

Johns Hopkins University

The synthetic theory of ∞ -categories vs the synthetic theory of ∞ -categories

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The motivation for ∞ -categories

Mere I-categories are insufficient habitats for sophisticated mathematical objects like motives that have higher-dimensional transformations encoding relevant "higher homotopical information."

A better setting is given by ∞ -categories, where the usual sets of morphisms are enriched to spaces of morphisms.

 \rightsquigarrow Thus, we want to extend 1-category theory (e.g., adjunctions, limits and colimits, universal properties, Kan extensions) to ∞ -category theory.

First problem: it is hard to say exactly what an ∞ -category is.

The idea of an ∞ -category

 ∞ -categories are the nickname that Lurie gave to $(\infty, 1)$ -categories, which are categories weakly enriched over homotopy types.

The schematic idea is that an ∞ -category should have

- objects
- I-arrows between these objects
- with composites of these I-arrows witnessed by invertible 2-arrows
- with composition associative up to invertible 3-arrows (and unital)
- with these witnesses coherent up to invertible arrows all the way up

But this definition is tricky to make precise.

Models of ∞ -categories

The notion of ∞ -category is made precise by several models:



 topological categories and relative categories are the simplest to define but do not have enough maps between them

quasi-categories (nee. weak Kan complexes),Rezk spaces (nee. complete Segal spaces),Segal categories, and(saturated I-trivial weak) I-complicial sets

each have enough maps and also an internal hom, and in fact any of these categories can be enriched over any of the others

The analytic vs synthetic theory of ∞ -categories

Q: How might you develop the category theory of ∞ -categories? Strategies:

• work analytically to give categorical definitions and prove theorems using the combinatorics of one model

(eg., Joyal, Lurie, Gepner-Haugseng, Cisinski in qCat; Kazhdan-Varshavsky, Rasekh in <u>Rezk</u>; Simpson in <u>Segal</u>)

• work synthetically to give categorical definitions and prove theorems in all four models qCat, Rezk, Segal, 1-Comp at once

(R-Verity: an ∞-cosmos axiomatizes the common features of the categories qCat, Rezk, Segal, 1-Comp of ∞-categories)

• work synthetically in a simplicial type theory augmenting HoTT to prove theorems in Rezk

(R-Shulman: an ∞ -category is a type with unique binary composites in which isomorphism is equivalent to identity)

Plan



0. The analytic theory of ∞ -categories

'' ∞ -category theory for experts''

I. The synthetic theory of ∞ -categories (in an ∞ -cosmos) " ∞ -category theory for graduate students"

2. The synthetic theory of ∞ -categories (in homotopy type theory) " ∞ -category theory for undergraduates"





The synthetic theory of ∞ -categories (in an ∞ -cosmos)

∞ -cosmoi of ∞ -categories

An ∞ -cosmos is an axiomatization of the properties of qCat.

defn. An ∞ -cosmos has:

- ∞ -categories A, B as objects
- functors between ∞ -categories $f: A \to B$, which define the points of a quasi-category Fun $(A, B) = B^A$
- a class of isofibrations $E \twoheadrightarrow B$ with familiar closure properties
- so that (flexible weighted simplicially enriched) limits of diagrams of ∞ -categories and isofibrations exist.

Theorem. qCat, Rezk, Segal, and 1-Comp define ∞ -cosmoi.

Henceforth ∞ -category and ∞ -functor are technical terms that mean the objects and morphisms of some ∞ -cosmos.

The homotopy 2-category

The homotopy 2-category of an ∞ -cosmos is a strict 2-category whose:

- objects are the ∞ -categories A, B in the ∞ -cosmos
- I-cells are the ∞ -functors $f: A \to B$ in the ∞ -cosmos

• 2-cells we call ∞ -natural transformations $A \bigoplus_{g} B$ which are defined to be homotopy classes of I-simplices in Fun(A, B)

Prop. Equivalences in the homotopy 2-category

$$A \underbrace{\stackrel{f}{\underset{g}{\longrightarrow}}}_{g} B \qquad A \underbrace{\stackrel{\mathsf{id}_A}{\underset{gf}{\longrightarrow}}}_{gf} A \qquad B \underbrace{\stackrel{\mathsf{id}_B}{\underset{fg}{\longrightarrow}}}_{fg} B$$

coincide with equivalences in the ∞ -cosmos.

