In this lecture, we introduce t-structures on stable ∞-categories.

#### 1. Definitions

1.1. Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category. A t-structure on C is just a t-structure on the triangulated category hC.

**Definition 1.2.** Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category. A **t-structure** on C is defined to be a pair of full sub- $\infty$ -categories ( $C^{\leq 0}$ ,  $C^{\geq 0}$ ) of C such that when we write

$$\mathsf{C}^{\leq n} \coloneqq \mathsf{C}^{\leq 0} [-n], \; \mathsf{C}^{\geq n} \coloneqq \mathsf{C}^{\geq 0} [-n]$$

we have:

- (0) Both  $\mathsf{C}^{\leq 0}$  and  $\mathsf{C}^{\geq 0}$  are stable under isomorphisms in  $\mathsf{C}.$
- (1) For  $X \in C^{\leq 0}$  and  $Y \in C^{\geq 1}$ , we have  $\mathsf{Maps}_{\mathsf{C}}(X,Y) \simeq \{0\}$ .
- (2) We have inclusions  $C^{\leq -1} \subseteq C^{\leq 0}$  and  $C^{\geq 1} \subseteq C^{\geq 0}$ .
- (3) For any  $X \in C$ , there exists a fiber-cofiber sequence  $X' \to X \to X''$  such that  $X' \in C^{\leq 0}$  and  $X'' \in C^{\geq 1}$ .

Warning 1.3. We use the cohomological convention. To compare with notations in the homological convention, let

$$\mathsf{C}_{\leq n} \coloneqq \mathsf{C}^{\geq -n}, \; \mathsf{C}_{\geq n} \coloneqq \mathsf{C}^{\leq -n}$$

Exercise 1.4. The assignment

$$(\mathsf{C}^{\leq 0}, \mathsf{C}^{\geq 0}) \mapsto (\mathsf{h} \mathsf{C}^{\leq 0}, \mathsf{h} \mathsf{C}^{\geq 0})$$

gives a bijection between t-structures on  $\mathsf{C}$  with t-structures on the triangulated category  $\mathsf{h}\mathsf{C}$ .

Exercise 1.5. The assignment

$$(C^{\leq 0}, C^{\geq 0}) \mapsto ((C^{\geq 0})^{op}, (C^{\leq 0})^{op})$$

gives a bijection between t-structures on C with t-structures on  $C^{op}$ .

**Exercise 1.6.** Show that for m < n,  $C^{\leq m} \cap C^{\geq n} \simeq \{0\}$ .

**Lemma 1.7.** Let  $n \ge 0$ . For any  $X \in C^{\le 0}$  and  $Y \in C^{\ge -n}$ , the mapping space  $\mathsf{Maps}_{\mathsf{C}}(X,Y)$  is a homotopy n-type.

Sketch. First note that the connected components of  $\mathsf{Maps}_\mathsf{C}(X,Y)$  are weakly homotopy equivalent to each other because it is the loop space of  $\mathsf{Maps}_\mathsf{C}(X,\Sigma Y)$ . Hence we only need to show  $\pi_m\mathsf{Maps}_\mathsf{C}(X,Y) \simeq 0$  for m > n and the base point  $0 \in \mathsf{Maps}_\mathsf{C}(X,Y)$ . This follows from observation that  $\Omega^{n+1}\mathsf{Maps}_\mathsf{C}(X,Y) \simeq \mathsf{Maps}_\mathsf{C}(X,\Omega^{n+1}Y)$  is weakly contractible because  $\Omega^{n+1}Y \in \mathsf{C}^{\geq 1}$ .

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**Definition 1.8.** Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure. The **heart** of this t-structure is defined to be

$$\mathsf{C}^{\heartsuit} := \mathsf{C}^{\leq 0} \cap \mathsf{C}^{\geq 0}.$$

**Theorem 1.9.** The  $\infty$ -category  $\mathsf{C}^{\triangledown}$  is an ordinary abelian category. Moreover,  $0 \to X'' \to X \to X' \to 0$  is a short exact sequence in  $\mathsf{C}^{\triangledown}$  iff  $X'' \to X \to X'$  is a fiber-cofiber sequence of  $\mathsf{C}$  contained in  $\mathsf{C}^{\triangledown}$ .

