

SIMPLE-MINDED SUBCATEGORIES AND T-STRUCTURES

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1. INTRODUCTION

Let \mathcal{T} be a triangulated category. The aim of this short note is to establish a bijection between the set of bounded t-structures on \mathcal{T} whose heart is a finite-length category and the set of full simple-minded subcategories of \mathcal{T} (see Definition 4.1). A t-structure as above corresponds to the full subcategory of \mathcal{T} whose objects are the simple objects of its heart.

The results presented here are essentially contained in [AN09, KN13, KY14, RR17, SY19] with special emphasis on [AN09]. We do not give precise references to these sources later on. This note was originally written around 2013 when we were not aware of [AN09]. Our motivation was to generalize some results of [Sch11]. This note may also be helpful for understanding [EQ16, Theorem 2.17]. The main results are Theorems 4.4 and 4.6.

2. NOTATION

Let \mathcal{T} be a triangulated category. Let \mathcal{U} be a full subcategory of \mathcal{T} . We denote by $\text{tria}(\mathcal{U})$ (resp. $\text{thick}(\mathcal{U})$) the smallest strict full triangulated (resp. thick) subcategory of \mathcal{T} that contains \mathcal{U} .

We denote by $\text{susp}(\mathcal{U})$ (resp. $\text{susp}^-(\mathcal{U})$) the smallest strict full subcategory containing $\mathcal{U} \cup \{0\}$ which is closed under extensions and positive (resp. negative) shifts (it is in particular closed under finite direct sums). Its closure under direct summands will be denoted $\text{susp}^\oplus(\mathcal{U})$ (resp. $\text{susp}^{-,\oplus}(\mathcal{U})$).

3. FILTRATIONS AND COFILTRATIONS

Let \mathcal{T} be a triangulated category.

Definition 3.1. Let M be an object of \mathcal{T} , and let S_1, S_2, \dots, S_m be objects of \mathcal{T} . An (S_1, \dots, S_m) -**filtration** of M is a finite sequence

$$0 = M_0 \xrightarrow{0=f_0} M_1 \xrightarrow{f_1} \dots \xrightarrow{f_{m-2}} M_{m-1} \xrightarrow{f_{m-1}} M_m = M$$

in \mathcal{T} such that each morphism f_{i-1} fits into a triangle

$$M_{i-1} \xrightarrow{f_{i-1}} M_i \rightarrow S_i \rightarrow [1]M_{i-1},$$

for $1 \leq i \leq m$; in other words a/any cone of f_{i-1} is isomorphic to S_i . (Note that $M_1 \cong S_1$.)

An (S_1, \dots, S_m) -**cofiltration** of M is a finite sequence

$$M = M^0 \xrightarrow{g^0} M^1 \xrightarrow{g^1} \dots \xrightarrow{g^{m-2}} M^{m-1} \xrightarrow{g^{m-1}} M^m = 0$$

in \mathcal{T} such that each morphism g^{i-1} fits into a triangle

$$S_i \rightarrow M^{i-1} \xrightarrow{g^{i-1}} M^i \rightarrow [1]S_i,$$

for $1 \leq i \leq m$. (Note that $S_m \cong M^{m-1}$.) (If $m = 0$ then $M = 0$ in both cases.)

We sometimes refer to the S_i appearing in an (S_1, \dots, S_m) -(co)filtration of M as the **subquotients** of the (co)filtration.

By assumption we have $g = 0$. Hence we can assume that $E = S_i \oplus S_{i+1}$ and that the two dotted arrows in the above octahedron are the obvious inclusion and projection morphisms. The octahedral axiom applied to the composition $M_{i+1} \rightarrow E \rightarrow S_i$, where the second map is the projection, yields an octahedron

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
& & S_{i+1} & & [1]M_{i-1} \\
& & \swarrow & & \swarrow \\
& \tilde{M}_i & & E & & [1]\tilde{M}_i \\
& \swarrow & & \swarrow & & \swarrow \\
M_{i-1} & & M_{i+1} & & S_i & & [1]S_{i+1} \\
& \searrow & \swarrow & & \swarrow & & \searrow \\
& & & & & & 0
\end{array}$$

$\xrightarrow{\tilde{f}_{i-1}}$ $\xrightarrow{\tilde{f}_i}$ $\xrightarrow{f_i f_{i-1}}$ $\xrightarrow{f_i}$ $\xrightarrow{f_{i-1}}$

