

# Verifiable Elections That Scale for Free

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Melissa Chase (MSR Redmond)

Markulf Kohlweiss (MSR Cambridge)

Anna Lysyanskaya (Brown University)

**Sarah Meiklejohn (UC San Diego)**

# 10,000-foot view of cryptographic voting

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Phase 1: users encrypt votes to cast ballots

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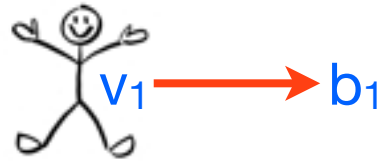
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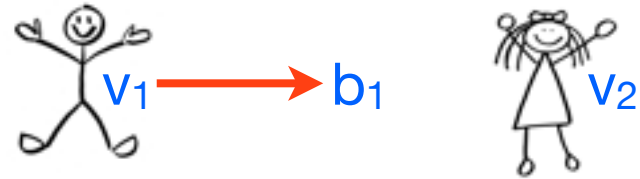
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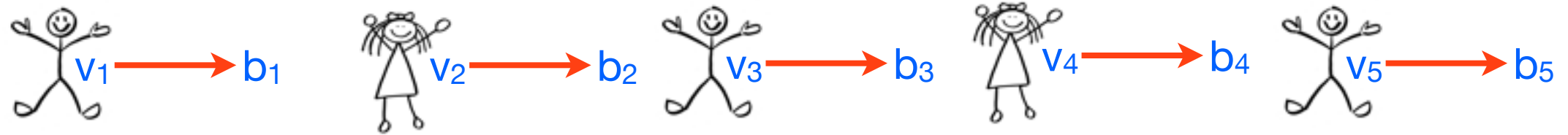
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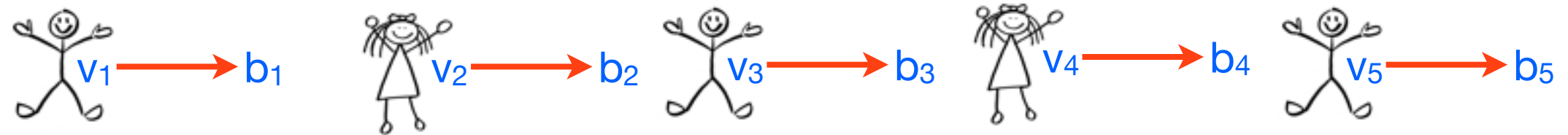




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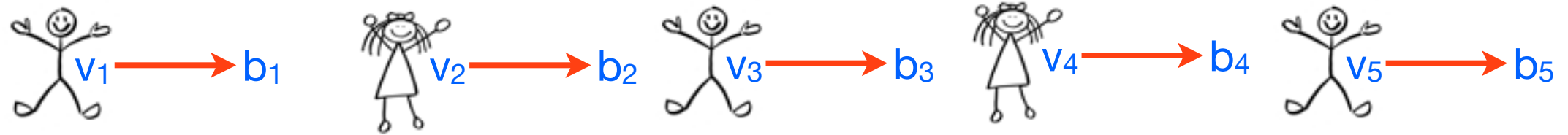


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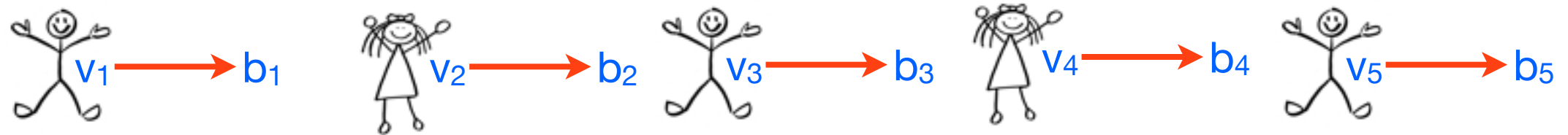
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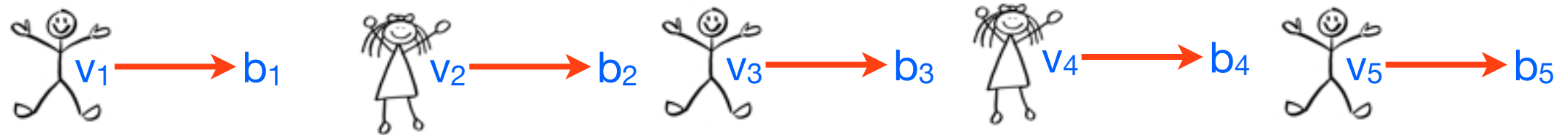
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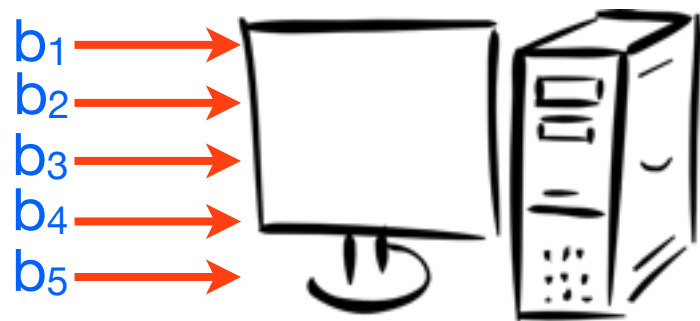
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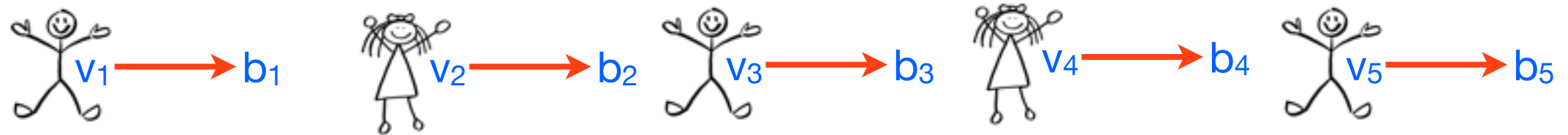
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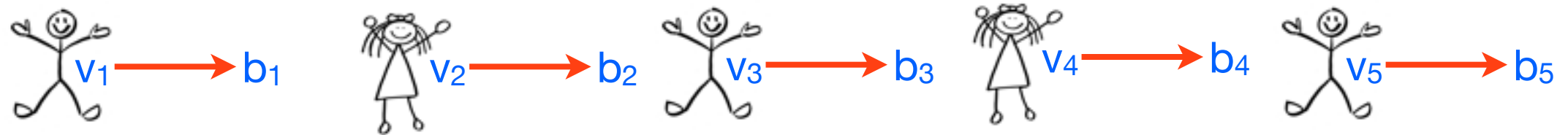
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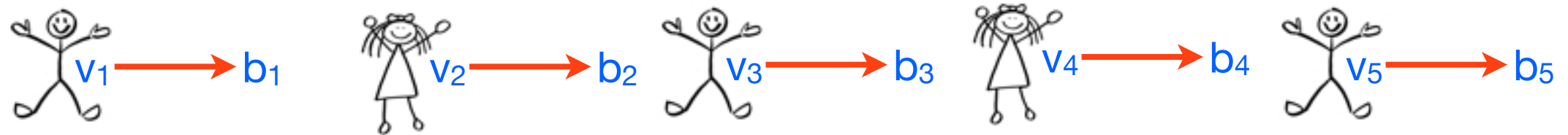
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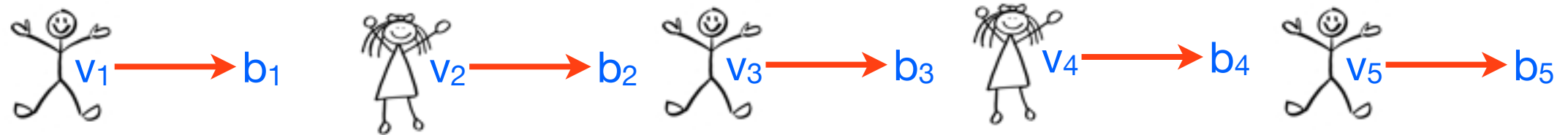
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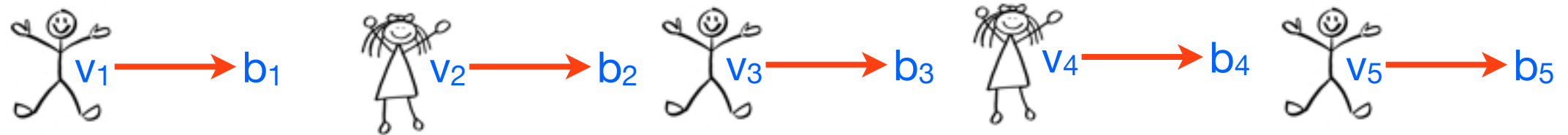




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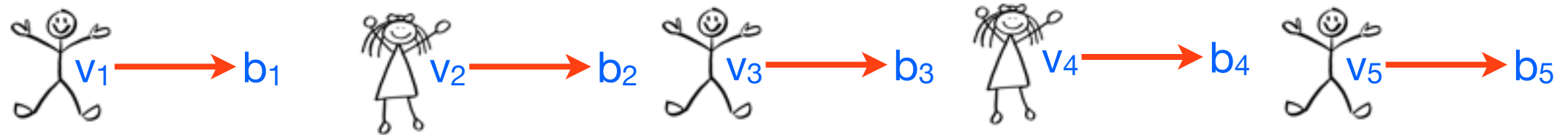


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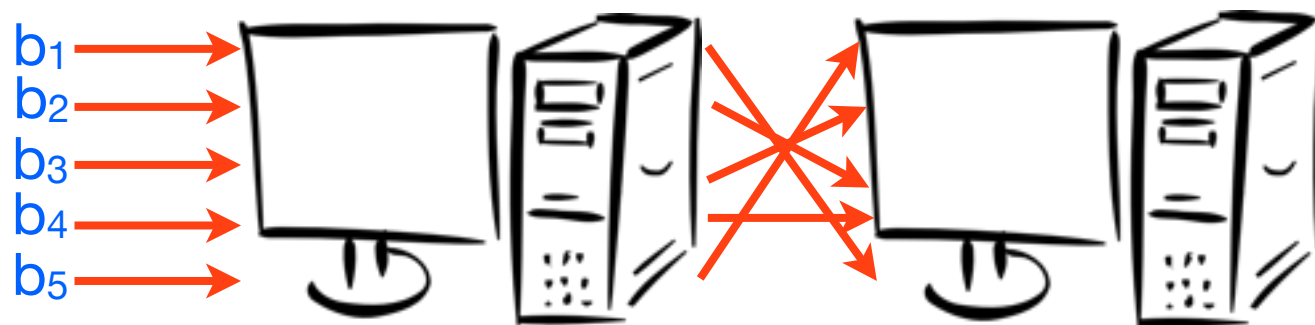


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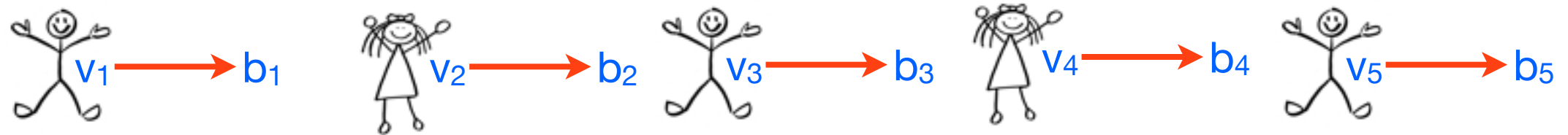
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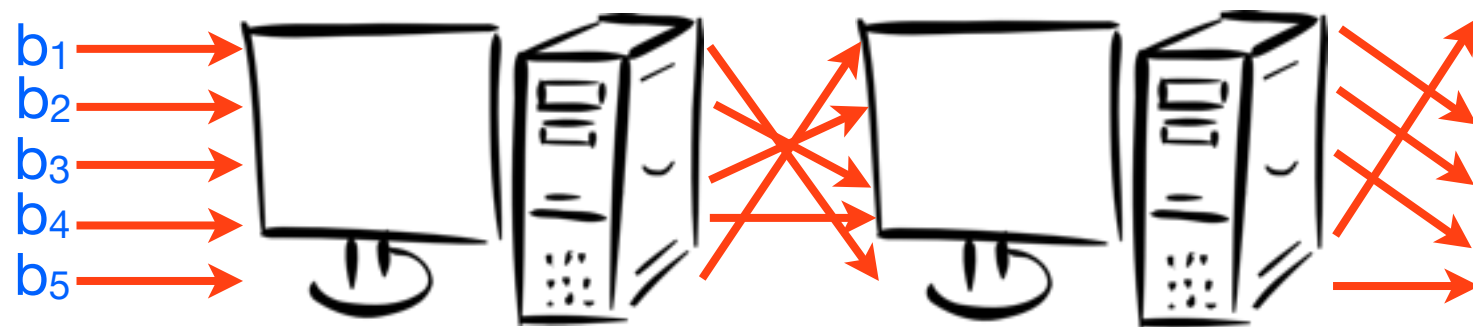
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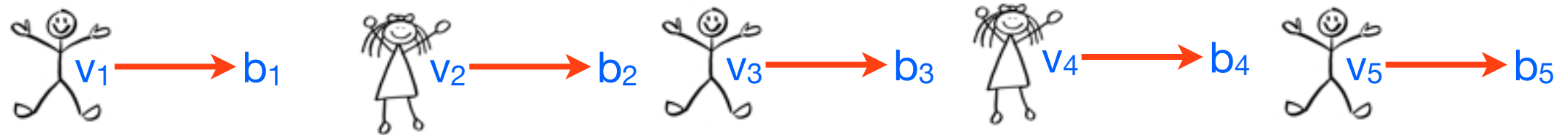


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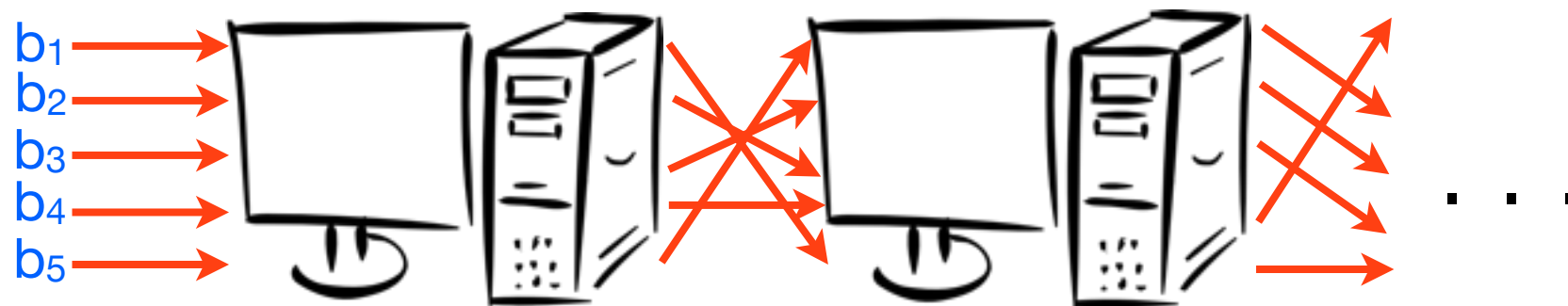


