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**DISTRIBUTIVE SEMILATTICES AS RETRACTS OF
ULTRABOOLEAN ONES; FUNCTORIAL INVERSES
WITHOUT ADJUNCTION**

FRIEDRICH WEHRUNG

*Rappelle toi, ma petite Lynn,
la perle du petit dragon...*

ABSTRACT. A $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice is *ultraboolean*, if it is a directed union of finite Boolean $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices. We prove that every distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice is a retract of some ultraboolean $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice. This is established by proving that every finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice is a retract of some finite Boolean $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice, and this in a *functorial* way. This result is, in turn, obtained as a particular case of a category-theoretical result that gives sufficient conditions, for a functor Π , to admit a right inverse. The particular functor Π used for the abovementioned result about ultraboolean semilattices has neither a right nor a left adjoint.

1. INTRODUCTION

Our general kind of problem is the following. We are given a functor \mathbf{F} from a category \mathcal{A} to a category \mathcal{B} , we wish to investigate whether \mathbf{F} has a right inverse (up to equivalence). Also, we suppose that we know how to do this on a subcategory of \mathcal{B} , or, more generally, on a given class of diagrams of \mathcal{B} . We wish to set a general framework that will enable us, under certain conditions, to find a right inverse of \mathbf{F} on a much larger class of diagrams of \mathcal{B} .

How to do this will be stated precisely in a further paper [17]. The present paper is intended to provide a start for that program, and it is motivated by the following example. We denote by \mathcal{L} the category of all lattices, by \mathcal{D} the category of all distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices, and by $\text{Con}_c: \mathcal{L} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ the functor that with a lattice L associates its semilattice $\text{Con}_c L$ of compact congruences, extended naturally to lattice homomorphisms. It is a well-known open problem, stated by R. P. Dilworth in 1945, whether every distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice is isomorphic to $\text{Con}_c L$ for some lattice L . We wish to reduce that problem, or rather some stronger versions about diagrams of semilattices, to a smaller class of distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices for which calculations are easier. Our candidate is the following.

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Definition 1.1. A $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice is *ultraboolean*, if it is a directed union of finite Boolean $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices.

Hence every ultraboolean $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice is distributive (the converse is trivially false, see the three-element chain).

For the present paper's needs, everything boils down to expressing members of the larger class (distributive semilattices) as *retracts* of the members of the smaller class (ultraboolean semilattices). Furthermore, such a retraction needs to be *functorial*. We shall refer to this problem as the *ultraboolean retraction problem*. At first sight, it is not clear whether the functoriality restriction might cause a problem. Indeed, every finite distributive lattice D is a retract of a finite Boolean lattice B . For example, as in [13, Section 1], we can embed D into the power set $B = \mathfrak{P}(J(D))$, where $J(D)$ denotes the poset (i.e., partially ordered set) of join-irreducible elements of D , *via* the map

$$a \mapsto \{p \in J(D) \mid p \leq a\}.$$

This map has a retraction, given by $X \mapsto \bigvee X$. As in [13, Section 1], one can extend ‘canonically’ any $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embedding $f: D \hookrightarrow E$ to a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -homomorphism $g: \mathfrak{P}(J(D)) \rightarrow \mathfrak{P}(J(E))$; however, even for $f = \text{id}_D$, the map g might not be an embedding! Hence this construction is not sufficient to solve the ultraboolean retraction problem.

In order to solve that problem, we need to embed any finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice D into some finite Boolean $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice $\Phi(D)$, *via* a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embedding $\varepsilon_D: D \hookrightarrow \Phi(D)$, with a retraction $\mu_D: \Phi(D) \rightarrow D$, these data being subjected to functoriality conditions, stated precisely in Section 3. Here are some caveats:

- Solving the problem ‘without the retraction’ μ_D is easy: namely, embed D into the universal Boolean semilattice $\text{Bool}(D)$ over D . For this construction, the corresponding embedding $\varepsilon_D: D \hookrightarrow \text{Bool}(D)$ is *not* a meet-embedding as a rule. An explicit construction is given by $\text{Bool}(D) = \mathfrak{P}(D^\#)$ (where $D^\# = D \setminus \{1\}$), $\varepsilon_D(a) = \{x \in D^\# \mid a \not\leq x\}$ (for all $a \in D$). On the other hand, any $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embedding $f: D \hookrightarrow E$ is turned to a *lattice* embedding $g: \text{Bool}(D) \hookrightarrow \text{Bool}(E)$! However, the retracts are lost, for the canonical retraction from $\text{Bool}(D)$ onto D does not satisfy the required commutation conditions.
- For a finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice D , the canonical map from D into $\mathfrak{P}(J(D))$ is, in fact, a *lattice* embedding. However, the requirement that all the maps $\varepsilon_D: D \hookrightarrow \Phi(D)$ be lattice embeddings is too strong to solve the ultraboolean retraction problem. This is showed by a counterexample in Section 10.

Nevertheless, we prove that the ultraboolean retraction problem has a positive solution. This result is, actually, an immediate application of a more general categorical principle, stated in Theorem 5.3. This principle states sufficient conditions for every object of a category \mathcal{A} to be a retract of some object of a category \mathcal{B} , and this functorially. Although some aspects of the formulations might remind of the Adjoint Functor Theorem, it is not hard to prove that in the particular case of the ultraboolean retraction problem, the functorial inverse that we construct does not arise from a functorial adjunction, see Proposition 9.6.

The importance of finite, simple, atomistic lattices for representation problems is highlighted in the paper of P. P. Pálffy and P. Pudlák [11], where it is proved that if a

finite, simple lattice L whose atoms join to the unit is isomorphic to the congruence lattice of a finite algebra, then it is isomorphic to the congruence lattice of a finite set with a finite group action. With this in mind and by using a trick of G. Grätzer and E. T. Schmidt, we give, in Section 11, an easy proof of the result that every $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice is a retract of some directed $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -union of finite, (lattice-)simple, atomistic lattices, and this in a functorial way. Although this proof does not use the result of Theorem 5.3, further potential uses of Theorem 5.3 are suggested by open problems such as Problem 5 (see Section 12).

While the present paper deals with the *existence* of functorial retractions, the paper [17] deals with how to *use* functorial retractions in order to prove that certain functors have large range.

While this paper is mainly category-theoretical, it aims at building up tools that will be used later in universal algebra. For this reason, the author chose to write it in probably more detail than a category theorist would wish, with the hope to make it reasonably intelligible to members of both communities.

However, a direct semilattice-theoretical proof of Theorem 9.5 (solution of the ultraboolean retraction problem) is not easier than the categorical proof involving Theorem 5.3, and it does not lead itself to further potential generalizations such as those suggested in Section 12. This, together with the categorical approach required in [17], motivates our choice of the language of categories instead of the one of universal algebra.

2. BASIC CONCEPTS

Most of our categorical notions are borrowed from S. Mac Lane [10]. For a category \mathcal{C} , we shall denote by $\text{Ob } \mathcal{C}$ the class of *objects* of \mathcal{C} , by \mathcal{C}^{iso} the category whose objects are those of \mathcal{C} and whose morphisms are the isomorphisms of \mathcal{C} . We shall denote by $\text{dom } f$ the domain of a morphism f of \mathcal{C} . As usual, a morphism in \mathcal{C} is a *monic* (resp., a *section*), if it is left cancellable (resp., left invertible) for the composition of morphisms. Of course, every section is a monic.

We shall view every quasi-ordered set $\langle P, \preceq \rangle$ as a category in which hom-sets have at most one element. Technically speaking, our quasi-ordered sets may be proper classes, but in our context this will create no difficulty. For $p \preceq q$ in P , we shall denote by $p \rightarrow q$ the unique morphism from p to q . An *ideal* of P is a subset X of P such that $p \preceq x$ implies that $p \in X$, for all $\langle p, x \rangle \in P \times X$. We denote by $\downarrow X$ the ideal generated by X , for all $X \subseteq P$, and we put $\downarrow p = \downarrow \{p\}$, for all $p \in P$. We put $\mathbf{2} = \{0, 1\}$, the two-element poset. For quasi-ordered sets $\langle P, \preceq_P \rangle$ and $\langle Q, \preceq_Q \rangle$, a map $f: P \rightarrow Q$ is an *embedding*, if $x \preceq_P y$ iff $f(x) \preceq_Q f(y)$, for all $x, y \in P$; we say that f is a *lower embedding*, if f is an embedding and the range of f is an ideal of Q .

For a meet-semilattice S , we put $S^= = S \setminus \{1\}$ if S has a unit, $S^= = S$ otherwise. Furthermore, we denote by $M(S)$ the set of all meet-irreducible elements of S , that is, those $u \in S^=$ such that $u = x \wedge y$ implies that either $u = x$ or $u = y$, for all $x, y \in S$. Dually, for a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice S , we denote by $J(S)$ the set of all join-irreducible elements of S .

We denote by ω the set of all natural numbers and by $\mathfrak{P}(X)$ the power set of X , for any set X .

3. FUNCTORIAL RETRACTS

Definition 3.1. Let \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} be subcategories of a category \mathcal{C} . We denote by $\text{Retr}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$ the category whose objects and morphisms are the following:

- *Objects:* all quadruples $\langle A, B, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$, where $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$, $B \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$, $\varepsilon: A \rightarrow B$, $\mu: B \rightarrow A$, and $\mu \circ \varepsilon = \text{id}_A$.
- *Morphisms:* a morphism from $\langle A, B, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ to $\langle A', B', \varepsilon', \mu' \rangle$ is a pair $\langle f, g \rangle$, where $f: A \rightarrow A'$ in \mathcal{A} , $g: B \rightarrow B'$ in \mathcal{B} , $g \circ \varepsilon = \varepsilon' \circ f$, and $\mu' \circ g = f \circ \mu$ (see Figure 3.1). Composition of morphisms is defined by the rule $\langle f', g' \rangle \circ \langle f, g \rangle = \langle f' \circ f, g' \circ g \rangle$.

In short, $\text{Retr}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$ is the category of all retractions of an object of \mathcal{B} onto an object of \mathcal{A} .

The *projection functor* from $\text{Retr}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$ to \mathcal{A} is the functor from $\text{Retr}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$ to \mathcal{A} that sends any object $\langle A, B, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ to A and any morphism $\langle f, g \rangle$ to f .

$$\begin{array}{ccc} B & \xrightarrow{g} & B' \\ \varepsilon \updownarrow \mu & & \varepsilon' \updownarrow \mu' \\ A & \xrightarrow{f} & A' \end{array}$$

FIGURE 3.1. Morphisms in $\text{Retr}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$.

Definition 3.2. We say that \mathcal{A} is a *functorial retract* of \mathcal{B} , if the projection functor from $\text{Retr}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$ to \mathcal{A} has a right inverse. We shall call such an inverse a *functorial retraction* of \mathcal{A} to \mathcal{B} .

Hence a functorial retraction may be viewed as a triple $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ that satisfies the following conditions:

- Φ is a functor from \mathcal{A} to \mathcal{B} .
- For every morphism $f: X \rightarrow Y$ in \mathcal{A} , we have $\varepsilon_X: X \rightarrow \Phi(X)$, $\mu_X: \Phi(X) \rightarrow X$, $\mu_X \circ \varepsilon_X = \text{id}_X$, $\Phi(f) \circ \varepsilon_X = \varepsilon_Y \circ f$, and $\mu_Y \circ \Phi(f) = f \circ \mu_X$ (see Figure 3.2).

Observe that we do not require the diagram of Figure 3.2 to be commutative, for example, $\Phi(f) \neq \varepsilon_Y \circ f \circ \mu_X$ in general.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \Phi(X) & \xrightarrow{\Phi(f)} & \Phi(Y) \\ \varepsilon_X \updownarrow \mu_X & & \varepsilon_Y \updownarrow \mu_Y \\ X & \xrightarrow{f} & Y \end{array}$$

FIGURE 3.2. Functorial retraction of \mathcal{A} to \mathcal{B} .

4. SHELTERING BETWEEN FULL SUBCATEGORIES

Definition 4.1. An *ideal of monics* of a category \mathcal{C} is a subcategory \mathcal{M} of \mathcal{C} satisfying the following conditions:

- (i) Every identity of \mathcal{C} belongs to \mathcal{M} .
- (ii) $g \circ f \in \mathcal{M}$ implies that $f \in \mathcal{M}$, for all morphisms f and g of \mathcal{C} such that $g \circ f$ is defined.
- (iii) Every morphism in \mathcal{M} is a monic.

