Pointed Sets

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This chapter contains some foundational material on pointed sets.

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1 Pointed Sets

1.1 Foundations

Definition 1.1.1.1. A **pointed set**[1] is equivalently

- An $\mathbb{E}_0$-monoid in $(\mathrm{N}_\bullet(\mathsf{Sets}), \mathrm{pt})$;
- A pointed object in $(\mathsf{Sets}, \mathrm{pt})$.

Remark 1.1.1.2. In detail, a **pointed set** is a pair (X, x_0) consisting of

- *The Underlying Set.* A set X, called the **underlying set of** (X, x_0);
- *The Basepoint.* A morphism

$$[x_0] \colon \mathrm{pt} \to X$$

  in Sets, determining an element $x_0 \in X$, called the **basepoint of** X.

Example 1.1.1.3. The 0**-sphere**[2] is the pointed set $(S^0, 0)$[3] consisting of

- *The Underlying Set.* The set S^0 defined by

$$S^0 \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \{0, 1\};$$

- *The Basepoint.* The element 0 of S^0.

Example 1.1.1.4. The **trivial pointed set** is the pointed set $(\mathrm{pt}, \star)$ consisting of

- *The Underlying Set.* The punctual set $\mathrm{pt} \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \{\star\}$;
- *The Basepoint.* The element $\star$ of pt.

Example 1.1.1.5. The **underlying pointed set** of a semimodule (M, α_M) is the pointed set $(M, 0_M)$.

Example 1.1.1.6. The **underlying pointed set** of a module (M, α_M) is the pointed set $(M, 0_M)$.

[1] *Further Terminology:* Also called an $\mathbb{F}_1$**-module**.
[2] *Further Terminology:* Also called the **underlying pointed set of the field with one element**.
[3] *Further Notation:* Also denoted $(\mathbb{F}_1, 0)$.

1.2 Morphisms of Pointed Sets

Definition 1.2.1.1. A **morphism of pointed sets**[4] is equivalently

- A morphism of $\mathbb{E}_0$-monoids in $(\mathsf{N}_\bullet(\mathsf{Sets}), \mathrm{pt})$.
- A morphism of pointed objects in $(\mathsf{Sets}, \mathrm{pt})$.

Remark 1.2.1.2. In detail, a **morphism of pointed sets** $f\colon (X, x_0) \to (Y, y_0)$ is a morphism of sets $f\colon X \to Y$ such that the diagram

$$\begin{tikzcd} & \mathrm{pt} \arrow[dl, "{[x_0]}"'] \arrow[dr, "{[y_0]}"] & \\ X \arrow[rr, "f"'] & & Y \end{tikzcd}$$

commutes, i.e. such that

$$f(x_0) = y_0.$$

1.3 The Category of Pointed Sets

Definition 1.3.1.1. The **category of pointed sets** is the category Sets_* defined equivalently as

- The homotopy category of the ∞-category $\mathsf{Mon}_{\mathbb{E}_0}(\mathsf{N}_\bullet(\mathsf{Sets}), \mathrm{pt})$ of Monoids in Monoidal ∞-Categories, **??**;
- The category Sets_* of Categories, **??**.

Remark 1.3.1.2. In detail, the **category of pointed sets** is the category Sets_* where

- *Objects.* The objects of Sets_* are pointed sets;
- *Morphisms.* The morphisms of Sets_* are morphisms of pointed sets;
- *Identities.* For each $(X, x_0) \in \mathrm{Obj}(\mathsf{Sets}_*)$, the unit map

  $$\mathbb{1}^{\mathsf{Sets}_*}_{(X,x_0)}\colon \mathrm{pt} \to \mathsf{Sets}_*((X, x_0), (X, x_0))$$

  of Sets_* at (X, x_0) is defined by[5]

  $$\mathrm{id}^{\mathsf{Sets}_*}_{(X,x_0)} \overset{\text{def}}{=} \mathrm{id}_X;$$

[4] *Further Terminology:* Also called a **pointed function** or a **morphism of $\mathbb{F}_1$-modules**.
[5] Note that id_X is indeed a morphism of pointed sets, as we have $\mathrm{id}_X(x_0) = x_0$.

