

### 3. Van der Waerden's Theorem

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To see that  $A$  is in fact a minimal left ideal, assume we have a left ideal  $B \subseteq A$  and pick  $x \in B$ . Then as above  $S + x \in \mathcal{A}$  while  $S + x \subseteq S + B \subseteq B \subseteq A$  so  $S + x = A$  so  $B = A$   $\square$

**2.3 Definition.** Let  $S$  be a semigroup. Then  $M(S) = \cup \{L: L \text{ is a minimal left ideal of } S\}$ .

It is a fact (which we will not need) that if  $S$  is a compact Hausdorff right topological semigroup, then  $M(S)$  is a two-sided ideal of  $S$ .

**2.4 LEMMA.** Let  $S$  be a compact Hausdorff right topological semigroup and let  $I$  be a two-sided ideal of  $S$ . Then  $M(S) \neq \emptyset$  and  $M(S) \subseteq I$ .

*Proof.* Since  $S$  is a left ideal of  $S$  it contains by Lemma 2.2 a minimal left ideal so  $M(S) \neq \emptyset$ . So see that  $M(S) \subseteq I$ , let  $x \in M(S)$ . There is a minimal left ideal  $L$  of  $S$  with  $x \in L$ . Also choose some  $y \in I$ . Then  $y + x \in L \cap I$  (since  $I$  is a right ideal) so  $L \cap I \neq \emptyset$ . Thus  $L \cap I$  is a left ideal contained in  $L$  so that  $L \cap I = L$ .  $\square$

The proof of the following lemma is an easy exercise and we omit it.

**2.5 LEMMA.** Let  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  be compact right topological semigroups and let  $S_1 \times S_2$  have the product topology and coordinatewise operations. Then  $S_1 \times S_2$  is a compact right topological semigroup. Given  $x \in S_1$  and  $y \in S_2$ ,  $\lambda_x$  and  $\lambda_y$  may or may not be continuous (where  $\lambda_x(t) = x + t$ ). If  $\lambda_x: S_1 \rightarrow S_1$  and  $\lambda_y: S_2 \rightarrow S_2$  are continuous, then  $\lambda_{(x,y)}: S_1 \times S_2 \rightarrow S_1 \times S_2$  is continuous.

### 3. VAN DER WAERDEN'S THEOREM

We let  $l \in \mathbb{N}$  be fixed throughout and show that given any finite partition of  $\mathbb{N}$  some one cell contains a length  $l$  arithmetic progression.

**3.1 Definition.** (a) Let  $Y = (\beta\mathbb{N})^l$  with the product topology and coordinatewise operations.

$$(b) \quad E^* = \{(a, a + d, a + 2d, \dots, a + (l-1)d): a \in \mathbb{N} \text{ and } d \in \mathbb{N} \cup \{0\}\}.$$

$$(c) \quad I^* = \{(a, a + d, a + 2d, \dots, a + (l-1)d): a, d \in \mathbb{N}\}.$$

$$(d) \quad E = cl_Y E^*$$

$$(e) \quad I = cl_Y I^*.$$

Note that by Lemmas 1.1 and 2.5,  $Y$  is a compact Hausdorff right topological semigroup and whenever  $\mathbf{x} = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_l) \in \mathbb{N}^l$ ,  $\lambda_{\mathbf{x}}$  is continuous.

3.2 LEMMA.  $E$  is a compact Hausdorff right topological semigroup and  $I$  is a two sided ideal of  $E$ .

*Proof.* Compactness is immediate and the Hausdorff property and right continuity are inherited from  $Y$ . We let  $\mathbf{p} = (p_1, p_2, \dots, p_l)$  and  $\mathbf{q} = (q_1, q_2, \dots, q_l)$  be members of  $E$  and show that  $\mathbf{p} + \mathbf{q} \in E$ . We show further that if either  $\mathbf{p}$  or  $\mathbf{q}$  is in  $I$ , then  $\mathbf{p} + \mathbf{q} \in I$ .

To see that  $\mathbf{p} + \mathbf{q} \in E$ , let  $U$  be a neighborhood of  $\mathbf{p} + \mathbf{q}$ . By the continuity of  $\rho_{\mathbf{q}}$ , pick a neighborhood  $V$  of  $\mathbf{p}$  with  $V + \mathbf{q} = \rho_{\mathbf{q}}[V] \subseteq U$ . Since  $\mathbf{p} \in cl E^*$  we may pick  $a \in \mathbf{N}$  and  $d \in \mathbf{N} \cup \{0\}$  with

$$(a, a+d, a+2d, \dots, a+(l-1)d) \in V.$$

If  $\mathbf{p} \in I$  we may presume  $d \neq 0$ . Let  $\mathbf{x} = (a, a+d, a+2d, \dots, a+(l-1)d)$ . Then  $\mathbf{x} \in V$  so  $\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{q} \in U$ . By the continuity of  $\lambda_{\mathbf{x}}$ , pick a neighborhood  $W$  of  $\mathbf{q}$  with  $\mathbf{x} + W = \lambda_{\mathbf{x}}[W] \subseteq U$ . Since  $\mathbf{q} \in cl E^*$ , pick  $b \in \mathbf{N}$  and  $c \in \mathbf{N} \cup \{0\}$  (with  $c \neq 0$  if  $\mathbf{q} \in I$ ) such that  $(b, b+c, b+2c, \dots, b+(l-1)c) \in W$ . Let  $\mathbf{y} = (b, b+c, b+2c, \dots, b+(l-1)c)$ . Then  $\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{y} \in U \cap E^*$ . If either  $d \neq 0$  or  $c \neq 0$ , then  $c + d \neq 0$  so  $\mathbf{x} + \mathbf{y} \in U \cap I^*$ .  $\square$

