

Dropping Polishness

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How do we “generalize” descriptive set theory?

Recall that a space is *Polish* if it is separable and completely metrizable. I can think of three ways...

- 1 Dropping separability: the prototypical space is κ^ω , where κ has the discrete topology. It is completely metrizable, but not necessarily separable. (Ask Sergey Medvedev...)
- 2 Dropping everything: the prototypical space is κ^{κ} with the $<\kappa$ -box-topology, where κ has the discrete topology and it satisfies $\kappa^{<\kappa} = \kappa$. (Ask Sy Friedman...)
- 3 Dropping Polishness: consider questions of “descriptive set-theoretic flavor” in spaces that are separable and metrizable, but not necessarily **completely** metrizable. (Ask Arnie Miller...)

From now on, we will assume that every space is separable and metrizable, but not necessarily Polish.

How do you define complexity then?

Γ will always be one of the following (boldface) pointclasses.

- Σ_ξ^0 or Π_ξ^0 , where ξ is an ordinal such that $1 \leq \xi < \omega_1$ (these are the *Borel pointclasses*).
- Σ_n^1 or Π_n^1 , where n is an ordinal such that $1 \leq n < \omega$ (these are the *projective pointclasses*).

We will assume that the definition of a Γ subset of a Polish space is well-known, and recall that it can be generalized to arbitrary spaces as follows.

Definition

Fix a pointclass Γ . Let X be a space. We will say that $A \subseteq X$ is a Γ subset of X if there exists a Polish space T containing X as a subspace such that $A = B \cap X$ for some Γ subset B of T .

In the case of the Borel pointclasses, this is not really necessary, because the usual definition works in arbitrary spaces. But we prefer to give a unified treatment.

The following “reassuring” proposition can be proved by induction on Γ .

Proposition

Fix a pointclass Γ . Let X be a space and $A \subseteq X$. Then the following conditions are equivalent.

- *A is a Γ subset of X .*
- *For every space T containing X as a subspace there exists a Γ subset B of T such that $A = B \cap X$.*

One could also define the so-called *ambiguous pointclasses* as follows.

- Let $\Delta_\xi^0 = \Sigma_\xi^0 \cap \Pi_\xi^0$ for every ordinal ξ such that $1 \leq \xi < \omega_1$.
- Let $\Delta_n^1 = \Sigma_n^1 \cap \Pi_n^1$ for every ordinal n such that $1 \leq n < \omega$.

However, the above proposition fails for these classes, already at the level $\Delta_1^0 = \text{clopen}$.

Illustrious precedents

Definition

The *Baire order* $\text{ord}(X)$ of a space X is the minimum ordinal α such that $\Sigma_{\alpha}^0(X) = \text{Borel}(X)$.

Examples:

- $\text{ord}(X) = 1$ if and only if X is discrete.
- $\text{ord}(X) \leq 2$ whenever X is countable, and $\text{ord}(\mathbb{Q}) = 2$.
- $\text{ord}(X) \leq \omega_1$ for every space.
- $\text{ord}(X) = 3$ if X is a Luzin set. (Recall that an uncountable set of reals X is a *Luzin set* if every uncountable subset of X is non-meager. They exist under CH.)
- $\text{ord}(X) = 2$ if X is a Sierpiński set. (Recall that an uncountable set of reals X is a *Sierpiński set* if every uncountable subset of X is non-null. They exist under CH.)

Theorem (Lebesgue)

$\text{ord}(X) = \omega_1$ for every uncountable Polish space X .

Banach asked whether we can “drop Polishness”...

Conjecture (Banach)

$\text{ord}(X) = \omega_1$ for every uncountable space X .

Theorem (Miller, 1979)

It is consistent that $\text{ord}(X) = \omega_1$ for every uncountable space X .

Theorem (Kunen)

Assume CH. Then for every α such that $1 \leq \alpha < \omega_1$ there exists a space X such that $\text{ord}(X) = \alpha$.

Miller improved this by showing that CH can be weakened to the existence of a Luzin set.

Perfect set property: the classical case

Definition

Let X be a space and Γ a pointclass. We will say that X has the *perfect set property for Γ subsets* (briefly, the $\text{PSP}(\Gamma)$) if every Γ subset of X is either countable or it contains a copy of 2^ω .

