3, 4, 20, 22, 28, 40]. For example, Kim and Hsu use multiple heap sizes and simulate different memory hierarchies with a whole heap mark-sweep algorithm, assisted by occasional compaction [28]. Kim and Hsu, and Rajan et al. [33] note that a mark-sweep collector has a higher miss rate than the application itself because the collector touches reachable data that may not be in the program’s current working set. Blackburn et al. use the methodology we recommend here for studying the influence of copying, mark-sweep, and reference counting collectors, and their generational variants on three architectures [4]. They show a contiguously allocating generational copying collector delivers better mutator cache performance and total performance than a whole-heap mark-sweep collector with a free-list. A few studies explore heap size effects on performance [9, 10, 28], and as we show here, garbage collectors are very sensitive to heap size, and in particular to tight heaps. Diwan et al. [16, 41], Hicks et al. [22], and others [7, 8, 24] measure detailed, specific mechanism costs and architecture influences [16], but do not consider a variety of collection algorithms. Our work reflects these results and methodologies, but makes additional recommendations.

## 3. Benchmark and Methodology Introduction

This section describes SPEC Java and SPEC execution rules, how we collected DaCapo benchmarks, and our execution harness.

### 3.1 SPEC Java Benchmarks.

We compare the DaCapo suite to SPECjvm98 [37] and a modified version of SPECjbb2000 [38], and call them the SPEC Java benchmarks, or SPEC for short. We exclude SPECjAppServer because it requires multiple pieces of hardware and software to execute. The original SPECjbb2000 is a server-side Java application and reports its score as work done over a fixed time rather than elapsed time for a fixed work load. Although throughput (measuring work done over a fixed time) is one important criteria for understanding applications such as transaction processing systems, most applications are not throughput oriented. Superficially, the difference between fixing the time and workload is minor, however a variable workload is methodologically problematic. First, throughput workloads force a repetitive loop into the benchmark, which influences JIT optimization strategies and opportunities for parallelism, but is not representative of the wide range of non-repetitive workloads. Furthermore,

variable workloads make performance hard to analyze and reason about. For example, the level and number of classes optimized and re-optimized at higher levels and the number of garbage collections vary with the workload, leading to complex cascading effects on overall performance. We therefore modify SPECjbb2000, creating pseudojbb, which executes a fixed workload (by default, 70,000 transactions execute against a single warehouse).

SPEC benchmarking rules discourage special casing the virtual machine, compiler, and/or architecture for a specific SPEC Java benchmark. They specify the largest input size (100), sequencing through the benchmarks, no harness caching, and no pre-compilation of classes. The SPECjvm98 harness runs all the benchmarks multiple times, and intersperses untimed and timed executions. Benchmarkers may run all the programs as many times as they like, and then report the best and worst results using the same virtual machine and compiler configurations. SPEC indicates that reporting should specify the memory sizes: 48MB, 48–256MB, and greater than 256MB, but does not require reporting all three. All these sizes over provision the heap. Excluding the virtual machine, SPEC programs allocate up to 271MB, and have at most 8MB live in the heap at any time, except for pseudojbb with 21MB live (see Section 7). Since 2000, none of the vendors has published results for the smaller heaps.

The SPEC committee is currently working on collecting a new set of Java benchmarks. The SPEC committee consists of industrial representatives and a few academics. One of their main criteria is representativeness, which industry is much better to judge than academia. When SPEC releases new benchmark sets, they include a performance comparison point. They do not include or describe any measured metrics on which they based their selection. This paper suggests methodologies for both selecting and evaluating Java Benchmarks, which are not being used or recommended in current industrial standards, SPEC or otherwise.

### 3.2 DaCapo Benchmarks

We began the DaCapo benchmarking effort in mid 2003 as the result of an NSF review panel in which the panel and the DaCapo research group agreed that the existing Java benchmarks were limiting our progress. What followed was a two-pronged effort to identify suitable benchmarks, and develop a suite of analyses to characterize candidate benchmarks and evaluate them for inclusion. We began with the following criteria.

1. *Diverse real applications.* We want applications that are widely used to provide a compelling focus for the community’s innovation and optimizations, as compared to synthetic benchmarks.
2. *Ease of use.* We want the applications to be relatively easy to use and measure.

We implemented these criteria as follows.

1. We chose only *open source* benchmarks and libraries.
2. We chose diverse programs to *maximize coverage* of application domains and application behaviors.
3. We focused on client-side benchmarks that are *easy to measure* in a completely standard way, with minimal dependences outside the scope of the host JVM.
4. We excluded GUI applications since they are difficult to benchmark systematically. In the case of *eclipse*, we exercise a non-GUI subset.
5. We provide a range of inputs. With the default input sizes, the programs are *timely* enough that it takes hours or days to execute thousands of invocations of the suite, rather than weeks. With the exception of *eclipse*, which runs for around a minute, each benchmark executes for between 5 and 20 seconds on contemporary hardware and JVMs.

We considered other potential criteria, such as long running, GUI, and client-server applications. We settled on the above characteristics because their focus is similar to the existing SPEC benchmarks, while addressing some of our key concerns. Around 20 students and faculty at six institutions then began an iterative process of identifying, preparing, and experimenting with candidate benchmarks. Realizing the difficulty of identifying a good benchmark suite, we made the DaCapo benchmark project open and transparent, inviting feedback from the community [14]. As part of this process, we have released three beta versions.

We identified a broad range of static and dynamic metrics, including some new ones, and developed a framework in Jikes RVM [1] for performing these detailed analyses. Sections 6, 7, and 8 describe these metrics. We systematically analyzed each candidate to identify ones with non-trivial behavior and to maximize the suite’s coverage. We included most of the benchmarks we evaluated, excluding only a few that were too trivial or whose license agreements were too restrictive, and one that extensively used exceptions to avoid explicit control flow.

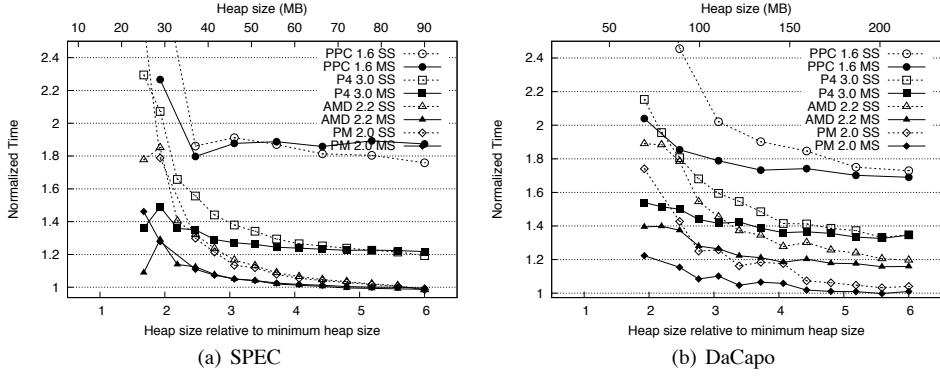
**The Constituent Benchmarks** We now briefly describe each benchmark in the final pre-release of the suite (*beta-2006-08*) that we use throughout the paper. More detailed descriptions appear in Figures 4 through 22. The source code and the benchmark harness are available on the DaCapo benchmark web site [14].

- antlr** A parser generator and translator generator.
- bloat** A bytecode-level optimization and analysis tool for Java.
- chart** A graph plotting toolkit and pdf renderer.
- eclipse** An integrated development environment (IDE).
- fop** An output-independent print formatter.
- hsqldb** An SQL relational database engine written in Java.
- jython** A python interpreter written in Java.
- luindex** A text indexing tool.
- lusearch** A text search tool.
- pmd** A source code analyzer for Java.
- xalan** An XSLT processor for transforming XML documents.

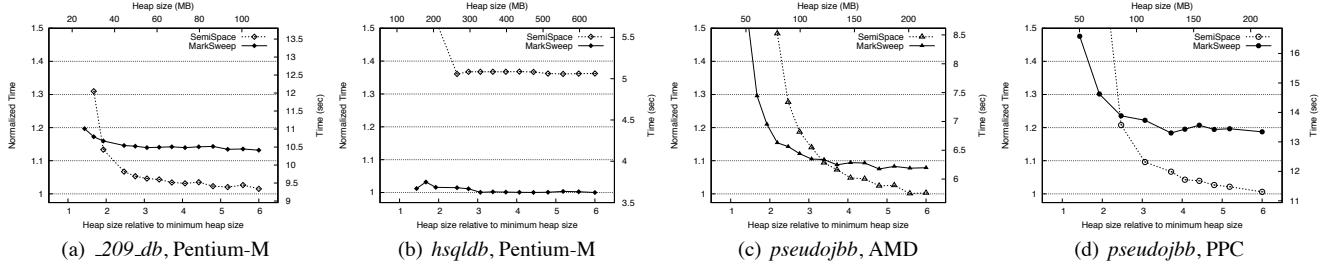
The benchmark suite is packaged as a single jar file containing a harness (licensed under the Apache Public License [2]), all the benchmarks, the libraries they require, three input sizes, and input data (e.g., *luindex*, *lusearch* and *xalan* all use the works of Shakespeare). We experimented with different inputs and picked representative ones.

**The Benchmark Harness** We provide a harness to invoke the benchmarks and perform a validity check that insures each benchmark ran to completion correctly. The validity check performs checksums on *err* and *out* streams during benchmark execution and on any generated files after benchmark execution. The harness passes the benchmark if its checksums match pre-calculated values.

The harness supports a range of options, including user-specified hooks to call at the start and end of the benchmark and/or after the benchmark warm-up period, running multiple benchmarks, and printing a brief summary of each benchmark and its origins. It also supports workload size (*small*, *default*, *large*), which iteration (first, second, or nth), or a *performance-stable* iteration for reporting execution time. To find a performance-stable iteration, the harness takes a window size *w* (number of executions) and a convergence target *v*, and runs the benchmark repeatedly until either the coefficient of variation,  $\frac{\sigma}{\mu}$ , of the last *w* runs drops below *v*, or reports failure if the number of runs exceeds a maximum *m* (where  $\sigma$  is the standard deviation and  $\mu$  is the arithmetic mean of the last *w* execution times). Once performance stabilizes, the harness reports the execution time of the next iteration. The harness provides defaults for *w* and *v*, which the user may override.



**Figure 1.** The Impact of Benchmarks and Architecture in Identifying Tradeoffs Between Collectors



**Figure 2.** Gaming Your Results

#### 4. Virtual Machine Experimental Methodologies

We modified Jikes RVM [1] version 2.4.4+ to report static metrics, dynamic metrics, and performance results. We use this virtual machine because it is open source and performs well. Unless otherwise specified, we use a generational collector with a variable sized copying nursery and a mark-sweep older space because it is a high performance collector configuration [4], and consequently is popular in commercial virtual machines. We call this collector *GenMS*. Our research group and others have used and recommended the following methodologies to understand virtual machines, application behaviors, and their interactions.

**Mix.** The mix methodology measures an iteration of an application which mixes JIT compilation and recompilation work with application time. This measurement shows the tradeoff of total time with compilation and application execution time. SPEC’s “worst” number may often, but is not guaranteed to, correspond to this measurement.

**Stable.** To measure stable application performance, researchers typically report a steady-state run in which there is no JIT compilation and only the application and memory management system are executing. This measurement corresponds to the SPEC “best” performance number. It measures final code quality, but does not guarantee the compiler behaved deterministically.

**Deterministic Stable & Mix.** This methodology eliminates sampling and recompilation as a source of non-determinism. It modifies the JIT compiler to perform *replay compilation* which applies a fixed compilation plan when it first compiles each method [25]. We first modify the compiler to record its sampling information and optimization decisions for each method, execute the benchmark *n* times, and select the best plan. We then execute the benchmark with the plan, measuring the first iteration (mix) or the second (stable) depending on the experiment.

The deterministic methodology produces a code base with optimized hot methods and baseline compiled code. Compiling all the

methods at the highest level with static profile information or using all baseline code is also deterministic, but it does not provide a realistic code base. These methodologies provide compiler and memory management researchers a way to control the virtual machine and compiler, holding parts of the system constant to tease apart the influence of proposed improvements. We highly recommend these methodologies together with a clear specification and justification of which methodology is appropriate and why. In Section 5.1, we provide an example evaluation that uses the deterministic stable methodology which is appropriate because we compare garbage collection algorithms across a range of architectures and heap sizes, and thus want to minimize variation due to sampling and JIT compilation.

#### 5. Benchmarking Methodology

This section argues for using multiple architectures and multiple heap sizes related to each program’s maximum live size to evaluate the performance of Java, memory management, and its virtual machines. In particular, we show a set of results in which the effects of locality and space efficiency trade off, and therefore heap size and architecture choice substantially affect quantitative and qualitative conclusions. The point of this section is to demonstrate that because of the variety of implementation issues that Java programs encompass, measurements are sensitive to benchmarks, the underlying architecture, the choice of heap size, and the virtual machine. Thus presenting results without varying these parameters is at best unhelpful, and at worst, misleading.

##### 5.1 How not to cook your books.

This experiment explores the space-time tradeoff of two full heap collectors: SemiSpace and MarkSweep as implemented in Jikes RVM [1] with MMTk [4, 5] across four architectures. We experimentally determine the minimum heap size for each program using MarkCompact in MMTk. (These heap sizes, which are specific to MMTk and Jikes RVM version 2.4.4+, can be seen in the top x-axes of Figures 2(a)–(d).) The virtual machine triggers collection when the application exhausts the heap space. The SemiSpace

Benchmark	First iteration				Second iteration					Third iteration				
	A	B/A	C/A	Best	A	B/A	C/A	Best	2 <sup>nd</sup> / 1 <sup>st</sup>	A	B/A	C/A	Best	3 <sup>rd</sup> / 1 <sup>st</sup>
SPEC														
_201_compress	7.2	0.76	<b>0.75</b>	0.75	<b>3.3</b>	1.51	1.65	1.00	0.75	<b>3.2</b>	1.02	1.69	1.00	0.65
_202_jess	3.2	0.80	<b>0.58</b>	0.58	2.0	1.27	<b>0.81</b>	0.81	0.82	2.0	<b>0.63</b>	0.79	0.63	0.65
_205_raytrace	2.6	0.86	<b>0.54</b>	0.54	1.5	0.99	<b>0.82</b>	0.82	0.66	1.5	<b>0.64</b>	0.82	0.64	0.58
_209_db	<b>8.0</b>	1.07	1.00	1.00	<b>6.9</b>	1.14	1.14	1.00	0.91	<b>6.8</b>	1.05	1.14	1.00	0.88
_213_javac	6.0	<b>0.48</b>	0.69	0.48	2.5	<b>0.93</b>	1.34	0.93	0.62	<b>2.2</b>	1.06	1.50	1.00	0.60
_222_mpegaudio	<b>3.8</b>	1.73	1.22	1.00	<b>2.8</b>	1.11	1.65	1.00	0.69	<b>2.7</b>	1.10	1.64	1.00	0.67
_227_mttrt	2.9	0.72	<b>0.51</b>	0.51	1.4	1.53	<b>0.94</b>	0.94	0.74	1.5	<b>0.61</b>	0.81	0.61	0.56
_228_jack	5.7	1.08	<b>0.61</b>	0.61	<b>3.1</b>	1.27	1.05	1.00	0.66	<b>3.0</b>	1.21	1.08	1.00	0.64
geomean		<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.74</b>	<b>0.68</b>		<b>1.22</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>0.94</b>	<b>0.73</b>		<b>0.91</b>	<b>1.18</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>0.65</b>
DaCapo														
antlr	6.0	<b>0.53</b>	0.68	0.53	3.4	<b>0.69</b>	0.94	0.69	0.66	3.2	<b>0.69</b>	0.97	0.69	0.64
bloat	12.0	<b>0.98</b>	1.03	0.98	<b>9.7</b>	1.28	1.20	1.00	0.93	<b>9.1</b>	1.24	1.28	1.00	0.88
chart	12.2	<b>0.97</b>	1.47	0.97	<b>9.5</b>	1.30	1.68	1.00	0.90	9.2	<b>0.73</b>	1.71	0.73	0.75
eclipse	61.7	1.28	<b>0.96</b>	0.96	<b>39.4</b>	1.60	1.17	1.00	0.74	<b>23.8</b>	1.60	1.94	1.00	0.54
fop	7.1	<b>0.40</b>	0.40	0.40	4.8	<b>0.33</b>	0.36	0.33	0.63	5.1	<b>0.31</b>	0.35	0.31	0.66
hsqldb	12.0	0.82	<b>0.47</b>	0.47	7.7	0.67	<b>0.66</b>	0.66	0.66	7.3	0.86	<b>0.68</b>	0.68	0.67
luindex	15.5	1.04	<b>0.94</b>	0.94	<b>9.8</b>	1.41	1.41	1.00	0.80	<b>9.1</b>	1.55	1.49	1.00	0.79
lusearch	13.1	<b>0.74</b>	0.90	0.74	10.6	<b>0.92</b>	1.06	0.92	0.91	<b>10.5</b>	1.56	1.07	1.00	1.10
jython	16.5	<b>0.52</b>	0.68	0.52	8.3	<b>0.92</b>	2.87	0.92	1.09	7.9	0.92	<b>0.83</b>	0.83	0.59
pmd	10.4	1.04	<b>0.95</b>	0.95	<b>7.5</b>	1.50	1.15	1.00	0.89	<b>6.9</b>	1.18	1.27	1.00	0.76
xalan	8.3	<b>0.87</b>	0.90	0.87	<b>5.3</b>	1.53	1.20	1.00	0.86	<b>5.0</b>	1.24	1.26	1.00	0.76
geomean		<b>0.84</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>0.76</b>		<b>1.10</b>	<b>1.25</b>	<b>0.86</b>	<b>0.83</b>		<b>1.08</b>	<b>1.17</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>0.74</b>

**Table 1.** Cross JVM Comparisons

collector must keep in reserve half the heap space to ensure that if the remaining half of the heap is all live, it can copy into it. The MarkSweep collector uses segregated fits free-lists. It collects when there is no element of the appropriate size, and no completely free block that can be sized appropriately. Because it is more space efficient, it collects less often than the SemiSpace collector. However, SemiSpace's contiguous allocation offers better locality to contemporaneously allocated and used objects than MarkSweep.

Figure 1 shows how this tradeoff plays out in practice for SPEC and DaCapo. Each graph normalizes performance as a function of heap size, with the heap size varying from 1 to 6 times the minimum heap in which the benchmark can run. Each line shows the geometric mean of normalized performance using either a MarkSweep (MS) or SemiSpace (SS) garbage collector, executing on one of four architectures. Each line includes a symbol for the architecture, unfilled for SS and filled for MS. The first thing to note is that the MS and SS lines converge and cross over at large heap sizes, illustrating the point at which the locality/space efficiency break-even occurs. Note that the choice of architecture and benchmark suite impacts this point. For SPEC on a 1.6GHz PPC, the tradeoff is at 3.3 times the minimum heap size, while for DaCapo on a 3.0GHz Pentium 4, the tradeoff is at 5.5 times the minimum heap size. Note that while the 2.2GHz AMD and the 2.0 GHz Pentium M are very close on SPEC, the Pentium M is significantly faster in smaller heaps on DaCapo. Since different architectures have different strengths, it is important to have a good coverage in the benchmark suite and a variety of architectures. Such results can paint a rich picture, but depend on running a large number of benchmarks over many heap sizes across multiple architectures.

The problem of using a subset of a benchmark suite, using a single architecture, or choosing few heap sizes is further illustrated in Figure 2. Figures 2(a) and (b) show how careful benchmark selection can tell whichever story you choose, with *\_209\_db* and *hsqldb* performing best under the opposite collection regimens. Figures 2(c) and (d) show that careful choice of architecture can paint a quite different picture. Figures 2(c) and (d) are typical of many benchmarks. The most obvious point to draw from all of these graphs is exploring multiple heap sizes should be required for Java and should start at the minimum in which the program can execute with a well performing collector. Eliminating the left hand

side in either of these graphs would lead to an entirely different interpretation of the data.