3.3 THEOREM. Let  $p \in M(\beta\mathbf{N})$  and let  $\mathbf{p} = (p, p, \dots, p)$ . Then  $\mathbf{p} \in I$ .

*Proof.* We first show that  $\mathbf{p} \in E$ . Let  $U_1 \times U_2 \times \dots \times U_l$  be a basic neighborhood of  $\mathbf{p}$ . Then  $U_1 \cap U_2 \cap \dots \cap U_l$  is a neighborhood of  $p$  in  $\beta\mathbf{N}$ . Since  $\mathbf{N}$  is dense, pick  $a \in \mathbf{N} \cap (U_1 \cap U_2 \cap \dots \cap U_l)$ . Then  $(a, a, \dots, a) \in E^* \cap (U_1 \times U_2 \times \dots \times U_l)$ . Thus  $\mathbf{p} \in cl E^* = E$ .

Since  $p \in M(\beta\mathbf{N})$ , there is a minimal left ideal  $L$  of  $\beta\mathbf{N}$  with  $p \in L$ . Since  $E + \mathbf{p}$  is a left ideal of  $E$ , pick by Lemma 2.2 a minimal left ideal  $L^*$  of  $E$  with  $L^* \subset E + \mathbf{p}$ . Since  $L^*$  is closed, hence compact, pick by Lemma 2.1 an idempotent  $\mathbf{q} = (q_1, q_2, \dots, q_l)$  in  $L^*$ . Now  $\mathbf{q} \in L^* \subseteq E + \mathbf{p}$  so pick some  $\mathbf{s} = (s_1, s_2, \dots, s_l)$  in  $E$  with  $\mathbf{q} = \mathbf{s} + \mathbf{p}$ .

We show that  $\mathbf{p} + \mathbf{q} = \mathbf{p}$ . To this end let  $i \in \{1, 2, \dots, l\}$ . Now  $q_i = s_i + p \in L$  so  $\beta\mathbf{N} + q_i \subseteq \beta\mathbf{N} + L \subseteq L$ . Thus  $\beta\mathbf{N} + q_i$  is a left ideal contained in the minimal left ideal  $L$  so that  $\beta\mathbf{N} + q_i = L$ . Thus since  $p \in L$  there exists  $t_i \in \beta\mathbf{N}$  with  $t_i + q_i = p$ . But then  $p + q_i = t_i + q_i + q_i = t_i + q_i = p$  as required.

Since  $\mathbf{p} \in E$  and  $\mathbf{q} \in L^*$ , a left ideal of  $E$ , we have  $\mathbf{p} = \mathbf{p} + \mathbf{q} \in L^*$  so that  $\mathbf{p} \in M(E)$ . Thus by Lemma 2.4,  $\mathbf{p} \in I$ .

3.4 COROLLARY (van der Waerden). Let  $m \in \mathbf{N}$  and let  $\{A_1, A_2, \dots, A_m\}$  be a partition of  $\mathbf{N}$ . There exist  $i \in \{1, 2, \dots, m\}$  and  $a, d \in \mathbf{N}$  with  $\{a, a+d, a+2d, \dots, a+(l-1)d\} \subseteq A_i$ .

*Proof.* By Lemma 2.4  $M(\beta\mathbf{N}) \neq \emptyset$  so pick  $p \in M(\beta\mathbf{N})$  and let  $\mathbf{p} = (p, p, \dots, p)$ . By Lemma 1.2 pick  $i \in \{1, 2, \dots, m\}$  such that  $cl A_i$  is a neighborhood of  $p$  and let  $U = cl A_i$ . Then  $U \times U \times \dots \times U$  is a neighborhood of  $\mathbf{p}$  while, by Theorem 2.3,  $\mathbf{p} \in I = cl I^*$ . Pick  $a, d \in \mathbf{N}$  with  $(a, a+d, a+2d, \dots, a+(l-1)d) \in U \times U \times \dots \times U$ . Then

$$\{a, a+d, a+2d, \dots, a+(l-1)d\} \subseteq U \cap \mathbf{N} = (cl A_i) \cap \mathbf{N} = A_i. \quad \square$$

We remark that if one starts with the free semigroup on  $l$  letters in place of  $\mathbf{N}$ , essentially the same proof yields the Hales-Jewett Theorem. See [3] for the details.

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