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DEFINABLE AUTOMORPHISMS OF $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$

BOBAN VELIČKOVIĆ

ABSTRACT. We investigate definable automorphisms of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ and show that e.g. every Borel automorphism is trivial. The existence of nontrivial projective automorphisms is consistent and independent from ZFC + CH.

Throughout this paper $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ will denote the Boolean algebra of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)$ modulo the ideal of finite sets. Call an automorphism F of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ trivial if there are two cofinite sets $a, b \subseteq \omega$ and a bijection $f: a \rightarrow b$ such that $F[x] = [f''(a \cap x)]$. Here $[x]$ denotes the equivalence class of x under the equivalence relation $x =_* y$ iff $(x \setminus y) \cup (y \setminus x)$ is finite. Note that there are exactly 2^{\aleph_0} trivial automorphisms. It is a well-known fact, first proved by W. Rudin [7], that the Continuum Hypothesis implies there are $2^{2^{\aleph_0}}$ automorphisms of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$, hence most of them are nontrivial. It is also consistent with $\neg\text{CH}$ that there is a nontrivial automorphism of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$. This was proved by Baumgartner (unpublished). He noticed that if there is a family $\{a_\alpha: \alpha < \omega_1\}$ of subsets of ω such that

- (i) $a_\alpha \setminus a_\beta$ is finite for every $\alpha < \beta < \omega_1$,
- (ii) $\{a_\alpha: \alpha < \omega_1\} \cup [\omega]^{<\omega}$ generates a maximal ideal I ,

then one can build by induction a family $\{f_\alpha: \alpha < \omega_1\}$ of functions such that

- (iii) $f_\alpha: a_\alpha \rightarrow a_\alpha$ is a permutation without fixed points,
- (iv) if $\alpha < \beta$ then $f_\beta \upharpoonright a_\alpha =_* f_\alpha$.

Then we simply define $F: \mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ by

$$F[x] = \begin{cases} [f_\alpha''(x)] & \text{if } x \in I \text{ and } x \subseteq a_\alpha \text{ for some } \alpha < \omega_1, \\ [\omega \setminus f_\alpha''(\omega \setminus x)] & \text{if } x \notin I \text{ and } \omega \setminus x \subseteq a_\alpha \text{ for some } \alpha < \omega_1. \end{cases}$$

Now, (iv) ensures that F is well defined, (ii) that it is defined everywhere and (iii) that it is nontrivial. To see that, assume F is induced by some $f: a \xrightarrow{1-1} b$ for $a, b \subseteq \omega$ cofinite. One can easily find disjoint infinite sets a^0, a^1 and a^2 such ^{onto} that $a^0 \cup a^1 \cup a^2 = a$ and $f(a^\varepsilon) \cap a^\varepsilon = \emptyset$ for $\varepsilon = 0, 1, 2$. Let $\varepsilon < 3$ be such that $a^\varepsilon \notin I$. It follows from the definition of F that $f''(a^\varepsilon) \notin I$, but, since I is a maximal ideal, $f''(a^\varepsilon)$ and a^ε must intersect which is a contradiction.

The existence of a family satisfying (i) and (ii) is consistent with $\neg\text{CH}$ (see Kunen [3, p. 289]).

Using the method of Laver [4] we can prove the consistency of "ZFC + MA(σ -centered) + $\neg\text{CH}$ + there is a nontrivial automorphism of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ ". It is

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not known to the author if $\text{MA} + \neg\text{CH}$ implies, or is at least consistent with, the existence of nontrivial automorphisms.

On the other hand, S. Shelah [9] proved the following.

THEOREM 1. *If ZF is consistent then so is “ZFC + $2^{\aleph_0} = \aleph_2$ + every automorphism of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ is trivial”.*

Here, we shall be interested in definable nontrivial automorphisms of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$. Throughout the rest of the paper we identify $\mathcal{P}(\omega)$ and 2^ω , i.e. $x \subseteq \omega$ is identified with its characteristic function χ_x . For a pointclass Γ we say that F is a Γ -automorphism if $\text{Gr}(F) \in \Gamma$, where $\text{Gr}(F) = \{\langle x, y \rangle : F[x] = [y]\}$. The following lemma is a distilled form of Shelah’s Main Lemma from [9, p. 131].

