Deep Inference for Graphical Theorem Proving

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2025-06-10

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D3S seminar

Prague

Introduction

$$\frac{x \text{ is } A \quad \text{All } A \text{ are } B}{x \text{ is } B} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \frac{A(x) \quad \forall y. A(y) \Rightarrow B(y)}{B(x)}$$

Generic patterns of deduction as symbolic rules

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- Generic patterns of deduction as symbolic rules
- Formalist school (Hilbert):

Maths as a huge game

Goal: to prove theorems by following inference rules

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Maths as a huge game

Goal: to prove theorems by following inference rules

• Proof theory: design & study of rule systems capturing maths

$$\frac{x \text{ is of type } A \qquad f \text{ is a function from } A \text{ to } B}{f(x) \text{ is of type } B} \qquad \Rightarrow \qquad \frac{\vdash x : A \qquad \vdash f : A \rightarrow B}{\vdash f(x) : B}$$

- Generic patterns of computation as symbolic rules
- Constructivist school (Brouwer-Heyting-Kolmogorov):

Maths as a huge computation

Goal: to implement theorems by building programs

• Type theory: design & study of rule systems capturing (sound) programming

Dream: a powerful language/software environment for both:

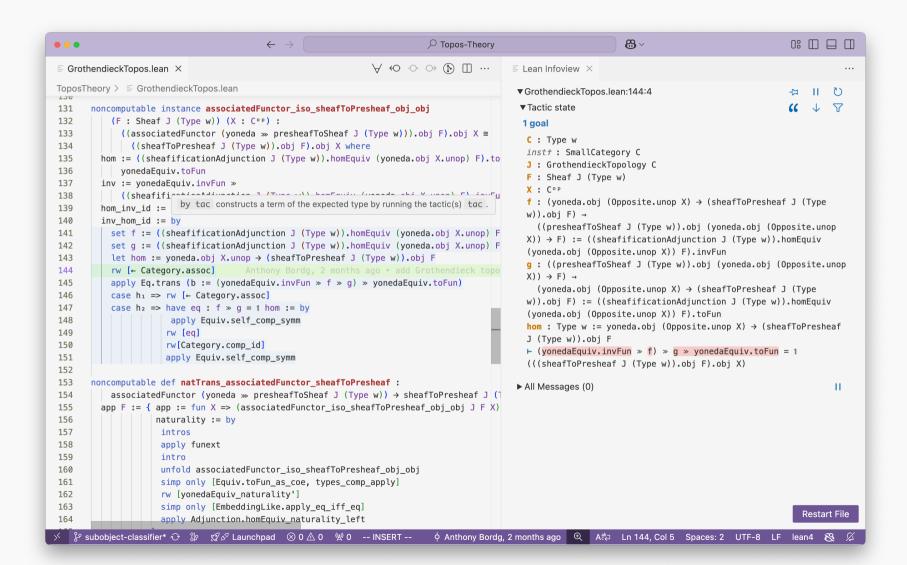
- formal mathematics
- verified programming

Dream: a user-friendly, yet powerful language/software environment for both:

- formal mathematics
- verified programming

Problem: current interfaces (and incoming ones based on LLMs) stuck in textual and verbal form



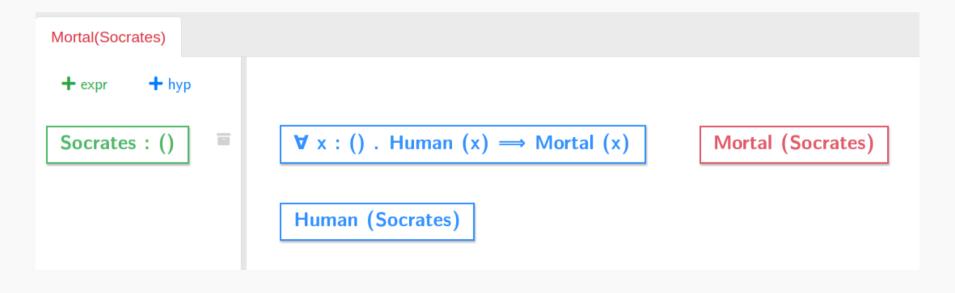


Proof-by-Action

Solution: no-code interface for proof assistants

> more graphical and gestural paradigm



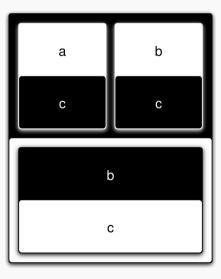


Proof-by-Action

Solution: no-code interface for proof assistants

→ more graphical and gestural paradigm



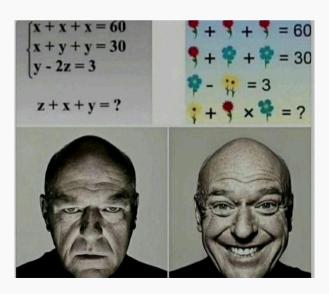


Proof-by-Action

Solution: no-code interface for proof assistants

→ more graphical and gestural paradigm





Symbolic Manipulations

A demo is worth a thousand words!

Paradigm

- Fully graphical: no textual proof language
- Both spatial and temporal:

proof = gesture sequence

• Different modes of reasoning with a single "syntax":

Technique	Action	Semantics	Proof theory
Proof-by-Pointing (Bertot, Kahn, and Théry 1994)	Click	Intro/Elim	Sequent calculus
Proof-by-Linking (Chaudhuri 2013)	Drag-and-Drop	Forward/Backward	Deep inference

Iconic Manipulations

Classical Logic: Existential Graphs

Three diagrammatic proof systems for classical logic:

- Alpha: propositional logic
- Beta: first-order logic
- Gamma: higher-order and modal logics

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Sheet of assertion

Juxtaposition

Cut

Sheet of assertion

 \mapsto true (no assertion)

Juxtaposition

Cut

Sheet of assertion

 \mapsto true (no assertion)

 \boldsymbol{a}

Juxtaposition

• Cut

Sheet of assertion

 $\mapsto \qquad \text{true (no assertion)}$ $\mapsto \qquad a \text{ is true}$

Juxtaposition

Cut

Sheet of assertion

 $\begin{array}{ccc} & \mapsto & \text{true (no assertion)} \\ a & \mapsto & a \text{ is true} \end{array}$

Juxtaposition

G H

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$$\begin{array}{ccc} & \mapsto & \text{true (no assertion)} \\ a & \mapsto & a \text{ is true} \end{array}$$

Juxtaposition

$$G \quad H \quad \mapsto \quad G \text{ is true and } H \text{ is true}$$

Cut

Sheet of assertion

$$a \mapsto true \text{ (no assertion)}$$
 $a \mapsto a \text{ is true}$

Juxtaposition

$$G \quad H \quad \mapsto \quad G \text{ is true and } H \text{ is true}$$

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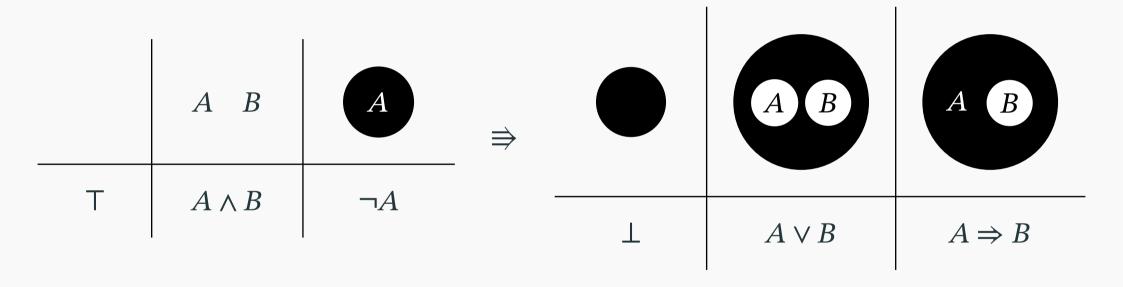
Juxtaposition

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Cut



Relationship with formulas



Only 4 edition principles!

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Iteration (copy-paste)		
$egin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$		

Only 4 edition principles!

Iteration (copy-paste)	Deiteration (unpaste)	
$G \longrightarrow G G$	G G o G	
$G \longrightarrow G G$	$egin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	

Only 4 edition principles!