Thus, non-evil 2-categorical definitions are "homotopically correct."

Adjunctions between ∞ -categories

defn. An adjunction between ∞ -categories is an adjunction in the homotopy 2-category., consisting of:

- ∞ -categories A and B
- ∞ -functors $u \colon A \to B$, $f \colon B \to A$
- ∞ -natural transformations B

$$B \underbrace{\stackrel{\mathsf{id}_B}{\overset{\mathsf{id}_B}{\overset{\mathsf{id}_A}}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}_A}}{\overset{id}_A}{\overset{id}$$

far



id

Write $f \dashv u$ to indicate that f is the left adjoint and u is the right adjoint.



The 2-category theory of adjunctions

Since an adjunction between ∞ -categories is just an adjunction in the homotopy 2-category, all 2-categorical theorems about adjunctions become theorems about adjunctions between ∞ -categories.



Prop. Adjoints to a given functor $u \colon A \to B$ are unique up to canonical isomorphism: if $f \dashv u$ and $f' \dashv u$ then $f \cong f'$.

Prop. Any equivalence can be promoted to an adjoint equivalence: if $u: A \xrightarrow{\sim} B$ then u is left and right adjoint to its equivalence inverse.

Composing adjunctions



Proof: The composite 2-cells



define the unit and counit of $ff' \dashv u'u$ satisfying the triangle equalities.

Initial and terminal elements in an ∞ -category

defn. An ∞ -category A has a terminal element iff $1 \overbrace{\square}^{i} A$.

Prop. Right adjoints preserve terminal elements.

Proof: Compose the adjunctions 1

$$1 \underbrace{\stackrel{!}{\overbrace{}}_{t}}_{t} A \underbrace{\stackrel{J}{\overbrace{}}_{u}}_{u} B .$$

£

More generally:

Prop. Right adjoints preserve limits and left adjoints preserve colimits.

Proof: The usual one!

The universal property of adjunctions

Prop.
$$A \xrightarrow[u]{t} B$$
 if and only if $\operatorname{Hom}_A(f, A) \simeq_{A \times B} \operatorname{Hom}_B(B, u)$.

Prop. If $f \dashv u$ with unit η and counit ϵ then

- η is initial in Hom_B(B, u) over B.
- ϵ is terminal in $\operatorname{Hom}_A(f, A)$ over A.





The synthetic theory of ∞ -categories (in homotopy type theory)

The Curry-Howard-Voevodsky correspondence

type theory	set theory	logic	homotopy theory
A	set	proposition	space
x:A	element	proof	point
$\emptyset, 1$	$\emptyset, \{\emptyset\}$	\perp, \top	$\emptyset, *$
$A \times B$	set of pairs	A and B	product space
A + B	disjoint union	A or B	coproduct
$A \to B$	set of functions	A implies B	function space
$x: A \vdash B(x)$	family of sets	predicate	fibration
$x: A \vdash b: B(x)$	fam. of elements	conditional proof	section
$\prod_{x \in A} B(x)$	product	$\forall x.B(x)$	space of sections
$\sum_{x:A}^{x:A} B(x)$	disjoint sum	$\exists x.B(x)$	total space
$p: x =_A y$	x = y	proof of equality	path from x to y
$\sum_{x,y:A} x =_A y$	diagonal	equality relation	path space for A

The identity type family is freely generated by the terms $\operatorname{refl}_x : x =_A x$.