Of course, the monics of \mathcal{C} form the largest ideal of monics of \mathcal{C} , while the sections of \mathcal{C} form the smallest ideal of monics of \mathcal{C} . An example of often used ideal of monics distinct from both the class of all monics and the class of all sections is constructed within the category of all commutative monoids, as the ideal of all one-to-one monoid homomorphisms f that satisfy $f(x) \leq f(y) \Rightarrow x \leq y$, where $x \leq y$ is an abbreviation for $(\exists z)(x + z = y)$.

Definition 4.2. Let \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} be full subcategories of a category \mathcal{C} and let \mathcal{M} be an ideal of monics of \mathcal{C} . A *shelter of \mathcal{C} by \mathcal{B} with respect to $\langle \mathcal{A}, \mathcal{M} \rangle$* consists of the following data (illustrated on Figure 4.1):

- (i) A functor \mathbf{B} from \mathcal{C}^{iso} to \mathcal{B}^{iso} .
- (ii) A natural transformation $S \mapsto \eta_S$ from the identity functor on \mathcal{C}^{iso} to the functor \mathbf{B} , such that $\eta_S \in \mathcal{M}$, for every $S \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{C}$.
- (iii) A map that with every morphism $g: S \rightarrow A$, where $S \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{C}$ and $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A} \cup \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$, associates a morphism $g^{\mathbf{B}}: \mathbf{B}(S) \rightarrow A$ such that $g = g^{\mathbf{B}} \circ \eta_S$.

Furthermore, we require the following conditions to be satisfied:

- (1) For every isomorphism $f: S \rightarrow T$ in \mathcal{C} and every $g: T \rightarrow A$, with $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A} \cup \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$, $g^{\mathbf{B}} \circ \mathbf{B}(f) = (g \circ f)^{\mathbf{B}}$ (see Figure 4.2(1)).
- (2) For every $h: S \rightarrow A$ and every isomorphism $u: A \rightarrow A'$ with either $A, A' \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$ or $A, A' \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$, $(u \circ h)^{\mathbf{B}} = u \circ h^{\mathbf{B}}$ (see Figure 4.2(2)).

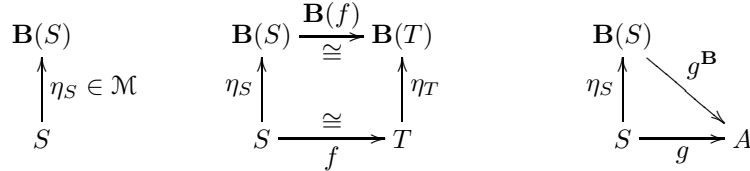


FIGURE 4.1. Data describing a shelter.

Remark 4.3. In all examples considered in this paper, \mathcal{B} is contained in \mathcal{A} .

5. STATEMENT OF THE MAIN THEOREM

Definition 5.1. Let \mathcal{M} be an ideal of monics of a category \mathcal{C} . For $S \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{C}$, we denote by $\mathcal{M}(S)$ the set of all morphisms $u: X \rightarrow S$ in \mathcal{M} , and we put $\mathcal{M}^*(S) = \mathcal{M}(S) \setminus \mathcal{M}^{\text{iso}}$. Furthermore, for $u: X \rightarrow S$ and $v: Y \rightarrow S$ in \mathcal{M} , we put

$$u \trianglelefteq_S v \iff (\exists f: X \rightarrow Y)(u = v \circ f); \quad (5.1)$$

$$u \sim_S v \iff (u \trianglelefteq_S v \text{ and } v \trianglelefteq_S u); \quad (5.2)$$

$$u \triangleleft_S v \iff (u \trianglelefteq_S v \text{ and } v \not\trianglelefteq_S u). \quad (5.3)$$

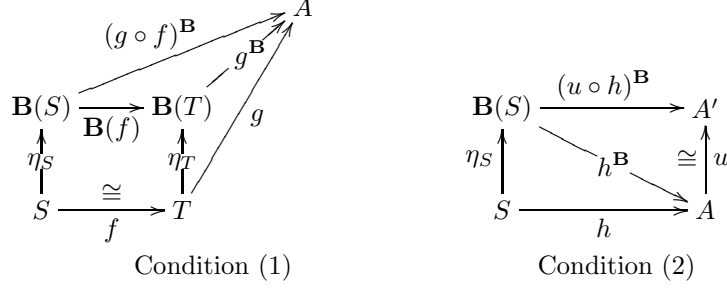


FIGURE 4.2. Additional features of a shelter.

Obviously, \trianglelefteq_S is a quasi-ordering on $\mathcal{M}(S)$ and \sim_S is the associated equivalence. In case $u \trianglelefteq_S v$, we shall denote by u/v the unique $f: X \rightarrow Y$ satisfying $u = v \circ f$. Necessarily, $f \in \mathcal{M}$, and f is an isomorphism iff $u \sim_S v$. We shall denote by $\text{lh } S$ (the *length of* S) the length of the quasi-ordered set $\langle \mathcal{M}(S), \trianglelefteq_S \rangle$ in case $\mathcal{M}(S)$ has finite length. The blocks of \sim_S will be called the \mathcal{M} -*subobjects* of S .

Lemma 5.2. *Let \mathcal{M} be an ideal of monics of a category \mathcal{C} and let $f: X \rightarrow Y$ in \mathcal{M} . Then the map $\mathcal{M}(f): \mathcal{M}(X) \rightarrow \mathcal{M}(Y)$, $u \mapsto f \circ u$ is a lower embedding. Furthermore, if both X and Y have finite length, then f is an isomorphism iff $\text{lh } X = \text{lh } Y$.*

Proof. Verifying that $\mathcal{M}(f)$ is a lower embedding is a straightforward exercise. If f is an isomorphism, then so is $\mathcal{M}(f)$, thus $\text{lh } X = \text{lh } Y$. If f is not an isomorphism, then $\text{lh } X = \text{height}_{\mathcal{M}(X)}(\text{id}_X) = \text{height}_{\mathcal{M}(Y)}(f) < \text{height}_{\mathcal{M}(Y)}(\text{id}_Y) = \text{lh } Y$. \square

Now we state the main technical result of the paper.

Theorem 5.3. *Let \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{B} be full subcategories of a category \mathcal{C} and let \mathcal{M} be an ideal of monics of \mathcal{C} . We assume the following:*

- (i) *Every diagram of \mathcal{C} , indexed by a finite poset, with vertices either in \mathcal{A} or in \mathcal{B} , with at least one vertex in \mathcal{A} , and with arrows in \mathcal{M} , has a colimit.*
- (ii) *Every object of \mathcal{A} has only finitely many $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M}$ -subobjects.*
- (iii) *\mathcal{C} is sheltered by \mathcal{B} with respect to $\langle \mathcal{A}, \mathcal{M} \rangle$.*
- (iv) *For every $\varphi: A_0 \rightarrow A_1$ in \mathcal{M} and every section $\varepsilon_0: A_0 \rightarrow B_0$, with $A_0, A_1 \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$ and $B_0 \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$, there is $S \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{C}$, together with $\varepsilon_1: A_1 \rightarrow S$ and $\psi: B_0 \rightarrow S$ both in \mathcal{M} , such that $\psi \circ \varepsilon_0 = \varepsilon_1 \circ \varphi$.*

Then $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M}$ is a functorial retract of $\mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{M}$.

From now on until the end of Section 8, we shall assume that \mathcal{A} , \mathcal{B} , \mathcal{C} , and \mathcal{M} satisfy the assumptions of Theorem 5.3, with a shelter \mathbf{B} denoted as in Section 4. The functorial retraction of Theorem 5.3 will be constructed explicitly, in terms of categorical operations and \mathbf{B} .

Our next lemma states that in item (iv) of Theorem 5.3, we may assume that $S \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$.

Lemma 5.4. *For all $\varphi: A_0 \rightarrow A_1$ in \mathcal{M} and every section $\varepsilon_0: A_0 \rightarrow B_0$, with $A_0, A_1 \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$ and $B_0 \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$, there is $B \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$, together with $\varepsilon_1: A_1 \rightarrow B$ and $\psi: B_0 \rightarrow B$ both in \mathcal{M} , such that $\psi \circ \varepsilon_0 = \varepsilon_1 \circ \varphi$.*

Proof. Consider S , ε_1 , and ψ obtained from (iv) of Theorem 5.3. Replace S by $B = \mathbf{B}(S)$, ε_1 by $\eta_S \circ \varepsilon_1$, and ψ by $\eta_S \circ \psi$. \square

6. INDUCTIVE CONSTRUCTION OF Φ , ε , μ

Denote by \mathcal{A}_n the full subcategory of \mathcal{A} whose objects are those $X \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$ such that $\text{lh } X < n$, for every natural number n . Of course, \mathcal{A}_0 is the empty category.

Fix a natural number n , and suppose having constructed a functor Φ from $\mathcal{A}_n \cap \mathcal{M}$ to \mathcal{B} , together with a system of morphisms $\varepsilon_X: X \rightarrow \Phi(X)$ and $\mu_X: \Phi(X) \rightarrow X$, for $X \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}_n$, such that the following induction hypothesis is satisfied:

$$\mu_X \circ \varepsilon_X = \text{id}_X, \quad \Phi(f) \circ \varepsilon_X = \varepsilon_Y \circ f, \quad \text{and} \quad \mu_Y \circ \Phi(f) = f \circ \mu_X, \quad (6.1)$$

for every morphism $f: X \rightarrow Y$ in $\mathcal{A}_n \cap \mathcal{M}$.

We do not assume, for the moment, that Φ sends morphisms in \mathcal{M} to morphisms in \mathcal{M} . So, for $f: X \rightarrow Y$ in $\mathcal{A}_n \cap \mathcal{M}$, all we know is that $\Phi(f): \Phi(X) \rightarrow \Phi(Y)$ in \mathcal{B} .

We put $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A = (\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M})(A)$ and $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A = (\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A) \setminus \mathcal{M}^{\text{iso}}$, for every $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$. For $u: X \rightarrow A$ and $v: Y \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A$ with $u \leq_A v$, we shall often identify the morphism (in $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A$) $u \rightarrow v$ with $f = u/v$, which is a morphism (in $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M}$) from X to Y .

Now suppose that $\text{lh } A = n$. We endow the set

$$\tilde{\mathcal{A}} \upharpoonright A = \{\langle u, i \rangle \in (\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A) \times \mathbf{2} \mid i = 1 \Rightarrow u \notin \mathcal{M}^{\text{iso}}\}$$

with the partial quasi-ordering, that we shall still denote by \leq_A , defined by

$$\langle u, i \rangle \leq_A \langle v, j \rangle \iff (u \leq_A v \text{ and } i \leq j), \quad \text{for all } \langle u, i \rangle, \langle v, j \rangle \in \tilde{\mathcal{A}} \upharpoonright A.$$

For $\langle u, i \rangle \in \text{Ob } \tilde{\mathcal{A}} \upharpoonright A$, where $u: X \rightarrow A$, we define

$$\rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle) = \begin{cases} X, & \text{if } i = 0, \\ \Phi(X), & \text{if } i = 1. \end{cases}$$

(Observe that $i = 1$ implies that $u \notin \mathcal{M}^{\text{iso}}$, thus $\text{lh } X < \text{lh } A$, and thus $\Phi(X)$ is defined.) Furthermore, if $\langle u, i \rangle \leq_A \langle v, j \rangle$ in $\tilde{\mathcal{A}} \upharpoonright A$, we put

$$\rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle v, j \rangle) = \begin{cases} u/v, & \text{if } i = j = 0, \\ \Phi(u/v) \circ \varepsilon_X, & \text{if } i = 0 \text{ and } j = 1, \\ \Phi(u/v), & \text{if } i = j = 1. \end{cases}$$

Lemma 6.1. *The correspondence ρ_A defines a functor from $\tilde{\mathcal{A}} \upharpoonright A$ to \mathcal{M} .*

Proof. It is obvious that $\rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle v, j \rangle)$ is a morphism from $\rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle)$ to $\rho_A(\langle v, j \rangle)$, and that ρ_A sends identities to identities. Now let $\langle u, i \rangle \leq_A \langle v, j \rangle \leq_A \langle w, k \rangle$ in $\tilde{\mathcal{A}} \upharpoonright A$, we need to verify the equality

$$\rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle) = \rho_A(\langle v, j \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle) \circ \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle v, j \rangle). \quad (6.2)$$

Let $u: X \rightarrow A$, $v: Y \rightarrow A$, and $w: Z \rightarrow A$, put $f = u/v$ and $g = v/w$. We separate cases.

