

# Chapter 1

## Capacity and Ultrametric spaces

### 1.1 Ultrametric basics

The principal context for this thesis is an arbitrary ultrametric space, which is a metric space that also satisfies an additional axion, sometimes called the ultrametric inequality or (in the case of vector spaces) the strong triangle property. We define ultrametric spaces below and for the rest of this section, we review some of their more important characteristics. The proofs offered in this section are, for the most part, standard and can be found in a number of reference texts, such as [Ro].

**Definition 1.** Let  $(M, \rho)$  be a metric space; that is, suppose  $M$  is a set and  $\rho : M \times M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$  is such that:

- (i)  $\rho(x, y) = 0$  if and only if  $x = y$
- (ii)  $\rho(x, y) = \rho(y, x)$
- (iii)  $\rho(x, z) \leq \rho(x, y) + \rho(y, z)$

for any  $x, y, z \in M$ . If  $\rho$  satisfies the ultrametric inequality,

$$\rho(x, z) \leq \max(\rho(x, y), \rho(y, z))$$

for any  $x, y, z \in M$ , then  $(M, \rho)$  is an **ultrametric space**.

A special case of an ultrametric space, and one where much of the previous work on this topic has been completed, is one where the metric has been derived from a norm on a vector space.

**Definition 2.** Let  $(V, N)$  be a normed vector space; that is, suppose  $V$  is  $\mathbb{F}$ -vector space, for  $\mathbb{F}$  some subfield of  $\mathbb{C}$ , and  $N : V \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0}$  is such that:

$$(i) \ N(x + y) \leq N(x) + N(y)$$

$$(ii) \ N(cx) = |c| \ N(x)$$

$$(iii) \ N(x) = 0 \text{ implies } x = 0$$

for any  $x, y \in V$  and  $c \in \mathbb{F}$ . We say that  $N$  satisfies the **strong triangle inequality** if

$$N(x + y) \leq \max(N(x), N(y))$$

for any  $x, y \in V$ .

**Proposition 1.** *Let  $(V, N)$  be a normed vector space and suppose  $N$  satisfies the strong triangle inequality. Then the metric space,  $(V, \rho_N)$ , where  $\rho_N$  is the metric induced by  $N$ , that is,  $\rho_N(x, y) = N(x - y)$ , is an ultrametric space.*

*Proof.* We take for granted that  $(V, \rho_N)$  is a metric space and also note that

$$N(x + z) \leq \max(N(x), N(z))$$

implies

$$\rho_N(x, z) \leq \max(\rho_N(x, 0), \rho_N(z, 0)) \leq \max(\rho_N(x, y), \rho_N(y, z))$$

□

**Notation.** If  $(V, N)$  is a normed vector space, then the metric induced by  $N$  is denoted  $\rho_N$ .

When ultrametric spaces come from spaces with algebraic structure, such as normed vector spaces, some of this structure carries over into metric spaces structure in a rather nice way:

**Proposition 2.** *[Ro] Let  $S$  be a group equipped with a (right) invariant ultrametric,  $\rho$ . If  $B = B(0, r)$  is a (closed) ball centred at the neutral element of  $S$ , that is  $B = \{x \in S; \rho(x, 0) \leq r\}$ , then  $B$  is a subgroup of  $S$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $x, y \in B$ . Then

$$\rho(x - y, 0) = \rho(x, y) \leq \max(\rho(x, 0), \rho(y, 0)) \leq r,$$

so that  $x - y \in B$ . □

In the previous chapter, we claimed that the  $p$ -adic metric was an ultrametric on the set  $\mathbb{Z}$ . Indeed,  $(\mathbb{Z}, \rho_p)$  and the closely related space of  $p$ -adic integers, denoted  $\mathbb{Z}_{(p)}$ , are the canonical examples of an ultrametric space.

**Example 1.** Let  $p$  be any prime and consider the metric space  $(\mathbb{Z}, \rho_p)$ . To see that  $(\mathbb{Z}, \rho_p)$  is an ultrametric space, we must show that  $\rho_p$  satisfies the ultrametric inequality, or equivalently, that  $p$ -adic absolute value satisfies the strong triangle inequality. Let  $x, y$  be in  $\mathbb{Z}$  and suppose  $v_p(x) = n_x$  and  $v_p(y) = n_y$ . Then if  $n = \min(n_x, n_y)$ ,  $p^n$  divides  $x$  and  $p^n$  divides  $y$ , so  $p^n$  divides  $x + y$ . We see now that  $v_p(x + y) \geq \min(v_p(x), v_p(y))$  and in turn  $|x + y|_p \leq \max(|x|_p, |y|_p)$ .

**Example 2.** Let  $p$  be any prime. If

$$z = \sum_{i \geq 0} b_i p^i$$

is such that  $b_i \in \{0, \dots, p-1\}$  for all  $i$ , then we say that  $z$  is a  **$p$ -adic integer**. If  $z = \sum_{i \geq 0} b_i p^i$ , we note that if only a finite number of the coefficients of  $z$  are non-zero, then  $\sum_{i \geq 0} b_i p^i$  is a representation in base  $p$  of some element of  $\mathbb{Z}$ . We can define the  **$p$ -adic order** of a  $p$ -adic integer, denoted  $\text{ord}_p(z)$ , in a way that agrees with the  $p$ -adic valuation when  $\sum_{i \geq 0} b_i p^i$  is in  $\mathbb{Z}$ . We let  $\text{ord}_p(z)$  be the smallest  $i$  such that  $b_i \neq 0$ . The  $p$ -adic integers are both a ring<sup>1</sup> and an ultrametric space with the metric induced by  $\text{ord}_p(z)$ . For a given prime,  $p$ , we denote the  $p$ -adic integers by  $\mathbb{Z}_{(p)}$ .

In what follows, we will often refer to  $p$ -adic spaces and it will not make much of a difference whether the reader prefers to think of being in  $(\mathbb{Z}, \rho_p)$  or  $\mathbb{Z}_{(p)}$ . The reason is this: when forming  $\rho_p$ -orderings of subsets of either space we are always able to do so by selecting elements with finite number of non-zero coefficients, that is, by selecting elements from  $\mathbb{Z}$  itself.

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<sup>1</sup>The ring operations carry over on the coefficients of  $p$ -adic integers in the expected way from  $\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z}$ , as long as special care is taken to keep track of carries.

Ultrametric spaces exhibit properties much unlike traditional metric spaces, and we review a few of these below. Of particular interest to us is the behavior between (closed) balls in an ultrametric space.

**Notation.** Let  $(M, \rho)$  be a compact ultrametric space and let

$$B(a, r) = \{x \in M \mid \rho(x, a) \leq r\}$$

denote the *closed* ball of radius  $r$ , centred at  $a$  for some  $r \in \mathbb{R}_{>0}$  and  $a \in (M, \rho)$ . Let

$$B^0(a, r) = \{x \in M \mid \rho(x, a) < r\}$$

denote the *open* ball of radius  $r$ , centred at  $a$  for some  $r \in \mathbb{R}_{>0}$  and  $a \in (M, \rho)$ .

In the above notation, we break from convention in that we denote a closed ball without using any decoration. This is because before too long we will work exclusively with closed balls. We are able to do this because for the most part, the notion of open and closed ball in an ultrametric space overlap, although we will need a few more facts before showing this.

**Definition 3.** Let  $S$  be a subset of an ultrametric space. The **diameter of  $S$**  is  $\text{diam}(S) = \sup_{x, y \in S} \rho(x, y)$ . Note that if  $S$  is compact,  $\text{diam}(S) = \max_{x, y \in S} \rho(x, y)$ .

**Proposition 3.** Let  $B = B(a, r)$  be a ball in an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$ . Then the diameter of  $B$  is less than or equal to the radius of  $B$ .

*Proof.* Suppose  $d = \text{diam}(B) > r$ . This would imply there exists  $x, y$  in  $B$  such that  $\rho(x, y) > r$ , in particular  $\rho(x, y)$  is strictly greater than  $\max(\rho(x, a), \rho(y, a))$ , which is a contradiction since  $\rho$  is an ultrametric.  $\square$

In the following proposition, we describe the triangles in an ultrametric space, and the result is more or less a restatement, in geometric terms, of the ultrametric inequality.

**Proposition 4.** *All triangles in an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$  are either equilateral or isosceles, with at most one short side.*

*Proof.* Let  $x, y$ , and  $z$  be three points in an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$ . We show that  $\rho(x, y) \neq \rho(x, z)$  and  $\rho(x, y) \neq \rho(y, z)$  implies  $\rho(x, y) < \rho(x, z) = \rho(y, z)$ .

If  $\rho(x, z) \neq \rho(y, z)$ , then without loss,  $\rho(x, z) > \rho(y, z)$ . At the same time, the ultrametric inequality implies  $\rho(x, y) \leq \max(\rho(x, z), \rho(y, z))$  and  $\rho(y, z) \leq \max(\rho(x, y), \rho(x, z))$ . The first inequality implies  $\rho(x, y) < \rho(x, z)$ , which means the second inequality implies  $\rho(y, z) < \rho(x, z)$ . This is a contradiction, so we must have  $\rho(x, z) = \rho(y, z)$ .

To see that  $\rho(x, y) < \rho(x, z)$ , simply note that  $\rho(x, y) \leq \max(\rho(x, z), \rho(y, z))$   $\square$

With this result in hand, we are able to quickly demonstrate some of the properties of balls, which are of fundamental importance to us. We see below that the ultrametric inequality, perhaps innocuous on the surface, quickly implies ultrametric balls are markedly different from their Archimedean counterparts.

**Proposition 5.** *Every point of a ball in an ultrametric is at its centre. That is, if  $B(x_0, r)$  is a ball in an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$ , then  $B(x, r) = B(x_0, r)$ ,  $\forall x \in B(x_0, r)$*

*Proof.* Let  $a \in B(x, r)$ . Then  $\rho(a, x) \leq r$  and since

$$\rho(a, x_0) \leq \max(\rho(a, x), \rho(x, x_0)) \leq r$$

we must have  $a \in B(x_0, r)$  and  $B(x, r) \subseteq B(x_0, r)$ . A similar argument shows  $B(x_0, r) \subseteq B(x, r)$ .  $\square$

**Proposition 6.** *If  $(M, \rho)$  is an ultrametric space and  $B(x_0, r_1)$  and  $B(y_0, r_2)$  are balls in  $(M, \rho)$ , then either  $B(x_0, r_1) \cap B(y_0, r_2) = \emptyset$ ,  $B(x_0, r_1) \subseteq B(y_0, r_2)$ , or  $B(x_0, r_1) \subseteq B(y_0, r_1)$ . That is, in an ultrametric space, all balls are either comparable or disjoint.*

*Proof.* Suppose  $B(x_0, r_1) \cap B(y_0, r_2) \neq \emptyset$  and let  $z$  be a point in the intersection. We show that if there exists an  $a \in B(y_0, r_2)$  such that  $a \notin B(x_0, r_1)$ , then  $B(x_0, r_1) \subseteq$

$B(y_0, r_2)$ . Let  $x \in B(x_0, r_1)$ . Then we must have  $\rho(x, z) < \rho(x, a)$ , since  $z \in B(x_0, r_1) = B(x, r_1)$  and  $a$  is not. Since the triangle with vertices  $(a, x, z)$  is isosceles with at most one short side, we must have  $\rho(x, a) = \rho(a, z) \leq r_2$ , since  $a \in B(y_0, r_1) = B(z, r_2)$ . Then  $x \in B(y_0, r_1)$ .  $\square$

**Proposition 7.** *The distance between any two non-overlapping balls in an ultrametric is constant. That is, if  $B(x_0, r_1)$  and  $B(y_0, r_2)$  are two balls in an ultrametric space with  $B(x_0, r_1) \cap B(y_0, r_2) = \emptyset$ , then there exists a  $c \in \mathbb{R}_{>0}$  such that  $\rho(x, y) = c$ ,  $\forall x \in B(x_0, r_1)$  and  $\forall y \in B(y_0, r_2)$ .*

*Proof.* Suppose  $\rho(x_0, y_0) = c$  and let  $x \in B(x_0, r_1)$  and  $y \in B(y_0, r_2)$  be arbitrary. Consider the triangle formed by  $(x_0, y_0, y)$ . Since  $\rho(x_0, y_0) = c$  and  $\rho(y, y_0) \leq r_2 < c$ , we must have  $\rho(x_0, y) = c$  because triangles in an ultrametric space have at most one short side. Now consider the triangle formed by  $(x_0, x, y)$ . Since  $\rho(x_0, y) = c$  and  $\rho(x, x_0) \leq r_1 < c$ , we must have  $\rho(x, y) = c$ .  $\square$

We will get a bit closer to showing the relationship between open and closed balls with the following results and will pick up a few other useful facts along the way. We start with another definition.

**Definition 4.** If  $(M, \rho)$  is an ultrametric space, then for  $x_0 \in M$  and  $r \in \mathbb{R}_{>0}$ ,

$$S(x_0, r) = \{x \in M; \rho(x, x_0) = r\}$$

is the **sphere of radius  $r$  at  $x_0$** .

**Lemma 1.** *Spheres (of positive radius) in an ultrametric space are both open and closed as sets.*

*Proof.* [Ro] A sphere in any metric space is closed, so we need only show a sphere is also open in an ultrametric space. We show a sphere,  $S = S(x_0, r)$ , is equal to a union of open sets,  $S = \cup_{x \in S} B^0(x, r)$ .

