

TREE-LIKE GRAPHINGS OF COUNTABLE BOREL EQUIVALENCE RELATIONS

ZHAOSHEN ZHAI

ABSTRACT. We present a streamlined exposition of a construction presented recently by R. Chen, A. Poulin, R. Tao, and A. Tserunyan, where it is proven that every locally-finite Borel graph with each component a quasi-tree induces a canonical treeable equivalence relation. **Write some more details...**

The purpose of this note is to provide a streamlined proof of a particular case of a construction presented in [CPTT23], in order to better understand the general formalism developed therein. We attempt to make this note self-contained, but nevertheless urge the reader to refer to the original paper for more detailed discussions and some generalizations of the results we have selected to include here.

Treeings of equivalence relations. A *countable Borel equivalence relation (CBER)* on a standard Borel space X is a Borel equivalence relation $E \subseteq X^2$ with each class countable. We are interested in special types of *graphings* on a CBER $E \subseteq X^2$, i.e. a Borel graph $G \subseteq X^2$ whose connectedness relation is precisely E . For instance, a graphing of E such that each component is a tree is called a *treeing* of E , and the CBERs that admit treeings are said to be *treeable*. The main results of [CPTT23] provide new sufficient criteria for treeability of certain classes of CBERs, and in particular, they prove the following

Theorem A ([CPTT23, Theorem 1.1]). *If a CBER admits a locally-finite graphing whose components are quasi-trees, then it is treeable.*

Roughly speaking, the existence of a quasi-isometry $G|_C \rightarrow T_C$ to a simplicial tree T_C for each component $C \subseteq X$ induces a collection $\mathcal{H}(C) \subseteq 2^C$ of ‘cuts’ (subsets $H \subseteq C$ with finite boundary such that both H and $C \setminus H$ are connected), which are ‘tree-like’ in the sense that

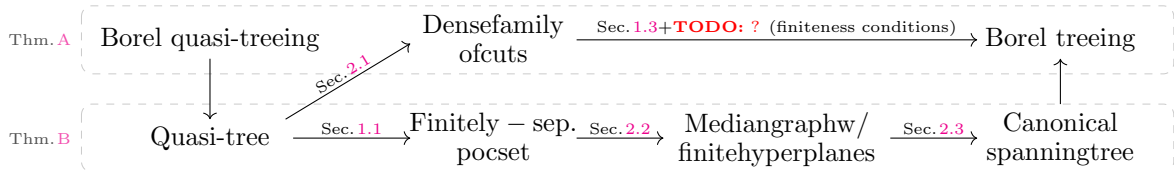
1. $\mathcal{H}(C)$ is *finitely-separating*: each pair $x, y \in C$ is separated by finitely-many $H \in \mathcal{H}(C)$, and
2. $\mathcal{H}(C)$ is *dense towards ends*: each end in $G|_C$ has a neighborhood basis in $\mathcal{H}(C)$.

These two conditions play somewhat different roles in the proof of Theorem A, and part the goal of this note is to clarify... **TODO**

Condition (1) allows for an abstract (i.e., *not necessarily* Borel), yet canonical, construction of a tree from $\mathcal{H}(C)$. This construction starts by viewing $\mathcal{H}(C)$ as a profinite pocset with non-trivial points isolated, which in turn provide exactly the data to construct a ‘median graph’ $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H}(C))$ whose vertices are ‘ultrafilters’¹ thereof. This median graph has finite ‘hyperplanes’, which allows us to apply a Borel ‘cycle-cutting’ algorithm and obtain a canonical spanning tree.

This gives us the following theorem, which can be viewed as a component-wise version of Theorem A.

Theorem B. *If $\mathcal{H} \subseteq 2^X$ is a collection of finitely-separating cuts on a connected locally-finite graph (X, G) , then the median graph $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ admits a canonical spanning tree.*



The additional condition (2), which equivalently imposes certain finiteness conditions on the median graph $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H}(C))$, then ensures that such a spanning tree can be constructed in a uniform way to each component $C \subseteq G$, giving us the desired treeing of the CBER. We prove this in Section **TODO: which section?**

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¹As in [CPTT23], we call them *orientations* instead, to avoid confusion with the more standard notion; see Definition 2.4.

1. PRELIMINARIES ON POSETS, ENDS, AND MEDIAN GRAPHS

Notation. A *graph* on a set X is a symmetric irreflexive binary relation $G \subseteq X^2$. For $A \subseteq X$, we say that A is *connected* if the induced subgraph $G[A]$ is. We always equip connected graphs with their *path metric* d , and let $\text{Ball}_r(x)$ be the closed ball of radius r around x ; more generally, we let $\text{Ball}_r(A) := \bigcup_{x \in A} \text{Ball}_r(x)$.

For a subset $A \subseteq X$, we let $\partial_{iv}A := A \cap \text{Ball}_1(\neg A)$ be its *inner vertex boundary*, $\partial_{ov}A := \partial_{iv}(\neg A)$ be its *outer vertex boundary*, and let $\partial_{ie}A := G \cap (\partial_{ov}A \times \partial_{iv}A)$ and $\partial_{oe}A := \partial_{ie}(\neg A)$ respectively be its *inner* and *outer edge boundaries*. Let $\partial_vA := \partial_{iv}A \cup \partial_{ov}A$ be the *(total) vertex boundary* of A .

Finally, for $x, y \in X$, the *interval* $[x, y]$ between x, y is the union of all geodesics between x, y , consisting of exactly those $z \in X$ with $d(x, z) + d(z, y) = d(x, y)$. We say that $A \subseteq X$ is *convex* if $[x, y] \subseteq A$ for all $x, y \in A$. For vertices $x, y, z \in X$, we write $x - \dots - y - \dots - z$ for $y \in [x, z]$. By the triangle inequality, we have for all $w, x, y, z \in X$ that

$$(w - \dots - x - \dots - y \text{ and } w - \dots - y - \dots - z) \Leftrightarrow (w - \dots - x - \dots - z \text{ and } x - \dots - y - \dots - z),$$

and both sides occur iff there is a geodesic from w to x to y to z , which we write as $w - \dots - x - \dots - y - \dots - z$.

1.1. Profinite pocsets. The construction starts by identifying a profinite pocset \mathcal{H} of ‘cuts’ in the graph, which we first study abstractly. The finitely-separating subpocsets of 2^X are well-known in metric geometry as *wallspaces*; see, e.g., [Nic04] and [CN05].