Case 1. $i = j = k = 0$. Then

$$\rho_A(\langle v, j \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle) \circ \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle v, j \rangle) = g \circ f = \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle).$$

Case 2. $i = j = 0, k = 1$. Then

$$\begin{aligned} \rho_A(\langle v, j \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle) \circ \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle v, j \rangle) &= \Phi(g) \circ \varepsilon_Y \circ f \\ &= \Phi(g) \circ \Phi(f) \circ \varepsilon_X \\ &= \Phi(g \circ f) \circ \varepsilon_X \\ &= \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle). \end{aligned}$$

Case 3. $i = 0, j = k = 1$. Then

$$\begin{aligned} \rho_A(\langle v, j \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle) \circ \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle v, j \rangle) &= \Phi(g) \circ \Phi(f) \circ \varepsilon_X \\ &= \Phi(g \circ f) \circ \varepsilon_X \\ &= \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle). \end{aligned}$$

Case 4. $i = j = k = 1$. Then

$$\rho_A(\langle v, j \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle) \circ \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle v, j \rangle) = \Phi(g) \circ \Phi(f) = \Phi(g \circ f) = \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle \rightarrow \langle w, k \rangle).$$

This concludes the proof. \square

Lemma 6.2. *The functor ρ_A has a colimit in \mathcal{C} .*

Proof. It follows from Assumption (ii) of Theorem 5.3 that $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A$ is equivalent to a finite poset; hence $\tilde{\mathcal{A}} \upharpoonright A$ is also equivalent to a finite poset. Since the colimit is a categorical concept, the conclusion follows from Assumption (i) of Theorem 5.3. \square

A colimit of ρ_A is given by an object $\Phi_*(A)$, together with a system of morphisms $\theta_{\langle u, i \rangle}: \rho_A(\langle u, i \rangle) \rightarrow \Phi_*(A)$, for all $\langle u, i \rangle \in \tilde{\mathcal{A}} \upharpoonright A$, subjected to certain commutation relations. In case $u \in \mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A$, the equality $\theta_{\langle u, 0 \rangle} = \theta_{\langle u, 1 \rangle} \circ \varepsilon_{\text{dom } u}$ holds. Hence, putting $\Phi_*(u) = \theta_{\langle u, 1 \rangle}$ and $\varepsilon^A = \theta_{\langle \text{id}_A, 0 \rangle}$, we obtain that the colimit of ρ_A is given by the object $\Phi_*(A)$, together with morphisms $\Phi_*(u): \Phi(\text{dom } u) \rightarrow \Phi_*(A)$, for $u \in \mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A$, and $\varepsilon^A: A \rightarrow \Phi_*(A)$, subjected to the commutativity of the diagrams represented on Figure 6.1 and the universality of $\Phi_*(A)$ together with the system of morphisms consisting of all $\Phi_*(u)$ -s and ε^A . Observe that for $n = 0$, this reduces to the universality of $\varepsilon^A: A \rightarrow \Phi_*(A)$; so, in that case, we may take $\Phi_*(A) = A$ and $\varepsilon^A = \text{id}_A$.

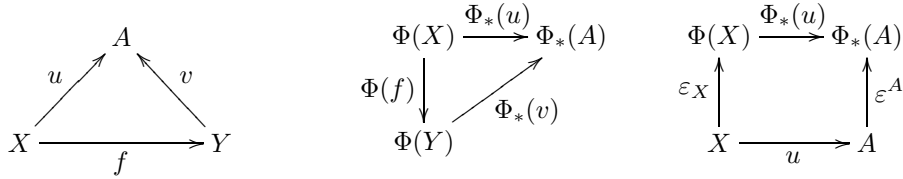


FIGURE 6.1. The colimit of ρ_A .

Lemma 6.3. *There exists a unique morphism $\mu^A: \Phi_*(A) \rightarrow A$ such that $\mu^A \circ \Phi_*(u) = u \circ \mu_{\text{dom } u}$, for every $u \in \mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A$, and $\mu^A \circ \varepsilon^A = \text{id}_A$.*

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \Phi(X) & \xrightarrow{\tau_u} & A \\
 \Phi(f) \downarrow & \nearrow \tau_v & \\
 \Phi(Y) & &
 \end{array}
 \qquad
 \begin{array}{ccc}
 \Phi(X) & \xrightarrow{\tau_u} & A \\
 \varepsilon_X \uparrow & \nearrow u & \\
 X & &
 \end{array}$$

 FIGURE 6.2. Retracting $\Phi_*(A)$ onto A .

Proof. We put $\tau_u = u \circ \mu_{\text{dom } u}$, for all $u \in \mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A$. By the universality of the colimit, it suffices to verify that the diagrams of Figure 6.2 commute, for all $u: X \rightarrow A$ and $v: Y \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A$ and $f = u/v$.

Left hand side diagram: $\tau_v \circ \Phi(f) = v \circ \mu_Y \circ \Phi(f) = v \circ f \circ \mu_X = u \circ \mu_X = \tau_u$.

Right hand side diagram: $\tau_u \circ \varepsilon_X = u \circ \mu_X \circ \varepsilon_X = u$. This concludes the proof. \square

Now we are ready to define $\Phi(A)$, ε_A , μ_A , and $\Phi(u)$, for $u: X \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A$:

$$\Phi(A) = \mathbf{B}(\Phi_*(A)); \quad (6.3)$$

$$\varepsilon_A = \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \varepsilon^A; \quad (6.4)$$

$$\mu_A = (\mu^A)^{\mathbf{B}}. \quad (6.5)$$

$$\Phi(u) = \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \Phi_*(u). \quad (6.6)$$

These maps are represented on Figure 6.3. They satisfy the relations $\mu^A \circ \varepsilon^A = \mu_A \circ \varepsilon_A = \text{id}_A$, $\varepsilon_A = \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \varepsilon^A$, $\mu^A = \mu_A \circ \eta_{\Phi_*(A)}$, and $\Phi(u) = \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \Phi_*(u)$.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 & & \Phi(A) = \mathbf{B}(\Phi_*(A)) \\
 & \nearrow \mu_A = (\mu^A)^{\mathbf{B}} & \uparrow \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \\
 A & \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_A} & \Phi_*(A) \\
 \uparrow u & \xrightarrow{\varepsilon^A} & \uparrow \Phi_*(u) \\
 X & \xrightarrow{\mu_X} & \Phi(X) \\
 & \xleftarrow{\varepsilon_X} &
 \end{array}$$

 FIGURE 6.3. Defining $\Phi(A)$, ε_A , μ_A , and $\Phi(u)$.

The computations of the relations $\Phi(u) \circ \varepsilon_X = \varepsilon_A \circ u$ and $\mu_A \circ \Phi(u) = u \circ \mu_X$ can be followed on Figures 6.1 and 6.3:

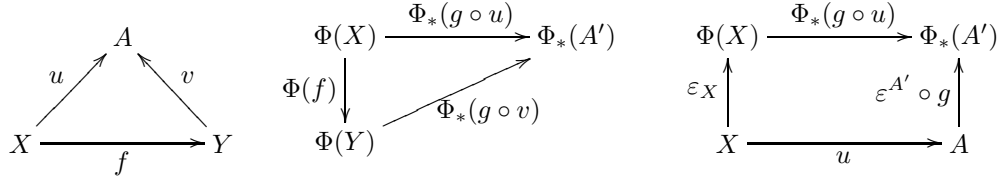
$$\Phi(u) \circ \varepsilon_X = \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \Phi_*(u) \circ \varepsilon_X = \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \varepsilon^A \circ u = \varepsilon_A \circ u,$$

$$\mu_A \circ \Phi(u) = \mu_A \circ \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \Phi_*(u) = \mu^A \circ \Phi_*(u) = u \circ \mu_X.$$

In order to complete the extension of Φ to all morphisms, it remains to define $\Phi(g)$, where $g: A \rightarrow A'$ in $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M}$ and $\text{lh } A = \text{lh } A' = n$. Observe that, by Lemma 5.2, g is an isomorphism. Moreover, if $u: X \rightarrow A$ and $v: Y \rightarrow A$ belong to $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A$ with $u \leq_A v$ and putting $f = u/v$, the diagrams of Figure 6.4 commute.

Therefore, by the universal property of $\Phi_*(A)$ and the associated limiting morphisms, there exists a unique morphism $\bar{g}: \Phi_*(A) \rightarrow \Phi_*(A')$ such that

$$\bar{g} \circ \varepsilon^A = \varepsilon^{A'} \circ g \text{ and } \Phi_*(g \circ u) = \bar{g} \circ \Phi_*(u), \text{ for all } u \in \mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A. \quad (6.7)$$

FIGURE 6.4. Putting $\Phi_*(A')$ above the diagram defining $\Phi_*(A)$.

Symmetrically, there exists a unique morphism $\bar{g}': \Phi_*(A') \rightarrow \Phi_*(A)$ such that

$$\bar{g}' \circ \varepsilon^{A'} = \varepsilon^A \circ g^{-1} \text{ and } \Phi_*(u) = \bar{g}' \circ \Phi_*(g \circ u), \text{ for all } u \in \mathcal{A} \uparrow^* A. \quad (6.8)$$

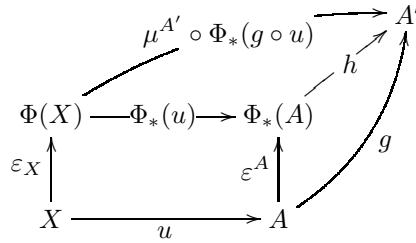
Again by using the universal property defining $\Phi_*(A)$ and $\Phi_*(A')$, we obtain that \bar{g} and \bar{g}' are mutually inverse isomorphisms. We define

$$\Phi_*(g) = \bar{g} \text{ and } \Phi(g) = \mathbf{B}(\Phi_*(g)). \quad (6.9)$$

So $\Phi_*(g)$ is an isomorphism from $\Phi_*(A)$ to $\Phi_*(A')$, and, since \mathbf{B} is a functor from \mathcal{C}^{iso} to \mathcal{B}^{iso} , $\Phi(g)$ is an isomorphism from $\Phi(A)$ onto $\Phi(A')$.

Lemma 6.4. $\mu^{A'} \circ \Phi_*(g) = g \circ \mu^A$.

Proof. By using the universal property defining $\Phi_*(A)$, it suffices to verify that the diagram represented on Figure 6.5 commutes, in both cases $h = \mu^{A'} \circ \Phi_*(g)$ and $h = g \circ \mu^A$, for all $u: X \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{A} \uparrow^* A$. Of course, none of the arrows of Figure 6.5 except ε^A , g , and h are needed in case $n = 0$, in which case $\Phi_*(A) = A$ and $\varepsilon^A = \text{id}_A$. The details of the computations use (6.7), (6.9), and Lemma 6.3;

FIGURE 6.5. Characterizing a morphism from $\Phi_*(A)$ to A' .

they are as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \mu^{A'} \circ \Phi_*(g) \circ \Phi_*(u) &= \mu^{A'} \circ \Phi_*(g \circ u), \\ g \circ \mu^A \circ \Phi_*(u) &= g \circ u \circ \mu_X = \mu^{A'} \circ \Phi_*(g \circ u), \\ \mu^{A'} \circ \Phi_*(g) \circ \varepsilon^A &= \mu^{A'} \circ \varepsilon^{A'} \circ g = g, \\ g \circ \mu^A \circ \varepsilon^A &= g. \end{aligned}$$

This completes the proof. \square

Lemma 6.5. $\Phi(g) \circ \varepsilon_A = \varepsilon_{A'} \circ g$ and $\mu_{A'} \circ \Phi(g) = g \circ \mu_A$.