Iteration (copy-paste)	Deiteration (unpaste)	Insertion
$egin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	$egin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccccc$	ightarrow G

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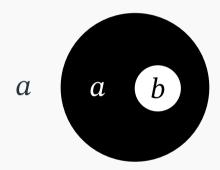
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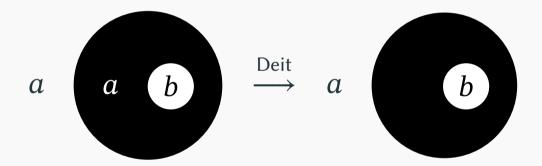
and a space principle, the **Double-cut** law:



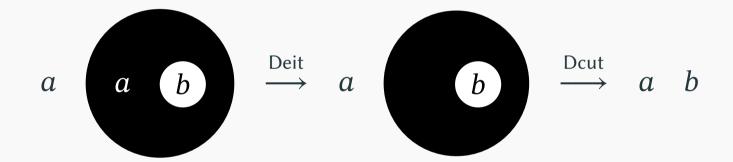
Example: modus ponens



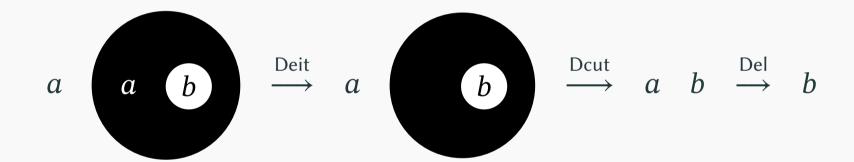
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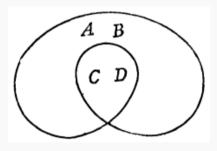
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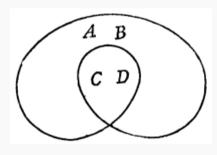


Intuitionistic Logic: Flowers



I thought I ought to take the general form of argument as the basal form of composition of signs in my diagrammatization; and this necessarily took the form of a "scroll", that is [...] a curved line without contrary flexure and returning into itself after once crossing itself.

- (Peirce 1906, pp. 533-534)

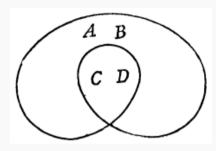


$$A \wedge B \Rightarrow C \wedge D$$

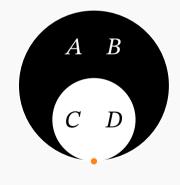
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• "conditional de inesse" = classical implication



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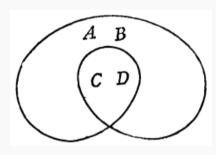


$$\neg (A \land B \land \neg (C \land D))$$

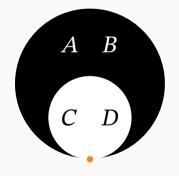
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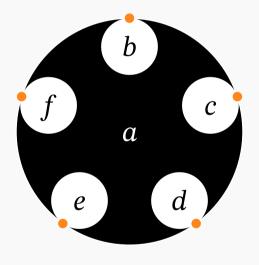


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- "conditional de inesse" = classical implication
- ⇒ scroll = two nested cuts
- Peirce also introduced ⇒ in logic! (Lewis 1920, p. 79)

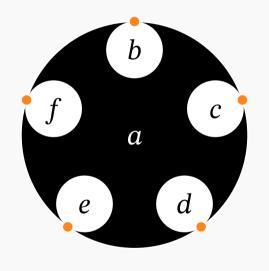


$$n = 5$$

Classical

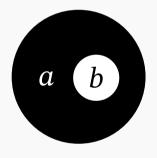


 $b \lor c$



$$n = 5$$

Classical

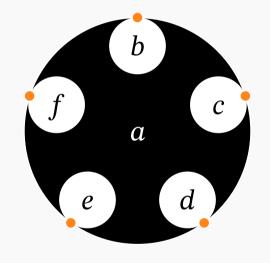


$$a \Rightarrow b$$

Classical



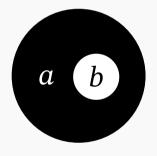
 $b \lor c$



 $a \Rightarrow b \lor c \lor d \lor e \lor f$

n = 5

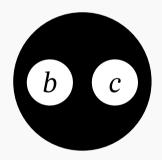
Classical



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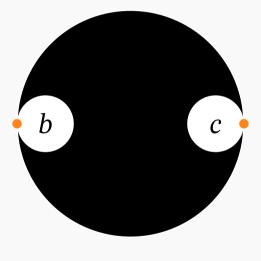
Continuity!

Intuitionistic





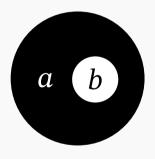




 $b \lor c$

$$n = 2$$

Classical



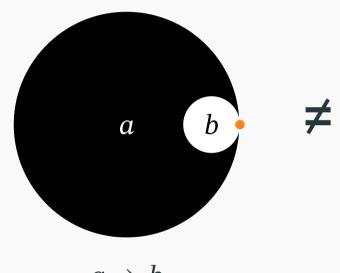
$$a \Rightarrow b$$

Continuity! Generalizes Peirce's scroll

Intuitionistic



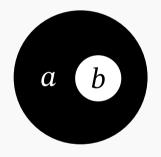
$$\neg(\neg b \land \neg c)$$



$$a \Rightarrow b$$

$$n = 1$$

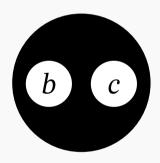
Intuitionistic



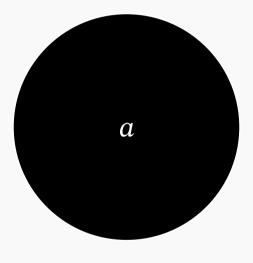
$$\neg(a \land \neg b)$$

Continuity! Generalizes Peirce's scroll and cut

Intuitionistic



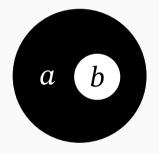
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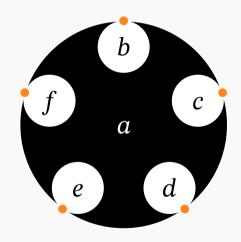
$$\neg a \triangleq a \Rightarrow \bot$$

$$n = 0$$

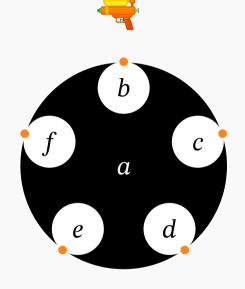
Intuitionistic



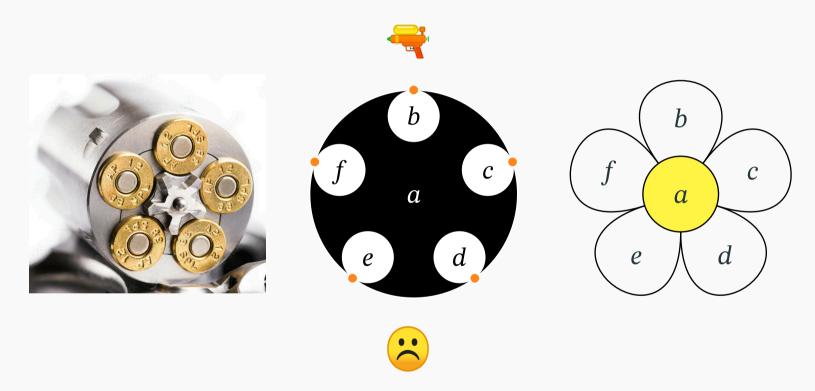
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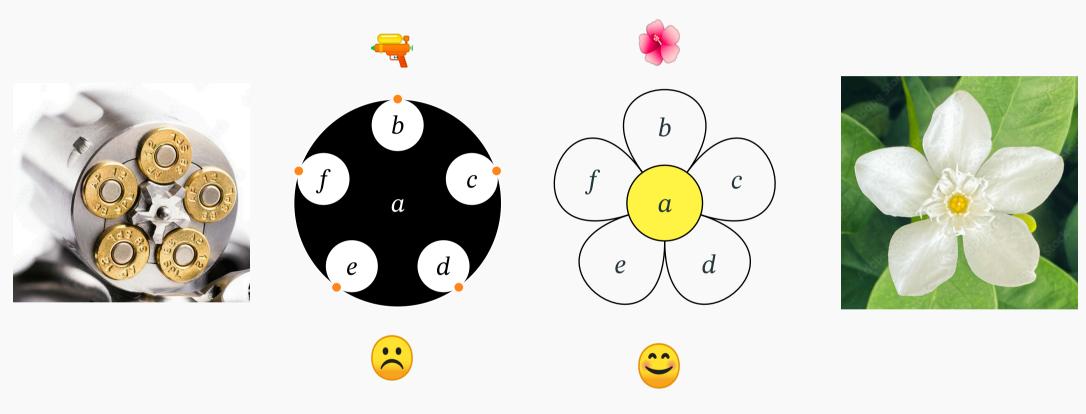








Turn inloops into petals.