- *Composition*. For each $(X, x_0), (Y, y_0), (Z, z_0) \in \mathrm{Obj}(\mathsf{Sets}_*)$, the composition map

$$\circ^{\mathsf{Sets}_*}_{(X,x_0),(Y,y_0),(Z,z_0)} \colon \mathsf{Sets}_*((Y, y_0), (Z, z_0)) \times \mathsf{Sets}_*((X, x_0), (Y, y_0)) \to \mathsf{Sets}_*((X, x_0), (Z, z_0))$$

of Sets_* at $((X, x_0), (Y, y_0), (Z, z_0))$ is defined by[6]

$$g \circ^{\mathsf{Sets}_*}_{(X,x_0),(Y,y_0),(Z,z_0)} f \overset{\text{def}}{=} g \circ f.$$

1.4 Elementary Properties of Pointed Sets

Proposition 1.4.1.1. Let (X, x_0) be a pointed set.

1. *Completeness.* The category Sets_* of pointed sets and morphisms between them is complete, having in particular products (Definition 2.1.1.1), pullbacks (Definition 2.3.1.1), and equalisers (Definition 2.2.1.1).

2. *Cocompleteness.* The category Sets_* of pointed sets and morphisms between them is cocomplete, having in particular coproducts (Definition 3.1.1.1), pushouts (Definition 3.2.1.1), and coequalisers (Definition 3.3.1.1).

3. *Failure To Be Cartesian Closed*. The category Sets_* is not Cartesian closed.

4. *Relation to Partial Functions.* We have an equivalence of categories[7]

$$\mathsf{Sets}_* \overset{\text{eq.}}{\cong} \mathsf{Sets}^{\text{part.}}$$

between the category of pointed sets and pointed functions between them and the category of sets and partial functions between them.

[6] Note that the composition of two morphisms of pointed sets is indeed a morphism of pointed sets, as we have

$$\begin{aligned} g(f(x_0)) &= g(y_0) \\ &= z_0, \end{aligned}$$

or

$$\begin{tikzcd} & \mathrm{pt} \arrow[dl, "{[x_0]}"'] \arrow[d, "{[y_0]}"] \arrow[dr, "{[z_0]}"] & \\ X \arrow[r, "f"'] & Y \arrow[r, "g"'] & Z \end{tikzcd}$$

in terms of diagrams.

[7] *Warning:* This is not an isomorphism of categories, only an equivalence.

Proof. *Item 1*, *Completeness*: Omitted.
Item 2, *Cocompleteness*: Omitted.
Item 3, *Failure To Be Cartesian Closed*: See [**MSE2855868**].
Item 4, *Relation to Partial Functions*: Omitted. □

2 Limits of Pointed Sets

2.1 Products

Let (X, x_0) and (Y, y_0) be pointed sets.

Definition 2.1.1.1. The **product of** (X, x_0) **and** (Y, y_0) is the pointed set $(X \times Y, (x_0, y_0))$.

2.2 Equalisers

Let $f, g\colon (X, x_0) \rightrightarrows (Y, y_0)$ be morphisms of pointed sets.

Definition 2.2.1.1. The **equaliser of** (f, g) is the pointed set $(\mathrm{Eq}_*(f, g), x_0)$ consisting of

- *The Underlying Set.* The set $\mathrm{Eq}_*(f, g)$ defined by

$$\mathrm{Eq}_*(f, g) \overset{\text{def}}{=} \{x \in X \mid f(x) = y_0 = g(x)\};$$

- *The Basepoint.* The element x_0 of $\mathrm{Eq}_*(f, g)$.

2.3 Pullbacks

Let (X, x_0), (Y, y_0), and (Z, z_0) be pointed sets and let $f\colon (X, x_0) \to (Z, z_0)$ and $g\colon (Y, y_0) \to (Z, z_0)$ be morphisms of pointed sets.

