

Part III – Category Theory (Ongoing course)

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0 Introduction

Lecture 1 Category theory is like a language spoken by many different people, with many different dialects. Specifically, different parts of category theory are used in different branches of mathematics. In this course, we aim to speak the language of category theory, without an accent - a broad overview of all aspects of category theory. There will be many examples, some of which may not be understandable. As long as some examples make sense, it is not a point of concern that some examples seem unfamiliar.

1 Definitions and Examples

1.1 Definition (Category). A **category** \mathcal{C} consists of

- (a) a collection \mathcal{C} of **objects** A, B, C, \dots
- (b) a collection $\text{mor } \mathcal{C}$ of **morphisms** f, g, h, \dots
- (c) two operations dom, cod assigning to each $f \in \text{mor } \mathcal{C}$ a pair of objects, its **domain** and **codomain**. We write $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ to mean ‘ f is a morphism and $\text{dom } f = A$ and $\text{cod } f = B$ ’.
- (d) an operation assigning to each $A \in \text{ob } \mathcal{C}$ a morphism $A \xrightarrow{1_A} A$, called its **identity**.
- (e) a partial binary operation **composition** $(f, g) \mapsto fg$ on morphisms, such that fg is defined iff $\text{dom } f = \text{cod } g$ and $\text{dom}(fg) = \text{dom } g$, $\text{cod}(fg) = \text{cod } f$ if fg is defined.

satisfying

- (f) $f1_A = f = 1_B f$ for any $A \xrightarrow{f} B$
- (g) $(fg)h = f(gh)$ whenever fg and gh are defined

1.2 Remark.

- (a) This definition is independent of a model of set theory. If we’re given a particular model of set theory, we call the **category** \mathcal{C} **small** if $\text{ob } \mathcal{C}$ and $\text{mor } \mathcal{C}$ are sets.
- (b) Some texts say fg means ‘ f followed by g ’, i.e. fg defined $\iff \text{cod } f = \text{dom } g$.
- (c) Note that a morphism f is an **identity** iff $fg = g$ and $hf = h$ whenever the compositions are defined. So we could formulate the definition entirely in terms of morphisms.

1.3 Examples.

- (a) The **category** **Set** has all sets as objects, and all functions between sets as morphisms. (Strictly, morphisms $A \longrightarrow B$ are pairs (f, B) where f is a set-theoretic function.)
- (b) The category **Gp** has all groups as objects, and group homomorphisms as morphisms. Similarly, **Rng** is the category of rings, **Mod** $_R$ the category of R -modules.

- (c) The category **Top** has all topological spaces as objects and continuous functions as morphisms. Similarly **Unif** has uniform spaces and uniformly continuous functions, and **Mf** has manifolds and smooth maps.
- (d) The category **Htpy** has the same objects as **Top**, but morphisms are homotopy classes of continuous functions. More generally, given \mathcal{C} , we call an equivalence relation \simeq on $\text{mor } \mathcal{C}$ a **congruence** if $f \simeq g \implies \text{dom } f = \text{dom } g$ and $\text{cod } f = \text{cod } g$, and $f \simeq g \implies fh \simeq gh$ and $kf \simeq kg$ whenever the composites are defined. Then we have a category \mathcal{C}/\simeq with the same objects as \mathcal{C} , but congruence classes as morphisms.
- (e) Given \mathcal{C} , the **opposite category** \mathcal{C}^{op} has the same objects and morphisms as \mathcal{C} , but dom and cod are interchanged, and fg in \mathcal{C}^{op} is gf in \mathcal{C} . This leads to the **Duality principle** if P is a true statement about categories, so is the statement P^* obtained from P by reversing all arrows.
- (f) A **small** category with one object is a **monoid**, i.e. a semigroup with 1. In particular, a group is a small category with one object, in which every morphism is an isomorphism (f is an **isomorphism** if $\exists g$ such that fg and gf are identities).
- (g) A **groupoid** is a category in which every morphism is an isomorphism. For a topological space X , the fundamental groupoid $\pi(X)$ has all points of X as objects and morphisms $x \longrightarrow y$ are homotopy classes $\text{rel } \{0, 1\}$ of paths $u : [0, 1] \longrightarrow X$ with $u(0) = x$, $u(1) = y$. (If you know how to prove that the fundamental group is a group, you can prove that $\pi(X)$ is a groupoid.)
- (h) A **discrete** category is one whose only morphisms are identities. A **preorder** is a category \mathcal{C} in which, for any pair (A, B) there is at most 1 morphism $A \longrightarrow B$. A small preorder is a set equipped with a binary relation which is reflexive and transitive. In particular, a partially ordered set is a small preorder in which the only isomorphisms are identities.
- (i) The category **Rel** has the same objects as **Set**, but morphisms $A \longrightarrow B$ are arbitrary relations $R \subseteq A \times B$. Given R and $S \subseteq B \times C$, we define

$$S \circ R = \{ (a, c) \in A \times C \mid (\exists b \in B)((a, b) \in R \wedge (b, c) \in S) \}.$$

The identity $1_A : A \longrightarrow A$ is $\{ (a, a) \mid a \in A \}$.

Similarly, the category **Part** of sets and partial functions (i.e. relations such that $(a, b) \in R, (a, b') \in R \implies b = b'$).

- (j) Let K be a field. The category **Mat** $_K$ has natural numbers as objects, and morphisms $n \longrightarrow p$ are $(p \times n)$ matrices with entries from K . Composition is matrix multiplication.

1.4 Definition (Functor). Let \mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D} be **categories**. A **functor** $F : \mathcal{C} \longrightarrow \mathcal{D}$ consists of

- (a) a mapping $A \longmapsto FA$ from $\text{ob } \mathcal{C}$ to $\text{ob } \mathcal{D}$
- (b) a mapping $f \longmapsto Ff$ from $\text{mor } \mathcal{C}$ to $\text{mor } \mathcal{D}$

such that $\text{dom}(Ff) = F(\text{dom } f)$, $\text{cod}(Ff) = F(\text{cod } f)$, $1_{FA} = F(1_A)$ and $(Ff)(Fg) = F(fg)$ whenever fg is defined.

Lecture 2 **1.3 Examples** (*Continued*).

- (k) We write **Cat** for the category whose objects are all **small categories**, and whose morphisms are **functors** between them.

1.5 Examples.

- (a) We have **forgetful functors** $\mathbf{Gp} \xrightarrow{U} \mathbf{Set}, \mathbf{Rng} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}, \mathbf{Top} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}, \mathbf{Rng} \rightarrow \mathbf{AbGp}$ (forgetting \times), $\mathbf{Rng} \rightarrow \mathbf{Mon}$ (forgetting $+$).

- (b) Given a set A , the free group FA has the property: given any group G and any function $A \xrightarrow{f} UG$, there's a unique homomorphism $FA \xrightarrow{f} G$ extending f . F is a functor $\mathbf{Set} \rightarrow \mathbf{Gp}$: given $A \xrightarrow{f} B$, we define Ff to be the unique homomorphism extending $A \xrightarrow{f} B \hookrightarrow UFB$.

Functoriality follows from uniqueness: given $B \xrightarrow{g} C$, $F(gf)$ and $(Fg)(Ff)$ are both homoms extending $A \xrightarrow{f} B \xrightarrow{g} C \hookrightarrow UFC$. Call this the **free functor**.

- (c) Given a set A , we write $\mathcal{P}A$ for the set of all subsets of A . We can make \mathcal{P} into a functor $\mathbf{Set} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$: given $A \xrightarrow{f} B$, we define $\mathcal{P}f(A') = \{f(a) \mid a \in A'\}$ for $A' \subseteq A$. But we also have a functor $\mathcal{P}^* : \mathbf{Set} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}^{\text{op}}$ defined on objects by \mathcal{P} , but $\mathcal{P}^*f(B') = \{a \in A \mid f(a) \in B'\}$ for $B' \subseteq B$.

By a **contravariant** functor $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$, we mean a **functor** $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}^{\text{op}}$ (or $\mathcal{C}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$). (A **covariant** functor is one that doesn't reverse arrows).

- (d) Let K be a field. We have a functor $* : \mathbf{Mod}_K \rightarrow \mathbf{Mod}_K^{\text{op}}$ defined by $V^* = \{\text{linear maps } V \rightarrow K\}$ and if $V \xrightarrow{f} W$, $f^*(\theta : W \rightarrow K) = \theta f$.

- (e) We have a functor $op : \mathbf{Cat} \rightarrow \mathbf{Cat}$ which is the 'identity' on morphisms. (Note that this is **covariant**).

- (f) A functor between monoids is a monoid homomorphism.

- (g) A functor between posets is an order-preserving map.

- (h) Let G be a group. A functor $F : G \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ consists of a set $A = F*$ together with an action of G on A , i.e. a permutation representation of G (where we use $*$ to refer to the unique object of the group). Similarly a functor $G \rightarrow \mathbf{Mod}_K$ is a K -linear representation of G .

