

# THE YONEDA LEMMA

or why we know what a black hole is  
without being able to see it

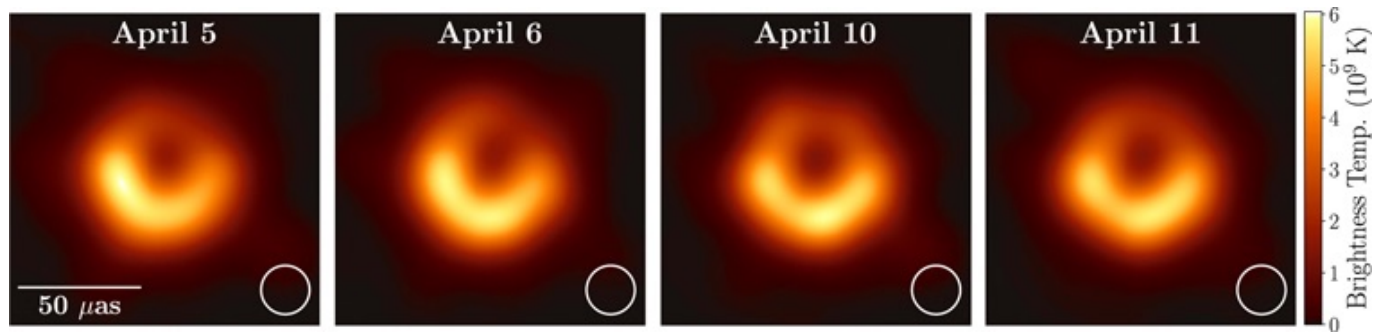
BSSM 2022

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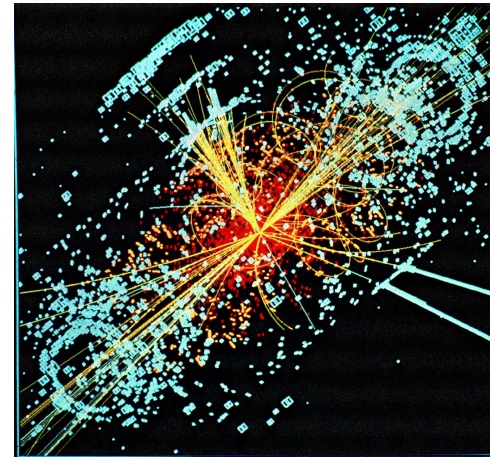
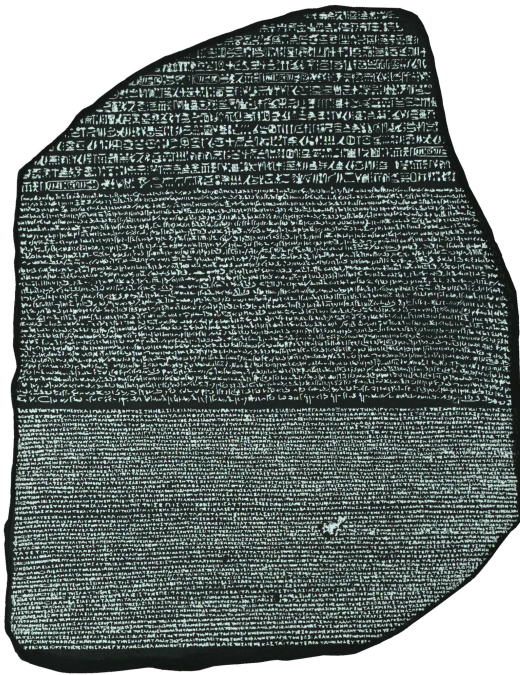
Julia Ramos González

UCLouvain

# Understanding the inaccessible



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<http://cdsweb.cern.ch/record/628469>

# Categories, our mathematical contexts

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$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{given } f: A \rightarrow B, \text{ we have} \\ f 1_A = f = 1_B f \\ \text{given } f: A \rightarrow B, g: B \rightarrow C, h: C \rightarrow D \\ h(gf) = (hg)f \end{array} \right.$$