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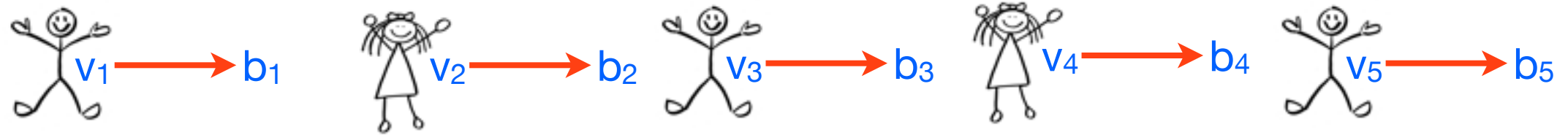


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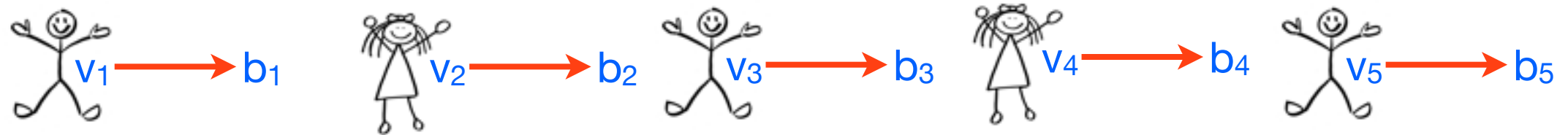


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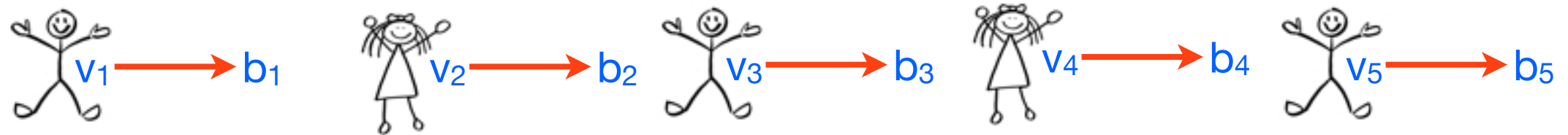
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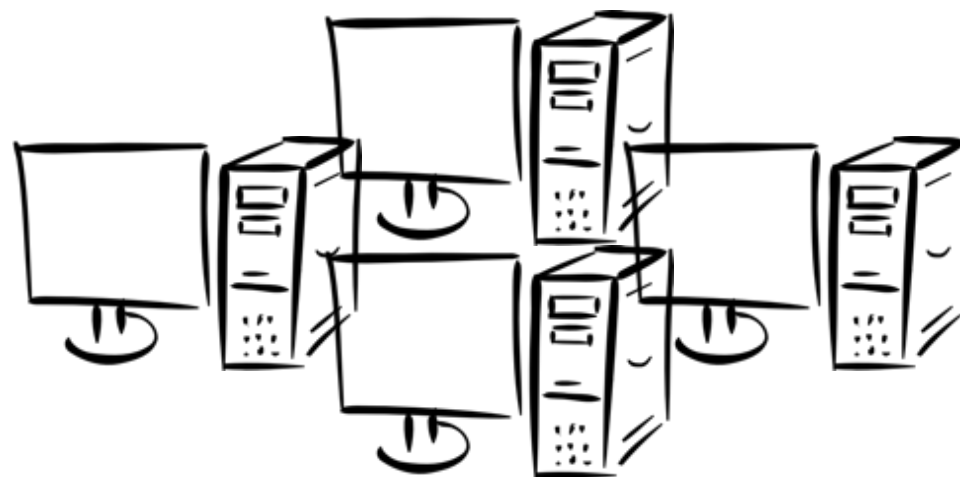
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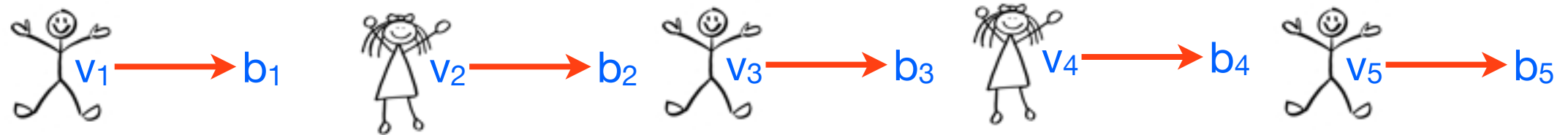


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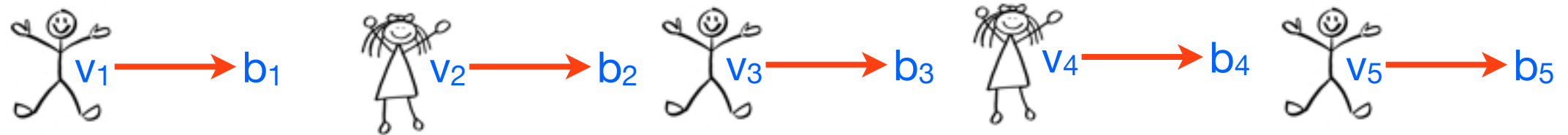
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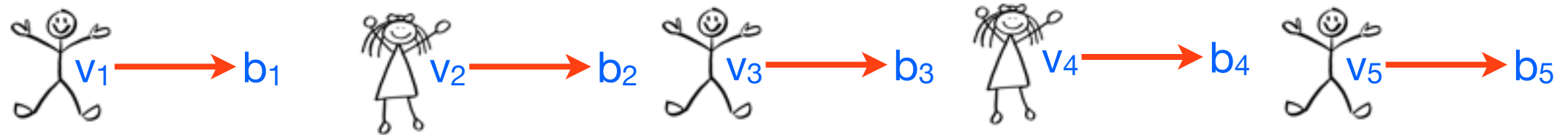


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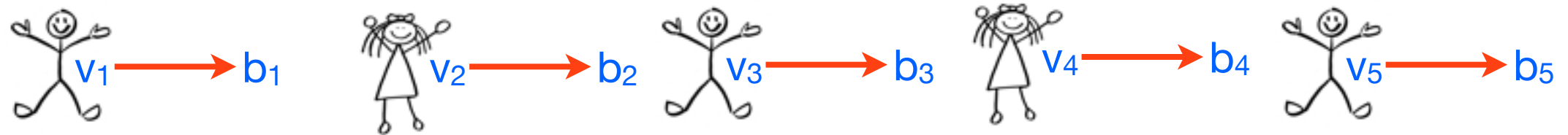


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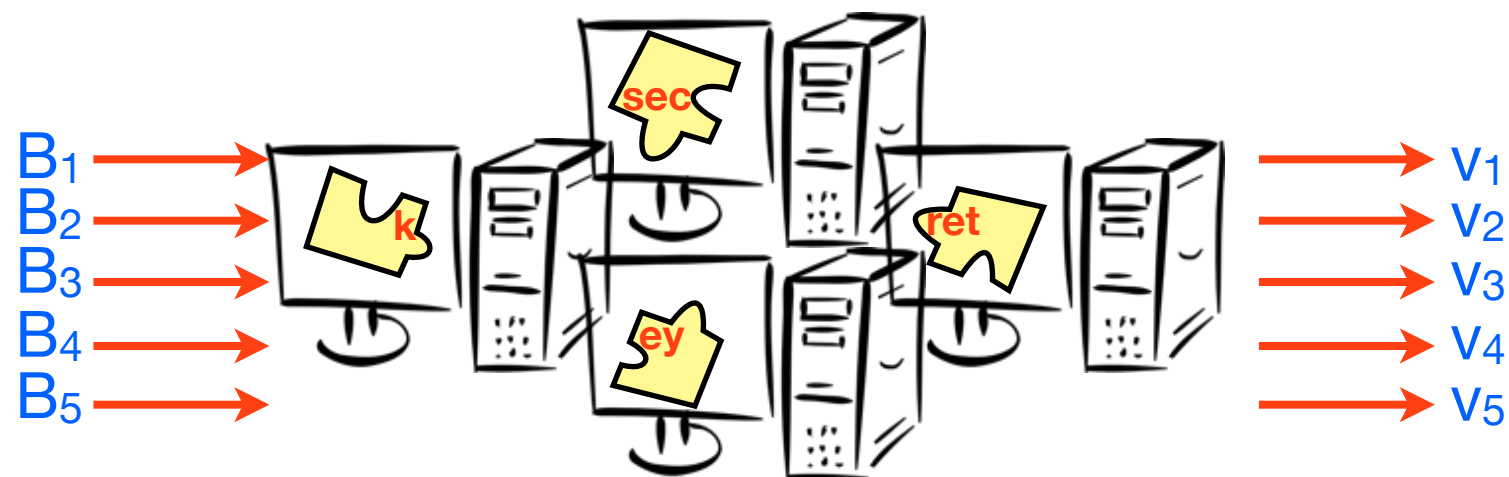
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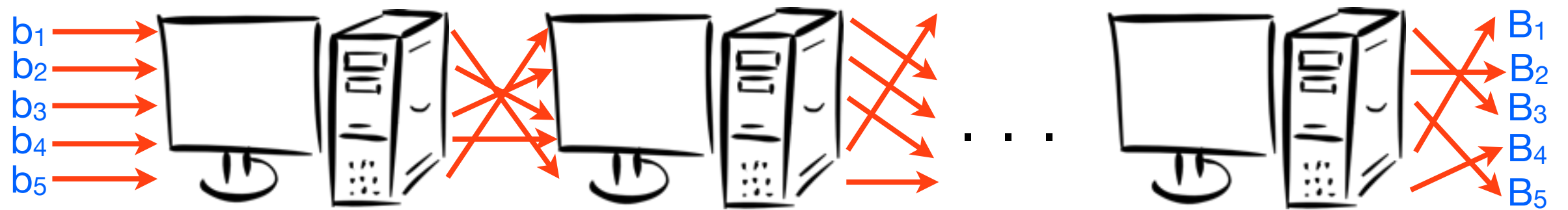