Let  $B = B^0(x, s)$  be an open ball that does not contain some  $x_0$ . Let  $r = \rho(x_0, x)$ . We must have  $r \geq s$ , so then (since all triangles are isosceles) every point in  $B$  lies

in  $S(x_0, r)$ , that is  $B \subseteq S(x_0, r)$ . Then for any  $x \in S(x_0, r)$ ,  $B^0(x, r) \subseteq S(x_0, r)$  and

$$\bigcup_{x \in S(x_0, r)} B^0(x, r) \subseteq S(x_0, r)$$

The reverse inequality is clear since the union is taken over points of  $S$ .  $\square$

**Proposition 8.** *The open balls in an ultrametric space are closed sets and the closed balls are open sets.*

*Proof.* The proof follows immediately from the result that spheres are both open and closed: to see that closed balls are open sets, note that for a closed ball,  $B(x_0, r)$ ,

$$B(x_0, r) = B^0(x_0, r) \cup S(x_0, r)$$

Likewise, to see that open balls are closed sets, note that

$$B^0(x_0, r) = B(x_0, r) \setminus S(x_0, r)$$

$\square$

The following proposition is now easy to see, although the result is both unintuitive and important for our purposes.

**Proposition 9.** *Suppose  $S$  is a compact subset of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$  and that  $\cup_{i \in I} B(x_i, r_i)$  is a cover of  $S$  by closed balls in  $S$ . Then there exists  $i_1, \dots, i_n$ , a finite subset of  $I$ , such that  $\cup_{j=1}^n B(x_{i_j}, r_{i_j})$  is a partition of  $S$ .*

*Proof.* Since  $S$  is compact and  $\rho$  is an ultrametric,  $\cup_{i \in I} B(x_i, r_i)$  is an open cover and contains a finite subcover of  $S$ . Say this subcover is given by the elements  $i_1, \dots, i_{n'} \in I$ , and suppose this is not a partition. That is, suppose for some  $i_i, i_j$ ,  $B(x_{i_i}, r_{i_i}) \cap B(x_{i_j}, r_{i_j}) \neq \emptyset$ . Then, without loss of generality, we must have  $B(x_{i_i}, r_{i_i}) \subseteq B(x_{i_j}, r_{i_j})$ , so that the removal of  $B(x_{i_i}, r_{i_i})$  is still a cover of  $S$ . We continue this process a finite number of times, since the subcover was finite to begin with, to arrive at a finite partition of  $S$ .  $\square$

In fact, a slightly stronger statement than the above is true:

**Corollary 1.** *Suppose  $S$  is a compact subset of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$  and that  $B(x_0, r)$  is a closed ball in  $S$ . Then, there exists a finite partition of  $S$  having  $B(x_0, r)$  as an element.*

*Proof.* Let  $\mathcal{C}$  be the cover of  $S$  given by  $\cup_{x \in S} B(x, r) \cap S$ . From the proposition, we can select a finite subcover of  $\mathcal{C}$  that is a partition of  $S$ . Suppose  $B(y, r) \cap S$  is the element in this partition containing  $x_0$ . Then since  $B(y, r)$  and  $B(x_0, r)$  are equal in  $M$ ,  $B(y, r) \cap S = B(x_0, r) \cap S = B(x_0, r)$ .  $\square$

We end this section by making a few comments about the set of distances that occur between the points of a compact ultrametric space.

**Proposition 10.** *[Ro] Let  $S$  be a compact subset of an ultrametric space,  $(M, \rho)$*

*(i) For  $m \in (M \setminus S)$ , let  $f_m : S \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ , be the function defined by  $f_m(s) = \rho(m, s)$ . Then  $\text{Im}(f_m)$  is finite for all  $m \in (M \setminus S)$ .*

*(ii) For  $a \in S$ , let  $\phi_a : S \setminus \{a\} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be the function defined by  $\phi_a(x) = \rho(x, a)$ . Then  $\text{Im}(\phi_a)$  is a discrete subset of  $\mathbb{R}$  for all  $a \in S$ .*

*Proof.* [Ro]

(i) The fibers of  $f_m$ ,  $f_m^{-1}(s)$ , for  $s \in S$ , form a cover of  $S$ . In fact, they form an open partition. Since  $S$  is compact by assumption, we must have that this partition is finite, and so the image of  $f_m$  was also finite.

(ii) Let  $\epsilon > 0$ . Let  $B^0(a, \epsilon)$  be the open ball,  $B^0(a, \epsilon) = \{x \in S; \rho(x, a) < \epsilon\}$ . Then  $(S \setminus B^0(a, \epsilon))$  is compact, and so from the above we know that  $\phi_a$  restricted to  $(S \setminus B^0(a, \epsilon))$  has finite range (let  $M = S$  and  $S = (S \setminus B^0(a, \epsilon))$  and apply (i)). Then the sets

$$[\epsilon, \infty) \cap \{\rho(s, a); s \in S, s \neq a\}$$

are finite and  $\text{Im}(\phi_a)$  is discrete.

$\square$



This leads to the following definition.

**Definition 5.** If  $(M, \rho)$  is an ultrametric space, we say  $M$  is **discretely-valued** if the set  $\Gamma_S = \{r \in \mathbb{R}; \exists x, y \in M \text{ such that } \rho(x, y) = r\}$  is a discrete subset of  $\mathbb{R}$ .

If  $(M, \rho)$  has a translation-invariant ultrametric then clearly  $M$  is discretely-valued since the sets  $\phi_a$  are then equal for all  $a$  in  $M$ . Now we have the following question.

**Question 1.** Are there mild conditions under which a compact ultrametric space is discretely-valued? In particular, are there conditions that do not appeal to some algebraic structure in  $M$ ?

When this is the case, it will become useful to write the set of distances occurring in  $S$  as a sequence, put in decreasing order.

**Notation.** If  $S$  is a compact, discretely-valued ultrametric space, then we denote the set of distances between points of  $S$  by

$$\Gamma_S = \{\gamma_0 = d = \text{diam}(S), \gamma_1, \gamma_2, \dots, \gamma_\infty = 0\}$$

where  $\gamma_i \in \Gamma_S$  if and only if  $\exists x, y \in S$  such that  $\rho(x, y) = \gamma_i$  and  $\gamma_i < \gamma_j$  if and only if  $i > j$ .

We end this section with the following corollary.

**Corollary 2.** *[Ro] Let  $B(a, r)$  be a closed ball in an compact, discretely-valued ultrametric space. Then there exists  $r' > r \in \mathbb{R}$  such that  $B(a, r) = \{x \in M \mid \rho(x, a) < r'\}$ ; that is, every closed ball is also an open ball with the same centre and slightly larger radius.*

### $\rho$ -orderings, $\rho$ -sequences, and valuative capacity

We are now in a position to give a general definition of  $p$ -orderings and in turn,  $p$ -sequences and valuative capacity. The observation that an analogous notion of  $p$ -ordering can be defined for a general ultrametric space, and that these structures coincide with Fekete  $n$ -tuples, is due to [J1]. The exploration of this idea makes up the remainder of this work.

**Definition 6.** [J1] Let  $S$  be a subset of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$ . A  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$  is a sequence  $\{a_i\}_{i \geq 0}$  in  $S$  such that  $a_0$  is arbitrary and  $\forall n > 0$ ,  $a_n$  maximizes

$$\prod_{i=0}^{n-1} \rho(s, a_i)$$

over  $s \in S$ .

The above generalizes the definition of  $p$ -orderings for  $\mathbb{Z}$ , since maximizing the  $p$ -adic distance between two points in  $\mathbb{Z}$  (or  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ ) is the same as minimizing the  $p$ -adic valuation of the difference of two points. In particular,  $\{a_i\}_{i \geq 0}$  is a  $p$ -ordering of  $S$ , a subset of  $\mathbb{Z}$ , if and only if it is a  $\rho_p$ -ordering of  $(S, \rho_p)$ . Let us see an example of the simplest kind, that is, for a finite set  $S$ .

**Example 3.** Suppose  $S$  is a finite subset of  $(\mathbb{Z}, \rho_2)$ ,  $S = \{0, 2, 8, 3\}$ . Then a  $\rho_2$ -ordering of  $S$  starts (arbitrarily) with  $a_0 = 0$ , which forces  $a_1 = 3$ , since  $\rho_2(0, 3) = 1 = \text{diam}(S)$ . The sequence continues  $a_2 = 2$  and  $a_3 = 8$ , but after this point the sequence becomes arbitrary because  $\prod_{i=0}^{n-1} \rho(s, a_i)$  will contain a 0, given by the repeated term. Indeed, for any finite subset  $S$  with  $|S| = n$ , the  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$  is arbitrary from the  $n^{\text{th}}$  point on.

We now give the definition of a  $\rho$ -sequence for an ultrametric space, generalizing the notion of a  $p$ -sequence.

**Definition 7.** [J1] Let  $\{a_i\}_{i \geq 0}$  be a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$ . The  $\rho$ -sequence of  $S$  is defined

by letting  $\delta(0) = 1$  and for  $n > 0$ ,

$$\delta(n) = \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} \rho(a_n, a_i)$$

The two propositions that follow are the critical observations. The first one tells us that we can use the  $\rho$ -sequence of  $S$  as an invariant and the second one motivates the definition of valutive capacity. The proofs of each are given in [J1].

**Proposition 11.** ([J1], Lemma 1) *The  $\rho$ -sequence of  $S$  is well-defined so long as  $S$  is compact and  $\rho$  is an ultrametric. That is, the  $\rho$ -sequence of a compact subset of an ultrametric spaces does not depend on the choice of  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$ .*

**Proposition 12.** ([J1], Theorem 1) *If  $S$  is a compact subset of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$ , then the first  $n$  terms of a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$  always give a Fekete  $n$ -tuple of  $S$  and all Fekete  $n$ -tuples of  $S$  arise in this way.*

Armed with the notion of a well-defined  $\rho$ -sequence for an ultrametric space, and the knowledge that it gives a construction for Fekete  $n$ -tuples in that space, we define the valutive capacity of  $S$ , where  $S$  is any compact subset of an ultrametric space.

**Definition 8.** [J1] Let  $S$  be a compact subset of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$  and let  $\delta(n)$  be the  $\rho$ -sequence of  $S$ . The **valutive capacity** of  $S$  is

$$\omega(S) := \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \delta(n)^{1/n}$$

We spend the rest of this chapter showing some basic results on valutive capacity. These results form the start of our toolkit for calculating the capacities of specific sets. They also show that many of the properties of capacity from  $\mathbb{C}$  carry over to the non-Archimedean case in a natural way.

Let us assume from this point on that  $S$  is always a compact subset of an ultrametric space, unless stated otherwise.

**Proposition 13.** (*[J1], theorem*)  $\omega(S)$  is finite. If  $S$  itself is finite, then  $\omega(S) = 0$ .

A compact set  $E \subseteq \mathbb{C}$  is said to be polar if the logarithmic capacity of  $E$  is 0 [Ra1]. Polar sets play a central role in potential theory and the theory of logarithmic capacity, which raises the following question:

**Question 2.** Are there ultrametric spaces that have some *infinite* subset  $S$  with  $\omega(S) = 0$ ?

We also have the expected result on monotonicity for vallicative capacity:

**Proposition 14.** (*[J1], Lemma 4*) If  $S$  and  $T$  are compact subsets of an ultrametric space such that  $S \subseteq T$  then  $\omega(S) \leq \omega(T)$ .

We show now some results on the interaction between the algebraic structure of the space and vallicative capacity. These results can be powerful tools for calculating capacities, in particular, when they are combined with the subadditivity result that follows.

**Proposition 15.** (*translation invariance*) If  $(M, \rho)$  is a compact ultrametric space and also a topological group for which  $\rho$  is (left) invariant under the group operation, then  $\omega$  is also (left)-invariant. That is, if  $\rho(x, y) = \rho(g + x, g + y)$ ,  $\forall g, x, y \in M$ , then  $\omega(g + S) = \omega(S)$ , for  $S \subseteq M$ .

*Proof.* Let  $\{a_i\}_{i \geq 0}$  be a  $\rho$ -ordering for  $S$ . Then  $\{g + a_i\}_{i \geq 0}$  is a  $\rho$ -ordering for  $g + S$ . Then

$$\begin{aligned} \omega(g + S) &= \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \delta(n)^{1/n} \\ &= \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left[ \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} \rho(g + a_n, g + a_i) \right]^{1/n} \\ &= \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left[ \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} \rho(a_n, a_i) \right]^{1/n} = \omega(S) \end{aligned}$$

□

**Example 4.** Note that  $\rho_p$  is translation invariant for each  $p$  since for any  $x, y$ , we have  $\rho_p(x, y) = p^{-v_p(x-y)} = p^{-v_p((a+x)-(a+y))} = \rho_p(a+x, a+y)$ . Then  $\omega(a+S) = \omega(S)$  for  $S \subseteq (\mathbb{Z}_p, \rho_p)$ .

**Proposition 16.** (*scaling*) Let  $(V, N)$  be a normed vector space and suppose  $N$  satisfies the strong triangle identity, so that  $(V, \rho_N)$  is an ultrametric space. Then if  $N$  is multiplicative, so is  $\omega$ . That is, if  $N(gx) = N(g)N(x), \forall g, x \in V$ , then  $\omega(gS) = N(g)\omega(S)$ , for  $g \in V$  and  $S \subseteq M$ .