This example shows the tradeoff between space efficiency and locality due to the garbage collector, and similar issues arise with almost any performance analysis of Java programs. For example, a compiler optimization to improve locality would clearly need a similarly thorough evaluation [4].

## 5.2 Java Virtual Machine Impact

This section explores the sensitivity of performance results to JVMs. Table 1 presents execution times and differences for three leading commercial Java 1.5 JVMs running one, two, and three iterations of the SPEC Java and DaCapo benchmarks. We have made the JVMs anonymous ('A', 'B', & 'C') in deference to license agreements and because JVM identity is not pertinent to the point. We use a 2GHz Intel Pentium M with 1GB of RAM and a 2MB L2 cache, and in each case we run the JVM 'out of the box', with no special command line settings. Columns 2–4 show performance for a single iteration, which will usually be most impacted by compilation time. Columns 6–8 present performance for a second iteration. Columns 11–13 show performance for a third iteration. The first to the third iteration presumably includes progressively less compilation time and more application time. The *Speedup* columns 10 and 15 show the average percentage speedup seen in the second and third iterations of the benchmark, relative to the first. Columns 2, 6 and 11 report the execution time for JVM A to which we normalize the remaining execution results for JVMs B and C. The *Best* column reports the best normalized time from all three JVMs, with the best time appearing in bold in each case.

One interesting result is that no JVM is uniformly best on all configurations. The results show there is a lot of room for overall JVM improvements. For DaCapo, potential improvements range from 14% (second iteration) to 25% (first iteration). Even for SPEC potential improvements range from 6% (second iteration) to 32% (first iteration). If a single JVM could achieve the best performance on DaCapo across the benchmarks, it would improve performance by a geometric mean of 24% on the first iteration, 14% on the second iteration, and 16% on the third interaction (the *geomean* row). Among the notable results are that JVM C slows down significantly for the second iteration of *jython*, and then performs best

on the third iteration, a result we attribute to aggressive hotspot compilation during the second iteration. The *eclipse* benchmark appears to take a long time to warm up, improving considerably in both the second and third iterations. On average, SPEC benchmarks speed up much more quickly than the DaCapo benchmarks, which is likely a reflection on their smaller size and simplicity. We demonstrate this point quantitatively in the next section.

These results reinforce the importance of good methodology and the choice of benchmark suite, since we can draw dramatically divergent conclusions by simply selecting a particular iteration, virtual machine, heap size, architecture, or benchmark.

## 6. Code Complexity and Size

This section shows static and dynamic software complexity metrics which are architecture and virtual machine independent. We present Chidamber and Kemerer's software complexity metrics [12] and a number of virtual machine and architecture independent dynamic metrics, such as, classes loaded and bytecodes compiled. Finally, we present a few virtual machine dependent measures of dynamic behavior, such as, methods/bytecdodes the compiler detects as frequently executed (hot), and instruction cache misses. Although we measure these features with Jikes RVM, Eeckhout et al. [19] show that for SPEC, virtual machines fairly consistently identify the same hot regions. Since the DaCapo benchmarks are more complex than SPEC, this trend may not hold as well for them, but we believe these metrics are not overly influenced by our virtual machine. DaCapo and SPEC differ quite a bit; DaCapo programs are more complex, object-oriented, and exercise the instruction cache more.

### 6.1 Code Complexity

To measure the complexity of the benchmark code, we use the Chidamber and Kemerer object-oriented programming (CK) metrics [12] measured with the ckjm software package [36]. We apply the CK metrics to classes that the application actually loads during execution. We exclude standard libraries from this analysis as they are heavily duplicated across the benchmarks (column two of Table 3 includes all loaded classes). The average DaCapo program loads more than twice as many classes during execution as SPEC. The following explains what the CK metrics reveal and the results for SPEC and DaCapo.

**WMC** Weighted methods per class. Since ckjm uses a weight of 1, WMC is simply the total number of declared methods for the loaded classes. Larger numbers show that a program provides more behaviors, and we see SPEC has substantially lower WMC values than DaCapo, except for *.213\_javac*, which as the table shows is the richest of the SPEC benchmarks and usually falls in the middle or top of the DaCapo's program range of software complexity. Unsurprisingly, fewer methods are declared (WMC in Table 2) than compiled (Table 3), but this difference is only dramatic for *eclipse*.

**DIT** Depth of Inheritance Tree. DIT provides for each class a measure of the inheritance levels from the object hierarchy top. In Java where all classes inherit Object the minimum value of DIT is 1. Except for *.213\_javac* and *.202\_jess*, DaCapo programs typically have deeper inheritance trees.

**NOC** Number of Children. NOC is the number of immediate subclasses of the class. Table 2 shows that in SPEC, only *.213\_javac* has any interesting behavior, but *hsqldb*, *luindex*, *lusearch* and *pmd* in DaCapo also have no superclass structure.

**CBO** Coupling between object classes. CBO represents the number of classes coupled to a given class (efferent couplings). Method calls, field accesses, inheritance, arguments, return types, and exceptions all couple classes. The interactions between objects and classes is substantially more complex for

Benchmark	WMC	DIT	NOC	CBO	RFC	LCOM
SPEC						
.201_compress	154	19	0	55	426	780
.202_jess	614	97	1	632	1846	2032
.205_raytrace	330	33	3	117	743	1046
.209_db	152	12	0	42	454	789
.213_javac	1011	186	38	1175	3293	3753
.222_mpegaudio	367	40	0	167	796	1350
.227_mttr	332	33	3	117	743	1046
.228_jack	375	46	0	163	860	6911
pseudojbb	541	35	0	254	1419	2487
min	152	12	0	42	426	780
max	1011	186	38	1175	3293	6911
geomean	<b>366</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>1701</b>
DaCapo						
antlr	1253	84	8	674	3094	8444
bloat	2265	206	21	1661	6232	6521
chart	1627	101	16	648	3979	29169
eclipse	10763	830	164	7277	26209	218199
fop	1433	148	17	998	3867	13041
hsqldb	2419	73	3	766	4676	47371
jython	3023	225	60	1398	5725	97111
luindex	494	50	0	246	1372	2260
lusearch	618	55	0	297	1441	3419
pmd	2348	215	4	1199	5384	126893
xalan	2433	161	24	971	5682	37394
min	494	50	0	246	1372	2260
max	10763	830	164	7277	26209	218199
geomean	<b>1857</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>4420</b>	<b>22561</b>

WMC	Weighted methods/class	CBO	Object class coupling
DIT	Depth Inheritance Tree	RFC	Response for a Class
NOC	Number of Children	LCOM	Lack of method cohesion

**Table 2.** CK Metrics for Loaded Classes (Excluding Libraries)

DaCapo compared to SPEC. However, both *.202\_jess* and *.213\_javac* have relatively high CBO values.

**RFC** Response for a Class. RFC measures the number of different methods that may execute when a method is invoked. Ideally, we would find for each method of the class, the methods that class will call, and repeat for each called method, calculating the transitive closure of the method's call graph. Ckjm calculates a rough approximation to the response set by inspecting method calls within the class's method bodies. The RFC metric for DaCapo shows a factor of around five increase in complexity over SPEC.

**LCOM** Lack of cohesion in methods. LCOM counts methods in a class that are not related through the sharing of some of the class's fields. The original definition of this metric (used in ckjm) considers all pairs of a class's methods, subtracting the number of method pairs that share a field access from the number of method pairs that do not. Again, DaCapo is more complex, e.g., *eclipse* and *pmd* have LCOM metrics at least two orders of magnitude higher than any SPEC benchmark.

In summary, the CK metrics show that SPEC programs are not very object-oriented in absolute terms, and that the DaCapo benchmarks are significantly richer and more complex than SPEC. Furthermore, DaCapo benchmarks extensively use object-oriented features to manage their complexity.

### 6.2 Code Size and Instruction Cache Performance

This section presents program size metrics. Column 2 of Table 3 shows the total number of classes loaded during the execution of each benchmark, *including* standard libraries. Column 3 shows the total number of declared methods in the loaded classes (compare to column 2 of Table 2, which excludes standard libraries). Columns 4 and 5 show the number of methods compiled (executed at least

Benchmark	Classes Loaded	Methods Declared	Methods & Bytecodes Compiled							I-Cache Misses			
			All		Optimized		% Hot			L1 I-cache		ITLB	
	Methods	BC KB	Methods	BC KB	Methods	BC KB	Methods	BC	/ms	norm	/ms	norm	
SPEC													
.201_compress	157	1118	254	23.9	16	3.7	6.3	15.5	69	0.08	4	0.07	
.202_jess	293	1777	655	42.4	46	4.3	7.0	10.1	383	0.45	31	0.56	
.205_raytrace	177	1316	381	32.4	44	9.0	11.5	27.8	1826	2.12	191	3.42	
.209_db	149	1108	249	23.7	11	1.5	4.4	6.3	34	0.04	2	0.04	
.213_javac	302	2261	978	89.0	141	25.4	14.4	28.5	6356	7.39	672	12.04	
.222_mpegaudio	200	1407	425	68.3	88	19.4	20.7	28.4	731	0.85	24	0.43	
.227_mtpt	178	1318	379	32.4	39	7.6	10.3	23.5	1940	2.25	45	0.81	
.228_jack	202	1392	488	53.6	33	5.4	6.8	10.1	3142	3.65	201	3.60	
pseudojbb	238	2622	824	69.7	174	25.7	21.1	36.9	5556	6.46	759	13.60	
min	149	1108	249	23.7	11	1.5	4.4	6.3	34	0.04	2	0.04	
max	302	2622	978	89.0	174	25.7	21.1	36.9	6356	7.39	759	13.60	
<b>geomean</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>1523</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>43.6</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>10.0</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>860</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1.00</b>	
DaCapo													
antlr	307	3517	1541	212.7	101	14.1	6.6	6.6	6198	7.20	597	10.70	
bloat	471	5231	2023	169.1	100	9.5	4.9	5.6	6031	7.01	398	7.13	
chart	706	8972	2299	204.1	113	20.8	4.9	10.2	11919	13.85	952	17.06	
eclipse	1023	12450	3713	243.0	14	2.0	0.4	0.8	5053	5.87	702	12.58	
fop	865	5761	2593	206.0	69	7.8	2.7	3.8	6603	7.68	532	9.53	
hsqldb	355	5970	1411	130.2	122	18.9	8.6	14.5	4866	5.66	524	9.39	
luindex	309	3118	940	74.3	168	29.3	17.9	39.4	1876	2.18	154	2.76	
lusearch	295	2795	822	65.5	133	21.7	16.2	33.1	10183	11.84	1888	33.84	
jython	886	9443	3242	462.5	297	28.5	9.2	6.2	2114	2.46	226	4.05	
pmd	619	6163	2247	152.4	137	14.3	6.1	9.4	2819	3.28	223	4.00	
xalan	552	6562	1747	126.2	194	36.0	11.1	28.5	3718	4.32	268	4.80	
min	295	2795	822	65.5	14	2.0	0.4	0.8	1876	2.18	154	2.76	
max	1023	12450	3713	462.5	297	36.0	17.9	39.4	11919	13.85	1888	33.84	
<b>geomean</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>5768</b>	<b>1866</b>	<b>162.4</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>4792</b>	<b>5.57</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>8.16</b>	

**Table 3.** Bytecodes Compiled and Instruction Cache Characteristics

once) and the corresponding KB of bytecodes (BC KB) for each benchmark. We count bytecodes rather than machine code, as it is not virtual machine, compiler, or ISA specific. The DaCapo benchmarks average more than twice the number of classes, three times as many declared methods, four times as many compiled methods, and four times the volume of compiled bytecodes, reflecting a substantially larger code base than SPEC. Columns 6 and 7 show how much code is optimized by the JVM’s adaptive compiler over the course of two iterations of each benchmark (which Eeckhout et al.’s results indicate is probably representative of most hotspot finding virtual machines [19]). Columns 8 and 9 show that the DaCapo benchmarks have a much lower proportion of methods which the adaptive compiler regards as hot. Since the virtual machine selects these methods based on frequency thresholds, and these thresholds are tuned for SPEC, it may be that the compiler should be selecting warm code. However, it may simply reflect the complexity of the benchmarks. For example, *eclipse* has nearly four thousand methods compiled, of which only 14 are regarded as hot (0.4%). On the whole, this data shows that the DaCapo benchmarks are substantially larger than SPEC. Combined with their complexity, they should present more challenging optimization problems.

We also measure instruction cache misses per millisecond as another indicator of dynamic code complexity. We measure misses with the performance counters on a 2.0 GHz Pentium M with a 32KB level 1 instruction cache and a 2MB shared level two cache, each of which are 8-way with 64 byte lines. We use Jikes RVM and only report misses during the mutator portion of the second iteration of the benchmarks (i.e., we exclude garbage collection). Columns 10 and 11 show L1 instruction misses, first as misses per millisecond, and then normalized against the geometric mean of the SPEC benchmarks. Columns 12 and 13 show ITLB misses using the same metrics. We can see that on average DaCapo has L1 I-cache misses nearly six times more frequently than SPEC, and ITLB misses about eight times more frequently than SPEC. In

particular, none of the DaCapo benchmarks have remarkably few misses, whereas SPEC benchmarks *.201\_compress*, *.202\_jess*, and *.209\_db* hardly ever miss the IL1. All DaCapo benchmarks have misses at least twice that of the geometric mean of SPEC.

## 7. Objects and Their Memory Behavior

This section presents object allocation, live object, lifetime, and lifetime time-series metrics. We measure allocation demographics suggested by Dieckmann and Hölzle [15]. We also measure lifetime and live object metrics, and show that they differ substantially from allocation behaviors. Since many garbage collection algorithms are most concerned with live object behaviors, these demographics are more indicative for designers of new collection mechanisms. Other features, such as the design of per-object metadata, also depend on the demographics of live objects, rather than allocated objects.

The data described in this section and Section 8 is presented in Table 4, and in Figures 4(a) through 22(a), each of which contains data for one of the DaCapo or SPEC benchmarks. Each figure includes a brief description of the benchmark, key attributes, and metrics. It also plots time series and summaries for (a) object size demographics (Section 7.2), (b) heap composition (Section 7.3), and (c) pointer distances (Section 8). Together this data shows that the DaCapo suite has rich and diverse object lifetime behaviors.

Since Jikes RVM is written in Java, the execution of the JIT compiler normally contributes to the heap, unlike most other JVMs, where the JIT is written in C. In these results, we exclude the JIT compiler and other VM objects by placing them into a separate, excluded heap. To compute the average and time-series object data, we modify Jikes RVM to keep statistics about allocations and to compute statistics about live objects at frequent *snapshots*, i.e., during full heap collections.

### 7.1 Allocation and Live Object Behaviors

Table 4 summarizes object allocation, maximum live objects, and their ratios in MB (megabytes) and objects. The table shows that

Benchmark	Heap Volume (MB)			Heap Objects			Mean Object Size		4MB Nursery Survival %
	Alloc	Live	Alloc/ Live	Alloc	Live	Alloc/ Live	Alloc	Live	
SPEC									
_201_compress	105.4	6.3	16.8	3,942	270	14.6	28,031	24,425	6.6
_202_jess	262.0	1.2	221.3	7,955,141	22,150	359.1	35	56	1.1
_205_raytrace	133.5	3.8	35.1	6,397,943	153,555	41.7	22	26	3.6
_209_db	74.6	8.5	8.8	3,218,642	291,681	11.0	24	31	14.6
_213_javac	178.3	7.2	24.8	5,911,991	263,383	22.4	32	29	25.8
_222_mpegaudio	0.7	0.6	1.1	3,022	1,623	1.9	245	406	50.5
_227_mttrt	140.5	7.2	19.5	6,689,424	307,043	21.8	22	25	6.6
_228_jack	270.7	0.9	292.7	9,393,097	11,949	786.1	30	81	2.8
pseudojbb	207.1	21.1	9.8	6,158,131	234,968	26.2	35	94	31.3
min	0.7	0.6	1.1	3,022	270	1.9	22	25	1.1
max	270.7	21.1	292.7	9,393,097	307,043	786.1	28,031	24,425	50.5
<b>geomean</b>	<b>86.5</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>23.0</b>	<b>1,180,850</b>	<b>35,886</b>	<b>32.9</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>8.7</b>
DaCapo									
antlr	237.9	1.0	248.8	4,208,403	15,566	270.4	59	64	8.2
bloat	1,222.5	6.2	195.6	33,487,434	149,395	224.2	38	44	6.0
chart	742.8	9.5	77.9	26,661,848	190,184	140.2	29	53	6.3
eclipse	5,582.0	30.0	186.0	104,162,353	470,333	221.5	56	67	23.8
fop	100.3	6.9	14.5	2,402,403	177,718	13.5	44	41	14.2
hsqldb	142.7	72.0	2.0	4,514,965	3,223,276	1.4	33	23	63.4
jython	1,183.4	0.1	8,104.0	25,940,819	2,788	9,304.5	48	55	1.6
luindex	201.4	1.0	201.7	7,202,623	18,566	387.9	29	56	23.7
lusearch	1,780.8	10.9	162.8	15,780,651	34,792	453.6	118	330	1.1
pmd	779.7	13.7	56.8	34,137,722	419,789	81.3	24	34	14.0
xalan	60,235.6	25.5	2,364.0	161,069,019	168,921	953.5	392	158	3.8
min	100.3	0.1	2.0	2,402,403	2,788	1.4	24	23	1.1
max	60,235.6	72.0	8,104.0	161,069,019	3,223,276	9,304.5	392	330	63.4
<b>geomean</b>	<b>907.5</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>147.6</b>	<b>18,112,439</b>	<b>103,890</b>	<b>174.3</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>8.4</b>

Table 4. Key Object Demographic Metrics

DaCapo allocates substantially more objects than the SPEC benchmarks, by nearly a factor of 20 on average. The *live* objects and memory are more comparable; but still DaCapo has on average three times the live size of SPEC. DaCapo has a much higher ratio of allocation to maximum live size, with an average of 147 compared to SPEC’s 23 measured in MB. Two programs stand out; *jython* with a ratio of 8104, and *xalan* with a ratio of 2364. The DaCapo benchmarks therefore put significantly more pressure on the underlying memory management policies than SPEC.

Nursery survival rate is a rough measure of how closely a program follows the generational hypothesis which we measure with respect to a 4MB bounded nursery and report in the last column of Table 4. Note that nursery survival needs to be viewed in the context of heap turnover (column seven of Table 4). A low nursery survival rate may suggest low total GC workload, for example, *\_222\_mpegaudio* and *hsqldb* in Table 4. A low nursery survival rate and a high heap turnover ratio instead suggests a substantial GC workload, for example, *eclipse* and *luindex*. SPEC and DaCapo exhibit a wide range of nursery survival rates. Blackburn et al. show that even programs with high nursery survival rates and large turnover benefit from generational collection with a copying bump-pointer nursery space [4]. For example, *\_213\_javac* has a nursery survival rate of 26% and performs better with generational collectors. We confirm this result for all the DaCapo benchmarks, even on *hsqldb* with its 63% nursery survival rate and low turnover ratio.

Table 4 also shows the average object size. The benchmark suites do not substantially differ with respect to this metric. A significant outlier is *\_201\_compress*, which compresses large arrays of data. Other outliers include *\_222\_mpegaudio*, *lusearch* and *xalan*, all of which also operate over large arrays.