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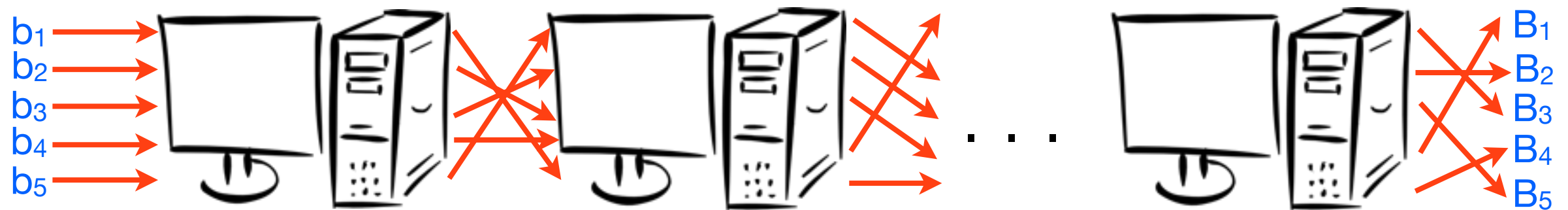
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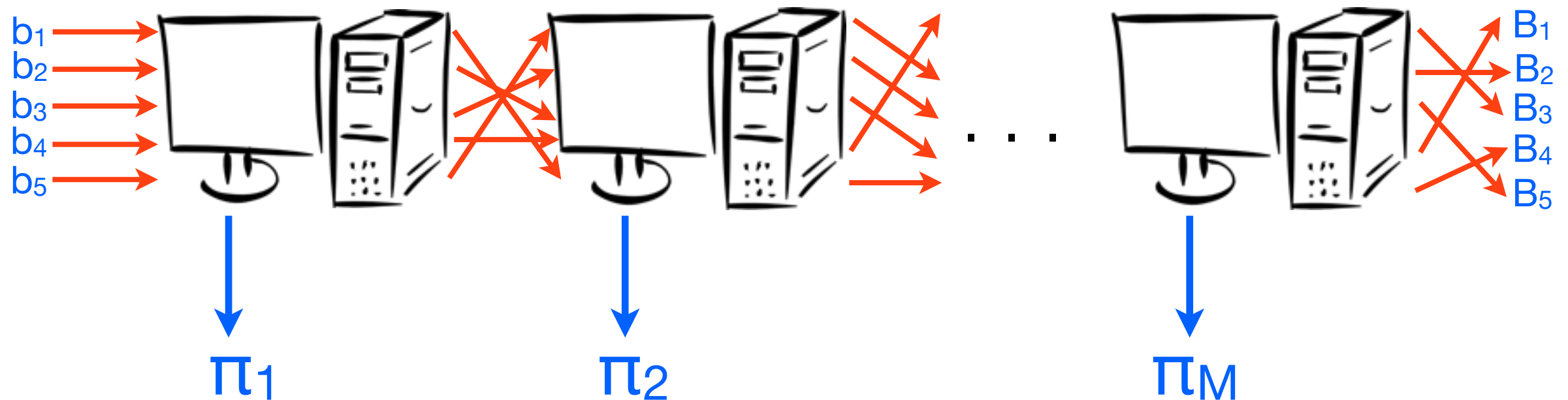
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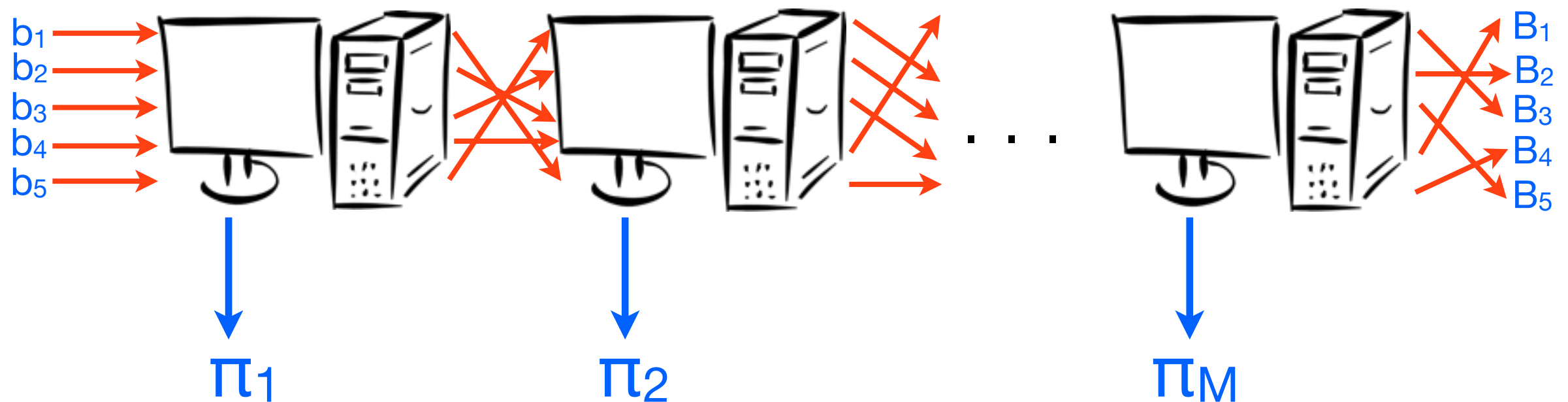
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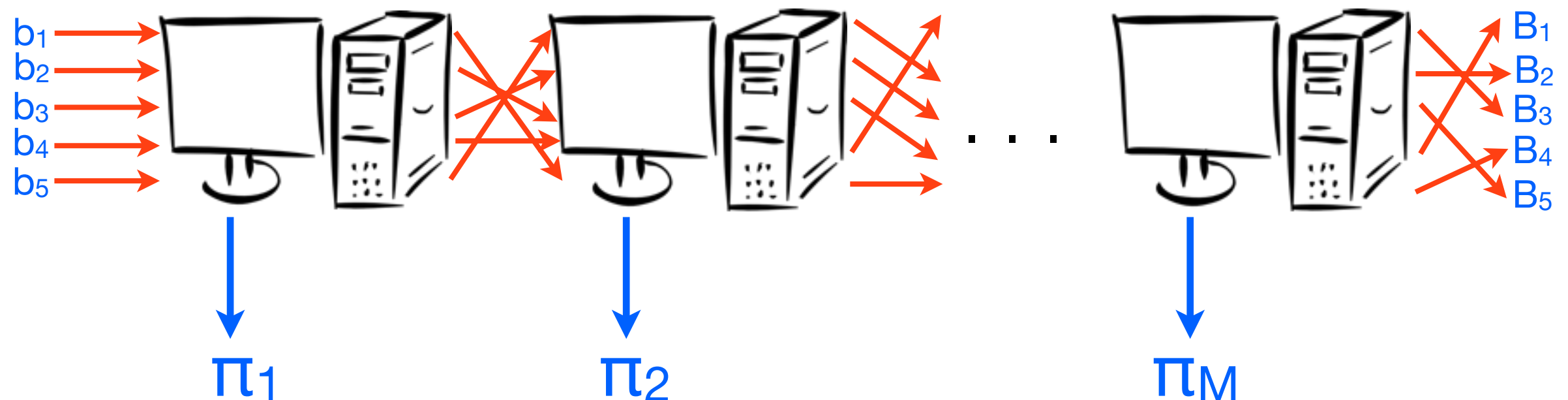
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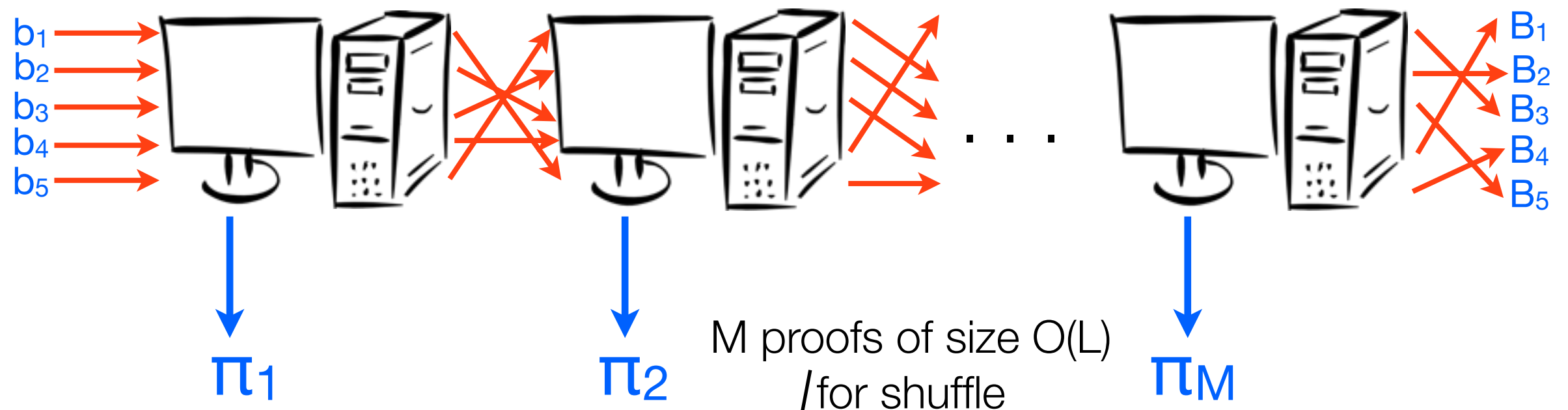
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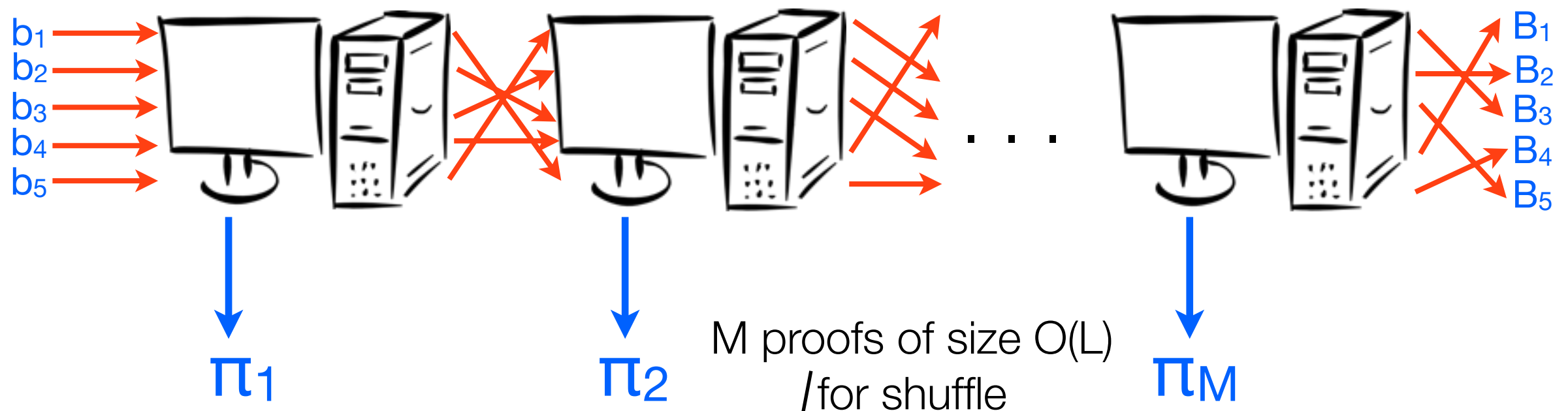


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- Do so by using **controlled-malleable zero-knowledge proofs** [CKLM12]
- Define compact threshold decryption (like compactly verifiable shuffle) and a notion of vote privacy in an election
- Give efficient instantiations of shuffle and threshold decryption schemes based on Decision Linear [BBS04] and two static assumptions [GL07]

# Outline

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Shuffling and decrypting

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## Definitions

Malleable proofs [CKLM12]  
Compact shuffles [CKLM12]  
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But how to define a **strong notion of soundness** like extractability?

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If a proof is zero knowledge, CM-SSE, and strongly derivation private, then we call it a **cm-NIZK**

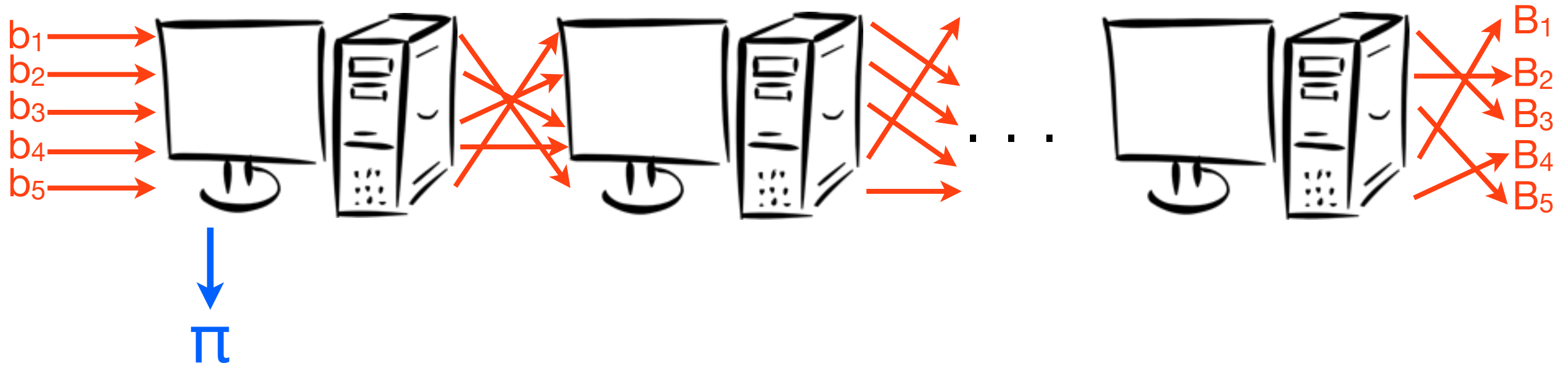
 (like function  
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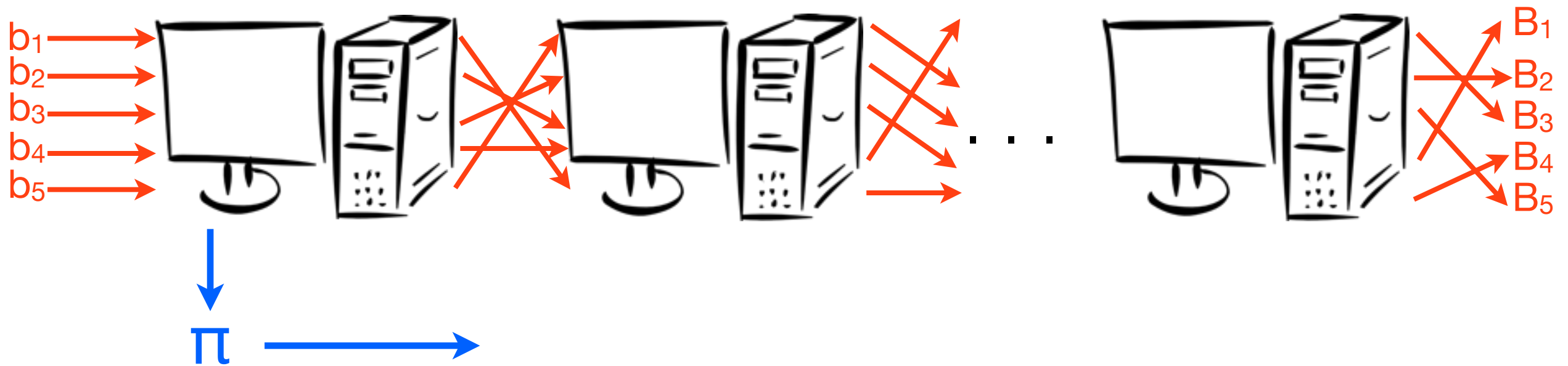