Hence by replacing the part $M_{i-1} \xrightarrow{f_{i-1}} M_i \xrightarrow{f_i} M_{i+1}$ of the filtration of M by $M_{i-1} \xrightarrow{\tilde{f}_{i-1}} \tilde{M}_i \xrightarrow{\tilde{f}_i} M_{i+1}$ we obtain the filtration we want. \square

Definition 3.4. Let \mathcal{U} be a full subcategory of \mathcal{T} , and let (d_1, \dots, d_m) be a sequence of integers. A (d_1, \dots, d_m) - \mathcal{U} -**(co)filtration** of an object M is a $([d_1]U_1, \dots, [d_m]U_m)$ -**(co)filtration** where U_1, \dots, U_m are objects of \mathcal{U} .

Lemma 3.5. *An object of \mathcal{T} is in $\text{tria}(\mathcal{U})$ if and only if it has a (d_1, \dots, d_m) - \mathcal{U} -**(co)filtration**, for some sequence (d_1, \dots, d_m) of integers.*

Proof. All objects having such a **(co)filtration** certainly are in $\text{tria}(\mathcal{U})$. Moreover, the subcategory of these objects is a strict full triangulated subcategory (use [BBD82, Lemma 1.3.10]). Hence it is equal to $\text{tria}(\mathcal{U})$. \square

4. SIMPLE-MINDED SUBCATEGORIES AND T-STRUCTURES

Let \mathcal{T} be a triangulated category.

Definition 4.1. A **simple-minded subcategory** of \mathcal{T} is a strict full subcategory \mathcal{S} of \mathcal{T} that satisfies the following three conditions.

- (S1) No object of \mathcal{S} is (isomorphic to) zero.
- (S2) Any non-zero morphism between two objects of \mathcal{S} is an isomorphism.
- (S3) $\text{Hom}(S, [i]S') = 0$ for all $S, S' \in \mathcal{S}$ and all $i < 0$.

We say that a simple-minded subcategory \mathcal{S} of \mathcal{T} is **full** if $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S}) = \mathcal{T}$.

Let \mathcal{S} be a simple-minded subcategory of \mathcal{T} . Note that conditions (S1) and (S2) imply that the endomorphism ring of each object of \mathcal{S} is a division ring, so in particular each object of \mathcal{S} is indecomposable.

Our aim is to construct a t-structure on $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S})$ (which will turn out to coincide with $\text{thick}(\mathcal{S})$). We first show that any object of $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S})$ has a nice filtration.

Lemma 4.2. *Given an object M of $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S})$ there is a decreasing sequence $d_1 \geq d_2 \geq \dots \geq d_m$ of integers such that M has a (d_1, \dots, d_m) - \mathcal{S} -filtration.*

Here is an illustration in case $m = 4$:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
0 = M_0 & \xrightarrow{0=f_0} & M_1 & \xrightarrow{f_1} & M_2 & \xrightarrow{f_2} & M_3 & \xrightarrow{f_3} & M_4 = M \\
& & \downarrow q_1 & & \downarrow q_2 & & \downarrow q_3 & & \downarrow q_4 \\
& & [d_1]S_1 & & [d_2]S_2 & & [d_3]S_3 & & [d_4]S_4 \\
& \swarrow c_1 & & \swarrow c_2 & & \swarrow c_3 & & \swarrow c_4 & \\
& & & & & & & &
\end{array}$$

$d_1 \geq d_2 \geq d_3 \geq d_4$

by condition (S3). Hence $\text{Hom}(M_{m-1}, [d_m - 1]S_m)$ vanishes which yields a contradiction as above. \square

Let $n \in \mathbb{Z}$. We denote by $\mathcal{D}^{\leq n}$ (resp. $\mathcal{D}^{\geq n}$) the full subcategory of \mathcal{T} consisting of objects that have a (d_1, \dots, d_m) - \mathcal{S} -filtration for some $m \in \mathbb{N}$ and some sequence $d_1 \geq d_2 \geq \dots \geq d_m$ of integers such that $-d_m \leq n$ (resp. $-d_1 \geq n$). By convention, the last condition is empty if $m = 0$. Note that the zero object is both in $\mathcal{D}^{\leq n}$ and in $\mathcal{D}^{\geq n}$.

Note that $\mathcal{D}^{\leq n} = [-n]\mathcal{D}^{\leq 0}$ and $\mathcal{D}^{\geq n} = [-n]\mathcal{D}^{\geq 0}$.

