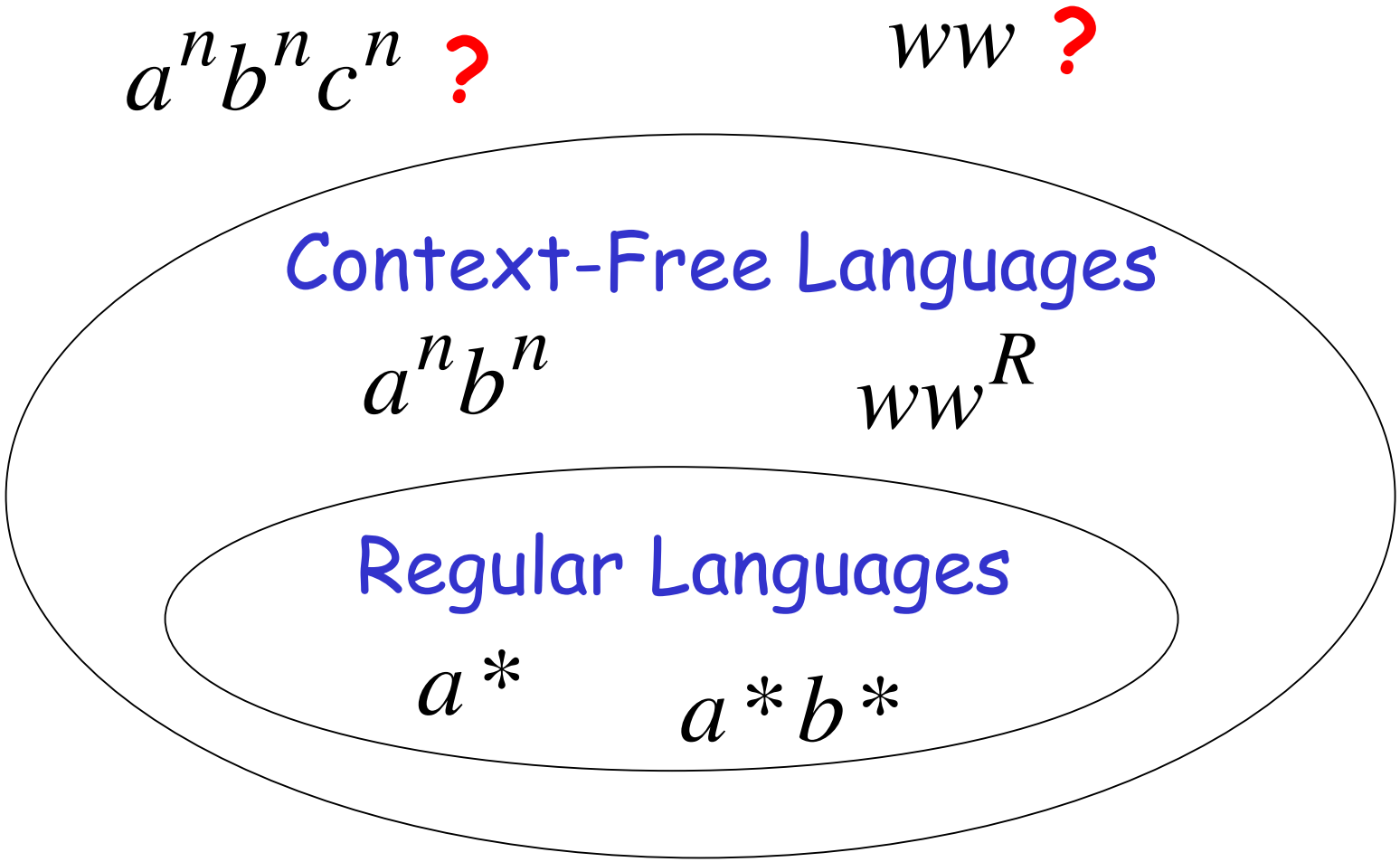
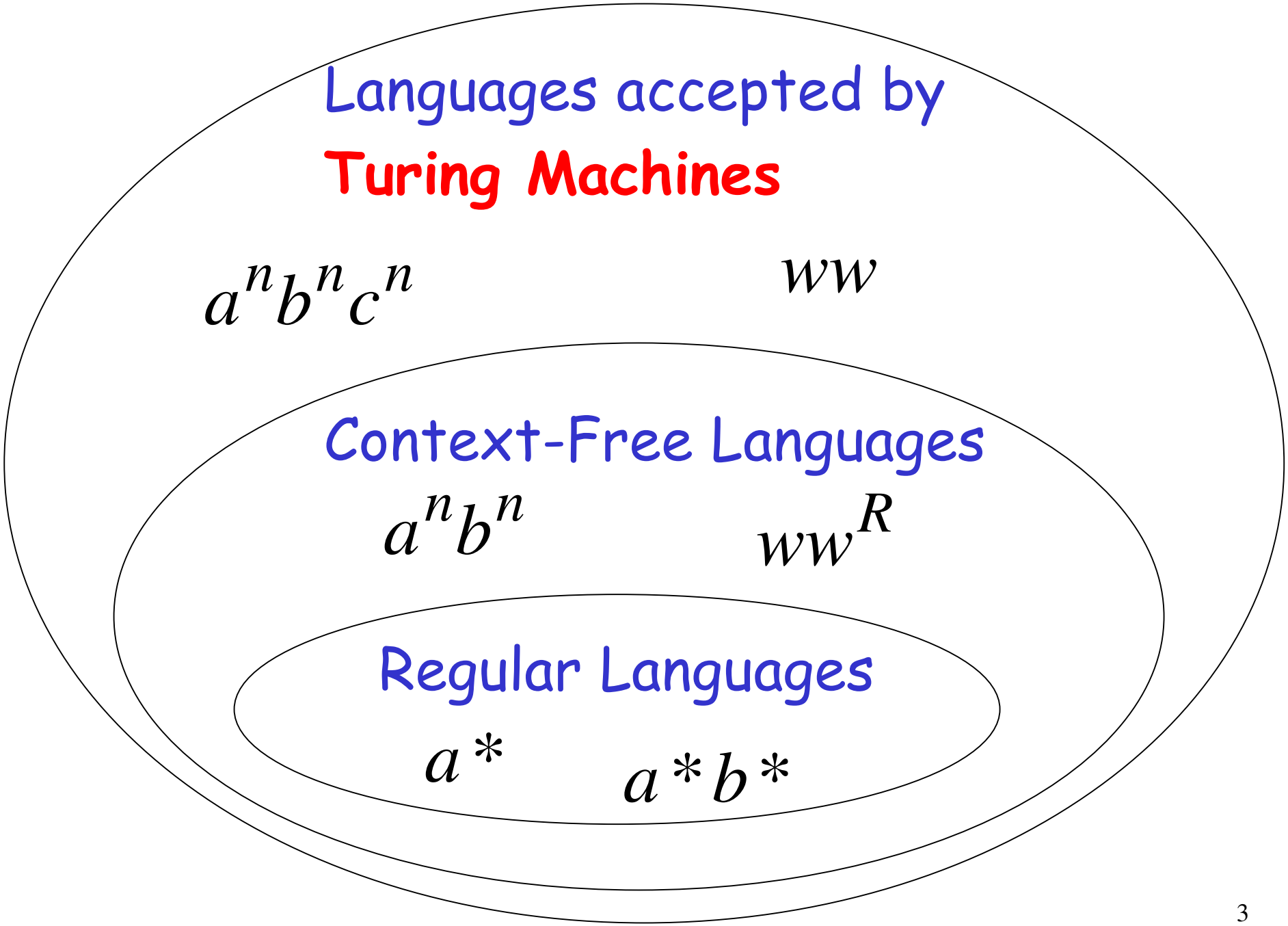
Turing Machines

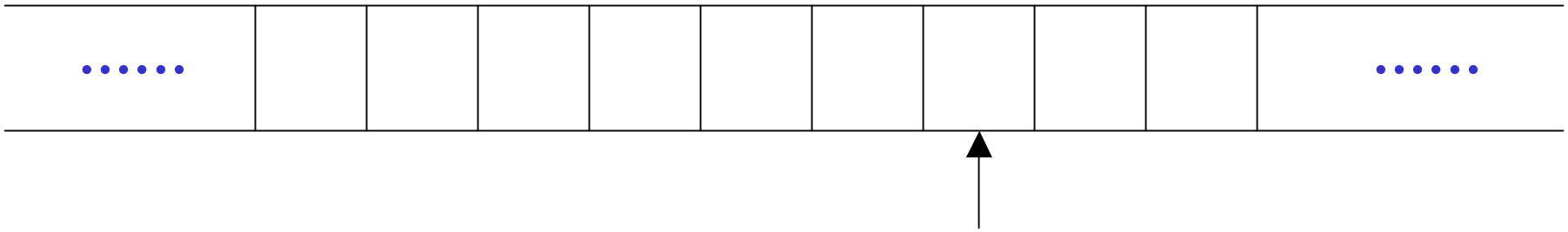
The Language Hierarchy




Languages accepted by
Turing Machines
$a^n b^n c^n$
ww
Context-Free Languages
$a^n b^n$
ww^R
Regular Languages
$a*$
$a*b*$

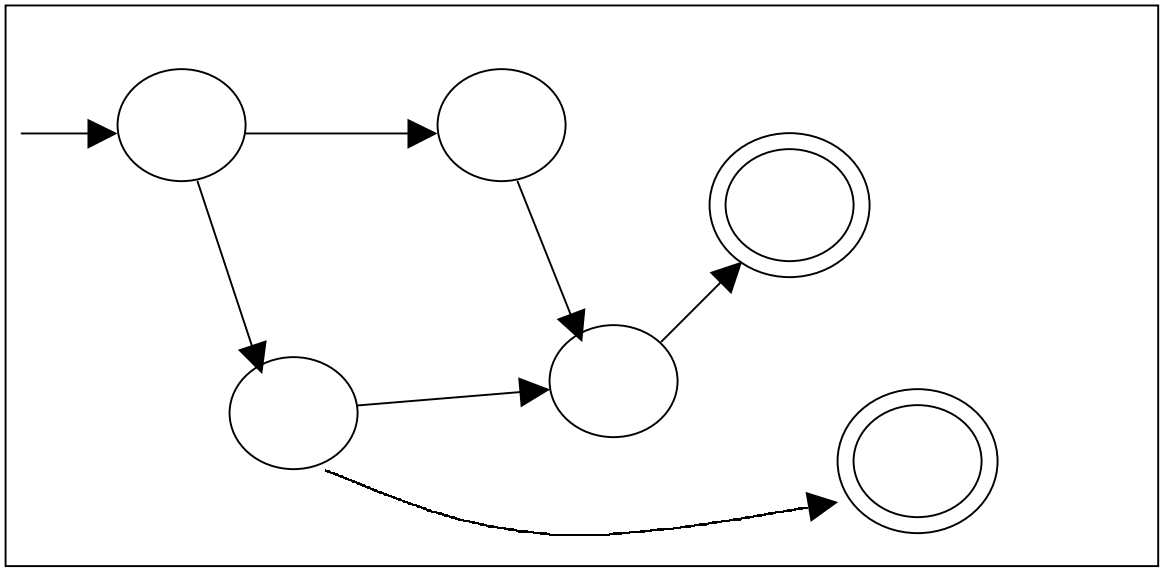
A Turing Machine

Tape



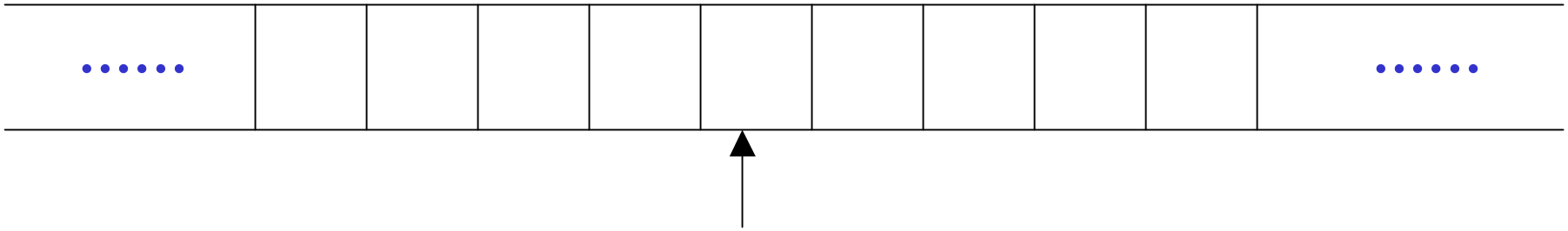
Read-Write head

Control Unit



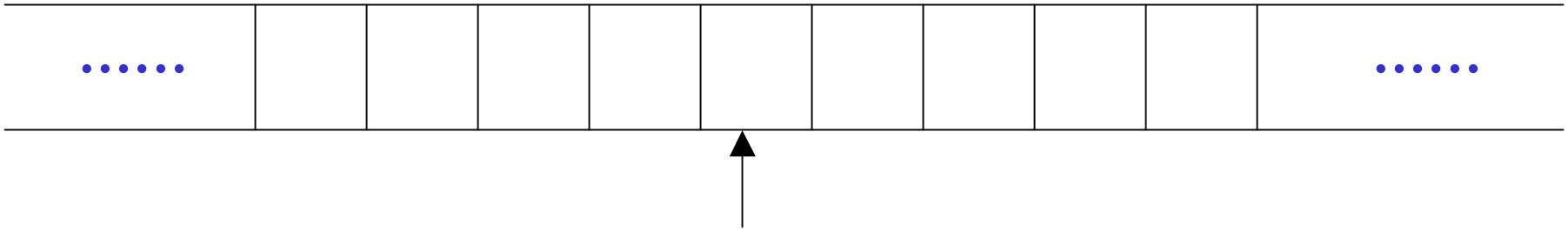
The Tape

No boundaries -- infinite length



Read-Write head

The head moves Left or Right



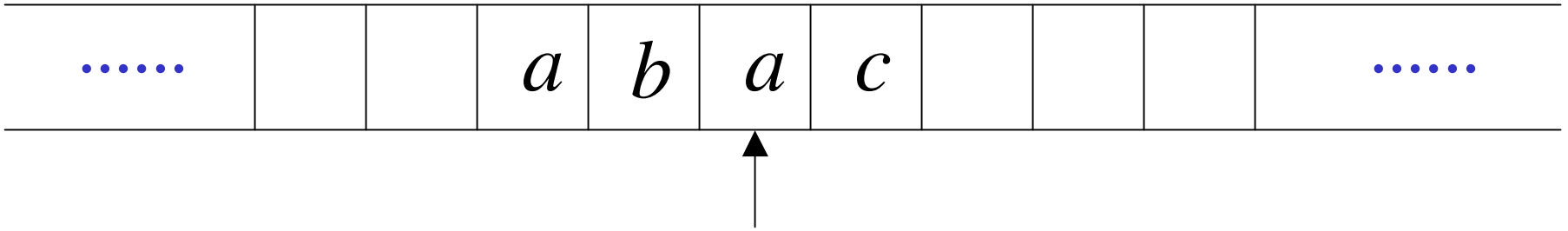
Read-Write head

The head at each time step:

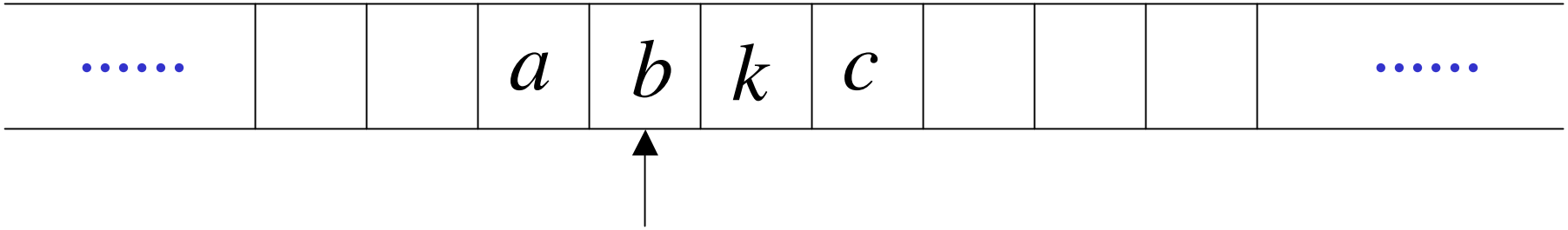
1. Reads a symbol
2. Writes a symbol
3. Moves Left or Right

Example:

