

PhD Defense

On measure-preserving actions of Polish groups on spaces of infinite measure

Fabien HOAREAU

Under the supervision of Pierre FIMA and François LE MAÎTRE

July 2, 2026



- 1 Introduction and context
- 2 Orbit full groups and topological embeddings
- 3 Locally finite models for ∞ -mp actions
- 4 Topological properties of Polish full groups

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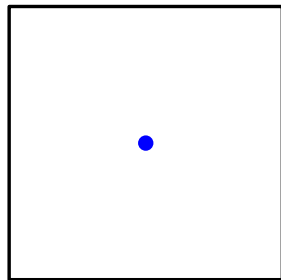
What is “ergodic theory of group actions”?

Dynamical systems

-How things evolve over time

Dynamical systems

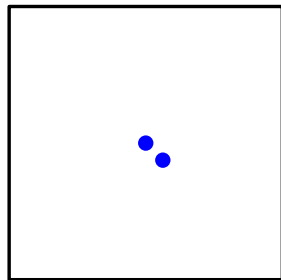
-How things evolve over time



$$t = 0$$

Dynamical systems

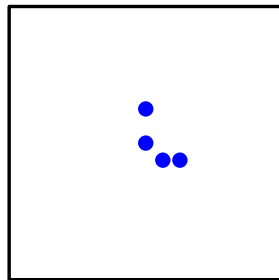
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$$t = 1$$

Dynamical systems

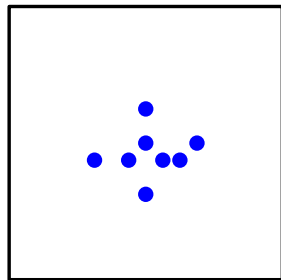
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$$t = 2$$

Dynamical systems

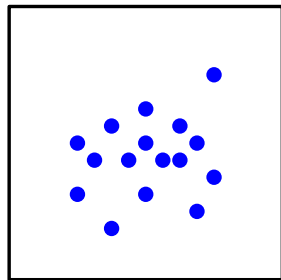
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$$t = 3$$

Dynamical systems

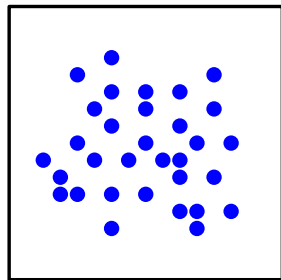
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$$t = 4$$

Dynamical systems

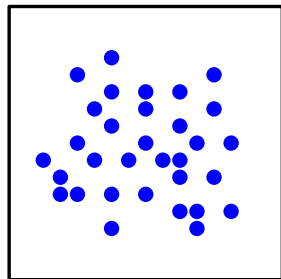
-How things evolve over time



$$t = 5$$

Dynamical systems

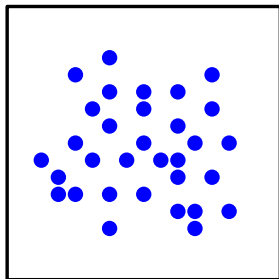
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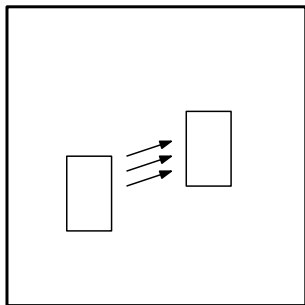
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- Notion of group / group action



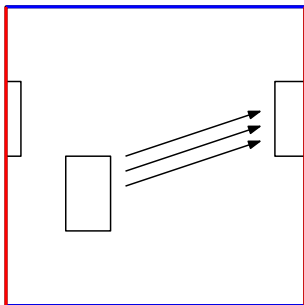
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Ergodic theory