Definition 1.1. A *pocset* $(\mathcal{H}, \leq, \neg, 0)$ is a poset (\mathcal{H}, \leq) equipped with an order-reversing involution $\neg : \mathcal{H} \rightarrow \mathcal{H}$ and a least element $0 \neq \neg 0$ such that 0 is the only lower-bound of $H, \neg H$ for every $H \in \mathcal{H}$. We call the elements in \mathcal{H} *half-spaces*.

A *profinite pocset* is a pocset \mathcal{H} equipped with a compact topology making \neg continuous and is *totally order-disconnected*, in the sense that if $H \not\leq K$, then there is a clopen upward-closed $U \subseteq \mathcal{H}$ with $H \in U \not\leq K$.

Remark 1.2. Such a topology is automatically Hausdorff and zero-dimensional, making it a Stone space.

We are primarily interested in subpocsets of $(2^X, \subseteq, \neg, \emptyset)$ for a fixed set X , which is profinite if equipped with the product topology of the discrete space 2 . Indeed, 2^X admits a base of *cylinder sets* – which are finite intersections of sets of the form $\pi_x^{-1}(i)$ where $x \in X$, $i \in \{0, 1\}$, and $\pi_x : 2^X \rightarrow 2$ is the projection – making \neg continuous since cylinders are clopen. Finally, for $H \not\leq K$, let U be the upward-closure of a clopen neighborhood $U_0 \ni H$ separating it from K , which is clopen since $\neg U_0$ is a finite union of cylinders.

Remark. We follow [CPTT23, Convention 2.7], where for a family $\mathcal{H} \subseteq 2^X$ of subsets of a fixed set X , we write $\mathcal{H}^* := \mathcal{H} \setminus \{\emptyset, X\}$ for the *non-trivial* elements of \mathcal{H} .

The following proposition gives a sufficient criteria for subpocsets of 2^X to be profinite. We also show in this case that every non-trivial element $H \in \mathcal{H}^*$ is isolated, which will be important in Section 2.2.

Lemma 1.3. *Let $\mathcal{H} \subseteq 2^X$ be a pocset. If \mathcal{H} is finitely-separating, then $\mathcal{H} \subseteq 2^X$ is closed and every non-trivial element is isolated.*

Proof. It suffices to show that the limit points of \mathcal{H} are trivial, so let $A \in 2^X \setminus \{\emptyset, X\}$. Fix $x \in A \not\leq y$. Since \mathcal{H} is finitely-separating, there are finitely-many $H \in \mathcal{H}$ with $x \in H \not\leq y$, and for each such $H \in \mathcal{H} \setminus \{A\}$, we have either some $x_H \in A \setminus H$ or $y_H \in H \setminus A$. Let $U \subseteq 2^X$ be the family of all subsets $B \subseteq X$ containing x and each x_H but not y or any y_H .

This is the desired neighborhood isolating $A \in U$. Indeed, it is (cl)open since it is the *finite* intersection of cylinders prescribed by the x_H ’s and y_H ’s, and it is disjoint from $\mathcal{H} \setminus \{A\}$ by construction. ■

In the case when $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}$ is a subpocset of cuts in a graph (X, G) , the same holds for the connected and co-connected cuts $\mathcal{H} \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}} \subseteq 2^X$. Hence, the above lemma refines to the following

Lemma 1.4. *Let $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}$ be a pocset of cuts in a connected graph (X, G) . If \mathcal{H} is finitely-separating, then $\mathcal{H} \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}$ is closed and every non-trivial element is isolated.*

Proof. It suffices to show that no $H \in \mathcal{H}^*$ is a limit point of $\mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$, for then $\mathcal{H} \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$ is closed. Fix $H \in \mathcal{H}^*$ and let $U \subseteq 2^X$ be the family of all subsets $B \subseteq X$ containing $\partial_{iv}H$ and disjoint from $\partial_{ov}H$, which clearly contains H , and is clopen since ∂_vH is finite.

Suppose that there is some $B \in U \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$. Then $H \subseteq B$, since if $x \in H \cap \neg B$, then there is a path in $\neg B$ to some $x' \in \partial_{ov}H \subseteq \neg B$, which passes through $\partial_{iv}H \subseteq B$, a contradiction. The converse is similar. ■

Lemma 1.5. *Let $\mathcal{H} \subseteq 2^X$ be a pocset in a connected graph (X, G) . If each $x \in X$ is on the vertex boundary of finitely-many half-spaces, then \mathcal{H} is finitely-separating. The converse holds too if (X, G) is locally-finite.*

Proof. Any $H \in \mathcal{H}$ separating $x, y \in X$ separates some edge on any fixed path between x and y , and there are only finitely-many such H for each edge. If (X, G) is locally-finite, then each $x \in X$ is separated from each of its finitely-many neighbors by finitely-many $H \in \mathcal{H}$. ■

1.2. Ends of graphs. Let (X, G) be a connected locally-finite graph and let $\mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X) \subseteq 2^X$ be the Boolean algebra of all $A \subseteq X$ with finite vertex boundary, which we refer to as *cuts* in X . Later, we will restrict to the connected and co-connected cuts $\mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X) \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$.

Definition 1.6. The *end compactification* of (X, G) is the Stone space \widehat{X} of $\mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X)$, whose non-principal ultrafilters are the *ends* of (X, G) .

We identify $X \hookrightarrow \widehat{X}$ via principal ultrafilter map $x \mapsto p_x$, so $\widehat{X} \setminus X$ is the set of ends of G . By definition, \widehat{X} admits a basis of clopen sets of the form $\widehat{A} := \{p \in \widehat{X} : A \in p\}$ for each $A \in \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X)$.

Definition 1.7. A family $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X)$ of cuts is *dense towards ends* of (X, G) if \mathcal{H} contains a neighborhood basis for every end in $\widehat{X} \setminus X$.

In other words, \mathcal{H} is dense towards ends if for every $p \in \widehat{X} \setminus X$ and every (clopen) neighborhood $\widehat{A} \ni p$, where $A \in \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X)$, there is some $H \in \mathcal{H}$ with $p \in \widehat{H} \subseteq \widehat{A}$; it is useful to note that $\widehat{H} \subseteq \widehat{A}$ iff $H \subseteq A$.

We show in Section 2.1 that certain cuts $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}$ induced by a locally-finite quasi-tree is dense towards ends. It will also be important that these cuts be connected, in that witnesses to density can also be found in $\mathcal{H} \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}$, consisting of those cuts that are connected and co-connected.