- (i) The construction of a fundamental group $\pi_1(X, x)$ of a space X with basepoint x is a functor $\mathbf{Top}_* \rightarrow \mathbf{Gp}$ where \mathbf{Top}_* is the set of spaces with a chosen basepoint. Similarly, the fundamental groupoid is a functor $\mathbf{Top} \rightarrow \mathbf{Gpd}$ where \mathbf{Gpd} is the category of groupoids and functors between them.

1.6 Definition (Natural transformation). Let \mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D} be **categories** and $F, G : \mathcal{C} \rightrightarrows \mathcal{D}$ two **functors**. A **natural transformation** $\alpha : F \rightarrow G$ consists of an assignment $A \mapsto \alpha_A$

from $\text{ob } \mathcal{C}$ to $\text{mor } \mathcal{D}$, such that $\text{dom } \alpha_A = FA$ and $\text{cod } \alpha_A = GA$ for all A , and for all $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ in \mathcal{C} the square

$$\begin{array}{ccc} FA & \xrightarrow{Ff} & FB \\ \downarrow \alpha_A & & \downarrow \alpha_B \\ GA & \xrightarrow{Gf} & GB \end{array}$$

commutes (i.e. $\alpha_B(Ff) = (Gf)\alpha_A$).

1.3 Examples (Continued).

- (1) Given categories \mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D} , we write $[\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D}]$ for the category whose objects are functors $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$, and whose morphisms are natural transformations.

1.7 Examples.

- (a) Let K be a field, V a vector space over K . There is a linear map $\alpha_V : V \rightarrow V^{**}$ given by

$$\alpha_V(v)(\theta) = \theta(v)$$

for $\theta \in V^*$. This is the V -component of a natural transformation

$$1_{\mathbf{Mod}_K} \rightarrow ** : \mathbf{Mod}_K \rightarrow \mathbf{Mod}_K.$$

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- (b) For any set A , we have a mapping $\sigma_A : A \rightarrow \mathcal{P}A$ sending a to $\{a\}$. If $f : A \rightarrow B$, then $\mathcal{P}f\{a\} = \{f(a)\}$, so σ is a natural transformation $1_{\mathbf{Set}} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}$.
- (c) Let $F : \mathbf{Set} \rightarrow \mathbf{Gp}$ be the free group functor (Examples 1.5(b)) and $U : \mathbf{Gp} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ the forgetful functor. The inclusions $A \rightarrow UFA$ form a natural transformation $1_{\mathbf{Set}} \rightarrow UF$.
- (d) Let G, H be groups and $f, g : G \rightarrow H$ two homomorphisms. A natural transformation $\alpha : f \rightarrow g$ corresponds to an element $h = \alpha_*$ of H such that $h.f(x) = g(x).h$ for all $x \in G$, or equivalently $f(x) = h^{-1}g(x)h$, i.e. f and g are conjugate group homomorphisms.
- (e) Let A, B be two G -sets regarded as functors $G \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$. A natural transformation $A \rightarrow B$ is a function f satisfying $f(g.a) = g.f(a)$ for all $a \in A$, i.e. a G -equivariant map.

1.8 Lemma. Let $F, G : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ be two functors, and $\alpha : F \rightarrow G$ a natural transformation. Then α is an isomorphism in $[\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D}]$ iff each α_A is an isomorphism in \mathcal{D} .

Proof.

\Rightarrow trivial

\Leftarrow Suppose each α_A has an inverse β_A . Given $f : A \rightarrow B$ in \mathcal{C} , we need to show that

$$\begin{array}{ccc} GA & \xrightarrow{Gf} & GB \\ \downarrow \beta_A & & \downarrow \beta_B \\ FA & \xrightarrow{Ff} & FB \end{array}$$

commutes.

But

$$\begin{aligned}(Ff)\beta_A &= \beta_B\alpha_B(Ff)\beta_A \\ &= \beta_B(Gf)\alpha_A\beta_A \\ &= \beta_B(Gf).\end{aligned}$$

□

1.9 Definition (Equivalent category). Let \mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D} be categories. By an **equivalence** between \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{D} , we mean a pair of **functors** $F : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$, $G : \mathcal{D} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ together with natural isomorphisms $\alpha : 1_{\mathcal{C}} \rightarrow GF$ and $\beta : FG \rightarrow 1_{\mathcal{D}}$. We write $\mathcal{C} \simeq \mathcal{D}$ if \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{D} are equivalent.

We say a property P of **categories** is a **categorical property** if whenever \mathcal{C} has P and $\mathcal{C} \simeq \mathcal{D}$, then \mathcal{D} has P .

For instance, being a groupoid or a preorder are categorical properties, but being a group or a partial order are not.

1.10 Examples.

- (a) The category **Part** is equivalent to the category **Set**_{*} of pointed sets (and basepoint-preserving functions). We define $F : \mathbf{Set}_* \rightarrow \mathbf{Part}$ by $F(A, a) = A \setminus \{a\}$ and if $f : (A, a) \rightarrow (B, b)$

$$Ff(x) = \begin{cases} f(x) & \text{if } f(x) \neq b \\ \text{undefined} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

and $G : \mathbf{Part} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}_*$ by $G(A) = A^+ = A \cup \{A\}$ and if $f : A \rightarrow B$ is a partial function, we define $Gf : A^+ \rightarrow B^+$ by

$$Gf = \begin{cases} f(x) & \text{if } x \in A \text{ and } f(x) \text{ defined} \\ B & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

The composite FG is the identity on **Part**, but GF is not the identity, however there's an isomorphism

$$(A, a) \rightarrow ((A \setminus \{a\})^+, A \setminus \{a\})$$

sending a to $A \setminus \{a\}$ and everything else to itself and this is natural.

Note that there can be no isomorphism $\mathbf{Set}_* \rightarrow \mathbf{Part}$ since **Part** has a 1-element isomorphism class $\{\emptyset\}$ and **Set**_{*} doesn't.

- (b) The category **FdMod** _{K} of finite-dimensional vector spaces over K is equivalent to **FdMod**^{op} _{K} : the functors in both directions are $(-)^*$ and both isomorphisms are the natural transformations of [Examples 1.7\(a\)](#).
- (c) **FdMod** _{K} is also equivalent to **Mat** _{K} : We define $F : \mathbf{Mat}_K \rightarrow \mathbf{FdMod}_K$ by $F(n) = K^n$, and $F(A)$ is the linear map represented by A with respect to the standard bases of K^n and K^p .

To define $G : \mathbf{FdMod}_K \rightarrow \mathbf{Mat}_K$, choose a basis for each finite dimensional vector space, and define $G(V) = \dim V$, $G(V \xrightarrow{f} W)$ as the matrix representing f with respect to the chosen bases. GF is the identity, provided we choose the standard bases for the spaces K^n ; $FG \neq 1$, but the chosen basis gives isomorphisms $FG(V) = K^{\dim V} \rightarrow V$ for each V , which form a natural isomorphism.

Lecture 4 **1.11 Definition** (Faithful, full, essentially surjective). Let $\mathcal{C} \xrightarrow{F} \mathcal{D}$ be a **functor**.

- (a) We say F is **faithful** if, given $f, f' \in \text{mor } \mathcal{C}$ with $\text{dom } f = \text{dom } f'$, $\text{cod } f = \text{cod } f'$ and $Ff = Ff'$ then $f = f'$.
- (b) We say F is **full** if, given $FA \xrightarrow{g} FB$ in \mathcal{D} , there exists $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ in \mathcal{C} with $Ff = g$.
- (c) We say F is **essentially surjective** if, for every $B \in \text{ob } \mathcal{D}$, there exists $A \in \text{ob } \mathcal{C}$ and an isomorphism $FA \rightarrow B$ in \mathcal{D} .

We say a subcategory $\mathcal{C}' \subseteq \mathcal{C}$ is **full** if the inclusion $\mathcal{C}' \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ is a full functor.

Example. **Gp** is a **full subcategory** of **Mon**, but **Mon** is not a full subcategory of the category **Sgp** of semigroups.

1.12 Lemma. Assuming the axiom of choice, a functor $F : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ is part of an **equivalence** $\mathcal{C} \simeq \mathcal{D}$ iff it is **full**, **faithful** and **essentially surjective**.

Proof.

\Rightarrow Given G, α, β as in **Definition 1.9**, for each $B \in \text{ob } \mathcal{D}$, β_B is an isomorphism $FGB \rightarrow B$, so F is essentially surjective.

Given $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ in \mathcal{C} , we can recover f from Ff as the composite

$$A \xrightarrow{\alpha_A} GFA \xrightarrow{GFf} GFB \xrightarrow{\alpha_B^{-1}} B.$$

Hence if $A \xrightarrow{f'} B$ satisfies $Ff = Ff'$, then $f = f'$.