Time 0

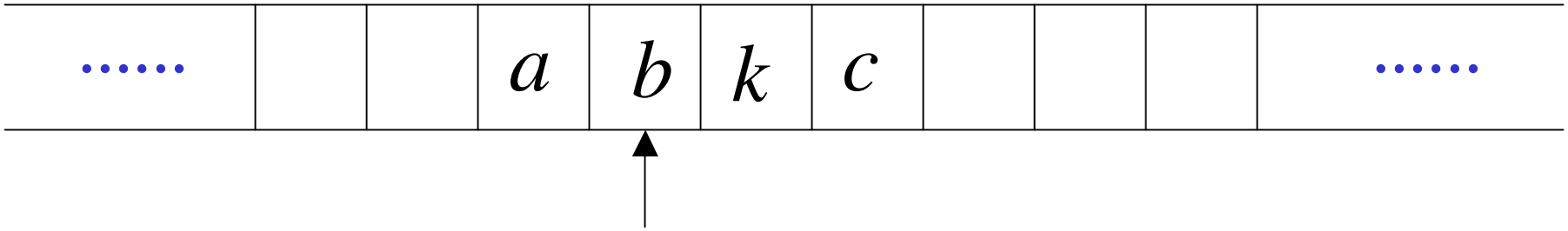


Time 1

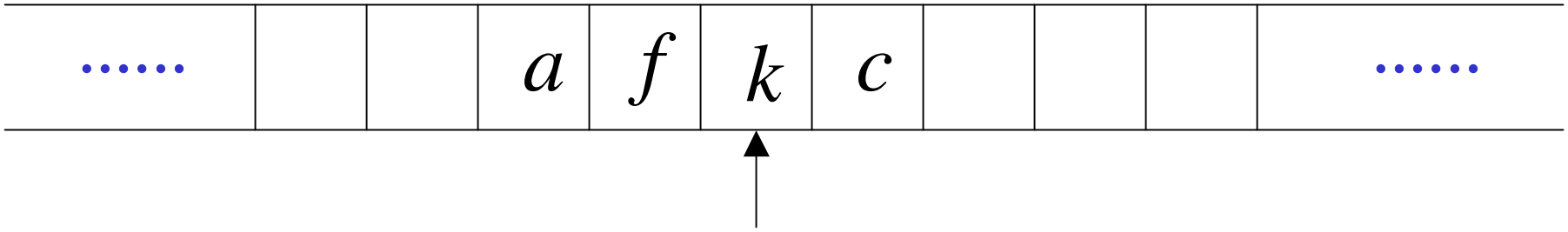


1. Reads a
2. Writes k
3. Moves Left

Time 1

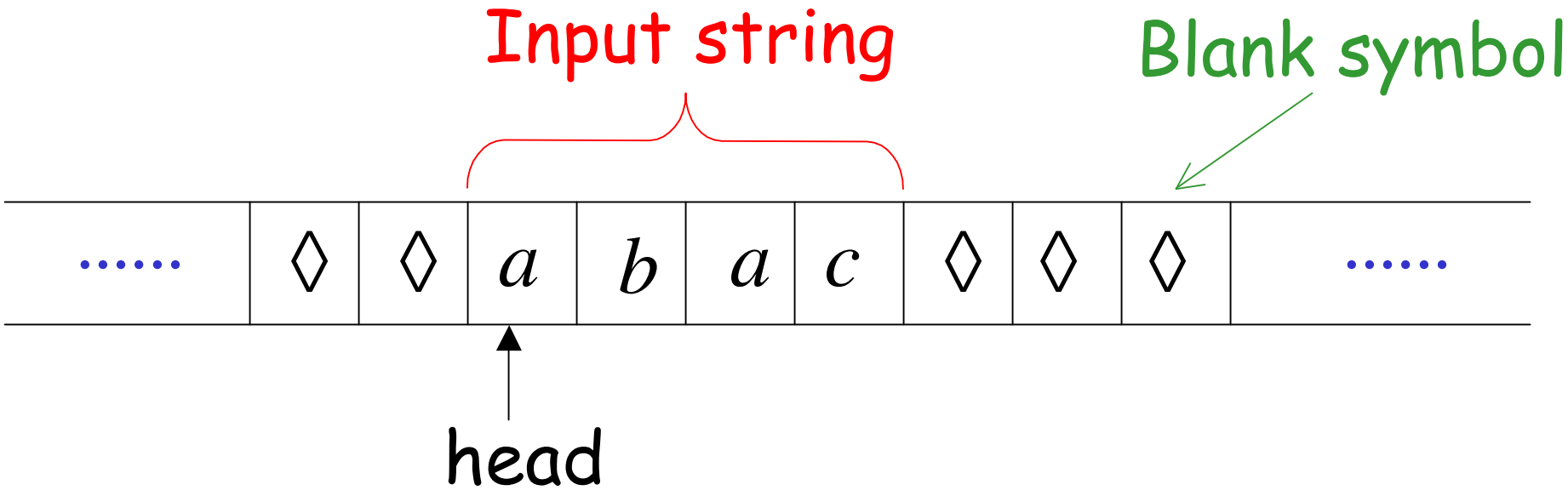


Time 2



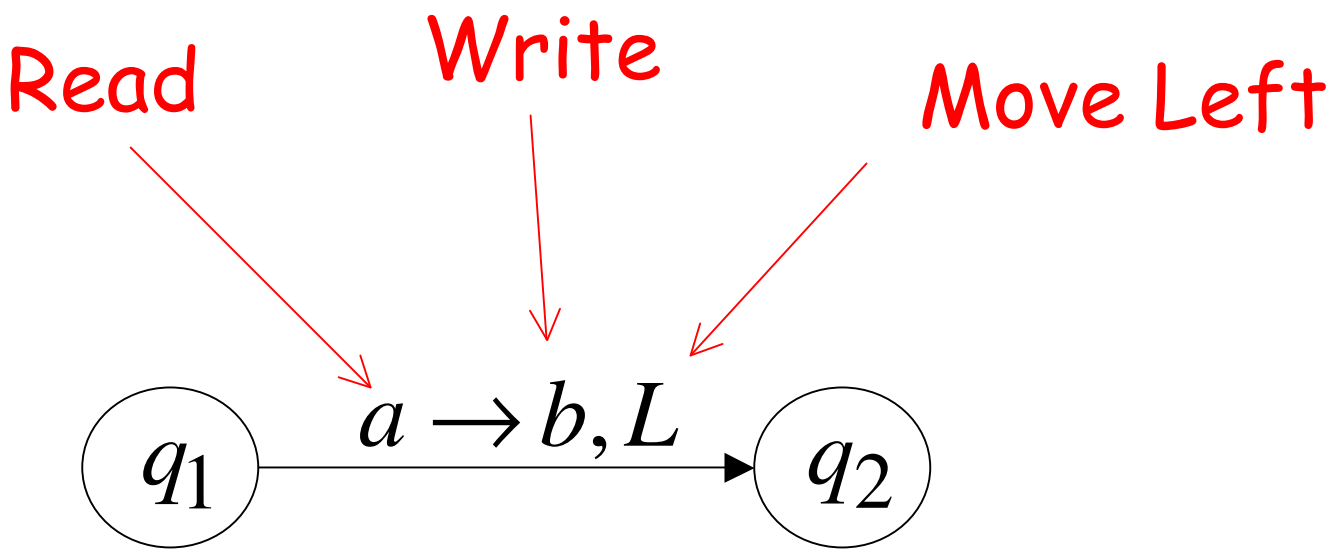
1. Reads b
2. Writes f
3. Moves Right

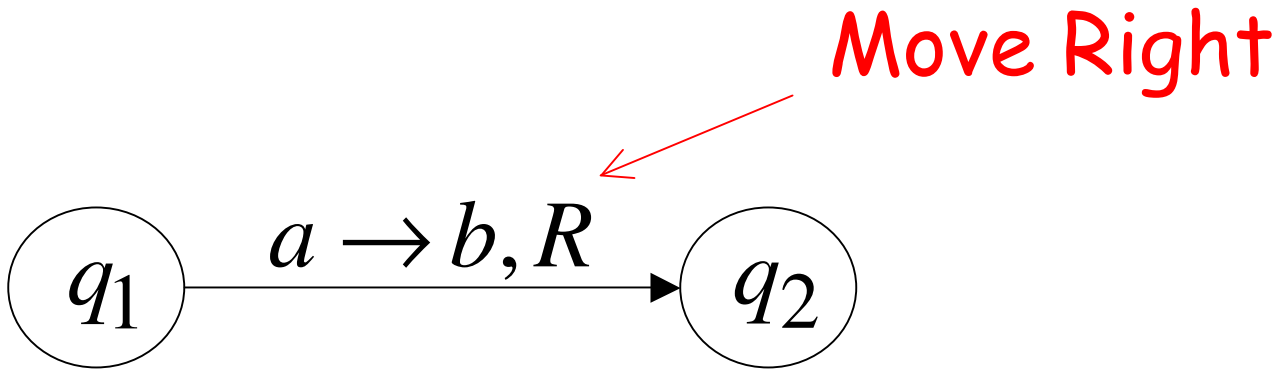
The Input String



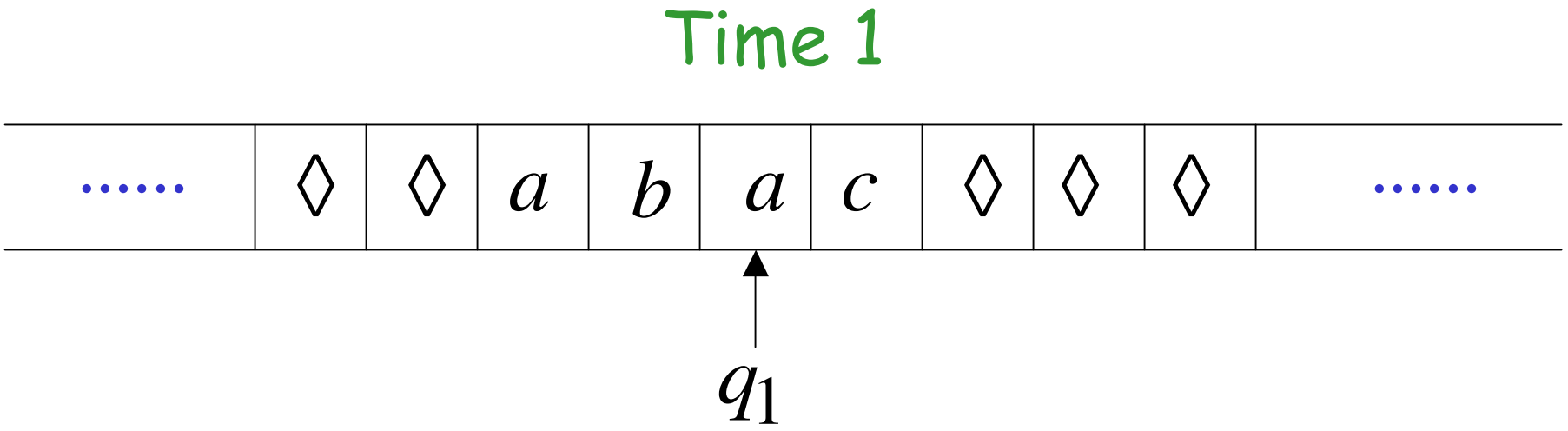
Head starts at the leftmost position of the input string

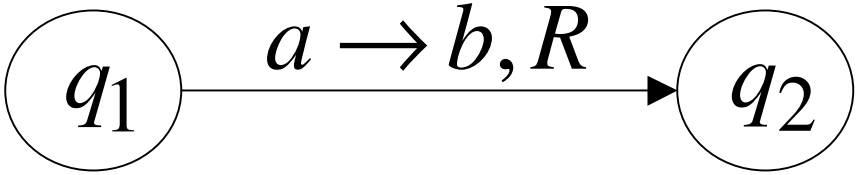
States & Transitions



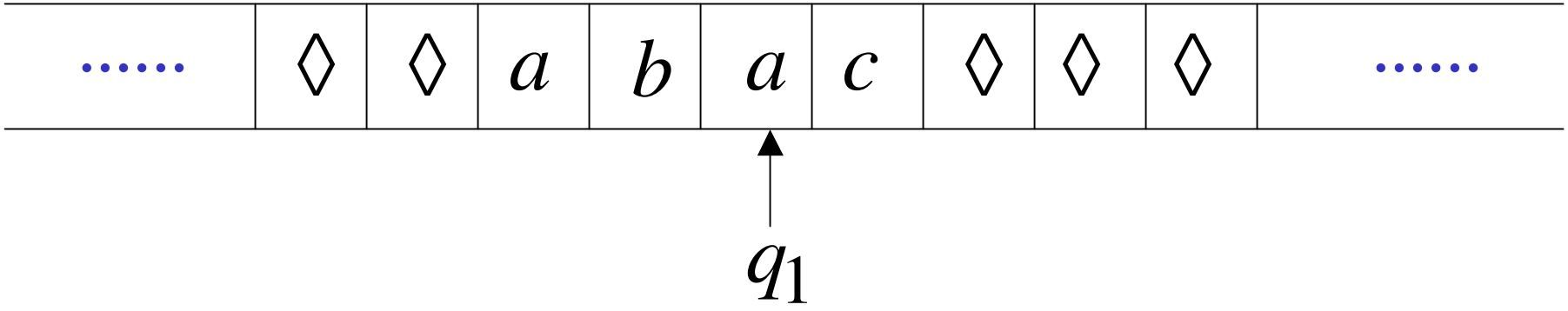


Example:

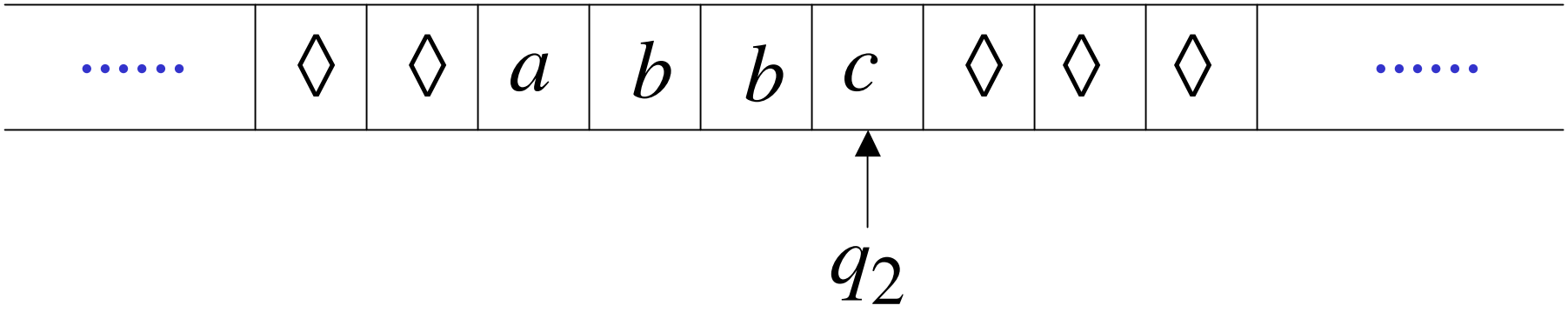


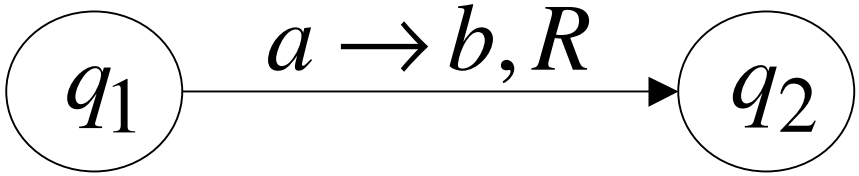


Time 1

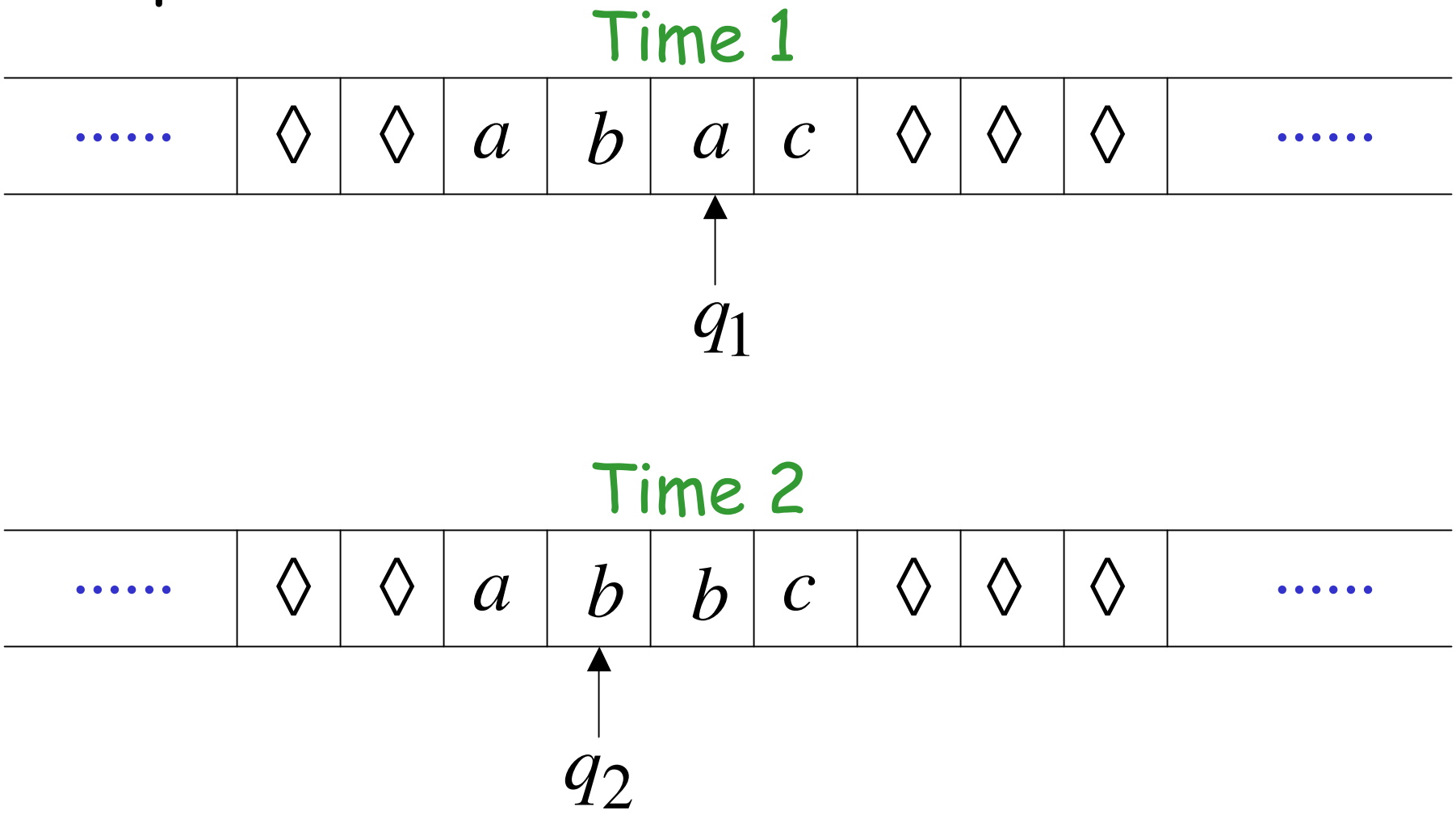


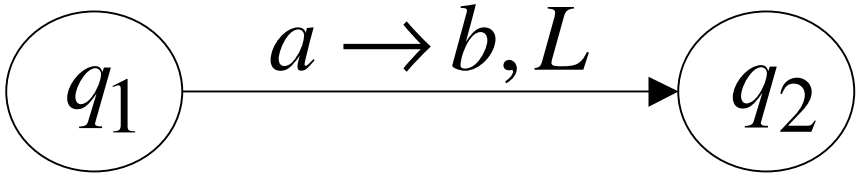
Time 2





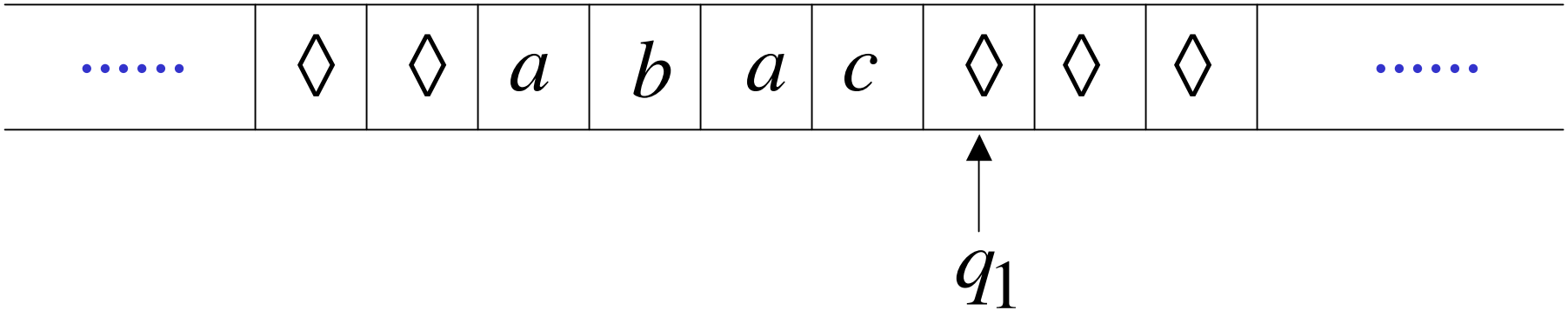
Example:



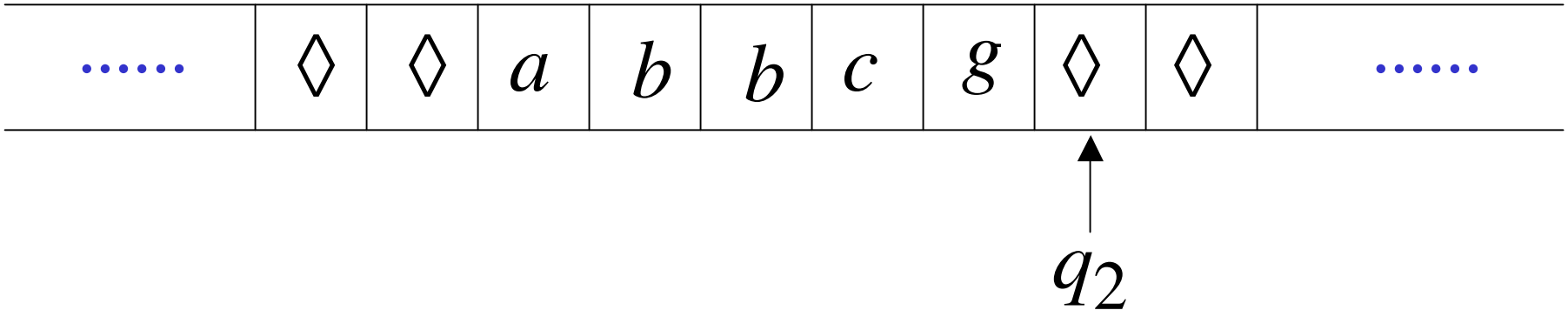


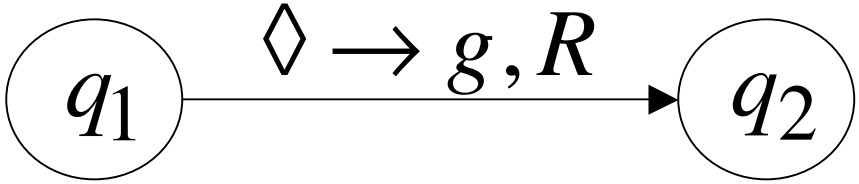
Example:

Time 1



Time 2

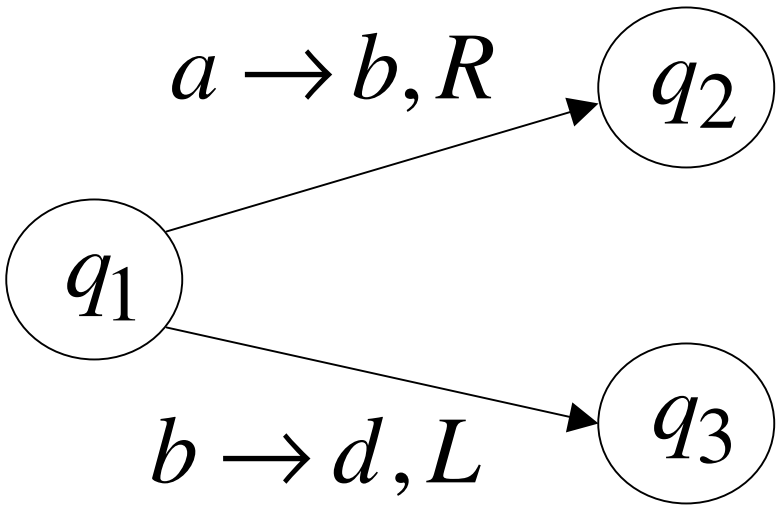




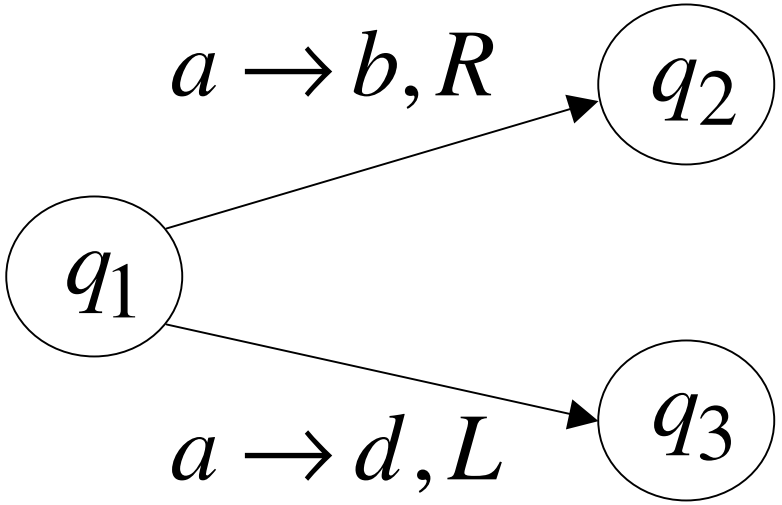
Determinism

Turing Machines are deterministic

Allowed



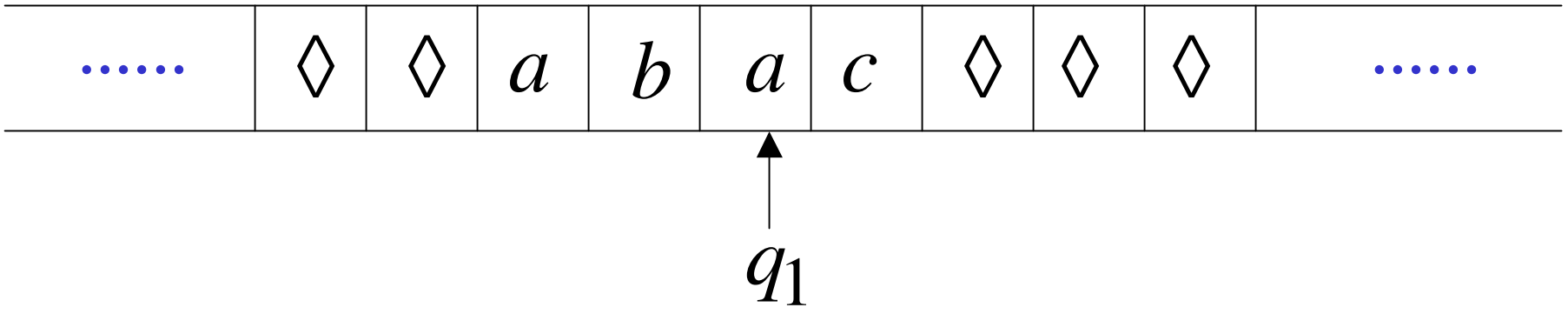
Not Allowed

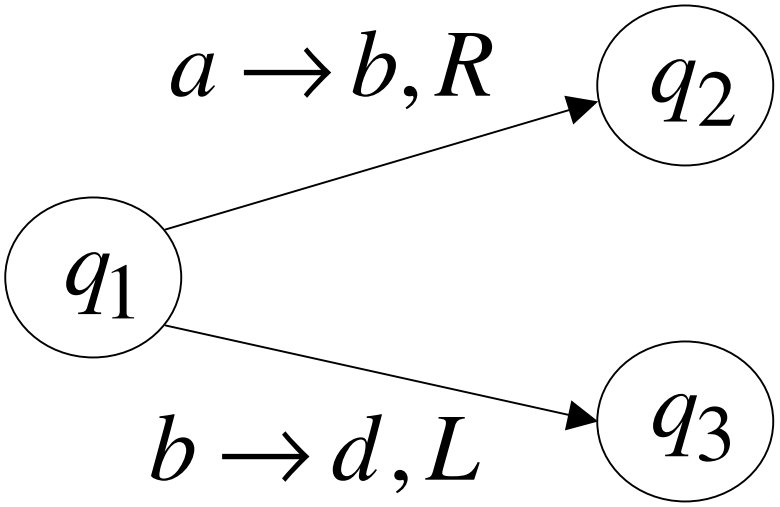


No lambda transitions allowed

Partial Transition Function

Example:





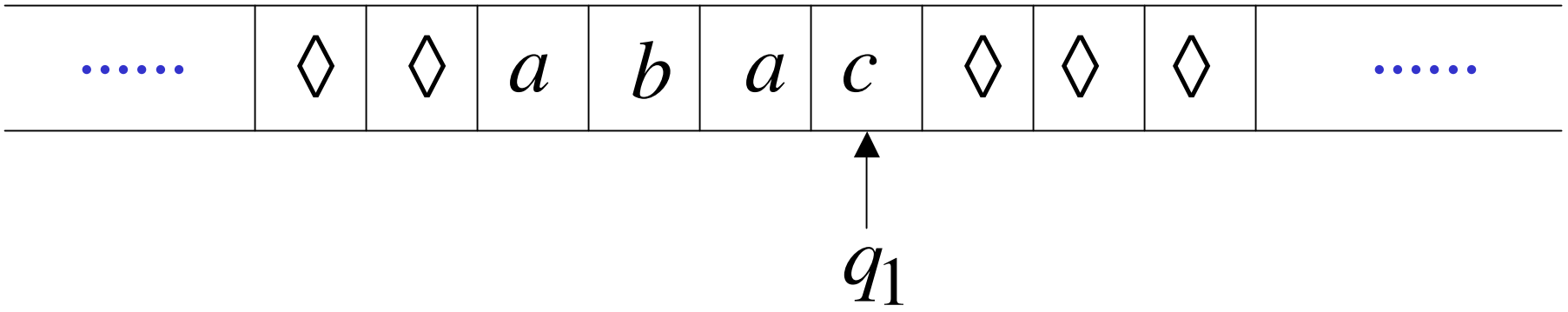
Allowed:

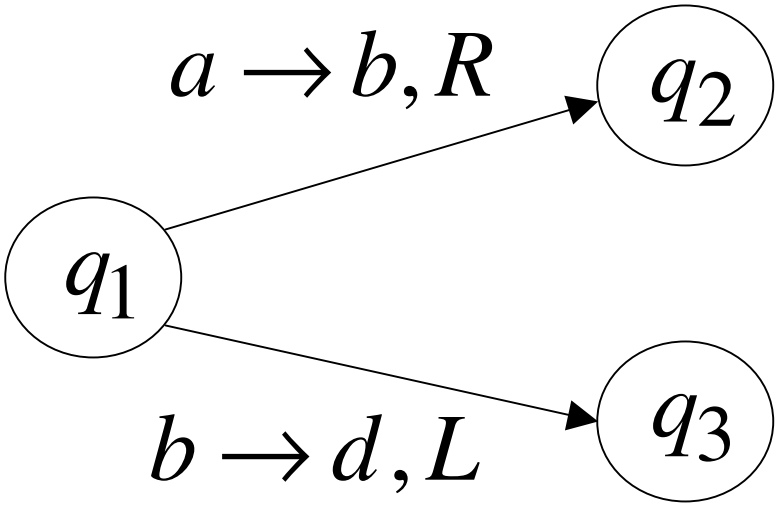
No transition
for input symbol c

Halting

The machine ***halts*** if there are no possible transitions to follow

Example:

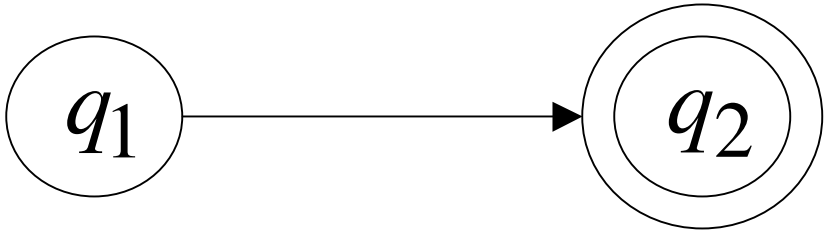




No possible transition

HALT!!!

Final States

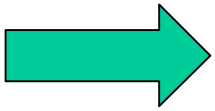


Allowed

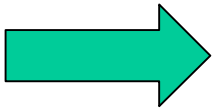
Not Allowed

- Final states have no outgoing transitions
- In a final state the machine halts

Acceptance

Accept Input 

If machine halts
in a final state

Reject Input 

If machine halts
in a non-final state

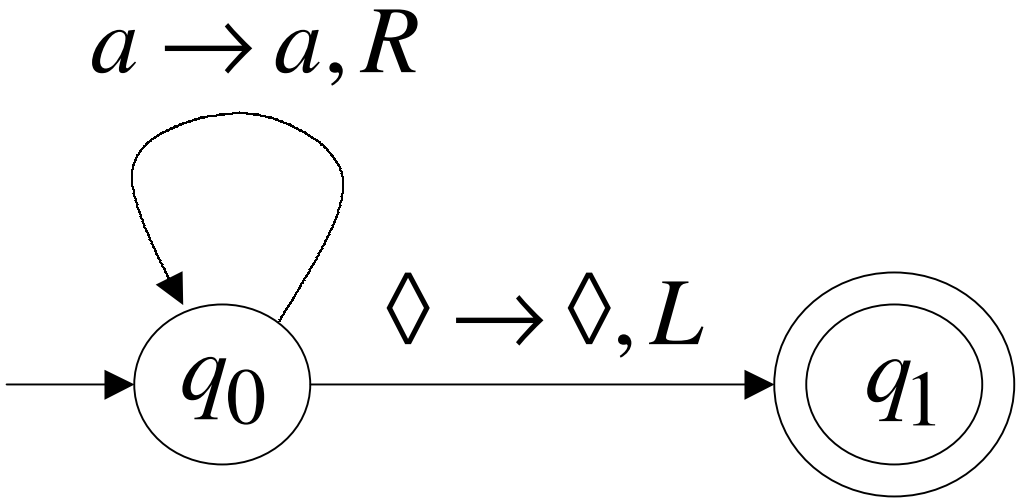
or

If machine enters
an *infinite loop*

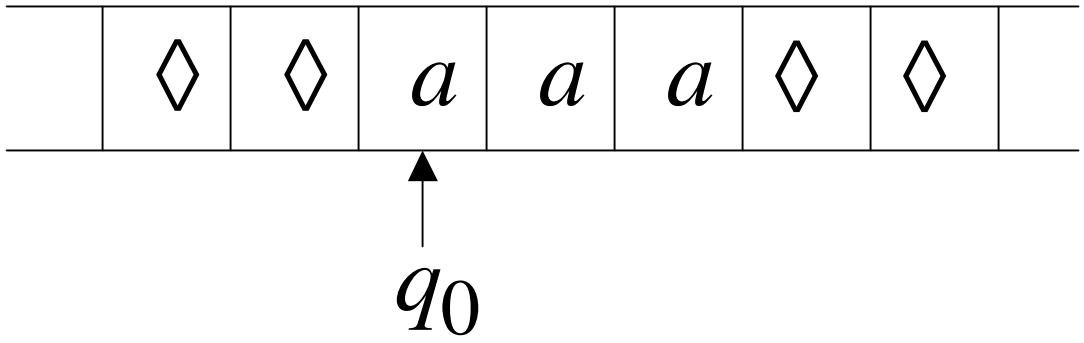
Turing Machine Example

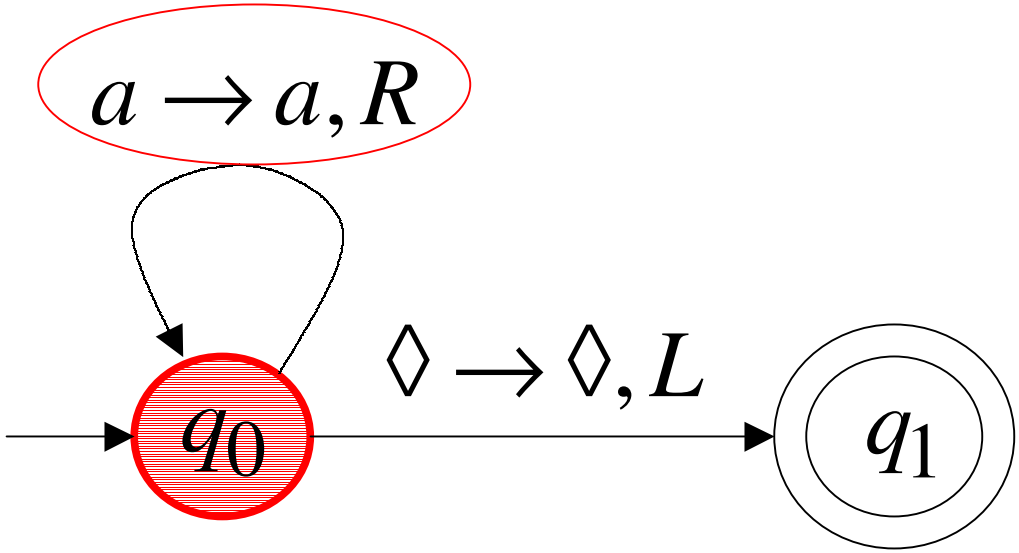
A Turing machine that accepts the language:

$$aa^*$$

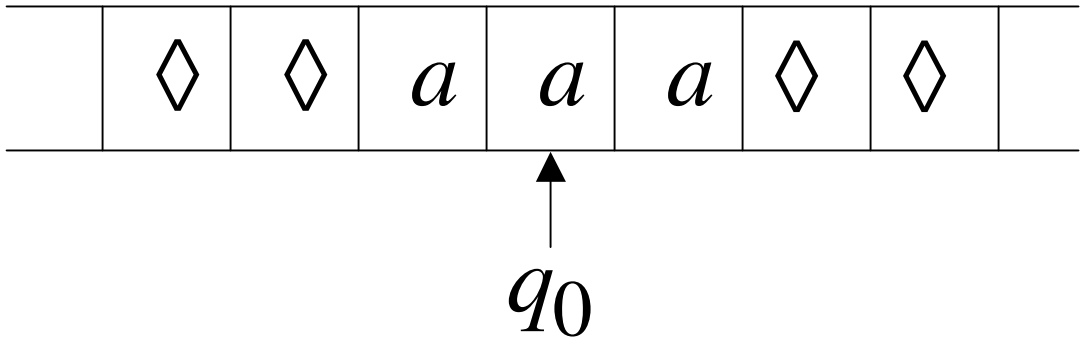


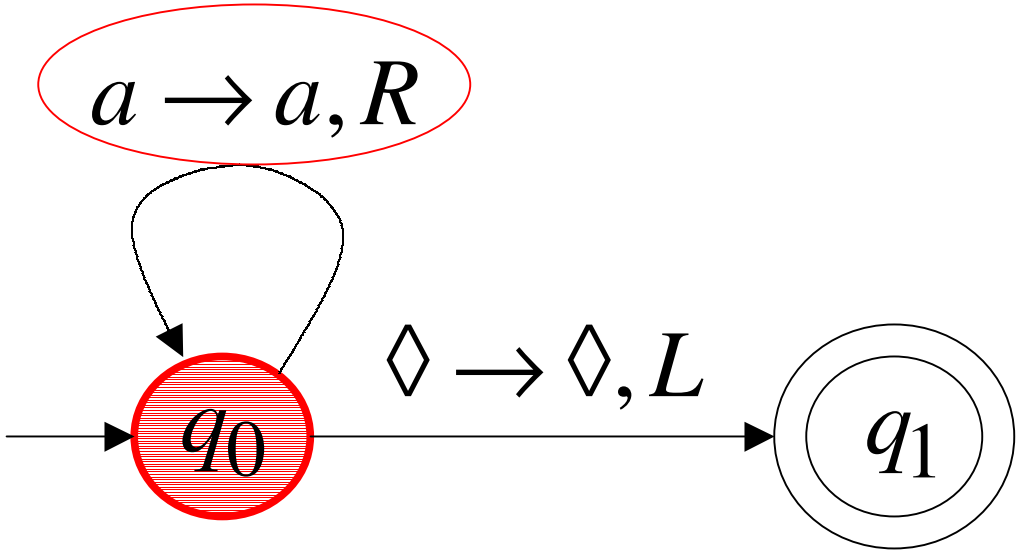
Time 0



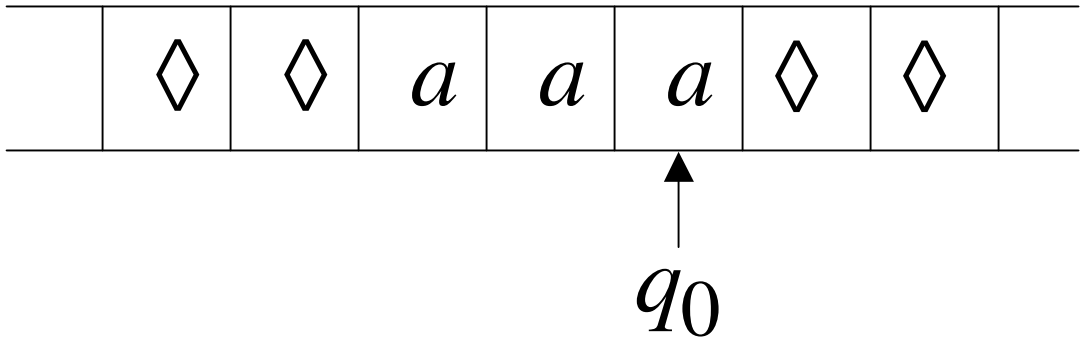


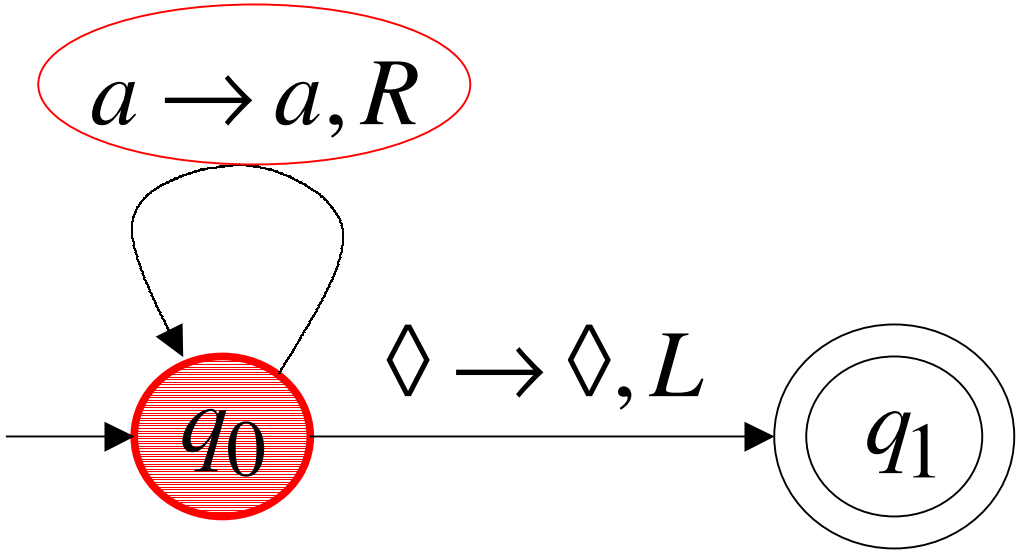
Time 1



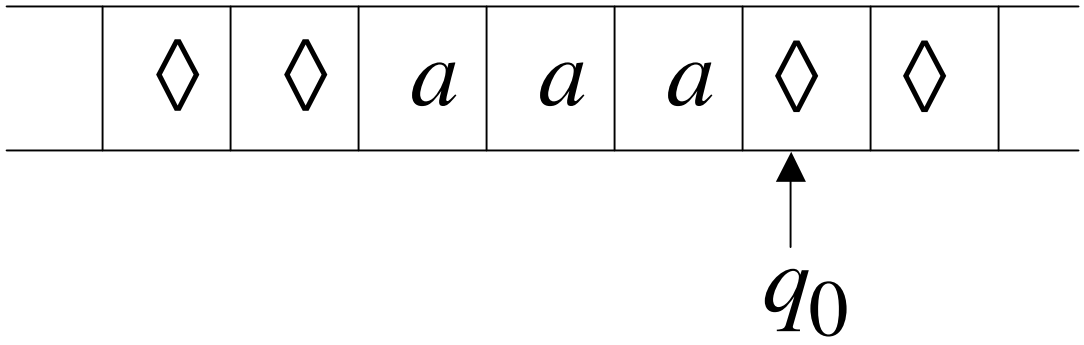


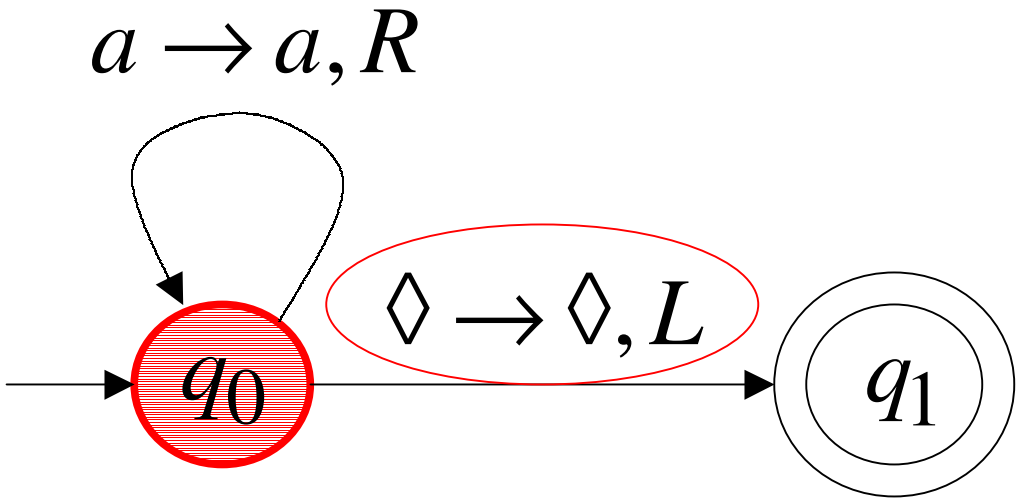
Time 2



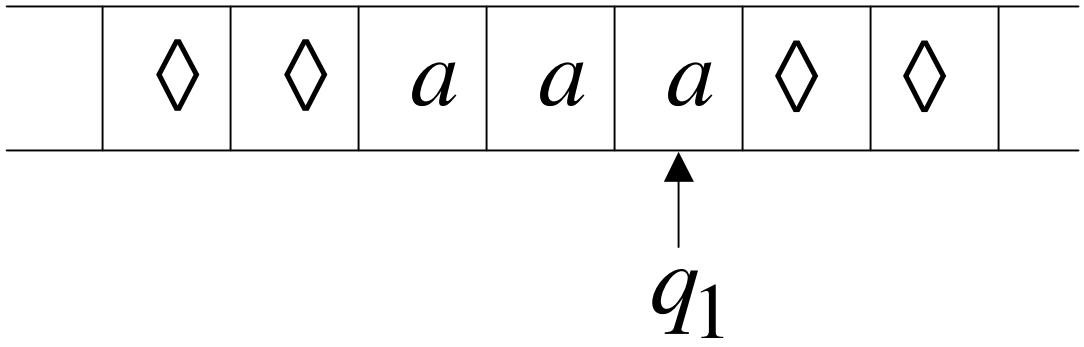


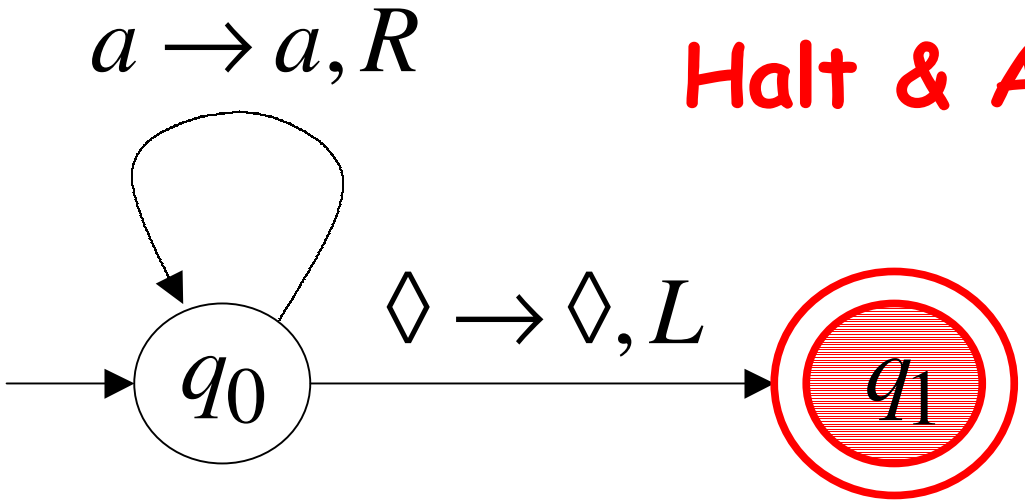
Time 3





Time 4

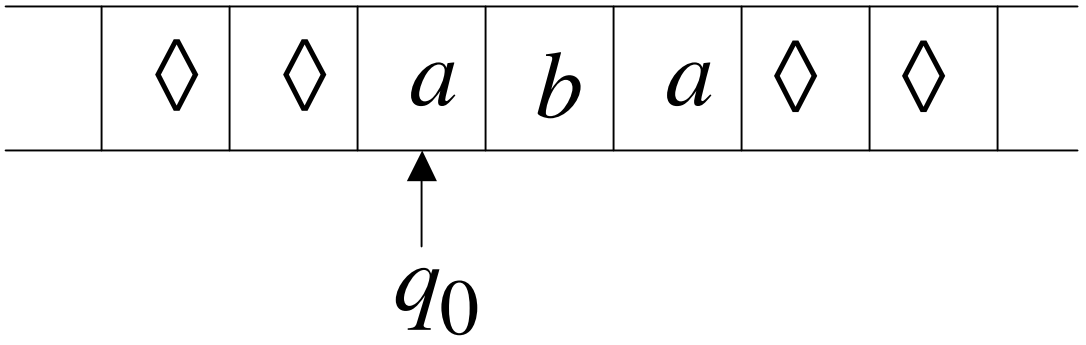


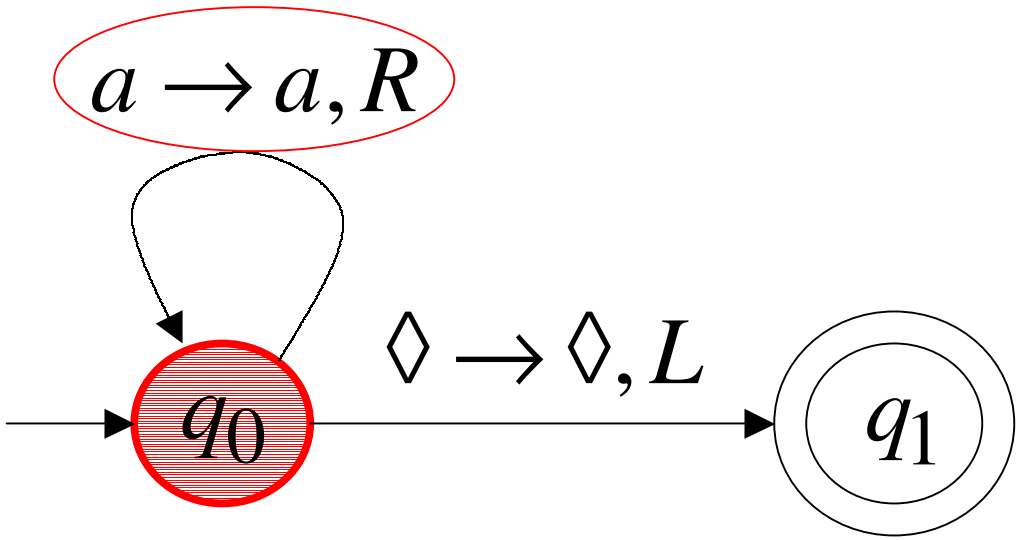


Halt & Accept

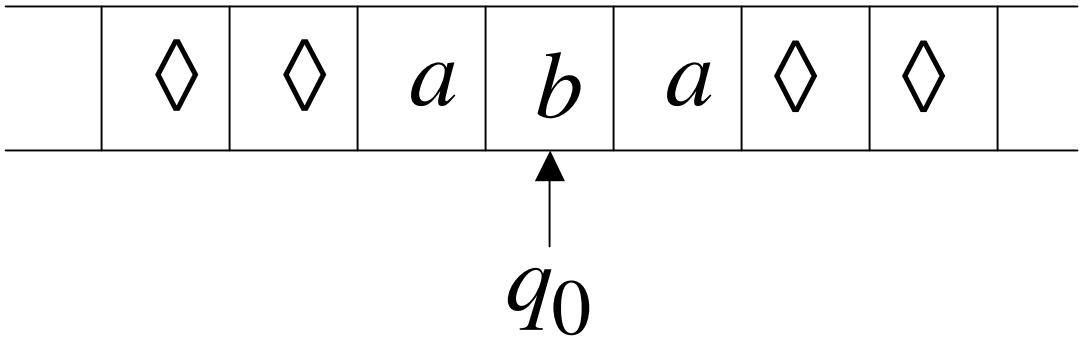
Rejection Example

Time 0



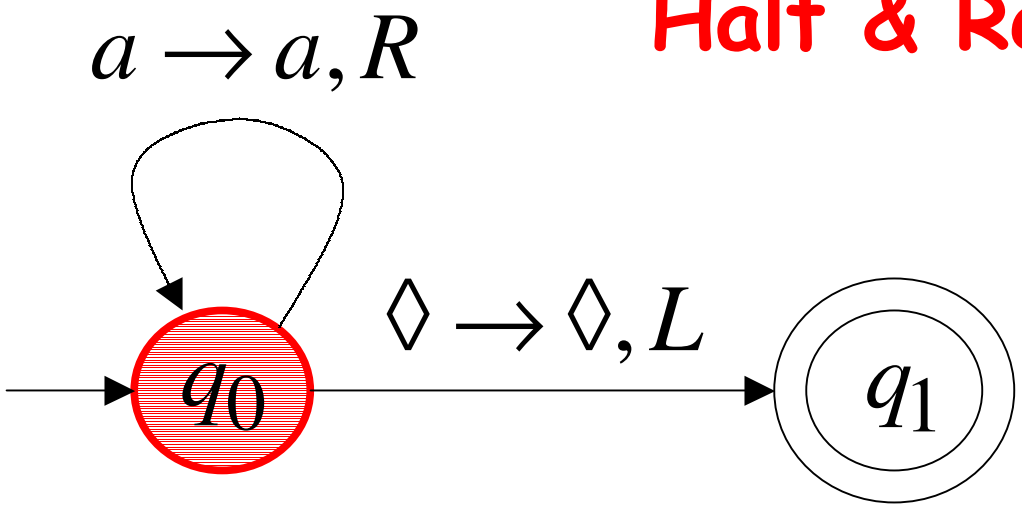


Time 1



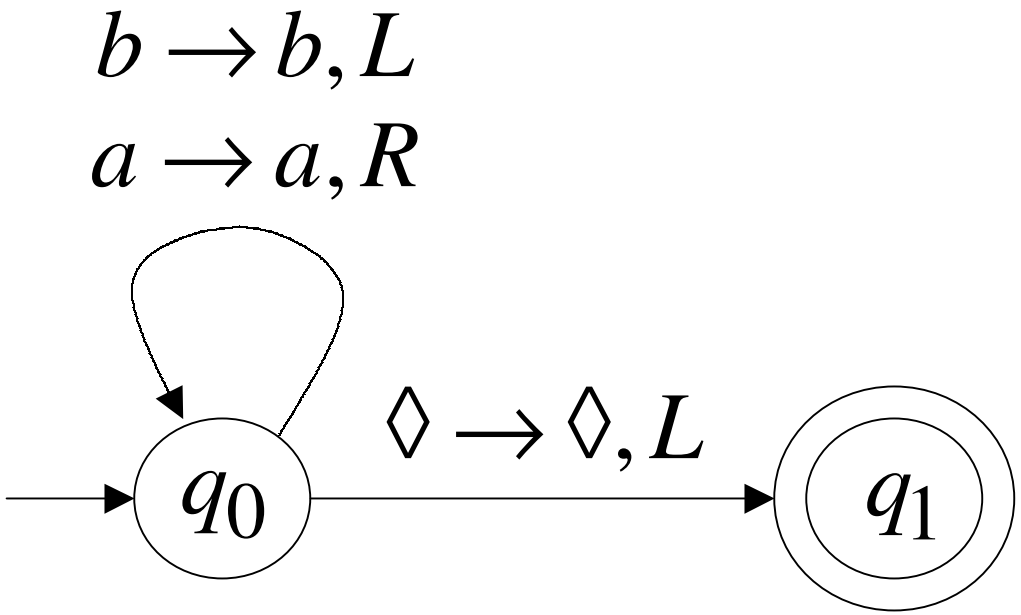
No possible Transition

Halt & Reject

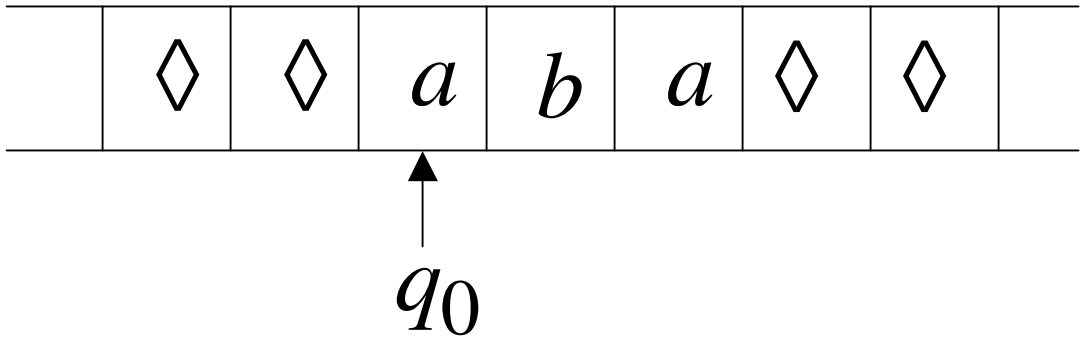


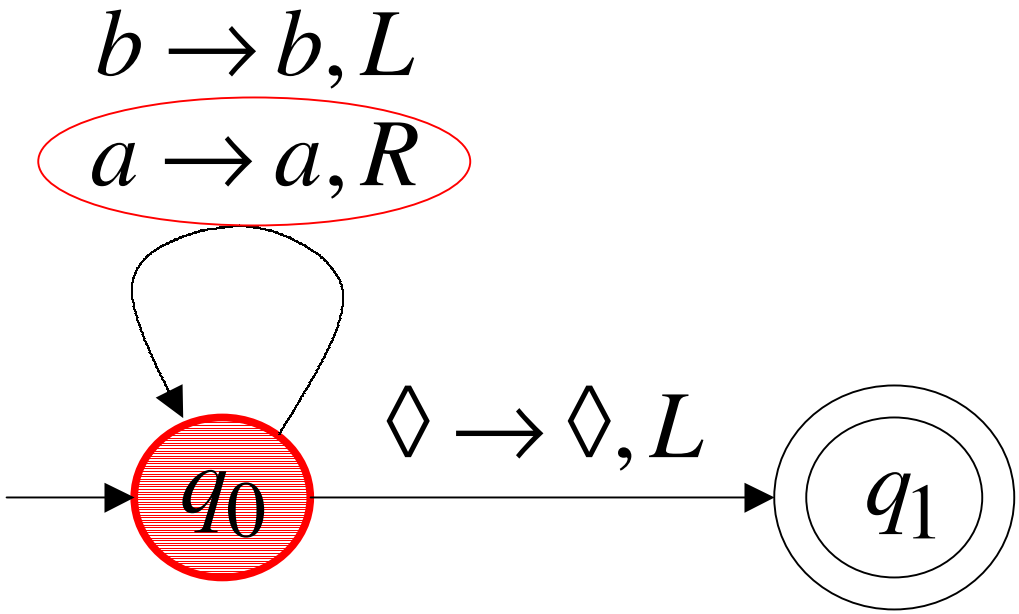
Infinite Loop Example

Another Turing machine for language aa^*

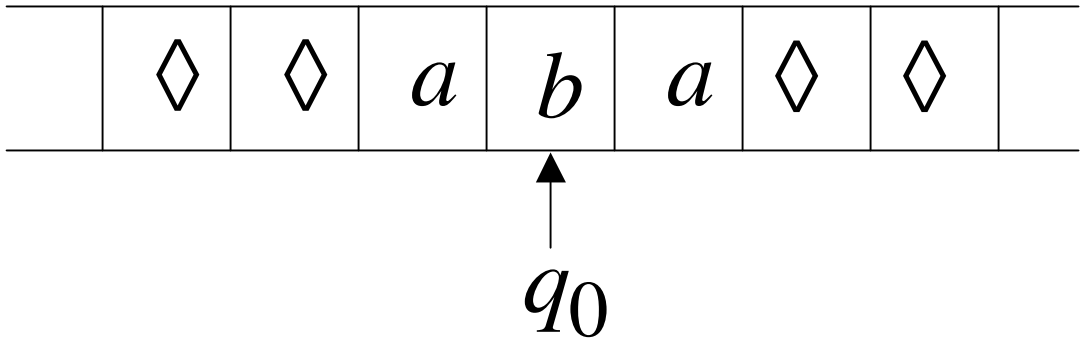


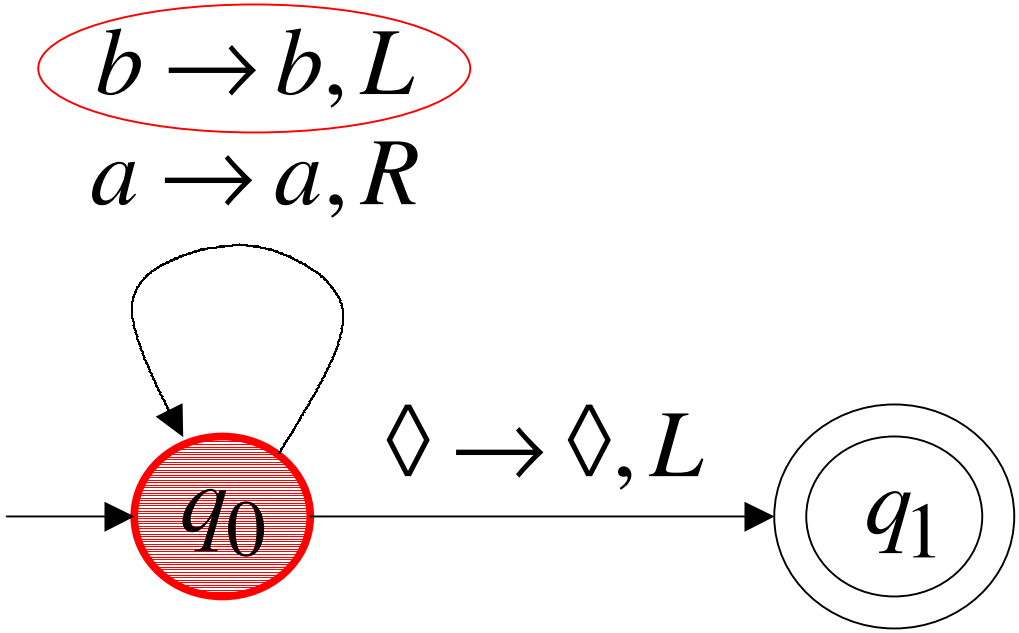