Definition 2.3.1.1. The **pullback of** (X, x_0) **and** (Y, y_0) **over** (Z, z_0) **along** (f, g) is the pointed set $\big((X, x_0) \times_{(z, z_0)} (Y, y_0), p_0\big)$ consisting of

- *The Underlying Set.* The set $(X, x_0) \times_{(z, z_0)} (Y, y_0)$ defined by

$$(X, x_0) \times_{(z, z_0)} (Y, y_0) \overset{\text{def}}{=} \{(x, y) \in X \times Y \mid f(x) = z_0 = g(y)\};$$

- *The Basepoint.* The element (x_0, y_0) of $(X, x_0) \times_{(z, z_0)} (Y, y_0)$.

3 Colimits of Pointed Sets

3.1 Coproducts

Let (X, x_0) and (Y, y_0) be pointed sets.

Definition 3.1.1.1. The **coproduct of** (X, x_0) **and** (Y, y_0) is their wedge sum $(X \vee Y, p_0)$ of Definition 4.3.1.1.

3.2 Pushouts

Let (X, x_0), (Y, y_0), and (Z, z_0) be pointed sets and let $f\colon (Z, z_0) \to (X, x_0)$ and $g\colon (Z, z_0) \to (Y, y_0)$ be morphisms of pointed sets.

Definition 3.2.1.1. The **pushout of** (X, x_0) **and** (Y, y_0) **over** (Z, z_0) **along** (f, g) is the pointed set $\left(X \coprod_{f,Z,g} Y, p_0\right)$, where $p_0 = [x_0] = [y_0]$.

3.3 Coequalisers

Let $f, g\colon (X, x_0) \rightrightarrows (Y, y_0)$ be morphisms of pointed sets.

Definition 3.3.1.1. The **coequaliser of** (f, g) is the pointed set $(\mathrm{CoEq}(f, g), x_0)$.

4 Constructions With Pointed Sets

4.1 Internal Homs

Let (X, x_0) and (Y, y_0) be pointed sets.

Definition 4.1.1.1. The **pointed set of morphisms of pointed sets from** (X, x_0) **to** (Y, y_0) is the pointed set $\mathsf{Sets}_*(X, Y)$ consisting of

- *The Underlying Set.* The set $\mathsf{Sets}_*((X, x_0), (Y, y_0))$ of morphisms of pointed sets from (X, x_0) to (Y, y_0);
- *The Basepoint.* The element

$$\Delta_{y_0}\colon (X, x_0) \to (Y, y_0)$$

  of $\mathsf{Sets}_*((X, x_0), (Y, y_0))$.

4.2 Free Pointed Sets

Let X be a set.

Definition 4.2.1.1. The **free pointed set on** X is the pointed set X^+ consisting of

- *The Underlying Set.* The set X^+ defined by

$$X^+ \overset{\text{def}}{=} X \coprod \text{pt};$$

- *The Basepoint.* The element $\star$ of X^+.

Proposition 4.2.1.2. Let X be a set.

1. *Functoriality.* The assignment $X \mapsto X^+$ defines a functor

$$(-)^+ \colon \mathsf{Sets} \longrightarrow \mathsf{Sets}_*,$$

   where

   - *Action on Objects.* For each $X \in \text{Obj}(\mathsf{Sets})$, we have

   $$[(-)^+](X) \overset{\text{def}}{=} X_+,$$

     where X_+ is the pointed set of Definition 4.2.1.1;

   - *Action on Morphisms.* For each morphism $f \colon X \longrightarrow Y$ of Sets, the image

   $$f_+ \colon X_+ \longrightarrow Y_+$$

     of f by $(-)^+$ is the map of pointed sets defined by

   $$f^+(x) \overset{\text{def}}{=} \begin{cases} f(x) & \text{if } x \in X, \\ \star & \text{if } x = \star. \end{cases}$$

2. *Adjointness.* We have an adjunction

$$\left((-)^+ \dashv 忘\right) \colon \quad \begin{tikzcd} \mathsf{Sets} \arrow[r, bend left, "(-)^+"] \arrow[r, phantom, "\perp"] & \mathsf{Sets}_*, \arrow[l, bend left, "忘"] \end{tikzcd}$$

   witnessed by a bijection of sets

$$\mathsf{Sets}_*((X_+, \star), (Y, y_0)) \cong \mathsf{Sets}(X, Y),$$

   natural in $X \in \text{Obj}(\mathsf{Sets})$ and $(Y, y_0) \in \text{Obj}(\mathsf{Sets}_*)$.