Proof. By using (6.4), (6.7), and (6.9), we obtain

$$\Phi(g) \circ \varepsilon_A = \Phi(g) \circ \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \varepsilon^A = \eta_{\Phi_*(A')} \circ \Phi_*(g) \circ \varepsilon^A = \eta_{\Phi_*(A')} \circ \varepsilon^{A'} \circ g = \varepsilon_{A'} \circ g.$$

Furthermore, since \mathbf{B} is a shelter, we obtain, by using (6.5), the following equalities:

$$\begin{aligned} \mu_{A'} \circ \Phi(g) &= (\mu^{A'})^{\mathbf{B}} \circ \mathbf{B}(\Phi_*(g)) = (\mu^{A'} \circ \Phi_*(g))^{\mathbf{B}}, \\ g \circ \mu_A &= g \circ (\mu^A)^{\mathbf{B}} = (g \circ \mu^A)^{\mathbf{B}}. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, by Lemma 6.4, $\mu_{A'} \circ \Phi(g) = g \circ \mu_A$. \square

At this stage, we have extended Φ to $\mathcal{A}_{n+1} \cap \mathcal{M}$, up to verification of preservation of composition by Φ . Proving this preservation is the object of the next three lemmas.

Lemma 6.6. *Let $A_0, A_1, A_2 \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$ with $\text{lh } A_0 = \text{lh } A_1 = \text{lh } A_2 = n$, let $f: A_0 \rightarrow A_1$ and $g: A_1 \rightarrow A_2$ in \mathcal{M} . Then $\Phi_*(g \circ f) = \Phi_*(g) \circ \Phi_*(f)$ and $\Phi(g \circ f) = \Phi(g) \circ \Phi(f)$.*

Proof. By Lemma 5.2, both f and g are isomorphisms. By using (6.7) and (6.9), we obtain

$$\Phi_*(g) \circ \Phi_*(f) \circ \varepsilon^{A_0} = \Phi_*(g) \circ \varepsilon^{A_1} \circ f = \varepsilon^{A_2} \circ g \circ f,$$

and, for all $u \in \mathcal{A} \upharpoonright^* A_0$,

$$\Phi_*(g \circ f \circ u) = \Phi_*(g) \circ \Phi_*(f \circ u) = \Phi_*(g) \circ \Phi_*(f) \circ \Phi_*(u).$$

Since these properties determine $\Phi_*(g \circ f)$, we obtain that $\Phi_*(g \circ f) = \Phi_*(g) \circ \Phi_*(f)$. Since \mathbf{B} is a functor from \mathcal{C}^{iso} to \mathcal{B}^{iso} , the equality $\Phi(g \circ f) = \Phi(g) \circ \Phi(f)$ follows. \square

Lemma 6.7. *Let $X \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}_n$ and let $A, A' \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$ such that $\text{lh } A = \text{lh } A' = n$, let $u: X \rightarrow A$ and let $g: A \rightarrow A'$ in \mathcal{M} . Then $\Phi(g \circ u) = \Phi(g) \circ \Phi(u)$.*

Proof. By Lemma 5.2, g is an isomorphism. By using (6.6), (6.7), and (6.9), we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} \Phi(g \circ u) &= \eta_{\Phi_*(A')} \circ \Phi_*(g \circ u) = \eta_{\Phi_*(A')} \circ \Phi_*(g) \circ \Phi_*(u) \\ &= \Phi(g) \circ \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \Phi_*(u) = \Phi(g) \circ \Phi(u), \end{aligned}$$

which concludes the proof. \square

Lemma 6.8. *Let $X, Y \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}_n$ and let $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$ such that $\text{lh } A = n$, let $f: X \rightarrow Y$ and let $u: Y \rightarrow A$ in \mathcal{M} . Then $\Phi(u \circ f) = \Phi(u) \circ \Phi(f)$.*

Proof. By using (6.6) and the relations on Figure 6.1, we obtain

$$\Phi(u) \circ \Phi(f) = \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \Phi_*(u) \circ \Phi(f) = \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \Phi_*(u \circ f) = \Phi(u \circ f),$$

which concludes the proof. \square

At this stage, Φ , ε , and μ have been extended to the whole category $\mathcal{A}_{n+1} \cap \mathcal{M}$. Therefore, arguing by induction on n , we obtain an extension of Φ , ε , and μ on $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M}$ that satisfies the following:

$$\begin{aligned} \mu_X \circ \varepsilon_X &= \text{id}_X, \quad \Phi(f) \circ \varepsilon_X = \varepsilon_Y \circ f, \quad \text{and} \quad \mu_Y \circ \Phi(f) = f \circ \mu_X, \\ &\text{for every morphism } f: X \rightarrow Y \text{ in } \mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M}. \end{aligned} \tag{6.10}$$

Definition 6.9. The triple $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ thus constructed is the *canonical \mathcal{B} -cover* of \mathcal{A} .

The construction $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ involves the shelter \mathbf{B} and categorical operations such as the colimit. Hence, even for fixed \mathbf{B} , it is defined uniquely only if we choose representatives for colimits of diagrams: otherwise, it is defined only up to isomorphism.

What is still missing is that we do not know yet whether the image under Φ of a morphism in \mathcal{M} is a morphism in \mathcal{M} (which is why we have, so far, kept this condition out of the induction hypothesis). This is the hardest part of the proof, and it will be the object of the next two sections.

7. FACTORING \mathbf{B} -LIFTINGS

Throughout this section we shall fix the canonical \mathcal{B} -cover $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ of \mathcal{A} .

Definition 7.1. Let $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$, let \mathcal{J} be an ideal of $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A$, and let $\Psi: \mathcal{J} \rightarrow \mathcal{B}$ be a functor. A \mathcal{B} -*lifting* of Ψ is a natural transformation from the domain functor $u \mapsto \text{dom } u$ (from \mathcal{J} to $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M}$) to Ψ .

Hence a \mathcal{B} -lifting of Ψ consists of a family $\tilde{\varepsilon} = \langle \tilde{\varepsilon}_u \mid u \in \mathcal{J} \rangle$, where $\tilde{\varepsilon}_u: \text{dom } u \rightarrow \Psi(u)$, for all $u \in \mathcal{J}$, such that if $u: X \rightarrow A$ and $v: Y \rightarrow A$ in \mathcal{J} with $u \triangleleft_A v$, then, putting $f = u/v$, the equality $\Psi(f) \circ \tilde{\varepsilon}_u = \tilde{\varepsilon}_v \circ f$ holds, see Figure 7.1. Observe that we use the convention, introduced at the beginning of Section 6, to identify f with $u \rightarrow v$, so $\Psi(f)$ is, in fact, defined as $\Psi(u \rightarrow v)$.

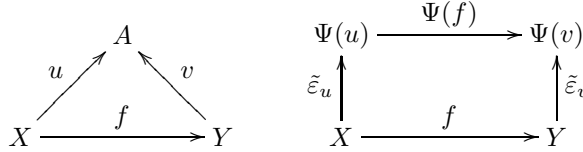


FIGURE 7.1. Illustrating a \mathcal{B} -lifting of Ψ .

Definition 7.2. Let $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$, let \mathcal{J} be an ideal of $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A$, and let $\Psi: \mathcal{J} \rightarrow \mathcal{B}$ be a functor. A *factor* of $\langle \Psi, \tilde{\varepsilon} \rangle$ is a natural transformation $\delta = \langle \delta_u \mid u \in \mathcal{J} \rangle$ from $\Phi \circ \text{dom}$ to Ψ such that $\tilde{\varepsilon}_u = \delta_u \circ \varepsilon_{\text{dom } u}$, for all $u \in \mathcal{J}$.

Hence, for $u: X \rightarrow A$ and $v: Y \rightarrow A$ in \mathcal{J} with $u \triangleleft_A v$ and putting $f = u/v$, the diagram of Figure 7.2 commutes.

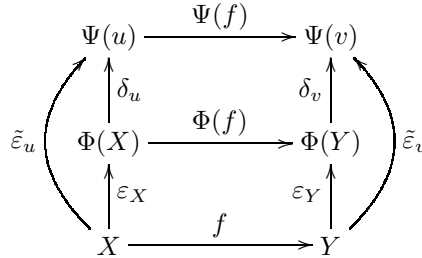


FIGURE 7.2. Illustrating a factor of $\langle \Psi, \tilde{\varepsilon} \rangle$.

Our next lemma will express a property of “quasi-universality” of the canonical \mathcal{B} -cover $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$.

Lemma 7.3. *Let $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{A}$ and let \mathcal{J} and \mathcal{J} be ideals of $\mathcal{A} \downarrow A$ such that \mathcal{J} contains \mathcal{J} . Let $\tilde{\varepsilon}$ be a \mathcal{B} -lifting of a functor $\Psi: \mathcal{J} \rightarrow \mathcal{B}$. Then any factor of $\langle \Psi \downarrow_{\mathcal{J}}, \tilde{\varepsilon} \downarrow_{\mathcal{J}} \rangle$ can be extended to a factor of $\langle \Psi, \tilde{\varepsilon} \rangle$.*

Proof. Arguing by induction on the length reduces the problem to the case where $\{v \in \mathcal{A} \downarrow A \mid v \triangleleft_A u\}$ is contained in \mathcal{J} , for all $u \in \mathcal{J}$. So let $u: U \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{J} \setminus \mathcal{J}$, we shall define a morphism $\delta_u: \Phi(U) \rightarrow \Psi(u)$.

For all $v: X \rightarrow U$ and $w: Y \rightarrow U$ in $\mathcal{A} \downarrow^* U$ such that $v \triangleleft_U w$, letting $f = v/w$, both relations $u \circ v \triangleleft_A u$ and $u \circ w \triangleleft_A u$ hold, thus both $u \circ v$ and $u \circ w$ belong to \mathcal{J} . Furthermore, the diagrams of Figure 7.3 commute: this is obvious for the left hand side, while for the right hand side, $\Psi(v) \circ \delta_{u \circ v} \circ \varepsilon_X = \Psi(v) \circ \tilde{\varepsilon}_{u \circ v} = \tilde{\varepsilon}_u \circ v$.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \Phi(X) & \xrightarrow{\delta_{u \circ v}} & \Psi(u \circ v) \xrightarrow{\Psi(v)} \Psi(u) \\
 \Phi(f) \downarrow & & \Psi(f) \downarrow \nearrow \Psi(w) \\
 \Phi(Y) & \xrightarrow{\delta_{u \circ w}} & \Psi(u \circ w)
 \end{array}
 \qquad
 \begin{array}{ccc}
 \Phi(X) & \xrightarrow{\Psi(v) \circ \delta_{u \circ v}} & \Psi(u) \\
 \varepsilon_X \uparrow & & \tilde{\varepsilon}_u \uparrow \\
 X & \xrightarrow{v} & U
 \end{array}$$

FIGURE 7.3. Putting $\Psi(u)$ above the diagram defining $\Phi_*(U)$.

Hence, by the universal property defining $\Phi_*(U)$, there exists a unique morphism $\gamma_u: \Phi_*(U) \rightarrow \Psi(u)$ such that $\gamma_u \circ \Phi_*(v) = \Psi(v) \circ \delta_{u \circ v}$, for all $v \in \mathcal{A} \downarrow^* U$, and $\tilde{\varepsilon}_u = \gamma_u \circ \varepsilon^U$. Put $\delta_u = \gamma_u^{\mathcal{B}}$ (see Figure 7.4).

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \Phi_*(U) \xrightarrow{\gamma_u} \Psi(u) & \Phi_*(U) \xrightarrow{\gamma_u} \Psi(u) & \Phi(U) \\
 \uparrow \Phi_*(v) & \uparrow \Psi(v) & \downarrow \delta_u = (\gamma_u)^{\mathcal{B}} \\
 \Phi(\text{dom } v) \xrightarrow{\delta_{u \circ v}} \Psi(u \circ v) & \varepsilon^U \uparrow \nearrow \tilde{\varepsilon}_u & \Phi_*(U) \xrightarrow{\gamma_u} \Psi(u) \\
 & U &
 \end{array}$$

FIGURE 7.4. Defining γ_u and δ_u .

We verify that the δ_u -s are as required (see Figure 7.2). First,

$$\delta_u \circ \varepsilon_U = \delta_u \circ \eta_{\Phi_*(U)} \circ \varepsilon^U = \gamma_u \circ \varepsilon^U = \tilde{\varepsilon}_u.$$

Our next series of calculations will prove that the extended δ is a natural transformation from $\Phi \circ \text{dom}$ to Ψ .