*Proof.* Let  $\rho_N$  be the metric induced by  $N$ , so that  $\rho_N(x, y) = N(x - y), \forall x, y \in V$ . Let  $\{a_i\}_{i \geq 0}$  be a  $\rho_N$ -ordering for  $S$  and let  $u, v$  be in  $gS$  with  $u = gs_i$  and  $v = gs_j$  for some  $s_i, s_j \in S$ . Then, since  $N$  is multiplicative,

$$\begin{aligned} \rho(u, v) &= \rho(gs_i, gs_j) = N(gs_i - gs_j) \\ &= N(g(s_i - s_j)) = N(g)N(s_i - s_j) = N(g)\rho(s_i, s_j), \end{aligned}$$

so that  $\{ga_i\}_{i \geq 0}$  is a  $\rho_N$ -ordering for  $gS$ . Then,

$$\begin{aligned} \omega(gS) &= \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left[ \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} \rho(ga_n, ga_i) \right]^{1/n} = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left[ \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} N(g)\rho(a_n, a_i) \right]^{1/n} \\ &= \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left[ N(g)^n \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} \rho(a_n, a_i) \right]^{1/n} = N(g) \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left[ \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} \rho(a_n, a_i) \right]^{1/n} = N(g)\omega(S) \end{aligned}$$

□

**Example 5.** Since  $\rho_p$  is multiplicative, we have that  $\omega(mS) = |m|_p \cdot \omega(S)$  for  $m \in \mathbb{Z}$  and  $S \subseteq \mathbb{Z}$ . In particular,  $\omega(p\mathbb{Z}) = \frac{1}{p} \cdot \omega(\mathbb{Z})$ .

The following proposition is from [J1], where it is given for some  $S$  written as the union of two subsets, although it is easily seen to be true for  $S$  equal to any finite union, so long as the other assumptions remain satisfied.

**Proposition 17.** ([J1], Proposition 10) (*subadditivity*) If  $\text{diam}(S) = d$  and  $S =$

$\cup_i^n A_i$  for  $A_i$  compact subsets of  $M$  with  $\rho(A_i, A_j) = d, \forall i, j$ , then

$$\frac{1}{\log(\omega(S)/d)} = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{1}{\log(\omega(A_i)/d)}$$

**Example 6.** We are now in a position to compute the valutive capacity of  $(\mathbb{Z}, \rho_p)$ . For any  $p$ , we note that  $\mathbb{Z}$  can be decomposed into  $p$  closed balls of radius  $\frac{1}{p}$ , which are equal to the cosets of  $\mathbb{Z}$  modulo  $p$ . Since  $\text{diam}(S) = 1$ , this gives

$$\frac{1}{\log(\omega(\mathbb{Z}))} = \sum_{i=0}^{p-1} \frac{1}{\log(\omega(p\mathbb{Z} + i))} = \frac{p}{\log(\omega(p\mathbb{Z}))} = \frac{p}{\log(\frac{1}{p} \cdot \omega(\mathbb{Z}))}$$

Now we have,

$$\log(\omega(\mathbb{Z})^p) = \log\left(\frac{1}{p} \cdot \omega(\mathbb{Z})\right)$$

so that,

$$\omega(\mathbb{Z})^p - \frac{\omega(\mathbb{Z})}{p} = 0$$

and  $\omega(\mathbb{Z}) = p^{\frac{1}{1-p}} = p^{\frac{-1}{p-1}}$ .

We can apply the same reasoning to any partition of  $S$  made up of sets that all have the same capacity and meeting the requirement that their pairwise distances are all equal to the diameter of  $S$ .

**Corollary 3.** Suppose  $S = \cup_i^n S_i$  with  $\rho(S_i, S_j) = d = \text{diam}(S)$  and also  $\omega(S_i) = \omega(S_j), \forall i, j$ . Let  $r \in \mathbb{R}$  be such that  $\omega(S_i) = r\omega(S), \forall i$ . Then  $\omega(S) = r^{\frac{1}{n-1}} \cdot d$ .

Now we note that a partition of  $S$  into closed balls will satisfy the hypotheses if the distance between each ball is equal to the diameter of  $S$ . In particular, if  $B(x_i, r_i)$  is a collection of closed balls such that the pairwise-distance between any  $B(x_i, r_i)$  and  $B(x_j, r_j)$  is constant, then if we know the capacity of each  $B(x_i, r_i)$ , we can compute the capacity of their union. If  $M$  is discretely-valued, then we can say more.

**Corollary 4.** (*Joins of computable sets are computable*) Let  $M$  be a compact, discretely-valued ultrametric space. Let  $\Gamma_M = \{\gamma_0, \gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_\infty = 0\}$  be the set of distances in

$M$ . Suppose that  $S = B(x, \gamma_i)$ , for some  $x$  and  $i$ , is the union of  $n \geq 2$  balls of radius  $\gamma_{i+1}$ , that is,  $S = \cup_{j=1}^n B(x_j, \gamma_{i+1})$  is a join in the lattice of closed balls in  $M$ . Then

$$\frac{1}{\log(\frac{\omega(B(x, \gamma_i))}{\gamma_{i+1}})} = \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{1}{\log(\frac{\omega(B(x_j, \gamma_{i+1}))}{\gamma_{i+1}})}$$

Of course, if  $M$  is a group, then we know the elements in these partitions are cosets, and if the metric is translation-invariant, then they each have the same capacity. We take up this last corollary in significant detail in the next chapter, obtaining some formulae for valutive capacity with various restrictions on  $\Gamma_M$  or related structures.

## Chapter 2

### $\rho$ -orderings and the structure of $S$

In the previous section, we defined valutive capacity for a compact subset  $S$  of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$ . We also got a glimpse into the way the valutive capacity of  $S$  interacts with its other properties, such as the set of distances occurring in  $S$  and the lattice of closed balls in  $S$  (or equivalently, if  $S$  has enough structure, a lattice of subgroups).

In this section, we offer a more detailed study of the interaction between the valutive capacity of  $S$  and the lattice of closed balls in  $S$ . In particular, we show how, if  $S$  is compact and discretely-valued, the lattice of closed balls can be used to compute the first  $n$  terms of a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$  (for any  $n < \infty$ ) and how, in some cases, this extends to being able to derive a formula for the valutive capacity of  $S$ .

Similar results have been found for the special case of ultrametric fields in [CEF]. We extend these results by moving to a more general setting, showing that much can be said about capacity in  $S$  without appealing to any underlying algebraic structure. Significant portions of the theory developed in this chapter was guided by an empirical investigation into the capacity of product spaces, which we describe in the next chapter. The code that performed these calculations is included in the appendix.

We assume throughout this section that  $S$  is a compact, discretely-valued subset of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$ .

### Subspaces of $S$

In the section we explore the subspaces of  $S$  formed by considering closed balls of some fixed radius. Recall from the previous section that if  $S$  is compact and



discretely-valued, then the set of distances occurring in  $S$  is a discrete, bounded subset of  $\mathbb{R}$  and so we may represent the set of distances by a sequence in decreasing order. As before, let the decreasing sequence of distances in  $S$  be given by  $\Gamma_S = \{\gamma_0 = \text{diam}(S), \gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_\infty = 0\}$ .

Now fix some  $k \in \mathbb{N}$ , and consider for a moment the set of closed balls of radius  $\gamma_k$  in  $S$ . We could denote these alternatively by  $B^M(x, \gamma_k) \cap S$  or by  $B^S(x, \gamma_k)$ , but when there is no risk of confusion, we will denote them simply by  $B(x, \gamma_k)$ . Clearly, the set  $\{B(x, \gamma_k); x \in S\}$  forms a cover of  $S$ . Although we have build the cover using closed balls, since we are in an ultrametric space, this gives an open cover of  $S$  (in fact, each element in the cover is not only an open set, but also an open ball for some radius slightly bigger than  $\gamma_k$ ). Then since  $S$  is compact, we must have some  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  such that  $S = \cup_{i=1}^n B(x_i, \gamma_k)$ . In fact, since  $\rho$  is an ultrametric, we can pick the  $x_i$ 's so that  $\cup_{i=1}^n B(x_i, \gamma_k)$  will be a disjoint union and therefore a finite partition of  $S$ . Note that both  $n$  and the  $x_i$ 's depend on our fixed  $k$ , but that  $n$  is independent of the  $x_i$ 's, since any choice of centres is equivalent. We rephrase this with following definition and lemma:

**Definition 9.** For  $S$  and  $\Gamma_S$  as above, and  $k \in \mathbb{N}$ , fixed, define  $\sim_k$  to be the relation on  $S$  given by

$$x \sim_k y \text{ if and only if } \rho(x, y) \leq \gamma_k$$

i.e.,  $x \sim_k y$  if and only if  $B_{\gamma_k}(x) = B_{\gamma_k}(y)$ .

The fact  $\sim_k$  is an equivalence relation on  $S$  is equivalent to the observation that every point in a ultrametric ball is at its centre:

**Lemma 2.** *Let  $S$  and  $\Gamma_S$  be as above, then  $\sim_k$  is an equivalence relation on  $S$ .*

*Proof.*  $\sim_k$  is clearly reflexive and symmetric, since  $\rho$  is a metric. Transitivity results from the ultrametric property of  $\rho$ : if  $x \sim_k y$  and  $y \sim_k z$ , then

$$\rho(x, z) \leq \max(\rho(x, y), \rho(y, z)) \leq \gamma_k$$

so  $x \sim_k z$ . □

We denote the set of equivalence classes of  $S / \sim_k$  by  $S_{\gamma_k}$ . We have defined  $S_{\gamma_k}$  to be the set of equivalence classes in  $S$  under the relation  $\sim_k$ , which is equivalent to letting  $S_{\gamma_k}$  be the set of closed balls of fixed radius  $\gamma_k$  in  $S$ . We now offer a third perspective on the elements on  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , which is due to [Ac],

**Lemma 3.** *For each  $k$ , the elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , that is, the closed balls of radius  $\gamma_k$ , themselves form an ultrametric space, where the metric is given by:*

$$\rho_k(B(x, \gamma_k), B(y, \gamma_k)) = \begin{cases} \rho(x, y), & \text{if } \rho(x, y) > \gamma_k \\ 0, & \text{if } \rho(x, y) \leq \gamma_k, \text{ i.e., } B(x, \gamma_k) = B(y, \gamma_k) \end{cases}$$

*Proof.*  $\rho_k$  is reflexive, symmetric and transitive since  $\rho$  is. Likewise,  $\rho_k$  satisfies the ultrametric property, since  $\rho$  does: let  $B(x, \gamma_k), B(y, \gamma_k)$  and  $B(z, \gamma_k)$  be any three elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$  and suppose  $\rho_k(B(x, \gamma_k), B(y, \gamma_k)) > 0$ . Then,

$$\begin{aligned} \gamma_k &< \rho_k(B(x, \gamma_k), B(y, \gamma_k)) \\ &= \rho(x, y) \leq \max(\rho(x, z), \rho(y, z)) \\ &= \max(\rho_k(B(x, \gamma_k), B(z, \gamma_k)), \rho_k(B(y, \gamma_k), B(z, \gamma_k))) \end{aligned}$$

since  $\gamma_k < \max(\rho(x, z), \rho(y, z))$  implies that at least one of  $\rho_k(B(x, \gamma_k), B(z, \gamma_k))$  or  $\rho_k(B(y, \gamma_k), B(z, \gamma_k))$  is greater than 0. □

So now the elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$  may be viewed as either equivalence classes, closed balls of fixed radius, or points in a new metric space. We make a final definition and introduce some notation before moving on.

**Definition 10.** Let  $S$  and  $\Gamma_S$  be as above. Define  $\beta(i)_{i \geq 0}$  to be the sequence given by  $\beta(i) = |S_{\gamma_i}|$ , which is an invariant of  $S$  and which counts the number of connected components of  $S_{\gamma_i}$  (that is, the points of  $S_{\gamma_i}$ ), when viewed as a metric space. When necessary, we use  $\beta^S(i)$  to denote the  $\beta$  sequence for a given, compact ultrametric

space  $S$ . Adapting the terminology in [FP], we call  $\beta^S(i)$  the **structure sequence** of  $S$ .

**Notation 1.** Let  $S_{\gamma_k}$  be as above. We denote the elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$  by  $B_1^k, \dots, B_{\beta(k)}^k$  or by  $B_1^{S,k}, \dots, B_{\beta(k)}^{S,k}$ , when necessary.

We return to the sequence  $\beta(i)$  at the end of this section. For now, we show how a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$  can be built recursively from the spaces  $S_{\gamma_k}$ . This begins by noting that the spaces themselves can be built recursively:

**Observation 1.** Let  $S$ ,  $\Gamma_S$ , and  $S_{\gamma_k}$  be as above. Then  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  can be constructed by partitioning each of the closed balls in  $S_{\gamma_k}$  into closed balls of radius  $\gamma_{k+1}$  and taking their union: Let  $B(x_i, \gamma_k)$  be an element of  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , denoted by  $B_i^k$ . Then, there exists  $x_{i,1}, \dots, x_{i,l_i} \in B_i^k$  such that,

$$B_i^k = \bigcup_{j=1}^{l_i} B(x_{i,j}, \gamma_{k+1})$$

and

$$B(x_{i,j}, \gamma_{k+1}) \cap B(x_{i,j'}, \gamma_{k+1}) = \emptyset, \forall j, j' \in 1 : l_i$$

and so

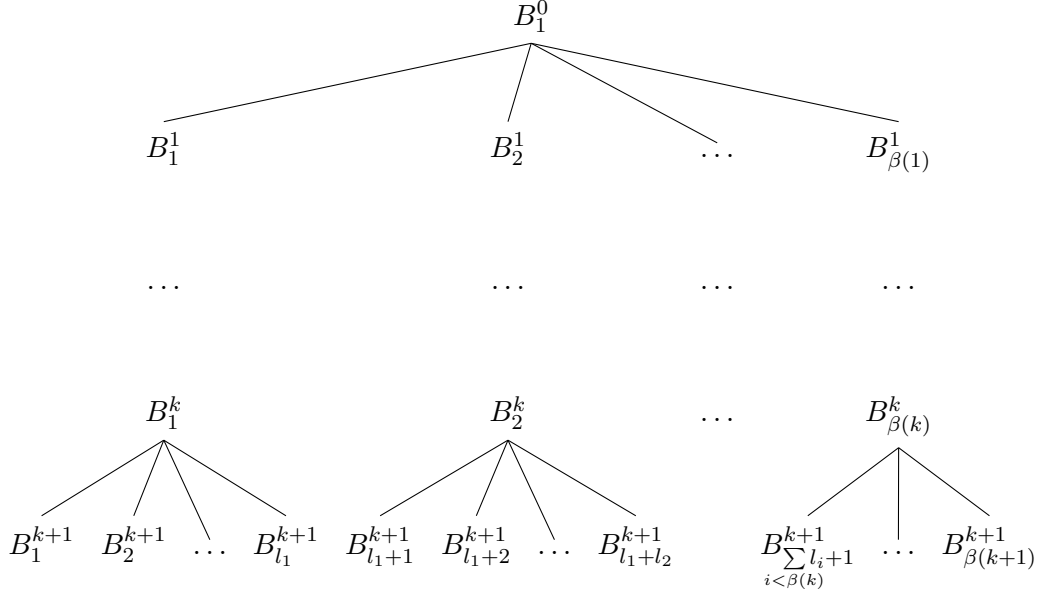
$$S_{\gamma_{k+1}} = \bigcup_{i=1}^{\beta(k)} \bigcup_{j=1}^{l_i} B(x_{i,j}, \gamma_{k+1}) = \bigcup_{j=1}^{\beta(k+1)} B_j^{k+1}$$

where  $\bigcup_{j=1}^{l_i} B(x_{i,j}, \gamma_k) = B(x_i, \gamma_{k+1}) = B_i^k, \forall i$ .