Given $FA \xrightarrow{g} FB$, define f to be the composite

$$A \xrightarrow{\alpha_A} GFA \xrightarrow{Gg} GFB \xrightarrow{\alpha_B^{-1}} B$$

Then $GFf = \alpha_B f \alpha_A^{-1} = Gg$, and G is faithful for the same reason as F , so $Ff = g$.

\Leftarrow For each $B \in \text{ob } \mathcal{D}$, choose $GB \in \text{ob } \mathcal{C}$ and an isomorphism $\beta_B : FGB \rightarrow B$ in \mathcal{D} . Given

$$B \xrightarrow{g} B'$$

define $Gg : GB \rightarrow GB'$ to be the unique morphism whose image under F is

$$FGB \xrightarrow{\beta_B} B \xrightarrow{g} B' \xrightarrow{\beta_{B'}^{-1}} FGB'$$

Uniqueness implies functoriality: given

$$B' \xrightarrow{g'} B''$$

then note $(Gg')(Gg)$ and $G(g'g)$ have the same image under F , so they're equal.

By construction, β is a natural transformation $FG \rightarrow 1_{\mathcal{D}}$.

Given $A \in \text{ob } \mathcal{C}$, define $\alpha_A : A \rightarrow GFA$ to be the unique morphism whose image under F is

$$FA \xrightarrow{\beta_{FA}^{-1}} FGFA$$

α_A is an isomorphism, since β_{FA} also has a unique pre-image under F .

Also α is a natural transformation, since any naturality square for α is mapped by F to a commutative square, and F is faithful. \square

1.13 Definition (Skeleton). By a **skeleton** of a category \mathcal{C} , we mean a **full subcategory** \mathcal{C}_0 containing one object from each isomorphism class. We say \mathcal{C} is **skeletal** if it's a skeleton of itself.

Example. \mathbf{Mat}_K is **skeletal**, and the image of $F : \mathbf{Mat}_K \rightarrow \mathbf{FdMod}_K$ of [Examples 1.10\(c\)](#) is a **skeleton** of \mathbf{FdMod}_K .

Warning. Almost any assertion about **skeletons** is equivalent to the axiom of choice. See question 2 on example sheet 1.

1.14 Definition (Monomorphism, epimorphism). Let $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ be a **morphism** in \mathcal{C}

- (a) We say f is a **monomorphism** (or f is **monic**) if, given any pair $C \xrightarrow[g]{f} A$, $fg = fh$ implies $g = h$
- (b) We say f is an **epimorphism** (or **epic**) if it's a monomorphism in C^{op} i.e. if $gf = hf$ implies $g = h$.

We denote **monomorphisms** by $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ and **epimorphisms** by $A \xrightarrow{f} B$

Any isomorphism is **monic** and **epic**: more generally if f has a left inverse (i.e. $\exists g$ such that gf is an identity) then it's monic. We call such monomorphisms **split**.

We say C is a **balanced category** if any morphism which is both **monic** and **epic** is an isomorphism.

1.15 Examples.

- (a) In **Set**, **mono** \iff injective (\implies easy; for \longleftarrow take $C = 1 = \{*\}$) and **epi** \iff surjective (\implies easy; for \longleftarrow use two morphisms $B \rightarrow 2 = \{0, 1\}$). So **Set** is **balanced**.
- (b) In **Gp** **mono** \iff injective (for \longleftarrow use homoms $\mathbb{Z} \rightarrow A$) and **epi** \iff surjective (\longleftarrow uses free products with amalgamation). So **Gp** is balanced.
- (c) In **Rng**, **mono** \iff injective (proof much as for **Gp**) but the inclusion $\mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}$ is an epimorphism, since if $\mathbb{Q} \xrightarrow[g]{f} R$ agree on all integers, they agree everywhere. So **Rng** isn't balanced.
- (d) In **Top**, **mono** \iff injective and **epi** \iff surjective (proofs as in **Set**). But **Top** isn't balanced since a continuous bijection needn't have a continuous inverse.

2 The Yoneda Lemma

Lecture 5 **2.1 Definition** (Locally small). We say a **category** \mathcal{C} is **locally small** if, for any two objects A, B , the morphisms $A \rightarrow B$ in \mathcal{C} form a set $\mathcal{C}(A, B)$.

If we fix A and let B vary, the assignment $B \mapsto \mathcal{C}(A, B)$ becomes a **functor** $\mathcal{C}(A, -) : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$: given $B \xrightarrow{f} C$, $\mathcal{C}(A, f)$ is the mapping $g \mapsto fg$. Similarly, $A \mapsto \mathcal{C}(A, B)$ defines a functor $\mathcal{C}(-, B) : \mathcal{C}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$.

2.2 Lemma (Yoneda Lemma). Let \mathcal{C} be a **locally small category**, $A \in \text{ob } \mathcal{C}$ and $F : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ a **functor**.

- (i) Then natural transformations $\mathcal{C}(A, -) \rightarrow F$ are in bijection with elements of FA .
- (ii) Moreover, this bijection is natural in both A and F .

Proof of Yoneda Lemma(i). Given $\alpha : \mathcal{C}(A, -) \rightarrow F$, we define

$$\Phi(\alpha) = \alpha_A(1_A) \in FA.$$

Given $x \in FA$, we define $\Psi(x) : \mathcal{C}(A, -) \rightarrow F$ by

$$\Psi(x)_B(A \xrightarrow{f} B) = (Ff)(x) \in FB.$$

$\Psi(x)$ is natural: given $g : B \rightarrow C$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \Psi(x)_C \mathcal{C}(A, g)(f) &= \Psi(x)_C(gf) = F(gf)(x) \\ (Fg)\Psi(x)_B(f) &= (Fg)(Ff)(x) = F(gf)(x). \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathcal{C}(A, B) & \xrightarrow{\mathcal{C}(A, g)} & \mathcal{C}(A, C) \\ \Psi(x)_B \downarrow & & \downarrow \Psi(x)_C \\ FB & \xrightarrow{Fg} & FC \end{array}$$

We also verify Ψ and Φ are inverse:

$$\Phi\Psi(x) = \Psi(x)_A(1_A) = F(1_A)(x) = x.$$

Given α ,

$$\begin{aligned} \Psi\Phi(\alpha)_B(f) &= \Psi(\alpha_A(1_A))_B(f) = Ff(\alpha_A(1_A)) \\ &= \alpha_B \mathcal{C}(A, f)(1_A) = \alpha_B(f) \end{aligned}$$

so $\Psi\Phi(\alpha) = \alpha$. □

2.3 Corollary. The assignment $A \mapsto \mathcal{C}(A, -)$ defines a **full** and **faithful functor** $\mathcal{C}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow [\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}]$.

Proof. Put $F = \mathcal{C}(B, -)$ in [Lemma 2.2\(i\)](#): we get a bijection between $\mathcal{C}(B, A)$ and morphisms $\mathcal{C}(A, -) \rightarrow \mathcal{C}(B, -)$ in $[\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}]$. We need to verify this is functorial: but it sends $f : B \rightarrow A$ to the natural transformation $g \mapsto gf$. So functoriality follows from associativity. \square

We call this **functor** (or the functor $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow [\mathcal{C}^{\text{op}}, \mathbf{Set}]$) sending A to $\mathcal{C}(-, A)$ the **Yoneda embedding** of \mathcal{C} , and denote it by Y .

Proof of Yoneda Lemma(ii). Suppose for the moment that \mathcal{C} is **small**, so that $[\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}]$ is **locally small**. Then we have two functors $\mathcal{C} \times [\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}] \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$: One sends (A, F) to FA , and the other is the composite

$$\mathcal{C} \times [\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}] \xrightarrow{Y \times 1} [\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}]^{\text{op}} \times [\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}] \xrightarrow{[\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}](-, -)} \mathbf{Set}$$

[Yoneda Lemma\(ii\)](#) says that these are naturally isomorphic.

We can translate this into an elementary statement, making sense even when \mathcal{C} isn't small, given $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ and $F \xrightarrow{\alpha} G$, the two ways of producing an element of GB from a natural transformation $\beta : \mathcal{C}(A, -) \rightarrow F$ give the same result, namely

$$\alpha_B(Ff)\beta_A(1_A) = (GF)\alpha_A\beta_A(1_A)$$

which is equal to $\alpha_B\beta_B(f)$. \square

2.4 Definition. We say a **functor** $F : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ is **representable** if it's **isomorphic** to $\mathcal{C}(A, -)$ for some A . By **representation** of F , we mean a pair (A, x) where $x \in FA$ is such that $\Psi(x)$ is an **isomorphism**. We also call x a **universal element** of F .

2.5 Corollary. If (A, x) and (B, y) are both **representations** of F , then there's a unique **isomorphism** $f : A \rightarrow B$ such that $(Ff)(x) = y$.