Lemma 1.8. *If a subpocset $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}$ is dense towards ends, then there is a subpocset $\mathcal{H}' \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty} \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}$, which is also dense towards ends, such that every $H' \in \mathcal{H}'$ has $\partial_e H' \subseteq \partial_e H$ for some $H \in \mathcal{H}$.*

Proof. A first attempt is to let \mathcal{H}' be the connected components H'_0 of elements in \mathcal{H} , but this fails since $\neg H'_0$ is not necessarily connected. Instead, we further take a component of $\neg H'_0$, whose complement clearly co-connected, and is connected since it consists of H'_0 and the other components of $\neg H'_0$, each of which is connected to H'_0 via $\partial_e H'_0$. Formally, we let

$$\mathcal{H}' := \{H' \subseteq X : H \in \mathcal{H} \text{ and } H'_0 \in H/G \text{ and } \neg H' \in \neg H'_0/G\},$$

where H/G denotes the G -components of H . Clearly $\partial_e H' \subseteq \partial_e H'_0 \subseteq \partial_e H$, so it remains to show that \mathcal{H}' is dense towards ends.

Fix an end $p \in \widehat{X} \setminus X$ with $p \in \widehat{A}$ for some $A \in \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X)$. Let $B \supseteq \partial_v A$ be finite connected, which can be obtained by adjoining paths between its components. Then $\neg B \in p$ since p is non-principal, so there is $H \in \mathcal{H}$ with $p \in \widehat{H} \subseteq \widehat{\neg B}$. We now use the above recipe to find the desired $H' \in \mathcal{H}'$:

- (1) Since $H \in \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X)$, it has finitely-many connected components, so exactly one of them belongs to p , say $p \in \widehat{H}'_0 \subseteq \widehat{H}$. Note that $B \subseteq \neg H \subseteq \neg H'_0$.
- (2) Since B is connected, there is a unique component $\neg H' \subseteq \neg H'_0$ containing B .

Observe that $H' \in \mathcal{H}'$ and $p \in \widehat{H}'$. Lastly, since H' is connected and is disjoint from $\partial_v A \subseteq B$, and since $H' \subseteq \neg A$ would imply $\neg H' \in p$, this forces $H' \subseteq A$, and hence $p \in \widehat{H}' \subseteq \widehat{A}$ as desired. ■

1.3. Finiteness conditions on pocsets. Let (X, G) be a connected locally-finite graph and fix a finitely-separating subpocset $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X) \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$ of cuts.

Definition 1.9. Let $\mathcal{H} \subseteq 2^X$ be a pocset. Two half-spaces $H, K \in \mathcal{H}$ are *nested* if $\neg^i H \cap \neg^j K = \emptyset$ for some $i, j \in \{0, 1\}$, where $\neg^0 H := H$ and $\neg^1 H := \neg H$. We say that \mathcal{H} is *nested* if every pair $H, K \in \mathcal{H}$ is nested.

Lemma 1.10. *Each $H \in \mathcal{H}$ is non-nested with finitely-many others.*

Proof. Fix $H \in \mathcal{H}$ and let $K \in \mathcal{H}$ be non-nested with H . By connectedness, the non-empty sets $H \cap K$ and $\neg H \cap K$ are joined by a path in K , so $\partial_v H \cap K \neq \emptyset$; similarly, $\partial_v H \cap \neg K \neq \emptyset$. For each $x \in \partial_v H \cap K$ and $y \in \partial_v H \cap \neg K$, any fixed path p_{xy} between them contains some $z \in \partial_v K \cap p_{xy}$; thus, any $K \in \mathcal{H}$ non-nested with H contains some $z \in \partial_v K \cap p_{xy}$.

Then, since there are finitely-many such $x, y \in \partial_v H$, for each of which there are finitely-many $z \in p_{xy}$, for each of which there are finitely-many $K \in \mathcal{H}$ with $z \in \partial_v K$ (by Lemma 1.5, since \mathcal{H} is finitely-separating), there can only be finitely-many $K \in \mathcal{H}$ non-nested with H . ■

Proposition 1.11. *If \mathcal{H} is dense towards ends, then each \mathcal{H} -block is finite and each $H \in \mathcal{H}^*$ has finitely-many successors.*

Proof. **TODO:** define \mathcal{H} -blocks beforehand too. ■

1.4. Median graphs and projections. Starting from a finitely-separating profinite pocset \mathcal{H} , we construct in Section 2.2 its dual median graph $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$; the rigidity of certain half-spaces therein can then be leveraged to construct a canonical spanning tree.

For more comprehensive references, and their general theory, see [Rol98] and [Bow22].

Definition 1.12. A *median graph* is a connected graph (X, G) such that for any $x, y, z \in X$, the intersection

$$[x, y] \cap [y, z] \cap [x, z]$$

is a singleton, whose element $\langle x, y, z \rangle$ is called the *median* of x, y, z . Thus we have a ternary median operation $\langle \cdot, \cdot, \cdot \rangle : X^3 \rightarrow X$, and a *median homomorphism* $f : (X, G) \rightarrow (Y, H)$ is a map preserving said operation.

Lemma 1.13. *For any $\emptyset \neq A \subseteq X$ and $x \in X$, there is a unique point in $\text{cvx}(A)$ between x and every point in A , called the projection of x towards A , denoted $\text{proj}_A(x)$.*

Moreover, we have $\bigcap_{a \in A} [x, a] = [x, \text{proj}_A(x)]$, and for any y in this set, we have $\text{proj}_A(y) = \text{proj}_A(x)$.

Proof. To show existence, pick any $a_0 \in A$. Given $a_n \in \text{cvx}(A)$, if there exists $a \in A$ with $a_n \notin [x, a]$, set $a_{n+1} := \langle x, a, a_n \rangle \in \text{cvx}(A)$. Then $a_0 - - a_1 - - \dots - - a_n - - x$ for all n , so this sequence terminates in at most $d(a_0, x)$ steps at a point in $\text{cvx}(A)$ between x and every point in A . For uniqueness, if there exist two such points $a, b \in \text{cvx}(A)$, then $x - - a - - b$ and $x - - b - - a$, forcing $a = b$.

Finally, if $x - - y - - \text{proj}_A(x)$ and $a \in A$, then $x - - \text{proj}_A(x) - - a$ and hence $x - - y - - a$. Conversely, let $x - - y - - a$ for all $a \in A$. Since $[y, a] \subseteq [x, a]$ for all a , we see that

$$\text{proj}_A(y) \in \text{cvx}(A) \cap \bigcap_{a \in A} [y, a] \subseteq \text{cvx}(A) \cap \bigcap_{a \in A} [x, a]$$

and hence $\text{proj}_A(y) = \text{proj}_A(x)$ by uniqueness. But since $y - - \text{proj}_A(y) - - a$, we have $x - - y - - \text{proj}_A(y)$, and hence $x - - y - - \text{proj}_A(x)$ as desired. ■

Remark 1.14. It follows from the proof above that for any median homomorphism $f : (X, G) \rightarrow (Y, H)$, we have $f(\text{proj}_A(x)) = \text{proj}_{f(A)}(f(x))$ for any $\emptyset \neq A \subseteq X$ and $x \in X$. Indeed, we have

$$\text{proj}_A(x) = \langle x, a_m, \dots, \langle x, a_2, \langle x, a_1, a_0 \rangle \rangle \dots \rangle$$

for some $m \leq d(a_0, x)$ and $a_0, \dots, a_m \in A$, and this is preserved by f .