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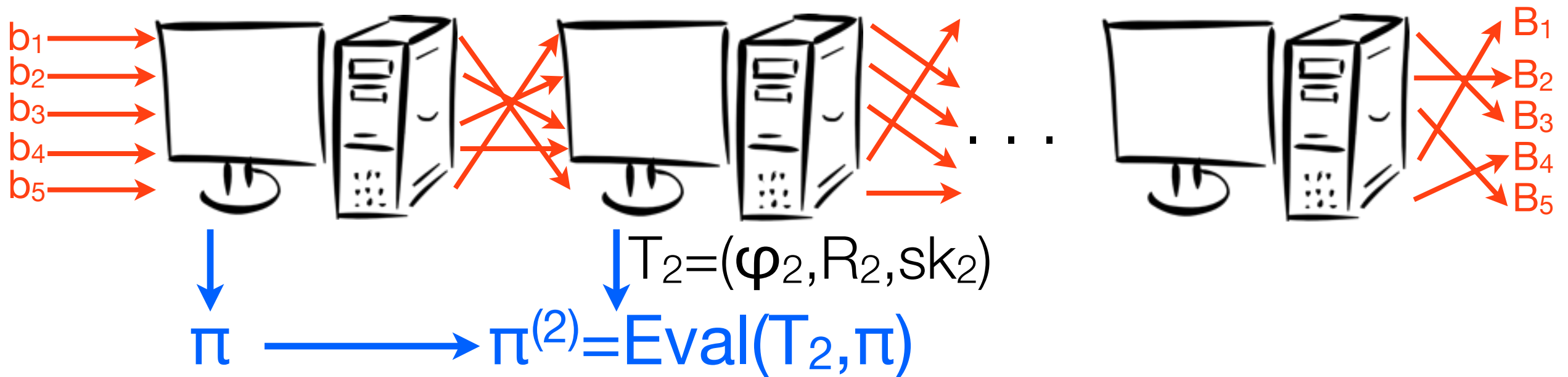
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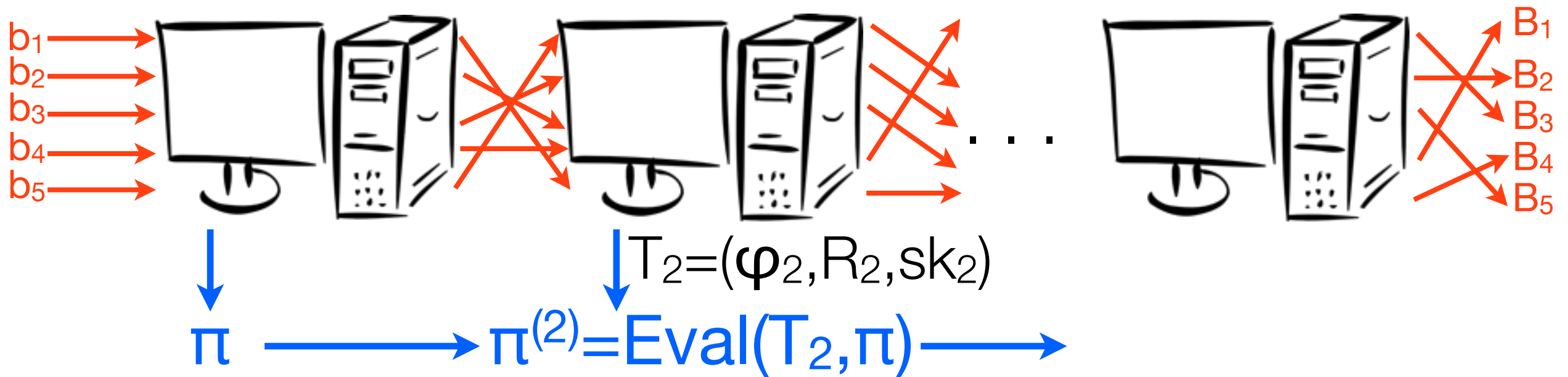
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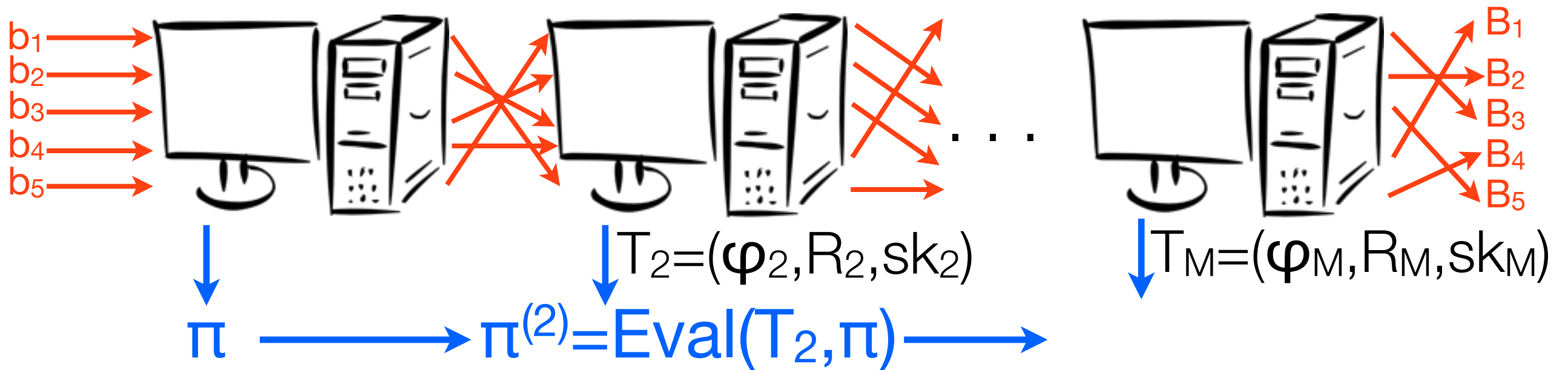
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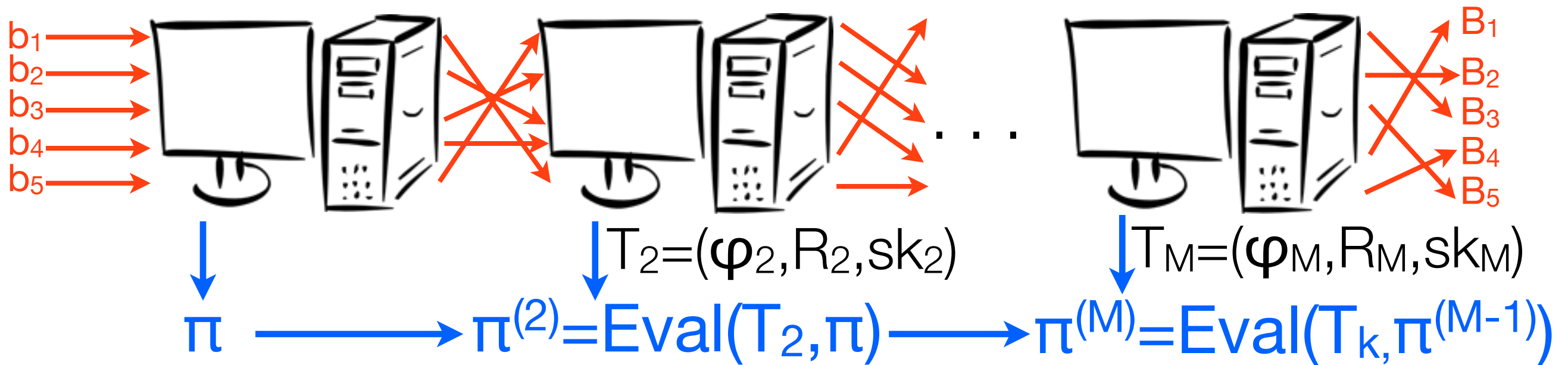
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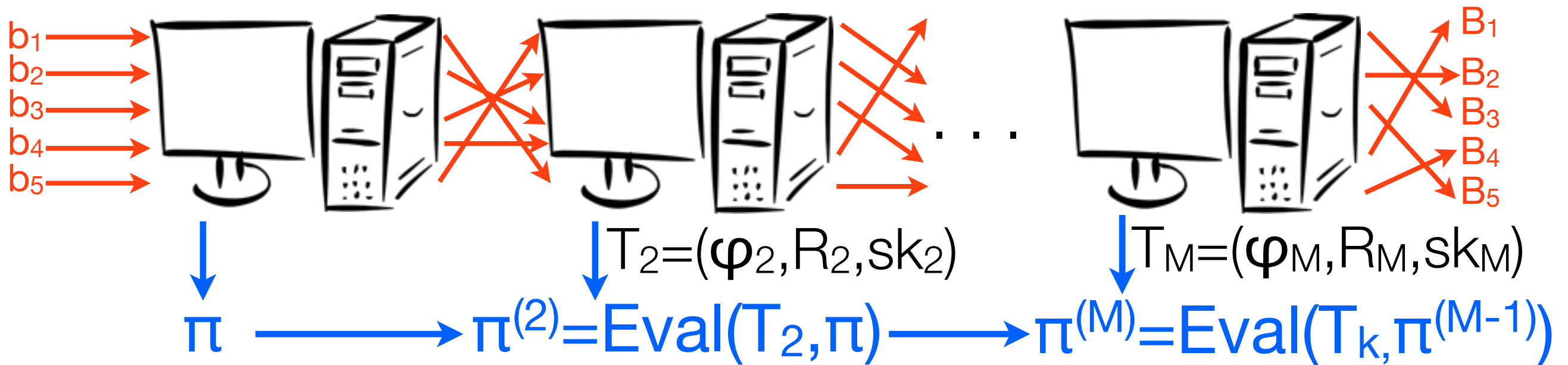


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So if there are  $L$  ciphertexts and  $M$  servers, proof size can be  $O(L+M)$

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$$C = \text{Enc}(pk, m)$$

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KeyGen  
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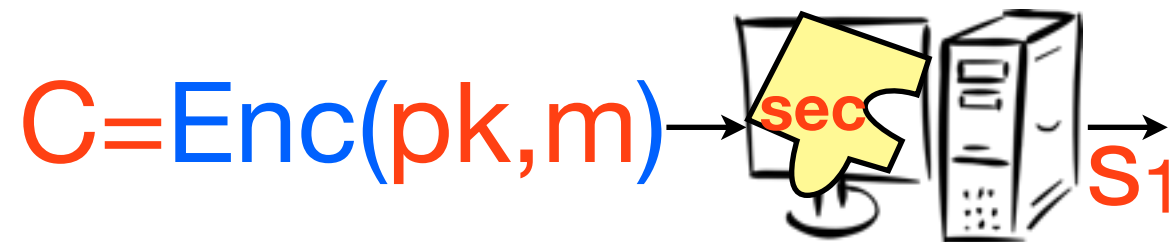
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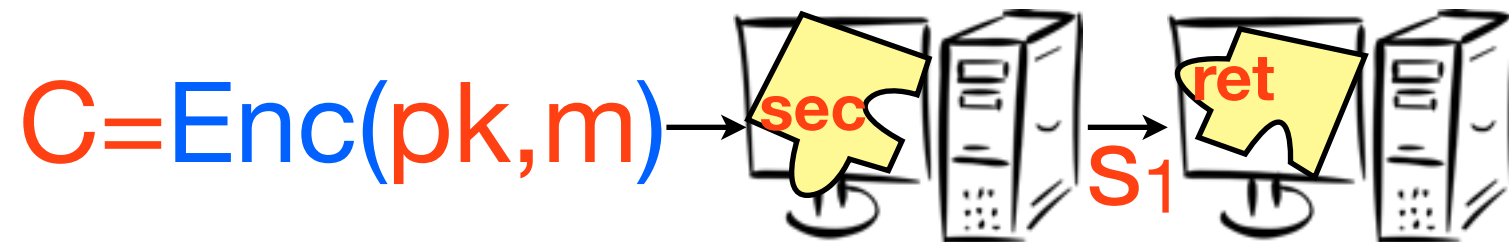
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KeyGen  
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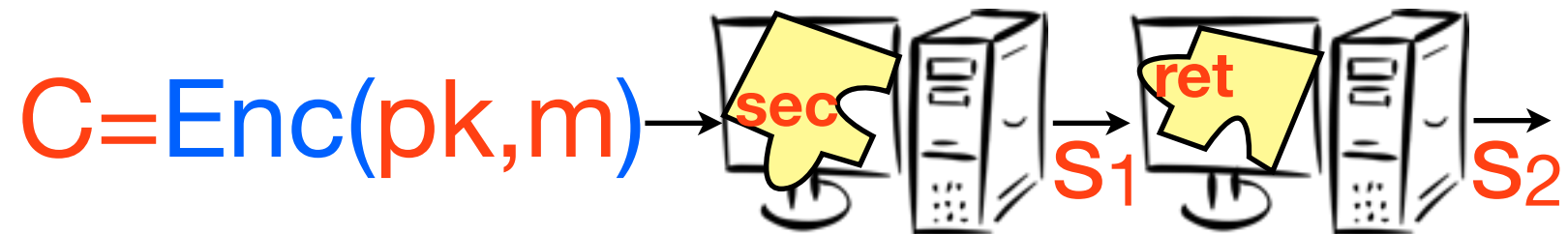
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KeyGen  
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# Compact threshold decryption

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# Compact threshold decryption

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Shares contain proof of correctness

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ShareDec  
(ShareProve)

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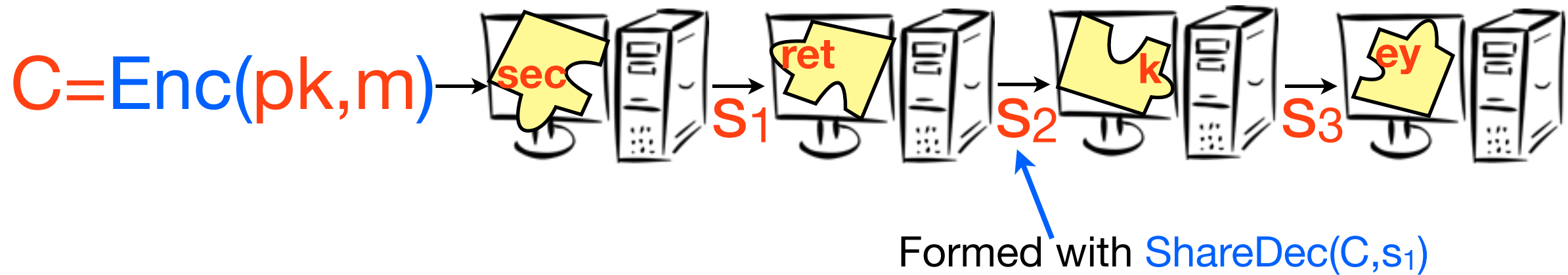


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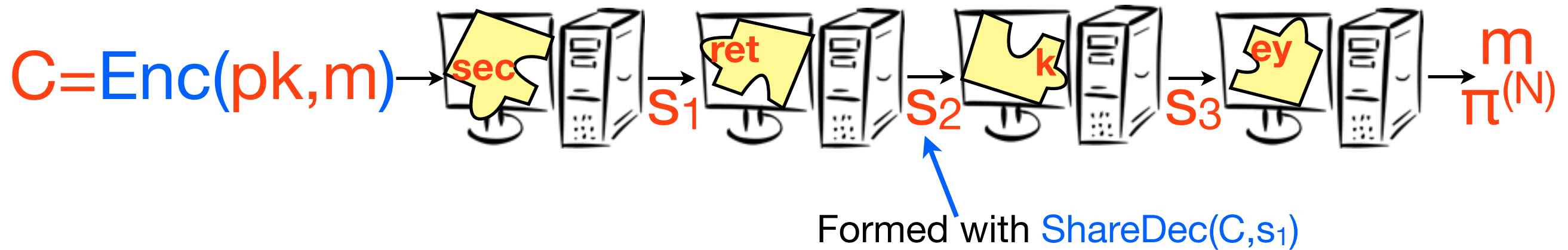


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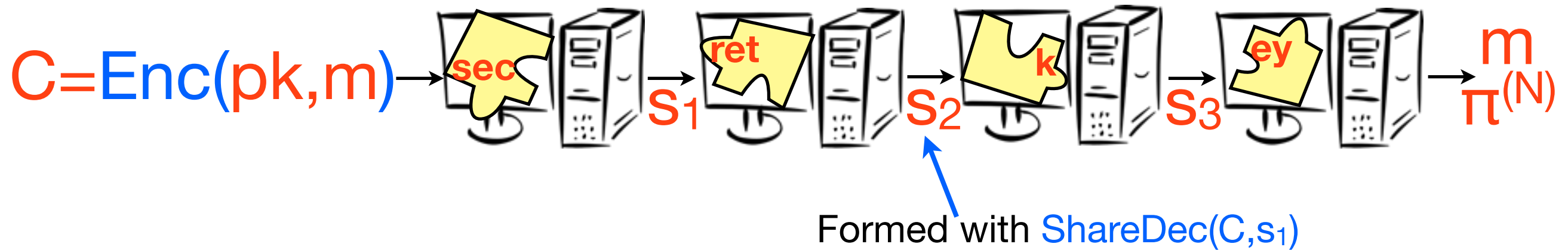