# Examples of categories

- **Set** → Objects sets  
→ Morphisms  $\text{Set}(A, B) =$  functions from  $A$  to  $B$   
→ Composition of functions & identity functions
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- **Top**
  - Objects topological spaces
  - Morphisms  $\text{Top}(X, Y) =$  continuous maps  $X \rightarrow Y$
  - Composition of continuous maps & identities

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- $\mathcal{A}^{\text{op}}$  → objects the same as  $\mathcal{A}$   
 → Morphisms  $\mathcal{A}^{\text{op}}(A, A') = \mathcal{A}(A', A)$  + identity and composition of  $\mathcal{A}$   
 $A \xrightarrow{\quad} A' \xrightarrow{\quad} A'' = A \xleftarrow{\quad} A' \xleftarrow{\quad} A''$

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and the rest of objects see them as the same  $\mathcal{A}(C, A) \cong \mathcal{A}(C, B)$   <sup>$\circ f$</sup>  for all  $C$

# Relating categories functors

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$$X_1 \subseteq X \longmapsto \{f(x) \mid x \in X_1\} \subseteq Y$$



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it is nothing but a **left  $G$ -set**!

# Hom-functors

Homs are sets

Let  $A$  be a locally small category

We define the functor  $h^A: A \rightarrow \text{Set}$  as follows

$$\text{obj}(A) \longrightarrow \text{obj}(\text{Set})$$

$$\longmapsto$$

$$A(B, C) \longrightarrow \text{Set}(A(A, B), A(A, C))$$

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$h^A$  tells us what the object  $A$  sees from the category  $\mathcal{A}$

# Hom-functors

Homs are sets

Let  $A$  be a locally small category

We define the functor  $h_A: A^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \text{Set}$  as follows

$$\text{obj}(A^{\text{op}}) \longrightarrow \text{obj}(\text{Set})$$

$$B \longmapsto h_A(B) = A(B, A)$$

$$A^{\text{op}}(B, C) = A(C, B) \longrightarrow \text{Set}(A(B, A), A(C, A))$$

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# Preserving viewpoints

- A functor  $F: \mathcal{A} \rightarrow \mathcal{B}$  is called **fully faithful** if for every pair  $A, B \in \text{obj}(\mathcal{A})$  the functions

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$$\text{Ab} \xrightarrow{L} \text{Grp}$$

$$G \longmapsto L(G) = G$$

$$[G \xrightarrow{f} H] \longmapsto [L(f) = f \quad G \rightarrow H]$$

(morphisms in Ab  
are the homomorphisms  
of groups)



# Relating functors natural transformations

Let  $\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B}$  be two locally small categories

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- A natural transformation  $\alpha: F \Rightarrow G$  is given by a morphism  $\alpha_A: F(A) \rightarrow G(A)$  in  $\mathcal{B}$  such that for all  $f: A \rightarrow A'$  in  $\mathcal{A}$  the following diagram in  $\mathcal{B}$  commutes

$$\begin{array}{ccc} F(A) & \xrightarrow{\alpha_A} & G(A) \\ F(f) \downarrow & & \downarrow G(f) \\ F(A') & \xrightarrow{\alpha_{A'}} & G(A') \end{array}$$

# Categories of functors

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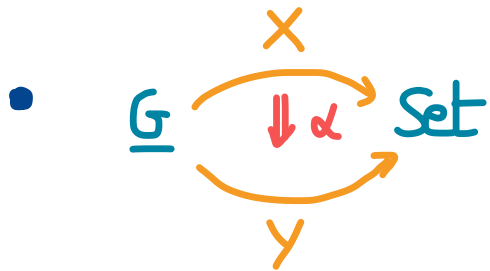
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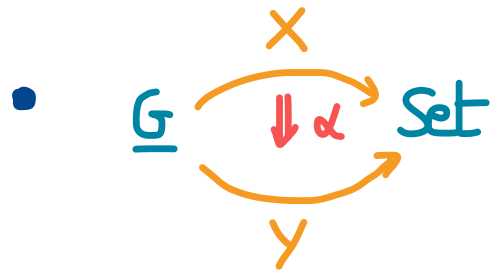
- Therefore, we can form a category of functors  $\text{Fun}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$  with objects the functors and morphisms the natural transformations



