High performance N-body simulation on computational grids

Groen, D.J.

Publication date
2010

Citation for published version (APA):
When Simon offered me a PhD position in 2006, I immediately figured that I wanted to continue in science and yet involve myself with the refreshingly different topic of astronomy. Now, four years later, I look back to an unusual but also very fun and defining period of my life. Simon, thank you for making this period possible to begin with, for helping me throughout my PhD, and having time for discussions even when you got busier, busier and busier yourself. Your intricate mix of direct criticism, solid support, sharp advices and empathy has helped me greatly to evolve as a scientific researcher, and a more balanced person in general. I also thank my promotores and the members of the promotiecommissie for reviewing my thesis, and providing valuable feedback.

Having nice colleagues in the workplace has helped me quite a bit, and I am very grateful to all of them. Alessia, thanks for taking the time to introduce me to the world of N-body systems when the deadline banshee was still looming over your own PhD thesis. Evghenii, thanks for the countless discussions and extraordinary insights on topics ranging from low-level optimization of N-body codes to unconventional beverage choices during lunch time. Stefan, thanks for all the valuable discussions laced with a sauce of quality black humor, and helping to introduce football as a perfectly valid conversation topic at work. Steven, thank you very much for helping me to tackle that behemoth of a project called CosmoGrid and introducing me to the concept of massively parallel living. Jeroen, I’m grateful for all the technical support and social amusement you have given. Atakan, thanks for your wisdom on profound and obscure matters. Bernadetta, thanks for inviting me over for several different parties and introducing me to the concept ”card game injury”. I also would like to thank all the other members in the computational astrophysics group in Leiden. Thank you all for keeping a brilliant atmosphere, even though the group was rapidly expanding to a scientific horde. I would like to give a special mention to Arjan, Atakan, Bernadetta, Inti, Marcell, Nathan, and Bernadetta, Steven and
Acknowledgements

Jeroen (again) as they have proof-read my thesis. Thanks to their help I was able to fish out more than a few textual and structural bloopers. I have met many nice colleagues outside of our group here in Leiden, and I am grateful for all the fun they brought during the later years of my PhD. Marcel, whether it was at the NAC with free drinks or in Utrecht with free money, I’ve had a great time all over the board, and I wish you all the best in the States. Chael and Jan-Pieter, thanks for livening up the lunches, especially during the time I was still an alien to Leiden. Anita, Ignas, Jeanette, Jeanne and Merijn, thanks for the fun times at the Soccom and the nice parties we organized. And everyone else at the Sterrewacht, thanks for all your kindness and support.

I also had a great time with the heaps of colleagues at the UvA. Alfredo Tirado Ramos supervised me way back when I was a Bachelor student, and we now share a long history dotted with nice events. Alfredo, thanks for all the good times and your academic, beer-related and unconventional wardrobe suggestions. Alfonso, thanks for all the advice and support during (and even after) the days of our QosCosGrid lives. Peter, thanks for all the valuable scientific discussions and insights you have provided over the years. I owe my thanks to the many colleagues at the UvA Computer Science department. Alfonso, Anton, Breaundán, Cees, Dick, Elena, Erik Hitipeuw, Erik Lorentz, Gohar, Gökhan, Ilkay, Jaap, Jordi, Lilit, Max, Michael Scarpa, Paola, Rick, Roman, Rudolph, Robert, Syed, Thomas, Yves and all the others at SCS, thank you for making my stay at the UvA so enjoyable. I’m also grateful to the colleagues from ’upstairs’, Alessandro, Arjan, Diego, Dominik, Hendrik, Jason, Kostas, Lucinda, Lianne, Maciej, Martin, Nathalie, Peter, Valeriu and everyone else at the API for the good times we’ve had during the NACs, borrels, football tournament and other events.