Time 0



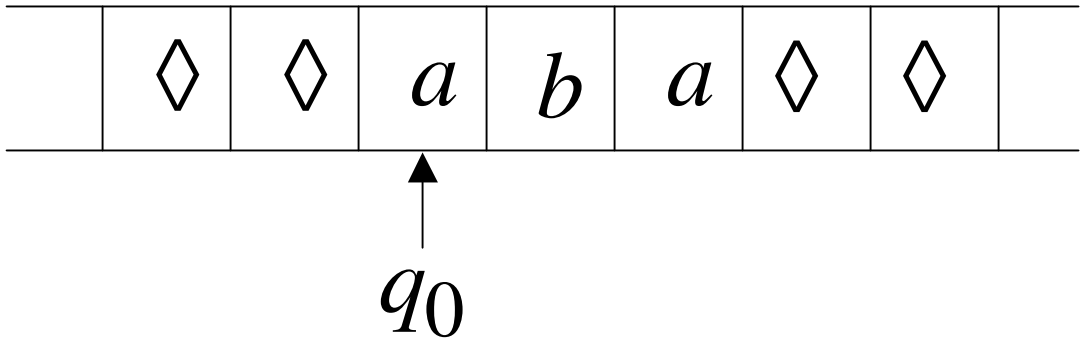


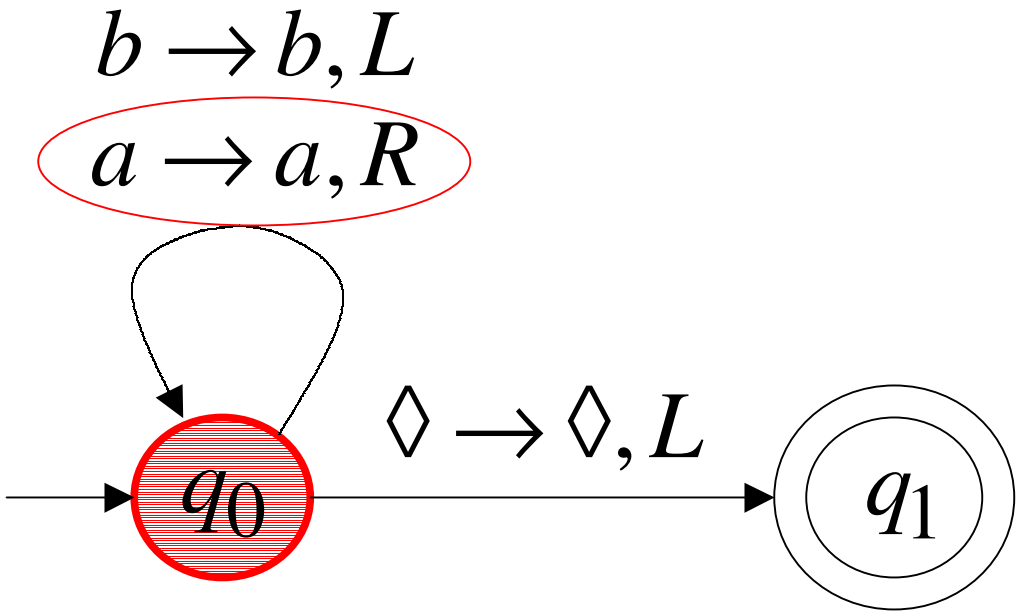
Time 1



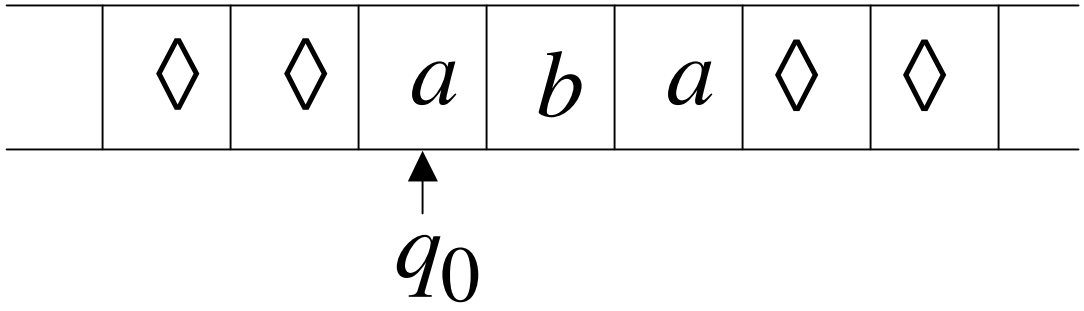


Time 2

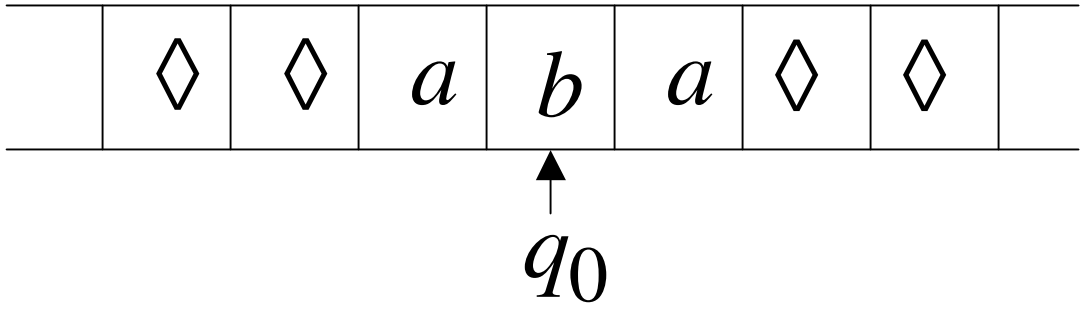




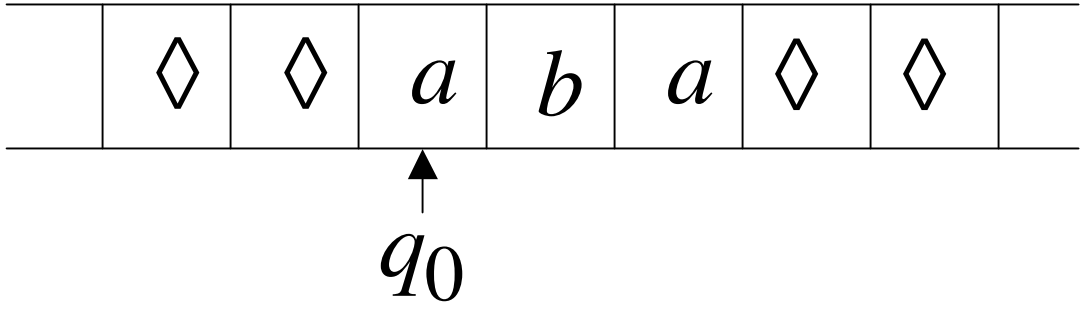
Time 2



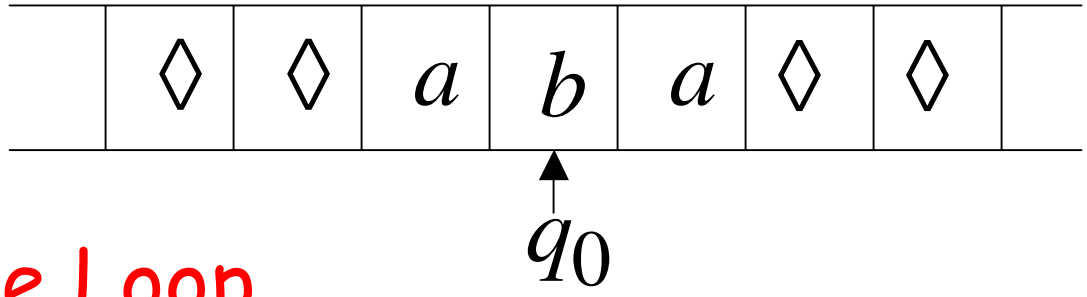
Time 3



Time 4



Time 5



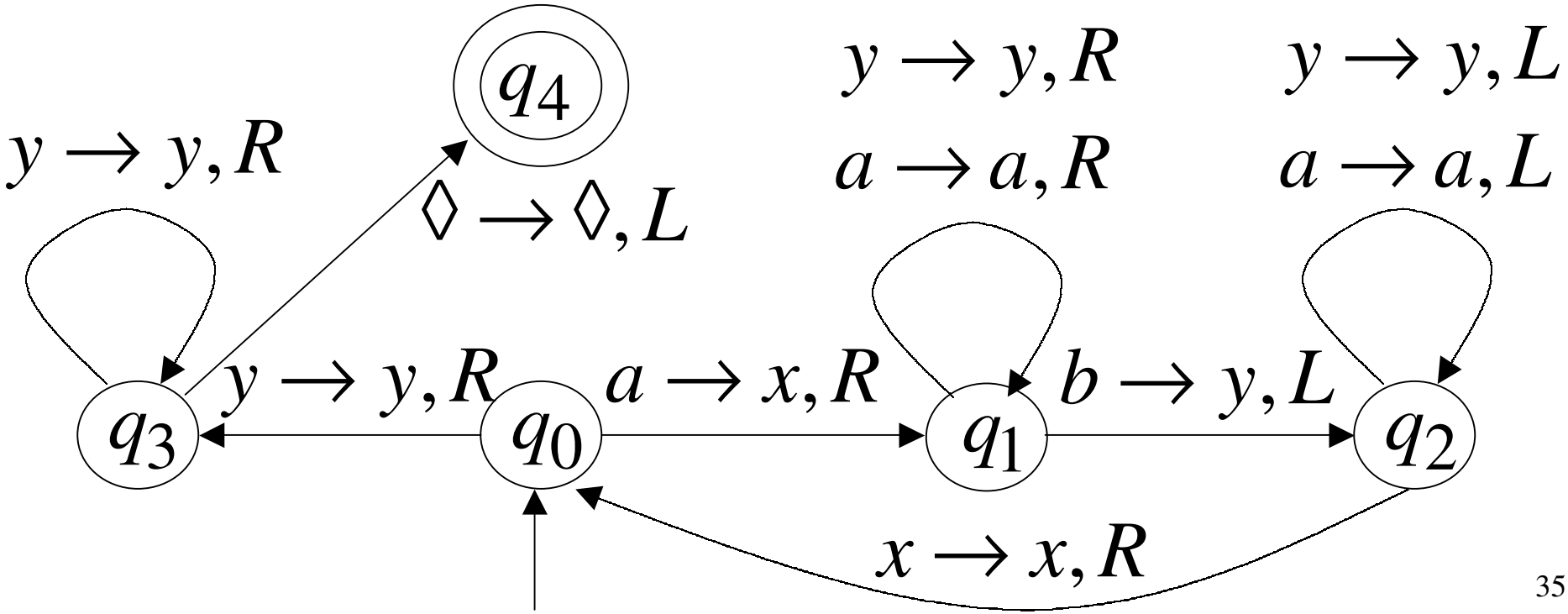
... Infinite Loop

Because of the infinite loop:

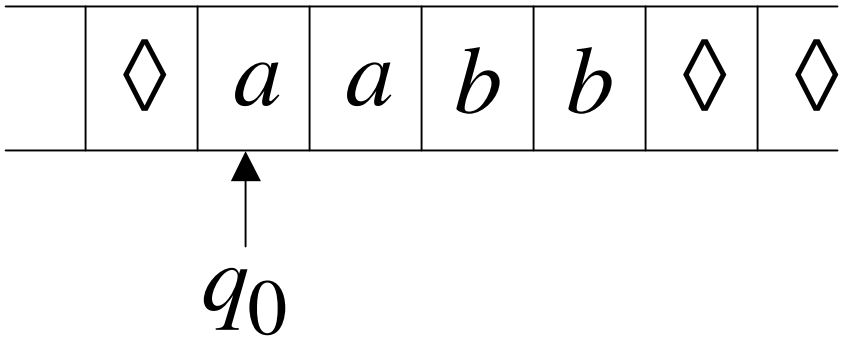
- The final state cannot be reached
- The machine never halts
- The input is not accepted

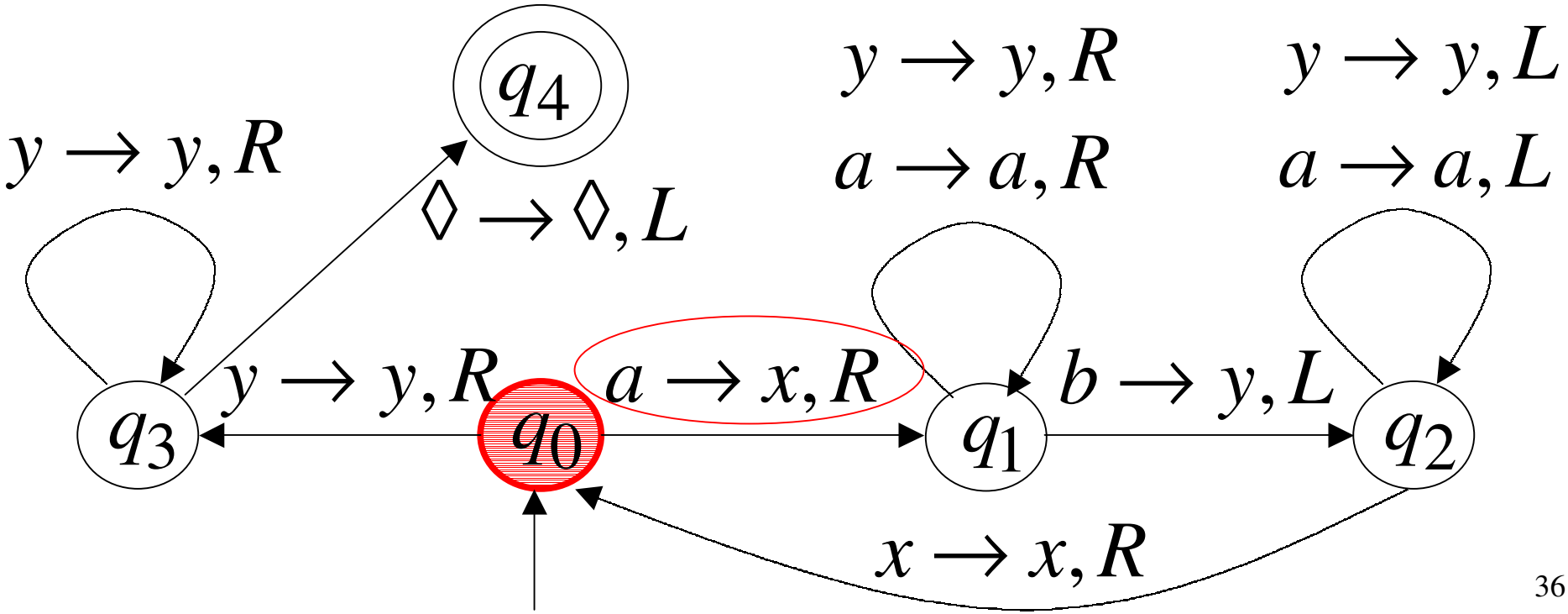
Another Turing Machine Example

Turing machine for the language $\{a^n b^n\}$

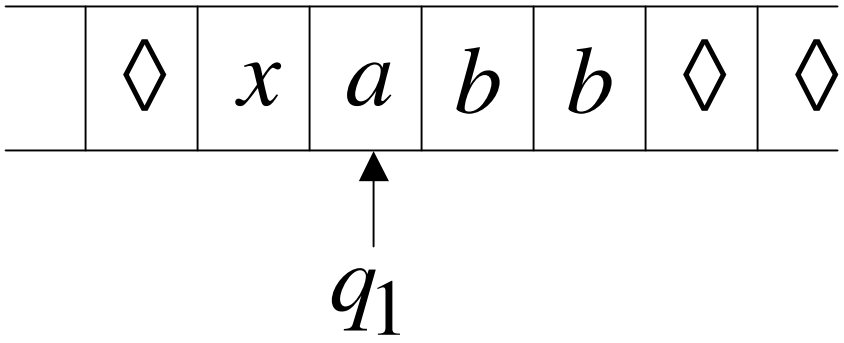


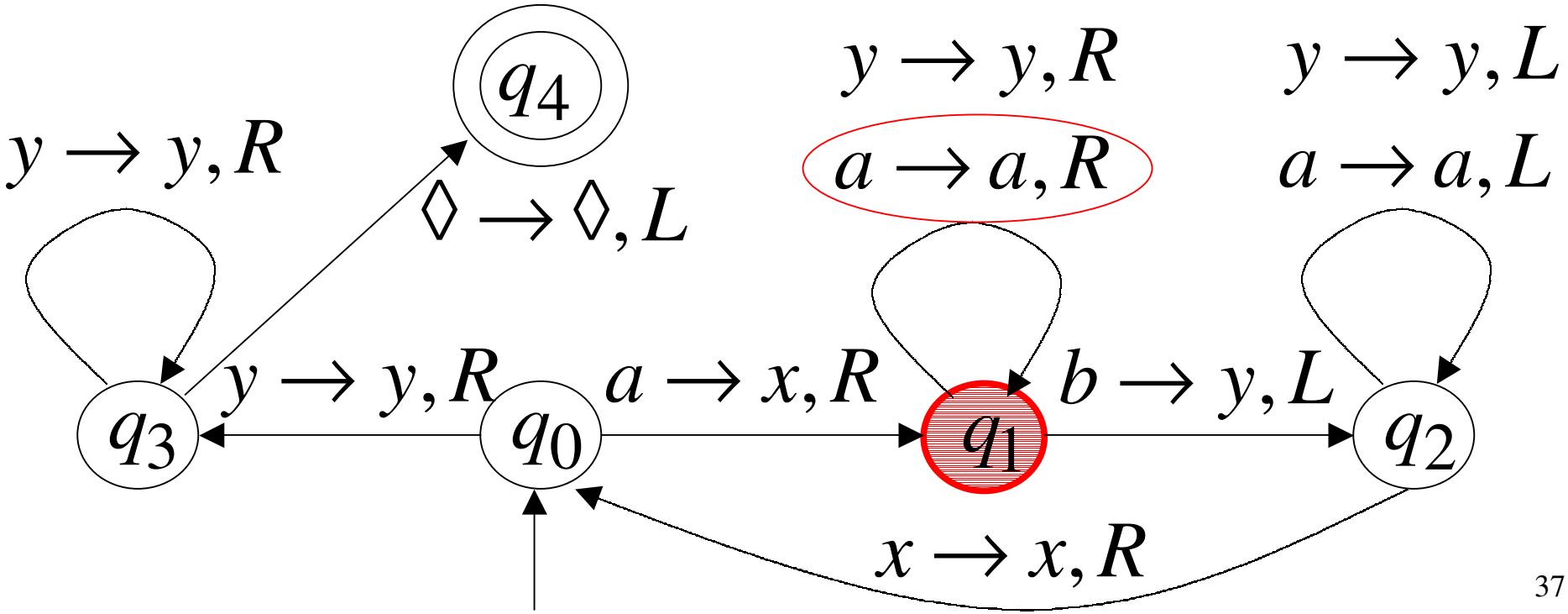
Time 0


◊ a a b b ◊ ◊
q_0

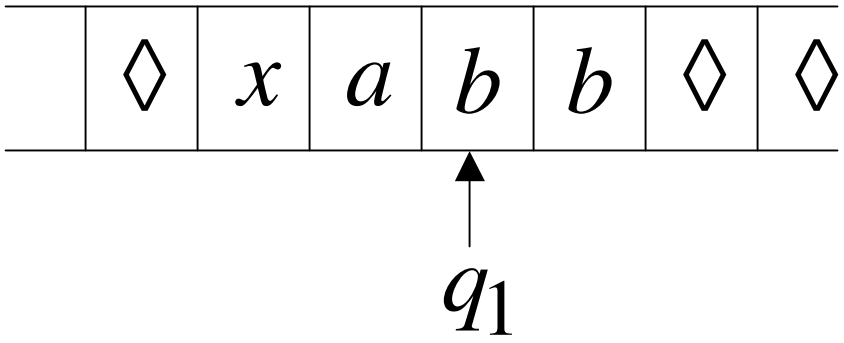

q_4
$y \to y, R$
$\lozenge \to \lozenge, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