Since  $S$  is compact, hence bounded, if we represent this process schematically we obtain a tree, where the root node is  $B_1^0 = B(x, \gamma_0)$ , for any choice of  $x \in S$ , and the children of any given  $B_n^m$  are such that they form a partition of their join. Since we will often refer to this schematic representation, we define it below.

**Definition 11.** If  $S$  is a compact subset of an ultrametric space, then  $T_s$  is the tree whose vertices are  $B_i^k$ , that is the elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , and whose edgeset,  $E$ , is given by  $(B_k^i, B_l^j) \in E$  if and only if  $j = i + 1$  and  $B_l^j \subseteq B_k^i$  for some choice of representatives

$B(x_k, \gamma_i)$  and  $B(x_l, \gamma_j)$ , as shown below:



Before going on, first note that we have drawn  $T_S$  such that leftmost child of some  $B_i^k$  is  $B_j^{k+1}$  where  $j$  is minimal among the children of  $B_i^k$ , and then continued in increasing order. In general, if we draw  $T_S$  so that the children of a given vertex are depicted in increasing order according to their index, then each choice of indexing for the elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$  produces a different graphical representation of  $T_S$ . The structures produced by different choices of indices are clearly isomorphic as trees, and as we will see by the end of the section, each choice of indexing will be valid for our purposes as well.

Of central importance to us is the distance between two vertices in  $T_S$ . Since each vertex represents an element of  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , that is a closed ball in an ultrametric space, it is well-defined to let the distance between vertices be equal to the distance between a choice of centres for those balls. Note that if the distance between  $B_i^k$  and  $B_j^l$  is taken to be  $\rho(x_i, x_j)$ , for some choice of  $x_i \in B_i^k$  and  $x_j \in B_j^l$ , say  $\rho(x_i, x_j) = \gamma_n$ , then the join of  $B_i^k$  and  $B_j^l$  is some  $B_x^n$ .

**Lemma 4.** *If  $B_i^k$  and  $B_j^l$  are two vertices in  $T_S$ , then  $\rho(x_i, x_j)$ , for any choice of  $x_i \in B_i^k$  and  $x_j \in B_j^l$ , is equal to the diameter of the join of  $B_i^k$  and  $B_j^l$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $B_i^k$  and  $B_j^l$  be two (distinct) vertices in  $T_S$  and let  $B_x^n$  be their join. The diameter of  $B_x^n$  is  $\gamma_n$  since  $B_x^n = B(x_0, \gamma_n)$  for some  $x_0$ . Since  $\rho$  is an ultrametric the distance between any  $x_i \in B_i^k$  and  $x_j \in B_j^l$  is constant, and must be equal to the diameter of the smallest ball containing both of them, that is  $\gamma_n$ .  $\square$

In particular, we have that for any  $k$  and any  $i < \beta(k)$ , the distances between the children of  $B_i^k$  will be  $\gamma_k$  and for any  $i \neq j$  the distance between the children of  $B_i^k$  and  $B_j^k$  will be equal to the distance between  $B_i^k$  and  $B_j^k$  (which will be some  $\gamma_m, m < k$ ).

### Recursive $\rho$ -orderings

In this section, we show how the recursive partitioning of  $S$  into the spaces  $S_{\gamma_k}$  gives rise to a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$ . We first note that without loss of generality, for any  $k \in \mathbb{N}$ , we can reindex the  $B_i^k$ 's so that they give the first  $\beta(k)$  terms of a  $\rho_k$ -ordering of  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , when the latter is viewed as a (finite) metric space. In the first proposition below, we note that if the  $B_i^k$ 's are so indexed, then finding a  $\rho_{k+1}$ -ordering of  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  is straightforward: select a  $B_j^{k+1}$  from each of the  $B_i^k$ 's in order and then start over.

**Proposition 18.** *Let be  $S$  a compact, discretely-valued subset of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$  and  $\Gamma_S$ , the set of distances in  $S$ . If  $S_{\gamma_k}$  is the partition of  $S$  as described above for  $\gamma_k \in \Gamma_S$  with  $k < \infty$ , where the elements are indexed according to a  $\rho_k$ -ordering of  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , then the first  $\beta(k+1)$  terms in a  $\rho_{k+1}$ -ordering of  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  can be found by selecting at each stage  $n$ , a child from  $B_{\bar{n}}^k$ , where  $\bar{n} = n \bmod \beta(k) + r$  and  $r$  is minimal in  $\{0, \dots, \beta(k) - 1\}$  such that  $B_{n \bmod \beta(k) + r}^k$  still has unused children.*

*Proof.* Let  $S$ ,  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , and  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  be as above. In particular, suppose the elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$  are indexed according to a  $\rho_k$ -ordering. Denote the elements of  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  by  $B_{i,j}^{k+1}$  where the first subscript indicates that the element is a child of  $B_i^k$ . To form a  $\rho_{k+1}$  ordering of  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$ , we must maximize the product of distances at each step  $n$ .

Now note that  $\Gamma_{S_{\gamma_k}} = \{\gamma_0, \gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_{k-1}\}$  and  $\Gamma_{S_{\gamma_{k+1}}} = \{\gamma_0, \gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_{k-1}, \gamma_k\}$ . That is, the distances in  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  are the same as the distances in  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , although they also

include the smaller distance  $\gamma_k$ . Since we know that the elements  $B_1^k, \dots, B_{\beta(k)}^k$  already maximizes the product of distances in  $\{\gamma_0, \gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_{k-1}\}$ , the first  $\beta(k)$  terms of a  $\rho_{k+1}$ -ordering of  $S_{k+1}$  can be found by taking  $B_{1,j_1}^k, \dots, B_{1,j_{\beta(k)}}^k$  for any choice of  $j$ 's. At this point, any choice of next element will produce a copy of  $\gamma_k$  in the  $\rho_{k+1}$ -sequence; however, if we chose another child of  $B_1^k$ , we are able to keep building the ordering in a canonical fashion, since we know that we will then be able to maximize the product at the next step by choosing another child of  $B_2^k$ .

We see then that a  $\rho_{k+1}$ -ordering of  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  is found by minimizing the number of times  $\gamma_k$  is introduced into the  $\rho_{k+1}$ -sequence and maximizing the product among the  $\gamma_0, \gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_{k-1}$ , and the latter is already known to be achieved by taking the  $B_i^k$  in order. If the  $B_i^k$ 's all have the same number of children, then we can always select a child of  $B_{\bar{n}}^k$ , where  $\bar{n} = n \bmod \beta(k)$  at each stage  $n$ ,  $n < \beta(k+1)$ , since there will always be one available. On the other hand, suppose the  $B_i^k$  have an unequal number of children and  $n$  is the first step at which all the children of  $B_{\bar{n}}^k$  have been exhausted. What element will maximize the  $\rho_{k+1}$ -sequence?

Consider the space  $(S_{\gamma_k} \setminus B_{\bar{n}}^k)$ . Removal of  $B_{\bar{n}}^k$  will not effect the first  $m$  terms of a  $\rho_k$ -ordering of this space, for  $m < \bar{n}$ , since if a sequence of elements maximizes a function over a set  $X$ , they will also maximize that function of a subset of  $X$  (provided they themselves remain in the subset). Then the  $\rho_k$ -sequence of  $(S_{\gamma_k} \setminus B_{\bar{n}}^k)$  begins  $\{B_1^k, \dots, B_{\bar{n}-1}^k\}$ .

Moreover, if  $B_{\bar{n}+1}^k$  maximizes  $\prod_{i=1}^{\bar{n}} \rho_k(x, B_i^k)$  over  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , then it also maximizes  $\prod_{i=1}^{\bar{n}-1} \rho_k(x, B_i^k)$  over  $(S_{\gamma_k} \setminus B_{\bar{n}}^k)$ , since  $\prod_{i=1}^{\bar{n}} \rho_k(x, B_i^k) = (\prod_{i=1}^{\bar{n}-1} \rho_k(x, B_i^k)) \cdot \rho_k(x, B_{\bar{n}}^k)$ .

Then the  $\rho_k$ -sequence of  $(S_{\gamma_k} \setminus B_{\bar{n}}^k)$  is simply  $\{B_1^k, \dots, B_{\bar{n}-1}^k, B_{\bar{n}+1}^k, \dots, B_{\beta(k)}^k\}$ .

Now we see that  $\rho_{k+1}$ -sequence of  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  is maximized by simply skipping over  $B_{\bar{n}}^k$ , should all its children be exhausted, and selecting a child from  $B_{\bar{n}+1}^k$ . Then a  $\rho_{k+1}$ -ordering of  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  is found by selecting elements of each  $B_i^k$  in order as much as possible, and skipping to  $B_{i+1}^k$ , when it is not possible.

□

Note that in building the  $\rho_{k+1}$ -ordering of  $S_{\gamma_{k+1}}$  we selected, at each step, a child of some  $B_i^k$ , but we did not concern ourselves over which child was selected. This is because the distances between any two children of some  $B_i^k$  is  $\gamma_k$ , and the distance between any one of them and a child of some  $B_j^k$ ,  $i \neq j$ , is the same. We can now see, as claimed above, that any of the isomorphic versions of  $T_S$  are valid for producing  $\rho$ -orderings. Suppose then that we have created  $T_s$  and (arbitrarily) indexed the children of each vertex. Then, there is no loss of generality in assuming that at each stage, we select a child with smallest index among its siblings, that is, that we select the leftmost available child in  $T_s$ . Since, for ease of indexing, we will assume a  $\rho$ -ordering has been built by this convention, we introduce the following definition.

**Definition 12.** The  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$  formed by pulling elements from left to right in (a choice of)  $T_s$  is call the **canonical  $\rho$ -ordering** of  $S$  (with respect to  $T_s$ ).

The above proposition quickly leads to a recursive contruction for a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$ . Indeed, to build a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$  from the above, it suffices only to make a choice of centres for each of  $B_i^k$ 's.

**Proposition 19.** *Let be  $S$  a compact, discretely-valued subset of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$  and let  $\Gamma_S$  be the set of distances in  $S$ . Let  $S_{\gamma_k}$  be the partition of  $S$  as described above for  $\gamma_k \in \Gamma_S$  with  $k < \infty$ , where the elements are indexed according to a  $\rho_k$ -ordering of  $S_{\gamma_k}$ . Suppose each of the element of  $S_{\gamma_k}$  have also been partitioned into closed balls of radius  $\gamma_{k+1}$ ,  $B_i^k = \cup_{j=1}^{l_i} B_{i,j}^{k+1}, \forall i$ .*

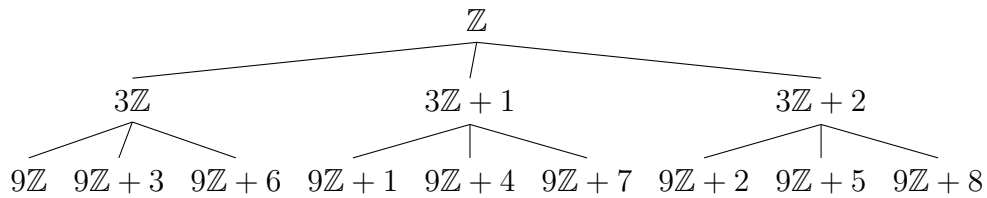
*Let  $x_{i,j}$  denote a choice of centre for the element  $B_{i,j}^{k+1}$ . Then the first  $\beta(k+1)$  elements of a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$  can be found by forming a matrix,  $A_k$ , whose  $(i, j)^{th}$  entry is  $x_{i,j}$ , if  $j \leq l_i$  and \* otherwise, and then concatenating the rows.*

*Proof.* The matrix  $A_k$  is a representation of the  $k^{th}$  and  $(k+1)^{th}$  levels of  $T_S$  where the  $B_i^k$ 's (and  $B_{i,j}^{k+1}$ 's) have been replaced by a choice of centres. Since matrices must be rectangular, the case where some  $B_i^k$  and  $B_j^k$  have an unequal number children

is handled by inserting a placeholder,  $*$ , into  $A_k$ . Moreover, since the  $\rho_{k+1}$  distance between distinct closed balls is just the  $\rho$  distance between a choice of centres of those balls, a choice of centres in a  $\rho_{k+1}$ -ordering gives the beginning of a  $\rho$ -ordering. By the above proposition, we must select elements from each  $B_i^K$  one after the other, which is achieved by selecting one element from each column in order, for example by concatenating the rows (and then deleting  $*$ 's if necessary).  $\square$

We get the most use out of the construction above if, in selecting a choice of centres for the  $B_{i,j}^{k+1}$ 's, we reuse the previous the choices as much as possible. Suppose for example we have made a choice of centres for the balls of radius  $\gamma_k$  and constructed the matrix  $A_{k-1}$ . At the next iteration, we will need a choice of centres for the balls of radius  $\gamma_{k+1}$ . If  $x_i$  was our choice of representative for  $B_i^k$  and  $x_i \in B_{i,j}^{k+1}$ , we may as well let  $x_i$  be our choice of representative for  $B_{i,j}^{k+1}$ . If we make our choice of centres in this way, then when we concatenate the rows of some  $A_{k-1}$ , we obtain (without loss) the first row of  $A_k$ . We follow this convention in the two examples below.