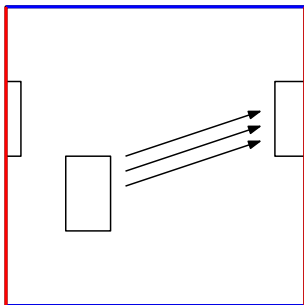
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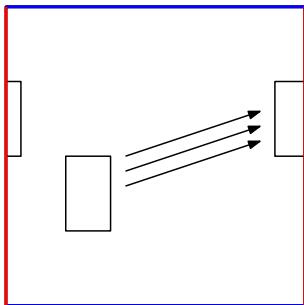
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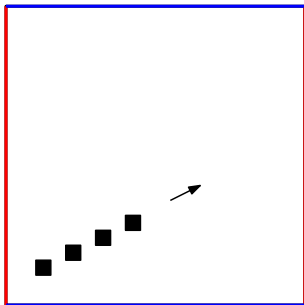
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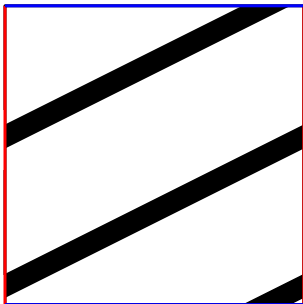
Ergodic theory



Remark: For any fixed parameters of the translation T (angle and length), applying powers of T yields a $\mathbb{Z}$ -action on the space.

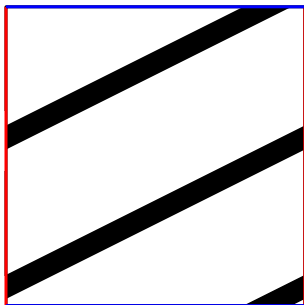
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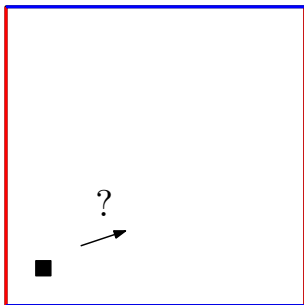
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Non ergodic case

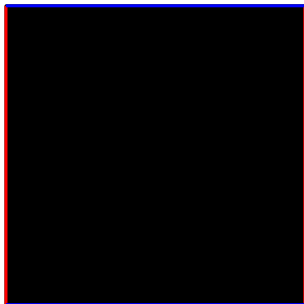
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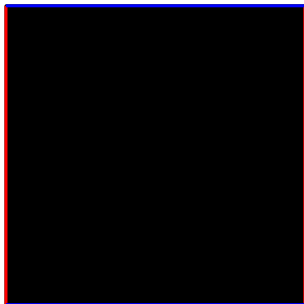
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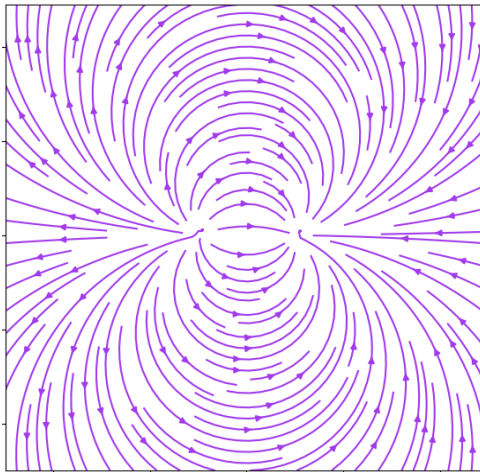
Goal: Generalizing techniques from these fields to actions of more general groups.

First generalization

Extending the “classical ergodic theory” that studies $\mathbb{Z}$ -actions to actions of some uncountable groups.