"Make love, not war"

Corollaries

The original "theorems" of geometry were those propositions that Euclid proved, while the **corollaries** were simple deductions from the theorems inserted by Euclid's commentators and editors. They are said to have been marked the figure of a little garland (or corolla), in the origin.

— Peirce, MS 514 (1909) (Peirce 1976)

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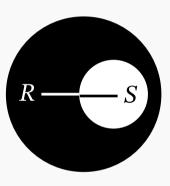
— Peirce, MS 514 (1909) (Peirce 1976)

Petals = (possible) corolla-ries of pistil!

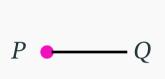
Predicate Logic: Gardens

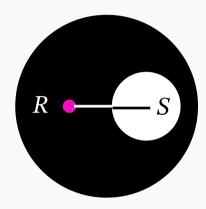
In Beta, quantifiers and variables are represented with lines.





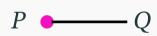
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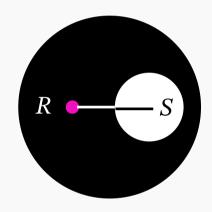
quantifier location = **outermost** point

In Beta, quantifiers and variables are represented with lines.



$$\exists x. P(x) \land Q(x)$$

existential graphs!



$$\forall x.R(x) \Rightarrow S(x)$$

$$\simeq \neg \exists x. R(x) \land \neg S(x)$$

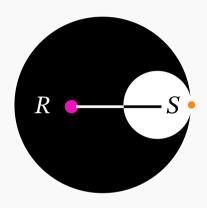
quantifier type = outermost point polarity

Problem: no De Morgan duality in intuitionistic logic



$$\exists x. P(x) \land Q(x)$$

existential graphs!

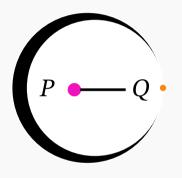


$$\forall x.R(x) \Rightarrow S(x)$$

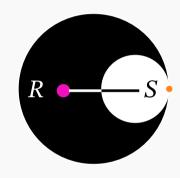
$$\not\simeq \neg \exists x. R(x) \land \neg S(x)$$

quantifier type = outermost point polarity

Solution: polarity-invariant interpretation



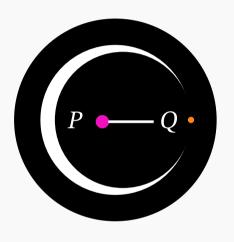
$$\exists x. P(x) \land Q(x)$$



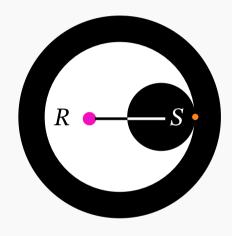
$$\forall x.R(x) \Rightarrow S(x)$$

 $\exists / \forall = inloop/outloop$

Solution: polarity-invariant interpretation



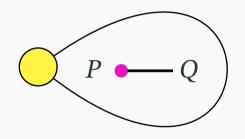
$$\neg(\exists x. P(x) \land Q(x))$$



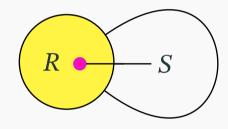
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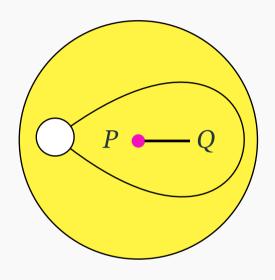
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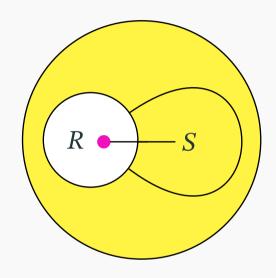
$$\forall x.R(x) \Rightarrow S(x)$$

 $\exists / \forall = \text{petal/pistil}$

Solution: polarity-invariant interpretation



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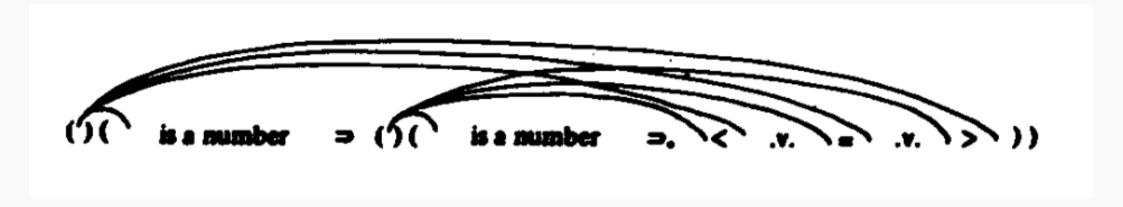


$$\neg(\forall x.R(x) \Rightarrow S(x))$$

$$\exists / \forall = \text{petal/pistil}$$

Spaghetti statements

Problem: cables all over the place (well known in visual programming)

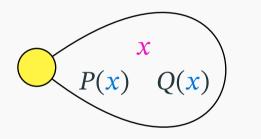


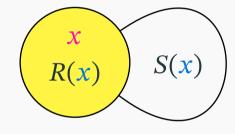
[These diagrams are] too cumbersome to recommend themselves as a practical notation.

— (Quine 1955, p. 70)

Gardens

Solution: replace lines with good old binders and variables





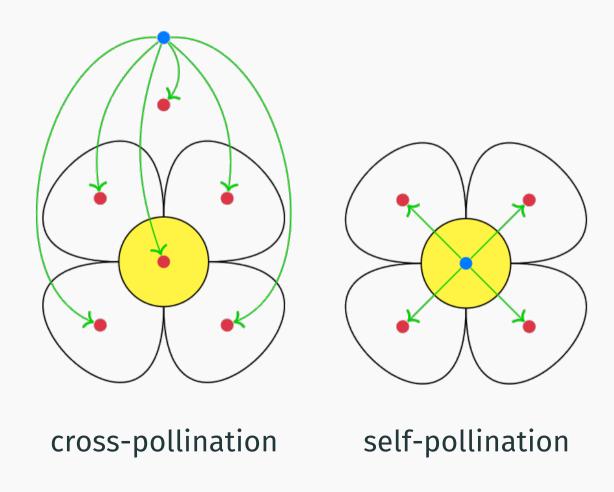
$$\exists \mathbf{x}. P(\mathbf{x}) \land Q(\mathbf{x})$$

$$\forall \mathbf{x}.R(\mathbf{x}) \Rightarrow S(\mathbf{x})$$

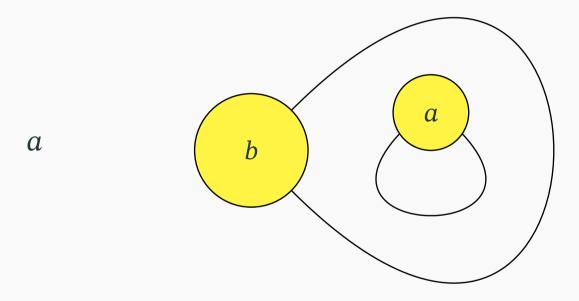
garden = content of an area (binders + flowers)

Reasoning with Flowers

Justify a target by an identical source

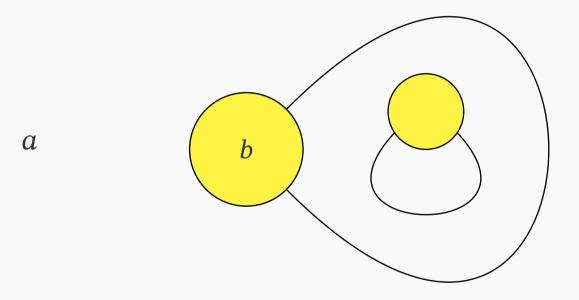


Works at arbitrary depth!



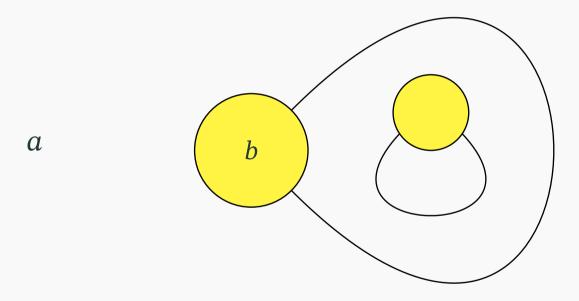
Cross-pollination

Works at arbitrary depth!