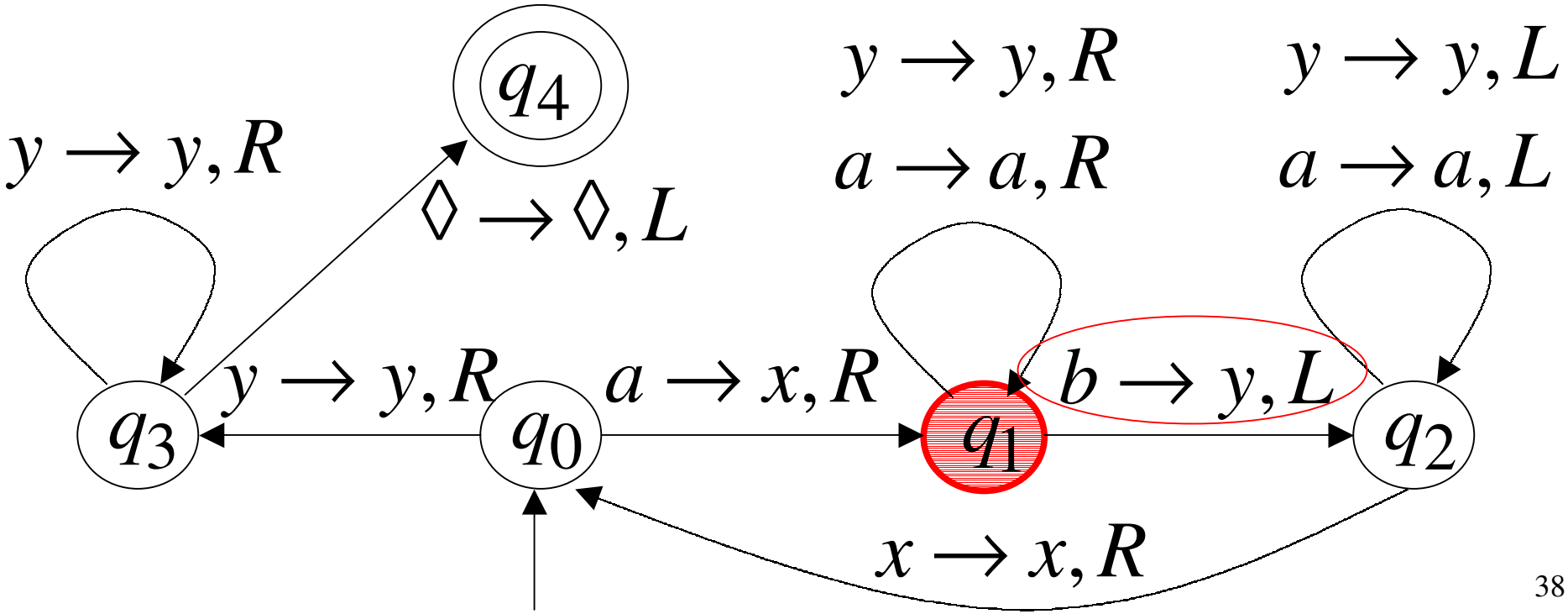
Time 1


◊ x a b b ◊ ◊
q_1

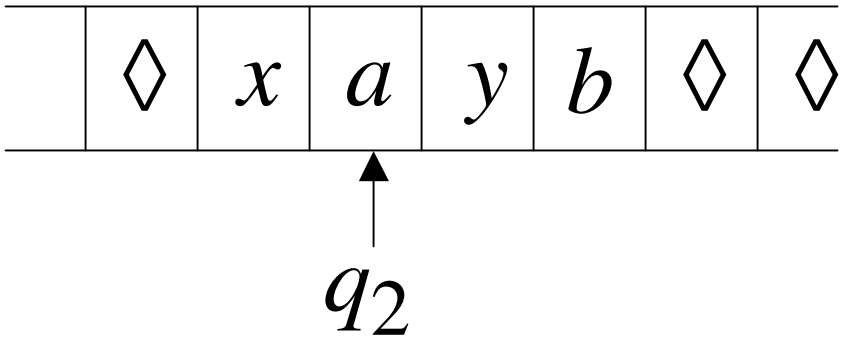

q_4
$y \to y, R$
$\Diamond \to \Diamond, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

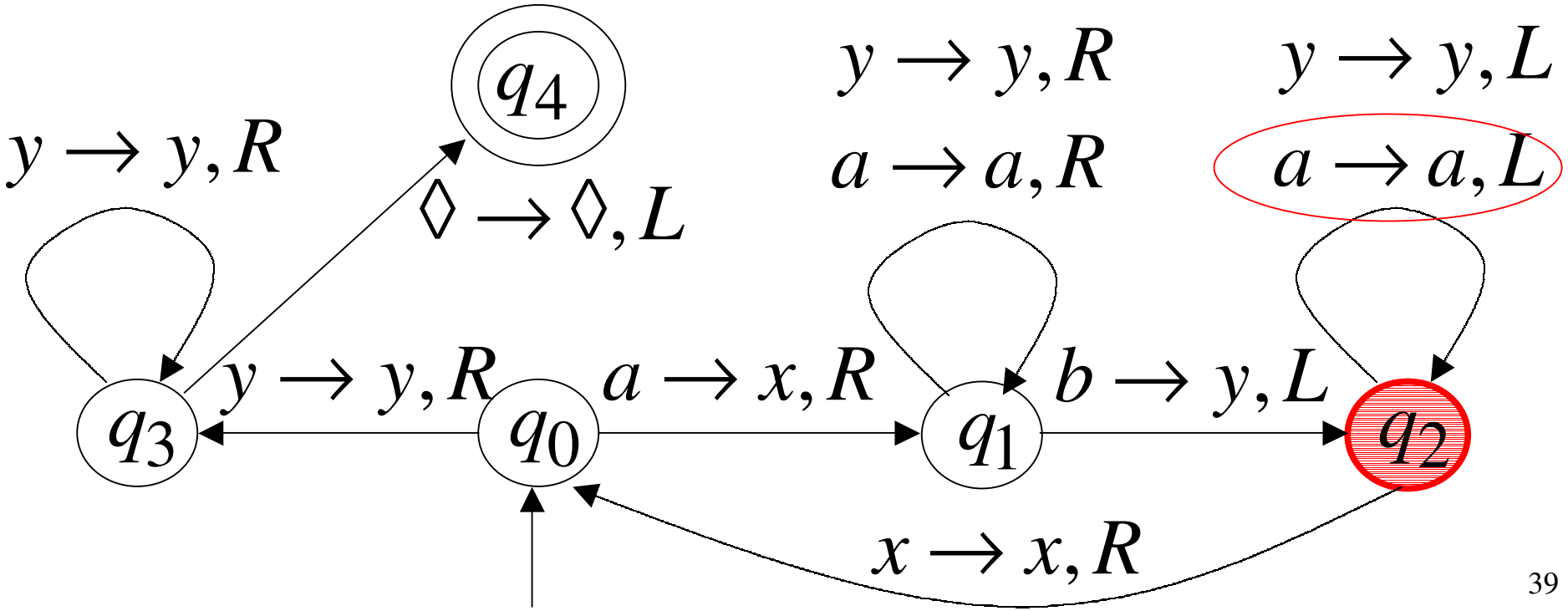
Time 2


◊ x a b b ◊ ◊
q_1

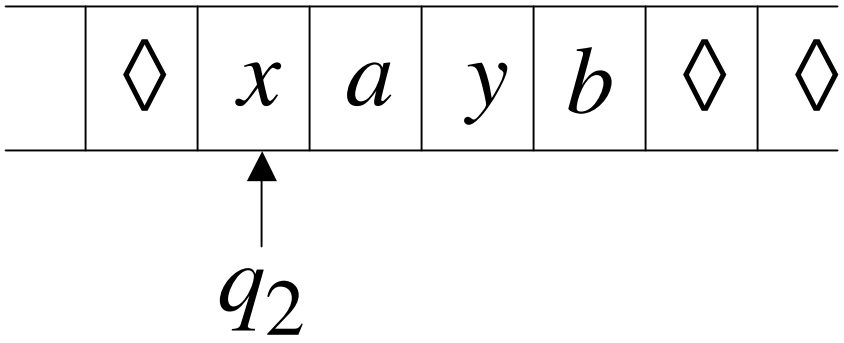

q_4
$y \to y, R$
$\lozenge \to \lozenge, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

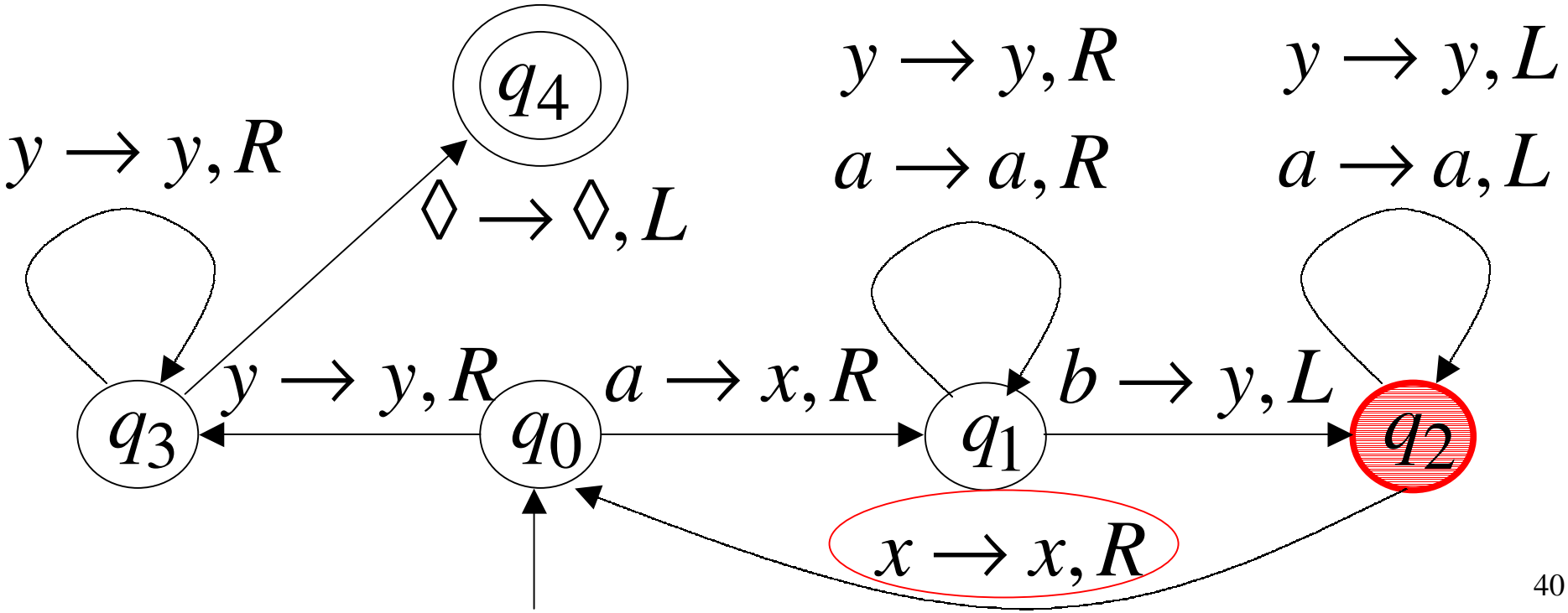
Time 3


◊ x a y b ◊ ◊
q_2

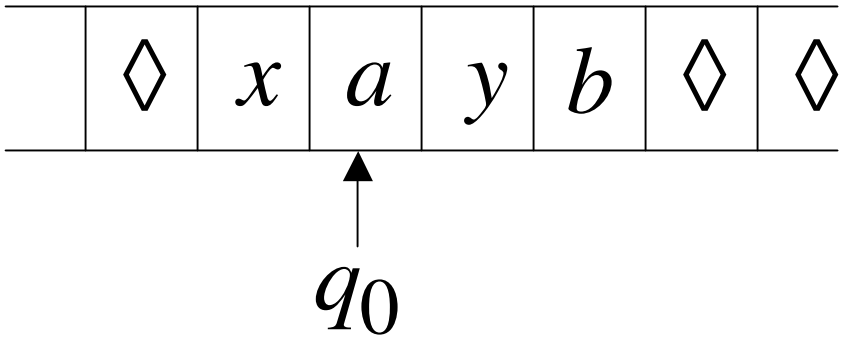

q_4
$y \to y, R$
$\Diamond \to \Diamond, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

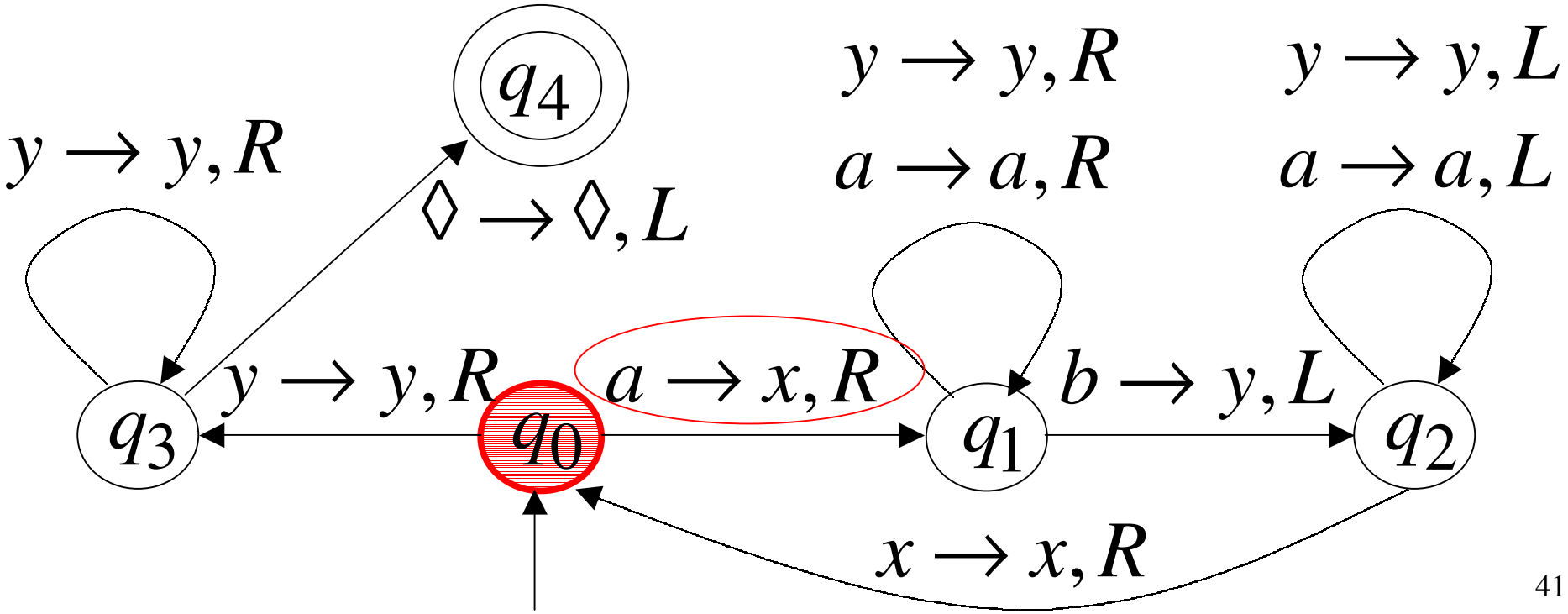
Time 4


◊ x a y b ◊ ◊
q_2

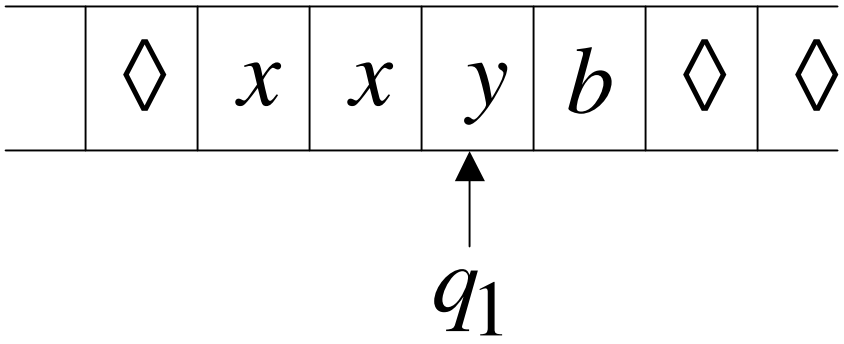

q_4
$y \to y, R$
$\lozenge \to \lozenge, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

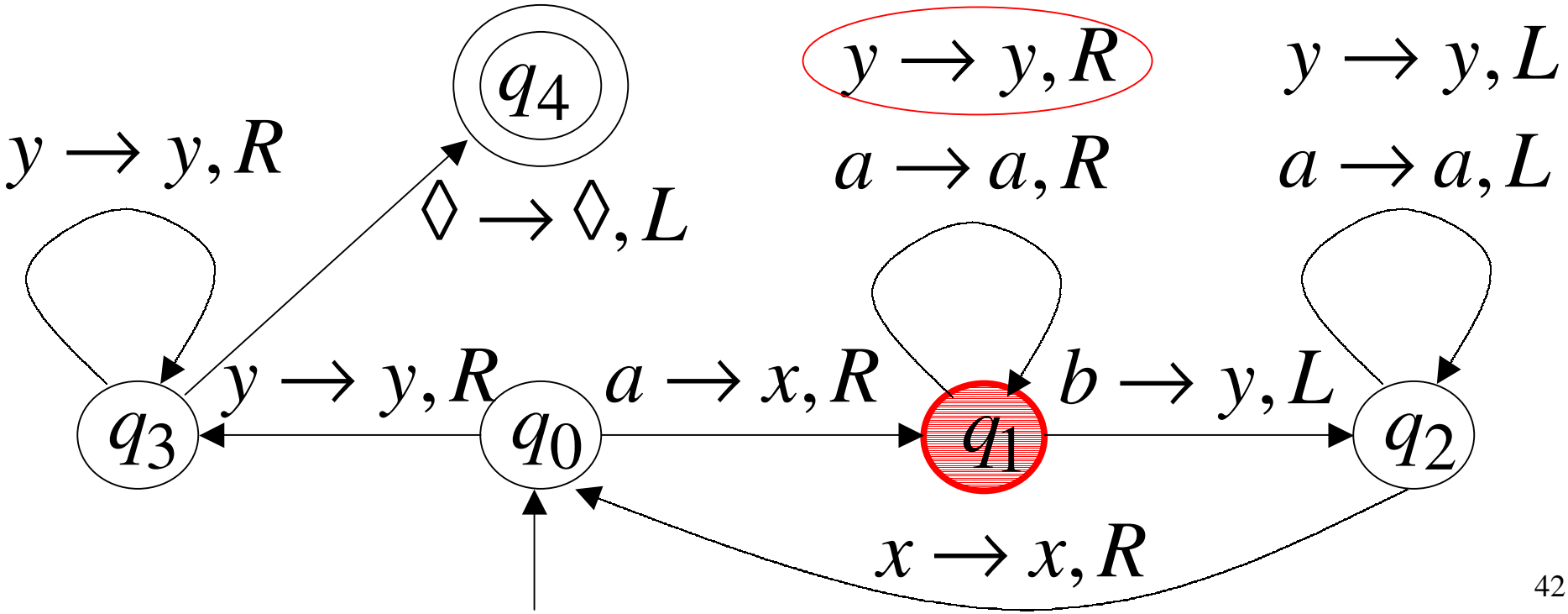
Time 5


◊ x a y b ◊ ◊
q_0

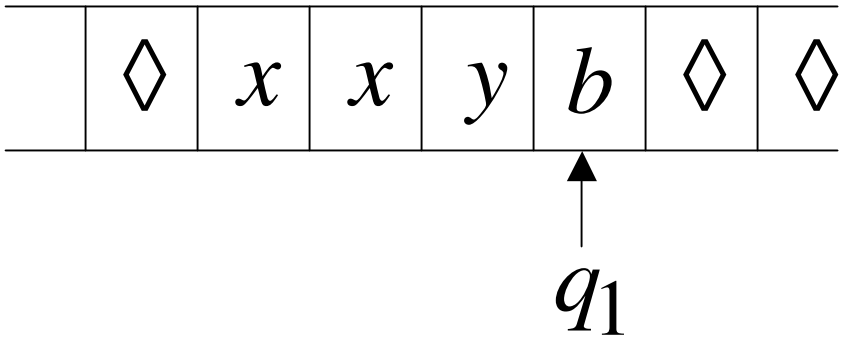

q_4
$y \to y, R$
$\Diamond \to \Diamond, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

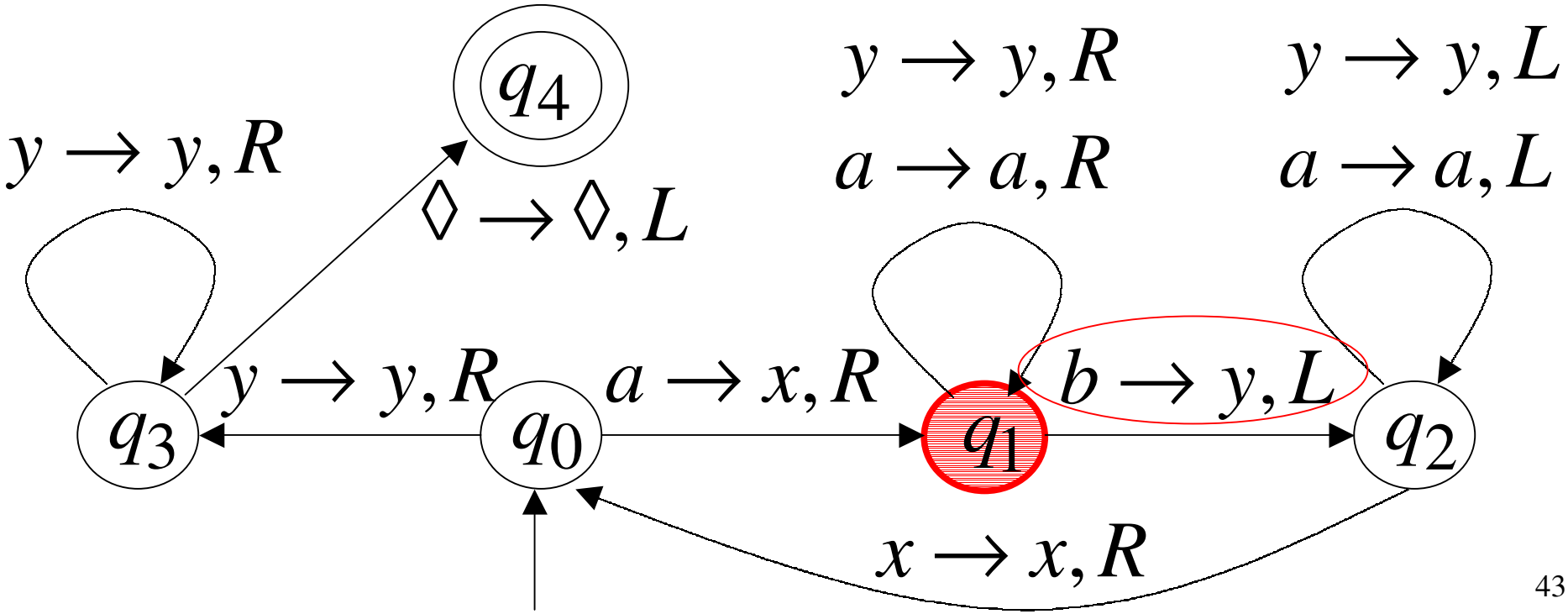
Time 6


◊ x x y b ◊ ◊
q_1


q_4
$y \to y, R$
$\lozenge \to \lozenge, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