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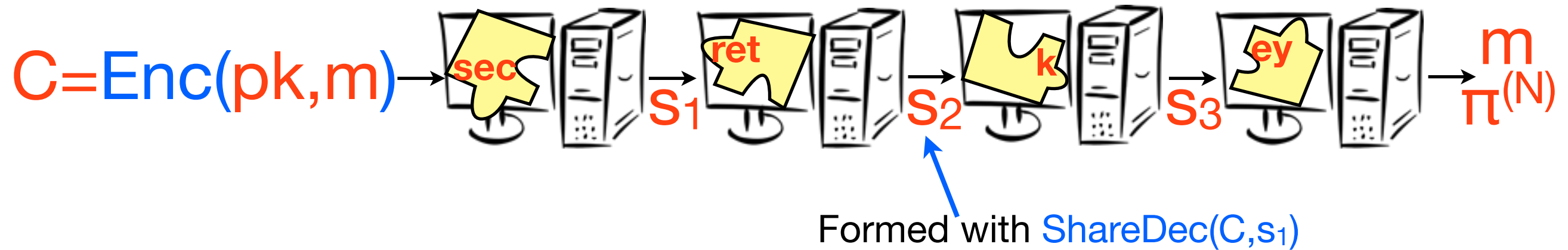


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# Compact threshold decryption



Shares contain proof of correctness

Servers can decrypt in any order; not fixed

Once again, final proof  $\pi^{(N)}$  suffices for whole decryption, meaning total proof size can again be  $O(L+N)$  instead of  $O(LN)$  (again, under an appropriate definition)

KeyGen  
 Enc  
 ShareDec  
 (ShareProve)  
 ShareVerify

# Outline

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Definitions

**Shuffling and decrypting**

A compact verifiable shuffle

Threshold decryption

A voting scheme

Conclusions



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**Dec**(crs, sk,  $(u, v, w)$ ): return  **$u^{-1/\alpha}v^{-1/\beta}w$**

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Basically, alter their proofs and make them malleable (i.e., show they satisfy **CM-friendliness**)

End up with [CRS of size  \$O\(M\)\$ , proofs of size  \$O\(L+M\)\$](#)  (improvement over [CKLM12], which had constant-sized CRS but proofs of size  $O(L^2+M)$ )

# Part 2: Compact threshold decryption (KeyGen)

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To split BBS decryption key  $sk = (\alpha, \beta)$ , just pick  $\alpha_1, \beta_1, \dots, \alpha_{N-1}, \beta_{N-1} \leftarrow F_p$  and set  $\alpha_N = -1/\alpha - \sum \alpha_i$  and  $\beta_N = -1/\beta - \sum \beta_i$ ; then  $\alpha_1 + \dots + \alpha_N = -1/\alpha$  and  $\beta_1 + \dots + \beta_N = -1/\beta$

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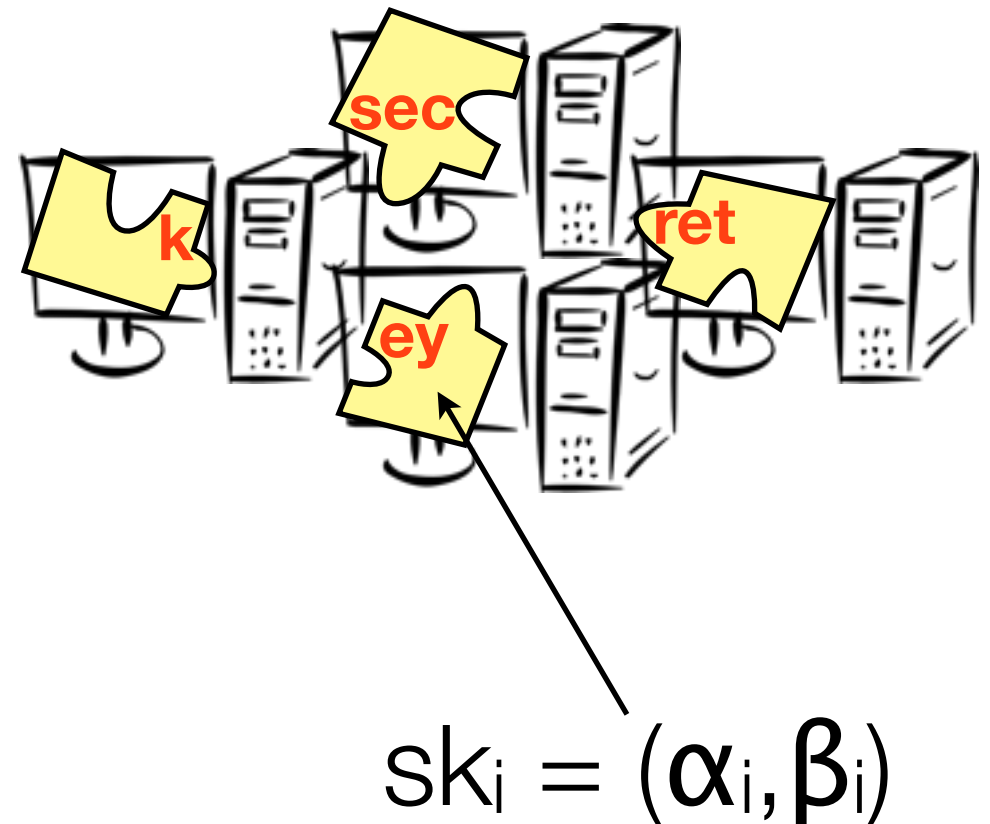
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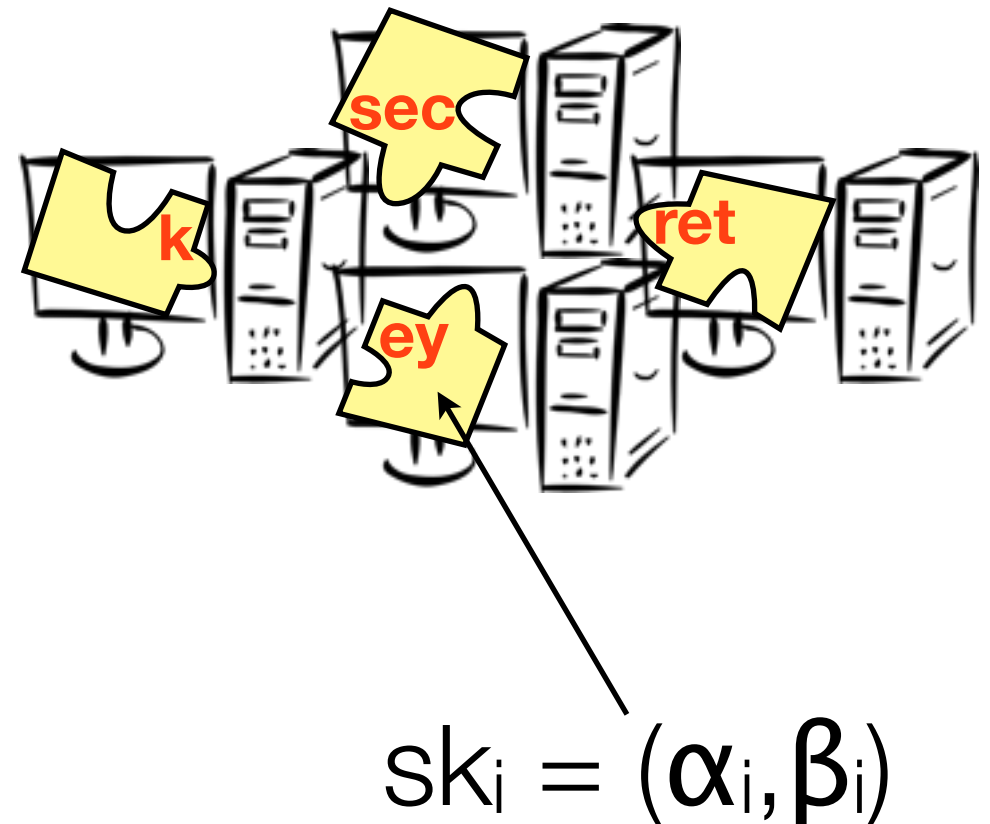


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Also want verification key  $vk = (\text{Com}(sk_1) = (\text{Com}(\alpha_1), \text{Com}(\beta_1)), \dots, \text{Com}(sk_N))$

# Part 2: Compact threshold decryption (ShareDec)

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So say decrypter with  $sk_j = (\alpha_j, \beta_j)$  gets share  $(s, l, \pi)$

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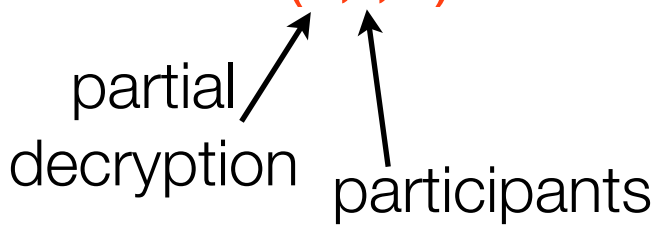
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partial decryption      participants      proof of correct partial decryption



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- Output  $(s', I \cup \{j\}, \pi')$

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# Outline

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Definitions

Shuffling and decrypting

A voting scheme

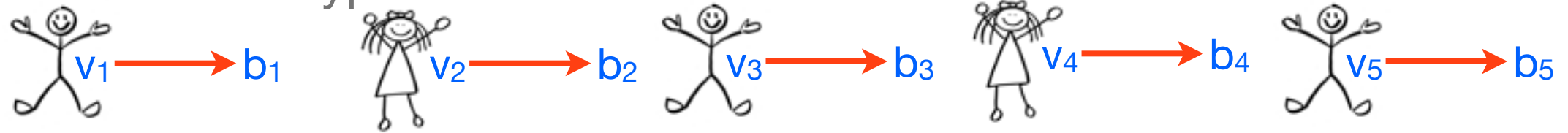
Conclusions



# Instantiating cryptographic voting

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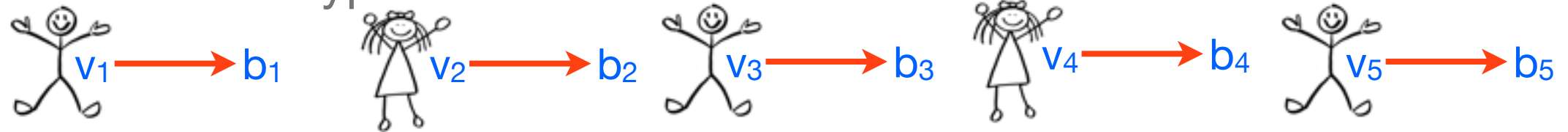
Phase 1: users encrypt votes to cast ballots



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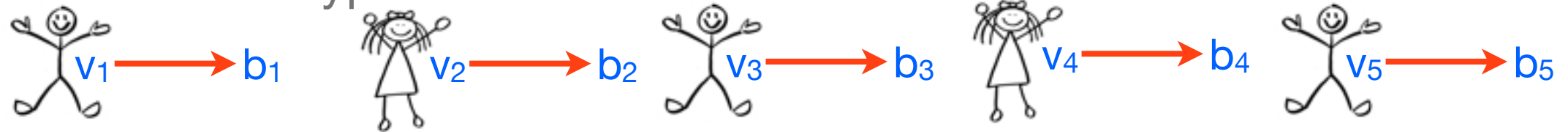


Set up KeyGen for BBS encryption,  $vk$  and  $crs$  for threshold decryption proofs,  $crs$  for shuffle proofs

# Instantiating cryptographic voting

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Phase 1: users encrypt votes to cast ballots



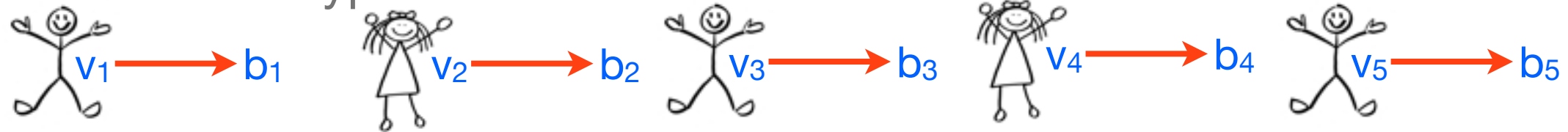
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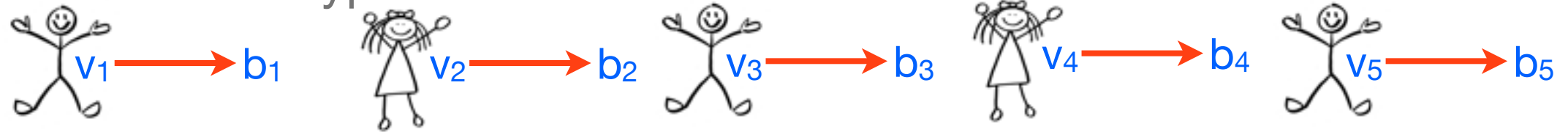
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The  $vk$  for threshold decryption is size  $O(N)$ ; for shuffles the  $crs$  is size  $O(M)$

# Instantiating cryptographic voting

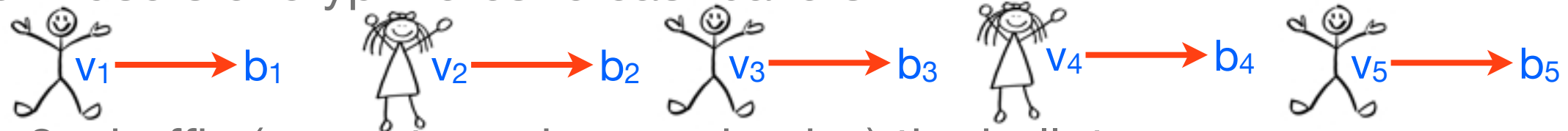
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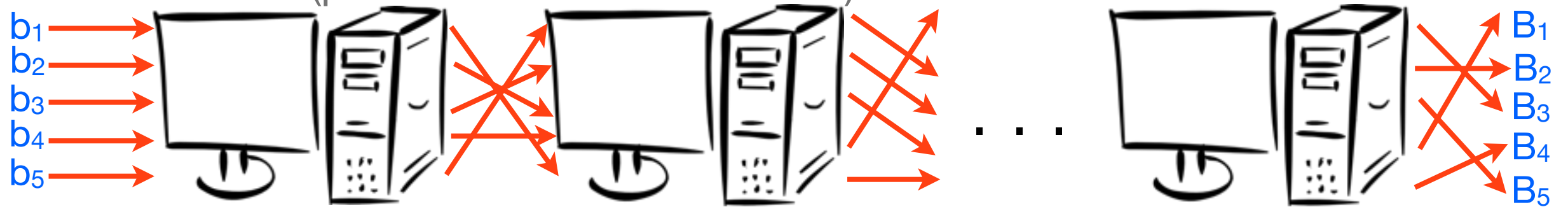