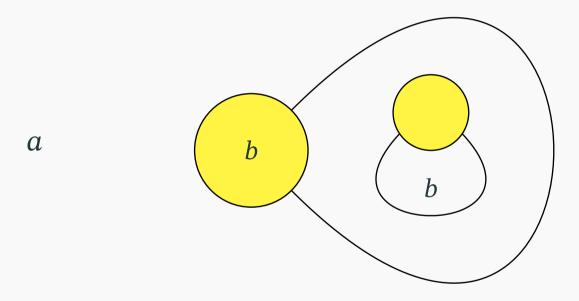
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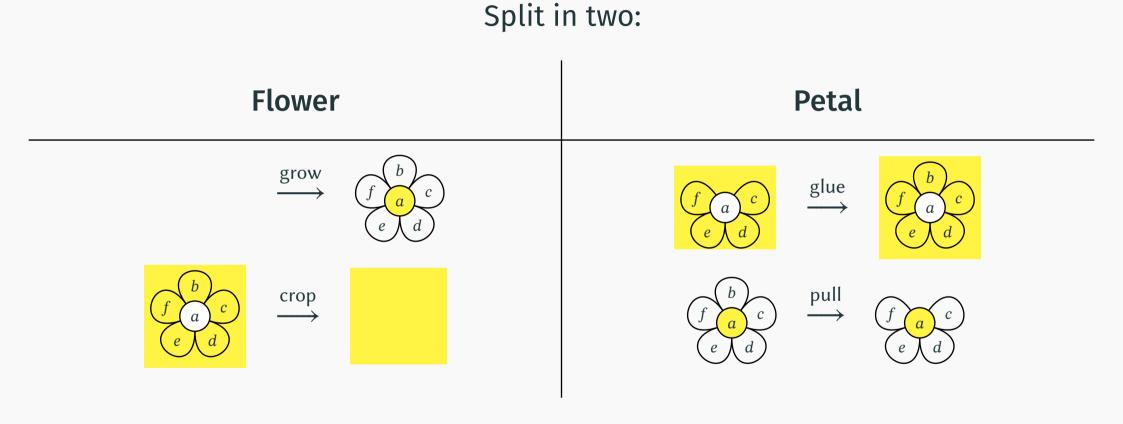
Self-pollination

Works at arbitrary depth!



Self-pollination

Insertion and Deletion

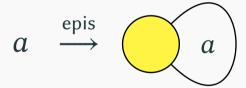


Backward reading: conclusion

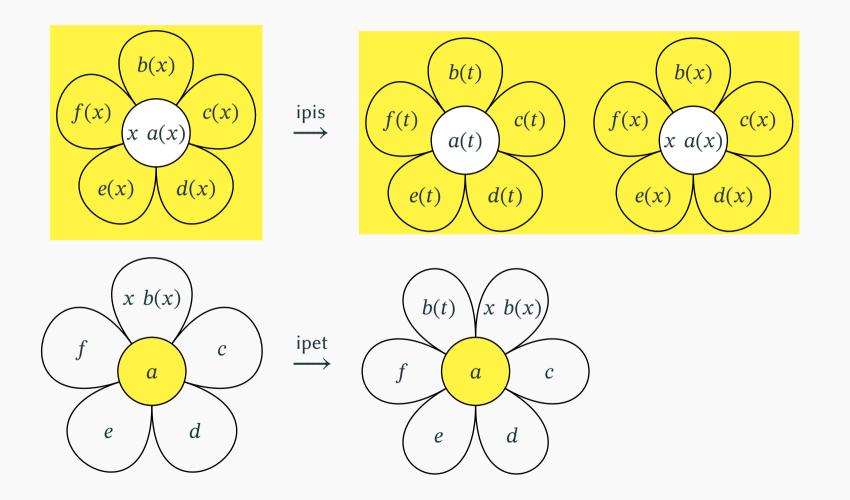
29

Scrolling

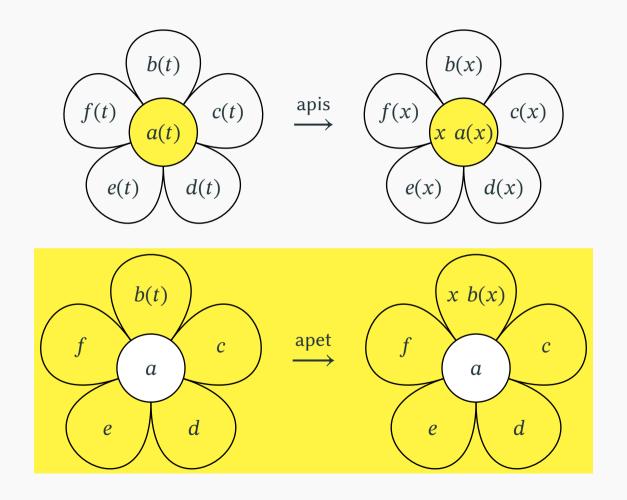
Intuitionistic restriction of double-cut principle:



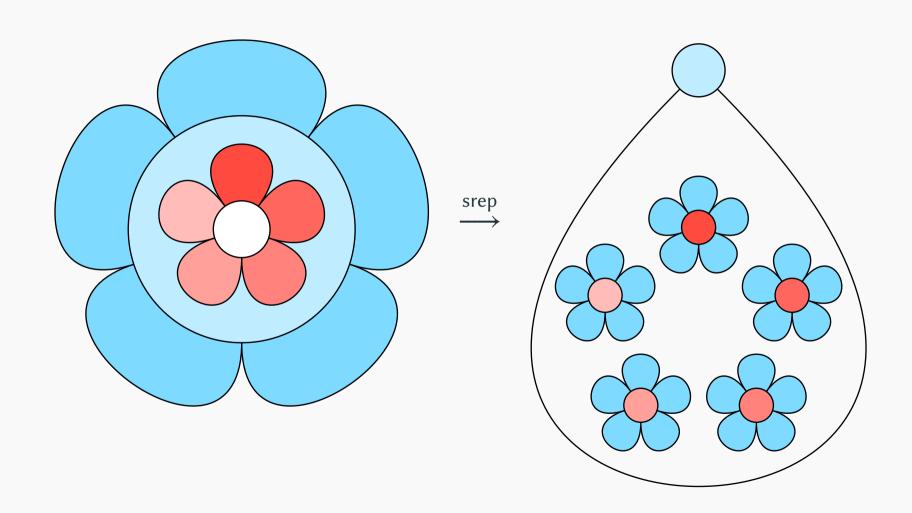
Instantiation



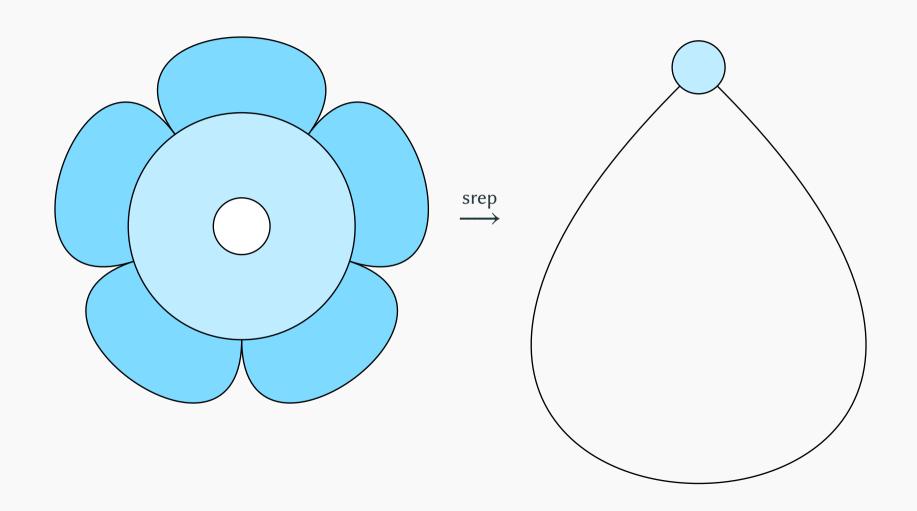
Abstraction

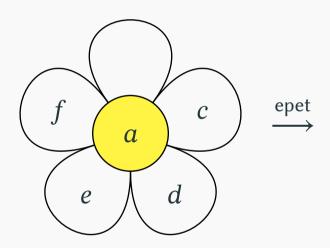


Case reasoning



Ex falso quodlibet





Metatheory: Nature vs. Culture

Natural rules *

Natural rules *

$$\textcircled{Poll} \downarrow, poll \uparrow \} \qquad \underbrace{ \text{[De)iteration } \cup \text{ Instantiation } \cup \text{ Scrolling } \cup \text{ QED } \cup \text{ Case reasoning } }_{\text{[epis]}}$$