Proof. Consider the composite

$$\mathcal{C}(B, -) \xrightarrow{\Psi(y)} F \xrightarrow{\Psi(x)^{-1}} \mathcal{C}(A, -)$$

By [Corollary 2.3](#), this is of the form $Y(f)$ for a unique **isomorphism** $f : A \rightarrow B$ and the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathcal{C}(B, -) & \xrightarrow{Y(f)} & \mathcal{C}(A, -) \\ & \searrow \Psi(y) & \swarrow \Psi(x) \\ & F & \end{array}$$

commutes iff $(Ff)x = y$. \square

2.6 Examples.

- (a) The **forgetful functor** $\mathbf{Gp} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ is **representable** by $(\mathbb{Z}, 1)$. Similarly, the forgetful functor $\mathbf{Rng} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ is representable by $(\mathbb{Z}[x], x)$ and the forgetful functor $\mathbf{Top} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ is representable by $(\{\ast\}, \ast)$.

- (b) The functor $\mathcal{P}^* : \mathbf{Set}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ (see [Examples 1.5\(c\)](#)) is representable by $(\{0, 1\}, \{1\})$: this is the bijection between subsets and characteristic functions.
- (c) Let G be a group. The unique (up to [isomorphism](#)) representable functor $G(*, -) : G \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ is the *Cayley representation* of G , i.e. the set UG with G acting by left multiplication.
- (d) Let A, B be two objects of a [locally small category](#) \mathcal{C} . We have a functor $\mathcal{C}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ sending C to $\mathcal{C}(C, A) \times \mathcal{C}(C, B)$. A [representation](#) of this, if it exists, is called a (categorical) **product** of A and B , and denoted

$$(A \times B, (A \times B \xrightarrow{\pi_1} A, A \times B \xrightarrow{\pi_2} B)).$$

This pair has the property that, for any pair $(C \xrightarrow{f} A, C \xrightarrow{g} B)$ there's a unique $C \xrightarrow{h} A \times B$ with $\pi_1 h = f$ and $\pi_2 h = g$.

Products exist in many categories of interest: in **Set**, **Gp**, **Rng**, **Top** they are 'just' Cartesian products, in posets they are binary meets.

Dually we have the notion of **coproduct** $(A + B, (A \xrightarrow{\nu_1} A + B, B \xrightarrow{\nu_2} A + B))$. These also exist in many categories of interest.

Lecture 6

- (e) The dual-vector-space functor $\mathbf{Mod}_K^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Mod}_K$, when composed with the forgetful functor $\mathbf{Mod}_K \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$, is representable by $(K, 1_K)$.
- (f) Let $A \rightrightarrows B$ be morphisms in a locally small category \mathcal{C} . We have a functor $F : \mathcal{C}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ defined by

$$F(C) = \{ h \in \mathcal{C}(C, A) \mid fh = gh \}.$$

A representation of F , if it exists, is called an **equalizer** of (f, g) . It consists of an objects E and a morphism $E \xrightarrow{e} A$ such $fe = ge$, and every h with $fh = gh$ factors uniquely through e . In **Set**, we can take $E = \{ x \in A \mid f(x) = g(x) \}$ and $e =$ inclusion. Similar constructions work in **Gp**, **Rng**, **Top**, \dots .

Dually, we have the notion of **coequalizer**.

2.7 Remark. If e occurs as an [equalizer](#), then it's a [monomorphism](#), since any h factors through it in at most one way. We say a monomorphism is **regular** if it occurs as an equalizer.

[Split](#) monomorphisms are [regular](#) (c.f. question 6i on sheet 1). Note that regular mono + [epi](#) \implies [iso](#): if the equalizer e of (f, g) is epic, then $f = g$, so $e \cong 1_{\text{cod } e}$.

2.8 Definition (Separating, detecting families). Let \mathcal{C} be a category, and \mathcal{G} a class of objects of \mathcal{C} .

- (a) We say \mathcal{G} is a **separating family** for \mathcal{C} if, given $A \rightrightarrows B$ such that $fh = gh$ for all $G \xrightarrow{h} A$ with $G \in \mathcal{G}$, then $f = g$ (i.e. the functors $\mathcal{C}(G, -)$, $G \in \mathcal{G}$ are collectively faithful).

- (b) We say \mathcal{G} is a **detecting family** for \mathcal{C} if, given $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ such that every $G \xrightarrow{h} B$ with $G \in \mathcal{G}$ factors uniquely through f , then f is an isomorphism.

If $\mathcal{G} = \{G\}$, we call G a **separator/detector**.

2.9 Lemma.

- (i) If \mathcal{C} is a **balanced** category, then any **separating** family is **detecting**.
- (ii) If \mathcal{C} has **equalizers**, then any detecting family is separating.

Proof.

- (i) Suppose \mathcal{G} is **separating** and $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ satisfies the condition of **Definition 2.8(b)**. If $B \xrightarrow[g]{g} C$ satisfy $gf = hf$, then $gx = hx$ for every $G \xrightarrow{x} B$, so $g = h$, i.e. f is **epic**.
Similarly if $D \xrightarrow[k]{k} A$ satisfy $fk = fl$, then $ky = ly$ for any $G \xrightarrow{y} D$, since both are factorisations of fky through f . So $k = l$, i.e. f is **monic**.
- (ii) Suppose \mathcal{G} is **detecting** and $A \xrightarrow[g]{f} B$ satisfies the condition of 2.8(a). Then the **equalizer** $E \xrightarrow{e} A$ is an **isomorphism**, so $f = g$.

□

2.10 Examples.

- (a) In $[\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}]$ the family

$$\{\mathcal{C}(A, -) \mid A \in \text{ob } \mathcal{C}\}$$

is both **separating** and **detecting** (this is just a restatement of **Yoneda Lemma**.)

- (b) In **Set**, $1 = \{*\}$ is both a separator and a detector since it represents the identity **functor** $\mathbf{Set} \longrightarrow \mathbf{Set}$.

Similarly, \mathbb{Z} is both in **Gp**, since it represents the **forgetful functor** $\mathbf{Gp} \longrightarrow \mathbf{Set}$.

And $2 = \{0, 1\}$ is a coseparator and a codetector in **Set**, since it represents $\mathcal{P}^* : \mathbf{Set}^{\text{op}} \longrightarrow \mathbf{Set}$.

- (c) In **Top**, $1 = \{*\}$ is a separator since it represents the forgetful functor $\mathbf{Top} \longrightarrow \mathbf{Set}$, but not a detector. In fact, **Top** has no detecting *set* of objects:

For any infinite cardinal κ , let X be a discrete space of cardinality κ and let Y be the same set with ‘co- $< \kappa$ ’ topology, i.e. $F \subseteq Y$ closed $\iff F = Y$ or $\text{card } F < \kappa$. The identity $X \longrightarrow Y$ is continuous, but not a homeomorphism.

So if $\{G_i \mid i \in I\}$ is any set of spaces, taking $\kappa > \text{card } G_i$ for all i yields an example to show that the set is not detecting.

(d) Let \mathcal{C} be the category of pointed connected CW-complexes and homotopy classes of (basepoint-preserving) continuous maps. JHC Whitehead proved that if $X \xrightarrow{f} Y$ in this category induces isomorphisms $\pi_n(X) \rightarrow \pi_n(Y)$ for all n , then it's an isomorphism in \mathcal{C} . This says that $\{S^n \mid n \geq 1\}$ is a detecting set for \mathcal{C} .

But PJ Freyd showed there is no **faithful** functor $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$, so no separating *set*: if $\{G_i \mid i \in I\}$ were separating, then

$$x \mapsto \prod_{i \in I} \mathcal{C}(G_i, X)$$

would be faithful.

Note that any **functor** of the form $\mathcal{C}(A, -)$ preserves **monomorphisms**, but they don't normally preserve **epimorphisms**.

2.11 Definition (Projective). We say an object P is **projective** if, given

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & P & \\ & \downarrow f & \\ A & \xrightarrow{e} & B \end{array}$$

there exists $P \xrightarrow{g} A$ with $eg = f$. (If \mathcal{C} is **locally small**, this says $\mathcal{C}(P, -)$ preserves **epimorphisms**).

Dually, an **injective** object of \mathcal{C} is a projective object of \mathcal{C}^{op} . Given a class \mathcal{E} of epimorphisms, we say P is \mathcal{E} -projective if it satisfies the condition for all $e \in \mathcal{E}$.

2.12 Lemma. **Representable functors** are (pointwise) **projective** in $[\mathcal{C}, \mathbf{Set}]$.

Proof. Take

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & \mathcal{C}(A, -) & \\ & \downarrow \beta & \\ F & \xrightarrow{a} & G \end{array}$$

where α is pointwise surjective. By **Yoneda Lemma**, β corresponds to some $y \in GA$, and we can find $x \in FA$ with $\alpha_A(x) = y$. Now if $\gamma : \mathcal{C}(A, -) \rightarrow F$ corresponds to x then naturality of the **Yoneda bijection** yields $\alpha\gamma = \beta$. \square

3 Adjunctions

Lecture 7 **3.1 Definition.** Let \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{D} be two categories and $\mathcal{C} \xrightarrow{F} \mathcal{D}$, $\mathcal{D} \xrightarrow{G} \mathcal{C}$ two functors. By an **adjunction** between F and G we mean a bijection between morphisms $FA \xrightarrow{\hat{f}} B$ in \mathcal{D} and morphisms $A \xrightarrow{f} GB$ in \mathcal{C} which is **natural** in A and B , i.e. given $A' \xrightarrow{g} A$ and $B \xrightarrow{h} B'$, we have $h\hat{f}(Fg) = \widehat{(Gh)fg} : FA' \rightarrow B'$.