**Example 7.** Let us use the above to start a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S = (\mathbb{Z}, \rho_3)$ . We have that  $\Gamma_S = \{1, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{9}, \frac{1}{27}, \dots\}$  and  $T_s$  begins:



We start by finding a  $\rho_0$ -ordering of  $S_{\gamma_0}$ , but this is trivial since  $S_{\gamma_0}$  has only a single element. Let us pick 0 to be our choice on centre for  $B_1^0 = B(0, 1) = \mathbb{Z}$ . As we see from  $T_S$ ,  $S_{\gamma_0}$  is partitioned into 3 closed balls of radius  $\gamma_1 = \frac{1}{3}$ , namely  $3\mathbb{Z}$ ,  $3\mathbb{Z} + 1$ , and  $3\mathbb{Z} + 2$ . A choice of centres is given by 0, 1, and 2, so that  $A_0$  becomes:

$$A_0 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 2 \end{pmatrix}$$



To start the  $\rho$ -ordering, concatenate the rows to obtain  $\{0, 1, 2\}$ , and to continue it, make a choice of centres for each of the closed balls of radius  $\gamma_2 = \frac{1}{9}$  partitioning the sets  $3\mathbb{Z} + i$ ,  $i \in 0, 1, 2$ . For example,  $3\mathbb{Z} = 9\mathbb{Z} \cup 9\mathbb{Z} + 3 \cup 9\mathbb{Z} + 6$ , so a choice of centres for  $B_1^1$  is given by  $\{0, 3, 6\}$ . Making choices for the remaining elements, we obtain:

$$A_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 2 \\ 3 & 4 & 5 \\ 6 & 7 & 8 \end{pmatrix}$$

To continue the  $\rho$ -ordering we concatenate the rows,  $\{0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8\}$ , which also gives the first row of  $A_2$ . The remaining rows are found by partitioning each of the closed balls of radius  $\frac{1}{9}$  and again making a choice of centres:

$$A_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 \\ 9 & 10 & 11 & 12 & 13 & 14 & 15 & 16 & 17 \\ 18 & 19 & 20 & 21 & 22 & 23 & 24 & 25 & 26 \end{pmatrix}$$

And so on.

We are able to make two statements following this example. The first is that in starting the  $\rho_3$ -ordering, the fact that  $S_{\gamma_0}$  had only a single element allowed us to get started for free. In fact, all compact ultrametric spaces are bounded, so this is always the case.

The second takeaway is that we found the start of a  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S = (\mathbb{Z}, \rho_3)$  was given by taking the integers starting at 0 in their natural order. If we had continued building the ordering, we would have continued to find this. The fact that the natural ordering on the integers is a  $\rho_p$ -ordering, where  $\rho_p$  is the  $p$ -adic metric for any prime  $p$ , is well known [B1], but we give an alternate proof of it here:

**Corollary 5.** *Let  $S$  be the ultrametric space  $(\mathbb{Z}, \rho_p)$ , where  $\rho_p$  is  $p$ -adic metric for any prime  $p$ . The a  $\rho_p$ -ordering of  $S$  can be found by taking the integers, starting at 0, in their natural order.*

*Proof.* We prove the above by induction on  $k$ . First note that for any choice of prime, the elements of  $S_{\gamma_1}$  are the cosets of  $\mathbb{Z}$  modulo  $p$ , so that  $A_1$  has  $p$  columns. Since  $\{0, 1, 2, \dots, p-1\}$  are distributed among each of these cosets, without loss of generality the first row of  $A_1$  is given by  $[0, 1, 2, \dots, p-1]$  in order.

Now suppose that the first row of  $A_k$  is given by  $[0, 1, 2, \dots, n]$  for  $0 < k < k+1$ . We show the first row of  $A_{k+1}$ , and therefore the first  $n'$  elements in a  $\rho_p$ -ordering of  $S$ , where  $n'$  is the column dimension of  $A_{k+1}$ , can be obtained as  $[0, 1, 2, \dots, n, n+1, \dots, n']$ . First note that each closed ball of radius  $p^k = \gamma_k$  is in fact a coset of  $\mathbb{Z}$  modulo  $p^k$ , of which there are  $p$ . Then for any  $k$ ,  $A_k$  is a matrix with  $p^k$  columns and  $p$  rows. In particular,  $n = p^k - 1$ . Let  $i \in \{0, 1, \dots, p^k - 1\}$  be arbitrary. Then  $i$  is in exactly one of the cosets of  $\mathbb{Z}$  modulo  $p^k$  and since the first row of  $A_k$  is  $[0, 1, 2, \dots, p^k - 1]$ , it must have been chosen as our representative of this coset. If we split  $p^k\mathbb{Z} + i$  into balls of radius  $p^{k+1}$ , we have

$$p^k\mathbb{Z} + i = \bigcup_{j=0}^{p-1} p^{k+1}\mathbb{Z} + (p^k j + i)$$

since there will be  $p$  elements in the partition, each of which will be equal to  $i$  modulo  $p^k$  and distinct modulo  $p^{k+1}$ . Then, there is a choice of centres such that the  $i^{th}$  column of  $A_k$  is

$$[i, p^k + i, 2p^k + i, \dots, (p-1)p^k + i]^T$$

filling this in for each  $i$ , we see that  $A_k$  can be obtained as:

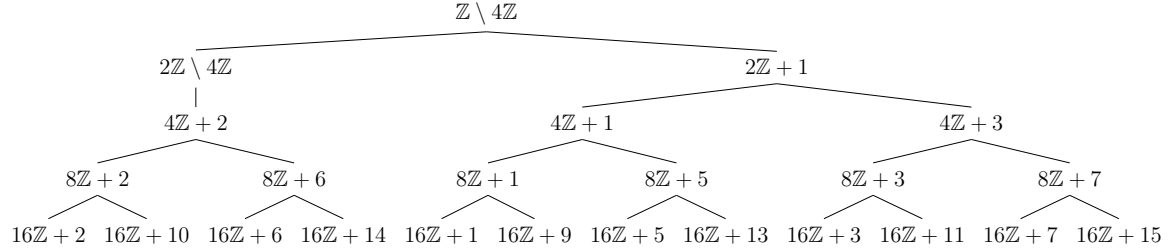
$$A_k = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 2 & \dots & p^k - 1 \\ p^k & p^k + 1 & p^k + 2 & \dots & p^k + (p^k - 1) \\ 2p^k & 2p^k + 1 & 2p^k + 2 & \dots & 2p^k + (p^k - 1) \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ (p-1)p^k & (p-1)p^k + 1 & (p-1)p^k + 2 & \dots & (p-1)p^k + (p^k - 1) \end{pmatrix}$$

Concatenating the rows, we see the first row of  $A_{k+1}$  will be

$$[0, 1, 2, \dots, p^k - 1, p^k, \dots, p^{k+1} - 1]$$

as required.  $\square$

**Example 8.** Let us now see an example where there is an uneven number of children between the vertices on a given level. Suppose  $S = \mathbb{Z} \setminus 4\mathbb{Z}$ , a subset of  $(\mathbb{Z}, \rho_2)$ . In this case, we have that  $\Gamma_S = \{1, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{4}, \frac{1}{8}, \dots\}$  and  $T_s$  begins:



Choosing centres for the partition of  $\mathbb{Z}$  into closed balls of radius  $\frac{1}{2}$ , we have:

$$A_0 = \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

We have taken  $S$  to be the complement of  $4\mathbb{Z}$  in  $\mathbb{Z}$ , so  $B(0, \gamma_1)$  has only one child, since  $2\mathbb{Z} \setminus 4\mathbb{Z} = 4\mathbb{Z} + 2$ , while  $B(1, \gamma_1)$  has two. Making a choice of centres, we have:

$$A_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 1 \\ * & 3 \end{pmatrix}$$

We concatenate the rows, skipping over  $*$ , and again make a choice of centres for the closed balls of radius  $\frac{1}{8}$ :

$$A_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 1 & 3 \\ 6 & 5 & 7 \end{pmatrix}$$

One more iteration yields:

$$A_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 1 & 3 & 6 & 5 & 7 \\ 10 & 9 & 11 & 14 & 13 & 15 \end{pmatrix}$$

So that a  $\rho_2$ -ordering of  $S = \mathbb{Z} \setminus 4\mathbb{Z}$  starts:  $\{2, 1, 3, 6, 5, 7, 10, 9, 11, 14, 13, 15, \dots\}$ .

In the two propositions above, there was notational difficulty that arose when there was an unequal number of children between the vertices on a given level of  $T_s$ .

This difficulty is, in fact, more than a notational inconvenience, and the situation simplifies considerably when it is not the case. We are far from the first to observe this. Amice noted this as far back as her 1964 paper [Am], and it has been observed more recently by Chabert and colleagues, for example in [FP] and [CEF]. The following section discusses this in more detail, first by supplying some preliminary lemmas and then showing how calculations are simplified in this setting.

### Semi-regularity

In this section, we restrict to the case where in the tree  $T_s$ , for  $S$  some compact subset of an ultrametric space, every vertex on a given level has the same number of children. In this case, we can attach another sequence to  $S$ , which we call the  $\alpha$ -sequence of  $S$  and which describes, for each level  $k \in \mathbb{N}$ , the size of the partitions on that level. We develop some preliminary lemmas, which we then use to derive formulae for this special case.

**Definition 13.** Let  $S$  be as above, a compact, discretely-valued subset of an ultrametric space  $(M, \rho)$ . We say that  $S$  is **semi-regular** if  $T_{B_i^k} \cong T_{B_j^k}$ ,  $\forall k \in \mathbb{N}$  and  $i, j \in \beta(k)$ , and where the isomorphism is understood as an isomorphism of trees. That is,  $S$  is semi-regular if each ball of radius  $\gamma_k$  breaks into the same number of balls of radius  $\gamma_{k+1}$ , for all  $k$ . If there exists an  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  such that  $T_{B_i^N} \cong T_{B_j^N}$  for all  $N \geq n$ , that is, each ball of radius  $\gamma_N$  breaks into the same number of balls of radius  $\gamma_{N+1}$  for  $N \geq n$ , then we say  $S$  is **eventually semi-regular**.

**Definition 14.** Suppose  $S$  is a compact, discretely-valued subset of an ultrametric space and  $S$  is semi-regular. The  $\alpha$ -**sequence** of  $S$  is the sequence given by

$$\alpha(k) = \frac{\beta(k+1)}{\beta(k)}$$

which is in  $\mathbb{N}$  for each  $k$ . That is, if  $B_i^k$  is an element of  $S_{\gamma_k}$ , then  $\alpha(k)$  is equal to the number of children of  $B_i^k$  in  $T_s$ . Since  $S$  is semi-regular, this number does not depend on  $i$ .

**Example 9.** If  $G$  is a compact ultrametric space and also a group, each ball centred

at 0 is in fact a subgroup of  $G$ . Then each set of elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$  is a collection of cosets of  $G/B(0, \gamma_k)$ . Since  $G$  is assumed to be compact,  $G/B(0, \gamma_k)$  is finite and so Lagrange's theorem implies that  $G$  is semi-regular.

We now work towards a formula for the terms in the  $\rho$ -sequence of a semi-regular space  $S$ . We need a few lemmas to get started.

**Lemma 5.** *Let  $n$  and  $q$  be in  $\mathbb{N}$ . Then  $\lfloor \frac{n}{q} \rfloor$  counts the numbers strictly less than  $n$  that are congruent to  $n \pmod q$ .*

*Proof.* By the division algorithm, we know there exists unique  $c, r \in \mathbb{Z}$  such that

$$n = cq + r$$

with  $0 \leq r < q$ . Since  $c$  counts the number of  $q$ -multiples in the set  $\{1, \dots, n\}$ , and each  $q$ -multiple contains exactly one element that is congruent to  $n \pmod q$ , we need only show  $\lfloor \frac{n}{q} \rfloor = c$ . Simply note the above implies

$$\frac{n}{q} = c + \frac{r}{q}$$

and we must have  $\frac{r}{q} < 1$ . Then  $c$  is the largest integer such that  $\frac{n}{q} \leq c$ , but this is the definition of  $\lfloor \frac{n}{q} \rfloor$ .  $\square$

**Lemma 6.**

$$\lfloor \frac{n}{b} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{ab} \rfloor = \sum_{k=1}^{a-1} \lfloor \frac{n + kb}{ab} \rfloor$$

for  $n, a, b \in \mathbb{N}$ . In particular,

$$\lfloor \frac{n}{b} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{2b} \rfloor = \lfloor \frac{n + b}{2b} \rfloor$$

for  $n, b \in \mathbb{N}$ .