All rules are:

• Invertible: if $\Phi \longrightarrow \Psi$ then Ψ equivalent to Φ

Natural rules **

All rules are:

- Invertible: if $\Phi \longrightarrow \Psi$ then Ψ equivalent to Φ
- → "Equational" reasoning

Natural rules **

$$\mathscr{B} = \underbrace{(De)iteration}_{\{poll\downarrow,poll\uparrow\}} \cup \underbrace{Instantiation}_{\{ipis,ipet\}} \cup \underbrace{Scrolling}_{\{epis\}} \cup \underbrace{QED}_{\{epet\}} \cup \underbrace{Case\ reasoning}_{\{srep\}}$$

All rules are:

- Invertible: if $\Phi \longrightarrow \Psi$ then Ψ equivalent to Φ
- → "Equational" reasoning
- Analytic: if $\Phi \longrightarrow \Psi$ and a occurs in Ψ then a occurs in Φ

Natural rules *

$$\mathscr{B} = \underbrace{(De)iteration}_{\{poll\downarrow,poll\uparrow\}} \cup \underbrace{Instantiation}_{\{ipis,ipet\}} \cup \underbrace{Scrolling}_{\{epis\}} \cup \underbrace{QED}_{\{epet\}} \cup \underbrace{Case\ reasoning}_{\{srep\}}$$

All rules are:

- Invertible: if $\Phi \longrightarrow \Psi$ then Ψ equivalent to Φ
- → "Equational" reasoning
- Analytic: if $\Phi \longrightarrow \Psi$ and a occurs in Ψ then a occurs in Φ
- → Reduces proof-search space

Cultural rules ≫

$$= \underbrace{Insertion}_{\{grow,glue\}} \cup \underbrace{Deletion}_{\{crop,pull\}} \cup \underbrace{Abstraction}_{\{apis,apet\}}$$

Cultural rules ≫

$$= \underbrace{Insertion}_{\{grow,glue\}} \cup \underbrace{Deletion}_{\{crop,pull\}} \cup \underbrace{Abstraction}_{\{apis,apet\}}$$

- All rules are non-invertible
- Some rules are non-analytic

Theorem (Soundness): If $\Phi \vdash \Psi$ then $\Phi \vDash \Psi$ in every Kripke structure \mathcal{K} .

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Corollary (Admissibility of $>\!\!<$): If $\Phi \vdash \Psi$ then $\Phi \stackrel{\infty}{\vdash} \Psi$.

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Corollary (Admissibility of $>\!\!<$): If $\Phi \vdash \Psi$ then $\Phi \vdash \Psi$.

Completeness of analytic fragment **%**!

→ normal form for proofs

The Flower Prover

A <u>demo</u> is worth a thousand pictures!

Flower Prover

GUI in the Proof-by-Action paradigm based on the flower calculus

- Represent flowers as nested boxes
- Modal interface to interpret gestural actions:

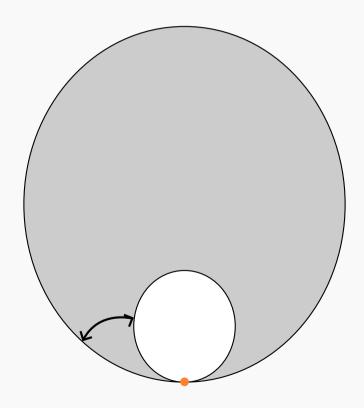
Proof mode

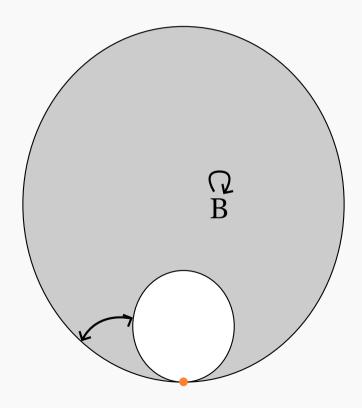
⇔ Natural (invertible and analytic) rules

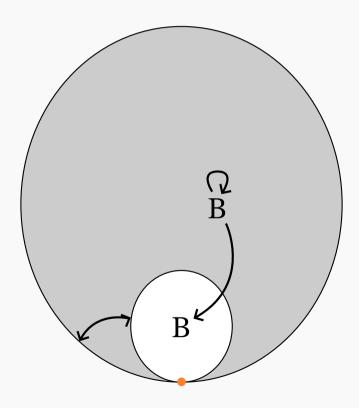
Edit mode ← Cultural (non-invertible) rules

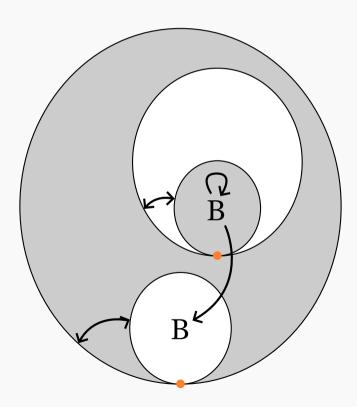
Navigation mode ← Contextual closure (functoriality)