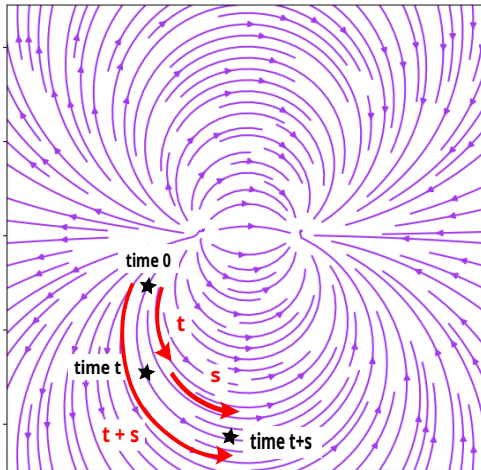
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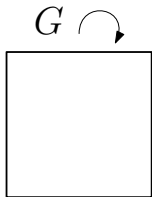


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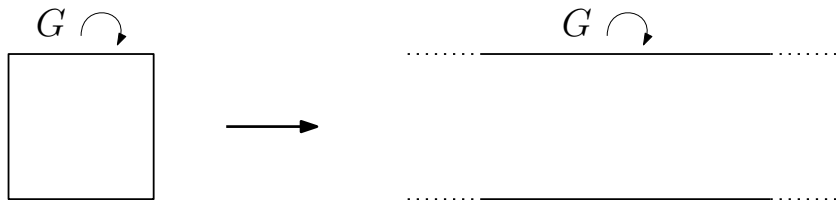
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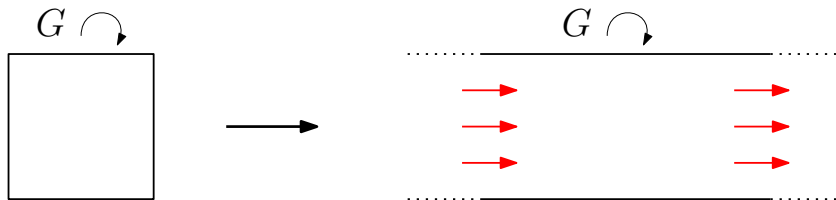
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- The group $\mathfrak{S}_\infty$ of all permutations of $\mathbb{N}$.

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Question: Can we “classify” the orbit structure of these G -actions?

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- Γ : countable group
- α and β : group actions (sometimes denoted simply by $\cdot$)

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Two actions α and β of two countable groups Γ and Λ respectively on (X, μ) are **orbit equivalent** (denoted by OE) if there exists an element $S \in \text{Aut}(X, \mu)$ such that for μ -a.e. $x \in X$ we have

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...and Ornstein and Weiss gave the following generalization.

Theorem (Ornstein–Weiss 1980)

Any two ergodic pmp actions of any two countable infinite amenable groups are OE.

Full groups

Definition

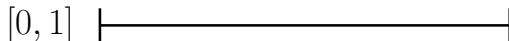
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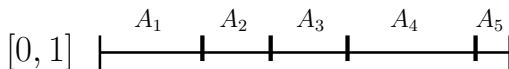


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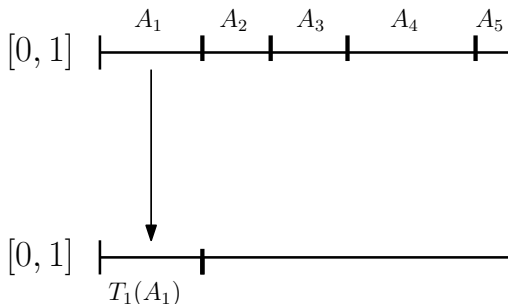


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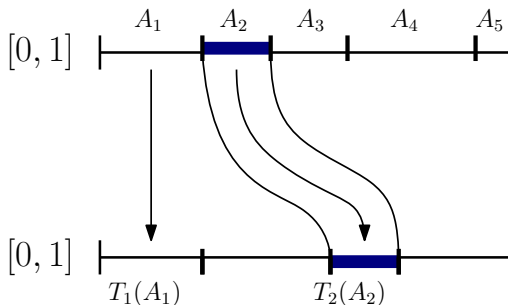


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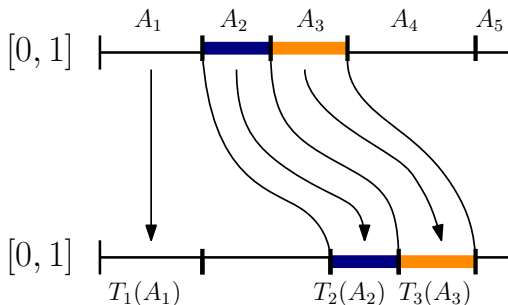