*Proof.*

$$\lfloor \frac{n}{b} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{ab} \rfloor = \lfloor a \cdot \frac{n}{ab} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{ab} \rfloor = \sum_{k=0}^{a-1} \lfloor \frac{n}{ab} + \frac{k}{a} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{ab} \rfloor \quad (*)$$

$$= \sum_{k=1}^{a-1} \lfloor \frac{n}{ab} + \frac{k}{a} \rfloor = \sum_{k=1}^{a-1} \lfloor \frac{n + kb}{ab} \rfloor$$

where the final step in (\*) is due to Hermite's identity:  $\lfloor nx \rfloor = \sum_{k=0}^{n-1} \lfloor x + \frac{k}{n} \rfloor$ , for  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  and  $x \in \mathbb{R}$ .  $\square$

**Lemma 7.** *If  $S$  is semi-regular and  $\sigma$  denotes the canonical  $\rho$ -ordering of  $S$ , that is, a  $\rho$ -ordering formed by pulling from left to right in  $T_s$ , then*

$$\rho(\sigma(n), \sigma(m)) = \gamma_k$$

*if and only if*

$$n = m \pmod{\beta(k)} \text{ and } n \neq m \pmod{\beta(k+1)}$$

*Proof.* Since  $S$  is semi-regular, every sequence of  $\beta(k)$  terms in  $\sigma$  will be from each of distinct elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$  (for any  $k$ ). Moreover, since  $\sigma$  is a canonical  $\rho$ -ordering, we always pull from the elements of  $S_{\gamma_k}$  in the same order. Then  $\sigma(n)$  and  $\sigma(m)$  are descendents of some  $B_j^k$  if, and only if,  $n = m \pmod{\beta(k)}$ . Then the result follows since  $\rho(\sigma(n), \sigma(m)) = \gamma_k$  if and only if  $B_i^k$  for some  $i \in 1, \dots, \beta(k)$  is the join of  $B_i^n \ni \sigma(n)$  and  $B_i^m \ni \sigma(m)$ .  $\square$

We introduce another piece of notation before continuing.

**Notation 2.** Let  $S$  be a compact, discretely-valued subset of an ultrametric space,  $\Gamma_S$  the set of distances in  $S$  and  $\delta(n)$  the characteristic sequence of  $S$ . Suppose  $\gamma_k$  is an element of  $\Gamma_S$ . Then we denote by  $v_{\gamma_k}(\delta(n))$  the exponent of  $\gamma_k$  in the  $n^{\text{th}}$ -term of the characteristic sequence of  $S$ .

**Proposition 20.** *If  $S$  is a semi-regular ultrametric space,  $\delta$  is the characteristic sequence of  $S$ ,  $\beta$  is the structure sequence of  $S$ , and  $\alpha$  is the sequence describing the semi-regularity, then*

$$v_{\gamma_k}(\delta(n)) = \lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k)} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k+1)} \rfloor = \sum_{j=1}^{\alpha(k)-1} \lfloor \frac{n + j \cdot \beta(k)}{\alpha(k)\beta(k)} \rfloor$$

*Proof.* The exponent of  $\gamma_k$  in the  $n^{\text{th}}$  term of the characteristic sequence is the number of  $m$  strictly less than  $n$  such that  $\rho(\delta(n), \delta(m)) = \gamma_k$ . By the lemma above, this the

number of  $m < n$  such that  $m \equiv n \pmod{\beta(k)}$  and  $m \not\equiv n \pmod{\beta(k+1)}$ , which by the previous lemma is  $\lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k)} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k+1)} \rfloor$ . Then we have:

$$\begin{aligned}
& v_{\gamma_k}(\delta(n)) \\
&= \lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k)} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k+1)} \rfloor \\
&= \lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k)} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k)\alpha(k)} \rfloor, \text{ because } S \text{ is semi-regular} \\
&= \sum_{j=1}^{\alpha(k)-1} \lfloor \frac{n + j \cdot \beta(k)}{\alpha(k)\beta(k)} \rfloor
\end{aligned}$$

□

**Example 10.** Consider the ultrametric space  $(\mathbb{Z}, \rho_p)$  for any prime  $p$ . Then  $\beta(k) = p^k$  and  $\alpha(k) = p$  for any  $k \in \mathbb{N} \cup 0$ . The above gives

$$v_{\gamma_k}(\delta(n)) = \lfloor \frac{n}{p^k} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{p^{k+1}} \rfloor$$

Now since  $\gamma_k = p^{-k}$ ,  $\forall k$ , we are able to compute the exponent of  $\frac{1}{p}$  in  $\delta(n)$ . We have

$$\begin{aligned}
& v_{\frac{1}{p}}(\delta(n)) \\
&= \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} k \cdot (\lfloor \frac{n}{p^k} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{p^{k+1}} \rfloor) \\
&= \sum_{k=1}^{\lceil \log_p(n) \rceil} k \cdot (\lfloor \frac{n}{p^k} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{p^{k+1}} \rfloor) \\
&= \lfloor \frac{n}{p} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{p^2} \rfloor + 2\lfloor \frac{n}{p^2} \rfloor - 2\lfloor \frac{n}{p^3} \rfloor + \dots + \lceil \log_p(n) \rceil \lfloor \frac{n}{p^{\lceil \log_p(n) \rceil}} \rfloor \\
&= \lfloor \frac{n}{p} \rfloor + \lfloor \frac{n}{p^2} \rfloor + \dots + \lfloor \frac{n}{p^{\lceil \log_p(n) \rceil}} \rfloor \\
&= \sum_{k=1}^{\lceil \log_p(n) \rceil} \lfloor \frac{n}{p^k} \rfloor \\
&= \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \lfloor \frac{n}{p^k} \rfloor
\end{aligned}$$

We are able to simplify to a finite sum in the above because  $\lfloor \frac{n}{p^k} \rfloor = 0$  if

$$p^k > n \iff \log(p^k) > \log(n) \iff k > \log_p(n)$$

We have already seen that the natural order on the integers gives a  $\rho_p$ -ordering for each  $p$ . So then

$$v_{\frac{1}{p}}(\delta(n)) = v_{\frac{1}{p}}\left(\prod_{i=0}^n \frac{1}{p}^{v_p(n-i)}\right) = \sum_{i=0}^{n-1} v_p(n-i) = v_p(n!) = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \lfloor \frac{n}{p^k} \rfloor$$

so that we are able to recover the well-known Legendre's formula.

The fact that we were able to reduce to a finite sum was not the only reason we were able to simplify the above calculations. It also helped a great deal that the sum was telescoping. We now recall Corollary 6 from Chapter 2.

**Corollary.** *Suppose  $S = \cup_i^n S_i$  with  $\rho(S_i, S_j) = d = \text{diam}(S)$  and also  $\omega(S_i) = \omega(S_j)$ ,  $\forall i, j$ . Let  $r \in \mathbb{R}$  be such that  $\omega(S_i) = r\omega(S)$ ,  $\forall i$ . Then  $\omega(S) = r^{\frac{1}{n-1}} \cdot d$ .*

If  $S$  is semi-regular then the elements of  $S_{\gamma_1}$  meet the requirements for this corollary. In this case, the principal obstacle to computing the capacity of such a set is whether or not we can compute the scaling factor  $r$ . We show now how this is related to the fact that we saw a telescoping sum in the above example.

**Definition 15.** Let  $S$  be a semi-regular subset of an ultrametric space. If there exists a  $q \in \mathbb{N}$  such that  $\alpha(n) = q$ , for all  $n$ , then  $S$  is said to be **regular**.

So then  $S$  is regular just in case  $S$  is semi-regular and the  $\alpha$ -sequence of  $S$  is constant. We need to make one more definition before we begin calculations.

**Definition 16.** Let  $S$  be a semi-regular subset of an ultrametric space and  $\Gamma_S$  is the sequence of decreasing distances in  $S$ . Then we say  $S$  is **tame**, if for  $\gamma_k \in \Gamma_S$ ,

$$\gamma_k = \alpha(k)^{c_k}$$

for all  $k \in \mathbb{N}$  and some  $c_k \in \mathbb{Z}$ .



Now suppose  $S$  is regular and tame with  $\alpha(k) = q$  for all  $k$ . Then,

$$v_{\gamma_k}(\delta(n)) = \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{q^{k+1}} \rfloor$$

and since  $\gamma_k = q^{c_k}$ ,

$$v_{q^{c_k}}(\delta(n)) = \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{q^{k+1}} \rfloor$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} v_q(\delta(n)) &= \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} c_k \cdot (\lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{q^{k+1}} \rfloor) \\ &= \sum_{k=0}^{\lceil \log_q(n) \rceil} c_k \cdot (\lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{q^{k+1}} \rfloor) \\ &= c_0 n - c_0 \lfloor \frac{n}{q} \rfloor + c_1 \lfloor \frac{n}{q} \rfloor - c_1 \lfloor \frac{n}{q^2} \rfloor + c_2 \lfloor \frac{n}{q^2} \rfloor - c_2 \lfloor \frac{n}{q^3} \rfloor \dots + \lceil \log_q(n) \rceil \lfloor \frac{n}{q^{\lceil \log_q(n) \rceil}} \rfloor - \lceil \log_q(n) \rceil \lfloor \frac{n}{q^{\lceil \log_q(n) \rceil}} \rfloor \\ &= c_0 n + \sum_{k=1}^{\lceil \log_q(n) \rceil} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor \\ &= c_0 n + \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor \end{aligned}$$

Now,

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} c_0 n + \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor = \log_q(\omega(S))$$

Of course, we have seen  $\log(\omega(S))$  appear before. Namely, in the subadditivity formula from Chapter 2. What about the right-hand side of the subadditivity formula?  $S$  is also semi-regular, which implies that if  $\cup_{i=1}^q B(x_i, \gamma_0)$  is a partition of  $S$ , then  $\omega(B(x_i, \gamma_0)) = \omega(B(x_j, \gamma_0))$  for all  $i$  and  $j$ . Moreover,  $B(x_i, \gamma_1)$  is regular and tame, since  $S$  is. Then,

$$\log_q(\omega(B(x_i, \gamma_1))) = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} c_1 n + \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor$$

and since the diameter of  $S = \gamma_0 = q^{c_0}$ , and in turn  $\log_q(d) = c_0$ , subadditivity implies that

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} c_0(n-1) + \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor = \frac{\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} c_1 n - c_0 + \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor}{q}$$

$(c_k - c_{k-1})$  is positive ( $\Gamma_S$  is strictly decreasing and  $\gamma_k = q^{c_k}$  implies that the sequence  $c_k$  is also strictly decreasing. To see this, observe that  $\gamma_k = q^{c_k}$  implies  $\log_q(\gamma_k) = c_k$  and note that  $\log$  is a monotone function) and since we know this converges, we must have  $c_0 = 0$ .

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor = \frac{\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} (c_1 - c_0) \lfloor \frac{n}{q^0} \rfloor + \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor}{q}$$

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor = \frac{\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} (c_k - c_{k-1}) \cdot \lfloor \frac{n}{q^k} \rfloor}{q}$$

So then, if  $S$  is regular and tame, we find the scaling factor from Corollary 6 is  $\frac{1}{q}$ , and  $\omega(S) = \frac{1}{q^{\frac{1}{q-1}}}$ .

Now we see that there is a sense in which we can talk about translation invariance and scaling even when  $S$  does not have any underlying algebraic structure. Indeed, semi-regularity and regularity respectively provide the analogous notions.

## Chapter 3

### Application: Product spaces of $\mathbb{Z}_p$

As a first point of departure, a natural space to consider is the product space of ultrametric spaces, for example  $\mathbb{Z}^n$  (or  $\mathbb{Z}_p^n$  or  $\mathbb{Q}_p^n$ ), for some  $n > 1$ . If we restrict our attention to bounded subsets, then a natural candidate for an ultrametric on the product space is the  $L_\infty$  metric, given by

$$\rho_\infty(x, y) = \rho_\infty((x_1, x_2, \dots), (y_1, y_2, \dots)) = \sup_i \{\rho(x_i, y_i)\}$$

where  $\rho$  is the metric from the base space. In fact, since we have only defined valutive capacity for compact subsets of an ultrametric spaces, there is no loss of generality by restricting our metric to bounded spaces. We also see that no problems arise in letting both  $M$  and  $\rho$  vary between components of the space, as long as each  $M_i$  remains bounded and each  $\rho_i$  is an ultrametric.