For $u: U \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{J} \setminus \mathcal{J}$ and $v: X \rightarrow U$ in $\mathcal{A} \downarrow^* U$ (thus in \mathcal{J}),

$$\delta_u \circ \Phi(v) = \delta_u \circ \eta_{\Phi_*(U)} \circ \Phi_*(v) = \gamma_u \circ \Phi_*(v) = \Psi(v) \circ \delta_{u \circ v}.$$

Now let $u: U \rightarrow A$ and $v: V \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{J} \setminus \mathcal{J}$ such that $u \triangleleft_A v$, and put $f = u/v$. If f is not an isomorphism, then $u \triangleleft_A v$, thus (since $v \in \mathcal{J}$) $u \in \mathcal{J}$, a contradiction. Hence

f is an isomorphism. We prove that $\Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \gamma_v \circ \Phi_*(f)$ satisfies the properties defining γ_u .

$$\begin{aligned} \Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \gamma_v \circ \Phi_*(f) \circ \varepsilon^U &= \Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \gamma_v \circ \varepsilon^V \circ f && \text{(by (6.7) and (6.9))} \\ &= \Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \tilde{\varepsilon}_v \circ f \\ &= \tilde{\varepsilon}_u. \end{aligned}$$

Let $w \in \mathcal{A} \uparrow^* U$. By using (6.7) and (6.9), we compute:

$$\begin{aligned} \Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \gamma_v \circ \Phi_*(f) \circ \Phi_*(w) &= \Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \gamma_v \circ \Phi_*(f \circ w) \\ &= \Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \Psi(f \circ w) \circ \delta_{u \circ w} \\ &= \Psi(w) \circ \delta_{u \circ w}. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, $\Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \gamma_v \circ \Phi_*(f) = \gamma_u$, that is, $\gamma_v \circ \Phi_*(f) = \Psi(f) \circ \gamma_u$. Now we can compute further, using the assumption that \mathbf{B} is a shelter:

$$\begin{aligned} \delta_u &= \gamma_u^{\mathbf{B}} = (\Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \gamma_v \circ \Phi_*(f))^{\mathbf{B}} \\ &= \Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \gamma_v^{\mathbf{B}} \circ \mathbf{B}(\Phi_*(f)) \\ &= \Psi(f^{-1}) \circ \delta_v \circ \Phi(f), \end{aligned}$$

whence $\Psi(f) \circ \delta_u = \delta_v \circ \Phi(f)$. \square

8. PRESERVATION OF \mathcal{M} BY Φ

In this section we shall prove the remaining claim about the canonical \mathcal{B} -cover $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$.

Lemma 8.1. *For any morphism f of $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M}$, $\Phi(f)$ belongs to $\mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{M}$.*

Proof. We let $f: U \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{A} \cap \mathcal{M}$, we prove that $\Phi(f) \in \mathcal{M}$. If f is an isomorphism, then (since Φ is a functor) so is $\Phi(f)$, thus $\Phi(f) \in \mathcal{M}$. From now on we assume that f is not an isomorphism.

Since $\varepsilon_U: U \rightarrow \Phi(U)$ is a section (for $\mu_U \circ \varepsilon_U = \text{id}_U$), it follows from Lemma 5.4 that there exists $B \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$, together with $\varphi: \Phi(U) \rightarrow B$ and $\varepsilon: A \rightarrow B$ in \mathcal{M} , such that $\varphi \circ \varepsilon_U = \varepsilon \circ f$.

For each $u: X \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{A} \uparrow A$, we define $\Psi(u) \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{B}$ and $\tilde{\varepsilon}_u: X \rightarrow \Psi(u)$ by

$$\Psi(u) = \begin{cases} \Phi(X), & \text{if } u \triangleleft_A f, \\ B, & \text{otherwise;} \end{cases} \quad \tilde{\varepsilon}_u = \begin{cases} \varepsilon_X, & \text{if } u \triangleleft_A f, \\ \varepsilon \circ u, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases} \quad (8.1)$$

For $u: X \rightarrow A$ and $v: Y \rightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{A} \uparrow A$, we put $g = u/v$ and we define a morphism $\Psi(u \rightarrow v): \Psi(u) \rightarrow \Psi(v)$ in \mathcal{B} as follows:

Case 1. $v \triangleleft_A f$. Put $\Psi(u \rightarrow v) = \Phi(g)$.

Case 2. $u \triangleleft_A f, v \not\triangleleft_A f$. Put $\Psi(u \rightarrow v) = \varphi \circ \Phi(u/f)$.

Case 3. $u, v \not\triangleleft_A f$. Put $\Psi(u \rightarrow v) = \text{id}_B$.

Claim 1. *In the context above, $\Psi(u \rightarrow v) \circ \tilde{\varepsilon}_u = \tilde{\varepsilon}_v \circ g$.*

Proof of Claim. In Case 1, this is equivalent to the statement $\Phi(g) \circ \varepsilon_X = \varepsilon_Y \circ g$, which holds.

In Case 2, putting $\bar{u} = u/f$, we compute

$$\varphi \circ \Phi(\bar{u}) \circ \varepsilon_X = \varphi \circ \varepsilon_U \circ \bar{u} = \varepsilon \circ f \circ \bar{u} = \varepsilon \circ u = \varepsilon \circ v \circ g,$$

which is the desired statement.

In Case 3, from $v \circ g = u$ it follows that $\varepsilon \circ v \circ g = \varepsilon \circ u$, which is the desired statement. \square Claim 1.

Claim 2. Ψ is a functor.

Proof of Claim. It suffices to prove that $\Psi(u \rightarrow w) = \Psi(v \rightarrow w) \circ \Psi(u \rightarrow v)$, for all $u \trianglelefteq_A v \trianglelefteq_A w$ in $\mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A$. Put $X = \text{dom } u$, $Y = \text{dom } v$, $Z = \text{dom } w$, $g = u/v$, and $h = v/w$. We separate cases.

Case 1. $w \trianglelefteq_A f$. Then

$$\Psi(v \rightarrow w) \circ \Psi(u \rightarrow v) = \Phi(h) \circ \Phi(g) = \Phi(h \circ g) = \Psi(u \rightarrow w).$$

Case 2. $v \trianglelefteq_A f$ and $w \not\trianglelefteq_A f$. Put $\bar{u} = u/f$ and $\bar{v} = v/f$. The equality $u = v \circ g$ can be written $f \circ \bar{u} = f \circ \bar{v} \circ g$, thus, since f is monic, $\bar{u} = \bar{v} \circ g$. Therefore,

$$\Psi(u \rightarrow w) = \varphi \circ \Phi(\bar{u}) = \varphi \circ \Phi(\bar{v}) \circ \Phi(g) = \Psi(v \rightarrow w) \circ \Psi(u \rightarrow v).$$

Case 3. $u \trianglelefteq_A f$ and $v \not\trianglelefteq_A f$. Put $\bar{u} = u/f$. Then

$$\Psi(u \rightarrow w) = \varphi \circ \Phi(\bar{u}) = \text{id}_B \circ \varphi \circ \Phi(\bar{u}) = \Psi(v \rightarrow w) \circ \Psi(u \rightarrow v).$$

Case 4. $u \not\trianglelefteq_A f$. Then $\Psi(u \rightarrow v) = \Psi(u \rightarrow w) = \Psi(v \rightarrow w) = \text{id}_B$, whence

$$\Psi(u \rightarrow w) = \Psi(v \rightarrow w) \circ \Psi(u \rightarrow v).$$

This concludes the proof of our claim. \square Claim 2.

By Claims 1 and 2, $\tilde{\varepsilon}$ is a \mathcal{B} -lifting of the functor Ψ on the ideal $\mathcal{J} = \mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A$. Furthermore, putting

$$\mathcal{J} = \{u \in \mathcal{A} \upharpoonright A \mid u \trianglelefteq_A f\},$$

the rule $\delta_u = \text{id}_{\Phi(\text{dom } u)}$ defines a factor of $\langle \Psi \upharpoonright_{\mathcal{J}}, \tilde{\varepsilon}_{\mathcal{J}} \rangle$. Therefore, by Lemma 7.3, δ extends to a factor of $\langle \Psi, \tilde{\varepsilon} \rangle$, which we shall still denote by δ .

Since $f \in \mathcal{J}$ and $\text{id}_A \notin \mathcal{J}$, we obtain $\Psi(f \rightarrow \text{id}_A) = \varphi \circ \Phi(\text{id}_U) = \varphi$. Therefore,

$$\varphi = \varphi \circ \delta_f = \delta_{\text{id}_A} \circ \Phi(f).$$

Since $\varphi \in \mathcal{M}$, we obtain that $\Phi(f) \in \mathcal{M}$. \square

This completes the proof of Theorem 5.3: the canonical \mathcal{B} -cover $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ is a solution of the given problem.

9. DISTRIBUTIVE AND ULTRABOOLEAN SEMILATTICES

A $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice $\langle S, \vee, 0, \leq \rangle$ is *distributive*, if its ideal lattice $\text{Id } S$ is distributive, see G. Grätzer [6, Section II.5]. Equivalently, for all $a, b, c \in S$, if $c \leq a \vee b$, then there are $x \leq a$ and $y \leq b$ such that $c = x \vee y$. Distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices are characterized in P. Pudlák [12, Fact 4, p. 100] as directed $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -unions of finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices.

Denote by \mathcal{S} the category of finite $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices and $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -homomorphisms, and by \mathcal{D} and \mathcal{B} the full subcategories of \mathcal{S} consisting of all distributive, respectively Boolean members of \mathcal{S} . We denote by \mathcal{M} the subcategory of \mathcal{S} consisting of all $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embeddings. Of course, \mathcal{M} is an ideal of monics of \mathcal{S} .

Lemma 9.1. *Let S , T , and D be $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices with D finite distributive, and let $e: S \rightarrow T$ and $f: S \rightarrow D$ be $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -homomorphisms with e an embedding. Then there exists a largest $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -homomorphism $g: T \rightarrow D$ extending f , and it is given by the formula*

$$g(t) = \bigwedge^D (f(s) \mid s \in S, t \leq e(s)), \text{ for all } t \in T. \quad (9.1)$$

(Of course, the meet of the empty set is defined here as the unit of D .)

Proof. An easy exercise. Although the distributivity of D is not used for correctness of the definition (9.1), it is used for proving that g is a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -homomorphism. \square

We shall call the map g defined in (9.1) the *largest extension* of f with respect to e .

Any $S \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{S}$ is a finite lattice, thus also a meet-semilattice. We put $\mathbf{B}(S) = \mathfrak{P}(\mathbf{M}(S))$, and we let

$$\eta_S: S \hookrightarrow \mathbf{B}(S), \quad a \mapsto \{u \in \mathbf{M}(S) \mid a \not\leq u\}.$$

Lemma 9.2 (folklore). *The map η_S is a $\langle \vee, 0, 1 \rangle$ -embedding from S into $\langle \mathbf{B}(S), \cup, \emptyset, S \rangle$, for every finite $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice S .*

For an isomorphism $f: S \rightarrow T$ of finite $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices, we put

$$\mathbf{B}(f)(X) = f[X], \text{ for all } X \in \mathbf{B}(S).$$

It is immediate to verify that \mathbf{B} is a functor from \mathcal{S}^{iso} to \mathcal{B}^{iso} and that η is a natural transformation from the identity of \mathcal{S}^{iso} to \mathbf{B} .

Definition 9.3. Let S and A be finite $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices with A distributive, and let $g: S \rightarrow A$ be a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -homomorphism. We denote $g^{\mathbf{B}}$ the largest $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -extension of g from $\mathbf{B}(S)$ to A with respect to the embedding $\eta_S: S \hookrightarrow \mathbf{B}(S)$.

Now the proof of the following lemma is a straightforward exercise (see Definition 4.2). Items (i), (ii), (1), and (2) of Definition 4.2 follows from the fact that the formulas defining \mathbf{B} , $g \mapsto g^{\mathbf{B}}$, and η are ‘intrinsic’, thus preserved under isomorphisms. Item (iii) of Definition 4.2 follows from Lemma 9.1 (see Definition 9.3).