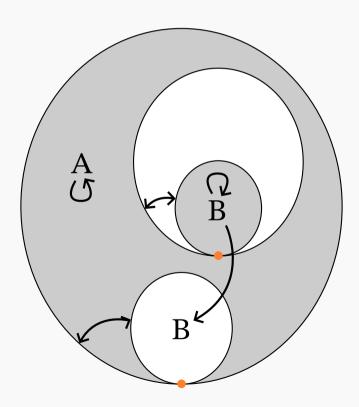
Towards Curry-Howard

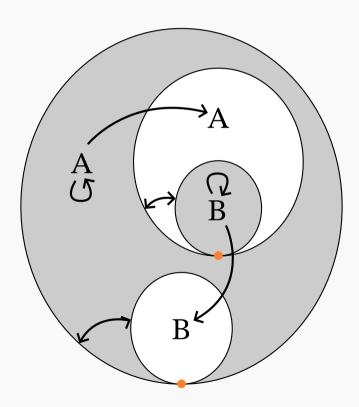








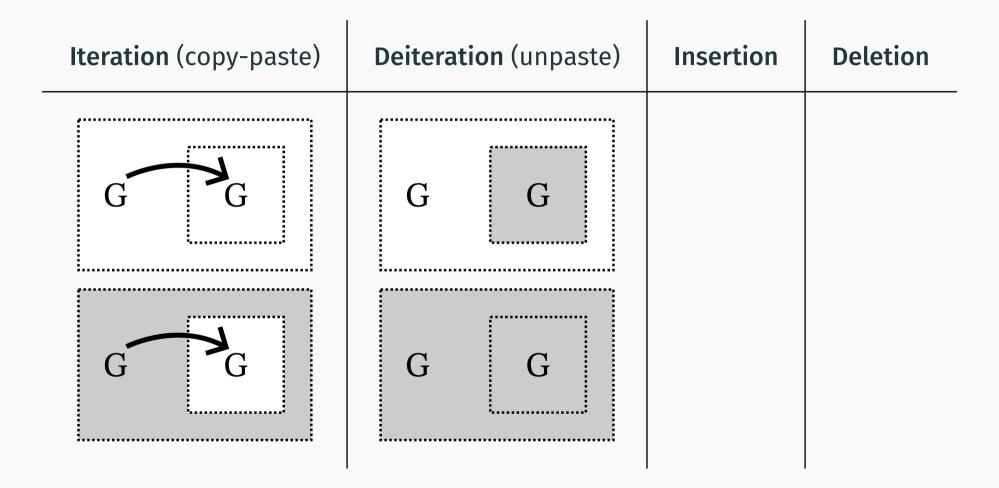


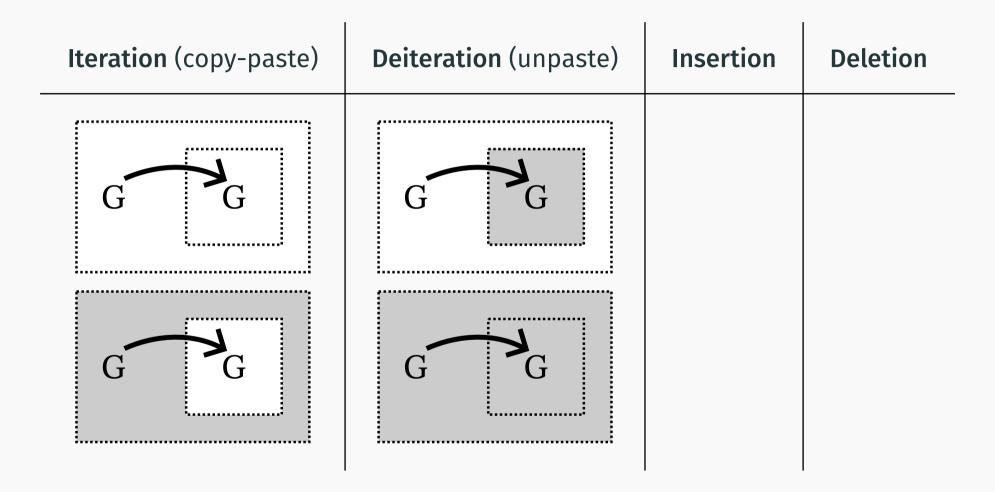


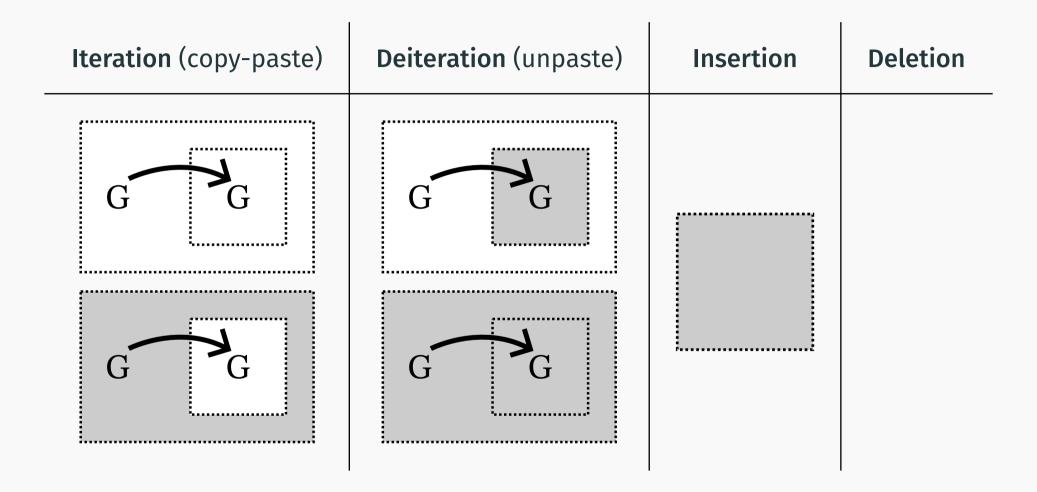
Iteration (copy-paste)	Deiteration (unpaste)	Insertion	Deletion

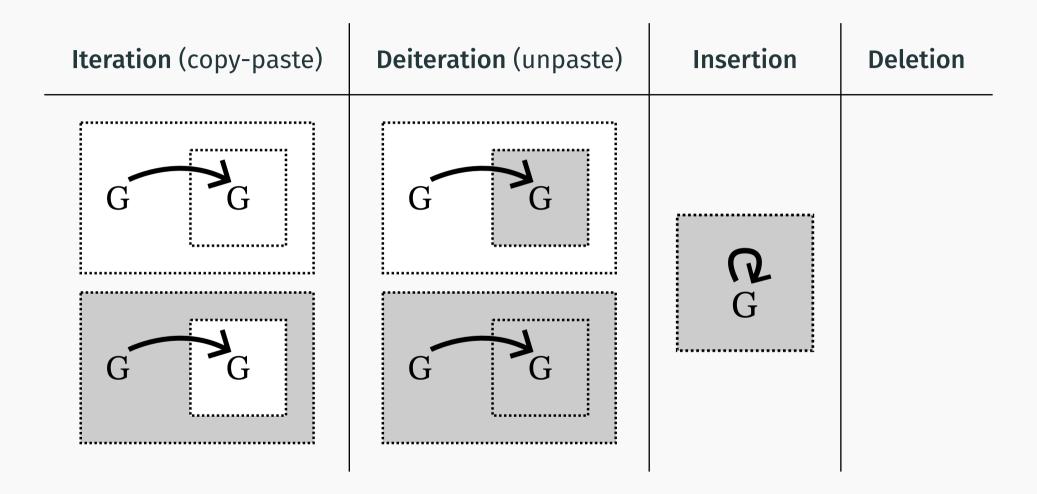
Iteration (copy-paste)	Deiteration (unpaste)	Insertion	Deletion
G			
G			

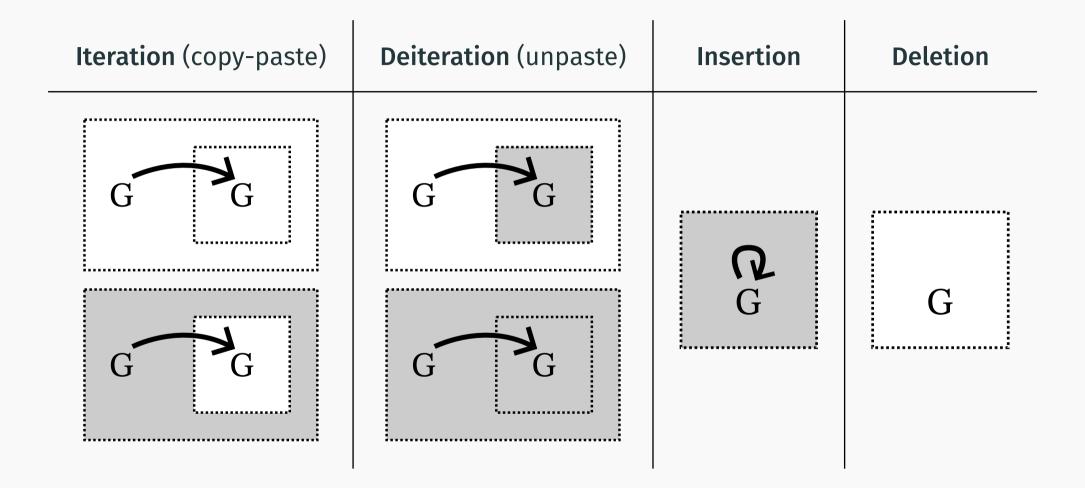
Iteration (copy-paste)	Deiteration (unpaste)	Insertion	Deletion
G			
G			