Sketch. By Lemma 1.7,  $C^{\circ}$  is an ordinary category. It follows it can be identified with  $hC^{\leq 0} \cap hC^{\geq 0}$ , which is the heart of the triangulated category hC. Now the claims follow from the corresponding well-known claims for triangulated categories.

**Warning 1.10.** A t-structure is not determined by its heart. Most information in a stable  $\infty$ -category cannot be recovered from the heart. For instance, for  $X, Y \in C^{\circ}$ , the groups  $\operatorname{Ext}^{\bullet}_{C}(X,Y)$  and  $\operatorname{Ext}^{\bullet}_{C^{\circ}}(X,Y)$  are not isomorphic in general.

**Definition 1.11.** Let C and D be stable  $\infty$ -categories equipped with t-structures. For an exact functor  $F: C \to D$ , we say

- the functor F is **left t-exact** if it sends  $C^{\geq 0}$  into  $D^{\geq 0}$
- the functor F is **right t-exact** if it sends  $C^{\leq 0}$  into  $D^{\leq 0}$
- the functor F is **t-exact** if it is both left t-exact and right t-exact.

Exercise 1.12. Show that the left adjoint of a left t-exact functor is right t-exact.

**Exercise 1.13.** Construct an exact functor  $F : C \to D$  that preserves the hearts but is not t-exact.

#### 2. Cohomologies

**Proposition-Definition 2.1.** Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure. For any n, the inclusion functor  $C^{\leq n} \to C$  admits a right adjoint  $\tau^{\leq n}$ , and the inclusion functor  $C^{\geq n} \to C$  admits a left adjoint  $\tau^{\geq n}$ . These functors are called the **truncation functors** for the t-structure.

Remark 2.2. One can memorize the above handedness as  $C^{\leq 0} \longleftrightarrow C \longleftrightarrow C^{\geq 1}$ .

**Exercise 2.3.** Prove the above proposition by verifying the following claim. Let  $X \in C$  and  $X' \to X \to X''$  be any fiber-cofiber sequence with  $X' \in C^{\leq 0}$  and  $X'' \in C^{\geq 1}$ , then

(1) For any  $Y \in C^{\leq 0}$ , the morphism  $X' \to X$  induces equivalences

$$\mathsf{Maps}_\mathsf{C}(Y,X') \xrightarrow{\simeq} \mathsf{Maps}_\mathsf{C}(Y,X).$$

(2) For any  $Z \in \mathbb{C}^{\geq 1}$ , the morphism  $X \to X''$  induces equivalences

$$\mathsf{Maps}_{\mathsf{C}}(X,Z) \xrightarrow{\simeq} \mathsf{Maps}_{\mathsf{C}}(X'',Z).$$

Deduce that  $X' \simeq \tau^{\leq 0} X$  and  $X'' \simeq \tau^{\geq 1} X$ .

Exercise 2.4. We have Cartesian squares

In particular,  $C^{\leq 0}$  and  $C^{\geq 0}$  determine each other.

**Exercise 2.5.** The full sub- $\infty$ -category  $C^{\leq 0} \subseteq C$  is stable under colimits, while  $C^{\leq 0} \subseteq C$  is stable under limits.

**Exercise 2.6.** A limit in  $C^{\leq 0}$  is isomorphic to the  $\tau^{\leq 0}$ -truncation of the corresponding limit in C. Dually, a colimit in  $C^{\geq 0}$  is isomorphic to the  $\tau^{\geq 0}$ -truncation of the corresponding colimit in C.

2.7. The following exercises say that for a fiber-cofiber sequence  $X' \to X \to X''$ , amplitude estimations of two terms give an estimation for the third one.