For $A := \{a, b\}$, we have $\text{proj}_A(x) = \langle a, b, x \rangle$, and hence $\text{cvx}(A) = \text{proj}_A(X) = \langle a, b, X \rangle = [a, b]$.

Lemma 1.15. *For each $x, y \in X$, $\text{cone}_x(y)$ is convex, and if xGy , then $\text{cone}_x(y) \sqcup \text{cone}_y(x) = X$.*

Proof. Fix $a, b \in \text{cone}_x(y)$ and $a - - c - - b$. It suffices to show that $x - - y - - \langle a, c, x \rangle$, for then $x - - y - - c$ since we have $x - - \langle a, c, x \rangle - - c$. Indeed, it follows from the following observations.

- $x - - y - - \langle a, b, x \rangle$, since $\langle a, b, x \rangle = \text{proj}_{\{a, b\}}(x)$ and so $[x, \langle a, b, x \rangle] = [x, a] \cap [x, b] \ni y$ by Lemma 1.13.
- $x - - \langle a, b, x \rangle - - \langle a, c, x \rangle$, which follows from $\langle a, b, x \rangle - - \langle a, c, x \rangle - - a$, since $x - - \langle a, b, x \rangle - - a$ by definition. Indeed, we have $\langle a, c, x \rangle$ is in both $[a, x]$ and $[a, c] \subseteq [a, b]$, and since $\text{proj}_{\{b, x\}}(a) = \langle a, b, x \rangle$, we have again by Lemma 1.13 that $[\langle a, b, x \rangle, a] = [a, x] \cap [a, b] \ni \langle a, c, x \rangle$.

Finally, take $z \in X$ and consider $w := \langle x, y, z \rangle \subseteq [x, y]$. Either $w = x$ or $w = y$ (but not both), giving us the desired partition. ■

Remark 1.16. In particular, this shows that if xGy , then $\text{cone}_x(y) \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(X)$. The convexity of cones also shows, in the situation of Lemma 1.13, that $\text{proj}_A = \text{proj}_{\text{cvx}(A)}$, i.e., $\text{proj}_A(x)$ is also between x and every point in $\text{cvx}(A)$: indeed, note that $\text{cone}_x(\text{proj}_A(x))$ is convex and contains A , so it contains $\text{cvx}(A)$ too.

Lemma 1.17. $\text{proj}_A : X \rightrightarrows \text{cvx}(A)$ is a median homomorphism with $\text{proj}_A \circ \text{cvx} = \text{cvx} \circ \text{proj}_A$.

Proof. The second claim follows from the first since, by Remark 1.14, we have

$$f(\text{cvx}(B)) = f(\text{proj}_B(X)) = \text{proj}_{f(B)}(f(X)) = \text{cvx}(f(B))$$

for all median homomorphisms $f : X \rightarrow Y$ and $B \subseteq X$, so it in particular applies to $f := \text{proj}_A$.

To this end, let $x - - - y - - - z \in X$ and set $w := \langle \text{proj}_A(x), \text{proj}_A(y), \text{proj}_A(z) \rangle \in \text{cvx}(A)$. It suffices to show that $y - - - w - - - a$ for all $a \in A$, for then $w = \text{proj}_A(y)$ and hence $\text{proj}_A(x) - - - \text{proj}_A(y) - - - \text{proj}_A(z)$. But we have $y - - - \text{proj}_A(y) - - - a$ already, so it further suffices to show that $y - - - w - - - \text{proj}_A(y)$. For this, we note that

$$x - - - \text{proj}_A(x) - - - \text{proj}_A(y) \quad \text{and} \quad \text{proj}_A(x) - - - w - - - \text{proj}_A(y),$$

so $x - - - w - - - \text{proj}_A(y)$, and similarly $z - - - w - - - \text{proj}_A(y)$. Thus, it follows that

$$\begin{aligned} w \in [\text{proj}_A(y), x] \cap [\text{proj}_A(y), z] &= [\text{proj}_A(y), \text{proj}_{\{x,z\}}(\text{proj}_A(y))] && \text{Lemma 1.13} \\ &= [\text{proj}_A(y), \text{proj}_{[x,z]}(\text{proj}_A(y))] && \text{Remark 1.16} \\ &\subseteq [\text{proj}_A(y), y], && \text{Lemma 1.13} \end{aligned}$$

where the second equality follows from $\text{cvx}(\{x, z\}) = [x, z]$, and hence $\text{proj}_{\{x,z\}} = \text{proj}_{[x,z]}$. \blacksquare

1.5. Convex half-spaces of median graphs. We now use projections to explore the geometry of convex half-spaces in median graphs. In particular, they are very rigid:

Proposition 1.18. *Each edge $(x, y) \in G$ is on a unique hyperplane, namely the inward boundary of $\text{cone}_x(y)$, and conversely, each half-space $H \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(X)$ is $\text{cone}_x(y)$ for every $(x, y) \in \partial_{\text{ie}}H$.*

Thus, hyperplanes are equivalence classes of edges. Furthermore, this equivalence relation is generated by parallel sides of squares (i.e., 4-cycles).

Proof. We have $\text{cone}_x(y) \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(X)$ by the above lemma, and clearly $(x, y) \in \partial_{\text{ie}} \text{cone}_x(y)$. Conversely, take $H \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(X)$ and any $(x, y) \in \partial_{\text{ie}}H$. Then $H = \text{cone}_x(y)$, for if $z \in H \cap \neg \text{cone}_x(y)$, then $z \in \text{cone}_y(x)$, and hence $x \in [y, z] \subseteq H$ by convexity of H , a contradiction; if $z \in \text{cone}_x(y) \cap \neg H$, then $[x, z] \subseteq \neg H$ by convexity of $\neg H$, and hence $y \notin H$, a contradiction.

