

Theory and Metatheory of Elimination in Rocq

Master 2 Internship Defense, Lyon

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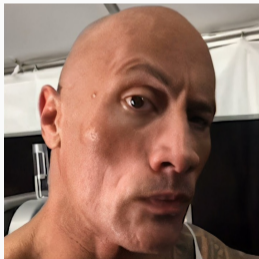
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³LMF & Inria Saclay, Saclay, France

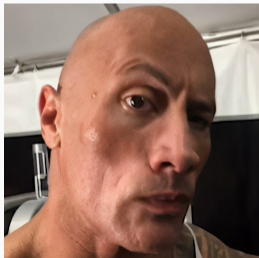
Là il y a Pierre, Pierre, Pierre et Pierre. Mais on l'appelle le roux, lui



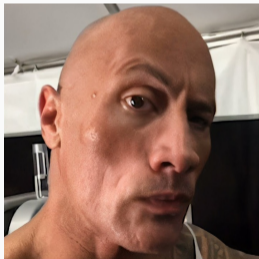
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Proof assistants?

- ▶ Model your problem.
- ▶ Try to prove things about it.
- ▶ Get a cold, mechanical, answer.¹

¹Or: Anomaly: *some non-understandable gibberish*, please report.

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Rocq is a proof assistant doing things ~~mostly~~ right.

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Concept used in every-day life:

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What could *possibly* go wrong?

Comme une sensation de déjà vu...

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Inductive sum (A B : Type) : Type :=  
| inl : A → sum A B  
| inr : B → sum A B.
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Inductive or (A B : Prop) : Prop :=
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| left : A → sumbool A B
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| right : B → sumbool A B.
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“Prouver plus, c’est mieux”

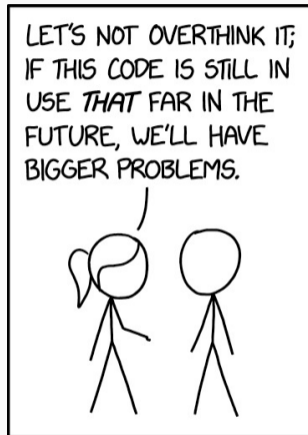
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Fine when there are 2 sorts: “only” 8 possible combinations.

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Rare image of the Rocq’s development team, 2005 (xkcd.com/2730)

Spoiler: we **are** *that* far in the future!

Gi rarement vu ça

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polymorphism

Il vous faudra autre chose?

Courtesy of J. Poiret et al (2025), you can write:

Inductive $\text{sum}@{s\ l\ sr\ s} (A : \mathcal{U}@{s\ l}) (B : \mathcal{U}@{sr}) : \mathcal{U}@{s} :=$

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Definition sum_elim@{s l sr s s'} {A :  $\mathcal{U}@{s l}$ } {B :  $\mathcal{U}@{s r}$ } {C :  $\mathcal{U}@{s'}$ }  
(f : A  $\rightarrow$  C) (g : B  $\rightarrow$  C) (u : sum@{s l sr s} A B) : C :=  
match u with  
| inl a  $\Rightarrow$  f a  
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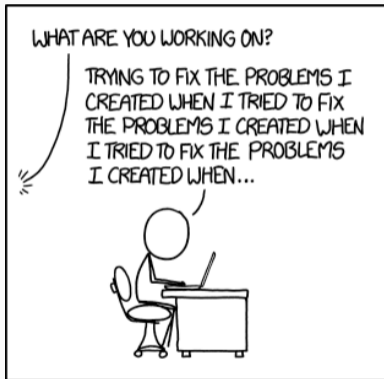
Still need to declare 2^n induction principles...

“Il ne peut même pas coder droit.”

Why is it failing?

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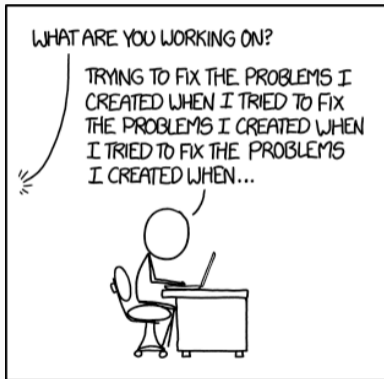
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Cannot create a **Type**-valued sum from a logical disjunction.

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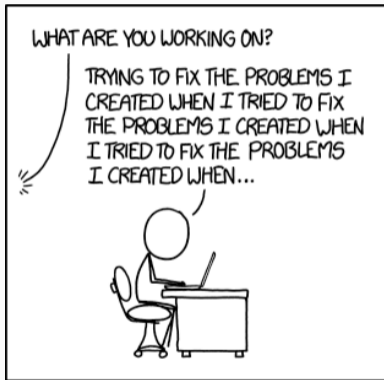
Cannot create a **Type**-valued sum from a logical disjunction.

Otherwise, excluded middle makes everything decidable.²

²You don't need me to tell you that this would be **bad!!**

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Cannot create a **Type**-valued sum from a logical disjunction.

Otherwise, excluded middle makes everything decidable.²

With ~~sort polymorphism~~, no way to express that.

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Elle est fraîche, elle est fraîche ma théorie !

So, how do we actually

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Meet our new, shiny, theory:

SortPoly[→]

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Main idea:

Introduce elimination constraints.

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Sort s_l s_r s s' .

Constraint $s \rightsquigarrow s'$.

Definition `sum_elim` $\{A : \mathcal{U}@{s_l}\} \{B : \mathcal{U}@{s_r}\} \{C : \mathcal{U}@{s'}\}$

$(f : A \rightarrow C) (g : B \rightarrow C) (u : \text{sum}@{s_l} s_r s) A B) : C :=$

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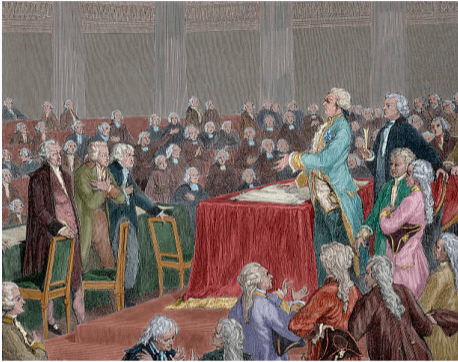
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end.
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Cool, but... is that it?

Les doléances du peuple



The General Users

Want it in Rocq.

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The Logicians

There is no proof $\vdash t : \perp$.

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Rocq's Maintainers

Type-checking is decidable

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This is pretty hard.

L'arnaqueur arnaqué

In the end, what did we get?

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- ▶ Type-checking probably decidable under stronger conditions.

No general theorem, but works for Rocq's Type Theory.



Avoid duplication in proof assistants by using `SortPoly→`.

Avoid duplication in proof assistants by using SortPoly[↗].

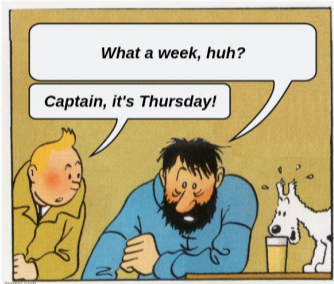
Recap:

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Thanks for your attention, any question?