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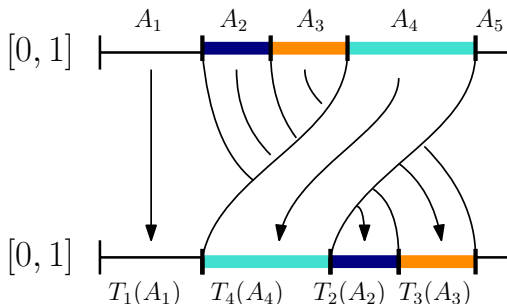


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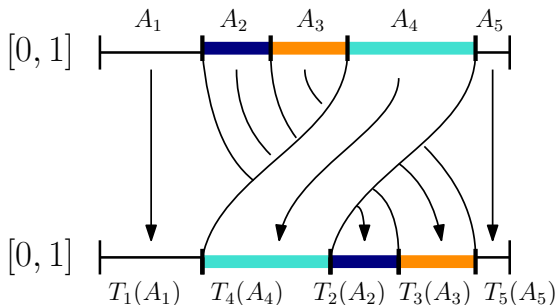


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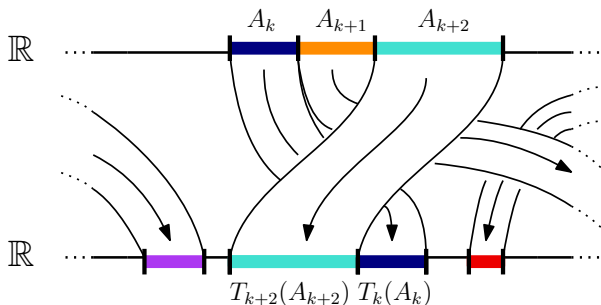


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Notation: Given a G -action on X , define the equivalence relation $\mathcal{R}_G$ by: $(x, y) \in \mathcal{R}_G \iff y \in G \cdot x$.

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A subgroup $\mathbb{G}$ of $\text{Aut}(X, \nu)$ is a **full group** if it is stable under the operation of cutting and pasting any sequence of elements of $\mathbb{G}$.

Notation: Given a G -action on X , define the equivalence relation $\mathcal{R}_G$ by: $(x, y) \in \mathcal{R}_G \iff y \in G \cdot x$.

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In other words, for any group isomorphism $\psi : \mathbb{G} \rightarrow \mathbb{H}$, there exists S in $\text{Aut}(X, \mu)$ such that for all $T \in \mathbb{G}$, we have $\psi(T) = STS^{-1}$.

Back to OE

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We say that two ∞ -mp (resp. pmp) actions of two Polish groups G and H are **orbit equivalent** if there exists a conull subset $X_0 \subseteq X$ and a Borel bijection $S : X_0 \rightarrow X_0$ which verify the following:

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A non-trivial example

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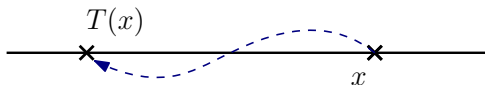
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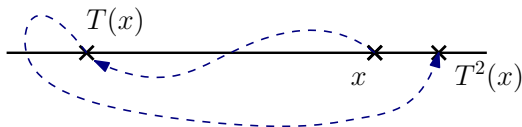
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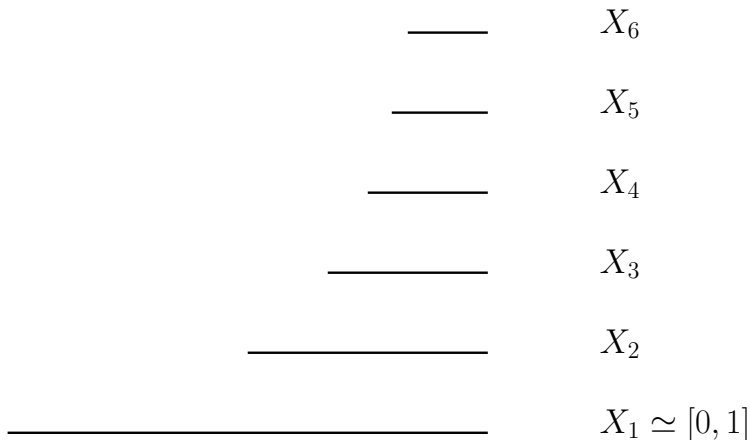
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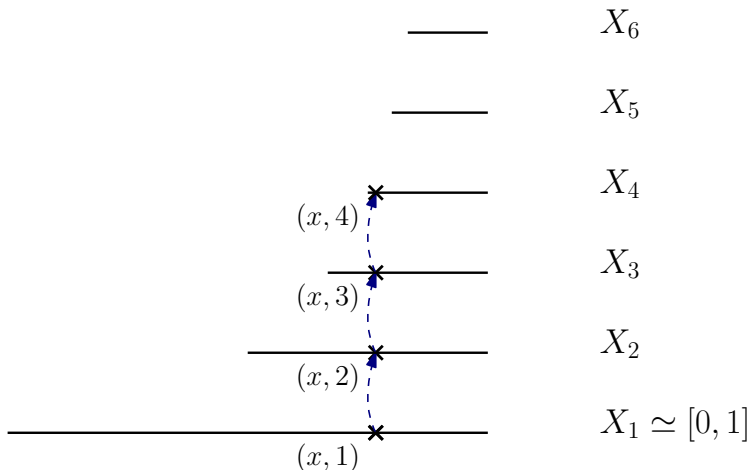