## 7.2 Object Size Demographics

This section improves the above methodology for measuring object size demographics. We show that these demographics vary with time and when viewed from perspective of allocated versus live objects. Allocation-time size demographics inform the structure of the allocator. Live object size demographics impact the design of per-object metadata and elements of the garbage collection algorithm, as well as influencing the structure of the allocator. Figures 4(a) through 22(a) each use four graphs to compare size demographics for each DaCapo and SPEC benchmark. The object size demographics are measured both as a function of all allocations (top) and as a function of live objects seen at heap snapshots (bottom). In each case, we show both a histogram (left) and a time-series (right).

The allocation histogram plots the number of objects on the y-axis in each object size (x-axis in log scale) that the program allocates. The live histogram plots the average number of live objects of each size over the entire program. We color every fifth bar black to help the eye correlate between the allocation and live histograms. Consider *antlr* in Figure 4(a) and *bloat* in Figure 5(a). For *antlr*, the allocated versus live objects in a size class show only modest differences in proportions. For *bloat* however, 12% of its allocated objects are 38 bytes whereas essentially no live objects are 38 bytes, which indicates they are short lived. On the other hand, less than 1% of *bloat*’s allocated objects are 52 bytes, but they make up 20% of live objects, indicating they are long lived. Figure 14(a) shows that for *xalan* there is an even more marked difference in allocated and live objects, where 50% of allocated objects are 12 bytes, but none stay live. In fact, 65% of live objects are 2 Kbytes, whereas they make up only 2% of allocated objects.

How well these large objects are handled will thus in large part determine the performance of the collector on *xalan*.

For each allocation histogram, we also present a time series graph in Figures 4(a) through 22(a).. Each line in the time series graph represents an object size class from the histogram on the left. We color every fifth object size black, stack them, and place the smallest size classes at the bottom of the graphs. The distance between the lines indicates the cumulative number of objects allocated or live of the corresponding size, as a function of time (in bytes of allocation by convention).

Together, the histogram and time-series data show marked differences between allocated and live object demographics. For example, the allocation histograms for *bloat*, *fop*, and *xalan* (Figures 5(a), 8(a), 14(a)) are similar, but the time series data shows many differences. The *xalan* program has eight allocation phases that are self-similar and mirrored in the live data, although in different size class proportions. Whereas, in *bloat* allocation and live objects show much less phase behavior, and phases are not self-correlated. Comparing live and allocated time-series for *fop* shows a different pattern. There is a steady increase in the live objects of each size (and consequently, probably growing data structures), whereas *fop* allocates numerous sizes in a several distinct allocation phases. Thus, the allocation and live graphs are very different. This shows that live and allocation time series analysis can reveal complexity and opportunities that a scalar metric will never capture.

### 7.3 Heap Composition Graphs

Figures 4(b) through 22(b) each plot heap composition in lines of constant allocation as a function of time, measured in allocations (top) and pointer mutations (bottom). Like the live object time series graphs, these graphs expose the heap composition but show object lifetime behaviors rather than object size. Since both graphs show live objects, their shapes are similar. The heap composition graphs group objects into cohorts based on allocation time. We choose cohort sizes as a power of two ( $2^n$ ) such that there are between 100 and 200 cohorts, shown as a line in each graph. The top line corresponds to the oldest cohort and indicates the total volume of live objects in the heap. The gaps between each of the lines reflects the amount in each cohort, and when objects in a cohort die, adjacent lines move closer together or if they all die, the lines merge. It is not uncommon for programs to immediately allocate long lived data, indicated by a gap between the top line and the other cohorts; *bloat*, *hsqldb*, *jython*, and *lusearch* all show this behavior in Figures 5(b), 9(b), 10(b), and 12(b).

Qualitatively, the complexity of the graphs in Figures 4(b) through 22(b) reflect the object lifetime behaviors of each of the benchmarks. With the exception of *jython* and *lusearch*, the DaCapo benchmarks show much richer lifetime behaviors than SPEC; *jython* is an interpreter, which leads to a highly regular execution pattern. Although *jython* allocates more than any of the SPEC benchmarks, its behavior is highly regular. We experimented with a number of interpreted workloads and found very similar, highly regular behavior, suggesting that the interpreter rather than the interpreted program dominates. The programs *chart* and *xalan* show distinct self-similar phases with respect to object lifetimes in Figures 6(b) and and 14(b). The programs *fop* and *hsqldb* show regular, steady heap growth in Figures 8(b) and 9(b). On the other hand, *bloat*, *eclipse*, *luindex*, and *pmd* show irregular, complex object lifetime patterns in Figures 5(b), 7(b), 11(b), and 13(b).

## 8. Reference Behavior in Pointer Distances

Java programs primarily use pointer-based data structures. This section provides statistics that describe the connectivity of the data structures created and manipulated by the DaCapo and SPEC benchmarks. We measure pointer distance between its source and target objects by the relative ages of the objects, for both static

snapshots of the heap, and dynamically as pointers change. These properties influence aspects of memory performance, such as temporal and spatial locality and the efficacy of generational garbage collectors.

Figures 4(c) through 22(c) show the relative distances between the sources and targets of pointers in the heap for each benchmark. Pointer distance is measured by the difference between the target and source object positions within (a close approximation to) a perfectly compacted heap. We approximate a continuously perfectly compacted heap by tracking cohort sizes and the logical position of each object within each cohort during frequent garbage collections. The youngest object has a heap position of 0 and the oldest has a heap position equal to the volume of live objects in the heap. Thus, positive values are old to young object pointers, and negative values are young to old.

We include both a ‘static’ *snapshot* measure of pointer distance, and a ‘dynamic’ *mutation* measure. Snapshot pointer distance is established by examining all pointers in the live object graph at a garbage collection—measuring the *state* of the object graph. Mutation distance is established by examining every pointer as it is created—measuring the *activity* over the object graph. We express these metrics as aggregate histograms for the execution of the entire benchmark, and as a time series to reflect the changing shape of the histogram over time (measured in mutations).

We first consider *snapshot* pointer distance, the top histogram and time series in Figures 4(c) through 22(c). The most striking feature of these graphs is the wide range of behaviors displayed by the benchmarks. Several programs show very irregular time-varying behavior, e.g., *antlr*, *chart*, *eclipse*, and *luindex*; whereas *bloat*, *hsqldb*, and *pmd* are more stable, but still vary a bit; and *xalan* shows a very complex, but exactly repeated pattern. Several of the SPEC benchmarks, such as *\_202\_jess*, *\_205\_raytrace*, and *\_209\_db* display a completely flat pointer distance profile.

The *mutation* pointer distance graphs have the same axes and are shown below each snapshot pointer distance figure. These graphs are computed by tracking pointer distances at all pointer stores (in a write barrier), rather than at static snapshots of the heap. These graphs show a wider range of irregularity and patterns than the heap snapshots.

To illustrate the differences between these metrics, consider *bloat* in Figure 5(c). Many pointers point from old to new objects (positive numbers in the snapshot graphs in the top half of Figure 5(c)), but almost all pointer *mutations* install new to old pointers (negative numbers in the mutation graphs). The snapshot graphs indicate that around 40% of pointers will point from old to new at any given snapshot (see the top-most line in the time series) and about 60% will point from new to old (the bottom-most line). On the other hand, the mutation graphs show that for most of the execution of the benchmark, nearly 100% of pointer mutations are in the new to old direction. The divergence of the snapshot and mutation data, and the time-varying nature of each highlight the limitations of single value summaries of benchmark behaviors.

## 9. Principal Components Analysis

Previous sections demonstrate that DaCapo is more object oriented, more complex, and larger than SPEC, whereas this section demonstrates that all the constituent programs differ from each other, using principal component analysis (PCA) [18]. This result indicates that we satisfy our goal of program diversity. It also confirms that DaCapo benchmarks differ from SPEC, which is unsurprising by now given the results from the preceding sections.

PCA is a multivariate statistical technique that reduces a large  $N$  dimensional space into a lower dimensional uncorrelated space. PCA generates a positive or negative weight (factor loading) associated with each metric. These weights transform the original higher dimension space into  $P$  principal components using linear equa-

Metric	Rank			
	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4
<i>Architecture</i>				
Instruction mix – ALU	-9	-15	7	-3
Instruction mix – branches	-10	<b>-4</b>	16	1
Instruction mix – memory	<b>1</b>	13	-11	-13
Branch mispreds/instruction for a PPM predictor	8	8	12	14
Register dependence distance up to 16	<b>-5</b>	-12	-5	12
Register dependence distance between 16 and 64	-15	<b>-1</b>	6	-7
Register dependence distance above 64	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	13	-15
<i>Code</i>				
Instruction cache misses in miss/msec	-14	14	<b>1</b>	11
Bytecode compiled in KB	-7	11	8	-6
Methods compiled	<b>-2</b>	7	9	-9
<i>Memory</i>				
Pointer distance – mean	<b>3</b>	-16	10	<b>-5</b>
Pointer distance – standard deviation	<b>-4</b>	9	14	16
Mutation distance – mean	16	10	<b>3</b>	4
Mutation distance – standard deviation	-12	<b>2</b>	15	2
Incoming pointers per object – standard deviation	-13	5	<b>-2</b>	-8
Outgoing pointers per object – standard deviation	-11	6	-4	-10

**Table 5.** Metrics Used for PC Analysis and Their PC Rankings

tions. We follow the PCA methodology from prior work [13, 19], but use different constituent metrics. Table 5 shows these metrics which cover architecture, code, and memory behavior. We include architecture metrics to expand over the code and memory metrics presented and explored in depth by previous sections, and to see which of these differentiate the benchmarks. Our *code* metrics include the i-cache miss rate for each benchmark, the number of methods compiled and the volume of bytecodes compiled. The *memory* metrics include static and dynamic pointer distances, and incoming and outgoing pointer distributions.

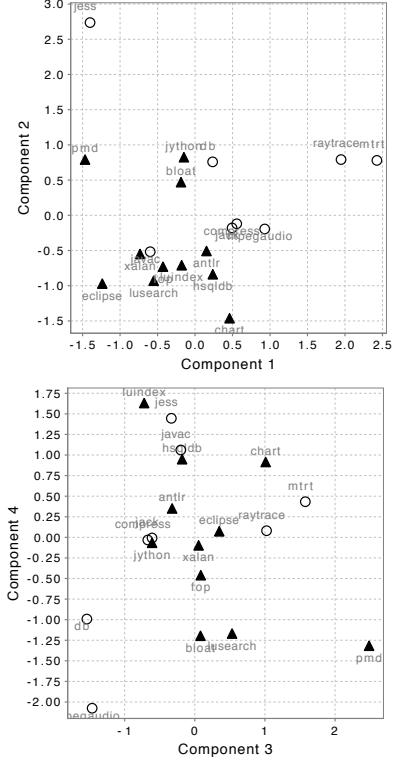
Following prior work [27], our *architecture* metrics are micro-architecture neutral, meaning that they capture key architectural characteristics such as instruction mix, branch prediction, and register dependencies, but do so independently of the underlying micro-architecture. We gather these metrics using a modified version of Simics v. 3.0.11 [42]. We use our harness to measure stable performance in Sun’s HotSpot JVM, v. 1.5.0\_07-b03 running on a simulated Sun Ultra-5\_10 with Solaris 9.

PCA computes four principal components (PC1, PC2, PC3, and PC4) which in our case account for 70% of the variance between benchmarks. PCA identifies principal components in order of significance; PC1 is the most determinative component and PC4 is the least. Table 5 shows the relative ranks of each of the metrics for PC1–PC4. The absolute value of the numbers in columns 2–5 indicates the rank significance of the metric, while the sign indicates whether the contribution is negative or positive. We bold the ten most significant values overall; six of these contribute to PC1, four to PC2, three to PC3, and none to PC4. Memory instruction mix is the most significant metric for PC1, and methods compiled is the next most significant. Note that the three most significant contributors to PC1 cover each of the three metric categories.

Scatter plots in Figure 3 show how the benchmarks differ in two-dimensional space. Figure 3 plots each program’s PC1 value against its PC2 value in the top graph, and Figure 3 plots PC3 and PC4 in the bottom graph. Intuitively, the further the distance between two benchmarks, the further apart they are with respect to the metrics. The benchmarks differ if they are apart in either graph. Since the programs are well distributed in these graphs, the benchmarks differ.

## 10. Conclusion

Benchmarks play a strategic role in computer science research and development by creating a common ground for evaluating ideas and products. The choice of benchmarks and benchmarking



**Figure 3.** PCA Scatter Plots; PC1 & PC2 (top), and PC3 & PC4.

methodology can therefore have a significant impact on a research field, potentially accelerating, retarding, or misdirecting energy and innovation. Prompted by concerns among ourselves and others about the state-of-the-art, we spent thousands of hours at eight separate institutions examining and addressing the problems of benchmarking Java applications. The magnitude of the effort surely explains why so few have developed benchmark suites.

This paper makes two main contributions: 1) it describes a range of methodologies for evaluating Java, including a number of new analyses, and 2) it presents the DaCapo benchmark suite. We show that good methodology is essential to drawing meaningful conclusions and highlight inadequacies prevalent in current methodology. A few of our specific methodology recommendations are:

- When *selecting benchmarks for a suite*, use PCA to quantify benchmark differences with metrics that include static and dynamic code and data behavior.
- When *evaluating architectures* use multiple JVMs. Evaluating new architecture features will also benefit from multiple JVMs.
- When *evaluating JVM performance*, use multiple architectures with mix and stable methodologies, reporting first and/or second iterations as well as steady-state to explore the compile and runtime tradeoffs in the JVM.
- When *measuring memory performance*, use and report heap sizes proportional to the minimums.
- When *measuring GC and JIT compilation performance* use mix and stable methodologies, and use constant workload (rather than throughput) benchmarks.
- When *measuring GC or compile time overheads* use deterministic stable and mix methodologies.

This paper uses these methodologies to demonstrate that the DaCapo benchmarks are larger, more complex and richer than the commonly used SPEC Java benchmarks. The DaCapo benchmarks

are publicly available, evolving, and have and will remain open to public feedback [14].

## Acknowledgments

We thank Andrew Appel, Randy Chow, Frans Kaashoek, and Bill Pugh who encouraged this project at our three year ITR review. We thank Mark Wegman who initiated the public availability of Jikes RVM, and the developers of Jikes RVM. Fahad Gilani wrote the original version of the measurement infrastructure for his ANU Masters Thesis.

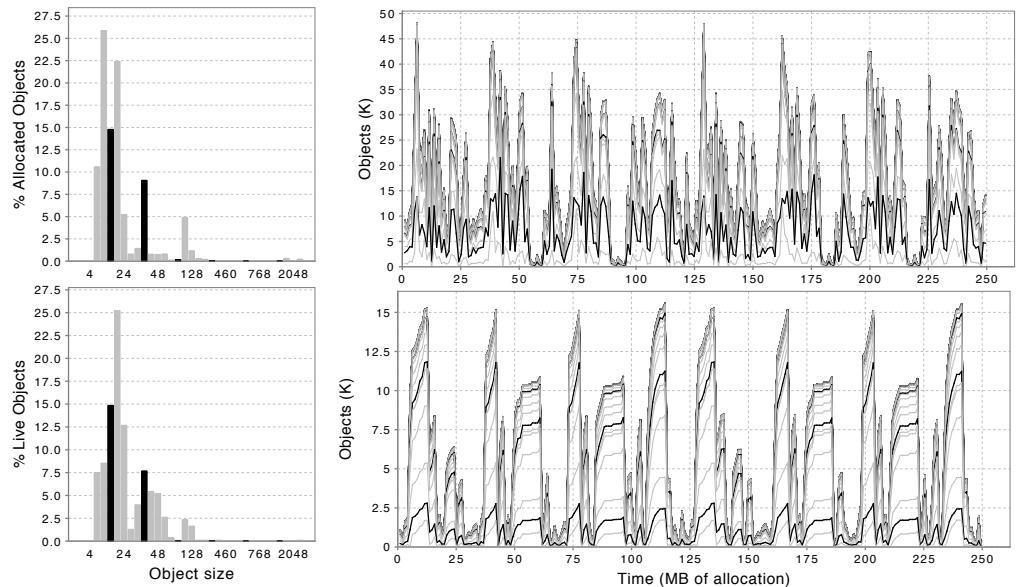
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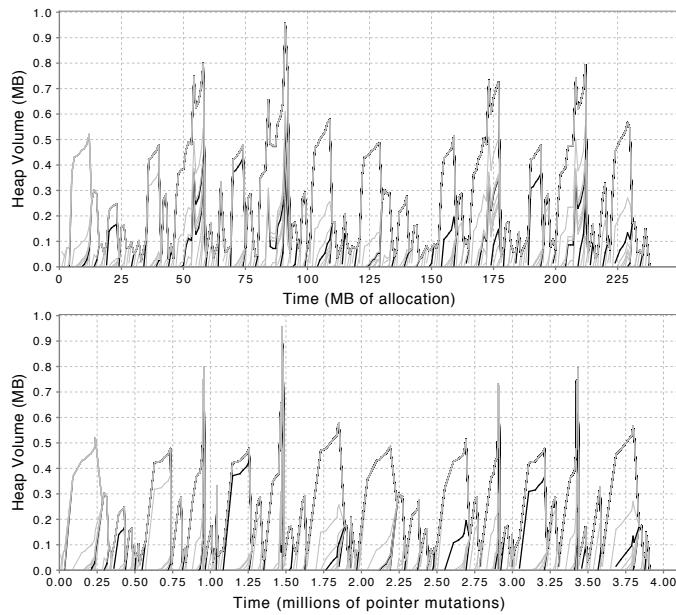
Benchmark Description and Origin	
Short Description	A parser generator and translator generator
Long Description	ANTLR parses one or more grammar files and generate a parser and lexical analyzer for each.
Threads	Single threaded
Repeats	Two iterations, each parses 44 distinct grammar files
Version	2.7.2
Copyright	Public Domain
Author	Terence Parr
License	Public Domain

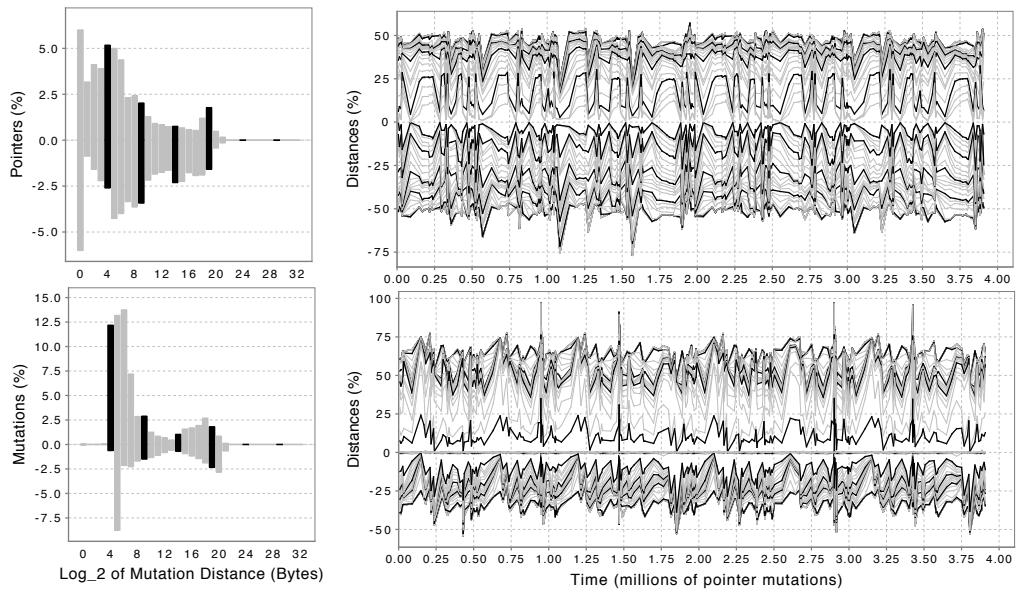
Benchmark Characteristics	
Total Allocation (MB)	237.9
(Obj)	4,208,403
Maximum Live (MB)	1.0
(Obj)	15,566
Pointer Mutations (M)	3.91
Classes Loaded	126