Theorem 4.4. *Let \mathcal{S} be a simple-minded subcategory of a triangulated category \mathcal{T} .*

(a) *We have $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S}) = \text{thick}(\mathcal{S})$, and*

$$t_{\mathcal{S}} := (\text{susp}(\mathcal{S}), \text{susp}^-(\mathcal{S}))$$

defines a bounded (and hence non-degenerate) t-structure $t_{\mathcal{S}}$ on this category. We have $\text{susp}(\mathcal{S}) = \text{susp}(\mathcal{S})^{\oplus} = \mathcal{D}^{\leq 0}$ and $\text{susp}^-(\mathcal{S}) = \text{susp}^{-\oplus}(\mathcal{S}) = \mathcal{D}^{\geq 0}$.

(b) *The heart $\heartsuit(t_{\mathcal{S}})$ of this t-structure $t_{\mathcal{S}}$ is a finite-length category and its simple objects are precisely the objects of \mathcal{S} .*

Proof. Part (a): We claim that $t := (\mathcal{D}^{\leq 0}, \mathcal{D}^{\geq 0})$ defines a t-structure on $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S})$.

The condition $\text{Hom}(\mathcal{D}^{\leq 0}, \mathcal{D}^{\geq 1}) = 0$ follows from assumption (S3). The conditions $\mathcal{D}^{\leq 0} \subset \mathcal{D}^{\leq 1}$ and $\mathcal{D}^{\geq 1} \subset \mathcal{D}^{\geq 0}$ are obvious.

Finally, let $M \in \text{tria}(\mathcal{S})$ be given. We want to construct a ‘‘truncation triangle’’ for M and can certainly assume that $M \neq 0$. Lemma 4.2 provides a decreasing sequence of integers $d_1 \geq d_2 \geq \dots \geq d_m$ (where $m \geq 1$) such that M has a (d_1, \dots, d_m) - \mathcal{S} -filtration (4.1). Let $i \in \{0, \dots, m\}$ be maximal such that $-d_j \leq 0$ for all $1 \leq j \leq i$. If we fit the morphism $M_i \xrightarrow{f_{m-1} \dots f_i} M$ into a triangle

$$M_i \rightarrow M \rightarrow B \rightarrow [1]M_i,$$

then $M_i \in \mathcal{D}^{\leq 0}$ and $B \in \mathcal{D}^{\geq 1}$ by Lemma 3.2. This shows that t is a t-structure on $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S})$.

This t-structure is obviously bounded: For M as above we have $M \in \mathcal{D}^{\geq -d_1} \cap \mathcal{D}^{\leq -d_m}$. This also implies that t is a non-degenerate t-structure.

The main theorem of [LC07] now shows that $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S})$ is Karoubian and hence $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S}) = \text{thick}(\mathcal{S})$.

Note that $\mathcal{S} \subset \mathcal{D}^{\leq 0} \subset \text{susp}(\mathcal{S}) \subset \text{susp}^{\oplus}(\mathcal{S})$. Since any left aisle of a t-structure is closed under extensions, positive shifts and direct summands, the last two inclusions are equalities. Similarly we obtain $\mathcal{D}^{\geq 0} = \text{susp}^-(\mathcal{S}) = \text{susp}^{-\oplus}(\mathcal{S})$. So $t = t_{\mathcal{S}}$. This proves part (a).

Part (b): We claim that any object of the heart $\heartsuit(t)$ of our t-structure $t = t_{\mathcal{S}}$ on $\text{thick}(\mathcal{S}) = \text{tria}(\mathcal{S})$ is a finite extension of objects of \mathcal{S} .

Let M be in $\heartsuit(t)$ with $M \neq 0$. Lemmata 4.2 and 4.3 yield a (d_1, \dots, d_m) - \mathcal{S} -filtration of M with $d_1 \geq d_2 \geq \dots \geq d_m$ (and subquotients $S_1, \dots, S_m \in \mathcal{S}$) and non-zero morphisms $[d_1]S_1 \rightarrow M$ and $M \rightarrow [d_m]S_m$ for objects S_1 and S_m in \mathcal{S} . This implies that $d_1 \leq 0$ (since otherwise $[d_1]S_1 \in \mathcal{D}^{\leq -1}$ has no non-zero morphism to $M \in \mathcal{D}^{\geq 0}$) and $d_m \geq 0$ (since otherwise $[d_m]S_m \in \mathcal{D}^{\geq 1}$ receives no non-zero morphism from $M \in \mathcal{D}^{\leq 0}$). Hence $0 = d_1 = d_2 = \dots = d_m$. This shows our claim.