Finally, parallel edges of a strip of squares generate the same hyperplane since, for a given square, each vertex is between its neighbors and hence any hyperplane containing an edge contains its opposite edge. On the other hand, let $(a, b), (c, d) \in \partial_{\text{ie}}H$ for some $H \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(X)$. Note that $\partial_{\text{ov}}H = \text{proj}_{\neg H}(H)$ is convex since H is, and since $\text{proj}_{\neg H}$ preserves convexity by Lemma 1.17, any geodesic between $a, c \in \partial_{\text{ov}}H$ lies in $\partial_{\text{ov}}H$. Matching this geodesic via $\partial_{\text{ie}}H : \partial_{\text{ov}}H \rightarrow \partial_{\text{iv}}H$ gives us a geodesic between b, d in $\partial_{\text{iv}}H$, which together with the matching forms the desired strip of squares. \blacksquare

Corollary 1.19. *Two half-spaces $H, K \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(X)$ are non-nested iff there is an embedding $\{0, 1\}^2 \hookrightarrow X$ of the Hamming cube into the four corners $\neg^i H \cap \neg^j K$.*

In particular, if $H, K \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^(X)$ are non-nested, then $\partial_{\text{iv}}H \cap \partial_{\text{iv}}K \neq \emptyset$.*

Proof. Let H, K be non-nested and take $x_1 \in H \cap K$ and $x_2 \in H \cap \neg K$. Since H is connected, any geodesic between x_1, x_2 crosses an edge $(x'_1, x'_2) \in \partial_{\text{oe}}K$ in H . Similarly, there is an edge $(y'_1, y'_2) \in \partial_{\text{oe}}K$ in $\neg H$, so we may slide both edges along $\partial_{\text{oe}}K$ to obtain the desired square (see Proposition 1.18).

Conversely, the half-spaces cutting the square are clearly non-nested. \blacksquare

Lemma 1.20. *A median graph (X, G) has finite hyperplanes iff each half-space $H \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}(X)$ is non-nested with finitely-many others.*

Proof. By Corollary 1.19, a half-space K non-nested with H corresponds uniquely to an edge $(x, y) \in \partial_{\text{ie}}H$ with $x, y \in \partial_{\text{iv}}K$, so there are finitely-many such half-spaces K iff $\partial_{\text{ie}}H$ is finite. \blacksquare

Lemma 1.21 (Helly). *Any finite intersection of pairwise-intersecting non-empty convex sets is non-empty.*

Proof. For pairwise-intersecting convex sets H_1, H_2, H_3 , pick any $x \in H_1 \cap H_2$, $y \in H_1 \cap H_3$ and $z \in H_2 \cap H_3$; their median $\langle x, y, z \rangle$ then lies in $H_1 \cap H_2 \cap H_3$.

Suppose that it holds for some $n \geq 3$ and let $H_1, \dots, H_{n+1} \subseteq X$ pairwise-intersect. Then $\{H_i \cap H_{n+1}\}_{i \leq n}$ is a family of n pairwise-intersecting convex sets, so $\bigcap_{i \leq n+1} H_i = \bigcap_{i \leq n} (H_i \cap H_{n+1})$ is non-empty. \blacksquare

Lastly, we have some useful finiteness conditions on convex half-spaces; the former implies that $\mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}(X)$ is finitely-separating, and the latter allows us to replace finite sets with their convex hulls.

Lemma 1.22. *Any two disjoint convex sets $\emptyset \neq A, B \subseteq X$ can be separated by a half-space $A \subseteq H \subseteq \neg B$, and furthermore we have $d(A, B) = |\{H \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}(X) : A \subseteq H \subseteq \neg B\}|$.*

Proof. Pick a geodesic $A \ni x_0 G x_1 G \cdots G x_n \in B$, where $n := d(A, B)$. Then $H := \text{cone}_{x_1}(x_0)$, which is a half-space by Lemma 1.15, separates A, B since $x_0 = \text{proj}_A(x_n)$, and thus we have $A \subseteq \text{cone}_{x_n}(x_0) \subseteq \text{cone}_{x_1}(x_0)$ and $B \subseteq \text{cone}_{x_0}(x_n) \subseteq \text{cone}_{x_0}(x_1)$.

Moreover, each such half-space $A \subseteq H \subseteq \neg B$ satisfies $x_i \in H \not\subseteq x_{i+1}$ for a unique $i < n$, and conversely each pair (x_i, x_{i+1}) has a unique half-space separating them, so we have the desired bijection. ■

Lemma 1.23. *Every interval $[x, y]$ is finite. More generally, if $A \subseteq X$ is finite, then so is $\text{cvx}(A)$.*

Proof. The singletons $\{x\}$ and $\{y\}$ are convex, so there are finitely-many half-spaces $H \subseteq [x, y]$. But each $z \in [x, y]$ is determined uniquely by those half-spaces containing it, so $[x, y]$ is finite.

Let $A := \{x_0, \dots, x_n\}$. Since $\text{cvx}(A) = \text{proj}_A(X)$, we have by Remark 1.14 that points in $\text{cvx}(A)$ are of the form $\langle x, x_n, \dots, \langle x, x_2, \langle x, x_1, x_0 \rangle \rangle \rangle$, which is finite by induction using that intervals are finite. ■

2. THE MAIN CONSTRUCTIONS

Let (X, G) be a connected locally-finite quasi-tree, which, in the context of Theorem A, stands for a single component of the locally-finite graphing of the CBER. For Theorem B to apply, we need to first identify a family of finitely-separating cuts therein.

2.1. Dense cuts induced by quasi-trees. Since X is a quasi-tree, and thus does not have arbitrarily long cycles, we expect that there is some finite bound $R < \infty$ such that the ends in $\widehat{X} \setminus X$ are ‘limits’ of cuts $\mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X) \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X)$ with boundary diameter bounded by R . We show that this is indeed the case, in the sense that $\mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X) \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$ is dense towards ends of (X, G) .

Lemma 2.1. *Let $f : (X, G) \rightarrow (Y, T)$ be a coarse-equivalence between connected graphs. For a fixed $H \in \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(Y)$, $\text{diam}(\partial_{\text{v}} f^{-1}(H))$ is uniformly bounded in terms of $\text{diam}(\partial_{\text{v}} H)$.*

Proof. Since f is bornologous, let $S < \infty$ be such that xGx' implies $d(f(x), f(x')) \leq S$, so that for any $(x, x') \in \partial_{\text{e}} f^{-1}(H)$, there is a path of length $\leq S$ between $f(x) \notin H$ and $f(x') \in H$. Thus both $d(f(x), \partial_{\text{v}} H)$ and $d(f(x'), \partial_{\text{v}} H)$ are bounded by S , so $f(\partial_{\text{v}} f^{-1}(H)) \subseteq \text{Ball}_S(\partial_{\text{v}} H)$ and hence

$$\text{diam}(f(\partial_{\text{v}} f^{-1}(H))) \leq \text{diam}(\partial_{\text{v}} H) + 2S.$$

That f is a coarse-equivalence gives us a uniform bound of $\text{diam}(\partial_{\text{v}} f^{-1}(H))$ in terms of $\text{diam}(\partial_{\text{v}} H)$. ■

In particular, if $\text{diam}(\partial_{\text{v}} H)$ is itself also uniformly bounded, then so is $\text{diam}(\partial_{\text{v}} f^{-1}(H))$.