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)



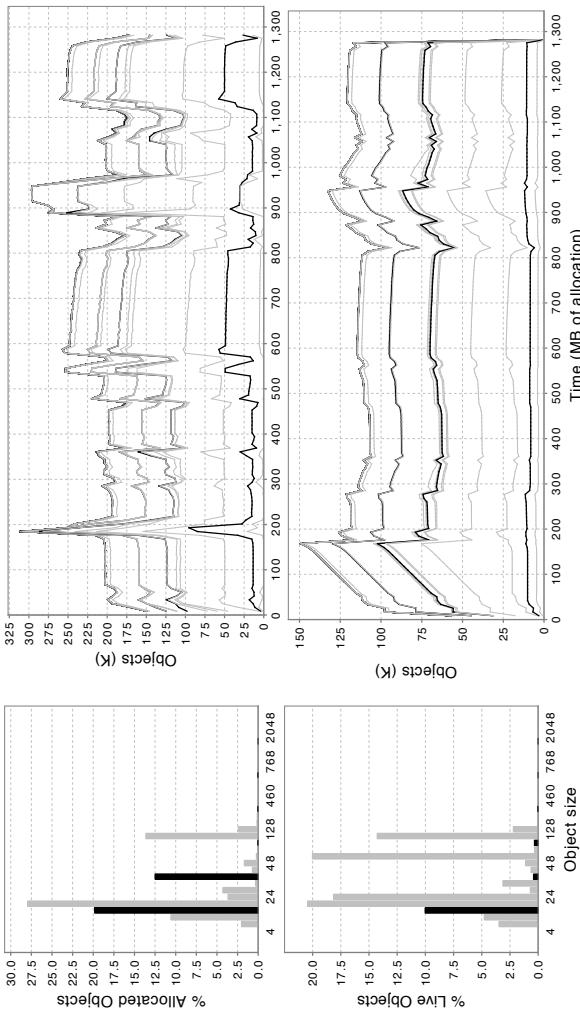
(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

Figure 4. Benchmark Characteristics: antlr

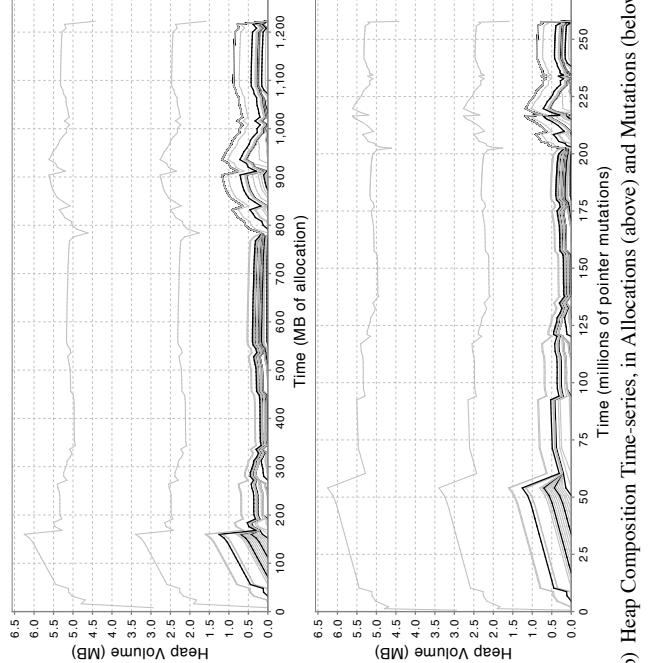
Benchmark Description and Origin	
Short Description	A Bytecode-level optimization and analysis tool for Java
Long Description	BLOAT analyzes and optimizes some of its own class files
Threads	Single threaded
Repeats	Single iteration, transitively optimizes classes referenced by a single root class
Version	1.0
Copyright	Copyright (c) 1997-2001 Purdue Research Foundation of Purdue University Nathaniel Nystrom and David Whitlock
Author	
License	BSD-style

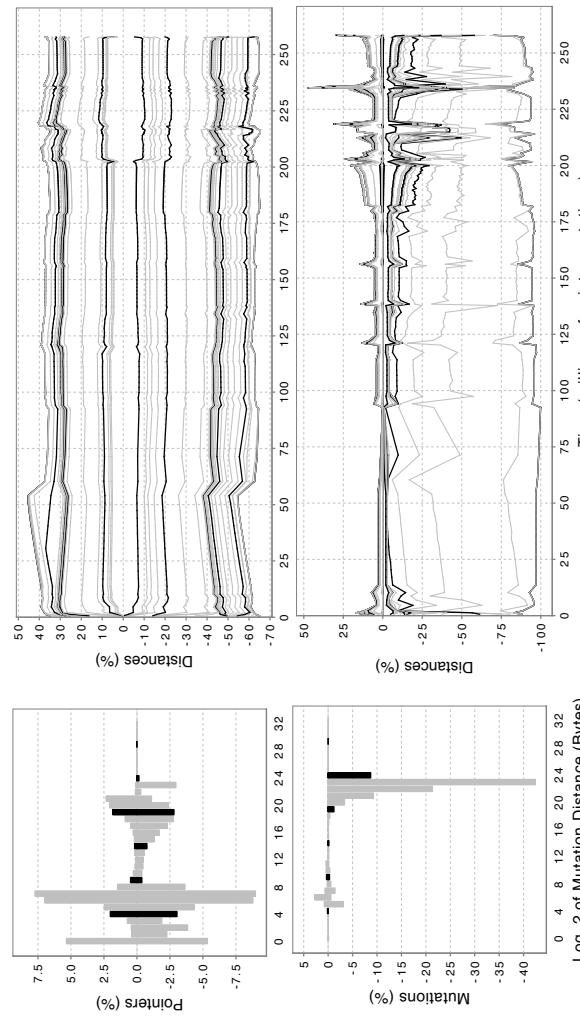
Benchmark Characteristics	
Total Allocation (MB)	1,222.5
(Obj)	33,487,434
Maximum Live (MB)	6.2
(Obj)	149,395
Pointer Mutations (M)	257.84
Classes_Loaded	281



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (top) and Mutations (bottom)

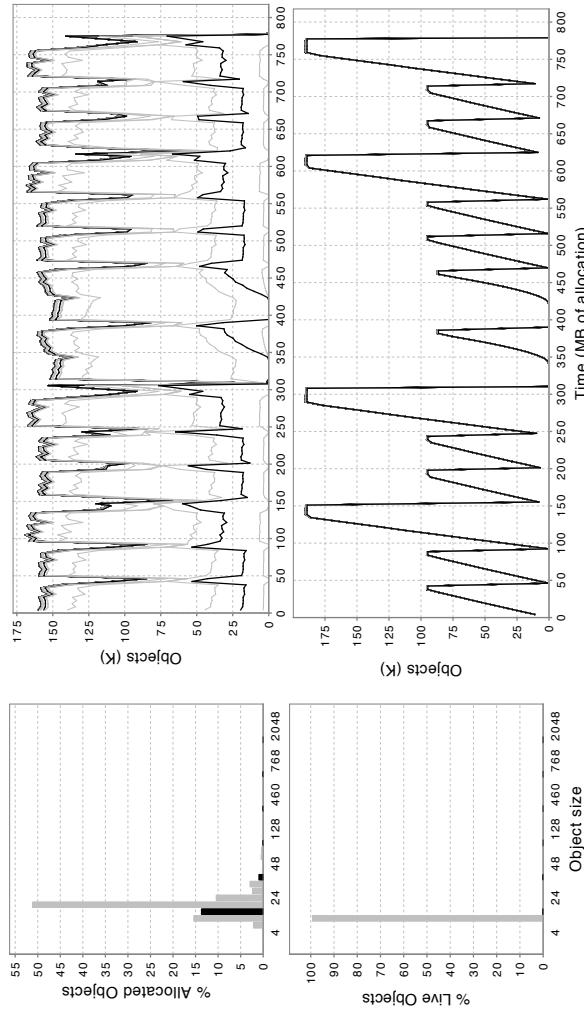


(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

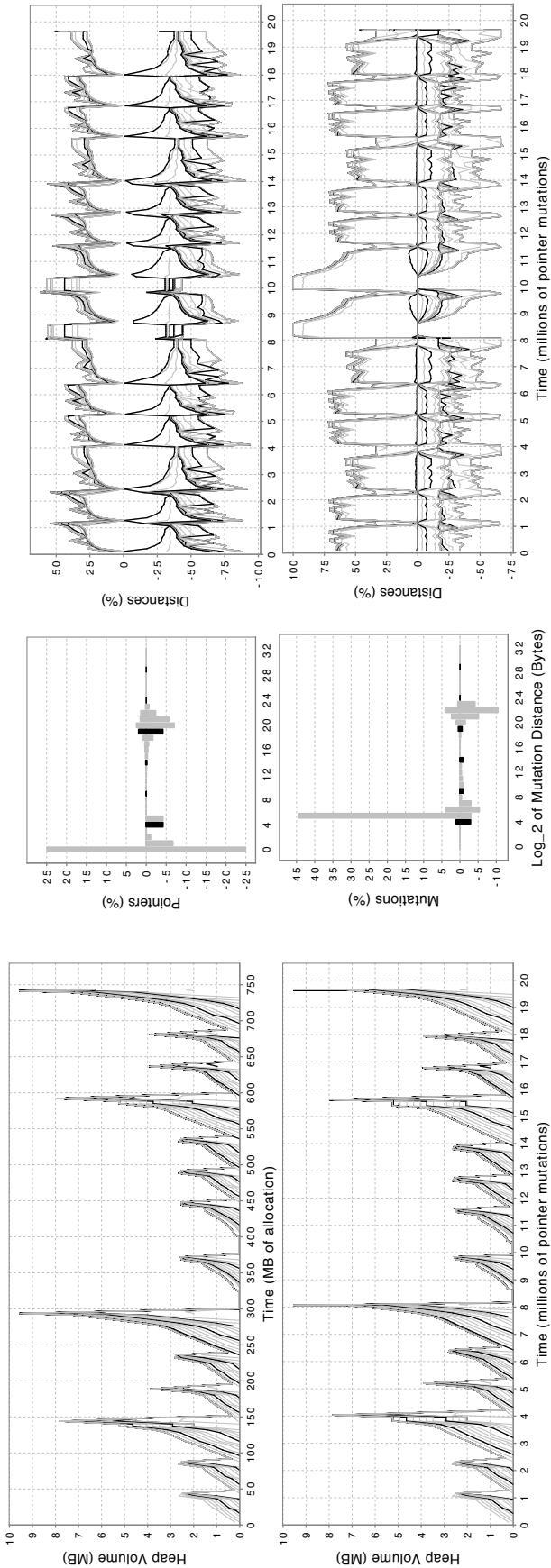
Figure 5. Benchmark Characteristics: bloat

Benchmark Description and Origin	
Short Description	A graph plotting toolkit and pdf renderer jfreechart plots a number of complex line graphs and renders them as pdf via itext
Long Description	Single threaded
Threads	Single iteration plots 14 distinct graphs
Repeats	0.9.21, 1.0b
Version	(C)opyright 2000-2004, by Object Refinery Limited and Contributors; Copyright 2000, 2001, 2002 by Bruno Lowagie
Author	David Gilbert, Bruno Lowagie and Paulo Soares
License	LGPL and MPL

Benchmark Characteristics	
Total Allocation (MB)	742.8
(Obj)	26,661,848
Maximum Live (MB)	9.5
(Obj)	190,184
Pointer Mutations (M)	19.64
Classes Loaded	219



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



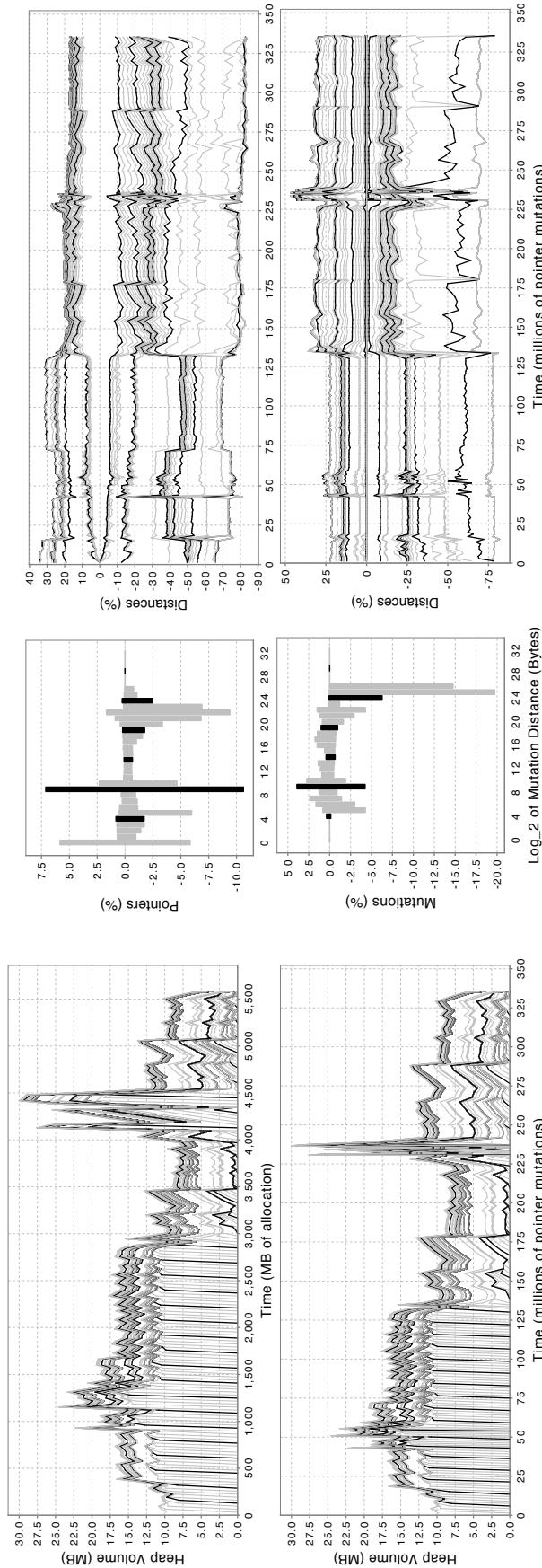
(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)

(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

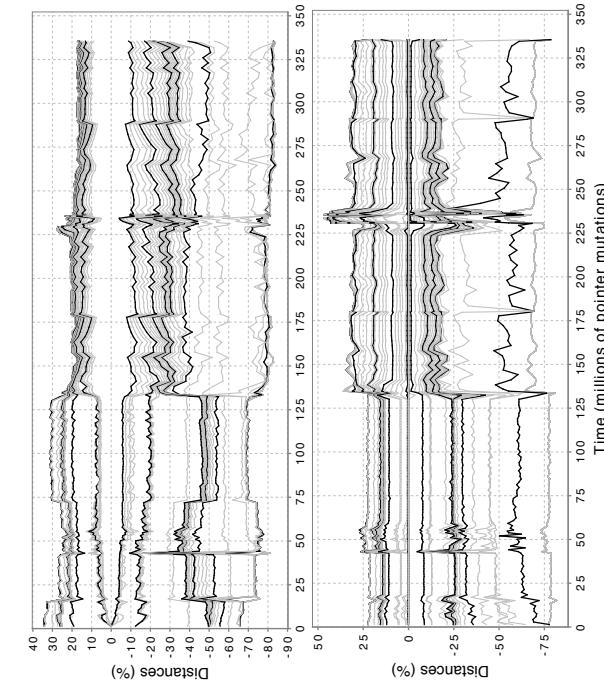
Figure 6. Benchmark Characteristics: chart

Benchmark Description and Origin	
Short Description	An integrated development environment
Long Description	Run as a series of eclipse jdt (non-gui) performance tests
Threads	Workload is single threaded, but Eclipse uses multiple threads internally
Repeats	Single iteration, performs multiple distinct Eclipse tasks
Version	3.1.2
Copyright	Eclipse Foundation
Author	Eclipse Foundation
License	Eclipse Public License
Benchmark Characteristics	
Total Allocation (MB)	5,582.0
(Obj)	104,162,353
Maximum Live (MB)	30.0
(Obj)	470,333
Pointer Mutations (M)	335.49
Classes_Loaded	795

(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



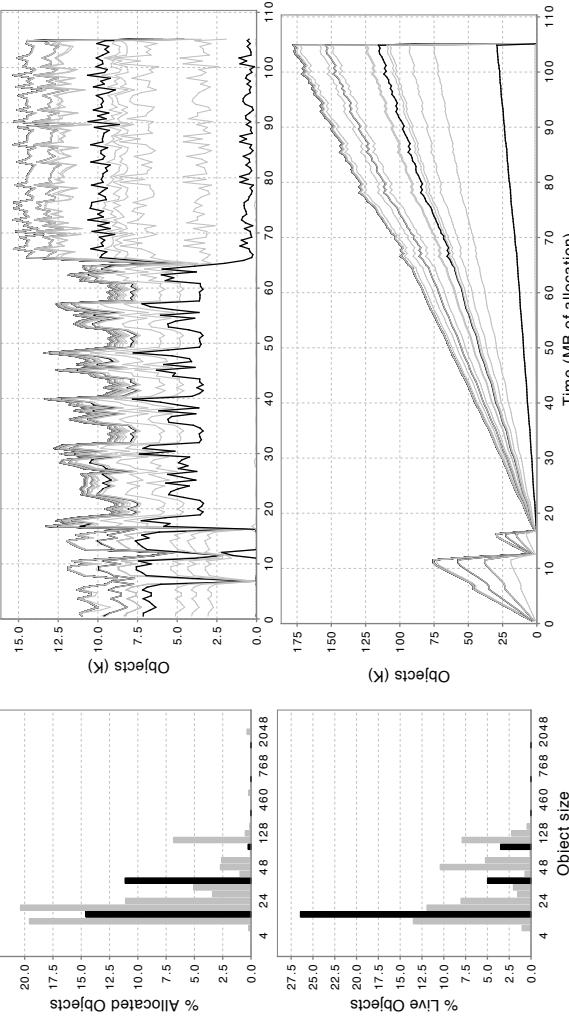
(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)



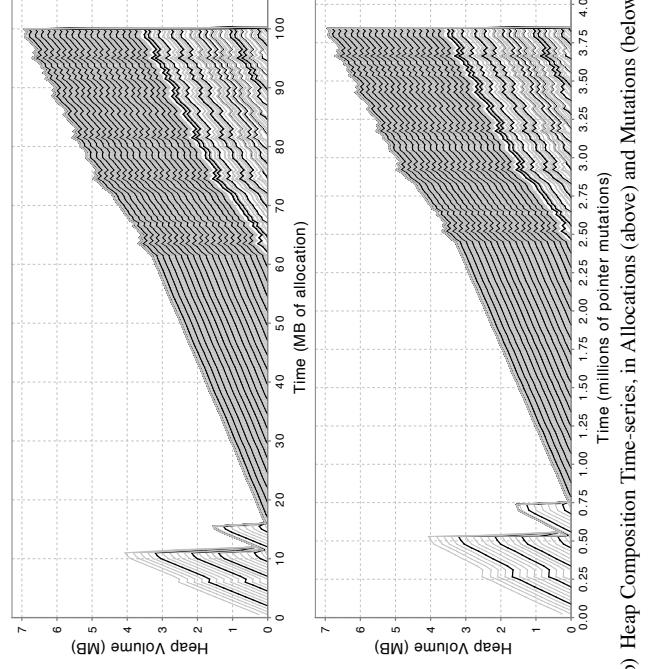
(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