LEMMA 2. *Let $F \in \text{Aut}(\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin})$. Suppose there is a dense G_δ subset X of 2^ω and a continuous $\varphi: X \rightarrow 2^\omega$ such that $\forall x \in X F[x] = [\varphi(x)]$. Then F is trivial.*

PROOF. Let us first assume $X = 2^\omega$. For $s \in 2^{<\omega}$ let $N_s = \{x \in 2^\omega : s \subseteq x\}$ be the basic clopen set determined by s . For $s, t \in 2^{<\omega}$ say that s forces t if $\varphi(N_s) \subseteq N_t$. We build by induction an increasing sequence of integers $\langle n_i : i < \omega \rangle$ and functions $f_i: [n_i, n_{i+1}) \rightarrow 2$ such that

(i) for every $i < \omega$ and every $s \in 2^{n_i}$, $s \cup f_i$ forces some $t \in 2^{n_i}$,

(ii) for every $i < \omega$, $s, s' \in 2^{n_i}$, every $k > n_{i+1}$ and $g: [n_{i+1}, k) \rightarrow 2$ if $s \cup f_i \cup g$ forces some t and $s' \cup f_i \cup g$ forces some t' then $\forall i \geq n_{i+1} t(i) = t'(i)$ if both are defined.

Assume f_{i-1} and n_i are defined. We have to construct f_i and n_{i+1} . First, we take care of (i).

Enumerate 2^{n_i} as $\{s_j : j < 2^{n_i}\}$ and construct partial functions f_i^j for $j \leq 2^{n_i}$ by induction. Set $f_i^0 = f_{i-1}$. Suppose we have f_i^j and it satisfies $\text{dom}(f_i^j) \cap n_i = \emptyset$. Since φ is continuous we can find $f_i^{j+1} \supseteq f_i^j$ such that $s_j \cup f_i^{j+1}$ is a function which forces some $t \in 2^{n_i}$. Finally let $g_i = f_i^{2^{n_i}}$. It is clear that if $f \supseteq g_i$ is such that $\text{dom}(f) \cap n_i = \emptyset$ then f satisfies (i) in place of f_i .

To take care of (ii) we need an auxiliary definition. For $s, s' \in 2^{n_i}$ call a partial function f a *witness* for $\langle s, s' \rangle$ if there is some $n > n_i$ such that

(iii) $f: [n_i, n) \rightarrow 2$,

(iv) whenever $k > n$ and $g: [n, k) \rightarrow 2$, t, t' are in $2^{<\omega}$ such that $s \cup f \cup g$ forces t and $s' \cup f \cup g$ forces t' , then t and t' agree above n , i.e. if

$$\sigma = (\text{dom } t \cap \text{dom } t') \setminus n$$

then $t \upharpoonright \sigma = t' \upharpoonright \sigma$.

Claim. *For every partial function $\tau: [n_i, k) \rightarrow 2$ and every $s, s' \in 2^{n_i}$ there is a partial function $f \supseteq \tau$ which is a witness for $\langle s, s' \rangle$.*

PROOF. Assume otherwise. We can produce sequences of partial functions $\langle \tau^j : j < \omega \rangle$, $\langle t^j : j < \omega \rangle$ and $\langle t'^j : j < \omega \rangle$ and an increasing sequence of integers $\langle l^j : j < \omega \rangle$ such that $s \cup \tau^j$ forces t^j , $s' \cup \tau^j$ forces t'^j and $t^j(l^j) \neq t'^j(l^j)$. But then let $x = s \cup \bigcup \{\tau^j : j < \omega\}$ and $x' = s' \cup \bigcup \{\tau^j : j < \omega\}$.

We have $x = {}_* x'$ while $\varphi(x) \neq {}_* \varphi(x')$, a contradiction. The claim is proved.

To ensure (ii) we apply the claim repeatedly for each pair $\langle s, s' \rangle \in 2^{n_i} \times 2^{n_i}$.

Enumerate $2^{n_i} \times 2^{n_i}$ as $\{\langle s^j, s'^j \rangle: j < 2^{2n_i}\}$ and construct $\langle g_i^j: j \leq 2^{2n_i} \rangle$ and $\langle n_i^j: j \leq 2^{2n_i} \rangle$ by induction. Set $g_i^0 = g_i$ and $n_i^0 = n_i$. Given g_i^j and n_i^j find $n_i^{j+1} > n_i^j$ and g_i^{j+1} using the claim such that $g_i^{j+1} \supseteq g_i^j$, $g_i^{j+1}: [n_i, n_i^{j+1}) \rightarrow 2$ and g_i^{j+1} is a witness for $\langle s^j, s'^j \rangle$. Finally, we let $f_{i+1} = g^{2^{2n_i}}$ and $n_i = n_i^{2^{2n_i}}$. This finishes the inductive construction of the f_i 's and n_i 's.