Path induction. If B(x, y, p) is a type family dependent on x, y : A and $p : x =_A y$, then to prove B(x, y, p) it suffices to assume y is x and p is refl_x. I.e., there is a function

$$\mathsf{path-ind}: \left(\prod_{x:A} B(x,x,\mathsf{refl}_x)\right) \to \left(\prod_{x,y:A} \prod_{p:x=_A y} B(x,y,p)\right).$$

The intended model



$\operatorname{Set}^{\mathbf{\Delta}^{\operatorname{op}} imes \mathbf{\Delta}^{\operatorname{op}}}$	\supset	$\mathcal{R}eedy$	\supset	Segal	\supset	Rezk
II				Ш		II
bisimplicial sets		types		types with		types with
				composition		composition
						& univalence

Theorem (Shulman). Homotopy type theory is modeled by the category of Reedy fibrant bisimplicial sets.

Theorem (Rezk). ∞ -categories are modeled by Rezk spaces aka complete Segal spaces.

Shapes in the theory of the directed interval

Our types may depend on other types and also on shapes $\Phi\subset 2^n,$ polytopes embedded in a directed cube, defined in a language

$$op, \bot, \land, \lor, \equiv$$
 and $0, 1, \leq$

satisfying intuitionistic logic and strict interval axioms.

$$\begin{split} \Delta^n &\coloneqq \{(t_1, \dots, t_n): 2^n \mid t_n \leq \dots \leq t_1\} \quad \text{ e.g. } \quad \Delta^1 &\coloneqq 2 \\ \Delta^2 &\coloneqq \begin{cases} (t, t) & (1, 1) \\ (0, 0) & (t, 0) \end{cases} \end{split}$$

$$\begin{split} \partial \Delta^2 &\coloneqq \{(t_1,t_2): 2^2 \mid (t_2 \leq t_1) \land ((0=t_2) \lor (t_2=t_1) \lor (t_1=1)) \} \\ \Lambda^2_1 &\coloneqq \{(t_1,t_2): 2^2 \mid (t_2 \leq t_1) \land ((0=t_2) \lor (t_1=1)) \} \end{split}$$

Extension types



The simplicial type theory allows us to *prove* equivalences between extension types along composites or products of shape inclusions.

Hom types



The hom type for A depends on two terms in A:

 $x,y:A\vdash \mathrm{Hom}_A(x,y)$

$$\operatorname{Hom}_A(x,y) \coloneqq \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \partial \Delta^1 & \xrightarrow{[x,y]} & A \\ \updownarrow & & & \\ \Delta^1 & & \end{array} \right\rangle \operatorname{type}$$

A term f: Hom_A(x, y) defines an arrow in A from x to y.

Semantically, $\sum_{x,y:A} \operatorname{Hom}_A(x,y)$ recovers the ∞ -category of arrows A^2 in the ∞ -cosmos Rezk and $\operatorname{Hom}_A(x,y)$ recovers the comma ∞ -category from x to y.

Segal types \equiv types with binary composition

A type A is Segal iff every composable pair of arrows has a unique composite, i.e., for every $f: \text{Hom}_A(x, y)$ and $g: \text{Hom}_A(y, z)$ the type

$$\left\langle \begin{array}{c} \Lambda_1^2 \xrightarrow{[f,g]} A \\ \downarrow \\ \Delta^2 \end{array} \right\rangle$$

is contractible.

Semantically, a Reedy fibrant bisimplicial set A is Segal if and only if $A^{\Delta^2} \twoheadrightarrow A^{\Lambda_1^2}$ has contractible fibers.

By contractibility,
$$\left\langle \begin{array}{c} \Lambda_1^2 \xrightarrow{[f,g]} A \\ \downarrow \\ \Delta^2 \end{array} \right\rangle$$
 has a unique inhabitant. Write $g \circ f : \operatorname{Hom}_A(x,z)$ for its inner face, *th*e composite of *f* and *g*.

Identity arrows

For any x : A, the constant function defines a term

$$\mathrm{id}_x \coloneqq \lambda t.x \colon \mathrm{Hom}_A(x,x) \coloneqq \left\langle \begin{array}{c} \partial \Delta^1 & \xrightarrow{[x,x]} & A \\ \updownarrow & & & \\ \Delta^1 & & & \end{array} \right\rangle,$$

which we denote by id_x and call the identity arrow.