Figure 7. Benchmark Characteristics: Eclipse

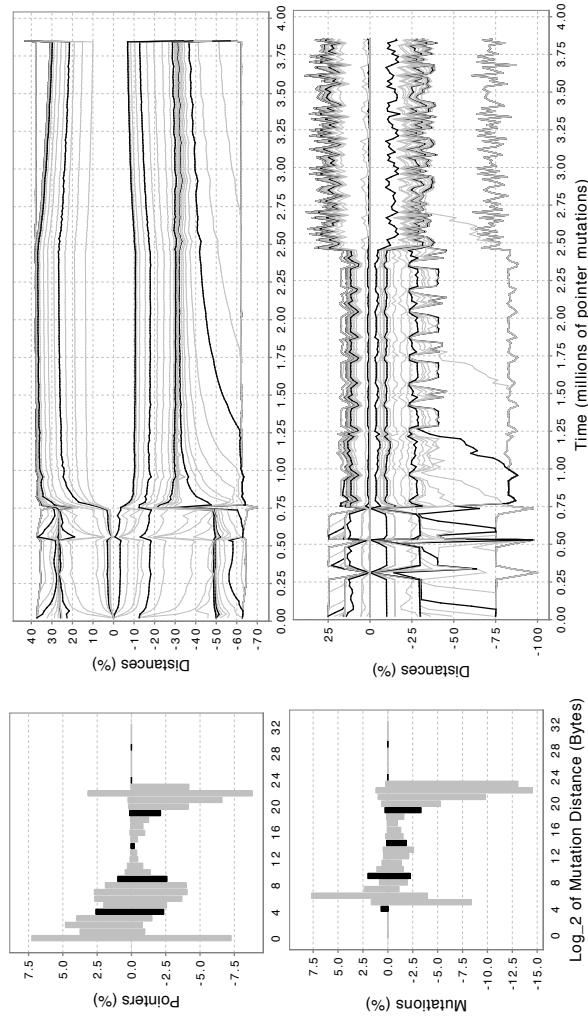
Benchmark Description and Origin	
Short Description	An output-independent print formatter
Long Description	fop takes an XSL-FO file, parses it and formats it, generating an encrypted pdf file
Threads	Single threaded
Repeats	Single iteration, renders a single XSL-FO file
Version	0.20.5
Copyright	Copyright (C) 1999-2003 The Apache Software Foundation
Author	Apache Software Foundation
License	Apache Public License
Benchmark Characteristics	
Total Allocation (MB)	100.3
(Obj)	2,402,403
Maximum Live (MB)	6.9
(Obj)	177,718
Pointer Mutations (M)	3.85
Classes_Loaded	231



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



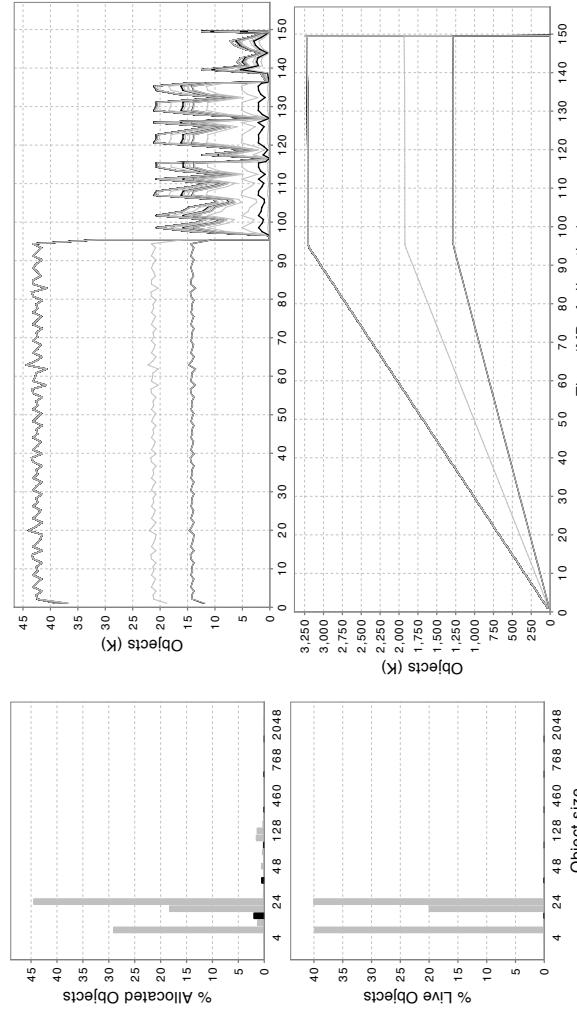
(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (left) and Mutations (right)



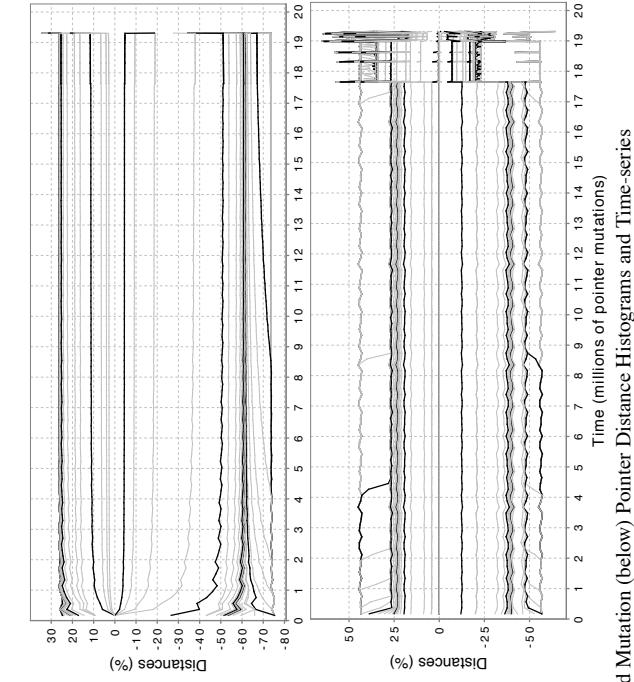
(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

Figure 8. Benchmark Characteristics: fop

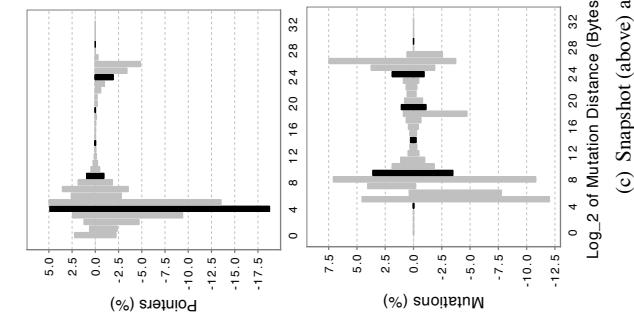
Benchmark Description and Origin	
Short Description	An SQL relational database engine written in Java
Long Description	HSQldb executes a JDBC-like in-memory benchmark, executing a number of transactions against a model of a banking application
Threads	20 client threads
Repeats	40 transactions per client
Version	1.8.0.4
Copyright	Copyright (c) 2001-2002, The HSQL Development Group The HSQLDB Development Group The HSQLDB license.
Benchmark Characteristics	
Total Allocation (MB)	142.7
(Obj)	4,514,965
Maximum Live (MB)	72.0
(Obj)	3,223,276
Pointer Mutations (M)	19.31
Classes Loaded	131



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)

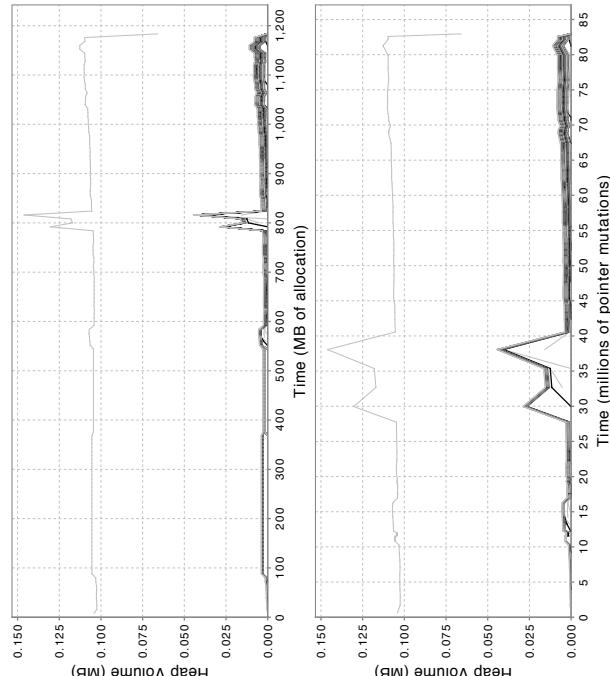
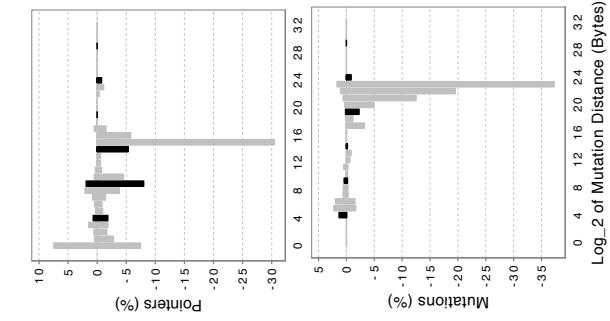
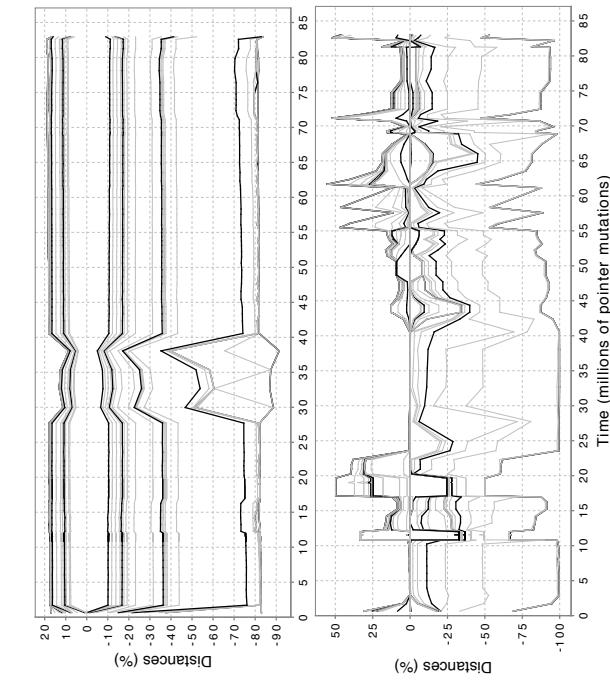


(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

Figure 9. Benchmark Characteristics: hsqldb

Benchmark Description and Origin	
Short Description	A python interpreter written in Java
Long Description	jython executes (interprets) the pybench benchmark or a small python program
Threads	Single threaded
Repeats	Single iteration runs a single iteration of the pybench python benchmark
Version	2.1
Copyright	Copyright (c) Python Software Foundation, Jim Hugunin and Barry Warsaw
Author	Jim Hugunin and Barry Warsaw
License	Jython Software License.
Benchmark Characteristics	
Total Allocation (MB)	1,183.4
(Obj)	25,940,819
Maximum Live (MB)	0.1
(Obj)	0.1
Pointer Mutations (M)	2,788
Classes_Loaded	82,96
	251

(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)

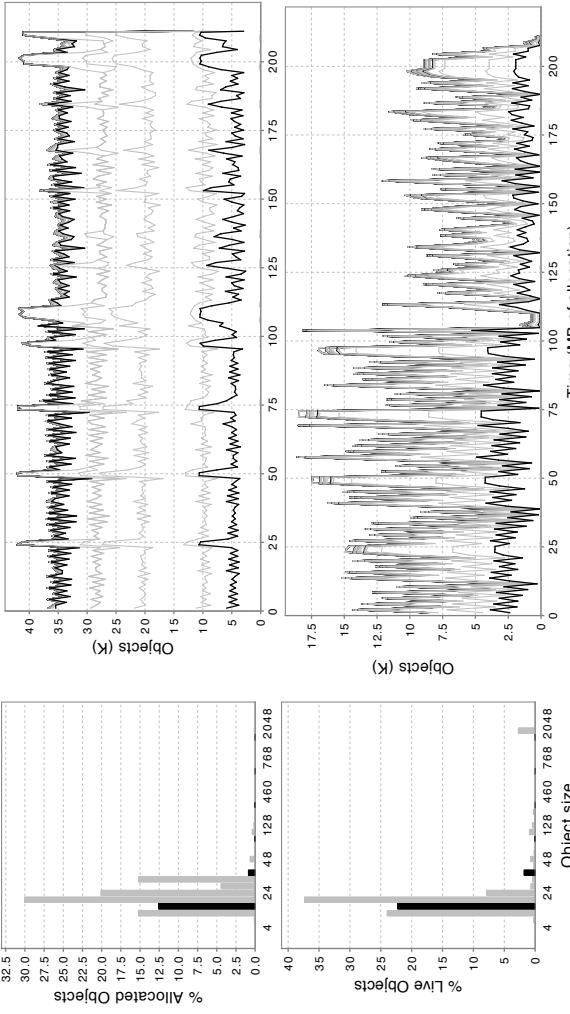
(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

Figure 10. Benchmark Characteristics: jython

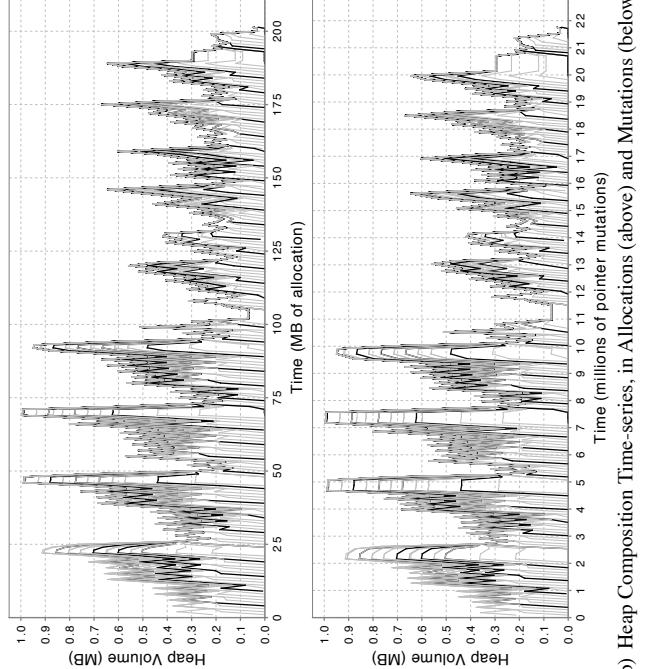
Benchmark Description	
Short Description	A text indexing tool
Long Description	Indexes a set of documents, the works of Shakespeare and the King James Bible
Threads	Single threaded
Repeats	Single iteration indexes two multi-file documents
Version	1.9.1
Copyright	Copyright (C) The Apache Software Foundation
Author	Lucene Project Management Committee
License	Apache Public License

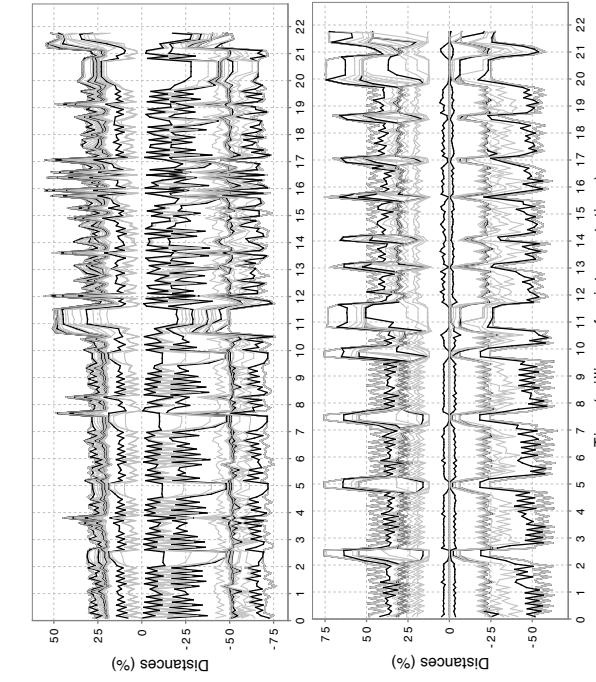
Benchmark Characteristics	
Total Allocation (MB)	201.4
(Obj)	7,202,623
Maximum Live (MB)	1.0
(Obj)	18,566
Pointer Mutations (M)	21.75
Classes_Loaded	128



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)



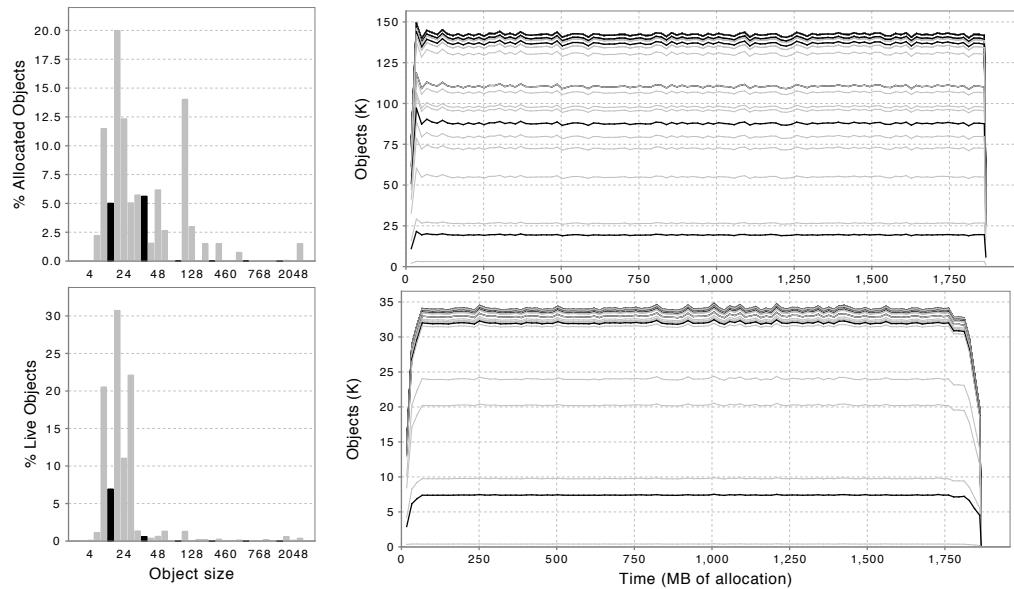
(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

Figure 11. Benchmark Characteristics: uindex

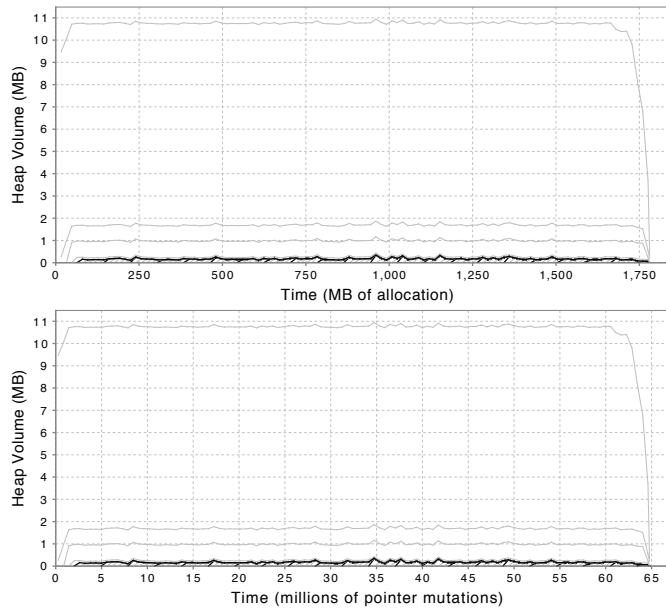
Benchmark Description and Origin	
Short Description	A text search tool
Long Description	Text search of keywords over a corpus of data comprising the works of Shakespeare and the King James bible
Threads	32 threads
Repeats	Each thread searches a large index for about 3500 distinct words
Version	1.9.1
Copyright	Apache Software Foundation, Apache license v2.0
Author	Lucene Project Management Committee
License	Apache Public License