Proposition 2.2. *The class of connected locally-finite graphs in which $\mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}$ is dense towards ends for some $R < \infty$ is invariant under coarse equivalence.*

Proof. Let $(X, G), (Y, T)$ be connected locally-finite graphs, $f : X \rightarrow Y$ be a coarse equivalence with quasi-inverse $g : Y \rightarrow X$, and suppose $\mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq S}(Y)$ is dense towards ends for some $S < \infty$. By Lemma 2.1, pick some $R < \infty$ so that for any $H \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq S}(Y)$, we have $f^{-1}(H) \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X)$.

Fix an end $p \in \widehat{X} \setminus X$ with $p \in \widehat{A}$ for some $A \in \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X)$. We need to find some $B \in \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(Y)$ such that $\widehat{f}(p) \in \widehat{B}$ and $f^{-1}(B) \subseteq A$, for then $\widehat{f}(p) \in \widehat{B}$ for some $B \supseteq H \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq S}(Y)$, and hence we have

$$p \in \widehat{f^{-1}(H)} \subseteq \widehat{f^{-1}(B)} \subseteq \widehat{A}$$

with $f^{-1}(H) \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X)$. For convenience, let $D < \infty$ be the uniform distance $d(1_X, g \circ f)$.

To this end, note that $\widehat{f}(p) \in \widehat{B}$ iff $p \in \widehat{f^{-1}(B)}$. Since $p \in \widehat{A}$, the latter can occur if $|A \triangle f^{-1}(B)| < \infty$, and so we need to find such a $B \in \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(Y)$ with the additional property that $f^{-1}(B) \subseteq A$.

Attempt 1. Set $B := g^{-1}(A) \in \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(Y)$. Then $f^{-1}(B) \subseteq \text{Ball}_D(A)$ since if $(g \circ f)(x) \in A$, then

$$d(x, A) \leq d(x, (g \circ f)(x)) \leq d(1_X, g \circ f) = D.$$

By local-finiteness of G , we see that $A \triangle f^{-1}(B) = A \setminus f^{-1}(B)$ is finite, as desired.

However, it is *not* the case that $f^{-1}(B) \subseteq A$. To remedy this, we ‘shrink’ A by D to A' so that $\text{Ball}_D(A') \subseteq A$, and take $B := g^{-1}(A')$ instead. Indeed, $A' := \neg \text{Ball}_D(\neg A) \subseteq A$ works, since $f^{-1}(B) \subseteq \text{Ball}_D(A')$ as before, so $A' \triangle f^{-1}(B) = A' \setminus f^{-1}(B)$ is finite. Also, $A \triangle A'$ is finite since $x \in A \triangle A'$ iff $x \in A$ and $d(x, \neg A) \leq D$, so $A \triangle f^{-1}(B)$ is finite too. It remains to show that $\text{Ball}_D(A') \subseteq A$, for then $f^{-1}(B) \subseteq A$ as desired.

Indeed, if $y \in \text{Ball}_D(A')$, then by the (reverse) triangle-inequality we have $d(y, \neg A) \geq d(x, \neg A) - d(x, y)$ for all $x \in A'$. But $d(x, \neg A) > D$, strictly, so $d(y, \neg A) > D - D = 0$, and hence $y \in A$. ■

Corollary 2.3. *If (X, G) is a locally-finite quasi-tree, then the subpocset $\mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X) \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$ is dense towards ends for some $R < \infty$.*

Proof. Observe that $\mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq 2}(T)$ is dense towards ends for any tree T , so Proposition 2.2 proves the density of $\mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X)$ for some $R < \infty$. By Lemma 1.8, there is a subpocset $\mathcal{H}' \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty}(X) \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$ dense towards ends such that for every $H' \in \mathcal{H}'$, we have $\partial_e H' \subseteq \partial_e H$ for some $H \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X)$. Hence we have $H' \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X) \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$, so the result follows. ■

The cuts $\mathcal{H} := \mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X) \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$ obtained here will be our starting point for Theorem B, so we need to show that it is finitely-separating. Indeed, since (X, G) is locally-finite, the R -ball around any fixed $x \in X$ is finite, so any $H \in \mathcal{H}$ with $x \in \partial_e H$ is contained in said R -ball. Thus, by Lemma 1.5, \mathcal{H} is finitely-separating.

Furthermore, we have by Lemma 1.4 that $\mathcal{H} \subseteq 2^X$ is closed and every non-trivial element is isolated. The latter condition allows for the construction in Theorem B to continue.

2.2. The dual median graph of a profinite pocset. We now present a classical construction in geometric group theory (see [Dun79], [Rol98], [Sag95], and [NR03] for other applications) of a ‘tree-like’ graph associated to a profinite pocset \mathcal{H} with every non-trivial element isolated. In the context of Theorem A, this will be applied to the pocset $\mathcal{H}_{\text{diam}(\partial) \leq R}(X) \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}(X)$ of cuts in a locally-finite graph (X, G) , and is also the first step in the construction in Theorem B.

Definition 2.4. An *orientation* on \mathcal{H} is an upward-closed subset $U \subseteq \mathcal{H}$ containing exactly one of $H, \neg H$ for each $H \in \mathcal{H}$. We let $\mathcal{U}(\mathcal{H})$ denote the set of all orientations on \mathcal{H} and let $\mathcal{U}^\circ(\mathcal{H})$ denote the clopen ones.

Intuitively, an orientation is a ‘maximally consistent’ choice of half-spaces².

Example 2.5. Each $x \in X$ induces its *principal orientation* $\hat{x} := \{H \in \mathcal{H} : x \in H\} = \mathcal{H} \cap \pi_x^{-1}(1)$ – which is clearly clopen in \mathcal{H} – and gives us a canonical map $X \rightarrow \mathcal{U}^\circ(\mathcal{H})$. However, this map is *not necessarily* injective, and we call a fiber $[x]_{\mathcal{H}} := \{y \in X : \hat{x} = \hat{y}\}$ thereof an \mathcal{H} -block.