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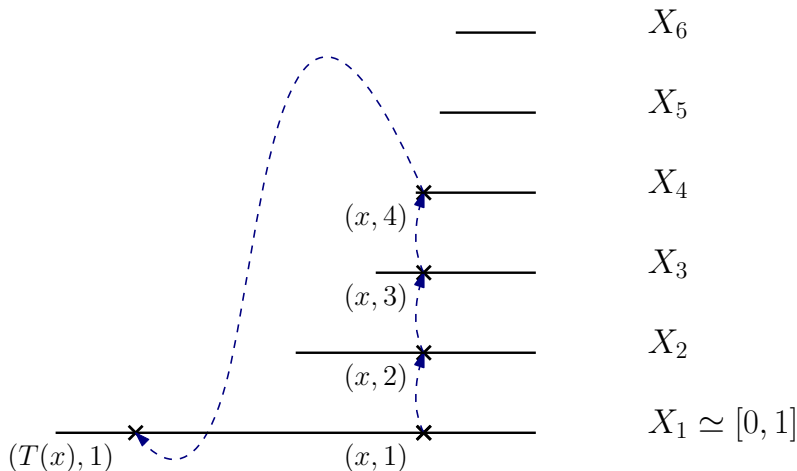
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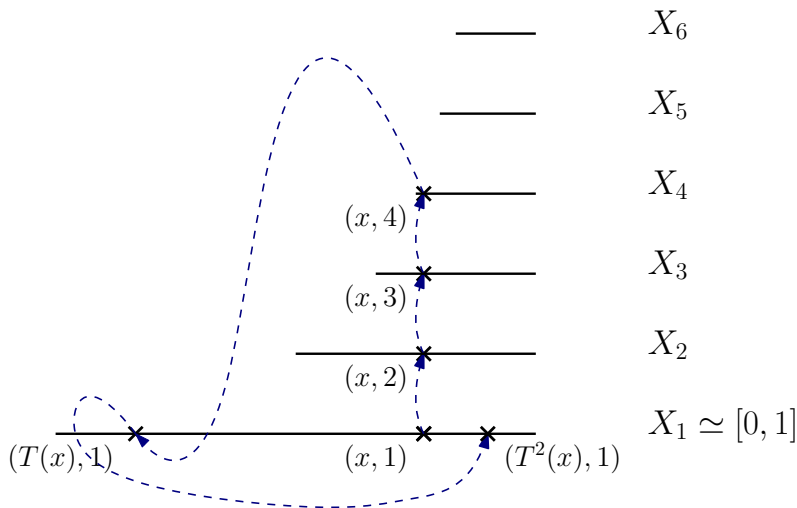
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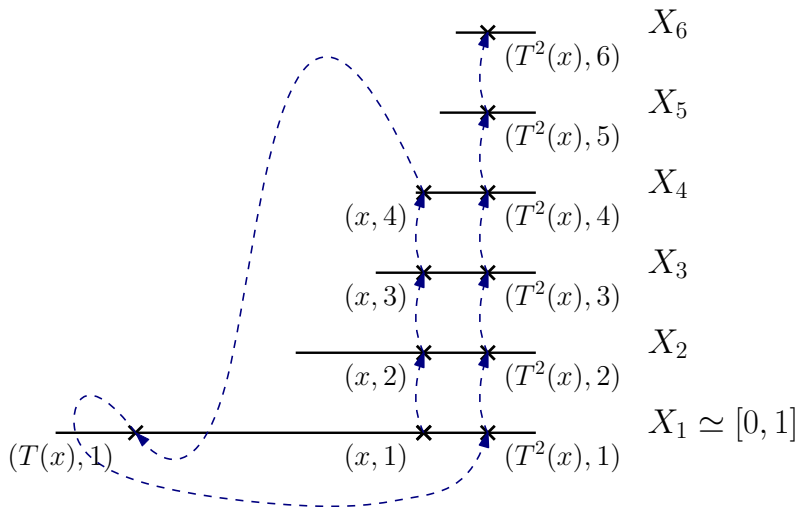
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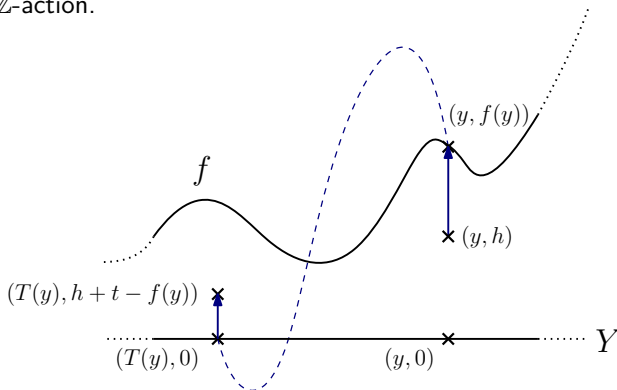
—→ We can construct ∞ -mp ergodic $\mathbb{Z}$ -actions.