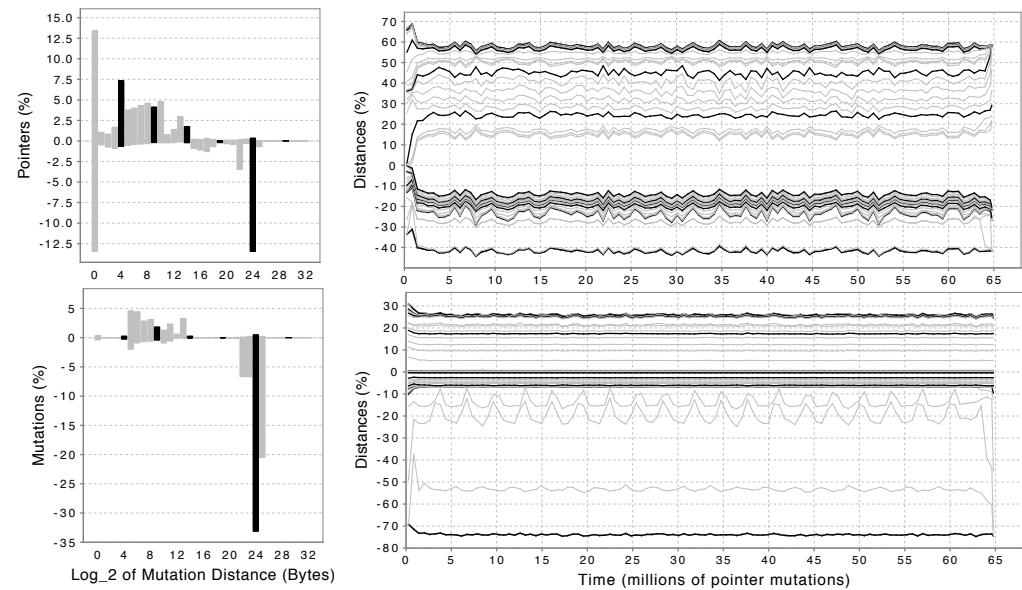
Benchmark Characteristics	
Total Allocation (MB)	1,780.8
(Obj)	15,780,651
Maximum Live (MB)	10.9
(Obj)	34,792
Pointer Mutations (M)	64.77
Classes Loaded	118



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)



(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

Figure 12. Benchmark Characteristics: lusearch

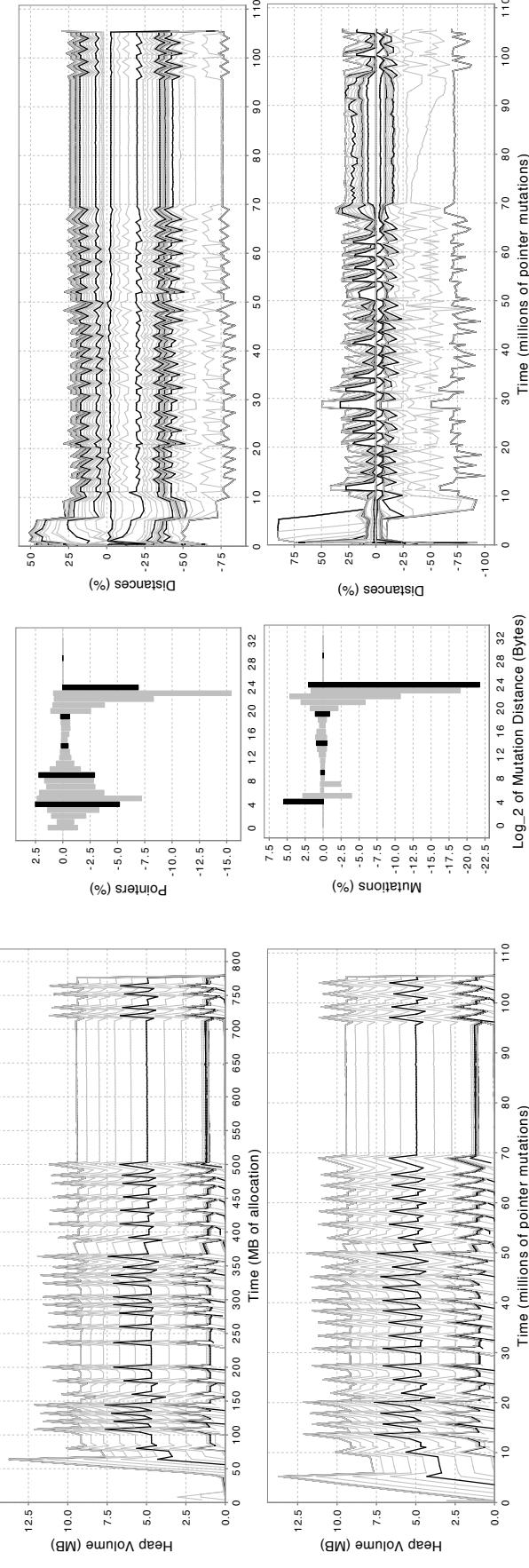
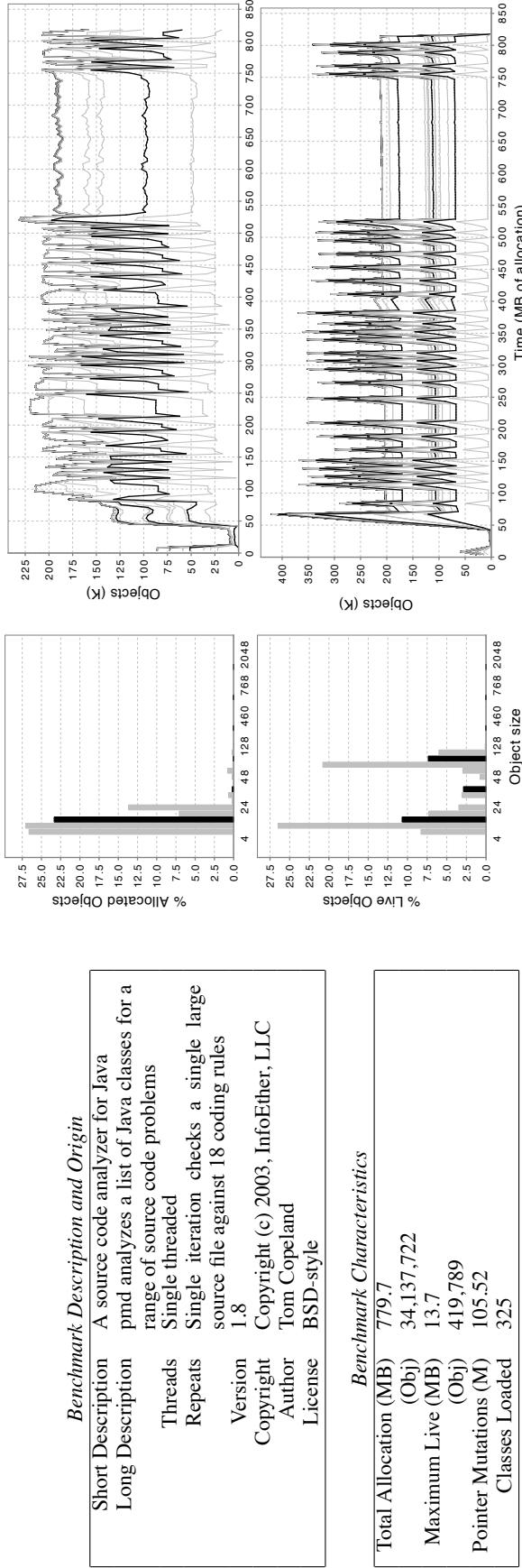


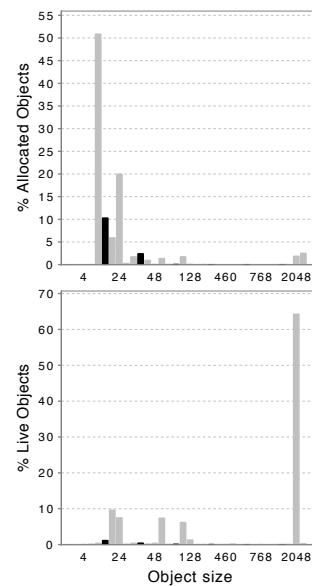
Figure 13. Benchmark Characteristics: pmd

### Benchmark Description and Origin

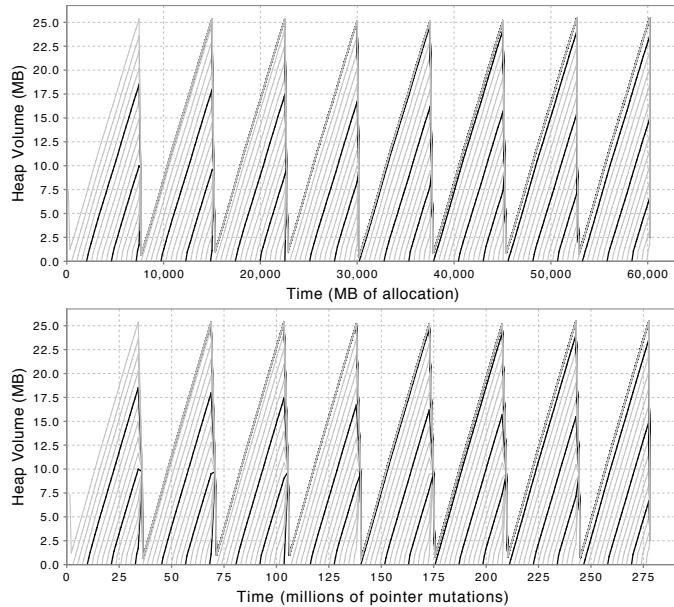
Short Description	An XSLT processor for transforming XML documents
Long Description	Xalan transforms an XML document (either a test case or the works of Shakespeare) and transforms the document into html
Threads	Single threaded
Repeats	8 iterations, each transforms a single large XML document (the works of Shakespeare)
Version	2.4.1
Copyright	Copyright (C) 1999-2003 The Apache Software Foundation
Author	Apache Software Foundation
License	Apache Software License

### Benchmark Characteristics

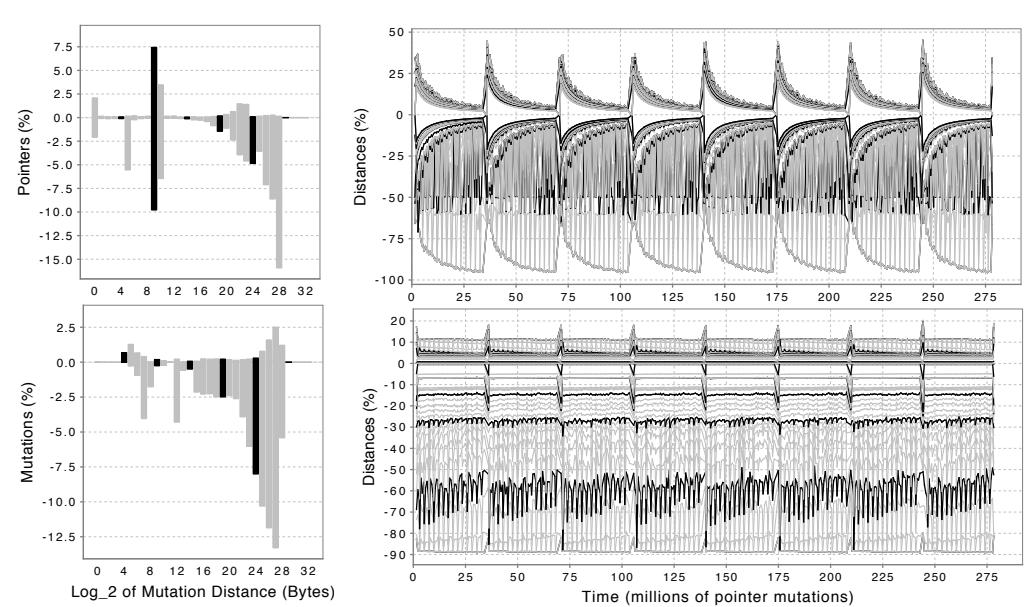
Total Allocation (MB)	60,235.6
(Obj)	161,069,019
Maximum Live (MB)	25.5
(Obj)	168,921
Pointer Mutations (M)	278.20
Classes Loaded	244



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)



(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

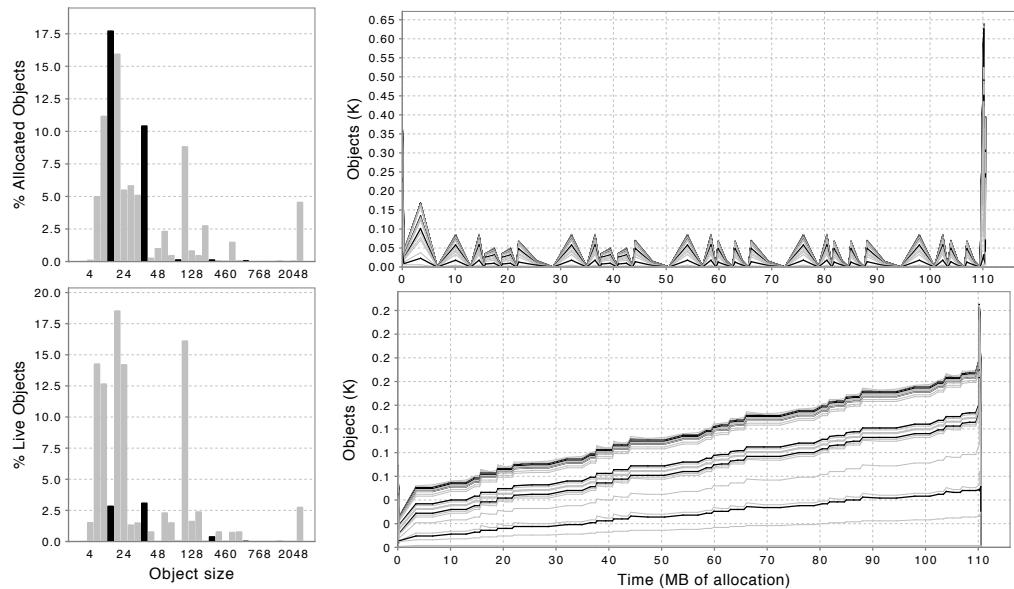
Figure 14. Benchmark Characteristics: *xalan*

### Benchmark Description and Origin

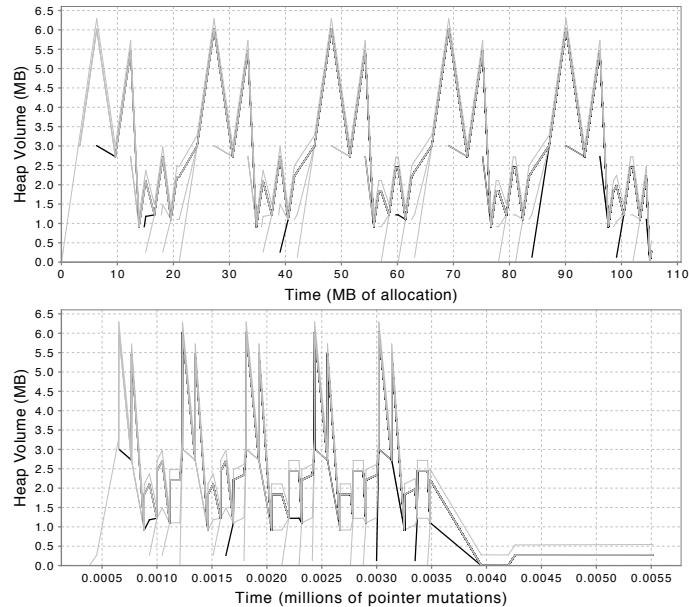
Short Description  
 Long Description  
 Threads  
 Repeats  
 Version  
 Copyright  
 Author  
 License

### Benchmark Characteristics

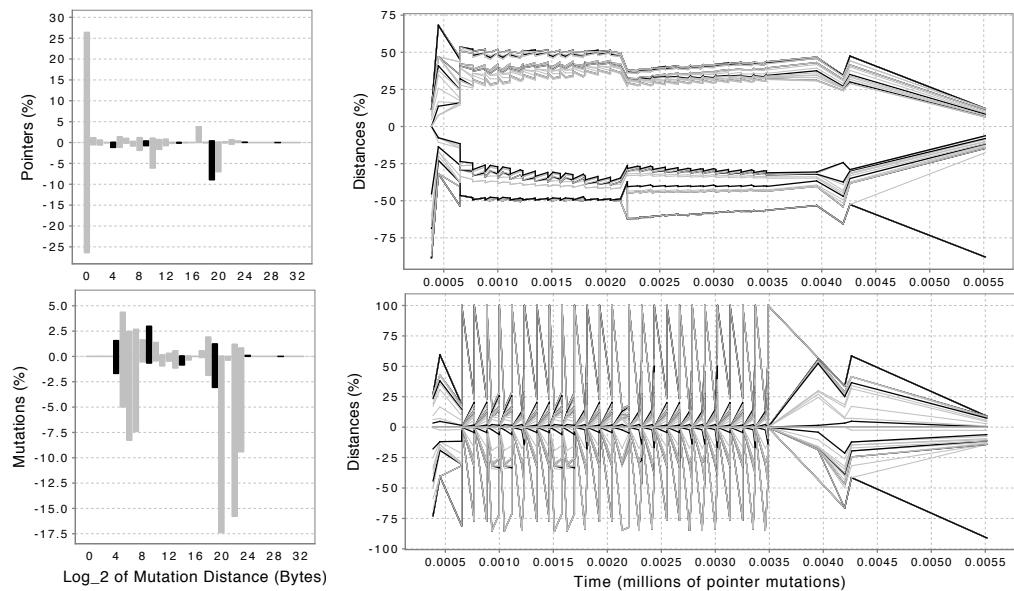
Total Allocation (MB)	105.4
(Obj)	3,942
Maximum Live (MB)	6.3
(Obj)	270
Pointer Mutations (M)	0.01
Classes Loaded	86