Time 7


◊ x x y b ◊ ◊
q_1


q_4
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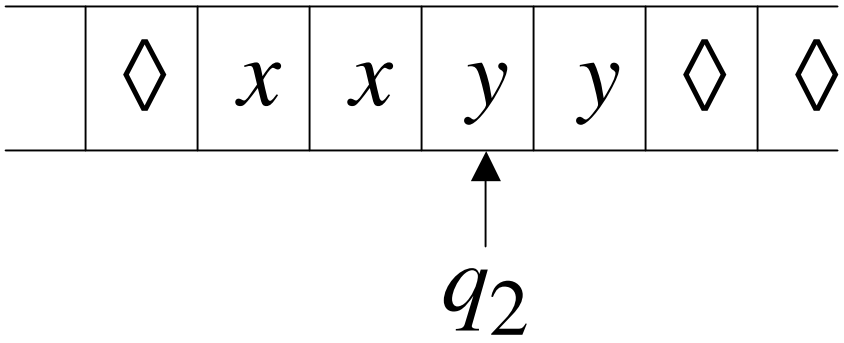
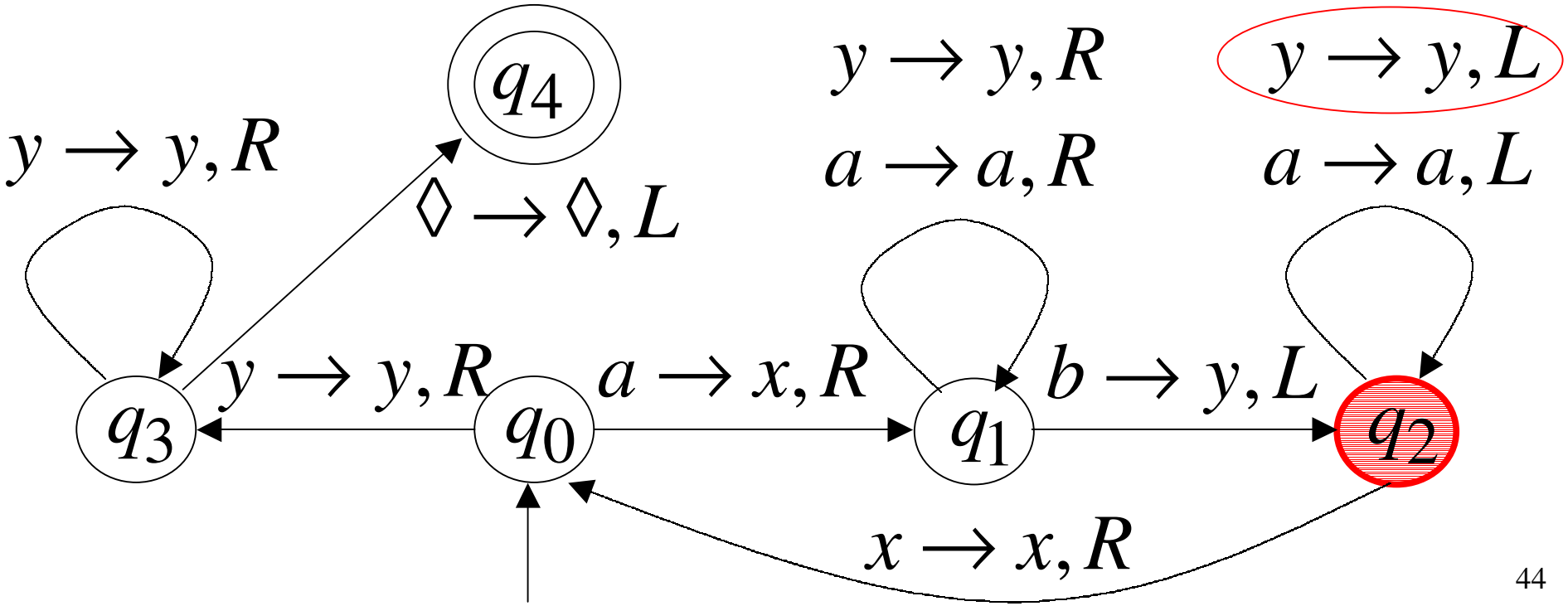
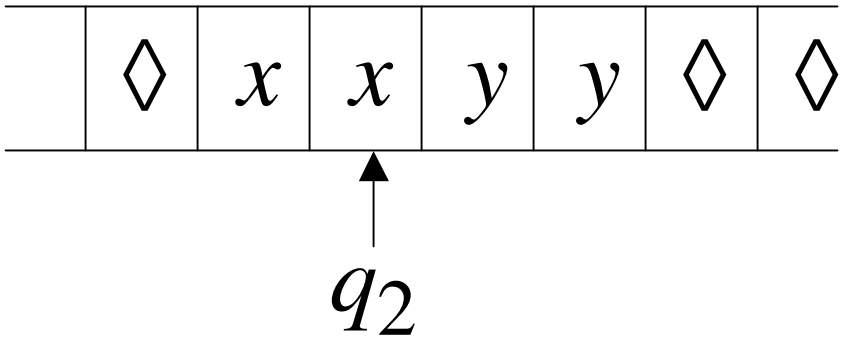
$\lozenge \to \lozenge, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

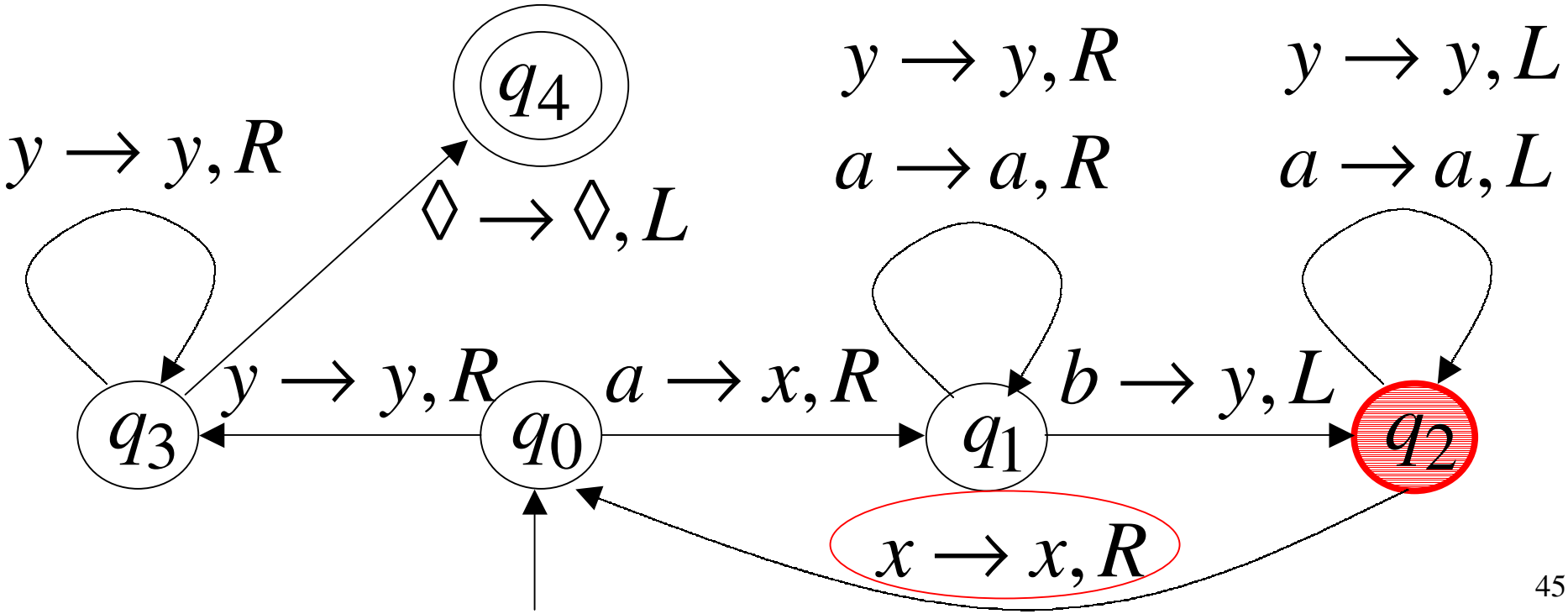
Time 8


◊ x x y y ◊ ◊
q_2


q_4
$y \to y, R$
$\Diamond \to \Diamond, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

Time 9


◊ x x y y ◊ ◊
q_2


q_4
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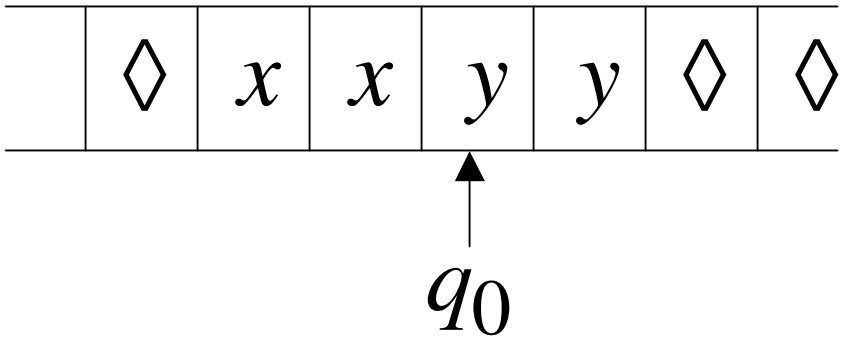
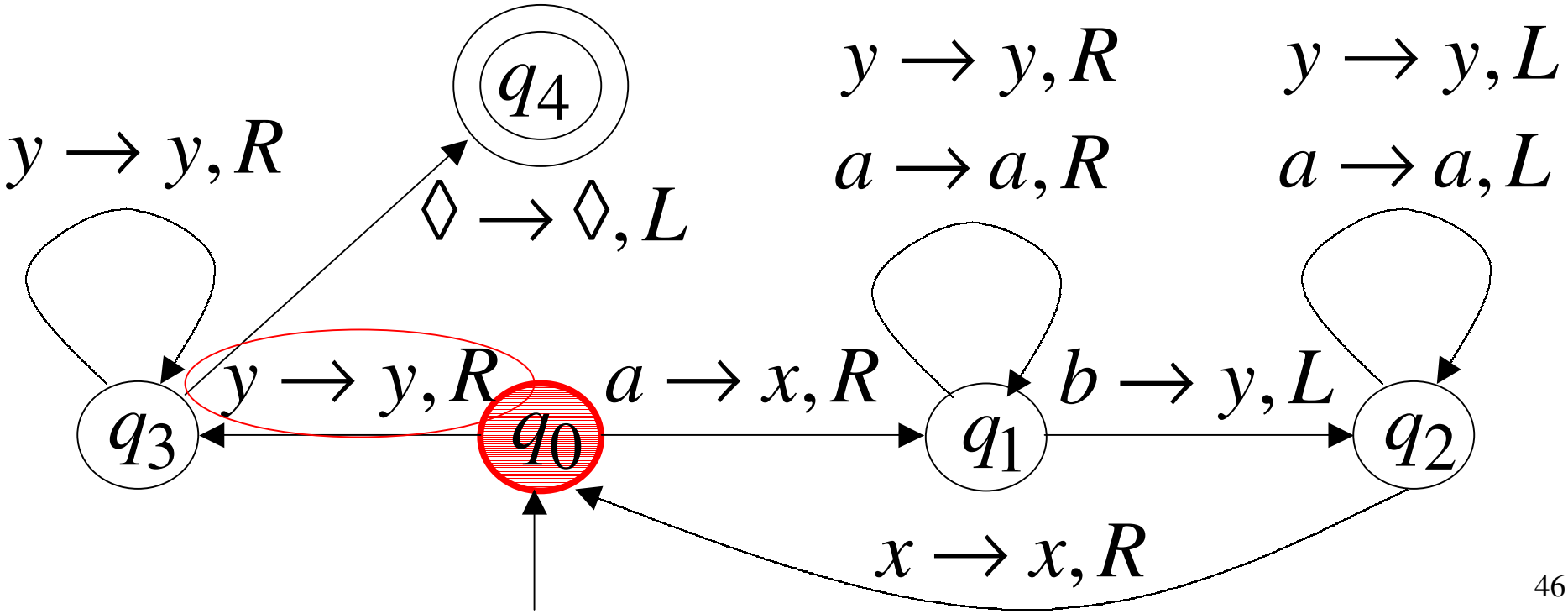
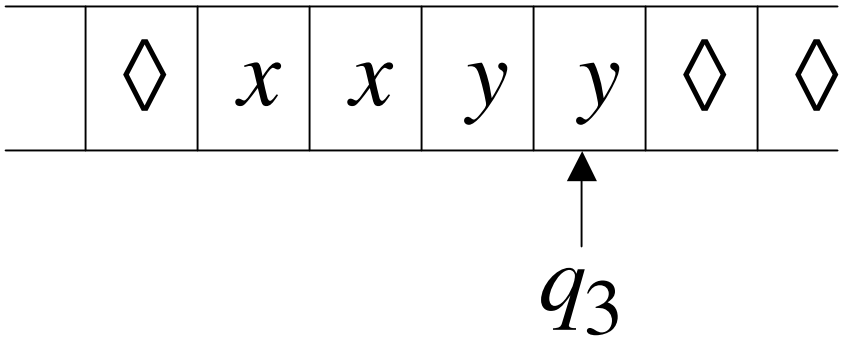
$\lozenge \to \lozenge, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
q_3
$y \to y, R$
q_0
$a \to x, R$
q_1
$b \to y, L$
q_2
$x \to x, R$

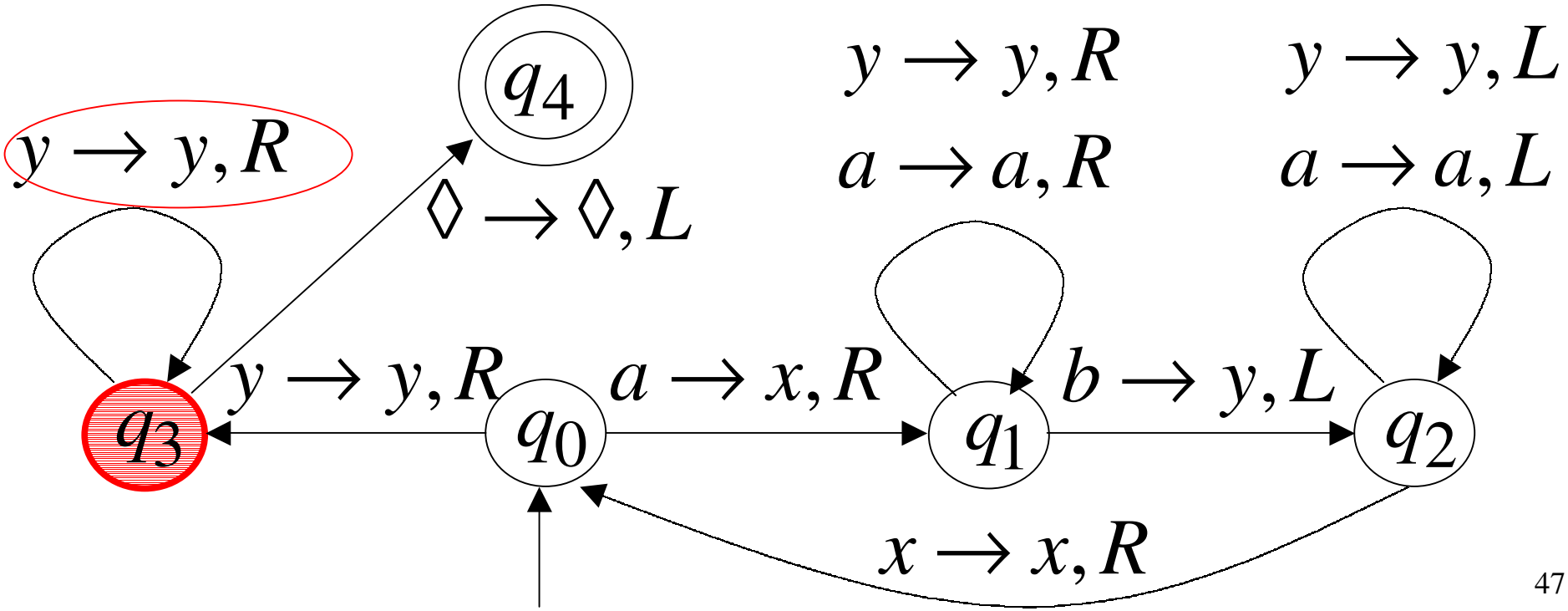
Time 10


◊ x x y y ◊ ◊
q_0

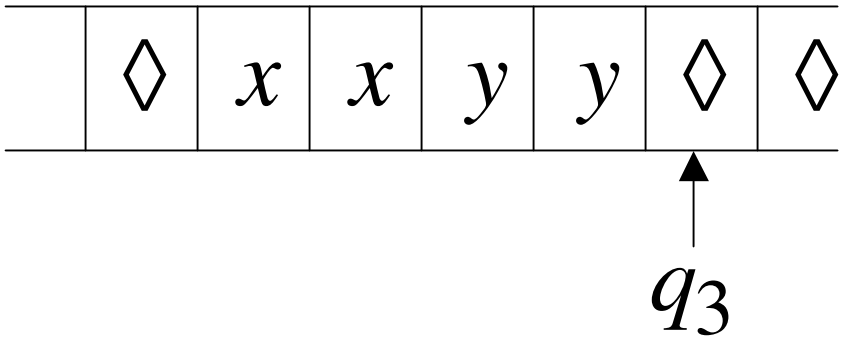

q_4
$y \to y, R$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
$\Diamond \to \Diamond, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to x, R$
$b \to y, L$
q_3
q_0
q_1
q_2
$x \to x, R$