We say F is **left adjoint** to G and write $F \dashv G$.

3.2 Examples.

- (a) The **free functor** $\mathbf{Set} \xrightarrow{F} \mathbf{Gp}$ is **left adjoint** to the **forgetful functor** $\mathbf{Gp} \xrightarrow{U} \mathbf{Set}$, since any function $f : A \rightarrow UB$ extends uniquely to a homomorphism $\hat{f} : FA \rightarrow B$. Naturality in B is easy, naturality in A follows from the definition of F as a functor.
- (b) The **forgetful functor** $\mathbf{Top} \xrightarrow{U} \mathbf{Set}$ has a left adjoint D which equips any set with the discrete topology and a right adjoint I which equips a set A with the indiscrete topology $\{\emptyset, A\}$.
- (c) The functor $\mathbf{ob} : \mathbf{Cat} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ has a left adjoint D sending A to the **discrete** category with $\mathbf{ob}(DA) = A$ and only identity morphisms. It also has a right adjoint I sending A to the (**indiscrete**) category with $\mathbf{ob}(IA) = A$ and one morphism $x \rightarrow y$ for each $(x, y) \in A \times A$. In this case D in turn has a left adjoint π_0 sending a small category \mathcal{C} to its set of *connected components*, i.e. the quotient of $\mathbf{ob} \mathcal{C}$ by the smallest equivalent relation identifying $\mathbf{dom} f$ with $\mathbf{cod} f$ for all $f \in \mathbf{mor} \mathcal{C}$.
- (d) Let \mathcal{M} be the **monoid** $\{1, e\}$ with $e^2 = e$. An object of $[\mathcal{M}, \mathbf{Set}]$ is a pair (A, e) where $e : A \rightarrow A$ satisfies $e^2 = e$.

We have a functor $G : [\mathcal{M}, \mathbf{Set}] \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ sending (A, e) to

$$\{x \in A \mid e(x) = x\} = \{e(x) \mid x \in A\}$$

and a functor $F : \mathbf{Set} \rightarrow [\mathcal{M}, \mathbf{Set}]$ sending A to $(A, 1_A)$.

Claim $F \dashv G \dashv F$: given $f : (A, 1_A) \rightarrow (B, e)$: it must take values in $G(B, e)$, and any $g : (B, e) \rightarrow (A, 1_A)$ is determined by its values on the image of e .

- (e) Let $\mathbf{1}$ be the **discrete** category with one object $*$. For any \mathcal{C} , there's a unique functor $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{1}$: a **left adjoint** for this picks out an **initial object** of \mathcal{C} , i.e. an object I such that there exists a unique $I \rightarrow A$ for each $A \in \mathbf{ob} \mathcal{C}$. Dually, a right adjoint for $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathbf{1}$ corresponds to a **terminal object** of \mathcal{C} .
- (f) Let $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ be a morphism in \mathbf{Set} . We can regard $\mathcal{P}A$ and $\mathcal{P}B$ as posets, and we have functors

$$\mathcal{P}A \xrightleftharpoons[\mathcal{P}^*f]{\mathcal{P}f} \mathcal{P}B$$

Claim $(\mathcal{P}f \dashv \mathcal{P}^*f)$: we have $\mathcal{P}f(A') \subseteq B' \iff f(x) \in B'$ for all $x \in A' \iff A' \subseteq \mathcal{P}^*f(B')$.

- (g) Suppose given sets A, B and a relation $R \subseteq A \times B$. We define mappings $(-)^l, (-)^r$ between $\mathcal{P}A$ and $\mathcal{P}B$ by

$$\begin{aligned} S^r &= \{ y \in B \mid (\forall x \in S)((x, y) \in R) \} \quad \text{for } S \subseteq A \\ T^l &= \{ x \in A \mid (\forall y \in T)((x, y) \in R) \} \quad \text{for } T \subseteq B. \end{aligned}$$

These mappings are order-reversing (i.e. [contravariant functors](#)) and

$$T \subseteq S^r \iff S \times T \subseteq R \iff S \subseteq T^l.$$

We say $(-)^r$ and $(-)^l$ are **adjoint on the right**.

- (h) The functor $\mathcal{P}^* : \mathbf{Set}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ is self-[adjoint on the right](#), since functions $A \rightarrow \mathcal{P}B$ correspond bijectively to subsets of $A \times B$ and hence to functions $B \rightarrow \mathcal{P}A$.

Definition (Comma category). $(A \downarrow G)$ is the **comma category** with objects pairs (B, f) with $A \xrightarrow{f} GB$, and morphisms $(B, f) \rightarrow (B', f')$ are morphisms $B \xrightarrow{g} B'$ such that

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & A & \\ f \swarrow & & \searrow f' \\ GB & \xrightarrow{Gg} & GB' \end{array}$$

commutes.

3.3 Theorem. Let $G : \mathcal{D} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ be a [functor](#). Then specifying a [left adjoint](#) for G is equivalent to specifying an [initial object](#) of $(A \downarrow G)$ for each $A \in \text{ob } \mathcal{C}$.

Proof. Suppose we are given $F \dashv G$. Consider the morphism $\eta_A : A \rightarrow GFA$ corresponding to $FA \xrightarrow{1} FA$. Then (FA, η_A) is an object of $(A \downarrow G)$. Moreover, given $g : FA \rightarrow B$ and $f : A \rightarrow GB$, the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & A & \\ \eta_A \swarrow & & \searrow f \\ GFA & \xrightarrow{Gg} & GB \end{array}$$

commutes iff

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & FA & \\ 1_{FA} \swarrow & & \searrow \hat{f} \\ FA & \xrightarrow{g} & B \end{array}$$

commutes, i.e. $g = \hat{f}$. So (FA, η_A) is [initial](#) in $(A \downarrow G)$.

Conversely, suppose we are given an initial object (FA, η_A) for each $(A \downarrow G)$. Given $A \xrightarrow{f} A'$, we define $Ff : FA \rightarrow FA'$ to be the unique morphism making

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{\eta_A} & GFA \\ \downarrow f & & \downarrow GFf \\ A' & \xrightarrow{\eta_{A'}} & GFA' \end{array}$$

commute. Functoriality follows from uniqueness: given $f' : A' \rightarrow A''$, both $F(f'f)$ and $(Ff')(Ff)$ are morphisms $(FA, \eta_A) \rightarrow (FA'', \eta_{A''}f'f)$ in $(A \downarrow G)$.

To show $F \dashv G$: given $A \xrightarrow{f} GB$, we define $\hat{f} : FA \rightarrow B$ to be the unique morphism $(FA, \eta_A) \rightarrow (B, f)$ in $(A \downarrow G)$. This is a bijection with inverse

$$(FA \xrightarrow{f} B) \mapsto (A \xrightarrow{\eta_A} GFA \xrightarrow{Gg} GB)$$

The latter mapping is natural in B since G is a functor, and in A since, by construction, η is a natural transformation $1_{\mathcal{C}} \rightarrow GF$. \square

3.4 Corollary. If F and F' are both [left adjoint](#) to $G : \mathcal{D} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$, then they are [naturally isomorphic](#).

Proof. For any A , (FA, η_A) and $(F'A, \eta'_A)$ are both [initial](#) in $(A \downarrow G)$, so there's a unique [isomorphism](#) $\alpha_A : (FA, \eta_A) \rightarrow (F'A, \eta'_A)$. In any naturality square for α , the two ways round are both morphisms in $(A \downarrow G)$ where the domain is initial, so they are equal. \square

3.5 Lemma. Given

$$\mathcal{C} \begin{array}{c} \xrightarrow{F} \\ \xleftarrow{G} \end{array} \mathcal{D} \begin{array}{c} \xrightarrow{H} \\ \xleftarrow{K} \end{array} \mathcal{E}$$

with $(F \dashv G)$ and $(H \dashv K)$ we have $(HF \dashv GK)$.

Proof. We have bijections between morphisms $A \rightarrow GKC$, morphisms $FA \rightarrow KC$ and morphisms $HFA \rightarrow C$, which are both natural in A and C . \square

3.6 Corollary. Given a commutative square

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathcal{C} & \longrightarrow & \mathcal{D} \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ \mathcal{E} & \longrightarrow & \mathcal{F} \end{array}$$

of [categories](#) and [functors](#), if the functors all have left [adjoints](#), then the diagram of left adjoints commutes up to [natural isomorphism](#).