**Proposition 21.** *Let  $(M_i, \rho_i)$  for  $i$  in some finite or countably infinite index set,  $I$ , be a collection of metric spaces and suppose  $\rho_i$  is a bounded ultrametric for all  $i$ . Then  $(M, \rho_\infty)$  is an ultrametric space, where  $M = M_1 \times M_2 \times M_3 \times \dots$  and  $\rho_\infty$  is the  $L_\infty$  metric described above.*

*Proof.* Let  $(M, \rho_\infty)$  be the product of ultrametric spaces as above and let  $x$  and  $y$  be two points in the space. Clearly,  $\rho_\infty(x, y) \geq 0$  since each  $\rho_i(x_i, y_i) \geq 0$ , and  $\rho_\infty(x, y) = 0 \iff \rho_i(x_i, y_i) = 0, \forall i \iff x_i = y_i, \forall i \iff x = y$ . The fact that  $\rho_\infty$  is symmetric is also an easy consequence of the fact that each  $\rho_i$  is symmetric since  $\rho_i(x_i, y_i) = \rho_i(y_i, x_i)$  implies  $\sup_i \{\rho_i(x_i, y_i)\} = \sup_i \{\rho_i(y_i, x_i)\}$ . To see that  $\rho_\infty$  is an

ultrametric, note that if  $z = z_i$  is any other point of  $M$ , then

$$\begin{aligned}
\rho_\infty(x, y) &= \sup_i \{\rho_i(x_i, y_i)\} \\
&\leq \sup_i \{\max(\rho_i(x_i, z_i), \rho_i(y_i, z_i))\} && \text{since each } \rho_i \text{ is an ultrametric} \\
&\leq \max(\sup_i \{\rho_i(x_i, z_i)\}, \sup_i \{\rho_i(y_i, z_i)\}) && * \\
&= \max(\rho_\infty(x, z), \rho_\infty(y, z))
\end{aligned}$$

\* Let  $M = \max(\sup_i(\{a_i\}, \sup_j(\{b_j\})))$ , then  $M \geq a_i, \forall i$  and  $M \geq b_i, \forall i$ , so  $M \geq \max(a_i, b_i), \forall i$ , hence  $M \geq \sup_i(\max(a_i, b_i))$ .  $\square$

We first show that translation invariance carries over into product spaces under the expected conditions.

**Proposition 22.** *Suppose  $(M, \rho_\infty)$  is the product of ultrametric spaces  $(M_i, \rho_i)$  and each  $M_i$  is a topological group with operation  $+$ . Then  $\rho_\infty$  is (left) translation invariant if each  $\rho_i$  is, in which case valiative capacity is also (left) translation invariant.*

*Proof.* Let  $(M, \rho_\infty)$  be as above. Suppose also that

$$\rho_i(x_i, y_i) = \rho_i(s_i + x_i, s_i + y_i), \forall s_i, x_i, y_i \in M_i, \forall i.$$

that is, suppose each  $\rho_i$  is (left) translation invariant. Then,

$$\rho_\infty(s + x, s + y) = \sup_i \{\rho_i(s_i + x_i, s_i + y_i)\} = \sup_i \{\rho_i(x_i, y_i)\} = \rho_\infty(x, y).$$

so that  $\rho_\infty$  is translation invariant. Proposition 15 implies valiative capacity is as well.  $\square$

In the next proposition, we show that scaling carries over to product space as well, although the conditions are now more restrictive. In contrast to the proposition above, here we do not allow the spaces to vary between components.

**Proposition 23.** *Let  $(m, \rho_N)$  be an ultrametric space, where  $\rho_N$  is the metric induced by some norm  $N$ . Let  $(M, \rho_\infty)$  be the ultrametric space formed by taking products of  $m$ , along with the  $L_\infty$  metric defined above. Then if  $\rho_N$  is multiplicative on  $m$ ,*

$\rho_\infty$  is multiplicative on  $M$ , in the sense that  $\rho_\infty(cx, cy) = |c|_{\rho_N} \rho_\infty(x, y)$ , for  $c = (c, c, c, \dots)$ ,  $x, y \in M$ .

*Proof.* Let  $M, \rho$ , and  $\rho_\infty$  be as above. Then,

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \rho_\infty(cx, cy) \\
 &= \sup_i \{ \rho_N(c_i x_i, c_i y_i) \} \\
 &= \sup_i \{ |c|_{\rho_N} \rho_N(x_i, y_i) \} \\
 &= |c|_{\rho_N} \sup_i \{ \rho_N(x_i, y_i) \} \\
 &= |c|_{\rho_N} \rho_\infty(x, y)
 \end{aligned}$$

□

**Corollary 6.** Let  $S$  be a subset of  $(M, \rho_\infty)$ , where  $M$  is the product of an ultrametric space  $(m, \rho_N)$ , which is itself a normed vector space with a multiplicative norm inducing  $\rho_N$ . If  $c = (c, c, c, \dots)$  is an element of  $M$  with constant value on each component, then  $\omega(cS) = |c|_{\rho_N} \omega(S)$ .

*Proof.* Note that if  $\{a_j\}_{j=0}^\infty$  is a  $\rho_\infty$  ordering of  $S$ , then  $\{ca_j\}_{j=0}^\infty$  is a  $\rho_\infty$  ordering of  $cS$ . □

We now introduce two examples, whose explorations take up a large portion of the following section.

**Example 11.** Let  $(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p, \rho_{p,\infty})$  be the metric space with elements  $\{(x, y) \mid x, y \in \mathbb{Z}_p\}$  and metric  $\rho_{p,\infty}((x_1, x_2), (y_1, y_2)) = \max(\rho_p(x_1, y_1), \rho_p(x_2, y_2))$ , where  $\rho_p$  is the p-adic metric for some fixed prime  $p$ . Since  $\rho_p$  is translation invariant and multiplicative in  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ , valutive capacity is also translation invariant and multiplicative in  $(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p, \rho_{p,\infty})$ .

**Example 12.** Let  $(\mathbb{Z}_{p_1} \times \mathbb{Z}_{p_2}, \rho_{p,\infty})$  be the metric space with elements  $\{(x, y) \mid x \in \mathbb{Z}_{p_1}, y \in \mathbb{Z}_{p_2}\}$  for two distinct primes,  $p_1 \neq p_2$ , and metric  $\rho_{p,\infty}((x_1, x_2), (y_1, y_2)) = \max(\rho_{p_1}(x_1, y_1), \rho_{p_2}(x_2, y_2))$ , where both  $\rho_{p_i}$  are p-adic metrics. Since each  $\rho_{p_i}$  is translation invariant in  $\mathbb{Z}_{p_i}$ , valutive capacity will be translation invariant in  $(\mathbb{Z}_{p_1} \times$

$\mathbb{Z}_{p_2}, \rho_{p,\infty}$ ); however, unlike the case of  $p_1 = p_2$ , this space does not have a multiplicative property that allows for scaling.

### **$n$ -fold products**

What is the valuative capacity of  $(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p, \rho_{p,\infty})$  from the example above? Suppose  $p = 2$ . Using translation invariance, scaling and subadditivity, we can compute the result by first noting that we can write  $\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2$  as a union, as below,

$$\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2 = (2\mathbb{Z}_2 \times 2\mathbb{Z}_2) \cup (2\mathbb{Z}_2 \times 2\mathbb{Z}_2 + 1) \cup (2\mathbb{Z}_2 + 1 \times 2\mathbb{Z}_2) \cup (2\mathbb{Z}_2 + 1, 2\mathbb{Z}_2 + 1).$$

Since the pairwise distances on the right-hand side are always  $1 = \text{diam}(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2)$ , subadditivity implies that

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{\log(\omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2))} \\ = & \frac{1}{\log(\omega(2\mathbb{Z}_2 \times 2\mathbb{Z}_2))} + \frac{1}{\log(\omega(2\mathbb{Z}_2 \times 2\mathbb{Z}_2 + 1))} + \frac{1}{\log(\omega(2\mathbb{Z}_2 + 1 \times 2\mathbb{Z}_2))} + \frac{1}{\log(\omega(2\mathbb{Z}_2 + 1 \times 2\mathbb{Z}_2 + 1))} \\ = & \frac{4}{\log(\|2\|_2 * \omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2))} = \frac{4}{\log(\frac{1}{2} * \omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2))} = \frac{4}{\log(\frac{1}{2}) + \log(\omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2))} \end{aligned}$$

Taking logs base 2, we have that

$$\omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2) = 2^{\frac{-1 + \log_2(\omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2))}{4}} = 2^{\frac{-1}{4}} 2^{\frac{\log_2(\omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2))}{4}} = 2^{\frac{-1}{4}} (2^{\log_2(\omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2))})^{\frac{1}{4}} = 2^{\frac{-1}{4}} \omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2)^{\frac{1}{4}}$$

so that  $\omega(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2)$  is a solution of the equation  $x^4 - \frac{x}{2}$ , for which there is a single real positive root, given by  $2^{-1/3}$ .

To compute the valuative capacity for a 2-fold product for an arbitrary prime  $p$ , note that we can always decompose  $\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p$  into a union of  $p^2$  sets each of the form  $\{p\mathbb{Z}_p + s \times p\mathbb{Z}_p + t\}$  for  $s, t \in (0, \dots, p-1)$ , and the pairwise distance between these sets will always be  $1 = \text{diam}(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p)$  (to see this, either note that we can always find co-prime elements, or note that each set is an closed ball of radius  $1/p$  centred at  $(s,t)$  and so the distance between them must be greater than  $1/p$ , and 1 is the only possible distance greater than  $1/p$  in  $\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p$ ). Then, we combine our tools as

before to obtain the equation,

$$\frac{1}{\log(\omega(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p))} = \frac{p^2}{\log(\|p\|_p * \omega(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p))} = \frac{p^2}{\log(1/p * \omega(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p))}$$

In turn, taking logs base  $p$ , we have

$$\omega(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p) = p^{\frac{-1}{p^2}} \omega(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p)^{\frac{1}{p^2}}$$

So that  $\omega(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p)$  is a solution of the equation  $x^{p^2} - \frac{x}{p} = x(x^{p^2-1} - \frac{1}{p})$  over  $\mathbb{R}$ . Since  $\mathbb{R}$  is a division ring, this means the positive solutions are given by solving  $x^{p^2-1} - \frac{1}{p}$ . Solutions of this equation are of the form  $p^{\frac{-1}{p^2-1}}$  times a  $p^2 - 1$  root of unity, and so there is exactly one positive, real solution, namely  $p^{\frac{-1}{p^2-1}}$  itself. Then the valulative capacity of the entire product space  $\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p$  is  $p^{\frac{-1}{p^2-1}}$ . In fact, from here it is not hard to see that by taking the  $n$ -fold product, we would end up with the same equation except that the exponent of  $p$  would become  $n$  rather than 2. We arrive at the following result:

**Proposition 24.** *Let  $M = (\mathbb{Z}_p^n, \rho_{p,\infty})$  be the ultrametric space with points equal to the  $n$ -fold product of  $\mathbb{Z}_p$  (for  $n < \infty$ ) for some fixed prime  $p$ . The valulative capacity of  $M$  is  $(\frac{1}{p})^{\frac{1}{p^n-1}}$ .*

*Proof.* Above. □

Taking  $n = 1$ , we see that this agrees with the valulative capacity of  $\mathbb{Z}_p$  computed in the last chapter.

What about  $(\mathbb{Z}_{p_1} \times \mathbb{Z}_{p_2})$  for distinct primes? These spaces do not admit a scaling property, so the same toolset is not available. They are however semi-regular, so we know that

$$v_{\gamma_k}(\sigma(n)) = \lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k)} \rfloor - \lfloor \frac{n}{\beta(k+1)} \rfloor = \sum_{j=1}^{\alpha(k)-1} \lfloor \frac{n + j \cdot \beta(k)}{\alpha(k)\beta(k)} \rfloor$$

Suppose  $p_1 = 2$  and  $p_2 = 3$ . Recall that the  $\alpha$  sequence of  $S = (\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_3)$  counts the number of closed balls of radius  $\gamma_{k+1}$  partitioning a closed ball of radius  $\gamma_k$ . In this case,  $\Gamma_S$  is the non-positive powers of 2 or 3 sorted into decreasing order, so

that  $\Gamma_S$  starts  $\{1, \frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{3}, \frac{1}{4}, \frac{1}{8}, \frac{1}{9}, \dots\}$  and  $\alpha(S)$  starts  $\{6, 2, 3, 2, 2, 3, 2, 3, 2, \dots\}$ . The  $\beta$  sequence of  $S$ , which counts the number of distinct balls of a fixed radius, then starts  $\{6, 12, 36, 72, 144, \dots\}$ .

We know that the capacity of  $S$  will be a product of some negative power of 2 and some negative power of 3. From the lemma 6, we know that when  $\alpha(k) = 2$ , we have

$$v_{\gamma_k}(\sigma(n)) = \lfloor \frac{n + \beta(k)}{2 \cdot \beta(k)} \rfloor$$

and when  $\alpha(k) = 3$ , we have

$$v_{\gamma_k}(\sigma(n)) = \lfloor \frac{n + \beta(k)}{3 \cdot \beta(k)} \rfloor + \lfloor \frac{n + 2 \cdot \beta(k)}{3 \cdot \beta(k)} \rfloor$$

We also know that if  $\alpha(k) = 2$ , then  $\gamma_k$  must be a (negative) power of 2, and likewise if  $\alpha(k) = 3$ , then  $\gamma_k$  is a power of 3.

Let us first explore the exponent of 2 in  $\sigma(n)$ . We start by noting that if  $\gamma_k$  is some  $2^{-i}$ , then

$$v_{\gamma_k}(\sigma(n)) = \lfloor \frac{n + 2^i \cdot 3^j}{2^{i+1} \cdot 3^j} \rfloor$$

since there will be a copy of 2 in  $\beta(k)$  for every occurrence of 2 in  $\alpha(0), \dots, \alpha(k)$ , which is also what  $i$  counts. So then, the exponent of  $\frac{1}{2}$  in the  $n^{th}$  characteristic sequence of  $S$  is

$$\sum_{i=1}^{\infty} i \cdot \lfloor \frac{n + 2^i \cdot 3^j}{2^{i+1} \cdot 3^j} \rfloor$$

What can we say about  $j$ , the exponent of 3?