Now, let $a^\varepsilon = \cup\{[n_i, n_{i+1}): i \equiv \varepsilon \pmod{3}\}$ and $f^\varepsilon = \cup\{f_i: i \equiv \varepsilon \pmod{3}\}$ for $\varepsilon = 0, 1, 2$. Then consider the function $\varphi^0(x) = \varphi(x \cup a^1 \cup a^2) \setminus \varphi(a^1 \cup a^2)$. Since F is a homomorphism we have $\forall x \subseteq a^0$, $\varphi^0(x) = \ast \varphi(x)$. It is easy to see that there are functions h_i such that

(v) $h_i: \mathcal{P}([n_{3i}, n_{3i+1})) \rightarrow \mathcal{P}([n_{3i-1}, n_{3i+2}))$ for $i < \omega$,

(vi) $\varphi^0(x) = \cup\{h_i(x \cap [n_{3i}, n_{3i+1})): i < \omega\}$ for $x \subseteq a^0$.

Now, for almost all $i < \omega$ we must have

(vii) $\forall u, v \in \mathcal{P}([n_{3i}, n_{3i+1})), h_i(u \cup v) = h_i(u) \cup h_i(v)$.

Assume there is an infinite $A \subseteq \omega$ such that for every $i \in A$ there are $u_i, v_i \subseteq [n_{3i}, n_{3i+1})$ and $h_i(u_i \cup v_i) \neq h_i(u_i) \cup h_i(v_i)$. Then let $u = \cup\{u_i: i \in A\}$ and $v = \cup\{v_i: i \in A\}$. Then $\varphi(u \cup v) \neq \ast \varphi(u) \cup \varphi(v)$ which contradicts the fact that F is a homomorphism. Similarly we get that h_i maps singletons to singletons for almost all $i < \omega$. For, assume otherwise. Let $A \subseteq \omega$ be infinite and $l_i \in [n_{3i}, n_{3i+1})$ for $i \in A$ such that $|h_i(\{l_i\})| \geq 2$ for every $i \in A$. Pick $m_i \in h_i(\{l_i\})$ for $i \in A$ and let $y = \{m_i: i \in A\}$. Then, clearly, there is no x such that $\varphi(x) = \ast y$. This contradicts the fact that F is onto.

So we can define a function $h^0: a^0 \rightarrow \omega$ by

$$h^0(l) = k \quad \text{if } l \in [n_{3i}, n_{3i+1}) \quad \text{and} \quad g_i(\{l\}) = \{k\}.$$

Then h^0 induces F on $\mathcal{P}(a^0)/\text{fin}$. Similarly we can find h^1 and h^2 which induce F on $\mathcal{P}(a^1)/\text{fin}$ and $\mathcal{P}(a^2)/\text{fin}$ respectively. By combining them and changing on a finite set if necessary we obtain the desired conclusion.

Let us now consider the general case, that the function φ is defined only on a dense G_δ set X . So there are open dense sets U_n , $n < \omega$ such that $X = \bigcap_{n < \omega} U_n$. We construct by induction an increasing sequence of integers $\langle m_k: k < \omega \rangle$ and a sequence of finite functions $\langle f_k: k < \omega \rangle$ such that $f_k: [m_k, m_{k+1}) \rightarrow 2$ and, for every $s \in 2^{m_k}$, $N_{s \cup f_k} \subseteq U_k$. Then let $f^\varepsilon = \cup\{f_k: k \equiv \varepsilon \pmod{2}\}$ and $a^\varepsilon = \cup\{[m_k, m_{k+1}): k \equiv \varepsilon \pmod{2}\}$ for $\varepsilon = 0, 1$. Then for every $x \subseteq a^\varepsilon$, $x \cup f^{1-\varepsilon} \in X$ so we can define $\varphi^\varepsilon: \mathcal{P}(a^\varepsilon) \rightarrow 2$ by $\varphi^\varepsilon(x) = \varphi(x \cup f^{1-\varepsilon}) \setminus \varphi(f^{1-\varepsilon})$. Clearly φ^ε is continuous for $\varepsilon = 0, 1$. So, by the special case of the lemma we get h^0, h^1 which induce F on $\mathcal{P}(a^0)$ and $\mathcal{P}(a^1)$ respectively. But then by combining them we conclude that F is trivial. \square

The above lemma clearly implies that if $F \in \text{Aut}(\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin})$ and there is a Baire choice function for F , then F is trivial. We also have the corresponding result for a Lebesgue measurable choice function.