# Examples of natural transformations



# Examples of natural transformations



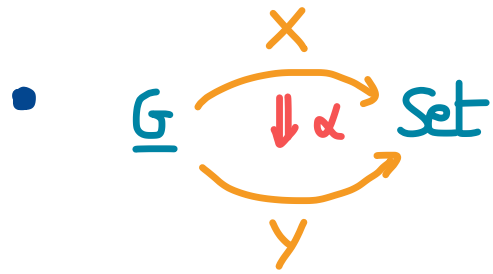
$$\alpha_* \quad X \longrightarrow Y$$

in Set

st for all  $g \in \underline{G}(*,*)$

$$\begin{array}{ccc} X & \xrightarrow{\alpha_*} & Y \\ g \downarrow & \circlearrowleft & \downarrow g \\ X & \xrightarrow{\alpha_*} & Y \end{array}$$

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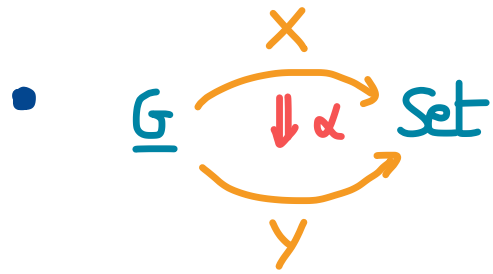


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in other words,  $\alpha_*(gx) = g\alpha_*(x) \quad \forall x \in X \quad \forall g \in G$

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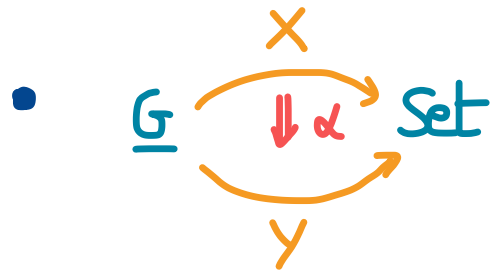
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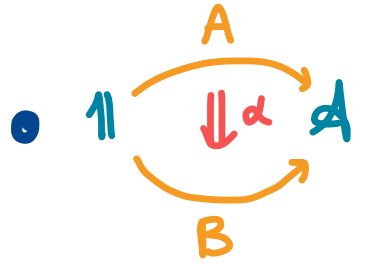
$$\alpha_*: X \rightarrow Y \text{ in Set st for all } g \in \underline{G} \begin{matrix} X & \xrightarrow{\alpha_*} & Y \\ g \downarrow & \circlearrowleft & \downarrow g \\ X & \xrightarrow{\alpha_*} & Y \end{matrix}$$

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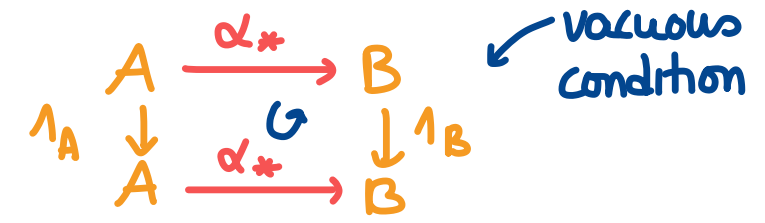
$\leadsto$  this is nothing but a **G-equivariant map of left G-sets!**

we have that  $\text{Fun}(\underline{G}, \text{Set}) = \text{category of left } G\text{-sets} + \text{equiv maps}$

# Examples of natural transformations



$\alpha_*$   $A \rightarrow B$  in  $A$  st



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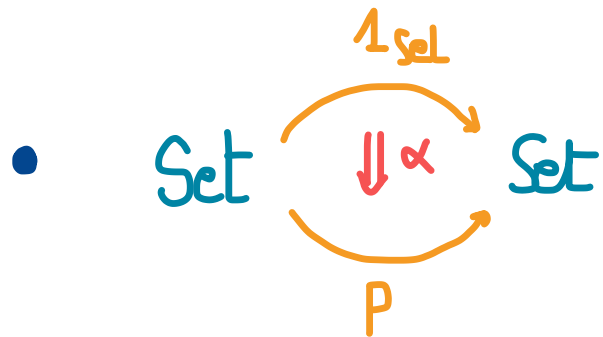
↳ this is nothing but a morphism in  $\mathcal{A} \Rightarrow \text{Fun}(\mathbb{1}, \mathcal{A}) = \mathcal{A}$