Proof. By [Lemma 3.5](#), both ways round the diagram of left adjoints are left adjoint to the composite $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{F}$, so by [Corollary 3.4](#) they are isomorphic. \square

Given an [adjunction](#) $(F \dashv G)$, the [natural transformation](#) $\eta : 1_{\mathcal{C}} \rightarrow GF$ emerging in the proof of [Theorem 3.3](#) is called the **unit** of the adjunction. Dually, we have a natural transformation $\epsilon : FG \rightarrow 1_{\mathcal{D}}$ such that $\epsilon_B : FGB \rightarrow B$ corresponds to $GB \xrightarrow{1_{GB}} GB$ is called the **counit**.

3.7 Theorem. Given functors $\mathcal{C} \begin{array}{c} \xrightarrow{F} \\ \xleftarrow{G} \end{array} \mathcal{D}$ specifying an [adjunction](#) $(F \dashv G)$ is equivalent to specifying natural transformations $\eta : 1_{\mathcal{C}} \rightarrow GF$, $\epsilon : FG \rightarrow 1_{\mathcal{D}}$ satisfying the commutative diagrams

$$\begin{array}{ccc} F & \xrightarrow{F\eta} & FGF \\ & \searrow 1_F & \downarrow \epsilon F \\ & & F \end{array} \quad \text{and} \quad \begin{array}{ccc} G & \xrightarrow{\eta G} & GFG \\ & \searrow 1_G & \downarrow G\epsilon \\ & & G \end{array}$$

called the **triangular identities**.

Proof. First suppose given $(F \dashv G)$. Define η and ϵ as in [Theorem 3.3](#) and its dual; now consider the composite

$$FA \xrightarrow{F\eta_A} FGFA \xrightarrow{\epsilon_{FA}} FA.$$

Under the adjunction this corresponds to

$$A \xrightarrow{\eta_A} GFA \xrightarrow{1_{GFA}} GFA$$

but this also corresponds to 1_{FA} , so $\epsilon_{FA} \cdot F\eta_A = 1_{FA}$. The other identity is [dual](#).

Conversely, suppose given η and ϵ satisfying the [triangular identities](#). Given $A \xrightarrow{f} GB$, let $\Phi(f)$ be the composite

$$FA \xrightarrow{Ff} FGB \xrightarrow{\epsilon_B} B,$$

and given $FA \xrightarrow{g} B$, let $\Psi(g)$ be

$$A \xrightarrow{\eta_A} GFA \xrightarrow{Gg} GB.$$

Then Φ and Ψ are both natural; we need to show that $\Phi\Psi$ and $\Psi\Phi$ are identity mappings. But

$$\begin{aligned} \Psi\Phi \left(A \xrightarrow{f} GB \right) &= A \xrightarrow{\eta_A} GFA \xrightarrow{GFf} GFGB \xrightarrow{G\epsilon_B} GB \\ &= A \xrightarrow{f} GB \xrightarrow{\eta_{GB}} GFGB \xrightarrow{G\epsilon_B} GB \\ &= f \end{aligned}$$

and dually $\Phi\Psi(g) = g$. □

3.8 Lemma. Suppose given

$$\mathcal{C} \xrightleftharpoons[G]{F} \mathcal{D}$$

and [natural isomorphisms](#) $\alpha : 1_{\mathcal{C}} \rightarrow GF$, $\beta : FG \rightarrow 1_{\mathcal{D}}$. Then there are isomorphisms $\alpha' : 1_{\mathcal{C}} \rightarrow GF$, $\beta' : FG \rightarrow 1_{\mathcal{D}}$ which satisfy the [triangular identities](#), so $(F \dashv G)$ (and $(G \dashv F)$).

Proof. We define $\alpha' = \alpha$ and β' to be the composite

$$FG \xrightarrow{(FG\beta)^{-1}} FGFG \xrightarrow{(F\alpha G)^{-1}} FG \xrightarrow{\beta} 1_{\mathcal{D}}.$$

Note that $FG\beta = \beta FG$ since

$$\begin{array}{ccc} FGFG & \xrightarrow{FG\beta} & FG \\ \downarrow \beta FG & & \downarrow \beta \\ FG & \xrightarrow{\beta} & 1_{\mathcal{D}} \end{array}$$

commutes by naturality of β and β is monic. Now $(\beta'_F)(F\alpha')$ is the composite

$$\begin{aligned} & F \xrightarrow{F\alpha} FGF \xrightarrow{(\beta FGF)^{-1}} FGF GF \xrightarrow{(F\alpha GF)^{-1}} FGF \xrightarrow{\beta F} F \\ &= F \xrightarrow{(\beta F)^{-1}} FGF \xrightarrow{FGF\alpha} FGF GF \xrightarrow{(F\alpha GF)^{-1}} FGF \xrightarrow{\beta F} F \\ &= F \xrightarrow{(\beta F)^{-1}} FGF \xrightarrow{\beta F} F = 1_F \end{aligned}$$

since $GF\alpha = \alpha_{GF}$. Similarly $(G\beta')(G'\alpha')$ is

$$\begin{aligned} & G \xrightarrow{\alpha G} GFG \xrightarrow{(GFG\beta)^{-1}} GFG FG \xrightarrow{(GF\alpha G)^{-1}} GFG \xrightarrow{G\beta} G \\ &= G \xrightarrow{(G\beta)^{-1}} GFG \xrightarrow{\alpha GFG} GFG FG \xrightarrow{(GF\alpha G)^{-1}} GFG \xrightarrow{G\beta} G \\ &= G \xrightarrow{(G\beta)^{-1}} GFG \xrightarrow{G\beta} G = 1_G. \end{aligned} \quad \square$$

3.9 Lemma. Suppose $G : \mathcal{D} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ has a left adjoint F with counit $\epsilon : FG \rightarrow 1_{\mathcal{D}}$, then

- (i) G is faithful iff ϵ is pointwise epic.
- (ii) G is full and faithful iff ϵ is an isomorphism.

Proof.

- (i) Given $B \xrightarrow{g} B'$, Gg corresponds under the adjunction to the composite

$$FGB \xrightarrow{\epsilon_B} B \xrightarrow{g} B'.$$

Hence the mapping $g \mapsto Gg$ is injective on morphisms with domain B (and specified codomain) iff $g \mapsto g\epsilon_B$ is injective, i.e. iff ϵ_B is epic.

- (ii) Similarly, G is full and faithful iff $g \mapsto g\epsilon_B$ is bijective. If $\alpha : B \rightarrow FGB$ is such that $\alpha\epsilon_B = 1_{FGB}$, then $\epsilon_B\alpha\epsilon_B = \epsilon_B$, whence $\epsilon_B\alpha = 1_B$. So ϵ_B is an isomorphism for all B . \square

Lecture 9 **3.10 Definition** (Reflection). By a **reflection**, we mean an adjunction in which the right adjoint is full and faithful (equivalently, the counit is an isomorphism). We say a subcategory $\mathcal{C}' \subseteq \mathcal{C}$ is **reflective** if the inclusion $\mathcal{C}' \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ has a left adjoint.

3.11 Examples.

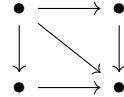
- (a) The category **AbGp** of abelian groups is reflective in **Gp**: the left adjoint sends a group G to its abelianization G/G' , where G' is the subgroup generated by all commutators $[x, y] = xyx^{-1}y^{-1}$, $x, y \in G$. (The unit of the adjunction is the quotient map $G \mapsto G/G'$.)
- (b) Given an abelian group A , let A_t denote the torsion subgroup, i.e. the subgroup of elements of finite order. The assignment $A \mapsto A/A_t$ gives a left adjoint to the inclusion **tfAbGp** \rightarrow **AbGp** where **tfAbGp** is the full subcategory of torsion-free abelian groups. And $A \mapsto A_t$ is right adjoint to the inclusion **tfAbGp** \rightarrow **AbGp** so this subcategory is coreflective.

- (c) Let $\mathbf{KHaus} \subseteq \mathbf{Top}$ be the full subcategory of compact Hausdorff spaces. The inclusion $\mathbf{KHaus} \rightarrow \mathbf{Top}$ has a left adjoint β , the Stone-Ćech compactification.
- (d) Let X be a topological space. We say $A \subseteq X$ is sequentially closed if $x_n \rightarrow x_\infty$ and $x_n \in A$ for all n implies $x_\infty \in A$. We say X is sequential if all sequentially closed sets are closed. Given a non-sequential space X , let X_s be the same set with topology given by the sequentially open sets in X ; the identity $X_s \rightarrow X$ is continuous, and defines the counit of an adjunction between the inclusion $\mathbf{Seq} \rightarrow \mathbf{Top}$ and the functor $X \mapsto X_s$.
- (e) If X is a topological space, the poset CX of closed subsets of X is reflective in PX , with reflector given by closure, and the poset OX of open subsets is coreflective, with coreflector given by interior.