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series

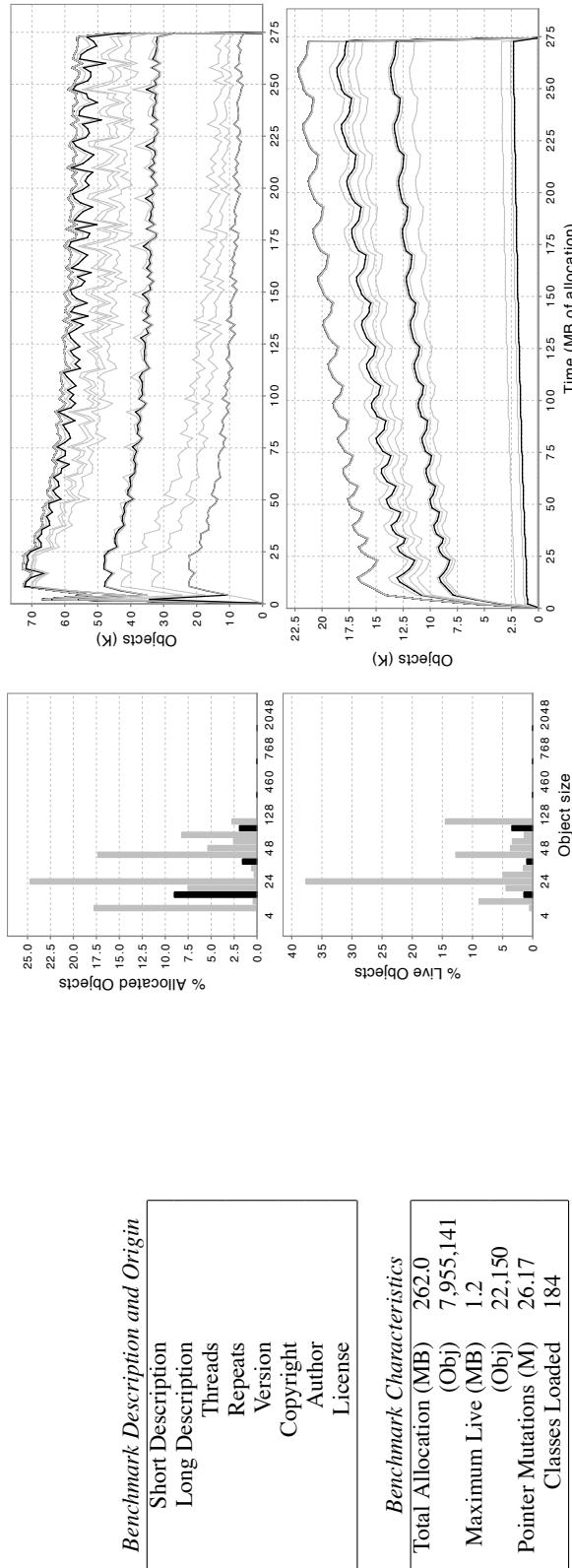


(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)



(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

Figure 15. Benchmark Characteristics: compress



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series

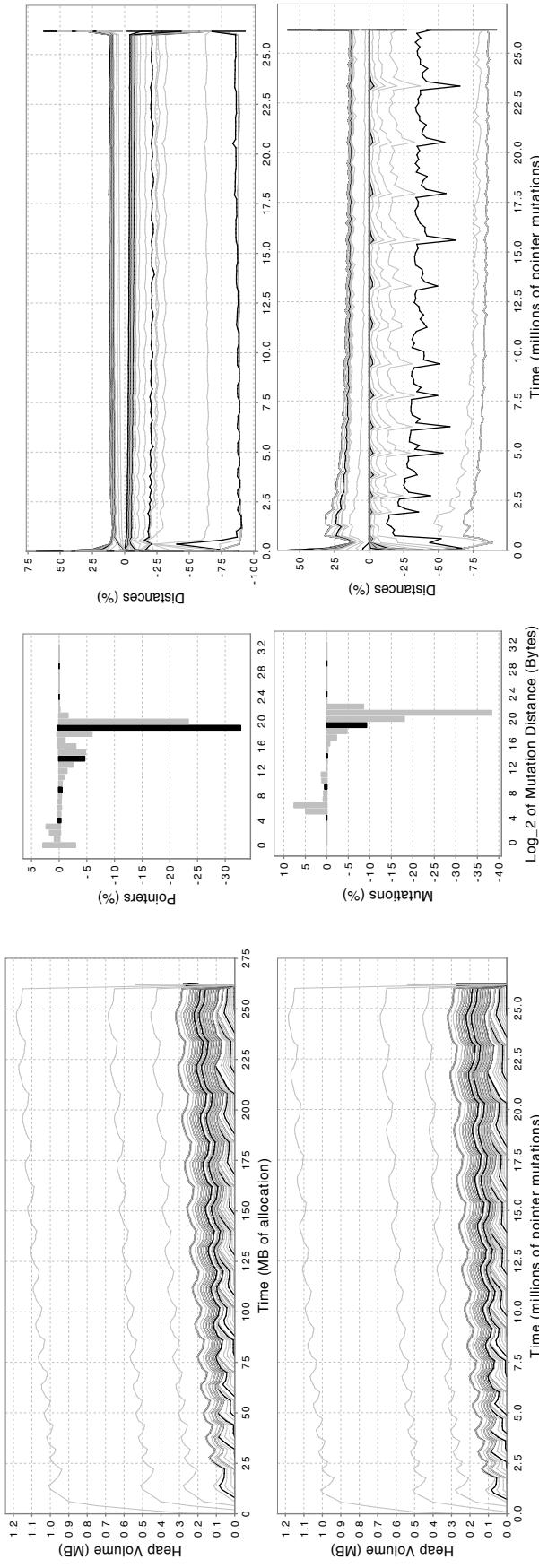
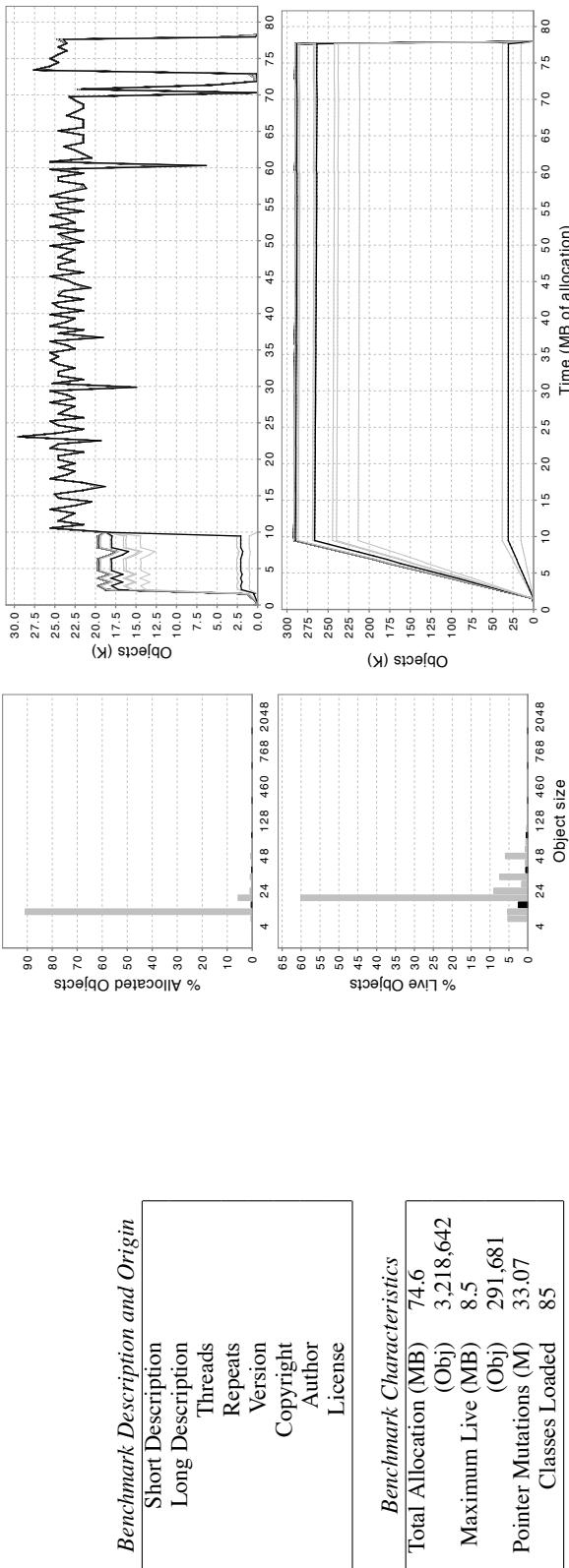


Figure 16. Benchmark Characteristics: jess



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series

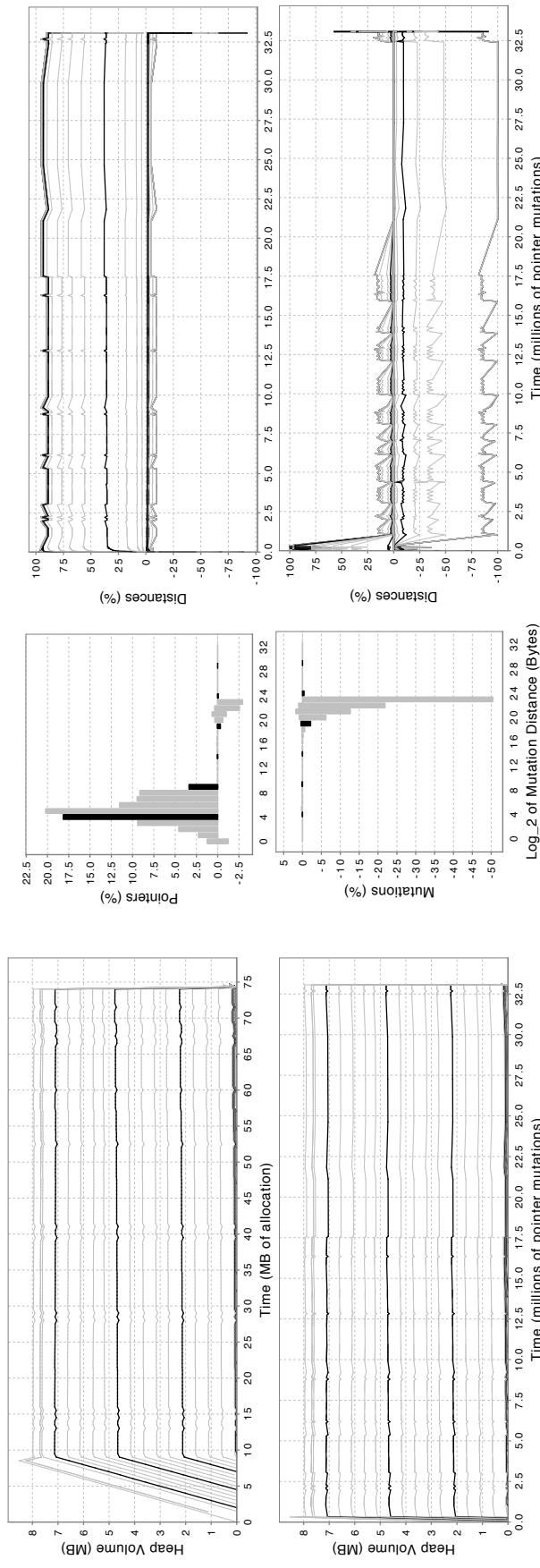
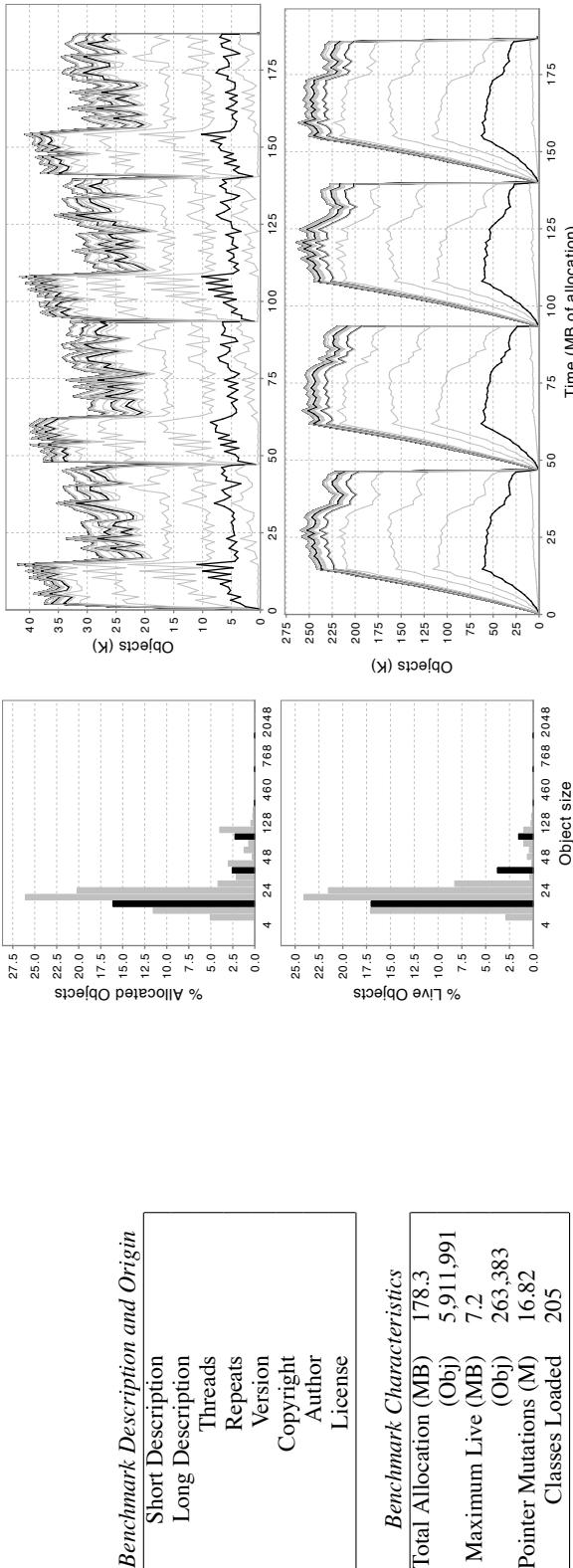
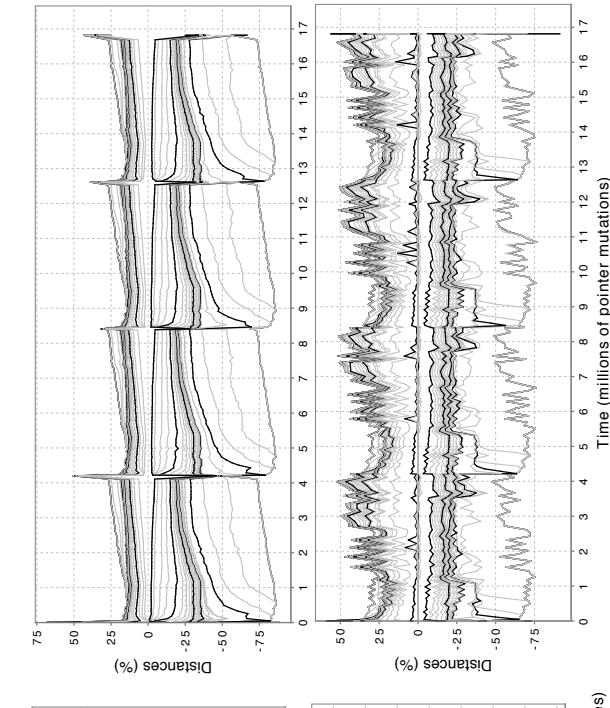


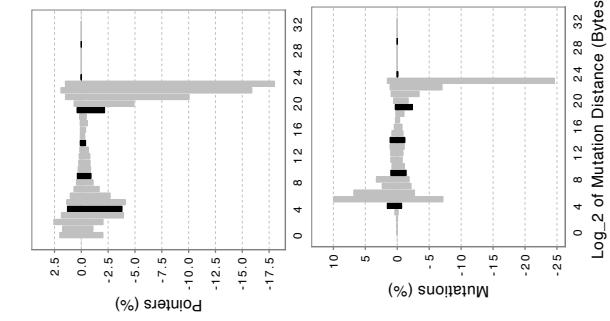
Figure 17. Benchmark Characteristics: `db`



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



(b) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series



(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

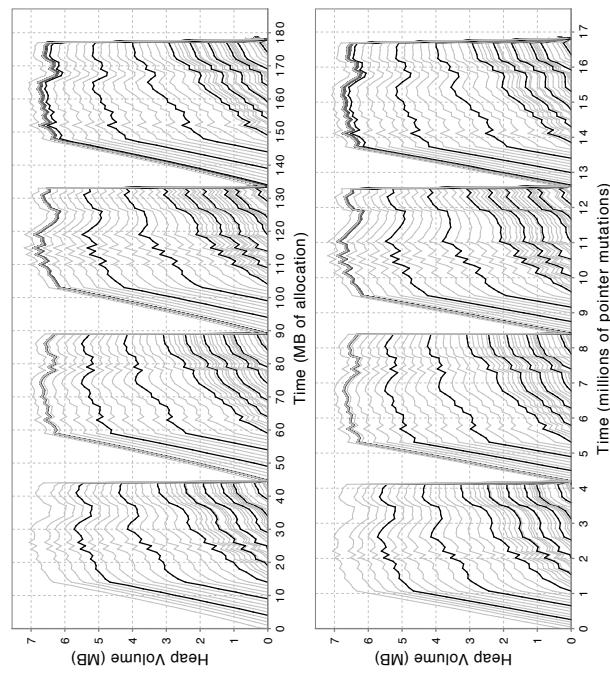
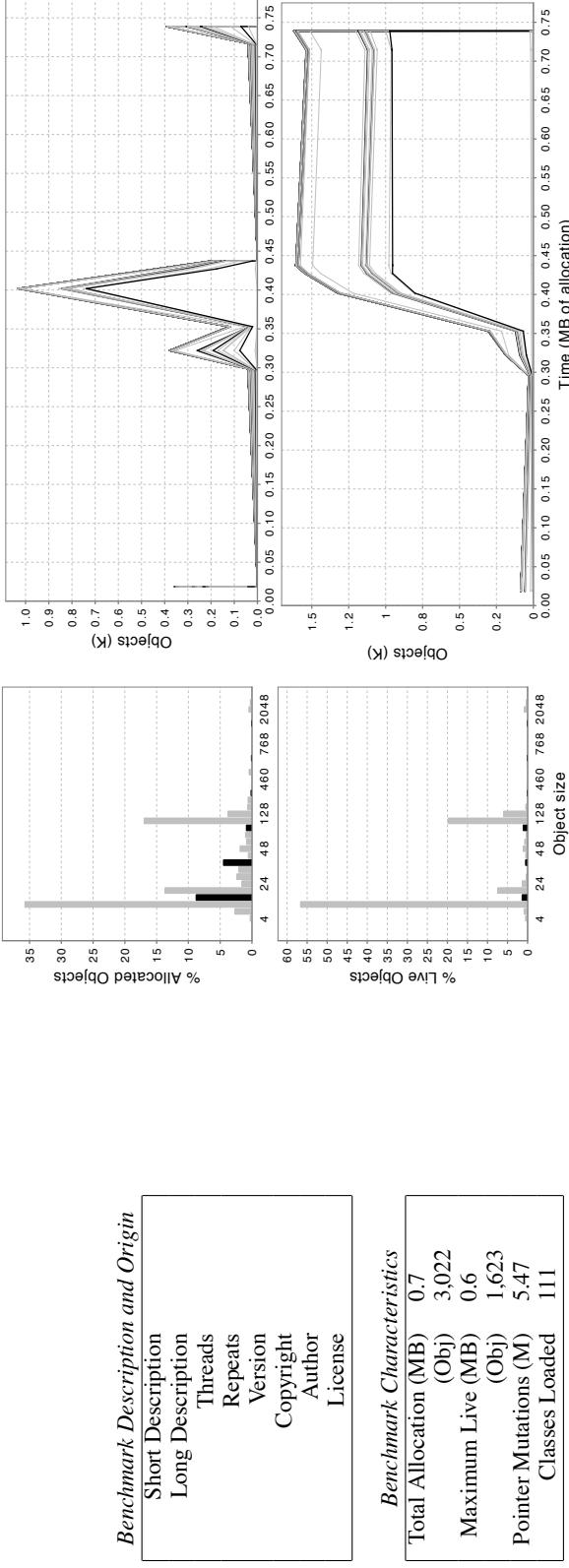
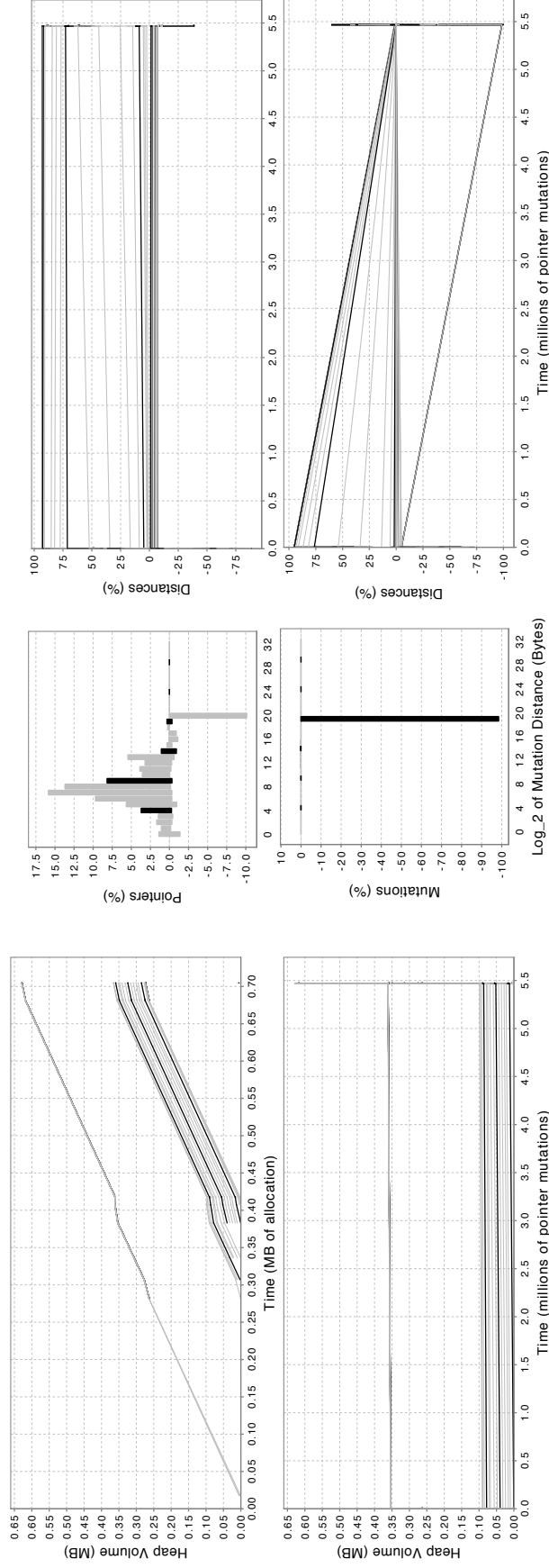