**Exercise 2.8.** Let  $X' \to X \to X''$  be a fiber-cofiber sequence.

- (1) If  $X', X'' \in C^{\leq 0}$ , then  $X \in C^{\leq 0}$ .
- (2) If  $X \in C^{\leq 0}$  and  $X'' \in C^{\leq -1}$ , then  $X' \in C^{\leq 0}$ . (3) If  $X \in C^{\leq 0}$  and  $X' \in C^{\leq 1}$ , then  $X'' \in C^{\leq 0}$ .

In particular, the full sub- $\infty$ -categories  $C^{\leq 0} \subseteq C \supseteq C^{\geq 0}$  are stable under extensions.

Exercise 2.9. Give examples to show the above estimations are optimal.

**Exercise 2.10.** The truncation functors  $\tau_{\leq \bullet}$  and  $\tau_{\geq \bullet}$  commute with each other.

**Remark 2.11.** The precise meaning of the above exercise consists of the following. For m and n, we have

- $\tau_{\geq m} \circ \tau_{\geq n} \simeq \tau_{\geq \max\{m,n\}}, \ \tau_{\leq m} \circ \tau_{\leq n} \simeq \tau_{\leq \max\{m,n\}}.$
- The commutative square

$$\begin{array}{cccc}
C^{\leq m} \cap C^{\geq n} & \xrightarrow{\subseteq} & C^{\leq m} \\
\downarrow^{\subseteq} & & \downarrow^{\subseteq} \\
C^{\geq n} & \xrightarrow{\subseteq} & C
\end{array}$$

is left adjointable along the horizontal direction, and the induced commutative square

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
C^{\leq m} \cap C^{\geq n} & \xrightarrow{\tau^{\geq n}} C^{\leq m} \\
\downarrow^{\subseteq} & \downarrow^{\subseteq} \\
\downarrow^{C^{\geq n}} & \xrightarrow{\tau^{\geq n}} C^{\leq m}
\end{array}$$

is right adjointable along the vertical direction, i.e., induces a commutative square

$$\begin{array}{c|c} \mathsf{C}^{\leq m} \cap \mathsf{C}^{\geq n} & \xrightarrow{\tau^{\geq n}} \mathsf{C}^{\leq m} \\ \hline \tau^{\leq m} & & \tau^{\leq m} \\ \mathsf{C}^{\geq n} & \longleftarrow \mathsf{C} \end{array}$$

**Definition 2.12.** Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure. Consider the functor

$$\mathsf{H}^n:\mathsf{C}\xrightarrow{\tau^{\leq n}\circ\tau^{\geq n}}\mathsf{C}^{\leq n}\cap\mathsf{C}^{\geq n}\xrightarrow{[-n]}\mathsf{C}^{\lozenge}.$$

For  $X \in C$ , we call  $H^n(X) \in C^{\circ}$  the n-th cohomology of X.

**Warning 2.13.** It may happen that  $H^n(X) \simeq 0$  while X is not isomorphic to 0. For instance,  $C^{\leq 0} := C$  and  $C^{\geq 0} := \{0\}$  give a t-structure with  $C^{\circ} \simeq \{0\}$ . There are lots of interesting examples in

- non-regular algebraic geometry
- infinite type algebraic geometry
- infinite dimensional representation theory
- ..
- 2.14. The following result follows from the corresponding well-known result for triangulated categories.

**Proposition 2.15.** Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure. For any fiber-cofiber sequence  $X' \to X \to X''$ , we have a long exact sequence in  $C^{\circ}$ 

$$\cdots \to \mathsf{H}^n(X') \to \mathsf{H}^n(X) \to \mathsf{H}^n(X'') \overset{\delta}{\to} \mathsf{H}^{n+1}(X') \to \cdots,$$

where the connecting morphism  $\delta$  is induced by the morphism  $X'' \to X'[1]$ .