Lemma 9.4. *The correspondences \mathbf{B} , η described above define a shelter of \mathcal{S} by \mathcal{B} with respect to $\langle \mathcal{D}, \mathcal{M} \rangle$.*

The corresponding commutative diagram is given on the right hand side of Figure 4.1. Now we are ready to prove our main semilattice-theoretical result.

Theorem 9.5. *There exists a functorial retraction $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ of the category $\mathcal{D} \cap \mathcal{M}$ to the category $\mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{M}$. Furthermore, ε_A is a $\langle \vee, 0, 1 \rangle$ -embedding, for all $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{D}$.*

Proof. We prove that the assumptions of Theorem 5.3 are satisfied, where we replace \mathcal{C} by \mathcal{S} and \mathcal{A} by \mathcal{D} . Item (i) is a very particular case of the well-known fact that every variety of algebras has small colimits, see, for example, [2, Theorem 8.3.8]. Item (ii) is trivial. Item (iii) is Lemma 9.4.

Finally, it is proved in [8, Theorem 2.10] that every semilattice embeds into an injective semilattice. Hence the variety of semilattices has the so-called Transfer Property (see [9, Proposition 1.5]), thus *a fortiori* the Amalgamation Property. Since every finitely generated semilattice is finite, these results extend to the finite case. Technically speaking, these results are established in [8, 9] for semilattices

which do not necessarily have a unit; however, the extension to the case with unit is trivial. The result for $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices is dual. This obviously implies Assumption (iv) of Theorem 5.3.

It remains to establish that the maps ε_A constructed in the proof of Theorem 5.3 are 1-preserving. We argue by induction on $\text{lh } A$. By definition, $\Phi_*(A)$ is $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -generated by the set

$$G = \text{im } \varepsilon^A \cup \bigcup (\text{im } \Phi_*(u) \mid u \in \mathcal{A} \uparrow^* A). \quad (9.2)$$

Let $u: X \hookrightarrow A$ in $\mathcal{A} \uparrow^* A$. By the induction hypothesis, ε_X is 1-preserving, thus

$$\Phi_*(u)(1_{\Phi(X)}) = \Phi_*(u) \circ \varepsilon_X(1_X) = \varepsilon^A \circ u(1_X) \leq \varepsilon^A(1_A),$$

thus the largest element of X is $\varepsilon^A(1_A)$. Hence the largest element of $\Phi_*(A)$ is also $\varepsilon^A(1_A)$, that is, ε^A is 1-preserving. Since η_S is 1-preserving for all S , it follows that $\varepsilon_A = \eta_{\Phi_*(A)} \circ \varepsilon^A$ is also 1-preserving. \square

Finally, denote by b_A the largest $b \in \Phi(A)$ such that $\mu_A(b) = 0$, for every finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice A . After replacing $\Phi(A)$ by its interval $[b_A, 1]$, and this for all A , we obtain that the μ_A -s may be assumed to separate zero (i.e., $\mu_A^{-1}\{0\} = \{0\}$).

For convenience, we list here the properties satisfied by the triple $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ of Theorem 9.5:

- The correspondence Φ is a functor from the category $\mathcal{D} \cap \mathcal{M}$ of all finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices with $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embeddings to the category $\mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{M}$ of all finite Boolean $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices with $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embeddings.
- The map ε_A is a $\langle \vee, 0, 1 \rangle$ -embedding from A into $\Phi(A)$ and the map μ_A is a zero-separating $\langle \vee, 0, 1 \rangle$ -homomorphism from $\Phi(A)$ onto A , for every finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice A . Furthermore, $\mu_A \circ \varepsilon_A = \text{id}_A$.
- For every $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embedding $f: X \hookrightarrow Y$ between finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices X and Y , both equalities $\Phi(f) \circ \varepsilon_X = \varepsilon_Y \circ f$ and $\mu_Y \circ \Phi(f) = f \circ \mu_X$ hold.

Observe that these properties imply that $\Phi(f)$ preserves the unit whenever f does.

As shown by the following result, this functorial inverse of the functor Π does not arise from an adjunction.

Proposition 9.6. *The projection functor $\Pi: \text{Retr}(\mathcal{D} \cap \mathcal{M}, \mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{M}) \rightarrow \mathcal{D} \cap \mathcal{M}$ has neither a right nor a left adjoint.*

Proof. Denote the objects of $\mathcal{R} = \text{Retr}(\mathcal{D} \cap \mathcal{M}, \mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{M})$ as $p = \langle D_p, B_p, \alpha_p, \beta_p \rangle$. A left or right adjoint of Π is given by a functor $\Psi: \mathcal{D} \rightarrow \mathcal{R}$. Let Ψ be given, for any $f: D \rightarrow E$ in $\mathcal{D} \cap \mathcal{M}$, by

$$\Psi(D) = \langle \tilde{D}, \Phi(D), \varepsilon^D, \mu^D \rangle \text{ and } \Psi(f) = \langle \tilde{f}, \Phi(f) \rangle, \quad (9.3)$$

where $\tilde{f}: \tilde{D} \rightarrow \tilde{E}$ and $\Phi(f): \Phi(D) \rightarrow \Phi(E)$.

Suppose first that Ψ is a left adjoint of Π , and denote by η the unit of the corresponding adjunction. So $\eta_D: D \hookrightarrow \tilde{D}$, for every $D \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{D}$. By the definition of an adjunction, for all $D \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{D}$, $p \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{R}$, and $f: D \hookrightarrow D_p$, there exists a unique $\langle f_*, f^* \rangle: \Psi(D) \rightarrow p$ such that $f = f_* \circ \eta_D$. In particular, for $D = D_p$ and $f = \text{id}_D$ (as seen in the Introduction, there are always B , α , and β such that

$\langle D, B, \alpha, \beta \rangle \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{R}$), we obtain, since all our semilattices are finite, that η_D is an *isomorphism* from D onto \tilde{D} .

Now let $D = \mathbf{3}$ (the three-element chain), $D_p = B_p = \mathbf{2}^2$, $\alpha_p = \beta_p = \text{id}_{\mathbf{2}^2}$, and $f: \mathbf{3} \hookrightarrow \mathbf{2}^2$ any $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embedding. From $\langle f_*, f^* \rangle: \Psi(D) \rightarrow p$ it follows that $f_* \circ \mu^D = f^*$, an embedding. Thus μ^D is an embedding, and so $\Phi(D) \cong \tilde{D} \cong D \cong \mathbf{3}$, which is not Boolean; a contradiction.

Now suppose that Ψ is a right adjoint of Π , and denote by ε the counit of the corresponding adjunction. So $\varepsilon_D: \tilde{D} \hookrightarrow D$, for all $D \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{D}$. By the definition of an adjunction, for all $D \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{D}$, $p \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{R}$, and $f: D_p \hookrightarrow D$, there exists a unique $\langle f_*, f^* \rangle: p \rightarrow \Psi(D)$ such that $\varepsilon_D \circ f_* = f$. In particular, $f^*: B_p \hookrightarrow \Phi(D)$, and hence $|B_p| \leq |\Phi(D)|$. However, for D and D_p fixed, $|B_p|$ can be taken arbitrarily large, a contradiction. \square

The functorial retraction given by Theorem 9.5 is given by an explicit formula. This makes it possible to give a crude upper bound for the maximum $\varphi(n)$ of all cardinalities of $\Phi(A)$, where A is a distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice of cardinality at most n . Of course, $\varphi(1) = 1$. As (9.2) gives a generating subset of $\Phi_*(A)$, we obtain

$$|\Phi_*(A)| \leq 2^{n+1+2^n \varphi(n)},$$

whence

$$\varphi(n+1) \leq 2^{2^{n+1+2^n \varphi(n)}}.$$

Hence $\varphi(n)$ is, roughly speaking, majorized by a tower of exponentials of length $2n$, which is, of course, beyond the reach of any implementation.

As illustrated in [15], the poset of distributive subsemilattices of a finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice can be quite complicated. To the contrary, the corresponding structure is much nicer for Boolean subsemilattices. This motivates the definition of ultraboolean introduced in Section 1.

Corollary 9.7. *Every distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice D is a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -retract of an ultraboolean $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice B . Furthermore, if D has a unit, then B can be taken with a unit.*

Proof. By Pudlák's Lemma, $D = \varinjlim_{i \in I} D_i$, for a direct system $\langle D_i, f_{i,j} \mid i \leq j \text{ in } I \rangle$ of finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices and $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embeddings $f_{i,j}: D_i \rightarrow D_j$. Furthermore, we may assume that all D_i -s contain as an element the unit of D in case there is any.

Now we use the functorial retraction constructed in the proof of Theorem 9.5. The semilattice $B = \varinjlim_{i \in I} \Phi(D_i)$, with transition maps $\Phi(f_{i,j}): \Phi(D_i) \rightarrow \Phi(D_j)$, is ultraboolean and has a unit in case D has a unit. Furthermore, the natural transformations $\langle \varepsilon_{D_i} \mid i \in I \rangle$ and $\langle \mu_{D_i} \mid i \in I \rangle$ define, by direct limit, $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -homomorphisms $\varepsilon: D \rightarrow B$ and $\mu: B \rightarrow D$ such that $\mu \circ \varepsilon = \text{id}_D$. Therefore, D is a retract of B . If D has a unit, then $\varepsilon(1_D) = 1_B$. \square

10. SIMULTANEOUS LATTICE EMBEDDINGS INTO FINITE BOOLEAN SEMILATTICES

The maps $\varepsilon_X: X \rightarrow \Phi(X)$ constructed in the proof of Theorem 9.5 are $\langle \vee, 0, 1 \rangle$ -embeddings. On the other hand, for every finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice S , the embedding from S into $\mathfrak{P}(\mathbb{J}(S))$ that with every $a \in S$ associates the set $\{p \in \mathbb{J}(S) \mid p \leq a\}$ is always a lattice embedding, and it has nice ‘‘almost functorial’’ properties, see [13, Section 1]. Hence the question whether a new functorial retraction may

be constructed, with the corresponding maps ε_X -s being *lattice* homomorphisms, is natural.

In the present section we shall prove, by a counterexample, that this is not possible. In fact we shall prove a much stronger negative statement, see Example 10.3.

All direct systems considered in this section will be indexed by posets. Hence, if $\langle I, \leq \rangle$ is a poset, an I -indexed direct system in a category \mathcal{A} consists of a system $\langle A_i, f_{i,j} \mid i \leq j \text{ in } I \rangle$, with $f_{i,j}: A_i \rightarrow A_j$ in \mathcal{A} , for $i \leq j$ in I , such that $f_{i,i} = \text{id}_{A_i}$ and $f_{i,k} = f_{j,k} \circ f_{i,j}$, for all $i \leq j \leq k$ in I .

Suppose now that all A_i -s are finite $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices, all the $f_{i,j}$ -s are $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embeddings, and let $i \leq j$ in I . For any $q \in J(A_j)$, we define $\partial^{i,j}q$ as the set of all *minimal* $p \in A_i$ such that $q \leq f_{i,j}(p)$. Of course, $\partial^{i,j}q$ is a subset of $J(A_i)$.

Definition 10.1. Let $\alpha = \langle A_i, f_{i,j} \mid i \leq j \text{ in } I \rangle$ and $\beta = \langle B_i, g_{i,j} \mid i \leq j \text{ in } I \rangle$ be direct systems of lattices, indexed by the same poset I . A *simultaneous lattice embedding* from α into β is a system $\langle \varepsilon_i \mid i \in I \rangle$ of lattice embeddings $\varepsilon_i: A_i \hookrightarrow B_i$ such that $\varepsilon_j \circ f_{i,j} = g_{i,j} \circ \varepsilon_i$, for all $i \leq j$ in I .

Proposition 10.2. Let $\langle A_i, f_{i,j} \mid i \leq j \text{ in } I \rangle$ be a direct system, indexed by a poset I , of finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices and $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embeddings, that admits a simultaneous lattice embedding into a direct system of finite Boolean semilattices. Then for all $i \leq j$ in I and all $p \in J(A_i)$, there exists $q \leq f_{i,j}(p)$ in $J(A_j)$ such that the following statements hold:

- (i) $\partial^{i,j}q = \{p\}$.
- (ii) For all $k \in I$ with $i \leq k \leq j$ and all $r \in \partial^{k,j}q$, the following implication holds:

$$r \leq f_{i,k}(1_{A_i}) \implies r \leq f_{i,k}(p).$$

Proof. We fix a simultaneous lattice embedding as in Definition 10.1, with all the A_i -s finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices and all the B_i -s finite Boolean.