PROPOSITION 3. *Let $F \in \text{Aut}(\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin})$. Suppose there is a set X of positive measure and a Lebesgue measurable function $\varphi: X \rightarrow 2^\omega$ such that $\forall x \in X F[x] = [\varphi(x)]$. Then F is trivial.*

PROOF. By Luzin’s theorem (see [8, p. 53]) there is a compact set C of positive measure such that $\varphi \upharpoonright C$ is continuous. Let $s \in 2^{<\omega}$ be such that $\mu(C \cap N_s) > \frac{1}{2}\mu(N_s)$. By changing φ if necessary we may assume s is a sequence of 0’s of length $n < \omega$. Consider the addition modulo 2, i.e. $x + y$ is such that $\forall k < \omega, x(k) + y(k) \equiv z(k) \pmod 2$ for $x, y \in 2^\omega, z \in 2^\omega$.

Claim. $N_s \subseteq C + C = \{x + y : x, y \in C\}$.

PROOF. Fix $z \in N_s$. Then $z + (C \cap N_s) \subseteq N_s$ and $\mu(z + (C \cap N_s)) > \frac{1}{2}\mu(N_s)$. So, $(z + C) \cap C \neq \emptyset$. Pick $x, y \in C$ such that $z + x = y$. But then also $z = x + y$. Now, consider the lexicographical ordering of 2^ω . Define

$$h(z) = \min((z + C) \cap C)$$

and $g(z) = z + h(z)$ for $z \in N_s$. Finally, let $\psi(z) = \varphi(h(z)) + \varphi(g(z))$. Then ψ is a Baire function, $\psi : N_s \rightarrow 2^\omega$ and $\forall z \in N_s, F[z] = [\psi(z)]$. This is sufficient to conclude, by virtue of the previous lemma, that F is trivial. \square

COROLLARY 4. Every Borel automorphism of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ is trivial.

PROOF. Let F be a Borel automorphism. So $\text{Gr}(F)$ is a Borel subset of $2^\omega \times 2^\omega$ with countable sections. But such sets can be uniformized by Borel sets (see Moschovakis [6, p. 258]). Hence there is a function $\varphi : 2^\omega \rightarrow 2^\omega$ such that $\langle x, \varphi(x) \rangle \in \text{Gr}(F)$ for every $x \in 2^\omega$ and $\text{Gr}(\varphi)$ is Borel. But it is well known that such φ is continuous on a dense G_δ set, so the result follows from Lemma 2. \square

Clearly, the above result is true for analytic automorphisms, too, since they are in fact Borel.

COROLLARY 5. Axiom of Determinacy implies that every automorphism of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ is trivial.

PROOF. AD implies that every $G \subseteq 2^\omega \times 2^\omega$ with nonempty sections can be uniformized by a continuous function on a dense G_δ set. This is a well-known fact, first proved by Solovay, but let us sketch the argument for the interested reader. Consider the following infinite game played by two players, I and II.

I	σ_0	σ_1	σ_2	\dots
II	τ_0	τ_1	τ_2	\dots
	n_0	n_1	n_2	

I plays finite partial functions σ_i (i.e. elements of $2^{<\omega}$) while II plays finite partial functions τ_i and integers n_i . In the end they produce two sequences $x = \sigma_0 \cap \tau_0 \cap \sigma_1 \cap \tau_1 \cap \dots$ and $y = \langle n_0, n_1, \dots \rangle$. We declare that II wins iff $\langle x, y \rangle \in G$.

A winning strategy for II easily gives rise to a uniformizing continuous function on a dense G_δ set. By AD we will be done once we prove the following.

Claim. I does not have a winning strategy.

PROOF. Fix a strategy S for I. Enumerate $2^{<\omega}$ as $\{s_i : i < \omega\}$ in such a way that $s_i \subseteq s_j$ implies $i \leq j$. We build by induction an increasing sequence of elements of $2^{<\omega}$, $\{q_i : i < \omega\}$ and a sequence of partial plays $\{p_i : i < \omega\}$ such that

(i) p_i is a partial play according to S of the form

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \sigma'_0 & & \sigma'_1 & & \cdots & & \sigma'_k \\ & & \tau'_0 & & \tau'_1 & & \cdots & & \tau'_{k-1} \\ & & s_i(0) & & s_i(1) & & & & s_i(k-1) \end{array}$$

where $k = \text{length}(s_i)$ and such that $\sigma'_0 \cap \tau'_0 \cap \cdots \cap \sigma'_k = q_i$.