2.16. The following result relates t-exact functors with exact functors between the hearts.

**Exercise 2.17.** Let  $F: C \to D$  be a left t-exact functor. Show that the composition

$$\mathsf{H}^0F:\mathsf{C}^{\Diamond}\to\mathsf{C}^{\geq0}\xrightarrow{F}\mathsf{D}^{\geq0}\xrightarrow{\tau^{\leq0}}\mathsf{D}^{\Diamond}$$

is left exact.

**Warning 2.18.** As in Warning 1.10, even a t-exact functor F cannot be recovered from  $H^0F$ .

**Remark 2.19.** Next time, we will define various versions of derived  $\infty$ -categories of an abelian categories A, which are equipped with t-structures whose hearts can be identified with A. By definition, all information about these derived  $\infty$ -categories can be recovered from A.

Under certain assumptions, a left/right t-exact functor F out of these derived  $\infty$ -categories can be identified with the right/left derived functor of  $H^0F$ .

## 3. Bounded, separated and complete

**Definition 3.1.** Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure. For an object  $X \in C$ ,

- we say X is **connective** if  $X \in C^{\leq 0}$ ;
- we say X is **coconnective** if  $X \in C^{\geq 0}$ ;
- we say X is n-connective if  $X \in C^{\leq -n}$ ;
- we say X is n-coconnective if  $X \in C^{\geq -n}$ ;
- we say X is eventually connective, or right bounded if

$$X \in \mathsf{C}^- \coloneqq \mathsf{I} \mathsf{I} \mathsf{C}^{\leq n}$$

• we say X is eventually coconnective, or left bounded if

$$X \in C^+ := | | C^{\geq n}$$

• we say X is bounded if X is both left bounded and right bounded:

$$X \in \mathsf{C}^\mathsf{b} \coloneqq \mathsf{C}^\mathsf{+} \bigcap \mathsf{C}^\mathsf{-}.$$

Warning 3.2. As in Warning 2.13, the above properties cannot be tested via the cohomologies.

**Exercise 3.3.** Show that if X is left bounded, then  $X \in C^{\geq 0}$  iff  $H^i(X) \simeq 0$  for i < 0.

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**Definition 3.4.** Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure.

- We say C is **right bounded** if  $C \simeq C^-$ .
- We say C is **left bounded** if  $C \simeq C^+$ .
- We say C is **bounded** if  $C \simeq C^b$ .
- We say C is right separated if

$$\mathsf{C}^{\geq \infty} \coloneqq \bigcap_{n} \mathsf{C}^{\geq n} \simeq \{0\}.$$

• We say C is left separated if

$$\mathsf{C}^{\leq -\infty}\coloneqq \bigcap_n \mathsf{C}^{\leq n} \simeq \{0\}.$$

**Definition 3.5.** Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure. The **left** completion  $\widehat{C}$  of C is defined to be the limit of the following diagram

$$\cdots \xrightarrow{\tau} \mathsf{C}^{\geq -2} \xrightarrow{\tau} \mathsf{C}^{\geq -1} \xrightarrow{\tau} \mathsf{C}^{\geq 0} \xrightarrow{\tau} \cdots.$$

We say C is **left complete** if the functor  $C \to \widehat{C}$  is an equivalence. Dually, the **right completion** is defined to be the limit of

$$\cdots \xrightarrow{\tau} \mathsf{C}^{\leq 2} \xrightarrow{\tau} \mathsf{C}^{\leq 1} \xrightarrow{\tau} \mathsf{C}^{\leq 0} \xrightarrow{\tau} \cdots$$

**Exercise 3.6.** Show that the right completion of C is equivalent to  $Sptr(C^{\leq 0})$ .

**Exercise 3.7.** Show that the left completion  $\widehat{C}$  is stable and the functor  $C \to \widehat{C}$  is exact.

**Exercise 3.8.** Show that the left completion  $\widehat{C}$  admits an essential unique t-structure such that  $C^{\geq 0} \xrightarrow{\simeq} (\widehat{C})^{\geq 0}$ .