4 Limits

4.1 Definition.

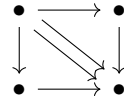
- (a) Let J be a **category** (almost always **small**, often finite). By a **diagram of shape J** in \mathcal{C} we mean a **functor** $D : J \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$. The objects $D(j)$, $j \in \text{ob } J$ are called **vertices** of the diagram, and the morphisms $D(\alpha)$, $\alpha \in \text{mor } J$ are called **edges** of D . For example, if J is the category



with 4 objects and 5 non-identity morphisms, a diagram of shape J is a commutative square

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{f} & B \\ \downarrow g & & \downarrow h \\ C & \xrightarrow{k} & D \end{array}$$

If J is

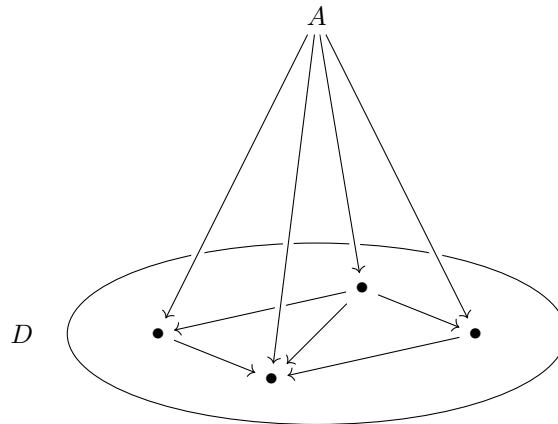


a diagram of shape J is a not-necessarily commutative square.

- (b) Given $D : J \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$, a **cone** over D consists of an object A of \mathcal{C} (the **apex** of the cone) together with morphisms $A \xrightarrow{\lambda_j} D(j)$ for each $j \in \text{ob } J$, such that

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & A & \\ \lambda_j \swarrow & & \searrow \lambda_{j'} \\ D(j) & \xrightarrow{D(\alpha)} & D(j') \end{array}$$

commutes for all $j \xrightarrow{\alpha} j'$ in $\text{mor } J$ (the λ_j are called the **legs** of the cone).



Given cones $(A, (\lambda_j)_{j \in \text{ob } J})$ and $(B, (\mu_j)_{j \in \text{ob } J})$, a morphism of cones between them is a morphism $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ such that

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{f} & B \\ \lambda_j \searrow & & \swarrow \mu_j \\ & D(j) & \end{array}$$

commutes for all j .

We write $\mathbf{Cone}(D)$ for the category of cones over D .

- (c) A **limit** for D is a **terminal object** of $\mathbf{Cone}(D)$, if this exists. Dually, we have the notion of **cone under a diagram**, and of **colimit** (**initial** cone under D).

Alternatively if \mathcal{C} is **locally small** and J is small, we have a **functor** $\mathcal{C}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ sending A to the set of **cones** with apex A . A **limit** for D is a **representation** of this functor.

If ΔA denotes the constant diagram of shape J with all vertices A and all edges 1_A , then a **cone** over D with **apex** A is the same thing as a **natural transformation** $\Delta A \rightarrow D$. Δ is a functor $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow [J, \mathcal{C}]$, and $\mathbf{Cone}(D)$ is the category $(\Delta \downarrow D)$ (a **comma category**, reversed). So to say that every **diagram of shape** J in \mathcal{C} has a **limit** is equivalent to saying that Δ has a **right adjoint**. (We say \mathcal{C} **has limits** of shape J). Dually, \mathcal{C} **has colimits** of shape J iff $\Delta : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow [J, \mathcal{C}]$ has a left adjoint.

4.2 Examples.

- (a) Suppose $J = \emptyset$. There's a unique **diagram of shape** J in \mathcal{C} ; a **cone** over it is just an object, and a morphism of cones is a morphism of \mathcal{C} . So a **limit** for this empty diagram is a **terminal object** of \mathcal{C} . (Dually, a **colimit** for it is an initial object).

Lecture 10

- (b) Let J be the category



A **diagram of shape** J is a pair of objects A, B ; a **cone** over it is a **span**

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & C & \\ \swarrow & & \searrow \\ A & & B \end{array}$$

and a **limit** for it is a **product**

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & A \times B & \\ \pi_1 \swarrow & & \searrow \pi_2 \\ A & & B \end{array}$$

Dually, a colimit for it is a **coproduct**

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & & B \\ \nu_1 \searrow & & \swarrow \nu_2 \\ & A + B & \end{array}$$

- (c) More generally, if J is a [small](#) discrete category, a diagram of shape J is a J -indexed family $\{A_j \mid j \in J\}$, and a limit for it is a product

$$\left\{ \prod_{j \in J} A_j \xrightarrow{\pi_j} A_j \mid j \in J \right\}.$$

Dually, a colimit for it is a coproduct

$$\left\{ A_j \xrightarrow{\nu_j} \sum_{j \in J} A_j \mid j \in J \right\},$$

also written $\coprod_{j \in J} A_j$.

- (d) Let J be the category

$$\bullet \rightrightarrows \bullet$$

A diagram of shape J is a parallel pair

$$A \begin{array}{c} \xrightarrow{f} \\ \xrightarrow{g} \end{array} B$$

a cone over this is

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & C & \\ h \swarrow & & \searrow k \\ A & & B \end{array}$$

satisfying $fh = k = gh$, or equivalently a morphism $C \xrightarrow{h} A$ satisfying $fh = gh$. A (co)limit for the diagram is a [\(co\)equalizer](#).

- (e) Let J be the category

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & \bullet & \\ & \downarrow & \\ \bullet & \longrightarrow & \bullet \end{array}$$

A diagram of shape J is a [cospan](#)

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & A & \\ & \downarrow f & \\ B & \xrightarrow{g} & C \end{array}$$

a cone over it is

$$\begin{array}{ccc} D & \xrightarrow{p} & A \\ \downarrow q & \searrow r & \\ B & & C \end{array}$$

satisfying $fp = r = gq$, or equivalently a span (p, q) completing the diagram to a commutative square. A limit for the diagram is called a **pullback** of (f, g) . In **Set**, the [apex](#) of the pullback is the ‘fibre product’

$$A \times_C B = \{ (x, y) \in A \times B \mid f(x) = g(y) \}$$

Dually, colimits of shape J^{op} are called **pushouts**, given

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{f} & B \\ \downarrow g & & \\ C & & \end{array}$$

we ‘push g along f ’ to get the right hand side of the colimit square.

(f) Let J be the poset of natural numbers. A diagram of shape J is a **direct system**

$$A_0 \xrightarrow{f_0} A_1 \xrightarrow{f_1} A_2 \xrightarrow{f_2} A_3 \xrightarrow{f_3} \dots$$

A colimit for this is called a **direct limit**: it consists of A_∞ equipped with morphisms $A_n \xrightarrow{g_n} A_\infty$ satisfying $g_n = g_{n+1}f_n$ for all n , and universal among such. Dually, we have **inverse system** and **inverse limit**.

4.3 Theorem.

- (i) Suppose \mathcal{C} has **equalizers** and all finite (resp. **small**) **products**. Then \mathcal{C} has all finite (resp. small) **limits**.
- (ii) Suppose \mathcal{C} has **pullbacks** and a **terminal object**. Then \mathcal{C} has all finite limits.

Proof.

- (i) Suppose given $D : J \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$. Form the **products**

$$P = \prod_{j \in \text{ob } J} D(j) \quad \text{and} \quad Q = \prod_{\alpha \in \text{mor } J} D(\text{cod } \alpha).$$

We have morphisms $P \xrightleftharpoons[g]{f} Q$ defined by $\pi_\alpha f = \pi_{\text{cod } \alpha}$, $\pi_\alpha g = D(\alpha)\pi_{\text{dom } \alpha}$ for all α .

Let $E \xrightarrow{e} P$ be an **equalizer** of (f, g) . The composites $\lambda_j = \pi_j e : E \rightarrow D(j)$ form a **cone** over D : given $\alpha : j \rightarrow j'$ in J ,

$$D(\alpha)\lambda_j = D(\alpha)\pi_j e = \pi_\alpha g e = \pi_\alpha f e = \pi_{j'} e = \lambda_{j'}.$$

Given any cone $(A, \{\mu_j \mid j \in \text{ob } J\})$ over D , there’s a unique $\mu : A \rightarrow P$ with $\pi_j \mu = \mu_j$ for each j , and

$$\pi_\alpha f \mu = \mu_{\text{cod } \alpha} = D(\alpha)\mu_{\text{dom } \alpha} = \pi_\alpha g \mu$$

for all α , and hence $f\mu = g\mu$, so $\exists! \nu : A \rightarrow E$ with $e\nu = \mu$. So $(E, \{\lambda_j \mid j \in \text{ob } J\})$ is a **limit cone**.