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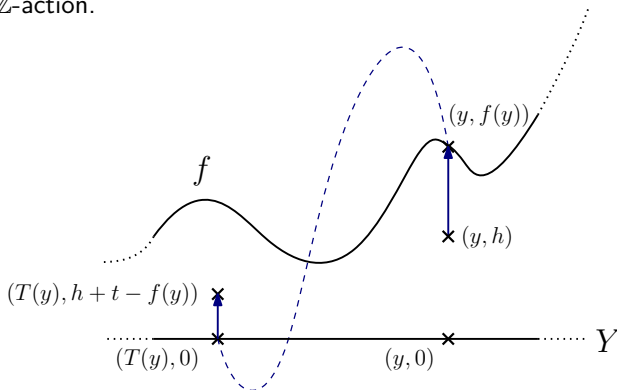
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→ We can construct ∞ -mp ergodic $\mathbb{R}$ -actions, that are not transitive.

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Remark

In order to adapt the result, we rely heavily on a generalization of Dye's Reconstruction Theorem, namely Fremlin's Reconstruction Theorem.

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The **weak topology** τ_w makes $\text{Aut}(X, \nu)$ a Polish group.
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Problems for generalizing to $\text{Aut}(X, \lambda)$

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Theorem (Becker–Kechris 1993)

Let α be a Borel G -action on X . There exists a compact Polish space K with a continuous G -action β on K and a Borel injection $\Phi : X \hookrightarrow K$ which is G -equivariant: for all $x \in X, g \in G$,
 $\Phi(\alpha(g, x)) = \beta(g, \Phi(x))$.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} X & \xrightarrow{\alpha(g, \cdot)} & X \\ \Phi \downarrow & & \downarrow \Phi \\ K & \xrightarrow{\beta(g, \cdot)} & K \end{array}$$

Check that $(\text{Aut}(X, \mu), \tau_w)$ topologically embeds into $(L^0(X, \mu, X), \tau_m)$.

Proposition

Let X be endowed with a compatible Polish topology τ_X .

- $(\text{Aut}(X, \mu), \tau_w) \hookrightarrow (L^0(X, \mu, X), \tau_m)$ is a topological embedding.
- $(\text{Aut}(X, \lambda), \tau_w) \hookrightarrow (L^0(X, \lambda, X), \tau_m)$ is a topological embedding under the condition that λ is locally finite with regard to τ_X .

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Definition

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Question: Can we make ∞ -mp G -actions on (X, λ) continuous, with a compatible topology τ_X such that λ is locally finite on (X, τ_X) ?

- 1 Introduction and context
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Let α be a ∞ -mp action of a locally compact Polish group G on (X, λ) . There is a continuous measure-preserving G -action β on a locally compact Polish space Y and a Borel G -equivariant injection $\Phi : X \hookrightarrow Y$ such that the pushforward measure $\Phi_* \lambda$ is a Radon measure on Y .

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Let $G \curvearrowright (X, \lambda)$ be a ∞ -mp action. We say that $f \in L^\infty(X, \lambda, \mathbb{C})$ is **G -continuous** if $\|f - g \cdot f\|_\infty \rightarrow 0$ as $g \rightarrow e_G$.

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- Construct a space Y as the spectrum of a well-chosen subalgebra of G -continuous functions in $\mathcal{L}^\infty(X)$.
 - Define a Radon measure η on Y with the Riesz representation theorem.
 - Embed X in Y in a Borel way via the evaluation map Φ , and check that $\Phi_*\lambda = \eta$ and that the G -action on (Y, η) is as wanted.

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Definition

Let G be a locally compact Polish group, and denote by m its left Haar measure. Consider a ∞ -mp G -action on (X, λ) . Let $f \in \mathcal{L}^\infty(X)$ and $\delta \in L^1(G, m)$. The **convolution product** $\delta * f : X \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ is defined by:

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→ Use convolution with functions δ being “approximations of the identity in G ” to obtain G -continuity!

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Proposition

There exists a ∞ -mp action of $\mathfrak{S}_\infty$ on (X, λ) which cannot admit a continuous Radon model.

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Recall the following.

Theorem (Carderi–Le Maître 2016)

Let G be a Polish group acting in a pmp way on (X, μ) . The orbit full group $[\mathcal{R}_G] \leq \text{Aut}(X, \mu)$ is a Polish group when endowed with the topology of orbital convergence in measure.

Theorem (H. 2026+)

Let G be a Polish group acting in a continuous and ∞ -mp manner on a Polish space (X, τ_X) equipped with an atomless Borel σ -finite measure λ which is locally finite. The orbit full group $[\mathcal{R}_G]$, equipped with the topology of orbital convergence in measure, is a Polish group.

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There exists a ∞ -mp action of $\mathfrak{S}_\infty$ on (X, λ) , for which the associated orbit full group $[\mathcal{R}_{\mathfrak{S}_\infty}]$ is not a Polish group when endowed with the topology of orbital convergence in measure.