Proposition 2.6. *Let \mathcal{H} be a profinite pocset with every non-trivial element isolated. Then the graph $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$, whose vertices are clopen orientations $\mathcal{U}^\circ(\mathcal{H})$ and whose edges are pairs $\{U, V\}$ with $V = U \triangle \{H, \neg H\}$ for some \subseteq -minimal $H \in U \setminus \{\emptyset, X\}$, is a median graph with path metric $d(U, V) = |U \triangle V|/2$ and medians*

$$\begin{aligned} \langle U, V, W \rangle &:= \{H \in \mathcal{H} : H \text{ belongs to at least two of } U, V, W\} \\ &= (U \cap V) \cup (V \cap W) \cup (U \cap W). \end{aligned}$$

Proof. First, $V := U \triangle \{H, \neg H\}$ as above is clopen since $H, \neg H \in \mathcal{H}^*$ are isolated (whence $\{H\}, \{\neg H\}$ are clopen), and it is an orientation by \subseteq -minimality of H . That $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ is connected follows from the following claim by noting that $U \triangle V \not\subseteq \emptyset, X$ is clopen, so it is a compact set of isolated points, whence finite.

Claim ([Sag95, Theorem 3.3]). There is a path between U, V iff $U \triangle V$ is finite, in which case

$$d(U, V) = |U \triangle V|/2 = |U \setminus V| = |V \setminus U|.$$

Proof. If $(U_i)_{i < n}$ is a path from $U =: U_0$ to $V =: U_{n-1}$, then, letting $\{H_i, \neg H_i\} := U_i \triangle U_{i-1}$ for all $1 \leq i < n$ gives us a sequence $(H_i)_{i < n}$ inducing³ this path, whence $U \triangle V$ consists of $\{H_i\}_{i < n}$ and their complements. Thus $U \triangle V = 2n = 2d(U, V)$, as desired.

²This can be formalized by letting \sim be the equivalence relation on \mathcal{H} given by $H \sim \neg H$. Letting $\partial : \mathcal{H} \rightarrow \mathcal{H}/\sim$ denote the quotient map, orientations $U \subseteq \mathcal{H}$ then correspond precisely to sections $\varphi : \mathcal{H}/\sim \rightarrow \mathcal{H}$ of ∂ such that $\varphi(\partial H) \not\subseteq \neg \varphi(\partial K)$ for every $H, K \in \mathcal{H}$; the latter condition rules out ‘orientations’ of the form $\leftarrow | \rightarrow$.

³In the sense that $U_i = U_{i-1} \triangle \{H_i, \neg H_i\}$ and $H_i \in U_i$ for each $1 \leq i < n$; see [Tse20, Definition 2.20].

Conversely, if $U \triangle V = \{H_1, \dots, H_n\} \sqcup \{K_1, \dots, K_m\}$ with $U \setminus V = \{H_i\}$ and $V \setminus U = \{K_j\}$, then $\neg H_i \in V \setminus U$ and $\neg K_j \in U \setminus V$ for all $i < n$ and $j < m$, so $n = m$ and $V = U \cup \{\neg H_i\} \setminus \{H_i\}$. We claim that there is a permutation $\sigma \in S_n$ such that $(H_{\sigma(i)})$ induces a path from $U =: U_0$, which is the desired path from U to V . Choose a minimal $H \in \{H_i\}$, which is also minimal in U : if $K \subseteq H$ for some $K \in U$, then $\neg H \subseteq \neg K$, and hence $\neg K \in V$, so $K = H_i \subseteq H$ for some i , forcing $K = H$. Set $U_1 := U \triangle \{H, \neg H\}$, which is a clopen orientation. Continuing in this manner by choosing a minimal element in $\{H_i\} \setminus \{H\}$ – and so on – gives us the desired path with $d(U, V) = n$. \square

Finally, we show that $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ is a median graph. Fix $U, V, W \in \mathcal{U}^\circ(\mathcal{H})$, and note that for any $M \in \mathcal{U}^\circ(\mathcal{H})$, we have by the triangle inequality that $M \in [U, V]$ iff $(U \setminus M) \cup (M \setminus V) \subseteq U \setminus V$, which clearly occurs iff $U \cap V \subseteq M \subseteq U \cup V$. Thus, a vertex M lies in the triple intersection $[U, V] \cap [V, W] \cap [U, W]$ iff

$$(U \cap V) \cup (V \cap W) \cup (U \cap W) \subseteq M \subseteq (U \cup V) \cap (V \cup W) \cap (U \cup W).$$

Note that the two sides coincide, so $M = \langle U, V, W \rangle$ – which is clopen if U, V, W are – is as claimed. \blacksquare

Given such a pocset \mathcal{H} , the graph $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ constructed above is called the *dual*⁴ median graph of \mathcal{H} . An important special case of this construction is when \mathcal{H} is *nested*, in which case $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ is a tree.

Lemma 2.7. *Let \mathcal{H} be a profinite pocset with non-trivial points isolated. If \mathcal{H} is nested and $(H_i)_{i < n} \subseteq \mathcal{H}$ induces a path in $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ with no backtracking, then (H_i) is strictly increasing.*

Proof. Let $(U_i)_{i < n}$ be the induced path. By definition, we have $U_{i+1} = U_{i-1} \cup \{\neg H_i, \neg H_{i-1}\} \setminus \{H_i, H_{i-1}\}$, so $H_i \neq \neg H_{i-1}$, lest $U_{i+1} = U_{i-1}$. Thus, since $H_i \in U_i = U_{i-1} \cup \{\neg H_{i-1}\} \setminus \{H_{i-1}\}$, we see that $H_i \in U_{i-1}$. Clearly $H_i \neq H_{i-1}$. It suffices to remove the three cases when $\neg H_i \subseteq H_{i-1}$, $H_{i-1} \subseteq \neg H_i$, and $H_i \subseteq H_{i-1}$, since then nestedness of \mathcal{H} gives us $H_{i-1} \subsetneq H_i$, as desired.

Indeed, if $\neg H_i \subseteq H_{i-1}$, then $H_{i-1} \in U_{i+1}$ by upward-closure of $U_{i+1} \ni \neg H_i$. But since $H_{i-1} \neq \neg H_i$, we have by definition of U_{i+1} that $H_{i-1} \in U_i$, a contradiction. The other cases are similar. \blacksquare

Corollary 2.8. *If \mathcal{H} is nested, then $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ is a tree.*

Proof. A cycle in $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ is induced by a *strictly* increasing chain $H_0 \subset \dots \subset H_n \subset H_0$, which is absurd. \blacksquare

Nonetheless, in the general non-nested case, $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ still admits a *canonical* spanning tree, which we prove in the following section.

