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What is Parallel Computer Architecture?

- A Parallel Computer is a collection of processing elements that cooperate to solve large problems fast
 - how large a collection?
 - how powerful are the elements?
 - how does it scale up?
 - how do they cooperate and communicate?
 - how is data transmitted between processors?
 - what are the primitive abstractions?
 - how does it all translate to performance?

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Parallel Computation: Why and Why Not?

• Pros

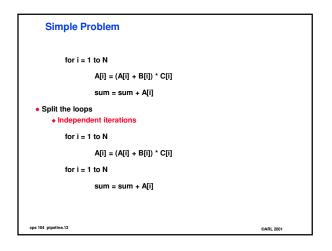
- Performance
- Cost-effectiveness (commodity parts)
- Smooth upgrade path
- Fault Tolerance
- Cons
 - Difficult to parallelize applications
 - Requires automatic parallelization or parallel program development
 - Software! AAHHHH!

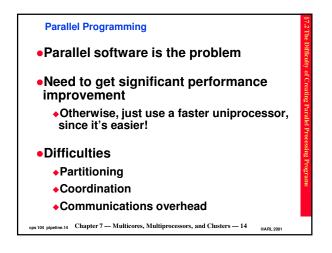
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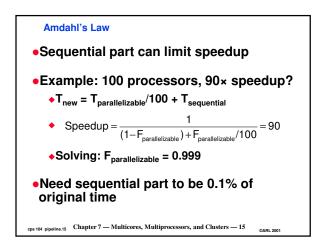
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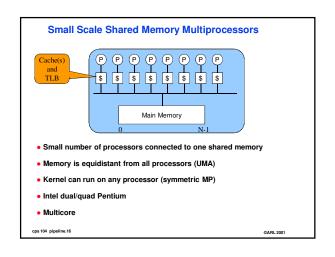
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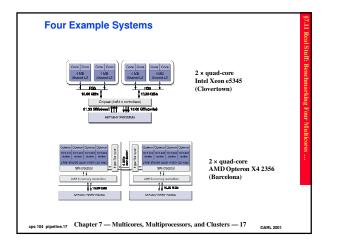
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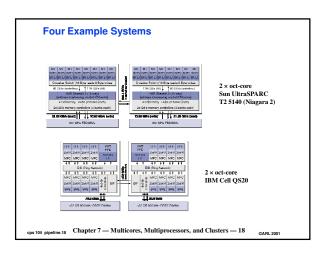


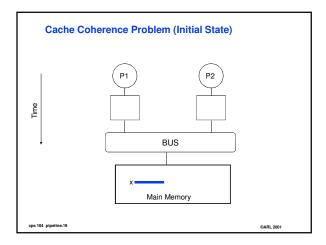


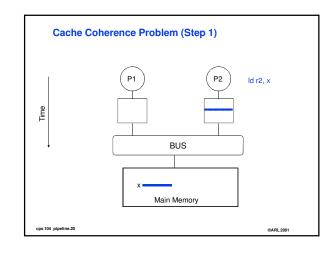


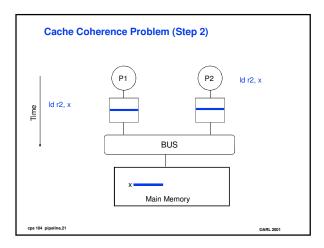


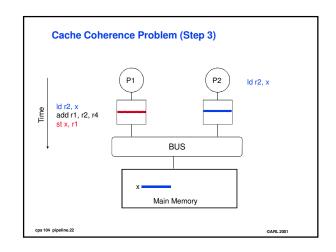


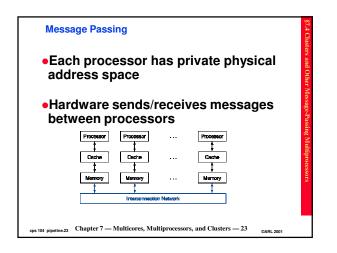


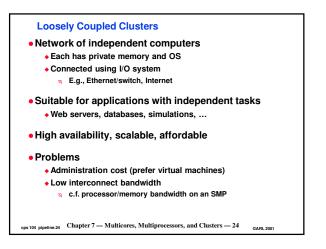












Grid Computing

- •Separate computers interconnected by long-haul networks
 - •E.g., Internet connections
 - •Work units farmed out, results sent back
- •Can make use of idle time on PCs
 - E.g., SETI@home, World Community Grid

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Multithreading

- Performing multiple threads of execution in parallel
 - Replicate registers, PC, etc.
 - Fast switching between threads
- Fine-grain multithreading
 - Switch threads after each cycle
 - Interleave instruction execution
 - If one thread stalls, others are executed

Coarse-grain multithreading

- Only switch on long stall (e.g., L2-cache miss)
- Simplifies hardware, but doesn't hide short stalls (eg, data hazards)

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