We show that the simple objects are precisely the objects of \mathcal{S} .

Let $0 \neq M \in \heartsuit(t)$ be filtered as above. Recall that short exact sequences in the heart correspond bijectively to triangles with terms in the heart. Then we have a short exact sequence $M_{m-1} \rightarrow M \rightarrow S_m$ in $\heartsuit(t)$. Recall that S_m is nonzero by condition (S1). Hence if M is simple then $M \rightarrow S_m$ must be an isomorphism (and $m = 1$). Hence any simple object of the heart is in \mathcal{S} .

Conversely, let $S \in \mathcal{S}$. Let $M \rightarrow S$ be a non-zero subobject in $\heartsuit(t)$. We have seen above that M has a $(0, \dots, 0)$ - \mathcal{S} -filtration. This yields a morphism $S_1 \rightarrow M$ with $S_1 \in \mathcal{S}$ whose cone is in $\heartsuit(t)$ by Lemma 3.2. This means that $S_1 \rightarrow M$ is a subobject. The composition $S_1 \rightarrow M \rightarrow S$ of monomorphisms in the heart is then a monomorphism. Since $S_1 \neq 0$ by (S1), this monomorphism is non-zero and hence an isomorphism by assumption (S2). In particular $M \rightarrow S$ is an isomorphism, so S is a simple object of the heart. Hence any object of \mathcal{S} is a simple object of the heart.

It is now clear that $\heartsuit(t)$ is a finite-length category. \square

Corollary 4.5. *Let $n \in \mathbb{Z}$. Then*

$$\mathcal{D}^{\leq n} = \{M \in \text{thick}(\mathcal{S}) \mid \text{Hom}(M, [-l]S) = 0 \text{ for all } S \in \mathcal{S} \text{ and } l > n\},$$

$$\mathcal{D}^{\geq n} = \{M \in \text{thick}(\mathcal{S}) \mid \text{Hom}([-l]S, M) = 0 \text{ for all } S \in \mathcal{S} \text{ and } l < n\}.$$

Proof. Using [BBD82, 1.3.4] this is immediate from Theorem 4.4. \square

Theorem 4.6. *Let \mathcal{T} be a triangulated category. Mapping a full simple-minded subcategory \mathcal{S} of \mathcal{T} to the t -structure $t_{\mathcal{S}} = (\text{susp}(\mathcal{S}), \text{susp}^-(\mathcal{S}))$ from Theorem 4.4 defines a bijection between the sets of*

- (a) *full simple-minded subcategories of \mathcal{T} and*
- (b) *bounded t -structures on \mathcal{T} whose heart is a finite-length category.*

The inverse map maps a bounded t -structure t with finite-length heart to the full subcategory $\text{Simples}(\heartsuit(t))$ of \mathcal{T} formed by the simple objects of its heart $\heartsuit(t)$.

Proof. Theorem 4.4 shows that the map $\mathcal{S} \mapsto t_{\mathcal{S}}$ is well-defined and satisfies $\text{Simples}(\heartsuit(t_{\mathcal{S}})) = \mathcal{S}$.

Conversely, let $t = (t^{\leq 0}, t^{\geq 0})$ be a bounded t -structure on \mathcal{T} with finite-length heart. Then $\mathcal{S} := \text{Simples}(\heartsuit(t))$ certainly satisfies the conditions (S1) and (S2) of Definition 4.1, and condition (S3) follows from $\text{Hom}(t^{\leq 0}, t^{\geq 1}) = 0$. Since t is bounded and $\heartsuit(t)$ is finite-length it is clear that $\text{tria}(\mathcal{S}) = \mathcal{T}$. This shows that \mathcal{S} is a full simple-minded subcategory of \mathcal{T} . Obviously we have $\text{susp}(\mathcal{S}) \subset t^{\leq 0}$ and $\text{susp}^-(\mathcal{S}) \subset t^{\geq 0}$. So the two aisles of $t_{\mathcal{S}}$ are contained in the corresponding aisles of t . This implies that $t = t_{\mathcal{S}} = t_{\text{Simples}(\heartsuit(t))}$. \square

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