We put $0_i = 0_{A_i}$ and $1_i = 1_{A_i}$, for all $i \in I$. Furthermore, define X_i as the set of all atoms of B_i . Replacing B_i by the interval $[\varepsilon_i(0_i), \varepsilon_i(1_i)]$ (which is still Boolean), we see that there is no loss of generality in assuming that ε_i is a $\langle \vee, \wedge, 0, 1 \rangle$ -embedding, for all $i \in I$. Furthermore, we may assume that the X_i -s are pairwise disjoint and that all the $f_{i,j}$ -s are set-theoretical inclusion mappings, so that $A_i \subseteq A_j$, for all $i \leq j$ in I .

Since ε_i is a $\langle \wedge, 1 \rangle$ -homomorphism, we can define $\mu_i(x)$, for $x \in B_i$, as the least $a \in A_i$ such that $x \leq \varepsilon_i(a)$. Hence,

$$x \leq \varepsilon_i(a) \iff \mu_i(x) \leq a, \text{ for all } \langle a, x \rangle \in A_i \times B_i. \quad (10.1)$$

For $\langle \xi, \eta \rangle \in X_i \times X_j$, let $\xi \leq \eta$ hold, if $\eta \leq g_{i,j}(\xi)$. It is obvious that \leq is a partial ordering on $\bigcup (X_i \mid i \in I)$.

The following claim records a few elementary facts.

Claim 1.

- (i) $\mu_i \circ \varepsilon_i = \text{id}_{A_i}$.
- (ii) $x \leq \varepsilon_i \circ \mu_i(x)$, for all $x \in B_i$.
- (iii) $\mu_i(\xi) \in J(A_i)$, for all $\xi \in X_i$.
- (iv) $\varepsilon_i(a) = \bigvee (\xi \in X_i \mid \mu_i(\xi) \leq a)$, for all $a \in A_i$.
- (v) $\mu_j \circ g_{i,j}(x) \leq \mu_i(x)$, for all $x \in B_i$.
- (vi) $\xi \leq \eta$ implies that $\mu_j(\eta) \leq \mu_i(\xi)$, for all $\langle \xi, \eta \rangle \in X_i \times X_j$.

Proof. It follows from (10.1) that $\varepsilon_i(a) \leq \varepsilon_i(b)$ iff $\mu_i \varepsilon_i(a) \leq b$, for all $a, b \in A_i$. Since ε_i is an embedding, (i) follows.

Substituting $a = \mu_i(x)$ in (10.1) gives immediately (ii).

Put $p = \mu_i(\xi)$, for $\xi \in X_i$. Since ξ is nonzero, so is p . Let $p = a \vee b$, where $a, b \in A_i$. So, $\xi \leq \varepsilon_i(p) = \varepsilon_i(a) \vee \varepsilon_i(b)$, but ξ is an atom of B_i , whence either $\xi \leq \varepsilon_i(a)$ or $\xi \leq \varepsilon_i(b)$, and hence, by the definition of p , either $p = a$ or $p = b$. Item (iii) follows.

By (10.1), an element ξ of X_i lies below $\varepsilon_i(a)$ iff $\mu_i(\xi) \leq a$. Since B_i is Boolean, (iv) follows.

From (ii) it follows that $g_{i,j}(x) \leq g_{i,j} \circ \varepsilon_i \circ \mu_i(x) = \varepsilon_j \circ \mu_i(x)$; item (v) follows.

For $\langle \xi, \eta \rangle \in X_i \times X_j$ with $\xi \trianglelefteq \eta$, that is, $\eta \leq g_{i,j}(\xi)$, we obtain, using (v), that $\mu_j(\eta) \leq \mu_j \circ g_{i,j}(\xi) \leq \mu_i(\xi)$. Item (vi) follows. \square

Claim 2. *The set $\partial^{i,j} \mu_j(\eta)$ is contained in $\{\mu_i(\xi) \mid \xi \in X_i \text{ and } \xi \trianglelefteq \eta\}$, for all $i \leq j$ in I and all $\eta \in X_j$.*

Proof of Claim. Let $p \in \partial^{i,j} \mu_j(\eta)$. From Claim 1(iv) it follows that

$$\varepsilon_j(p) = \bigvee (\beta \in X_j \mid \mu_j(\beta) \leq p),$$

whence $\eta \leq \varepsilon_j(p)$. Therefore, again by using Claim 1(iv), we obtain

$$\eta \leq g_{i,j} \circ \varepsilon_i(p) = g_{i,j} \left(\bigvee (\xi \in X_i \mid \mu_i(\xi) \leq p) \right) = \bigvee (g_{i,j}(\xi) \mid \xi \in X_i \text{ and } \mu_i(\xi) \leq p),$$

whence there exists $\xi \in X_i$ such that $\xi \trianglelefteq \eta$ and $\mu_i(\xi) \leq p$. Hence, by Claim 1(vi), $\mu_j(\eta) \leq \mu_i(\xi) \leq p$, with $\mu_i(\xi) \in A_i$ and $p \in \partial^{i,j} \mu_j(\eta)$. Therefore, $p = \mu_i(\xi)$. \square Claim 2.

Now we can conclude the proof of Proposition 10.2. It follows from Claim 1(i,iv) that

$$p = \mu_i \circ \varepsilon_i(p) = \bigvee (\mu_i(\xi) \mid \xi \in X_i \text{ and } \mu_i(\xi) \leq p),$$

thus, since p is join-irreducible, there exists $\xi \in X_i$ such that $p = \mu_i(\xi)$. Since $g_{i,j}$ is an embedding, there exists $\eta \in X_j$ such that $\eta \leq g_{i,j}(\xi)$ and $\eta \not\leq g_{i,j}(\neg^{B_i} \xi)$. This means that $\xi \trianglelefteq \eta$ and $\xi' \not\trianglelefteq \eta$ for all $\xi' \in X_i \setminus \{\xi\}$. We prove that the element $q = \mu_j(\eta)$ is as desired.

First, by Claim 1(iii), q belongs to $J(A_j)$. Since $q \leq p$, the set $\partial^{i,j} q$ is nonempty. Let $p' \in \partial^{i,j} q$. By Claim 2, there exists $\xi' \in X_i$ such that $\xi' \trianglelefteq \eta$ and $\mu_i(\xi') = p'$. By the definition of η , we obtain that $\xi' = \xi$, so $p' = p$. Hence, $\partial^{i,j} q = \{p\}$.

Now let $k \in I$ with $i \leq k \leq j$ and let $r \in \partial^{k,j} q$ with $r \leq 1_i$. The latter inequality implies that $\partial^{i,k} r$ is nonempty. Let $p' \in \partial^{i,k} r$. Since $r \in \partial^{k,j} q = \partial^{k,j} \mu_j(\eta)$, there exists, by Claim 2, $\zeta \in X_k$ such that $r = \mu_k(\zeta)$ and $\zeta \trianglelefteq \eta$. Since $p' \in \partial^{i,k} r$, there exists, again by Claim 2, $\xi' \in X_i$ such that $\xi' \trianglelefteq \zeta$ and $\mu_i(\xi') = p'$. So $\xi' \trianglelefteq \eta$ with $\xi' \in X_i$, whence $\xi' = \xi$, and so $p' = p$. Therefore, by Claim 1(vi), $r = \mu_k(\zeta) \leq \mu_i(\xi') = p$. \square

Now we obtain the promised counterexample.

Example 10.3. *There exists a square (i.e., a diagram indexed by 2^2) of finite distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices and $\langle \vee, 0, 1 \rangle$ -embeddings that does not have any simultaneous lattice embedding into any diagram of finite Boolean semilattices.*

Proof. Identify the finite poset P diagrammed on the left hand side of Figure 10.1 with its canonical image in the (distributive) lattice A of all ideals of P . So, $1 = p_1 \vee p_2$ and $P = \mathbf{J}(A)$. Put $p = p_1 \wedge p_2 = q_1 \vee q_2$ and let S denote the $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -subsemilattice of A generated by $\{p, p_1, p_2\}$. Hence S is distributive and $\mathbf{J}(S) = \{p, p_1, p_2\}$. For $i \in \{1, 2\}$, put $r_i = q_i \vee q'_i$ and $P_i = \{p, p_1, p_2, r_i\}$. Denote by A_i the

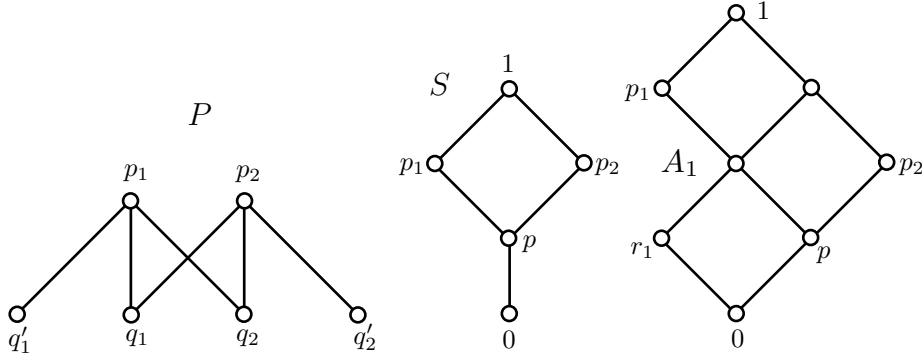


FIGURE 10.1. The poset P and the $\langle \vee, 0, 1 \rangle$ -semilattices S and A_1 .

$\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -subsemilattice of A generated by P_i . The only nontrivial comparable pairs in P_i are given by $r_1 < p_1$ and $p < p_1, p_2$. Furthermore, since $p_1 \not\leq r_1 \vee p_2$, all elements of P_i are join-prime in A_1 , hence A_1 is isomorphic to the lattice of all ideals of P_i ; whence it is distributive. Similarly, A_2 is distributive. The semilattices S and A_1 are diagrammed on Figure 10.1. Of course, A_1 and A_2 are isomorphic.

So we have obtained four $\langle \vee, 0, 1 \rangle$ -semilattices $S \subseteq A_1, A_2 \subseteq A$. Suppose that this square has a simultaneous lattice embedding into a diagram of finite Boolean semilattices. We apply Proposition 10.2 to the element $p \in \mathbf{J}(S)$. The element $q \in \mathbf{J}(A)$ given by Proposition 10.2 lies below p , so we may assume, by symmetry, that $q = q_1$. From $r_1 \in \partial^{A_1, A} q_1$ and $r_1 \leq 1_S$, it follows that $r_1 \leq p$, a contradiction. \square

The proof of Proposition 10.2 above makes essential use of the distributivity of all B_i -s. As we shall see in Section 11, this is unavoidable.

11. THE GRÄTZER-SCHMIDT EXTENSION AND RETRACTS OF ULTRA-SIMPLE-ATOMISTIC SEMILATTICES

A well-known result by M. Tischendorf [14] gives a direct construction implying that *every finite lattice embeds into some finite atomistic lattice*. For a finite lattice L , denote by $\mathbf{Ti}(L)$ the finite atomistic lattice obtained from L via Tischendorf's construction. It is proved in [14] that $\mathbf{Ti}(L)$ is a finite atomistic lattice containing (as a bounded lattice) L , via the embedding $\zeta_L: L \hookrightarrow \mathbf{Ti}(L)$, $a \mapsto \downarrow a \cap \mathbf{J}(L)$. In fact, it is proved in [14] that ζ_L is *congruence-preserving*, that is, the natural map from the congruence lattice $\text{Con } L$ of L to $\text{Con } \mathbf{Ti}(L)$ is an isomorphism. Furthermore, the map $\rho_L: \mathbf{Ti}(L) \rightarrow L$, $X \mapsto \bigvee X$ is easily seen to be a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -retraction of ζ_L .

Although the correspondence $L \mapsto \mathbf{Ti}(L)$ cannot be extended “naturally” to arbitrary $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embeddings, it can be extended to *isomorphisms*. This is sufficient to construct from it an appropriate shelter. This shelter can, in turn, be used to

prove the following analogue of Corollary 9.7: *Every $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice is a retract of a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice which is a directed $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -union of finite atomistic lattices.*

However, a much stronger result can be proved with a much simpler method, see Theorem 11.5. We shall now present this proof.