- (ii) It’s enough to construct finite products and equalizers. But if 1 is the **terminal object**, then a pullback for

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & A & \\ & \downarrow & \\ B & \longrightarrow & 1 \end{array}$$

has the universal property of a product $A \times B$, and we can form $\prod_{i=1}^n A_i$ inductively as $A_1 \times (A_2 \times (A_3 \times \cdots (A_{n-1} \times A_n) \cdots))$.

Now, to form the equalizer of $A \xrightleftharpoons[g]{f} B$, consider the **cospan**

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & A & \\ & \downarrow (1_A, f) & \\ A & \xrightarrow{(1_A, g)} & A \times B. \end{array}$$

A cone over this consists of

$$\begin{array}{ccc} P & \xrightarrow{h} & A \\ \downarrow k & & \\ A & & \end{array}$$

satisfying $(1_A, f)h = (1_A, g)k$ or equivalently, $1_A h = 1_A k$ and $fh = gk$, or equivalently a morphism $P \xrightarrow{h} A$ satisfying $fh = gh$. So a pullback for $(1_A, f)$ and $(1_A, g)$ is an equalizer of (f, g) . \square

Definition (Complete). We say a **category** \mathcal{C} is **complete** if it has all **small limits**. (Dually, **cocomplete** = all small colimits).

Set is **complete** and **cocomplete**: **products** are Cartesian products, **coproducts** are disjoint unions. Similarly, **Gp**, **AbGp**, **Rng**, **Mod_R**, ... are all complete and cocomplete. **Top** is also complete and cocomplete.

4.4 Definition. Let $F : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ be a **functor**.

- (a) We say F **preserves limits** of **shape** J if, given $D : J \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ and a **limit cone** $(L, \{\lambda_j \mid j \in \text{ob } J\})$ in \mathcal{C} , $(FL, \{F\lambda_j \mid j \in \text{ob } J\})$ is a limit for FD .
- (b) We say F **reflects limits** of **shape** J if, given $D : J \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ and a cone $(L, (\lambda_j)_j)$ such that $(FL, (F\lambda_j)_j)$ is a limit for FD , then $(L, (\lambda_j)_j)$ is a limit for D .
- (c) We say F **creates limits** of **shape** J if, given $D : J \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ and a limit $(M, (\mu_j)_j)$ for FD , there exists a cone $(L, (\lambda_j)_j)$ over D whose image under F is isomorphic to the limit cone, and any such that cone is a limit in \mathcal{C} .

Lecture 11 **4.5 Remark.**

- (a) If \mathcal{C} has **limits of shape** J , $F : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ **preserves** them and F and F reflects **isomorphisms**, then F **reflects** limits of **shape** J .
- (b) F reflects limits of **shape** **1** $\iff F$ reflects isomorphisms.
- (c) If \mathcal{D} has limits of **shape** J and $F : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ **creates them**, then F both preserves and reflects them.
- (d) In any of the statements of **Theorem 4.3**, we may replace both instances of ‘ \mathcal{C} has’ by either ‘ \mathcal{C} has and $F : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ preserves’ or ‘ \mathcal{D} has and $F : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ creates’.

4.6 Examples.

- (a) $U : \mathbf{Gp} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ (forgetful) creates all small limits: Given a family $\{G_i \mid i \in I\}$ of groups, there's a unique group structure on $\prod_{i \in I} UG_i$ making the projections π_i into homomorphisms and this makes it into a product in \mathbf{Gp} . Similarly for equalizers.
But U doesn't preserve coproducts: $U(G * H) \not\cong UG \sqcup UH$.
- (b) $U : \mathbf{Top} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$ (forgetful) preserves all small limits and colimits, but doesn't reflect them: if L is a limit for $D : J \rightarrow \mathbf{Top}$, and L is not discrete, there's another cone with apex L_d mapping to the limit in \mathbf{Set} .
- (c) The inclusion functor $I : \mathbf{AbGp} \rightarrow \mathbf{Gp}$ reflects coproducts but doesn't preserve them. The direct sum $A \oplus B$ (coproduct in \mathbf{AbGp}) is not normally isomorphic to the free product $A * B$; $A * B$ is not abelian unless either A or B is $\{e\}$, but if $A \cong \{e\}$ then $A * B \cong A \oplus B \cong B$.

4.7 Lemma. If \mathcal{D} has limits of shape J , then so does the functor category $[\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D}]$ for any \mathcal{C} , and the forgetful functor $[\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D}] \rightarrow \mathcal{D}^{\text{ob } \mathcal{C}}$ creates them.

Proof. Suppose we are given a diagram of shape J in $[\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D}]$; think of it as a functor $D : J \times \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$. For each $A \in \text{ob } \mathcal{C}$, let $(LA, \{\lambda_{j,A} \mid j \in \text{ob } J\})$ be a limit cone for the diagram $D(-, A) : J \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$. Given $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ in \mathcal{C} , the composites

$$A \xrightarrow{\lambda_{j,A}} D(j, A) \xrightarrow{D(j,f)} D(j, B)$$

form a cone over $D(-, B)$, since the squares

$$\begin{array}{ccc} D(j, A) & \xrightarrow{D(j,f)} & D(j, B) \\ \downarrow D(\alpha, A) & & \downarrow D(\alpha, B) \\ D(j', A) & \xrightarrow{D(j',f)} & D(j', B) \end{array}$$

commute. So there's a unique $Lf : LA \rightarrow LB$ making

$$\begin{array}{ccc} LA & \xrightarrow{\lambda_{j,A}} & D(j, A) \\ \downarrow Lf & & \downarrow D(j,f) \\ LB & \xrightarrow{\lambda_{j,B}} & D(j, B) \end{array}$$

commute for all j .

Uniqueness implies functoriality: given $g : B \rightarrow C$, $L(gf)$ and $(Lg)(Lf)$ are factorizations of the same cone through the limit LC . And this is the unique functor structure on $(A \mapsto LA)$ making the $\lambda_{j,-}$ into natural transformations.

The cone $(L, \{\lambda_{j,-} \mid j \in \text{ob } J\})$ is a limit: suppose given another cone $(M, \{\mu_{j,-} \mid j \in \text{ob } J\})$, then for each A , $(MA, \{\mu_{j,A} \mid j \in \text{ob } J\})$ is a cone over $D(-, A)$, so induces a unique $\alpha_A : MA \rightarrow LA$. Naturality of α follows from uniqueness of factorisations through a limit. So $(M, (\mu_j))$ factors uniquely through $(L, (\lambda_j))$. \square

4.8 Remark. In any **category**, a morphism $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ is **monic** iff

$$\begin{array}{ccc} A & \xrightarrow{1_A} & A \\ \downarrow 1_A & & \downarrow f \\ A & \xrightarrow{f} & B \end{array}$$

is a **pullback**. Hence any **functor** which preserves pullbacks preserves monomorphisms. In particular, if \mathcal{D} has pullbacks, then monomorphisms in $[\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{D}]$ are just pointwise monomorphisms.

4.9 Theorem. Suppose $G : \mathcal{D} \longrightarrow \mathcal{C}$ has a **left adjoint** F . Then G **preserves** all **limits** which exist in \mathcal{D} .

Proof 1. Suppose \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{D} both have **limits of shape** J . We have a commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathcal{C} & \xrightarrow{F} & \mathcal{D} \\ \downarrow \Delta & & \downarrow \Delta \\ [J, \mathcal{C}] & \xrightarrow{[J, F]} & [J, \mathcal{D}] \end{array}$$

and all the **functors** in it have **right adjoints** (in particular $[J, F] \dashv [J, G]$). So by **Corollary 3.6**, the diagram of right adjoints

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathcal{D} & \xrightarrow{G} & \mathcal{C} \\ \lim_J \uparrow & & \uparrow \lim_J \\ [J, \mathcal{D}] & \xrightarrow{[J, G]} & [J, \mathcal{C}] \end{array}$$

commutes up to **isomorphism**, i.e. G **preserves limits** of shape J . □

Proof 2. Suppose given $D : J \longrightarrow \mathcal{D}$ and a **limit cone** $(L, \{ L \xrightarrow{\lambda_j} D(j) \mid j \in \text{ob } J \})$. Given a cone $(A, \{ A \xrightarrow{\alpha_j} GD(j) \mid j \in \text{ob } J \})$ over GD the morphisms $FA \xrightarrow{\hat{\alpha}_j} D(j)$ form a cone over D , so they induce a unique $FA \xrightarrow{\hat{\beta}} L$ such that $\lambda_j \hat{\beta} = \hat{\alpha}_j$ for all j . Then $A \xrightarrow{\beta} GL$ is the unique morphism satisfying $(G\lambda_j)\beta = \alpha_j$ for all j . So $(GL, \{ G\lambda_j \mid j \in \text{ob } J \})$ is a limit cone in \mathcal{C} . □

The ‘primeval’ Adjoint Functor Theorem says that the converse of **Theorem 4.9** is true: if \mathcal{D} has and $G : \mathcal{D} \longrightarrow \mathcal{C}$ **preserves all limits**, then G has a **left adjoint**.

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