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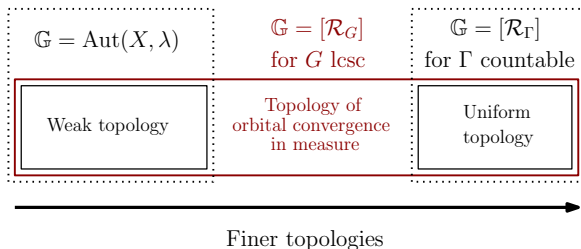
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Let $\mathbb{G}$ be an ergodic full group in $\text{Aut}(X, \lambda)$ (resp. $\text{Aut}(X, \mu)$). There is at most one Polish group topology on $\mathbb{G}$, and this topology refines the weak topology but is coarser than the uniform topology.

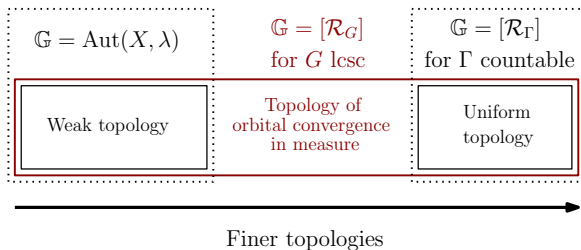
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Remark

Showing that Polish topologies are coarser than the uniform topology uses an automatic continuity result of Fremlin, which extends a result of Kittrell and Tsankov for $[\mathcal{R}_\Gamma] \leq \text{Aut}(X, \mu)$.

A non-trivial normal subgroup

Define $\text{Aut}_f(X, \lambda) = \{T \in \text{Aut}(X, \lambda) \mid \lambda(\text{supp } T) < \infty\} \triangleleft \text{Aut}(X, \lambda)$.

Define $\mathbb{G}_f = \mathbb{G} \cap \text{Aut}_f(X, \lambda) \triangleleft \mathbb{G}$.

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Theorem (Le Maître 2022)

The group $\text{Aut}_f(X, \lambda) \leq \text{Aut}(X, \lambda)$ is not Polishable.

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Let $\mathbb{G}$ be an ergodic full group in $\text{Aut}(X, \lambda)$. The group $\mathbb{G}_f$ can be endowed with a Polish group topology iff $\mathbb{G}$ is the full group of a countable equivalence relation.

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Remark

The uniform finite topology on $\mathbb{G}_f$ is the topology induced by the following metric:

$$d_{u,f} : S, T \mapsto \lambda(\{x \in X \mid S(x) \neq T(x)\}).$$

It refines the uniform topology τ_u .

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These equivalent conditions moreover imply the following one:

- (5) for any neighbourhood V of e_G , $\bigcup_{g \in V} \{x \in X \mid g \cdot x \neq x\}$ is conull.

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- (4) for any essentially free measure-preserving action of a countable group $\Gamma \curvearrowright (X, \lambda)$, there is a dense G_δ set of elements of $\mathbb{G}$ inducing a free action of $\Gamma * \mathbb{Z}$.

These equivalent conditions moreover imply the following one:

- (5) for any neighbourhood V of e_G , $\bigcup_{g \in V} \{x \in X \mid g \cdot x \neq x\}$ is conull.
- Finally, (5) implies the above conditions if the space X is endowed with a compatible Polish topology, with regard to which the measure is locally finite and the G -action is continuous.

Corollary

Let G be a locally compact Polish group acting in a ∞ -mp and ergodic manner on (X, λ) . Then exactly one of the following holds:

- (i) $\mathcal{R}_G$ is a countable measure-preserving equivalence relation;*
- (ii) The set $\text{APER} \cap [\mathcal{R}_G]$ is τ_m^o -dense in $[\mathcal{R}_G]$.*

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Example

For $G = \mathbb{R}$ acting on itself by translation, we recover Sachdeva's results on genericity for the weak topology in $\text{Aut}(X, \lambda) = [\mathcal{R}_G]$.

Thank you for your attention!