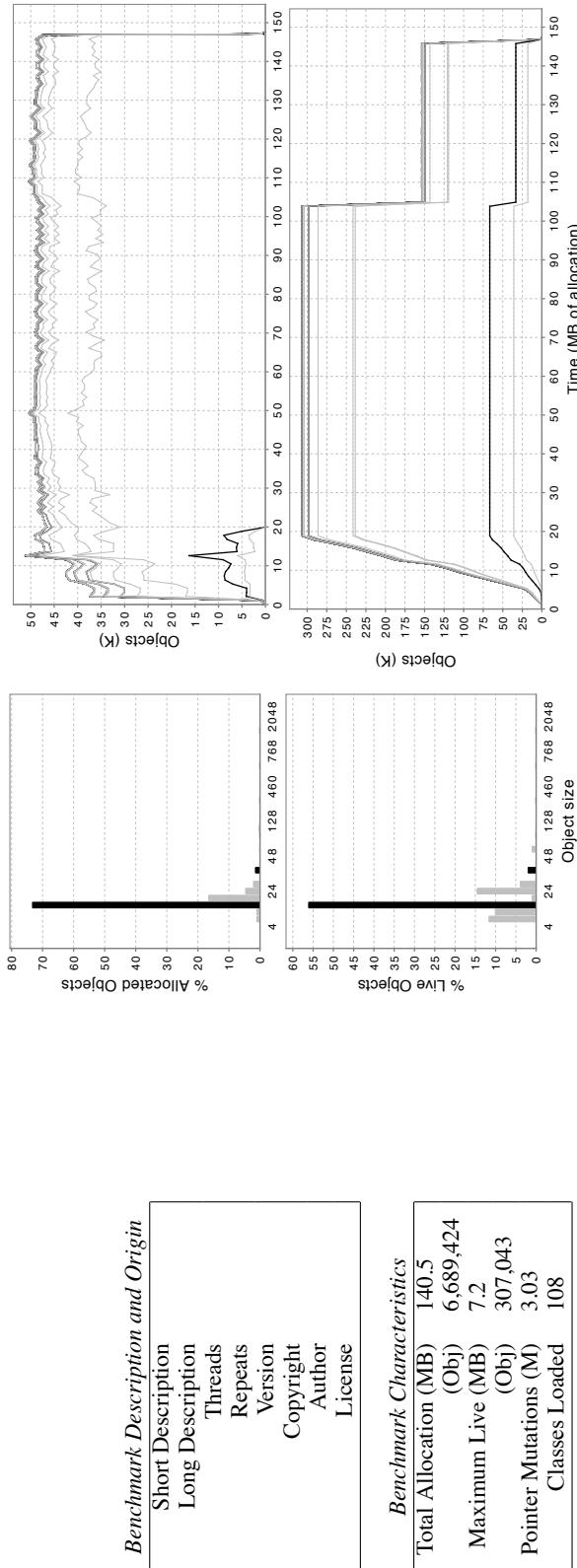
Figure 18. Benchmark Characteristics: javac



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



**Figure 19. Benchmark Characteristics: mpegaudio**



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series

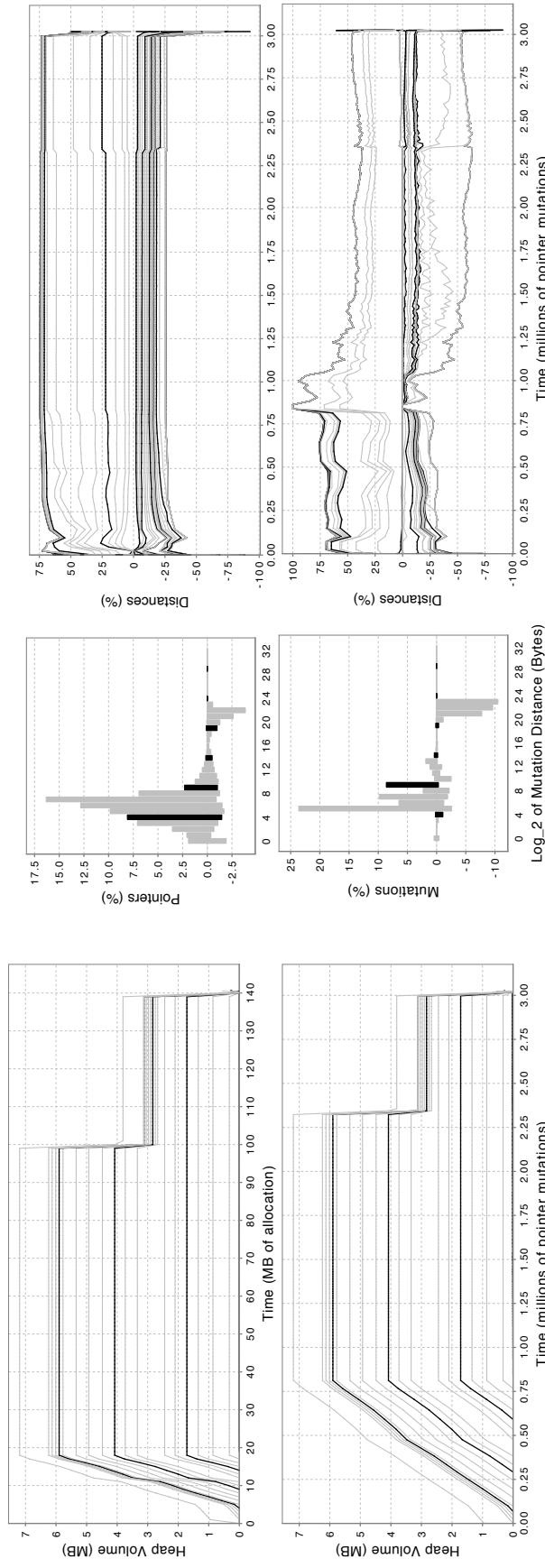
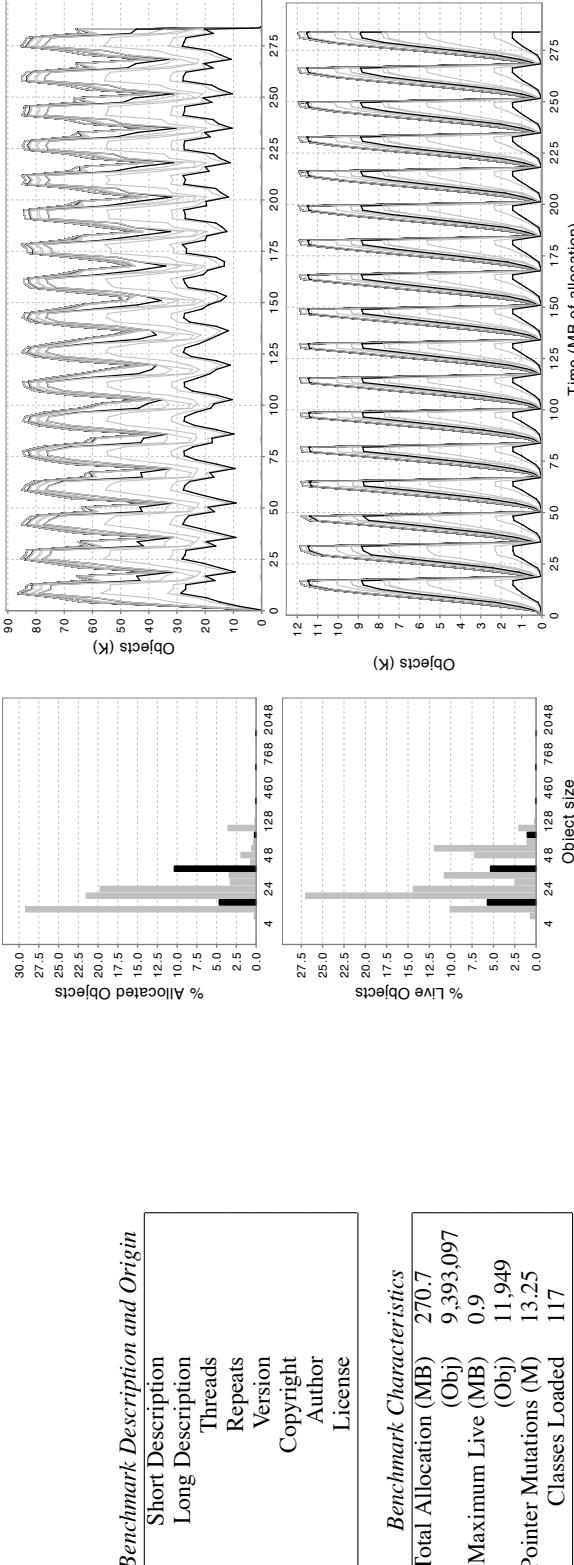
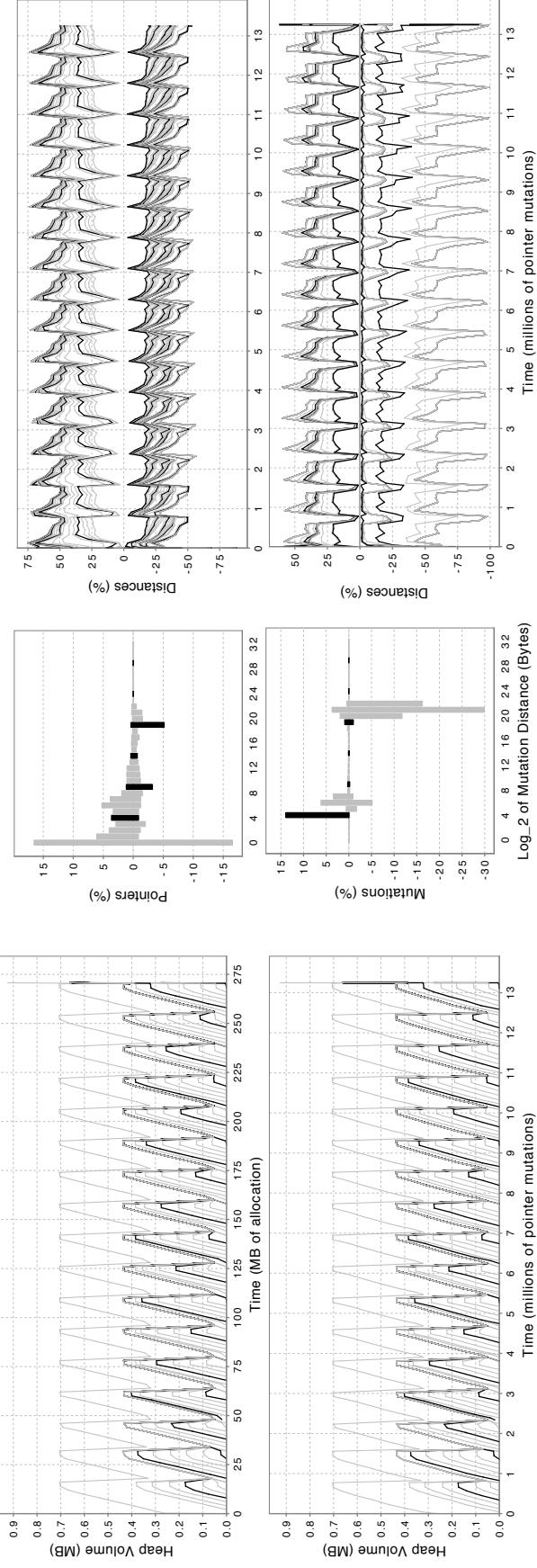


Figure 20. Benchmark Characteristics: mttt



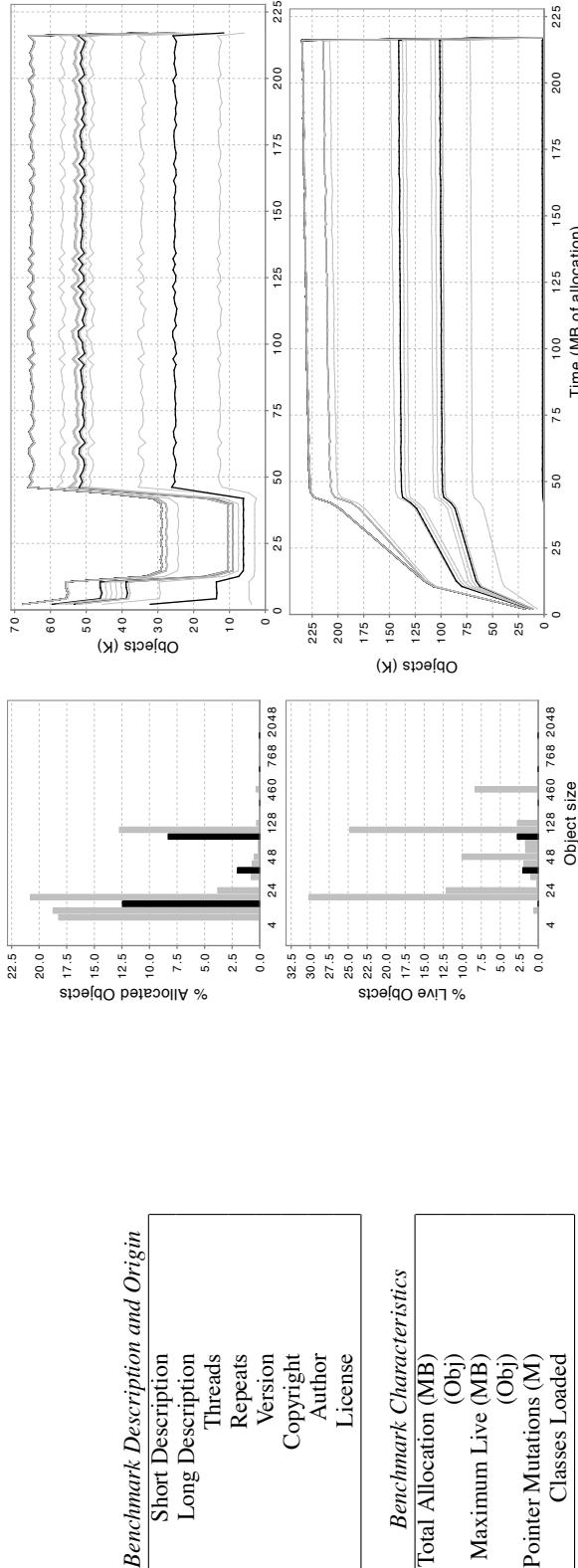
(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series



(b) Heap Composition Time-series, in Allocations (above) and Mutations (below)

(c) Snapshot (above) and Mutation (below) Pointer Distance Histograms and Time-series

**Figure 21.** Benchmark Characteristics: jack



(a) Allocated (above) and Live (below) Object Size Histograms and Time-series

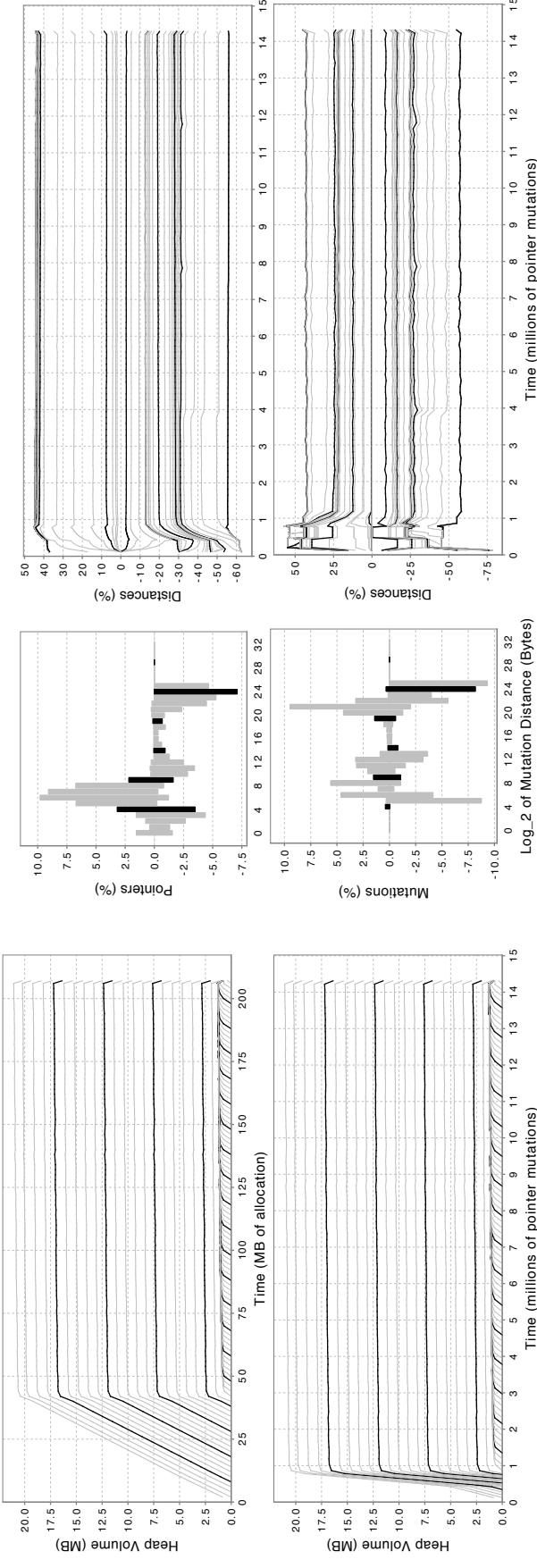


Figure 22. Benchmark Characteristics: jbb