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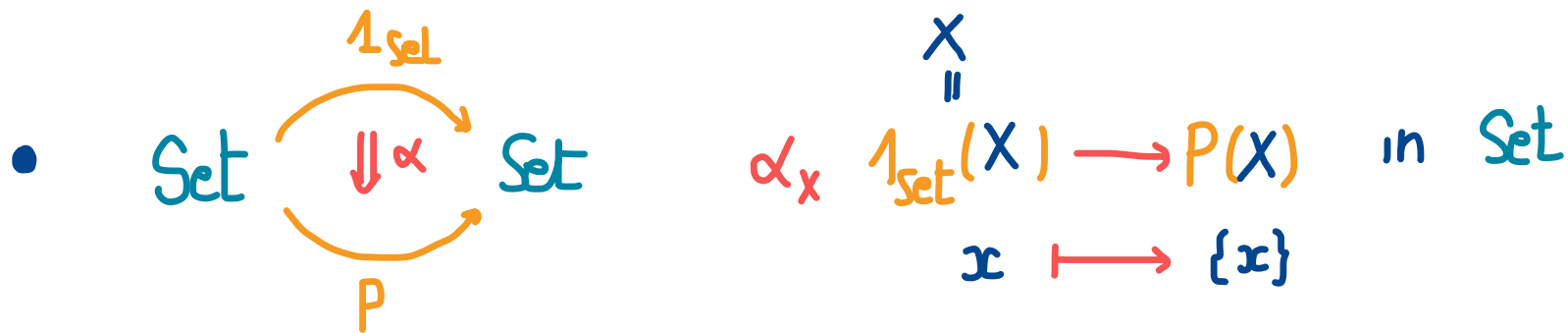




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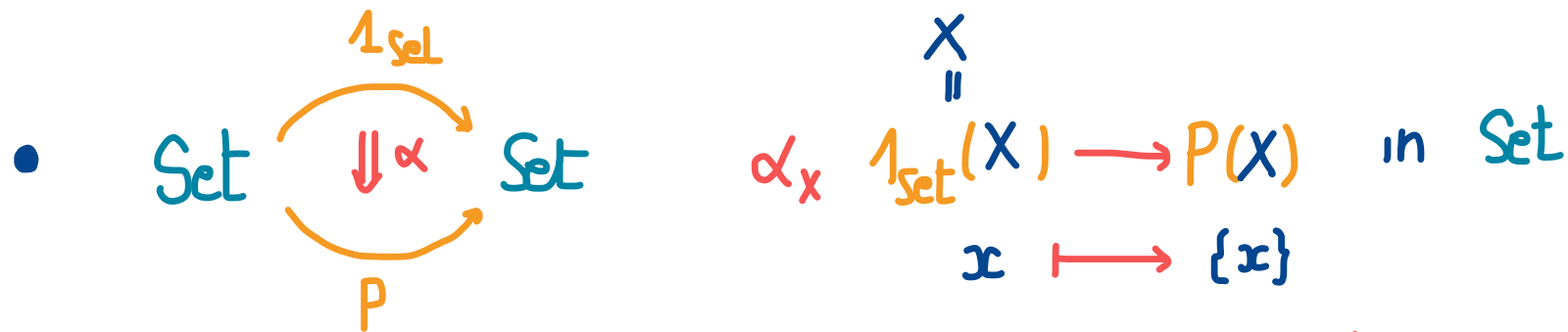
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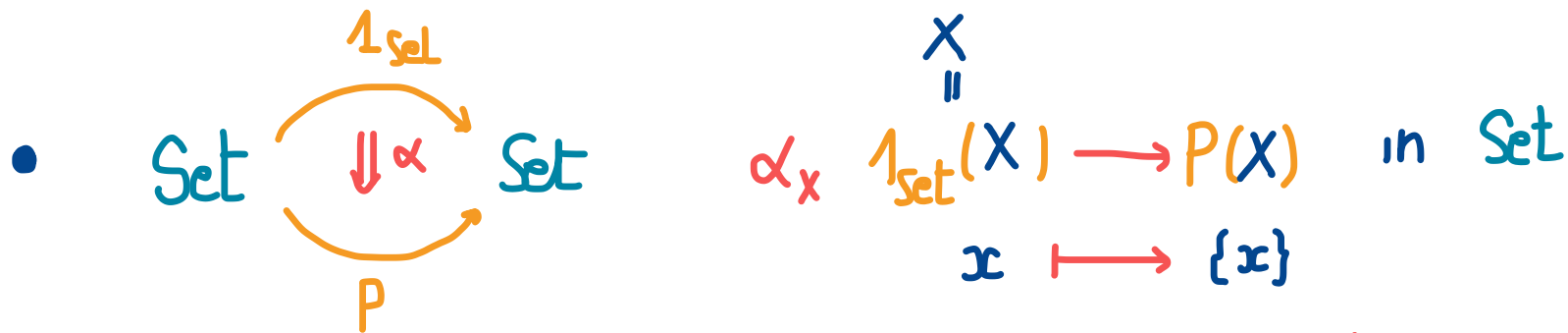


