

Introduction to forcing for the working mathematician

lecture 1: Independence of the Continuum Hypothesis

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Set Theory

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Objects are sets. Language is $\langle =, \in \rangle$.

Other relations and operations are derived; $\subset, \cap, \cup, \mathcal{P}(\cdot), \emptyset, \dots$

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Axioms:

1. Extensionality

$$\forall x \forall y (\forall z (z \in x \Leftrightarrow z \in y) \Leftrightarrow x = y)$$

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Infinitely many axioms, recursive system.

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- ▶ If $2^{\aleph_n} < \aleph_\omega$ for all $n \in \omega$, then $2^{\aleph_\omega} < \aleph_{\omega_4}$ (Shelah 94),
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- ▶ $\mathfrak{t} = \mathfrak{p}$ (Malliaris–Shelah 13),
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Gödel’s incompleteness implies there are undecidable sentences.

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Defined by Cantor in 1878.

Cantor believed it is true.

One of Hilbert's 23 problems (1900).

Gödel (1940) shows it cannot be disproved (if ZFC consistent).

Cohen (1963) shows it is independent of ZFC, invented *forcing*.

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- ▶ Idea 1: Remove some sets from V .
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- ▶ Idea 2: Add some new sets.
The method of *forcing*.

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Theorem (Balcar–Vopěnka)

If $V[G] \models \text{ZFC}$, then (essentially) P is a poset and G a V -generic filter.

Posets and Filters

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- ▶ We will assume that posets are nice; i.e.
 - ▶ antisymmetric
 $a \leq b \leq a \Rightarrow a = b$
 - ▶ separative
 $a \not\leq b \Rightarrow \exists c \leq a, c \perp b$
 - ▶ contains largest element **1**

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- ▶ $A \subset P$ is an **antichain** if $a, b \in A, a \neq b$ implies $a \perp b$.

Generic Filters

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A filter $G \subset P$ is V -**generic** if $G \cap D \neq \emptyset$ for each dense $D \subset P$, $D \in V$.

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Focus on case 1.

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Choose P to be a poset of approximations of the desired G .

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Put $f = \bigcup G$.

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Put $C = \{c_\alpha : \alpha \in \omega_2\}$, $V[G] \models |C| = |\omega_2^V|$.

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- ▶ If $\varphi \Rightarrow \psi$, then $\mathcal{D}_\varphi \subseteq \mathcal{D}_\psi$.

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$G \cap D_c \neq \emptyset$ implies $G \cap \mathcal{D}_{\dot{c}=x} \neq \emptyset$ for some $x \in V$,

and $V[G] \models c = x$.

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If P is c.c.c. and $V \models |\kappa| < |\lambda|$, then $V[G] \models |\kappa| < |\lambda|$.

Corollary

If P is c.c.c., then $V[G] \models |\omega_2^V| = \aleph_2$.

c.c.c. posets preserve cardinals

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WLOG show that there is no surjection $b: \omega \rightarrow \omega_1^V$ in $V[G]$,
other cases are analogous.

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$\mathcal{D}_{\dot{b}(n)=\alpha} \perp \mathcal{D}_{\dot{b}(n)=\beta}$ for each $n \in \omega$ and $\alpha \neq \beta \in \omega_1$.

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If $\mathcal{D}_{\dot{b}(n)=\alpha} = \emptyset$, then $V[G] \models b(n) \neq \alpha$.

I.e. $b(n) \in R_n$, and $\text{Rng}(b) \subset \bigcup \{ R_n : n \in \omega \}$.

$\bigcup \{ R_n : n \in \omega \}$ is in V and countable, and b is not a surjection.

Δ -system lemma

Lemma

Suppose $\gamma \in \text{On}$, $\{a_\alpha : \alpha \in \omega_1\} \subset [\gamma]^{<\omega}$. There exists $I \in [\omega_1]^{\omega_1}$ and $\Delta \in [\gamma]^{<\omega}$ such that $a_\alpha \cap a_\beta = \Delta$ for each $\alpha \neq \beta \in I$.

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Moreover if $\alpha < \beta$, $\chi \in a_\alpha \setminus \Delta$, $\xi \in a_\beta \setminus \Delta$, then $\chi < \xi$.*