2.3. Canonical spanning trees. We now present the Borel cycle-cutting algorithm that can be preformed canonically on any countable median graph with finite hyperplanes. We do so by colouring the half-spaces $\mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(X)$ into certain nested half-spaces $\mathcal{H}_n \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}(X)$, from which we inductively build a spanning forest by leveraging a tree structure on the \mathcal{H}_n -blocks X/\mathcal{H}_n . This tree is constructed as follows.

Lemma 2.9. *For any subpocset $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}(X)$, the principal orientations map $X \rightarrow \mathcal{U}^\circ(\mathcal{H})$ is surjective.*

Proof. Let $U \in \mathcal{U}^\circ(\mathcal{H})$, we need to find some $x \in X$ with $U = \hat{x}$. Since $U \subseteq \mathcal{H}$ is clopen, there is a finite set $A \subseteq X$ – which we may assume to be convex by Corollary 1.23 – such that for all $H \in \mathcal{H}$, we have $H \in U$ iff there is $K \in U$ with $H \cap A = K \cap A$. Note that $K \cap A \neq \emptyset$ for every $K \in U$, since otherwise $\emptyset \in U$. Furthermore, $H \cap K \neq \emptyset$ for every $H, K \in U$, since otherwise we have $H \subseteq \neg K$, and so $\neg K \in U$.

By Lemma 1.21, we have $(H \cap A) \cap (K \cap A) = H \cap K \cap A \neq \emptyset$, and applying it again furnishes some $x \in \bigcap_{H \in U} H \cap A$ in X . Thus $U \subseteq \hat{x}$, so $U = \hat{x}$ since both are orientations. \blacksquare

This lemma is crucial, in that it induces an isomorphism $X/\mathcal{H} \cong \mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ in the case when \mathcal{H} is finitely-separating. Explicitly, two \mathcal{H} -blocks $([x]_{\mathcal{H}}, [y]_{\mathcal{H}})$ are said to be *G-adjacent* if $(\hat{x}, \hat{y}) \in \mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$.

Proposition 2.10. *Every countable median graph with finite hyperplanes admits a canonical spanning tree.*

⁴The name is justified by a Stone-type duality between median graphs with median homomorphisms and profinite pocsets whose non-trivial points are isolated with continuous maps, where from a median graph one can construct a canonical pocset of ‘convex’ half-spaces (see [CPTT23, Section 2.D] for details).

Proof. Let (X, G) be a countable median graph with finite hyperplanes. By Corollary 1.19, if two half-spaces $H, K \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(X)$ are non-nested, then $\partial_v H \cap \partial_v K \neq \emptyset$, so looking at the intersection graph of the boundaries furnishes a countable colouring $\mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(X) = \bigsqcup_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \mathcal{H}_n^*$ such that each $H, \neg H$ receive the same color and that each $\mathcal{H}_n := \mathcal{H}_n^* \cup \{\emptyset, X\}$ is a *nested* subpocset. For each $n \in \mathbb{N}$, let $\mathcal{K}_n := \bigcup_{m \geq n} \mathcal{H}_m$.

We shall inductively construct an increasing chain of subforests $T_n \subseteq G$ such that the components of T_n are exactly the \mathcal{K}_n -blocks. Then, the increasing union $T := \bigcup_n T_n$ is a spanning tree, since each $(x, y) \in G$ lies in a \mathcal{K}_n -block for sufficiently large n (namely, the n such that $\text{cone}_x(y) \in \mathcal{H}_{n-1}^*$, since $\text{cone}_x(y)$ and its complement are the only half-spaces separating x and y by Proposition 1.18).

Since each pair of distinct points is separated by a half-space, the $\mathcal{K}_0 = \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}(X)$ -blocks are singletons, so put $T_0 := \emptyset$. Suppose that a forest T_n is constructed as required. Note that each \mathcal{K}_{n+1} -block $Y \in X/\mathcal{K}_{n+1}$ is not separated by any half-spaces in \mathcal{H}_m for $m > n$, but is separated (by Proposition 1.18) by \mathcal{H}_n into the \mathcal{K}_n -blocks contained in Y , and those correspond precisely to the \mathcal{H}_n -blocks in Y/\mathcal{H}_n . For each G -adjacent pair $A, B \in Y/\mathcal{H}_n$, which is separated by a unique half-space $H \in \mathcal{H}_n$ by Lemma 1.22, we may pick an edge from the *finite* hyperplane $\partial_e H$. Since each Y/\mathcal{H}_n is a tree by Corollary 2.8, and a single edge is picked between every pair of G -adjacent blocks therein, the graph T_{n+1} obtained from T_n by adding all such edges is a forest whose components are exactly the \mathcal{K}_{n+1} -blocks. ■

The following lemma allows one to apply this proposition to the dual median graph $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ of a subpocset $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty} \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}$ of finitely-separating cuts.

Lemma 2.11. *The dual median graph $\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H})$ of a subpocset $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \mathcal{H}_{\partial < \infty} \cap \mathcal{H}_{\text{conn}}$ of finitely-separating cuts has finite hyperplanes.*

Proof. Fix $K \in \mathcal{H}_{\text{cvx}}^*(\mathcal{M}(\mathcal{H}))$, which by Proposition 1.18 is of the form $K = \text{cone}_V(U)$ for some (and hence any) $(U, V) \in \partial_e K$, and we have by Proposition 2.6 that $V = U \triangle \{H, \neg H\}$ for some (non-trivial) minimal $H \in U$. We claim that any other edge $(U', V') \in \partial_e K$ can be reached from (U, V) by simultaneously flipping only the half-spaces $H'_0, \dots, H'_n \in \mathcal{H}^*$ non-nested with H , of which there are finitely-many by Lemma 1.10.

Since the edges $(U, V), (U', V')$ induce the same hyperplane $\partial_e K$, it suffices by Proposition 1.18 to prove this for when (U', V') is an edge of a square parallel to (U, V) , in which case there is some minimal $H' \in \mathcal{H}^*$ flipping both U to U' and V to V' . We have some easy observations.

1. H, H' are non-nested. Indeed, $H' \not\subseteq H$ and $H \not\subseteq H'$ by minimality; if $H \subseteq \neg H'$, then $\neg H' \in U$; and if $\neg H \subseteq H'$, then H' is not minimal in U .
2. $H \in U'$ is still minimal. Indeed, since $U' = U \triangle \{H', \neg H'\}$, the only way this can fail is if $\neg H' \subseteq H$, but this contradicts minimality of H .

Thus, $(U', V') \in \partial_e K$ is obtained by flipping $H \in U'$, which propagates this induction. ■

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