**Lemma 8.** *Let  $S = (\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_3)$  and consider the  $k^{th}$  element of the  $\beta$  sequence of  $S$ ,  $\beta(k) = 2^i \cdot 3^j$ . If  $k$  is such that  $\gamma_k = 2^{-i}$  for some  $i$ , then  $j$  counts the numbers  $a \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$  such that  $3^a < 2^i$ .*

*Proof.*  $\Gamma_S$  is strictly monotone decreasing and each  $\gamma_k$  is equal to a non-positive power of 2 or 3. If  $\gamma_k = 2^{-i}$ , then all non-positive powers of 3 and 2 which are greater than  $2^{-i}$  must be equal to some  $\gamma_j$ ,  $0 \leq j < k$ . That is,  $2^{-i}$  only appears in the  $\Gamma_S$  sequence after all larger powers of 2 and 3 have been exhausted. Since we are only



considering the case  $\gamma_k$  is a power of 2, this includes all of the smaller powers of 3.  $\square$

Now note that

$$3^a < 2^i \iff \log_2(3^a) < \log_2(2^i) \iff a \cdot \log_2(3) < i$$

So now we are reduced to counting the number of non-negative integers  $a$  that satisfy the above for a given  $i$ . The number of such  $a$ 's will simply be the value of the largest  $a$  plus 1 since  $a$  satisfying the relation implies all  $0 \leq a' \leq a$  solve the relation. Then, we are in fact reduced to finding the largest  $a \in \mathbb{Z}$  that satisfies  $a < \frac{i}{\log_2(3)}$ , but this is exactly  $\lfloor \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rfloor$ . This in turn gives  $j = \lfloor \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rfloor + 1 = \lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil$ , since  $\frac{i}{\log_2(3)}$  is never an integer. We now revisit our expression for the exponent of  $\frac{1}{2}$  and substitute our new found value for  $j$ :

$$\sum_{i=1}^{\infty} i \cdot \left\lfloor \frac{n + 2^i \cdot 3^{\lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil}}{2^{i+1} \cdot 3^{\lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil}} \right\rfloor = \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} i \cdot \left( \left\lfloor \frac{n}{2^i \cdot 3^{\lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil}} \right\rfloor - \left\lfloor \frac{n}{2^{i+1} \cdot 3^{\lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil}} \right\rfloor \right) \quad (3.1)$$

A symmetric argument shows that exponent of 3 in the  $i^{\text{th}}$  elements of the  $\rho$ -sequence of  $S$  is

$$\sum_{i=1}^{\infty} i \cdot \left\lfloor \frac{n + 2^i \cdot 3^{\lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil}}{2^{i+1} \cdot 3^{\lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil}} \right\rfloor = \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} i \cdot \left( \left\lfloor \frac{n}{2^i \cdot 3^{\lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil}} \right\rfloor - \left\lfloor \frac{n}{2^{i+1} \cdot 3^{\lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil}} \right\rfloor \right) \quad (3.2)$$

**Conjecture 1.** *Products of  $\mathbb{Z}_{p_i}$  for distinct primes have transcendental valiative capacity.*

The aperiodicity of the sequence  $\lceil \frac{i}{\log_2(3)} \rceil$  over  $i$  leads us to believe, but not prove, that each of the sums in (4.1) and (4.2) are irrational.

We end this section with an observation on the asymptotic behavior of capacity in these spaces. For a fixed prime  $p$ ,  $(\frac{1}{p})^{\frac{1}{p^n-1}}$  is an monotone, increasing sequence in  $n$  with  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} (\frac{1}{p})^{\frac{1}{p^n-1}} = 1$ . For fixed  $n$ , the sequence in  $p$  is also montone, increasing, again with  $\lim_{p \rightarrow \infty} (\frac{1}{p})^{\frac{1}{p^n-1}} = 1$ . In both cases, the limiting value is equal to the diameter of space. Indeed, we can observe that the sequence

$\{(0, 0, \dots), (1, 0, \dots), (0, 1, \dots), \dots\}$ , in which the first element has only zeros and the  $n$ -th element has a single 1 in the  $(n - 1)$ -th component, is a  $\rho$ -ordering for both  $(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p \times \dots, \rho_{p,\infty})$  and  $(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_3 \times \dots, \rho_{P,\infty})$ , since the distance between elements in this sequence (in either metric space) is always 1. If we could show that these spaces are compact, this would give a valuative capacity of  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} (1^n)^{(1/n)} = 1$  for both spaces. We explore this more in the following section.

## Product topology

In considering the product space of ultrametric spaces, we may wonder whether the chosen metric also gives back the product topology on the space. For products formed by taking some finite number of copies, the answer is positive. We give the necessary background and show this fact, adapting the proof in Munkres (20.3) to the case of ultrametric spaces.

**Definition-Proposition 1.** (*Munkres*) Suppose  $X_i$ , for  $i$  in some index set  $I$ , is a family of topological spaces. Let  $\pi_j : \prod_{i \in I} X_i \rightarrow X_j$  be the map given by projection onto the  $j$ -th component, that is  $\pi_j(x) = \pi_j((x_i)_{i \in I}) = x_j$ . For each  $j \in I$ , let  $\mathcal{S}_j$  be the collection

$$\mathcal{S}_j = \{\pi_j^{-1}(U_j) \mid U_j \text{ open in } X_j\}$$

Let  $\mathcal{S}$  be the union of the  $\mathcal{S}_j$  over  $j \in I$ ,  $\mathcal{S} = \cup_{j \in I} \mathcal{S}_j$ . Then  $\mathcal{S}$  is a subbasis that generates a topology on  $\prod_{i \in I} X_i$  called the **product topology**.

The basis,  $\mathcal{B}$ , generated by  $\mathcal{S}$  in the definition above is the set of all finite intersections of elements in  $\mathcal{S}$ . That is  $B \in \mathcal{B}$  if there exists  $S_1, S_2, \dots, S_n$  in  $\mathcal{S}$  such that  $B = S_1 \cap S_2 \cap \dots \cap S_n$ . A useful description of the basis for the product topology also appears in Munkres, as below:

**Proposition 25.** (*Munkres 19.2*) Suppose  $X_i$ , for  $i$  in some index set  $I$ , is a family of topological spaces and denote by  $\mathcal{B}_i$  the basis for the topology on  $X_i$ . Let

$$\mathcal{B}_P = \prod_{i \in I} B_i, \text{ for } B_i \in \mathcal{B}_i \text{ and } B_i = X_i \text{ for all but finitely-many } i \in I.$$

then  $\mathcal{B}_P$  is a basis for the product topology on  $\prod_{i \in I} X_i$ .

We can now show that the topology induced by the  $L_\infty$  metric described above agrees with the product topology for finite products.

**Proposition 26.** *Let  $M = (M_1 \times M_2 \times \dots \times M_n, \rho_\infty)$  be a finite product of bounded, ultrametric spaces and let  $\rho_\infty$  be the metric described above. Then the topology induced by  $\rho_\infty$  coincides with the product topology on  $M_1 \times M_2 \times \dots \times M_n$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $\mathcal{T}_{\rho_\infty}$  be the topology on  $M_1 \times M_2 \times \dots \times M_n$  induced by  $\rho_\infty$  and let  $\mathcal{B}_{\rho_\infty}$  be the basis for this topology. Let  $\mathcal{T}_P$  be the product topology with basis  $\mathcal{B}_P$ . We show  $\mathcal{T}_P \subset \mathcal{T}_{\rho_\infty}$  and vice versa. For this, it is equivalent (Munkres 13.3) to show that for  $z \in M_1 \times M_2 \times \dots \times M_n$  and  $B \in \mathcal{B}_P$  containing  $z$ , there is a basis element  $B' \in \mathcal{B}_{\rho_\infty}$  such that  $z \in B' \subset B$ , and vice versa.

So let  $z \in M_1 \times M_2 \times \dots \times M_n$  and suppose  $B \in \mathcal{B}_P$  contains  $z$ . Since  $B$  is in  $\mathcal{B}_P$ ,  $B$  is of the form  $B_{r_1}(z_1) \times B_{r_2}(z_2) \times \dots \times B_{r_n}(z_n)$  (since the choice of centres is arbitrary in an ultrametric spaces, we may choose the components of  $z$  as the centres without loss of generality). Let  $r = \min\{r_i\}$  for  $i \in 1, \dots, n$ . Then let  $B'$  be the ball  $B_r(z)$  in  $\mathcal{B}_{\rho_\infty}$ . Clearly,  $z \in B_r(z)$  and since  $r \leq r_i, \forall i$ ,  $B_r(z) = B_r(z_1) \times B_r(z_2) \times \dots \times B_r(z_n) \subset B_{r_1}(z_1) \times B_{r_2}(z_2) \times \dots \times B_{r_n}(z_n) = B$ .

Conversely, suppose  $A \in \mathcal{B}_{\rho_\infty}$  and let  $y \in A$ . To find  $A' \in \mathcal{B}_P$  such that  $y \in A'$  and  $A' \subset A$ , simply note that  $A$  itself is in  $\mathcal{B}_P$ .

□

We are now naturally left to ask whether the product topology on *infinite* products of ultrametric spaces coincides with the  $L_\infty$  metric. In this case, as in the analogous case of infinite copies of  $\mathbb{R}$  and a uniform metric, the answer is negative (at least in general). Fortunately, the metric that realizes the product topology on

infinite copies of  $\mathbb{R}$  can be adapted to the case of ultrametric spaces. We adapt to the proof of Munkres (20.5) to the case of infinite products of ultrametric spaces.

**Proposition 27.** *Suppose  $\mathbf{M} = M_1 \times M_2 \times \dots$  is an infinite collection of metric spaces, each with an ultrametric  $\rho_i$  which is bounded by 1, that is suppose  $\rho_i(x_i, y_i) \leq 1$ , for all  $x_i, y_i \in M_i$  and for all  $i$ . Define a metric  $d$  on  $\mathbf{M}$  as follows:*

$$d(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y}) = \sup_i \left\{ \frac{\rho_i(x_i, y_i)}{i} \right\}$$

*Then  $d$  is an ultrametric and induces the product topology on  $\mathbf{M}$ .*

*Proof.* We see that  $d$  inherits symmetry, injectivity and non-negativity from the requirement that each  $\rho_i$  is a metric, just as  $\rho_\infty$  did. To see that  $d$  satisfies the strong triangle inequality, define a new metric  $\rho'_i$  by  $\rho'_i(x, y) = \frac{\rho_i(x_i, y_i)}{i}, \forall i$ . Then  $\rho'_i$  is an ultrametric, since  $\rho_i(x, y) \leq \max(\rho_i(x, z), \rho_i(y, z))$  implies  $\frac{\rho_i(x, y)}{i} \leq \max(\frac{\rho_i(x, z)}{i}, \frac{\rho_i(y, z)}{i})$  for any  $i \in \mathbb{N}$ . Then we can view  $d$  as the  $L_\infty$  metric on the spaces  $(M_i, \rho'_i)$ , and so  $d$  will be an ultrametric as shown in the first proposition of this section.

Now we show  $d$  induces the product topology. We first show that metric topology induced by  $d$  is finer than the product topology. Let

$$B = B_r^{\mathbf{M}}(\mathbf{z}) = B_r^{M_1}(z_1) \times B_r^{M_2}(z_2) \times B_r^{M_3}(z_3) \times \dots$$

be a basis open in the metric topology. We must find a basis open  $B' \ni z$  in the product topology such that  $B' \subseteq B$ . Let  $N \in \mathbb{N}$  be such that  $\frac{1}{N} < r$ . Then let  $B'$  be the basis open element

$$B' = B_r^{M_1}(z_1) \times B_r^{M_2}(z_2) \times \dots \times B_r^{M_N}(z_N) \times M_{N+1} \times M_{N+2} \times \dots$$

in the product topology. Suppose  $\mathbf{y} \in B'$ . We must show  $\mathbf{y} \in B$ , i.e.,  $d(\mathbf{z}, \mathbf{y}) < r$ . Note that for all  $i \geq N$ ,

$$\frac{\rho_i(z_i, y_i)}{i} \leq \frac{1}{N}$$

which means

$$d(\mathbf{z}, \mathbf{y}) = \sup\left\{\frac{\rho_i(z_i, y_i)}{i}\right\} \leq \max\left\{\frac{\rho_1(z_1, y_1)}{1}, \frac{\rho_2(z_2, y_2)}{2}, \dots, \frac{\rho_N(z_N, y_N)}{N}, \frac{1}{N}\right\}$$

and since  $N$  was chosen so that  $\frac{1}{N} < r$  and  $B'$  was chosen to have balls of radius  $r$  in the first  $N$  components, we must have  $d(\mathbf{z}, \mathbf{y}) < r$ .

Conversely, ... □

From now on, we refer to the metric  $d$  above as the **product metric**. An important consequence of the fact that  $d$  achieves the product topology is that Tychonoff's theorem then guarantees that product spaces formed with this metric will be compact, infinite or otherwise. As a result, we can now ask directly about the valutive capacity of some infinite product spaces. We consider two examples.

**Example 13.** Let  $(\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p \times \dots, d)$  be the metric space formed by taking the product of  $(\mathbb{Z}_p, \rho_p)$  for some fixed prime  $p$  and let  $d$  be the product metric.

**Example 14.** Let  $(\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_3 \times \mathbb{Z}_5 \times \dots, \rho_{P,\infty})$  be the metric space formed by taking the product of  $(\mathbb{Z}_p, \rho_p)$  for every prime  $p$  and let  $d$  be the product metric.

So far we have two methods for computing valutive capacity. Either we can find a useful decomposition that allows us to apply the subadditivity formula, or we can find a  $\rho$ -ordering and then take the limit of its corresponding  $\rho$ -sequence.

## Conclusion

In this section, we considered the notion of valutive capacity in product spaces, that is, spaces formed by taking copies of ultrametric spaces. In the following sections, we consider valutive capacity in spaces formed by adding points, that is extension fields, or by both taking copies and adding (a distinguished) point, as in projective spaces. For these purposes, it will be more productive to start working over the field  $\mathbb{Q}_p$ , instead of  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ .

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