# Instantiating cryptographic voting

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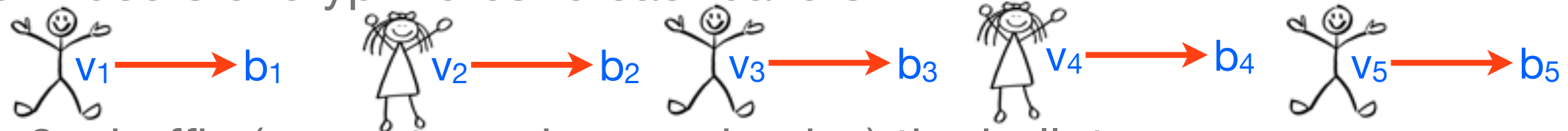


Phase 2: shuffle (permute and re-randomize) the ballots

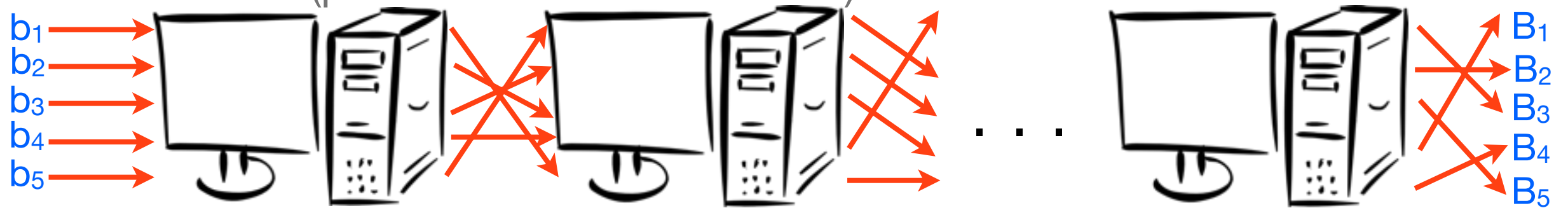


# Instantiating cryptographic voting

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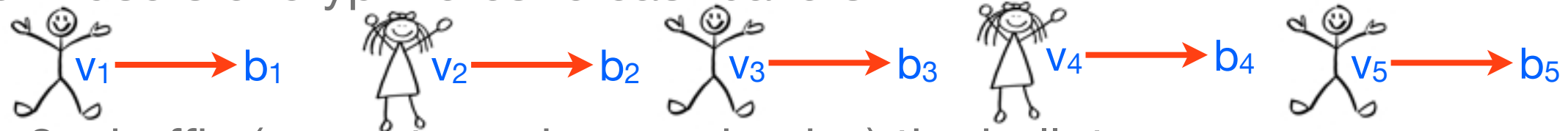
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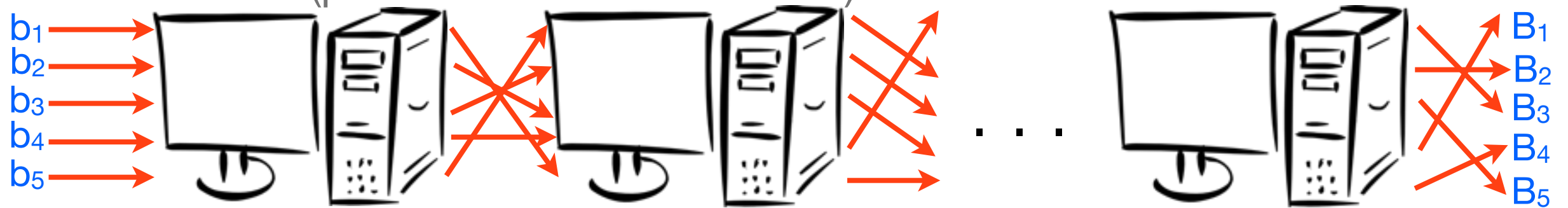
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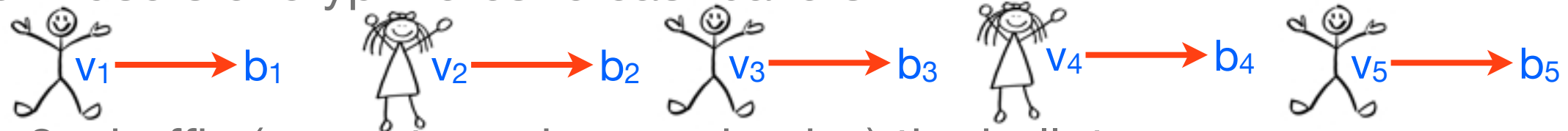
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Resulting proof at the end is of size  $O(L+M)$

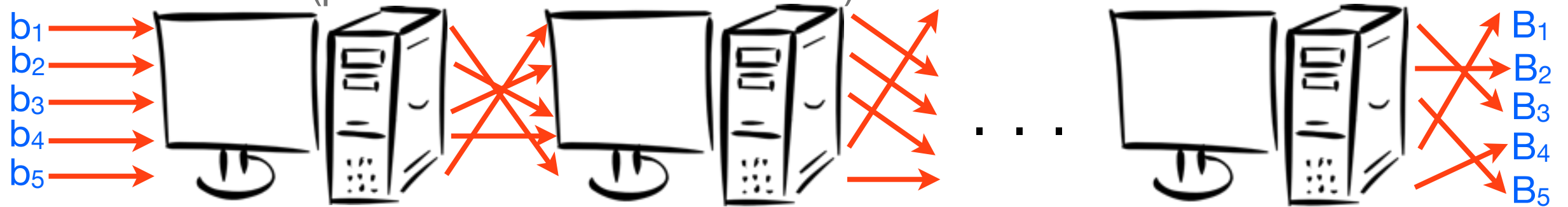


# Instantiating cryptographic voting

Phase 1: users encrypt votes to cast ballots

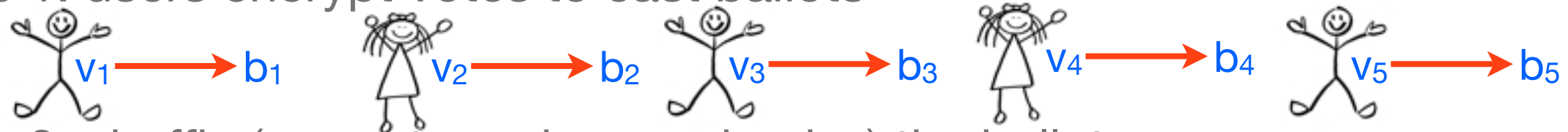


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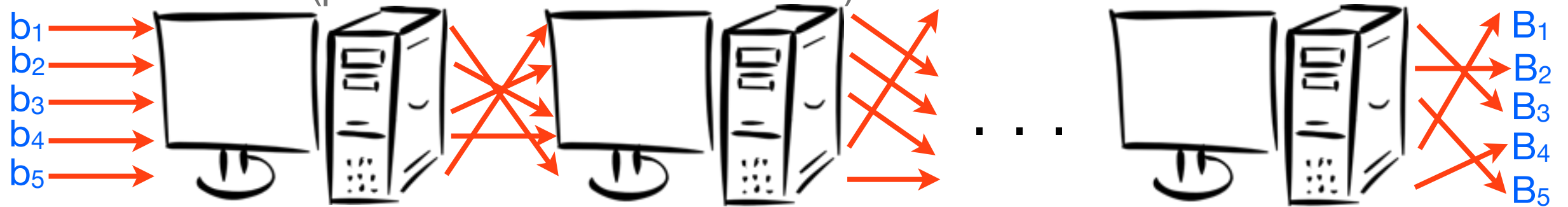


# Instantiating cryptographic voting

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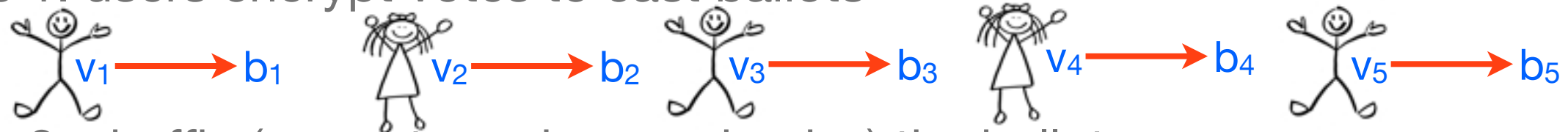


Phase 3: threshold decrypt the shuffled ballots

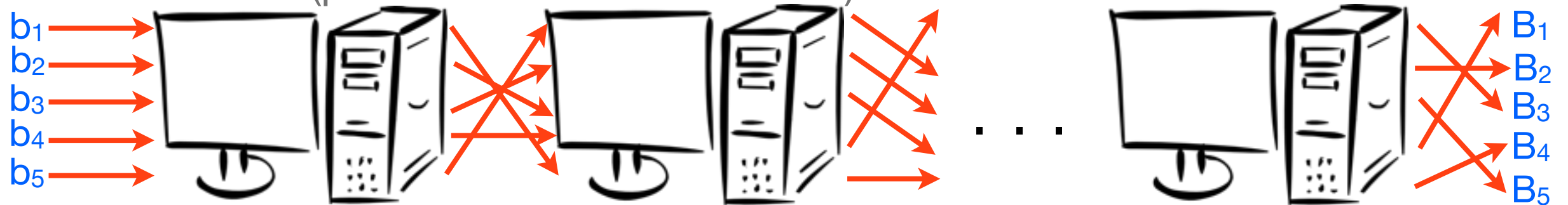


# Instantiating cryptographic voting

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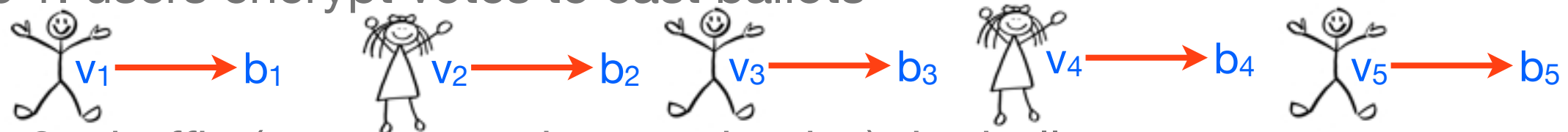
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Resulting proof from cumulative threshold decryption is  $O(L+N)$ , so total verifier input size?  $O(M) + O(N) + O(L+M) + O(L+N) = O(L+M+N)$

# Instantiating cryptographic voting

Phase 1: users encrypt votes to cast ballots



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Also show this satisfies notion of vote privacy for elections

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**Conclusions**

# Conclusions and open problems

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The notion of [compact threshold decryption](#) allows for proofs of size  $O(L+N)$

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**Thanks!**  
**Any questions?**