For any $f: \operatorname{Hom}_A(x, y)$ in a Segal type A, the term

$$\lambda(s,t).f(t):\left\langle \begin{array}{c} \Lambda_1^2 \xrightarrow{[\mathrm{id}_x,f]} A \\ \downarrow \\ \Delta^2 \end{array} \right\rangle$$

witnesses the unit axiom $f = f \circ id_x$.

Associativity of composition

Let A be a Segal type with arrows

 $f: \operatorname{Hom}_A(x,y), \quad g: \operatorname{Hom}_A(y,z), \quad h: \operatorname{Hom}_A(z,w).$

Prop. $h \circ (g \circ f) = (h \circ g) \circ f.$ Proof: Consider the composable arrows in the Segal type $\Delta^1 \to A$:



Composing defines a term in the type $\Delta^2 \to (\Delta^1 \to A)$ which yields a term $\ell \colon \operatorname{Hom}_A(x, w)$ so that $\ell = h \circ (g \circ f)$ and $\ell = (h \circ g) \circ f$.

Isomorphisms

An arrow $f: \operatorname{Hom}_A(x, y)$ in a Segal type is an isomorphism if it has a two-sided inverse $g: \operatorname{Hom}_A(y, x)$. However, the type

$$\sum_{g \colon \operatorname{Hom}_A(y,x)} (g \circ f = \operatorname{id}_x) \times (f \circ g = \operatorname{id}_y)$$

has higher-dimensional structure and is not a proposition. Instead define

$$\mathrm{isiso}(f) \coloneqq \left(\sum_{g \colon \mathrm{Hom}_A(y,x)} g \circ f = \mathrm{id}_x\right) \times \left(\sum_{h \colon \mathrm{Hom}_A(y,x)} f \circ h = \mathrm{id}_y\right).$$

For x, y : A, the type of isomorphisms from x to y is:

$$x\cong_A y\coloneqq \sum_{f:\mathrm{Hom}_A(x,y)}\mathrm{isiso}(f).$$

Rezk types $\equiv \infty$ -categories

By path induction, to define a map

 $\mathsf{path-to-iso} \colon (x =_A y) \to (x \cong_A y)$

for all x, y: A it suffices to define

 $\mathsf{path-to-iso}(\mathsf{refl}_x) \coloneqq \mathsf{id}_x.$

A Segal type A is Rezk iff every isomorphism is an identity, i.e., iff the map path-to-iso: $\prod_{x,y:A} (x =_A y) \to (x \cong_A y)$

is an equivalence.

Discrete types $\equiv \infty$ -groupoids

Similarly by path induction define



$$\mathsf{path-to-arr} \colon (x =_A y) \to \mathsf{Hom}_A(x,y)$$

for all x, y : A by path-to-arr(refl_x) := id_x.

A type A is discrete iff every arrow is an identity, i.e., iff path-to-arr is an equivalence.

Prop. A type is discrete if and only if it is Rezk and all of its arrows are isomorphisms.



∞ -categories for undergraduates

defn. An ∞ -groupoid is a type in which arrows are equivalent to identities:

path-to-arr: $(x = A y) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_A(x, y)$ is an equivalence.

defn. An ∞ -category is a type

which has unique binary composites of arrows:



• and in which isomorphisms are equivalent to identities: path-to-iso: $(x =_A y) \rightarrow (x \cong_A y)$ is an equivalence. Covariant type families \equiv categorical fibrations

A type family $x : A \vdash B(x)$ over a Segal type A is covariant if for every $f : \operatorname{Hom}_A(x, y)$ and u : B(x) there is a unique lift of f with domain u.

The codomain of the unique lift defines a term $f_*u : B(y)$.

Prop. For u: B(x), $f: \operatorname{Hom}_A(x,y)$, and $g: \operatorname{Hom}_A(y,z)$, $g_*(f_*u) = (g \circ f)_*u$ and $(\operatorname{id}_x)_*u = u$.

Prop. If $x : A \vdash B(x)$ is covariant then for each x : A the fiber B(x) is discrete. Thus covariant type families are fibered in ∞ -groupoids.

Prop. Fix a : A. The type family $x : A \vdash Hom_A(a, x)$ is covariant.