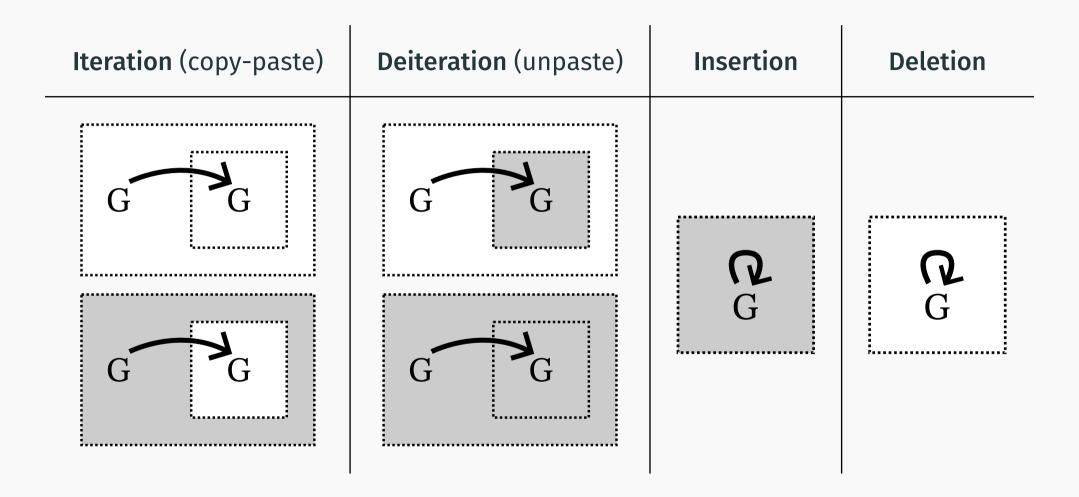


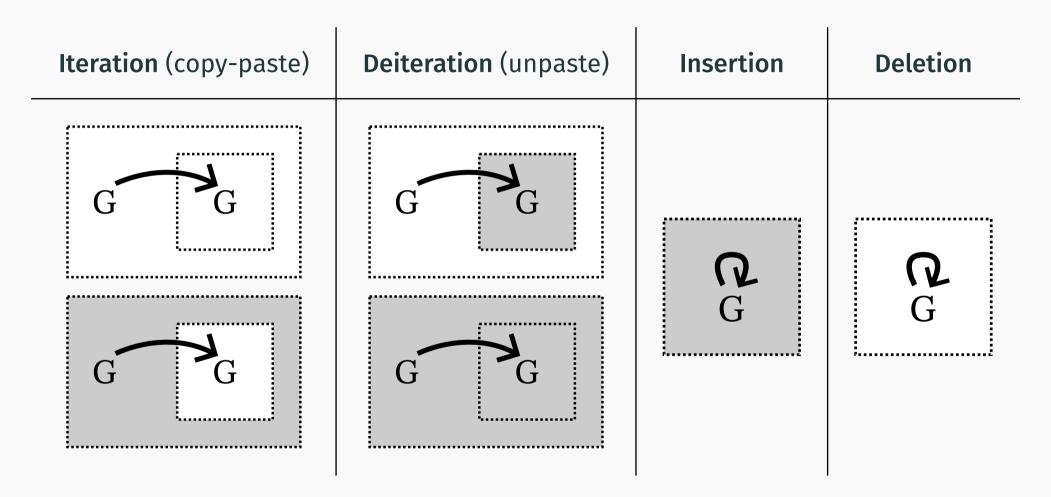






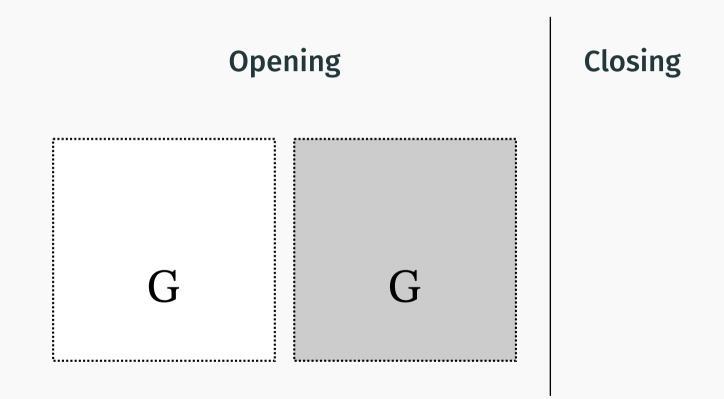


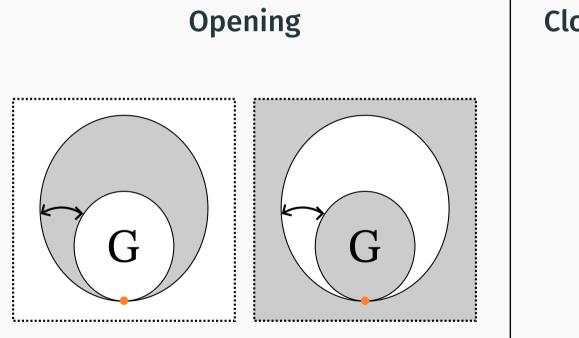




Structure of digraph, transformations determined by polarity

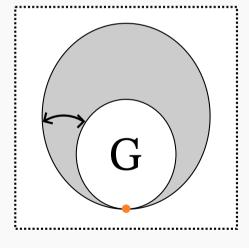
Opening Closing

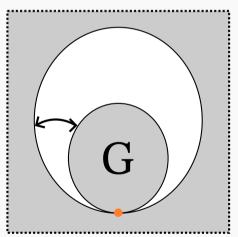




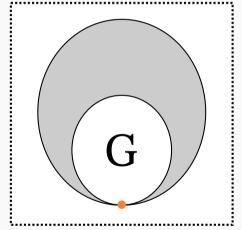
Closing

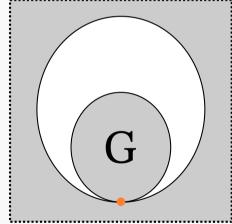
Opening



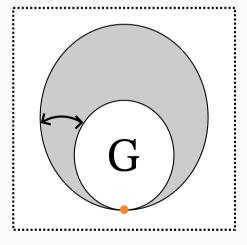


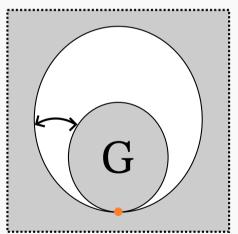
Closing



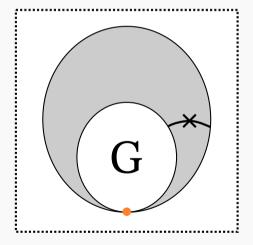


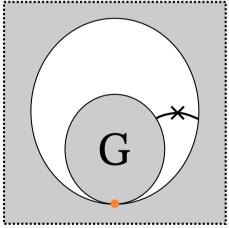
Opening

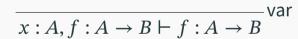


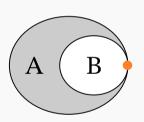


Closing

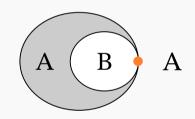




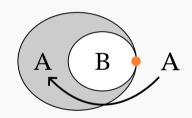




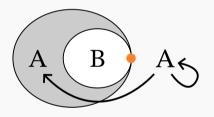
$$\overline{x:A,f:A \to B \vdash f:A \to B}$$
 var $\overline{x:A,f:A \to B \vdash x:A}$ var



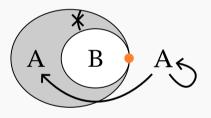
$$\frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash f:A\to B}}{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash x:A} \text{var} \frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash x:A}}{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash (f)x:B} \text{app}$$



$$\frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash f:A\to B}}{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash x:A} \text{var} \frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash x:A}}{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash (f)x:B} \text{app}$$

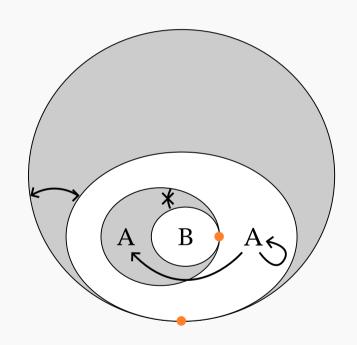


$$\frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash f:A\to B}}{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash x:A} \text{var} \frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash x:A}}{x:A,f:A\to B \vdash (f)x:B} \text{app}$$



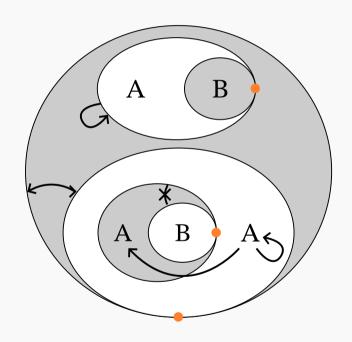
$$\frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash f:A\to B}}{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash x:A} \text{var} \frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash x:A}}{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash (f)x:B} \text{app}$$

$$\frac{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash (f)x:B}{x:A\vdash \lambda f.(f)x:(A\to B)\to B} \text{lam}$$



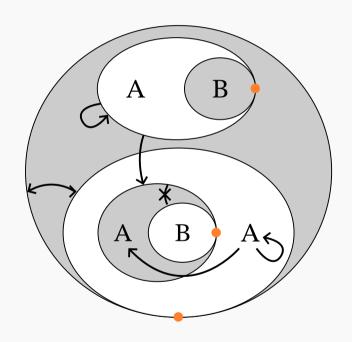
$$\frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash f:A\to B}}{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash x:A} \text{var} \frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash x:A}}{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash (f)x:B} \text{app}$$

$$\frac{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash (f)x:B}{x:A\vdash \lambda f.(f)x:(A\to B)\to B} \text{lam}$$



$$\frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash f:A\to B}}{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash x:A} \text{var} \frac{\overline{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash x:A}}{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash (f)x:B} \text{app}$$

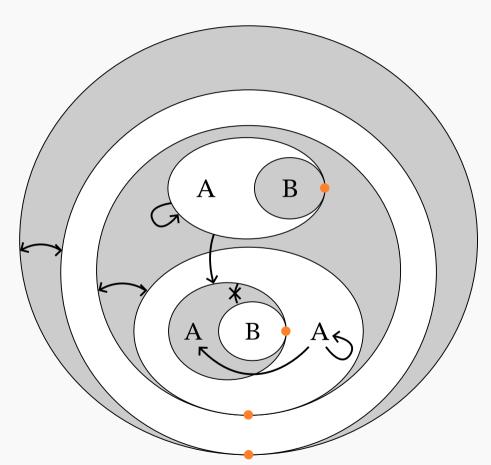
$$\frac{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash (f)x:B}{x:A\vdash \lambda f.(f)x:(A\to B)\to B} \text{lam}$$