3. *Symmetric Strong Monoidality With Respect to Wedge Sums.* The free pointed set functor of Item 1 has a symmetric strong monoidal structure
$$\left((-)^{+}, (-)^{+,\coprod}, (-)^{+,\coprod}_{\mathbb{1}}\right) \colon (\mathsf{Sets}, \coprod, \emptyset) \to (\mathsf{Sets}_*, \vee, \mathrm{pt}),$$
being equipped with isomorphisms of pointed sets
$$\begin{aligned}(-)^{+,\coprod}_{X,Y} \colon X^+ \vee Y^+ &\xrightarrow{\cong} (X \coprod Y)^+,\\ (-)^{+,\coprod}_{\mathbb{1}} \colon \mathrm{pt} &\xrightarrow{\cong} \emptyset^+,\end{aligned}$$
natural in $X, Y \in \mathrm{Obj}(\mathsf{Sets})$.
4. *Symmetric Strong Monoidality With Respect to Smash Products.* The free pointed set functor of Item 1 has a symmetric strong monoidal structure
$$\left((-)^{+}, (-)^{+,\times}, (-)^{+,\times}_{\mathbb{1}}\right) \colon (\mathsf{Sets}, \times, \mathrm{pt}) \to \left(\mathsf{Sets}_*, \wedge, S^0\right),$$
being equipped with isomorphisms of pointed sets
$$\begin{aligned}(-)^{+,\times}_{X,Y} \colon X^+ \wedge Y^+ &\xrightarrow{\cong} (X \times Y)^+,\\ (-)^{+,\times}_{\mathbb{1}} \colon S^0 &\xrightarrow{\cong} \mathrm{pt}^+,\end{aligned}$$
natural in $X, Y \in \mathrm{Obj}(\mathsf{Sets})$.

Proof. *Item 1, Functoriality*: Clear.
Item 2, Adjointness: Clear.
Item 3, Symmetric Strong Monoidality With Respect to Wedge Sums: Omitted.
Item 4, Symmetric Strong Monoidality With Respect to Smash Products: Omitted. □

4.3 Wedge Sums of Pointed Sets

Let (X, x_0) and (Y, y_0) be pointed sets.

Definition 4.3.1.1. The **wedge sum of X and Y** is the pointed set $(X \vee Y, p_0)$ consisting of

- *The Underlying Set.* The set $X \vee Y$ defined by[8]

$$\begin{aligned}(X \vee Y, p_0) &\overset{\text{def}}{=} (X, x_0) \coprod (Y, y_0)\\ &\cong (X \textstyle\coprod_{\mathrm{pt}} Y, p_0)\\ &\cong (X \textstyle\coprod Y/{\sim}, p_0),\end{aligned}$$
$$\begin{tikzcd} X \vee Y \arrow[dr, phantom, very near start, "\ulcorner"] & Y \arrow[l] \\ X \arrow[u] & \mathrm{pt}, \arrow[l, hook', "{[x_0]}"] \arrow[u, hook, "{[y_0]}"'] \end{tikzcd}$$

[8] Here $(X, x_0) \coprod (Y, y_0)$ is the coproduct of (X, x_0) and (Y, y_0) in Sets_*.

where $\sim$ is the equivalence relation on $X \coprod Y$ given by $x_0 \sim y_0$;

- *The Basepoint.* The element p_0 of $X \vee Y$ defined by

$$\begin{aligned} p_0 &\overset{\text{def}}{=} [x_0] \\ &= [y_0]. \end{aligned}$$

Proposition 4.3.1.2. Let (X, x_0) and (Y, y_0) be pointed sets.