The Yoneda lemma

Let $x : A \vdash B(x)$ be a covariant family over a Segal type and fix a : A.

Yoneda lemma. The maps

$$\operatorname{ev-id} \coloneqq \lambda \phi.\phi(a,\operatorname{id}_a) : \left(\prod_{x:A} \operatorname{Hom}_A(a,x) \to B(x)\right) \to B(a)$$

and

$$\mathsf{yon} \coloneqq \lambda u.\lambda x.\lambda f.f_*u: B(a) \to \left(\prod_{x:A}\mathsf{Hom}_A(a,x) \to B(x)\right)$$

are inverse equivalences.

Corollary. A natural isomorphism $\phi : \prod_{x:A} \operatorname{Hom}_A(a, x) \cong \operatorname{Hom}_A(b, x)$ induces an identity $\operatorname{ev-id}(\phi) : b =_A a$ if the type A is Rezk.

The dependent Yoneda lemma

Yoneda lemma. If A is a Segal type and B(x) is a covariant family dependent on x : A, then evaluation at (a, id_a) defines an equivalence

$$\operatorname{ev-id}: \left(\prod_{x:A} \operatorname{Hom}_A(a,x) \to B(x)\right) \to B(a)$$

The Yoneda lemma is a "directed" version of the "transport" operation for identity types, suggesting a dependently-typed generalization analogous to the full induction principle for identity types.

Dependent Yoneda lemma. If A is a Segal type and B(x, y, f) is a covariant family dependent on x, y : A and $f : \text{Hom}_A(x, y)$, then evaluation at (x, x, id_x) defines an equivalence

$$\operatorname{ev-id}: \left(\prod_{x,y:A} \prod_{f:\operatorname{Hom}_A(x,y)} B(x,y,f)\right) \to \prod_{x:A} B(x,x,\operatorname{id}_x)$$

Dependent Yoneda is directed path induction



Slogan: the dependent Yoneda lemma is directed path induction.

Path induction. If B(x, y, p) is a type family dependent on x, y : A and $p : x =_A y$, then to prove B(x, y, p) it suffices to assume y is x and p is refl_x. I.e., there is a function

$$\mathsf{path-ind}: \left(\prod_{x:A} B(x,x,\mathsf{refl}_x)\right) \to \left(\prod_{x,y:A} \prod_{p:x=_A y} B(x,y,p)\right).$$

Arrow induction. If B(x, y, f) is a covariant family dependent on x, y : A and $f : \operatorname{Hom}_A(x, y)$ and A is Segal, then to prove B(x, y, f) it suffices to assume y is x and f is id_x. I.e., there is a function

$$\mathrm{id\text{-}ind}: \left(\prod_{x:A} B(x,x,\mathrm{id}_x)\right) \to \left(\prod_{x,y:A} \prod_{f:\mathrm{Hom}_A(x,y)} B(x,y,f)\right).$$

Closing thoughts

More theorems about ∞ -categories can be proven using analytic methods in a particular model, but there are other advantages to the synthetic approach:

- efficiency: a large part of the theory can be developed simultaneously in many models by working synthetically with ∞-categories as objects in an ∞-cosmos.
- simplification: the axioms of an ∞-cosmos are chosen to simplify proofs by working strictly up to isomorphism insofar as possible.
- model-independence: ∞-cosmology may be used to demonstrate that both analytically- and synthetically-proven results about ∞-categories transfer across suitable "change-of-model" functors.
- compatible with new foundations: synthetic constructions can easily be adapted to simplicial HoTT, which yields further streamlining.

References

For more on the synthetic theories of ∞ -categories, see:

Emily Riehl and Dominic Verity

• draft book in progress:

 $\label{eq:elements} \begin{array}{l} \text{Elements of ∞-Category Theory} \\ \text{www.math.jhu.edu}/\sim \text{eriehl/elements.pdf} \end{array}$

• mini-course lecture notes:

 ∞ -Category Theory from Scratch arXiv:1608.05314

Emily Riehl and Michael Shulman

• A type theory for synthetic ∞-categories, Higher Structures 1(1):116–193, 2017; arXiv:1705.07442