(ii) If s_j extends s_i then p_j extends p_i .

We proceed by induction. Suppose we have built p_i and q_i for $i \leq n$. We construct p_{n+1} and q_{n+1} . First, look at s_{n+1} . Let $\text{length}(s_{n+1}) = k + 1$ and let $i \leq n$ be such that $s_i = s_{n+1} \upharpoonright k$. Consider the partial play p_i . let $\tau_j^{n+1} = \tau'_j$ for $j \leq k - 1$ and $\sigma_j^{n+1} = \sigma'_j$ for $j \leq k$. Then let τ_k^{n+1} be such that $q_i \cap \tau_k^{n+1} = q_n$ and $\sigma_{k+1}^{n+1} = S(p_i \cap \langle \tau_k^{n+1}, s_{n+1}(k) \rangle)$. Finally put $p_{n+1} = p_i \cap \langle \tau_k^{n+1}, s_{n+1}(k) \rangle \cap \sigma_{k+1}^{n+1}$ and $q_{n+1} = q_n \cap \sigma_{k+1}^{n+1}$. This finishes the inductive construction of the p_i 's and q_i 's.

Now, let $x = \bigcup \{q_i : i < \omega\}$. It is clear that for every $y \in 2^\omega$ there is a run of the game p in which I uses his strategy S

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \sigma_0 & & \sigma_1 & & \cdots & & \sigma_n & & \cdots \\ & & \tau_0 & & \tau_1 & & \cdots & & \tau_n & & \cdots \\ & & y(0) & & y(1) & & & & y(n) & & \cdots \end{array}$$

such that $\sigma_0 \cap \tau_0 \cap \sigma_1 \cap \tau_1 \cap \cdots \cap \sigma_n \cap \tau_n \cap \cdots = x$. Namely, if $y \upharpoonright n = s_{i_n}$ we know that p_{i_m} extends p_{i_n} for $n < m$, so we can take $p = \bigcup \{p_{i_n} : n < \omega\}$. If y is chosen such that $\langle x, y \rangle \in G$, then II wins this run of the game thus showing that S is not a winning strategy for I. \square

Our next theorem shows that Borel cannot be replaced by projective (in ZFC) in Corollary 2. However we do not know what happens with automorphisms which are between Σ_1^1 and Δ_2^1 in complexity.

THEOREM 6. *The Axiom of Constructibility implies that there is a nontrivial Δ_2^1 automorphism of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$.*

PROOF. This can be proved by simply modifying Baumgartner's argument mentioned at the beginning of this paper, constructing the sequences $\{a_\alpha : \alpha < \omega_1\}$ and $\{f_\alpha : \alpha < \omega_1\}$ in the canonical way using a fixed good Δ_2^1 -well ordering of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)$ (see Devlin [1, p. 70]). The details are straightforward and are left to the reader. \square

We finally show that it is consistent with CH that all projective, in fact, ODR automorphisms are trivial. We use the well-known model of Solovay [1], see also the presentation in Jech [2, p. 537].

Let κ be an infinite cardinal. The Levy collapse \mathcal{L}_κ is the following poset. Conditions are finite functions p , such that $\text{dom}(p) \subseteq \kappa \times \omega$ and $p(\alpha, n) \in \alpha$ for $(\alpha, n) \in \text{dom}(p)$. Order is reverse inclusion. Assuming that κ is inaccessible, Solovay [11] showed that the following holds in $V^{\mathcal{L}_\kappa}$.

Fact. Every ODR subset of $2^\omega \times 2^\omega$ with nonempty sections can be uniformized on a dense G_δ set by a continuous function.

By Lemma 2 this immediately yields the following.

THEOREM 7. *If the theory “ZF + \exists inaccessible cardinal” is consistent, then so is the theory “ZFC + CH + every ODR automorphism of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ is trivial”.*

REMARKS. (1) Shelah [10] has shown that the above uniformization result can be proved consistent without using an inaccessible cardinal. So, for Theorem 7 we need only assume that ZF is consistent.

(2) It follows from a recent result of Foreman, Magidor, Shelah and Woodin that if there is a supercompact cardinal (in fact much less) every automorphism of $\mathcal{P}(\omega)/\text{fin}$ which is in $L[\mathcal{P}(\omega)]$ is trivial.

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