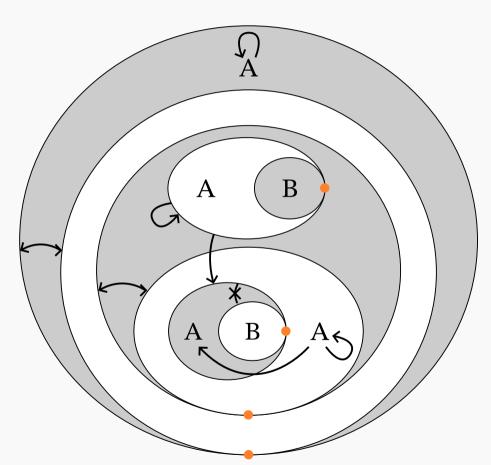


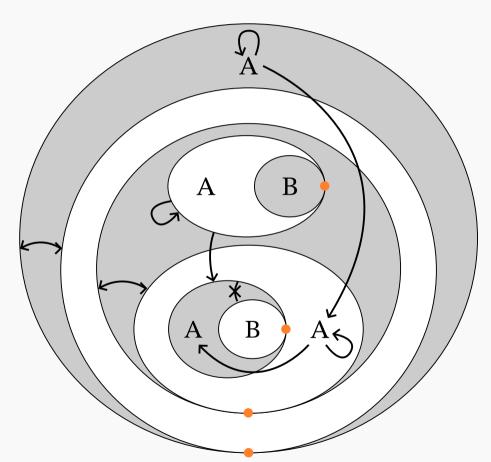
$$\frac{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash f:A\to B}{\underbrace{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash x:A}_{\text{app}}} \text{par}$$

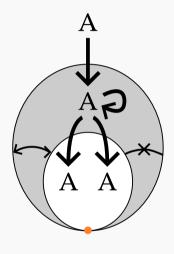
$$\frac{x:A,f:A\to B\vdash (f)x:B}{\underbrace{x:A\vdash \lambda f.(f)x:(A\to B)\to B}_{\text{lam}}} \text{lam}$$

$$\frac{h}{h} \frac{\lambda x.\lambda f.(f)x:A\to (A\to B)\to B} \text{lam}$$

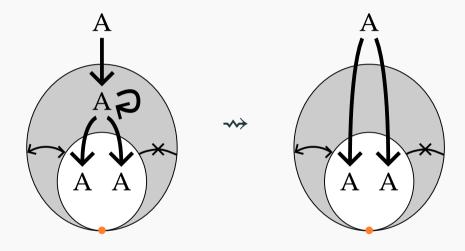




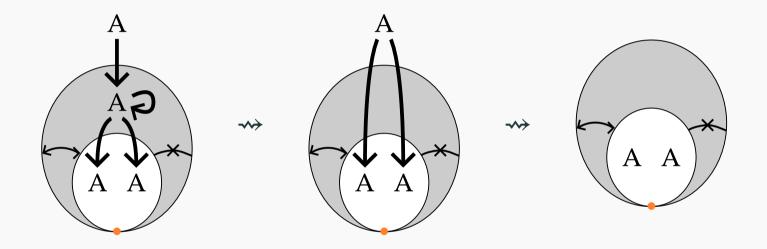




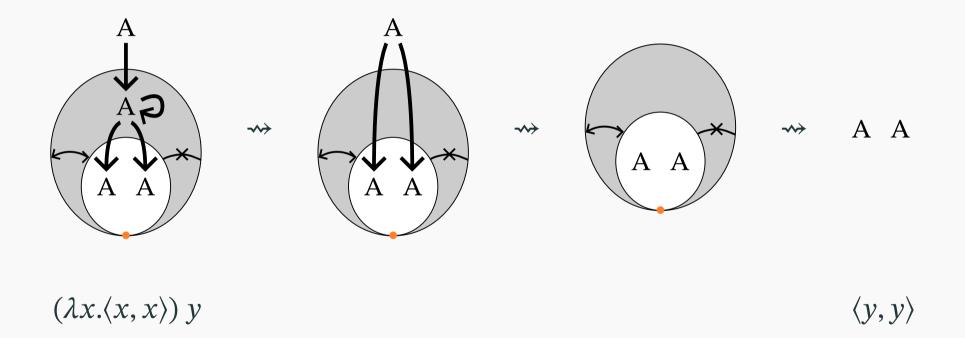
$$(\lambda x.\langle x, x\rangle) y$$



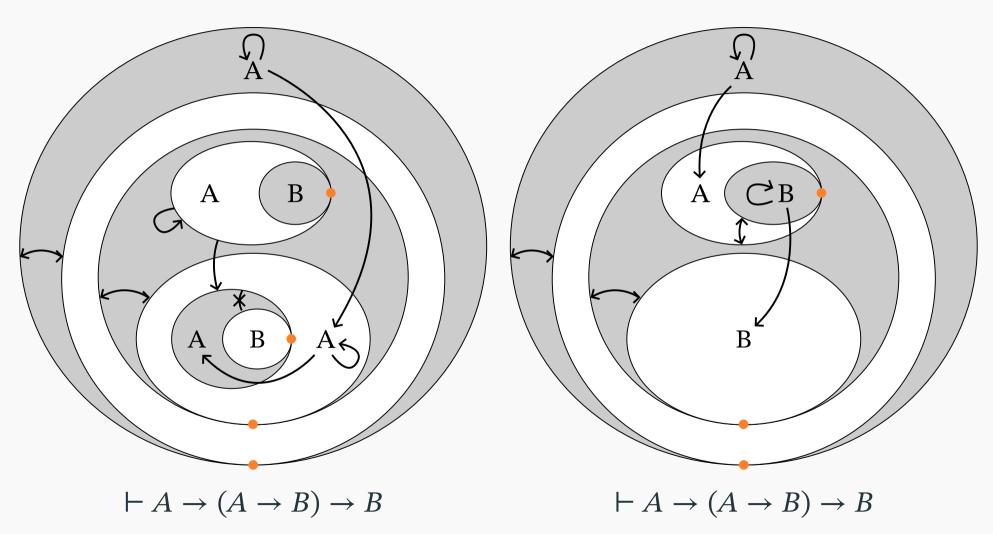
$$(\lambda x.\langle x, x\rangle) y$$



 $(\lambda x.\langle x, x\rangle) y$



Function call vs. inlining



[TODO] Computational expressivity

- Propositional logic \sim non-recursive, pure functional programming:
 - Functions (⇒)
 - Non-recursive algebraic datatypes (∧, ∨)
- Real-world programming by encoding more expressive types:
 - (Co)inductive types: (co)recursion
 - Higher-order types: polymorphism
 - Dependent types: type-level computation
 - Modal types: (monadic) side-effects?

[TODO] Notational freedom

Logic is about abstract, generic interactions

→ captures well (the structure of) general-purpose programming

[TODO] Notational freedom

Logic is about abstract, generic interactions

⇒ captures well (the structure of) *general-purpose* programming

BUT (and contrary to popular belief)

most maths/programming is about concrete representations of the world!

→ need for domain-specific interactive notations

Related works (non-exhaustive)

Programming systems:

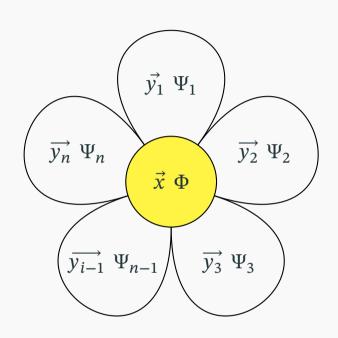
- Boxer (di Sessa 1994): building programs by manipulating nested boxes
- Managed copy & paste (Edwards and Petricek 2022): (de)iteration rules of EGs?
- ► Schema evolution (Edwards et al. 2024):

datatypes ↔ logical statements

schema evolution $\stackrel{?}{\leftrightarrow}$ illative transformations

• Proof assistants:

- ► (Ayers 2021): Box datastructure similar to flowers
- Categorical logic:
 - (Johnstone 2002): coherent/geometric sequents in topos theory
 - ▶ (Bonchi et al. 2024): categorical algebra of Beta



$$\forall \vec{x}. \left(\bigwedge \Phi \Rightarrow \bigvee_{i} \exists \vec{y}_{i}. \Psi_{i} \right)$$

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