for all  $f: X \rightarrow Y$  in  $\text{Set}$  we have  $\begin{array}{ccc} X & \xrightarrow{\alpha_x} & P(X) \\ f \downarrow & \curvearrowright & \downarrow P(f) \\ Y & \xrightarrow{\alpha_y} & P(Y) \end{array}$  ,

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$$\begin{array}{ccc} x \in X & \mapsto & \{x\} \in P(X) \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ f(x) \in Y & \mapsto & \{f(x)\} \in P(Y) \end{array}$$

# « Sameness » of functors

Let  $\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B}$  be categories and consider the functor category  $\text{Fun}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$

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$$\longmapsto$$

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# Functors encoding the viewpoint of an object

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- We say that a functor  $F: \mathcal{A} \rightarrow \text{Set}$  (resp  $F: \mathcal{A}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \text{Set}$ ) is **representable** if it is naturally isomorphic to a functor  $h^A$  (resp  $h_A$ ) for some  $A \in \text{obj}(\mathcal{A})$



# The Yoneda Lemma

Let  $\mathcal{A}$  be a locally small category. Then, we have that

$$\text{Fun}(\mathcal{A}^{\text{op}}, \text{Set})(h_A, F) \cong F(A)$$

naturally in  $A \in \text{obj}(\mathcal{A})$  and  $F \in \text{Fun}(\mathcal{A}^{\text{op}}, \text{Set})$

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Sketch of the proof

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$$\text{Fun}(\mathcal{A}^{\text{op}}, \text{Set})(h_A, F) \longrightarrow F(A)$$

$$\alpha_{h_A \Rightarrow F} \longmapsto \alpha_A(1_A)$$



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$$x \longmapsto \alpha: h_A \Rightarrow F$$



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Sketch of the proof

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Yoneda Lemma gives us a bijection  $F(A) \rightarrow \text{Fun}(\mathcal{A}^{\text{op}}, \text{Set})(h_A, F)$

Take  $F = h_B \Rightarrow h_B(A) = \mathcal{A}(A, B) \rightarrow \text{Fun}(\mathcal{A}^{\text{op}}, \text{Set})(h_A, h_B)$  which

is precisely the function  $(*)$

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Sets are determined by their points!

# Module spaces

- A **module space** classifying certain objects (the real numbers, triangles, vector bundles on a manifold) is a space (topological space, manifold, abelian variety, scheme, stack) in which each point represents one object, two non-isomorphic objects are represented by different points and objects that are «similar» are «closeby» in this space

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Example the real line  $\mathbb{R}$  is the module space classifying the real numbers

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What Yoneda lemma is telling us is that  $M$  is fully determined by what the other spaces see of  $M$ .

# More general spaces

We want to build on  $M$  from what all the spaces in our category  $\text{Spac}$  see

$$\mathcal{M} \text{ Spac}^{\text{op}} \longrightarrow \text{Set}$$

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what if not? Just consider  $\mathcal{C}$  as a space itself!

We do not see it, but we know how it is perceived by different spaces, and this is often enough to do geometry!

Thank you  
for  
your attention

# References

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[MacLane, S] Categories for the Working Mathematician

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## BLOG POST

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