1. *Functoriality.* The assignments $(X, x_0), (Y, y_0), ((X, x_0), (Y, y_0)) \mapsto (X \vee Y, p_0)$ define functors

$$\begin{aligned} X \vee - \colon \mathsf{Sets}_* &\longrightarrow \mathsf{Sets}_*, \\ - \vee Y \colon \mathsf{Sets}_* &\longrightarrow \mathsf{Sets}_*, \\ -_1 \vee -_2 \colon \mathsf{Sets}_* \times \mathsf{Sets}_* &\longrightarrow \mathsf{Sets}_*. \end{aligned}$$

2. *Associativity.* We have an isomorphism of pointed sets

$$(X \vee Y) \vee Z \cong X \vee (Y \vee Z),$$

natural in $(X, x_0), (Y, y_0), (Z, z_0) \in \mathsf{Sets}_*$.

3. *Unitality.* We have isomorphisms of pointed sets

$$\begin{aligned} \mathrm{pt} \vee X &\cong X, \\ X \vee \mathrm{pt} &\cong X, \end{aligned}$$

natural in $(X, x_0) \in \mathsf{Sets}_*$.

4. *Commutativity.* We have an isomorphism of pointed sets

$$X \vee Y \cong Y \vee X,$$

natural in $(X, x_0), (Y, y_0) \in \mathsf{Sets}_*$.

5. *Symmetric Monoidality.* The triple $(\mathsf{Sets}_*, \vee, \mathrm{pt})$ is a symmetric monoidal category.

6. *Symmetric Strong Monoidality With Respect to Free Pointed Sets.* The free pointed set functor of Item 1 of Proposition 4.2.1.2 has a symmetric strong monoidal structure

$$\left((-)^+, (-)^{+,\coprod}, (-)^{+,\coprod}_{\mathbb{1}}\right) \colon (\mathsf{Sets}, \coprod, \emptyset) \longrightarrow (\mathsf{Sets}_*, \vee, \mathrm{pt}),$$

being equipped with isomorphisms of pointed sets

$$(-)^{+,\coprod}_{X,Y} \colon X^+ \vee Y^+ \xrightarrow{\cong} (X \coprod Y)^+,$$
$$(-)^{+,\coprod}_{\mathbb{1}} \colon \mathrm{pt} \xrightarrow{\cong} \emptyset^+,$$

natural in $X, Y \in \mathrm{Obj}(\mathsf{Sets})$.

7. *The Fold Map.* We have a natural transformation

$$\nabla \colon \vee \circ \Delta^{\mathsf{Cats}}_{\mathsf{Sets}_*} \Longrightarrow \mathrm{id}_{\mathsf{Sets}_*}, \qquad \begin{tikzcd} & \mathsf{Sets}_* \times \mathsf{Sets}_* \arrow[dr, "\vee"] \arrow[d, phantom, "\Downarrow\nabla"] & \\ \mathsf{Sets}_* \arrow[ur, "\Delta^{\mathsf{Cats}}_{\mathsf{Sets}_*}"] \arrow[rr, bend right, "\mathrm{id}_{\mathsf{Sets}_*}"'] & & \mathsf{Sets}_*, \end{tikzcd}$$

called the **fold map**, whose component

$$\nabla_X \colon X \vee X \to X$$

at X is given by the composition

$$\begin{aligned} X &\xrightarrow{\Delta_X} X \times X \\ &\twoheadrightarrow X \times X/\sim \\ &\overset{\text{def}}{=\!=} X \vee X. \end{aligned}$$

Proof. *Item 1, Functoriality*: Omitted.
Item 2, Associativity: Omitted.
Item 3, Unitality: Omitted.
Item 4, Commutativity: Omitted.
Item 5, Symmetric Monoidality: Omitted.
Item 6, Symmetric Strong Monoidality With Respect to Free Pointed Sets: Omitted.
Item 7, The Fold Map: Omitted. □

Appendices

A Other Chapters

Set Theory

1. Sets
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4. Tensor Products of Pointed Sets
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Category Theory

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12. Bicategories
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