**Exercise 3.9.** Show that C is left separated iff the functor  $C \to \widehat{C}$  detects zero objects. In particular, C is left separated if it is left complete.

Warning 3.10. A left separated t-structure may not be left complete. For example, any left bounded t-structure is left separated, but is almost never left complete.

**Exercise 3.11.** Suppose C admits countable products and  $C^{\leq 0} \subseteq C$  is stable under countable products<sup>1</sup>. Then C is left separated iff it is left complete.

Exercise 3.12. Show that C is left complete iff it is Postnikov complete. The latter means

• Every object  $X \in C$  is the limit of its **Postnikov tower**:

$$X \simeq \lim \left[ \cdots \to \tau^{\geq n-1} X \to \tau^{\geq n} X \to \tau^{\geq n+1} X \to \cdots \right]$$

• Any **Postnikov tower** in C converges. In other words, any collection  $X_n \in \mathbb{C}^{\geq n}$  equipped with isomorphisms  $\tau^{\geq n} X_{n-1} \xrightarrow{\tilde{\rightarrow}} X_n$  is the Postnikov tower of

$$X\coloneqq \lim \left[\cdots \to X_{n-1} \to X_n \to X_{n+1} \to \cdots \right] \in \mathsf{C}$$

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>These conditions are often referred as: taking countable products is right t-exact.

#### 4. t-structures on presentable stable ∞-categories

**Proposition-Definition 4.1** (HA.1.4.4.13). Let C be a presentable stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure. The following conditions are equivalent:

- The  $\infty$ -category  $C^{\leq 0}$  is presentable.
- The  $\infty$ -category  $C^{\leq 0}$  is accessible.
- The  $\infty$ -category  $C^{\geq 0}$  is presentable.
- The  $\infty$ -category  $C^{\geq 0}$  is accessible.
- The composition  $C \xrightarrow{\tau_{\leq 0}} C^{\leq 0} \to C$  is accessible.
- The composition  $C \xrightarrow{\tau_{\geq 0}} C^{\geq 0} \to C$  is accessible.

We say a t-structure on C is accessible if it satisfies the above conditions.

**Proposition 4.2** (HA.1.4.4.11). Let C be a presentable stable  $\infty$ -category. A full sub- $\infty$ -category  $C' \subseteq C$  determines an accessible t-structure with  $C^{\leq 0} \cong C'$  iff

- C' is accessible
- $C' \subseteq C$  is closed under colimits and extensions.

Remark 4.3. In practice, one can apply the above proposition to the smallest full sub- $\infty$ -category C' generated by a small collection of objects under small colimits and extensions. Such C' is always accessible.

**Definition 4.4.** Let C be a presentable stable  $\infty$ -category. We say a t-structure on C is **compatible with filtered colimits** if taking filtered colimits is t-exact.

**Exercise 4.5.** Let C be a presentable stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure. Show that the following are equivalent:

- The t-structure is compatible with filtered colimits.
- The embedding  $C^{\geq 0} \subseteq \bar{C}$  is stable under filtered colimits.
- $\tau^{\leq 0}$  preserves filtered colimits.

**Remark 4.6.** Note that  $\tau^{\geq 0}$  and  $C^{\leq 0} \subseteq C$  always preserve any colimits because they admit right adjoints.

**Definition 4.7.** Let C be a presentable stable  $\infty$ -category. We say a t-structure on C is **compactly generated** if  $C^{\leq 0}$  is compactly generated, and the functor  $C^{\leq 0} \to C$  preserves compact objects.

**Exercise 4.8.** Show that any compactly generated t-structure is accessible and compatible with filtered colimits.

**Exercise 4.9.** Let C be a presentable stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a right complete t-structure. Show that the following is equivalent:

- The t-structure is compactly generated.
- The  $\infty$ -category  $C^{\leq 0}$  is compactly generated.