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KeyGen

# Regular verifiable threshold decryption [SG98]

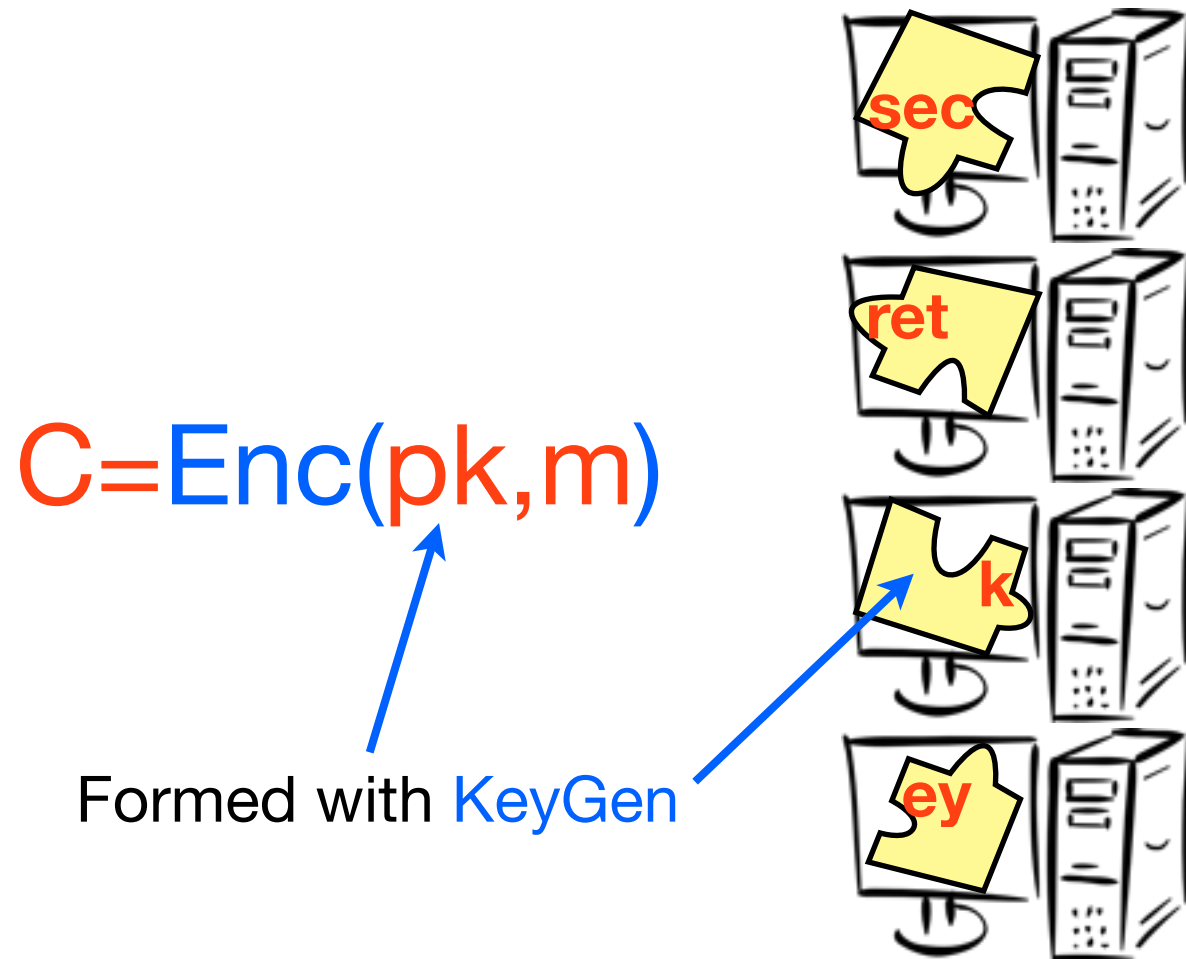
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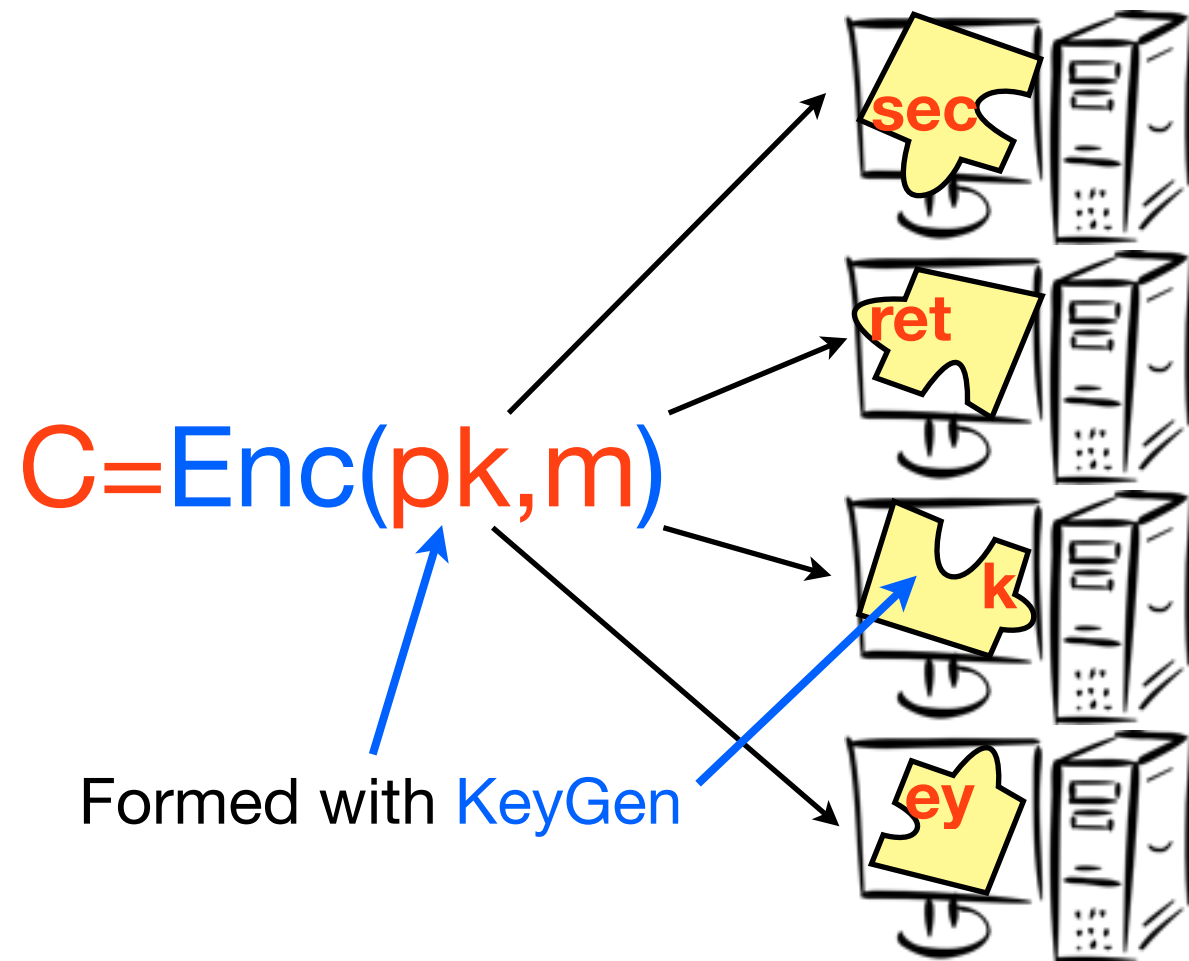
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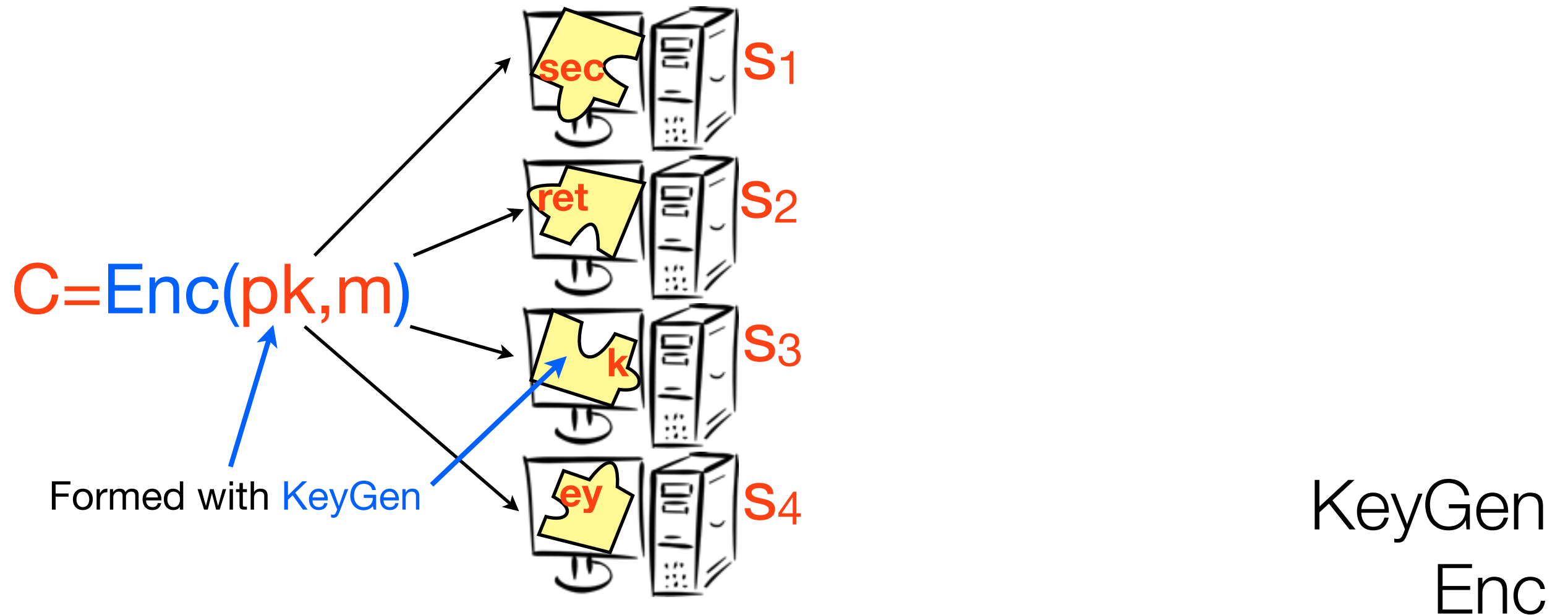
`KeyGen`  
`Enc`

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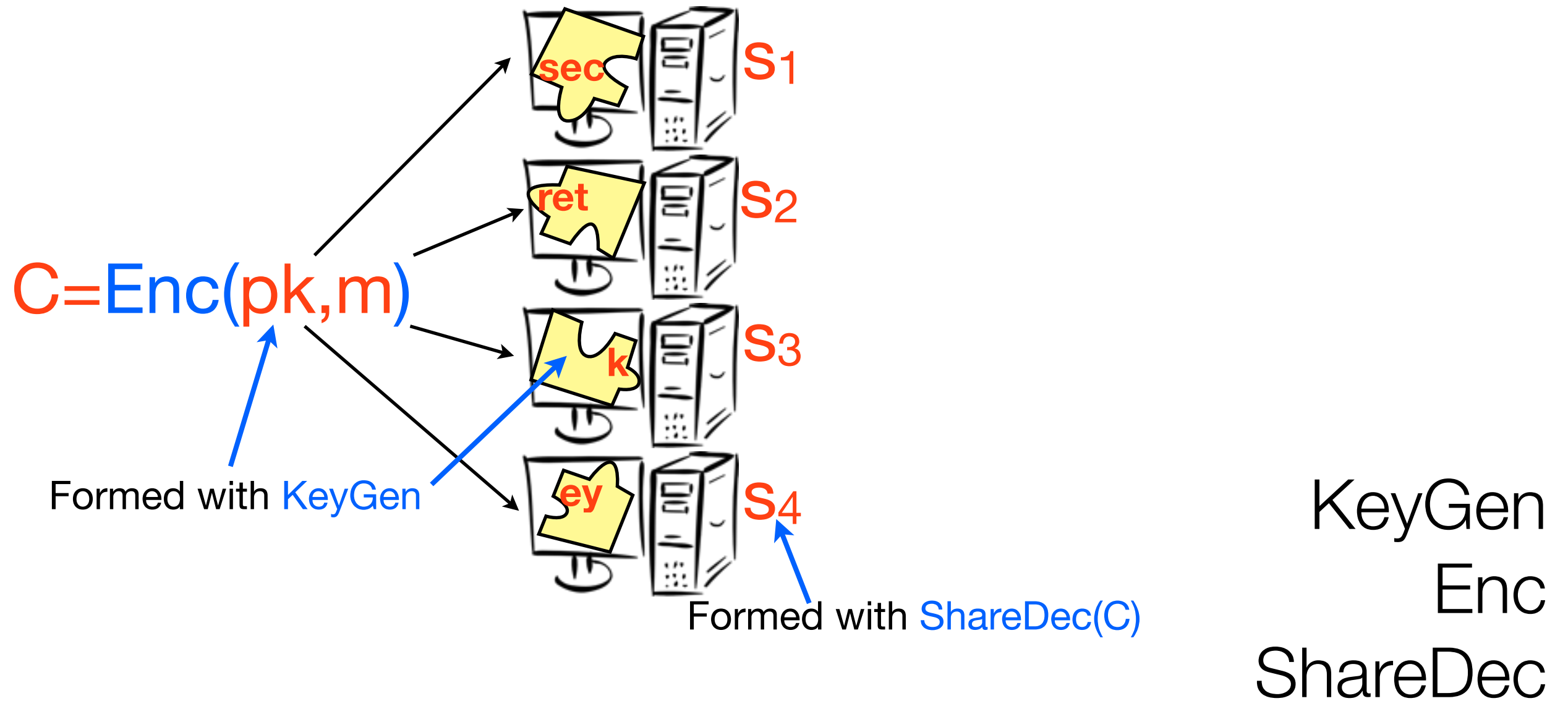