The many colleagues I met abroad have been largely responsible for making my trips both very educational and a lot of fun. Jun, thank you very much for your hospitality during my trips to Tokyo, and all the guidance on CosmoGrid. Keigo, thank you for all the technical help, edged humor and fun trips to Akihabara. Michiko and Masaki, thank you for your helpfulness and good luck in Leiden! Piet, thank you for your hospitality in Kyoto and the enlightening and highly diverse discussions. Steve, thank you for all your advice and the educational late-night conversations. Tomo, it has been great to work with you for nearly three years on CosmoGrid. Thank you for all the excellent times we’ve had on and off work. I also thank the other QosCosGrid colleagues for the help they provided and fun we’ve had at various meetings, especially Camille, Chris, David, Gabor, Laszlo, Mariusz, Martin, Thomas and Valentin. Camille, thanks for all the insightful conversations we’ve had. I also wish to thank Clayton Breland for initiating a deep scientific and psychological debate after I accidentally poured a full bottle of beer into his pelvic region.

There is more in life than research alone, and there are many people outside of science to whom I’d like to show my appreciation.

My friends have been especially valuable throughout these four years. aTijs, Dirk, eTijs, Marcel, Marco, Martijn and Oliver, thanks for all the godsmacking jam sessions, movie nights and roleplaying sessions over the past years (and Oliver, thank you for designing the cover of this thesis!). Very few distractions are more fun than drenching oneself in self-made music or bizarre fantasy settings. I also thank all of them as well
as Aurelie, Bas, Brenda, Dagmar, Karianne, Kat, Kelly, Paul and René for all the incredible parties, festivals, meetups and discussions (whether deep, insane or both) we’ve had. In addition I’d like to express my gratitude to the Hoofddorp Zondag 4, the football team which provided some great fun/distraction the later years of my PhD. And Sanne, thank you for all the support you’ve given during the years we’ve been together. I definitely cherish the good times and I wish you all the best.

En uiteraard wil ik mijn familie graag bedanken. Maaike, bedankt voor het altijd luisterende oor, de scherpe suggesties en de cruciale hulp die je gegeven hebt, ook op momenten dat het jou niet uit kwam. Taco, bedankt voor alle nuttige discussies en je verhelderende blik op alledaagse zaken. Dick, bedankt voor alle scherpe discussies, cruciale praktische hulp en je rust. Mam, bedankt dat je altijd met me meedenkt en achter me staat. Pap, bedankt dat je er altijd voor me bent.

This research is supported by the Netherlands organization for Scientific research (NWO) grant #639.073.803, #643.200.503 and #643.000.803, the European Commission grant for the QosCosGrid project (grant number: FP6-2005-IST-5 033883), the Stichting National Computerfaciliteiten (NCF project #SH-095-08), SURFNet with the GigaPort project, the International Information Science Foundation (IISF), NAOJ, the Netherlands Advanced School for Astronomy (NOVA) and the Leids Kerkhoven-Bosscha fonds (LKBF). We also thank the network facilities of SURFnet, DEISA, IEEAF, WIDE, JGN2plus (Project No. JGN2P-A20077), SINET3, Northwest Gigapop, the Global Lambda Integrated Facility (GLIF) GOLE of TransLight Cisco on National LambdaRail, TransLight, StarLight, NetherLight, T-LEX, Pacific and Atlantic Wave. We thank the DEISA Consortium (www.deisa.eu), co-funded through the EU FP6 project RI-031513 and the FP7 project RI-222919, for support within the DEISA Extreme Computing Initiative (GBBP project).

Finally, I am also grateful to Hans Blom, Maxine Brown, Andreas Burkert, Halden Cohn, Jonathan Cole, Tom Defanti, Jan Eveleth, Juha Fagerholm, David Groep, Katsuyuki Hasabe, Douglas Heggie, Kei Hiraki, Wouter Huisman, Igor Idziejczak, Mary Inaba, Akira Kato, Walter Lioen, Hashim Mohammed, Kees Neggers, Petri Nikunen, Masafumi Oe, Hanno Pet, Ronald van der Pol, Gavin Pringle, Joaching Stadel, Huub Stoffers, Yoshino Takeshi, Thomas Tam, Jin Tanaka, Peter Tavenier, Mark van de Sanden, Peter Tavenier, Alan Verlo, Joni Virtanen, Lucas Weteling and Seiichi Yamamoto for their contributions to this work.