Moreover, under these conditions, C is compactly generated, and compact objects in C are given by Y[n] for some compact object Y in  $C^{\leq 0}$  and integer n.

**Exercise 4.10.** Let C be a compactly generated stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure, such that compact objects in C are right bounded and closed under truncations. Show that the t-structure is compactly generated and right complete.

**Exercise 4.11.** Let  $C_0$  be a small stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a bounded t-structure. Show that  $C := Ind(C_0)$  has a compactly generated t-structure with  $C^{\leq 0} := Ind(C_0^{\leq 0})$ .

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Warning 4.12. Compact objects in C may not be closed under truncations. Hence not all compactly generated t-structures come from ind-completion. There are lots of interesting examples in the settings listed in Warning 2.13.

**Remark 4.13.** In practice, most t-structures on presentable stable  $\infty$ -categories are right complete and compatible with filtered colimits.

### 5. t-structure on Sptr

**Proposition-Construction 5.1** (HA.1.4.3.4). Let C be a pointed presentable  $\infty$ -category. We have an accessible t-structure on Sptr(C) given by the following.

- Let  $\operatorname{Sptr}(\mathsf{C})^{\geq 1}$  be the full  $\operatorname{sub}$ - $\infty$ -category of objects X such that  $\Omega^{\infty}(X) \simeq 0$ .
- Let  $\operatorname{Sptr}(\mathsf{C})^{\leq 0}$  be the full  $\operatorname{sub-\infty-category}$  generated by the essential image of the functor  $\Sigma^{\infty}$  under extensions and small colimits.

**Proposition 5.2** (HA.1.4.3.6). Let Sptr be equipped with the above t-structure. Then

- (1) This t-structure is compactly generated<sup>2</sup>, left complete and right complete.
- (2) The Eilenberg–Maclane spectrum functor  $A\mapsto \mathbb{H} A$  gives an equivalence  $Ab\stackrel{\simeq}{\to} \mathsf{Sptr}^{\triangledown}.$

**Exercise 5.3.** Show that the cohomology functor  $H^i : \operatorname{Sptr} \to \operatorname{Sptr}^{\circ}$  can be identified with  $\pi_{-i}$  via the equivalence  $\operatorname{Ab} \xrightarrow{\sim} \operatorname{Sptr}^{\circ}$ .

**Warning 5.4.** Let  $A_1$  and  $A_2$  be abelian groups. In general, the extension groups  $\operatorname{Ext}^i_{\operatorname{Sptr}}(\mathbb{H}A_1,\mathbb{H}A_2)$  and  $\operatorname{Ext}^i(A_1,A_2)$  are not isomorphic. For instance, the graded ring  $\operatorname{Ext}^\bullet_{\operatorname{Sptr}}(\mathbb{H}\mathbb{F}_q,\mathbb{H}\mathbb{F}_q)$  is the **mod** p **Steenrod algebra**.

5.5. Next time, we will construct a natural homomorphism

$$\operatorname{Ext}^{i}(A_{1}, A_{2}) \to \operatorname{Ext}^{i}_{\operatorname{Sptr}}(\mathbb{H}A_{1}, \mathbb{H}A_{2})$$

which should be viewed as derived direct images along  $Spec \mathbb{Z} \to Spec \mathbb{S}$ .

# APPENDIX A. PRESTABLE ∞-CATEGORIES

A.1. Let C be a stable  $\infty$ -category equipped with a t-structure. Sometimes it is more convenient to study  $C^{\leq 0}$  rather than C. It is possible to find several axioms that characterize  $\infty$ -categories of the form  $C^{\leq 0}$ . Such  $\infty$ -categories are called **prestable**  $\infty$ -categories.

A.2. Suggested readings. SAG.C.

 $<sup>^2\</sup>mathrm{Compact}$  generation is not proved in HA, but it follows from the fact that  $\mathsf{Spc}_\star$  is compactly generated.