KeyGen  
Enc

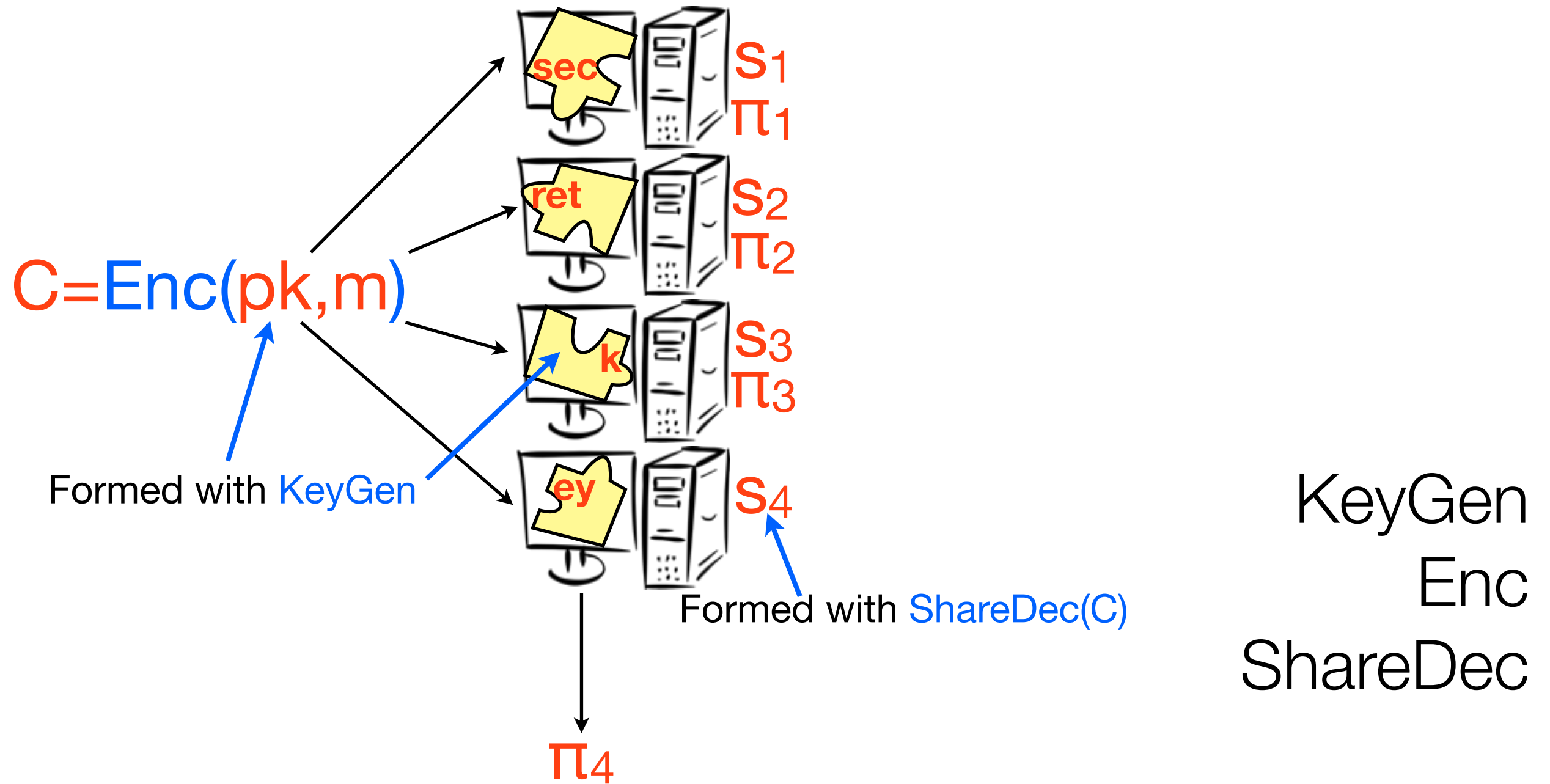
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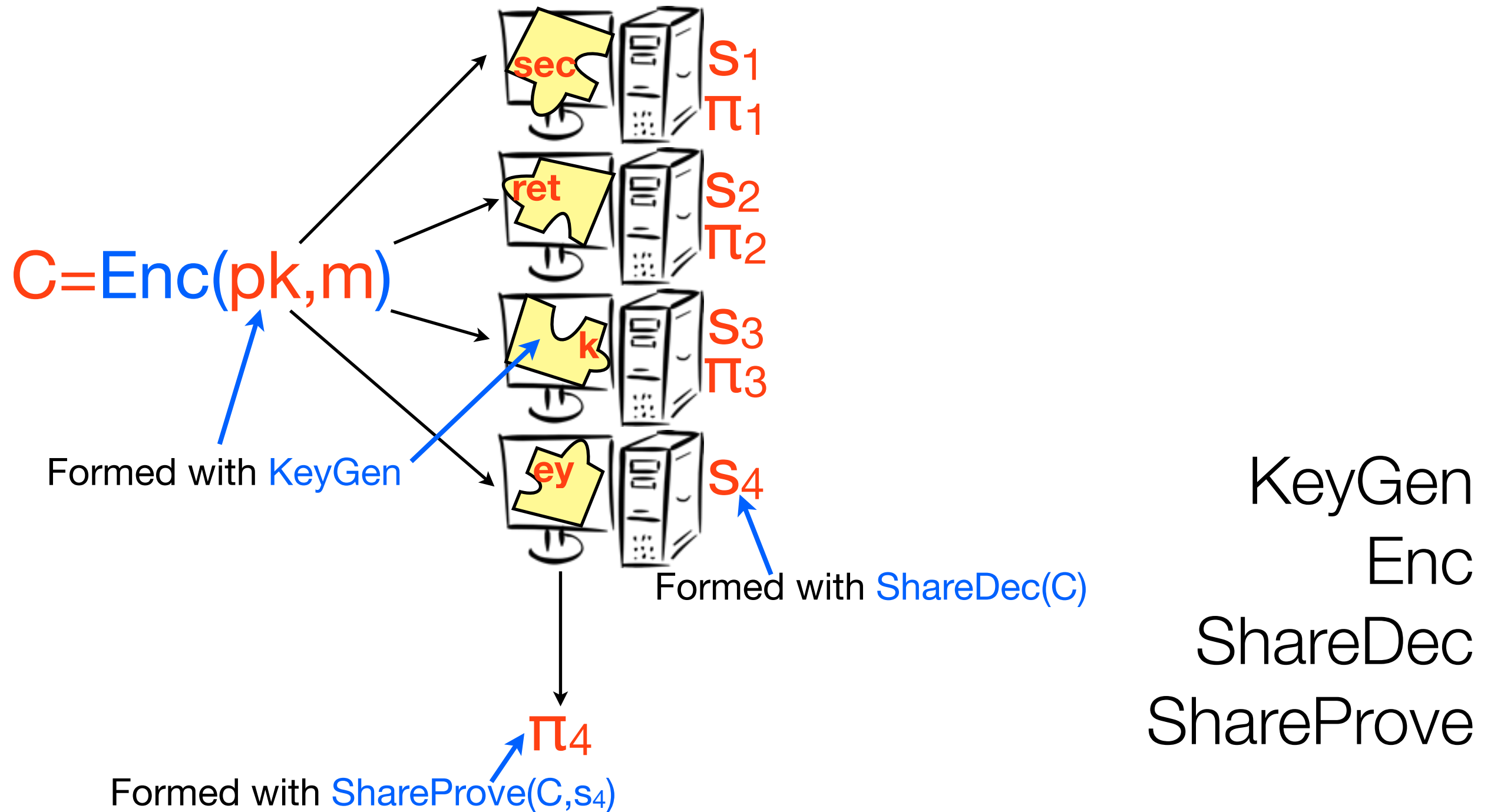
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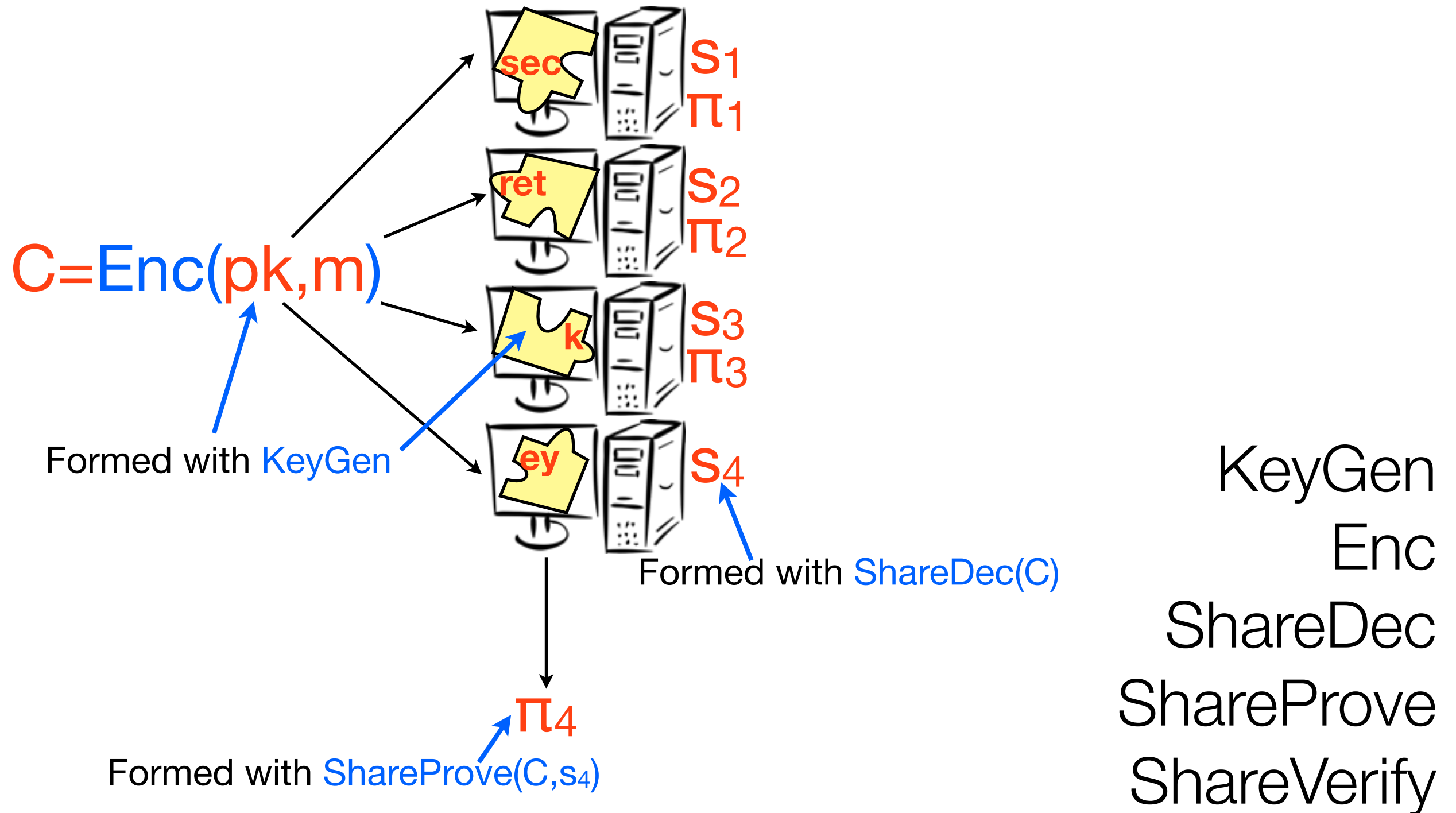
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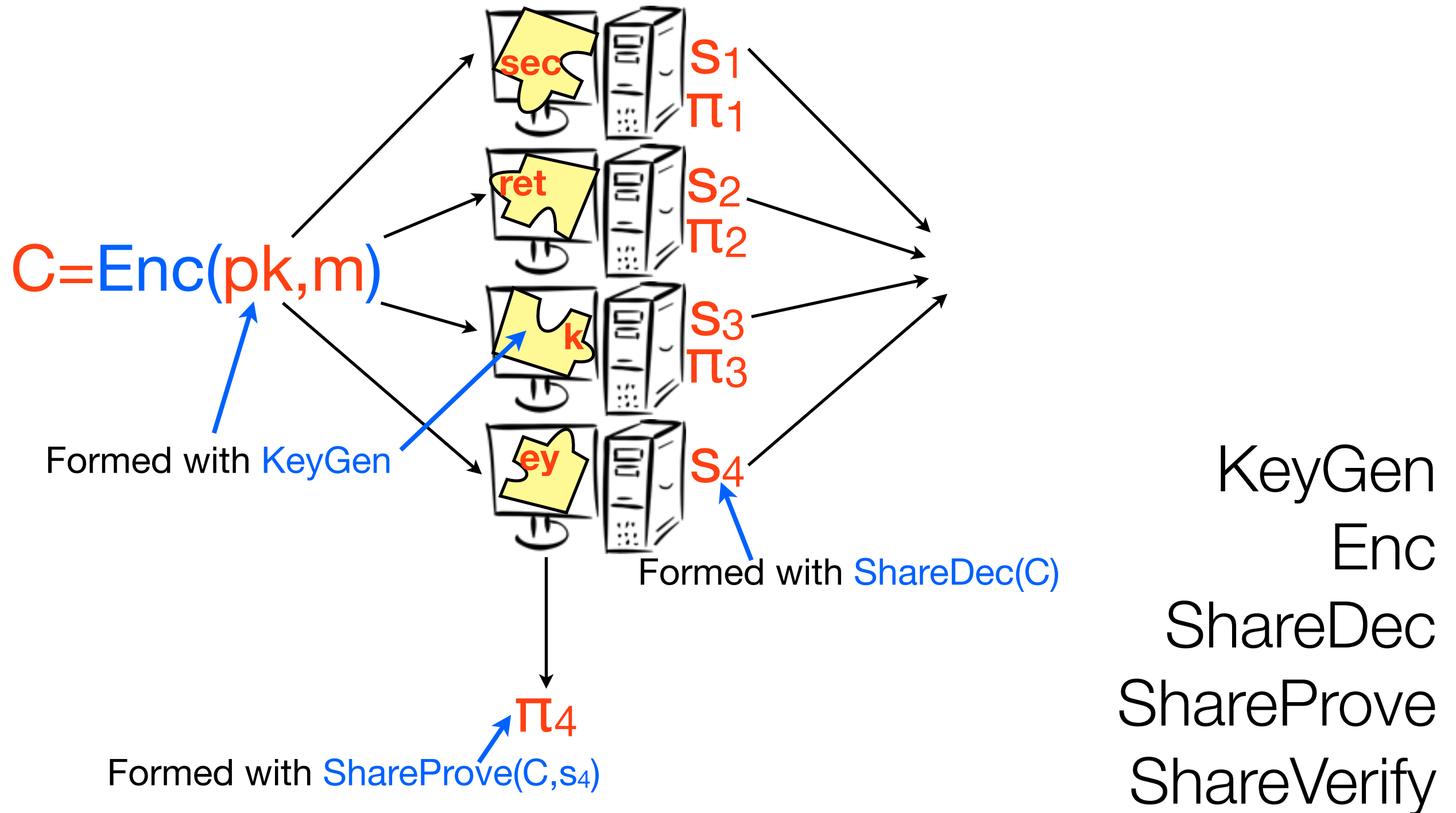
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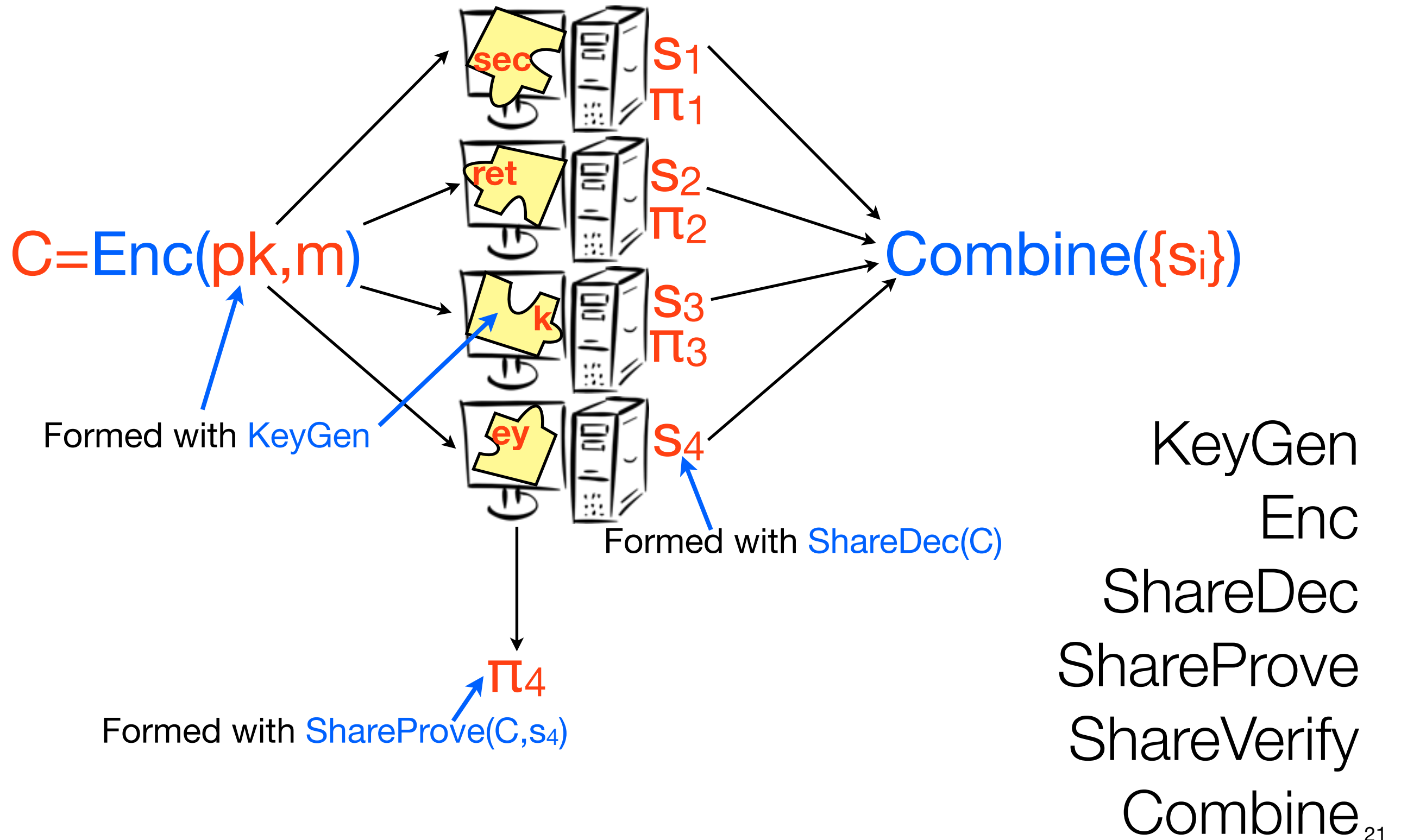


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