We recall that a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice K is *atomistic*, if every element of K is a join of atoms of K . The purpose of the first part of the following definition is to separate the two distinct notions of simple semilattice (which is a trivial) and simple lattice.

Definition 11.1. Let K be a lattice with zero. We say that the $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice $\langle K, \vee, 0 \rangle$ is *lattice-simple*, if the lattice $\langle K, \vee, \wedge \rangle$ is simple. A $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice K is *ultra-simple-atomistic*, if K is the directed union of its finite, lattice-simple, atomistic $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -subsemilattices.

We denote by $\text{At } K$ the set of all atoms of a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice K , and we put $\text{NAt } K = K \setminus (\{0\} \cup \text{At } K)$. For every $a \in \text{NAt } K$, we adjoin distinct atoms $p_a^i < a$, for $i \in \{0, 1\}$, such that $p_a^i = p_b^j$ only in case $a = b$ and $i = j$. Now we put

$$\mathbf{GS}(K) = K \cup \{p_a^i \mid a \in \text{NAt } K \text{ and } i < 2\}.$$

Since this construction is used in the proof of [7, Lemma 7], we shall call it the *Grätzer-Schmidt extension* of K .

The ordering of $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ consists of the ordering of K , augmented by the following pairs:

$$\begin{aligned} p_a^i \leq b &\iff a \leq b && \text{(in case } a \in \text{NAt } K), \\ a \leq p_b^j &\iff a = 0 && \text{(in case } b \in \text{NAt } K), \\ p_a^i \leq p_b^j &\iff (a = b \text{ and } i = j) && \text{(in case } a, b \in \text{NAt } K), \end{aligned}$$

for $a, b \in K$ and $i, j < 2$.

The following lemma records a few straightforward properties of $\mathbf{GS}(K)$.

Lemma 11.2. *Let K be a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice. Then the following properties hold:*

- (i) *The ordering \leq endows $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ with a structure of $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice.*
- (ii) *The inclusion map $\varepsilon_K: K \hookrightarrow \mathbf{GS}(K)$ is a complete $\langle \vee, \wedge \rangle$ -embedding (that is, an order-embedding that preserves all meets and joins defined in K).*
- (iii) *If K is a lattice, then so is $\mathbf{GS}(K)$.*
- (iv) *The map $\mu_K: \mathbf{GS}(K) \rightarrow K$ extending id_K such that $\mu_K(p_a^i) = a$, for all $a \in \text{NAt } K$ and $i < 2$, is a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -homomorphism, and $\mu_K \circ \varepsilon_K = \text{id}_K$.*

For elements a, b , and c in a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice K , we say that $c = a \oplus b$, if $c = a \vee b$ and $a \wedge b = 0$. Moreover, we say that a and b are *perspective*, in notation $a \sim b$, if there exists $x \in K$ such that $a \oplus x = b \oplus x$. The following lemma contains further related properties.

Lemma 11.3. *Let K be a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice. Then the following properties hold:*

- (i) *Every element of $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ is a join of at most two atoms.*
- (ii) *For all $x, y \in \mathbf{GS}(K)$ such that $0 < x < y$, there exists an atom p of $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ such that $y = x \oplus p$.*
- (iii) *Any two atoms of $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ are perspective.*
- (iv) *If K is a lattice, then $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ is lattice-simple.*
- (v) *In the general case, $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ is ultra-simple-atomistic.*

Proof. (i) Any $a \in \text{NAt } K$ satisfies that $a = p_a^0 \vee p_a^1$.

(ii) Necessarily, $y \in K$. If $x \in K$, then $y = x \oplus p_y^0$. If $x = p_a^i$, then $a \leq y$, and so $p_a^i \oplus p_y^{1-i} = y$.

(iii) Let x and y be distinct atoms of $\mathbf{GS}(K)$, and put $c = \mu_K(x) \vee \mu_K(y)$. If $x, y \in \text{At } K$, then $x \oplus p_c^0 = y \oplus p_c^0 = c$. If $x \in \text{At } K$ and $y = p_a^i$ (so $\mu_K(y) = a$), then $x \oplus p_c^{1-i} = y \oplus p_c^{1-i} = c$. Suppose that $x = p_a^i$ and $y = p_b^j$. Since $a \in \text{NAt } K$, there exists $d \in K$ such that $0 < d < a$. If $a = b$, then $x \oplus d = y \oplus d = a$. Suppose that $a \neq b$, say $b \not\leq a$. Then $x \oplus p_c^{1-j} = y \oplus p_c^{1-j} = c$.

(iv) It follows from Lemma 11.2(iii) that $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ is a lattice. Denote by $\Theta(x, y)$ the (lattice-)congruence of $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ generated by the pair $\langle x, y \rangle$, for any $x, y \in \mathbf{GS}(K)$. It follows from (iii) that $\Theta(0, x) = \Theta(0, y)$, for all atoms x and y of $\mathbf{GS}(K)$. Therefore, by (i) (or (ii)), $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ is lattice-simple.

(v) As K is the directed union of its finite $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -subsemilattices (we define the empty directed union as $\{0\}$), we obtain that $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ is the directed union of all $\mathbf{GS}(F)$, for F a nontrivial finite join-subsemilattice of K . By (i) and (iv), $\mathbf{GS}(F)$ is finite, atomistic, and lattice-simple, for all such F . \square

For $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices K and L and a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embedding $f: K \hookrightarrow L$, we define a map $\mathbf{GS}(f): \mathbf{GS}(K) \rightarrow \mathbf{GS}(L)$ by the rule

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{GS}(f)(a) &= a && \text{for } a \in K, \\ \mathbf{GS}(f)(p_a^i) &= p_{f(a)}^i && \text{for } a \in \text{NAt } K \text{ and } i < 2. \end{aligned}$$

The verification of the following lemma is straightforward.

Lemma 11.4. *In the context above, the map $\mathbf{GS}(f)$ is a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embedding from $\mathbf{GS}(K)$ into $\mathbf{GS}(L)$ such that $\mathbf{GS}(f) \circ \varepsilon_K = \varepsilon_L \circ f$ and $\mu_L \circ \mathbf{GS}(f) = f \circ \mu_K$. Furthermore, if f is a lattice homomorphism, then so is $\mathbf{GS}(f)$.*

Collecting some of the information above, we obtain the following rather elementary result.

Theorem 11.5. *The triple $\langle \mathbf{GS}, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ is a functorial retraction of the category of $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices and $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embeddings to the full subcategory of ultra-simple-atomistic $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices. Furthermore, the functor \mathbf{GS} sends finite lattices to finite (lattice-)simple lattices.*

The essence of this result can be captured by the following somewhat loose formulation: *Every $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice is a retract of some ultra-simple-atomistic $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice, and this holds functorially.*

Further properties of the functorial retraction of Theorem 11.5 are obtained above. For example, for any $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -embedding $f: K \hookrightarrow L$,

- (1) the map ε_K is a complete $\langle \vee, \wedge \rangle$ -embedding (this is why the assumption of distributivity of the B_i -s is unavoidable in the proof of Proposition 10.2);
- (2) if $f: K \hookrightarrow L$ is a 0-lattice embedding, then so is $\mathbf{GS}(f)$.

Let us keep the notation of Section 9 for \mathcal{S} and \mathcal{M} , and denote by \mathcal{S}_{at} the full subcategory of atomistic members of \mathcal{S} . We state the following analogue of Proposition 9.6.

Proposition 11.6. *The projection functor from $\text{Retr}(\mathcal{S} \cap \mathcal{M}, \mathcal{S}_{\text{at}} \cap \mathcal{M})$ to $\mathcal{S} \cap \mathcal{M}$ has neither a right nor a left adjoint.*

The proof of Proposition 11.6 is virtually the same as the one of Proposition 9.6.

However, as shows the following easy result and since there are finite non-atomistic lattices, the analogue of Theorem 11.5 for *lattices* does not hold.

Proposition 11.7. *Any finite $\langle \vee, \wedge \rangle$ -homomorphic image of a $\langle \vee, \wedge \rangle$ -direct limit of finite atomistic lattices is atomistic.*

Proof. Let K be a finite lattice and let $g: L \rightarrow K$ be a surjective lattice homomorphism, where $L = \varinjlim_{i \in I} L_i$, with I directed, the lattices L_i finite atomistic, and transition maps $f_i: L_i \rightarrow L$. Since K is finite, there exists $i \in I$ such that $g_i = g \circ f_i$ is surjective. Since $g_i(p)$ is an atom of K , for any atom p of L_i , K is atomistic. \square

12. OPEN PROBLEMS

As observed above, the functorial retraction constructed in the proof of Theorem 9.5, although theoretically computable, lives *a priori* beyond the reach of any implementation. The most natural question is thus whether such a functorial retraction could be constructed with ‘reasonable’ growth.

A possible way to formulate this problem is the following. We use the notation of Section 9.

Problem 1. Are there a functorial retraction $\langle \Phi, \varepsilon, \mu \rangle$ of $\mathcal{D} \cap \mathcal{M}$ to $\mathcal{B} \cap \mathcal{M}$ and a positive integer d such that for every finite distributive (semi)lattice D with n join-irreducible elements, $\Phi(D)$ has at most n^d atoms?

Both Example 10.3 and the huge upper bound for the construction of Theorem 9.5 suggest that $\Phi(D)$ needs to be large with respect to D .

Say that a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -homomorphism $\mu: S \rightarrow T$ is *weakly distributive*, if whenever $\mu(c) = a \vee b$, there is a decomposition $c = x \vee y$ in S such that $\mu(x) \leq a$ and $\mu(y) \leq b$. In view of some lifting results with respect to the congruence functor on lattices (see [16] for a survey), the following problem may be relevant.

Problem 2. Is every distributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice a weakly distributive image of some ultraboolean $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice?

We know that Problem 2 has a positive answer for *countable* semilattices.

We do not know whether the analogue of Corollary 9.7 for *dimension groups* holds. By definition, a partially ordered abelian group G is a *dimension group*, if G is directed (for its ordering), unperforated, and has the interpolation property, see [4]. Special cases of dimension groups are the *simplicial groups*, that is, those partially ordered abelian groups that are isomorphic to some finite power of the integers (with componentwise ordering). As defined in [3], a partially ordered abelian group is **E**-*ultrasimplicial*, if it is a directed union of simplicial groups. Every **E**-ultrasimplicial group is a dimension group; the converse is easily seen to be false, even in the divisible case (see [3, Example 1.2]).

Problem 3. Is every dimension group a retract of some **E**-ultrasimplicial group?

A similar question can be formulated in the context of [5]. We denote by \mathcal{R}_{ep} (resp., $\mathcal{R}_{\text{ep}}^*$) the class of all monoids which are direct limits (resp., directed unions) of finite products of monoids of the form $(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}) \cup \{0\}$ for positive integers n . A first-order characterization of \mathcal{R}_{ep} is obtained in [5].

Problem 4. Is every member of \mathcal{R}_{ep} a retract of some member of $\mathcal{R}_{\text{ep}}^*$?

The result of Theorem 9.5 is made possible by the shelter **B**. In order to define a shelter we need a functor playing the role of the ‘functor from \mathcal{S}^{iso} to \mathcal{B}^{iso} ’ of Definition 4.2(i). A special feature of such functors is that they can be easily defined on *isomorphisms* (because they are given by ‘explicit’ constructions), but not on *embeddings*. There are probably many such objects within mathematical practice. For example, it is proved in [1, Theorem 1.11], *via* an explicit construction, that every finite join-semidistributive lattice embeds into some finite atomistic join-semidistributive lattice. (A lattice is *join-semidistributive*, if it satisfies the quasi-identity $x \vee y = x \vee z \Rightarrow x \vee y = x \vee (y \wedge z)$.) This suggests the following problem.

Problem 5. Say that a $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice S is *join-semidistributive*, if for all $a, b, c \in S$, if $a \vee b = a \vee c$, then there exists $x \leq b, c$ such that $a \vee b = a \vee x$. Is every join-semidistributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattice a retract of some direct limit of finite atomistic join-semidistributive $\langle \vee, 0 \rangle$ -semilattices?

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