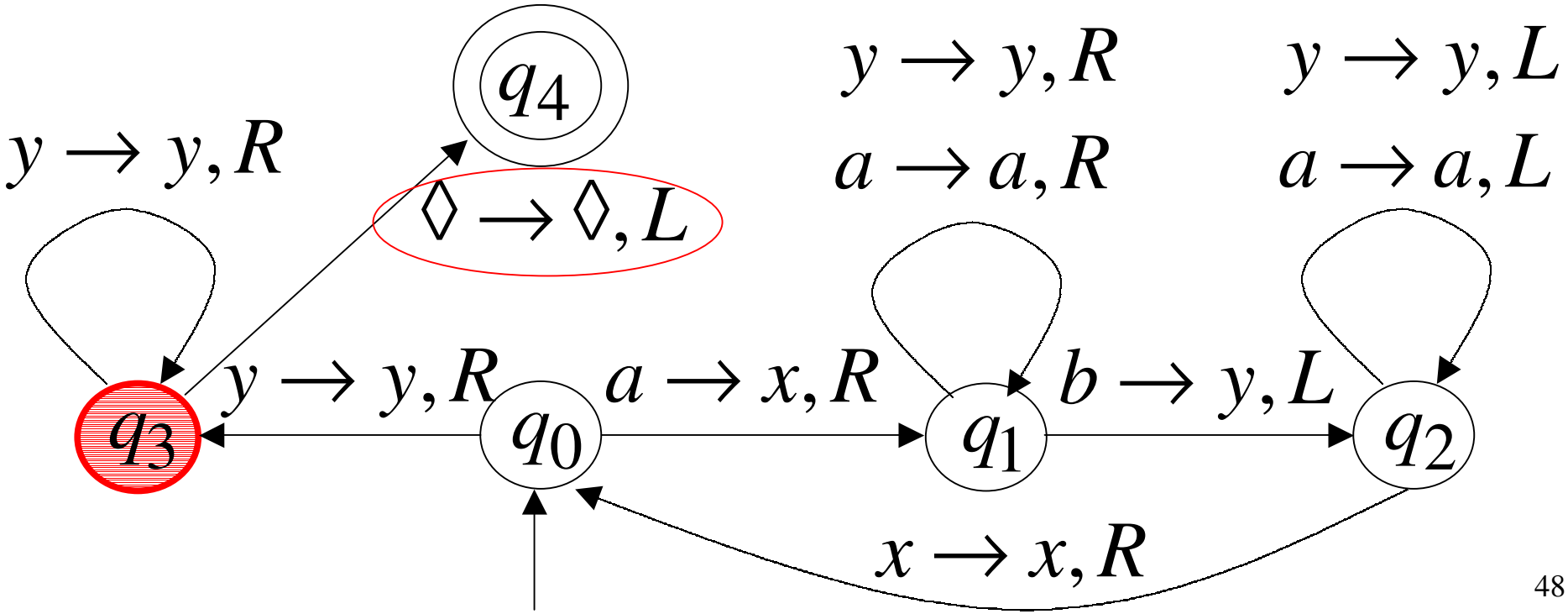
Time 11


◊ x x y y ◊ ◊
q_3

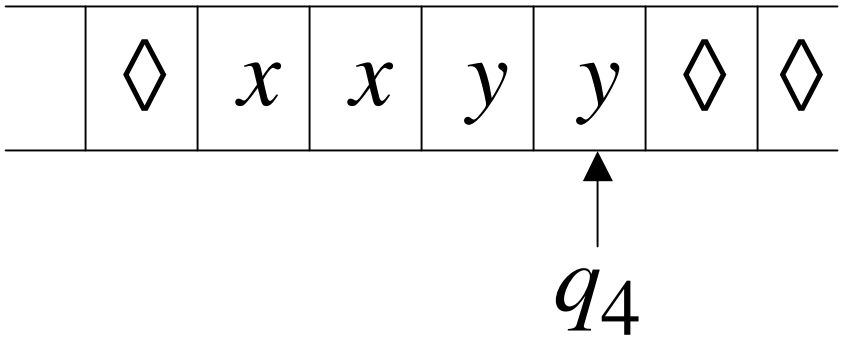

q_4
$y \to y, R$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
$\Diamond \to \Diamond, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to x, R$
$b \to y, L$
q_3
q_0
q_1
q_2
$x \to x, R$

Time 12

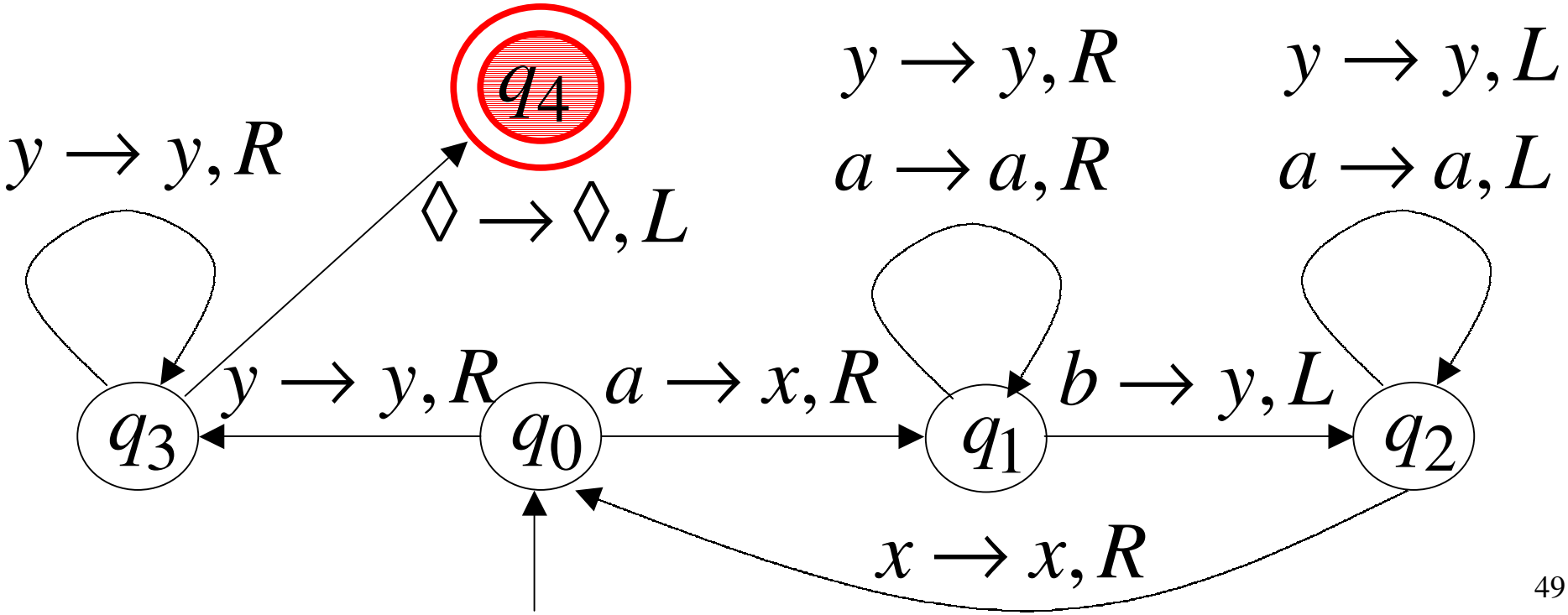

◊ x x y y ◊ ◊
q_3


q_4
$y \to y, R$
$a \to a, R$
$y \to y, L$
$a \to a, L$
$y \to y, R$
$\Diamond \to \Diamond, L$
$y \to y, R$
$a \to x, R$
$b \to y, L$
q_3
q_0
q_1
q_2
$x \to x, R$

Time 13



Halt & Accept



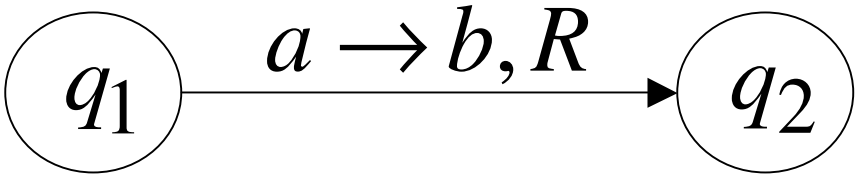
Observation:

If we modify the
machine for the language $\{a^n b^n\}$

we can easily construct
a machine for the language $\{a^n b^n c^n\}$

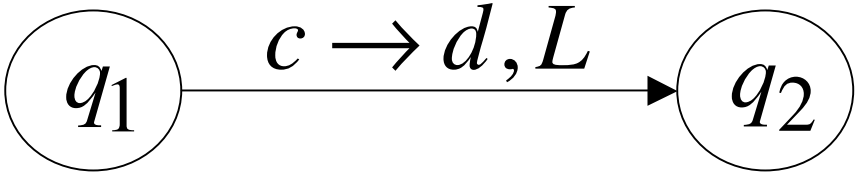
Formal Definitions for Turing Machines

Transition Function



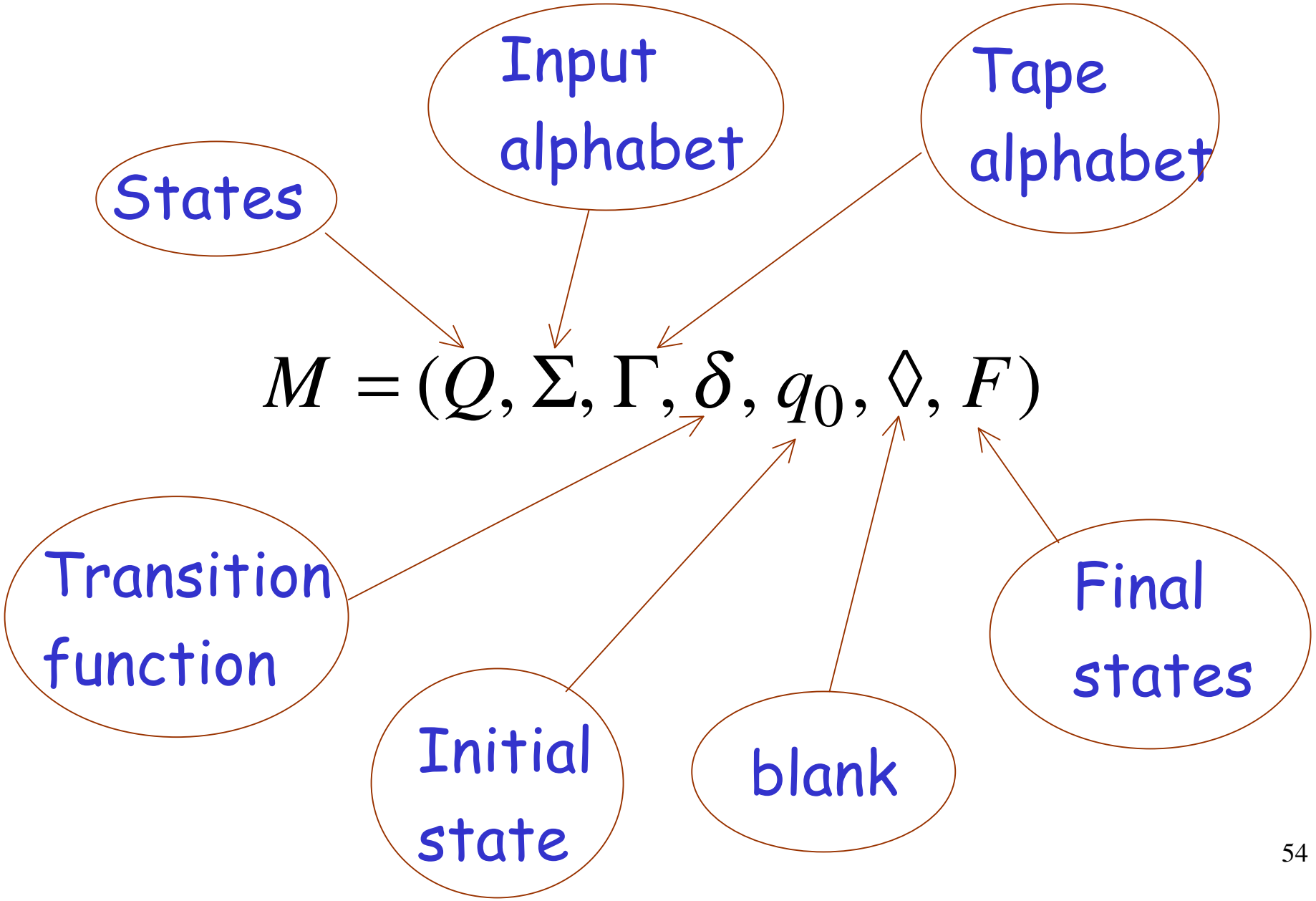
$$\delta(q_1, a) = (q_2, b, R)$$

Transition Function

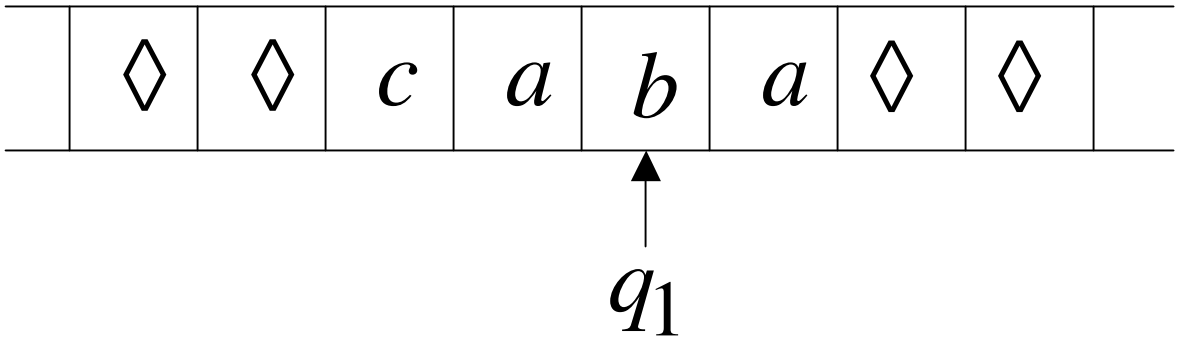


$$\delta(q_1, c) = (q_2, d, L)$$

Turing Machine:

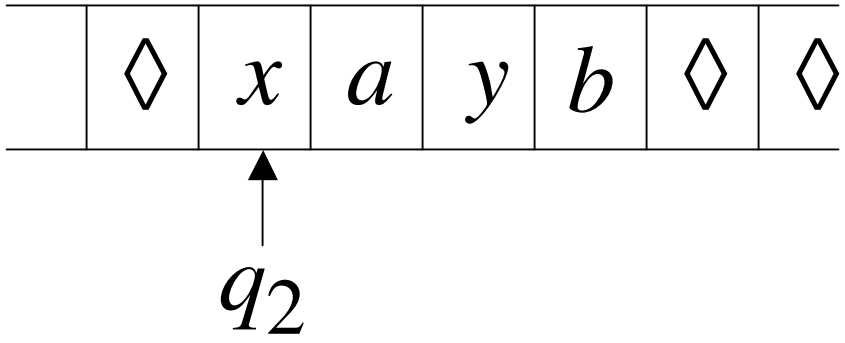


Configuration

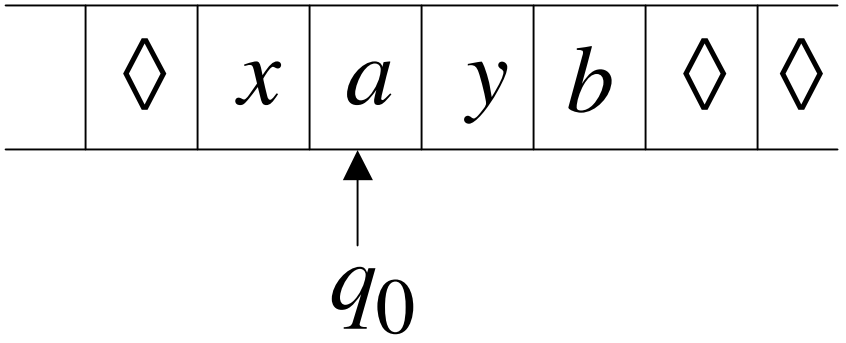


Instantaneous description: $ca\ q_1\ ba$

Time 4

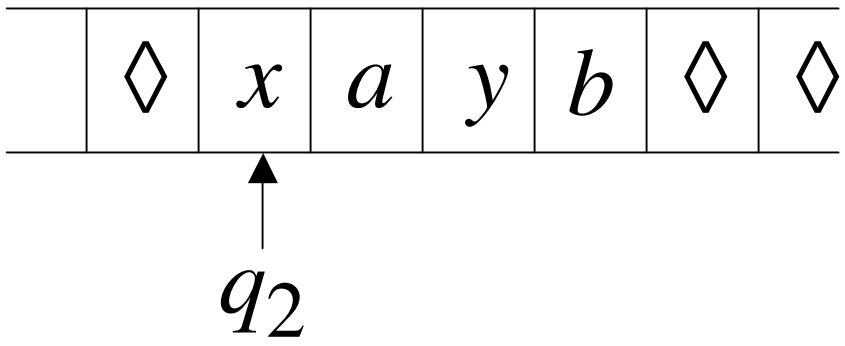


Time 5

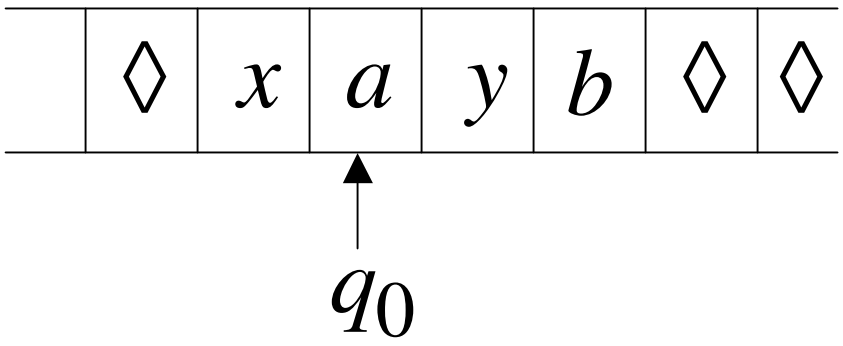


A Move: $q_2\ xayb \succ x\ q_0\ ayb$

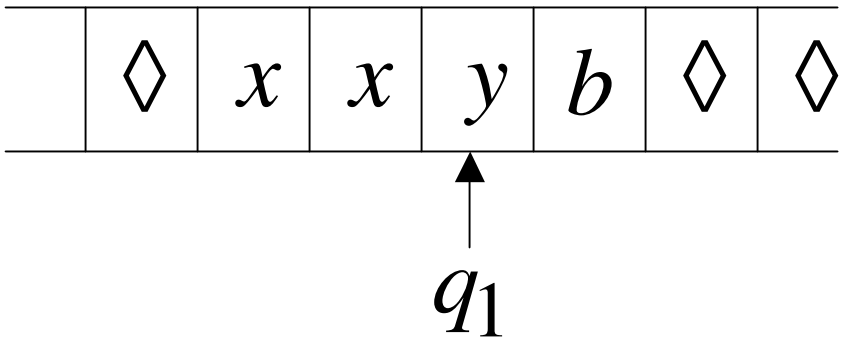
Time 4



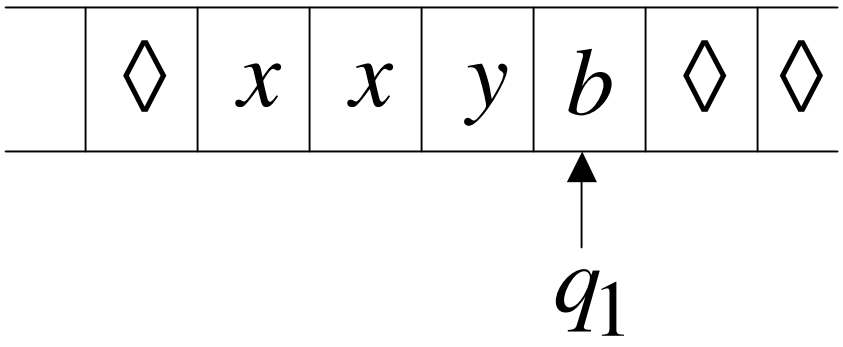
Time 5



Time 6



Time 7



$$q_2\ xayb \succ x\ q_0\ ayb \succ xx\ q_1\ yb \succ xxy\ q_1\ b$$

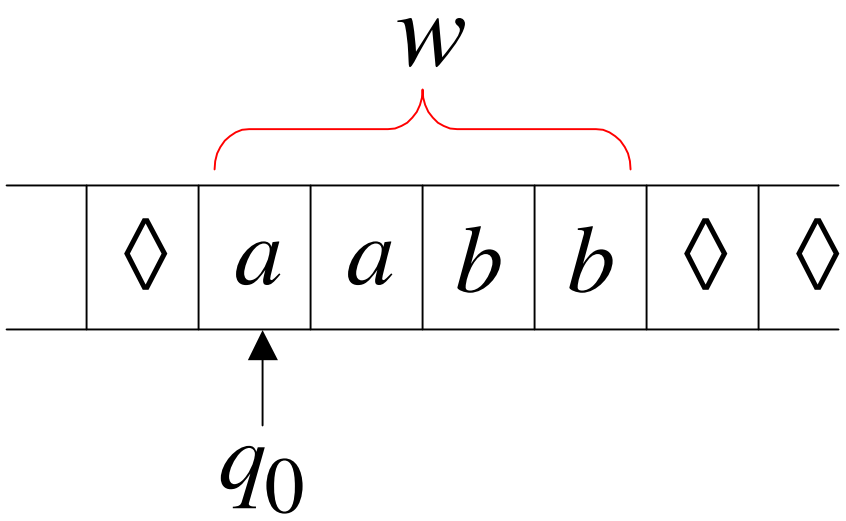
$$q_2\ xayb \succ x\ q_0\ ayb \succ xx\ q_1\ yb \succ xxy\ q_1\ b$$

Equivalent notation:

$$q_2\ xayb \overset{*}{\succ} xxy\ q_1\ b$$

Initial configuration: $q_0\ w$

Input string



The Accepted Language

For any Turing Machine M

$$L(M) = \{w : \quad q_0\, w \overset{*}{\succ} x_1\, q_f\, x_2\}$$

Initial state

Final state

Standard Turing Machine

The machine we described is the standard:

- Deterministic
- Infinite tape in both directions
- Tape is the input/output file