One of the classical problems of descriptive set theory consists in determining for which pointclasses Γ the statement “Every Polish space has the $\text{PSP}(\Gamma)$ ” holds. The following three famous theorems essentially solve this problem.

Theorem

- (Suslin) *Every Polish space has the $\text{PSP}(\text{analytic})$.*
- (Gödel) *Assume $V = L$. Then no uncountable Polish space has the $\text{PSP}(\text{coanalytic})$.*
- (Davis) *Assume the axiom of Projective Determinacy. Then every Polish space has the $\text{PSP}(\text{projective})$.*

Perfect set property: the non-Polish case

But what happens in arbitrary (that is, not necessarily Polish) spaces? By the following simple proposition, the problem described above becomes trivial.

Recall that a subset B of an uncountable Polish space T is a *Bernstein set* if $B \cap K \neq \emptyset$ and $(T \setminus B) \cap K \neq \emptyset$ for every copy K of 2^ω in T . It is easy to see that Bernstein sets exist in ZFC. Since $2^\omega \approx 2^\omega \times 2^\omega$, every Bernstein set has size \mathfrak{c} .

Proposition

Let X be a Bernstein set in some uncountable Polish space. Then X does not have the PSP(Γ) for any pointclass Γ .

Proof: Let Γ be a pointclass. Then X itself is an uncountable Γ subset of X that does not contain any copy of 2^ω .



Thank you for your attention



and good night!

Perfect set property: the non-Polish case, II

Much less trivial, however, is to determine the status of the statement

“For every space X , if X has the $\text{PSP}(\Gamma)$ then X has the $\text{PSP}(\Gamma')$ ”

as Γ, Γ' range over all pointclasses of complexity at most analytic. We will focus on the case “ $\text{PSP}(\text{analytic})$ vs. $\text{PSP}(\text{closed})$ ”.

Theorem

The following are equivalent.

- *For every space X , if X has the $\text{PSP}(\text{closed})$ then X has the $\text{PSP}(\text{analytic})$.*
- $\mathfrak{b} > \omega_1$.

We will prove the interesting half of the above theorem.

A first attempt (suggested by Kunen)

Assume $\mathfrak{b} = \omega_1$. We want to construct a space X such that

- Every uncountable closed subset of X contains a copy of 2^ω , but
- There exists an uncountable analytic subset of X that contains no copies of 2^ω .

Using $\mathfrak{b} = \omega_1$, fix a family $Z = \{f_\alpha : \alpha \in \omega_1\} \subseteq \omega^\omega$ such that

- Z is unbounded (there exists no $g \in \omega^\omega$ such that $f <^* g$ for all $f \in Z$),
- Z is well-ordered ($f_\alpha <^* f_\beta$ whenever $\alpha < \beta$).

X will be a subspace of $T = (\omega + 1)^\omega \approx 2^\omega$, where

$\omega + 1 = \omega \cup \{\omega\}$ is the converging sequence with limit ω .

Also define $T_n = \{x \in T : x(n) = \omega\}$ for every $n \in \omega$, so that

$$T = \omega^\omega \cup \bigcup_{n \in \omega} T_n.$$

Define

$$X = Z \cup \bigcup_{n \in \omega} T_n \subseteq (\omega + 1)^\omega$$

Lemma

Let Z be an unbounded family. Then

- $\text{cl}(Z)$ is not compact, where the closure is taken in ω^ω ,
- $\text{cl}(Z) \not\subseteq \omega^\omega$, where the closure is taken in $(\omega + 1)^\omega$.

Lemma

Let Z be a **well-ordered** unbounded family of size ω_1 .
Then, for every uncountable $Y \subseteq Z$,

- $\text{cl}(Y)$ is not compact, where the closure is taken in ω^ω ,
- $\text{cl}(Y) \not\subseteq \omega^\omega$, where the closure is taken in $(\omega + 1)^\omega$.

Since each $T_n \approx (\omega + 1)^\omega$ is compact, Z is a G_δ subset of X .
So, by the second lemma, Z witnesses that X does not have the PSP(G_δ). In particular, X does not have the PSP(analytic).

What goes wrong? (And how do we fix it?)

We still have to show that every uncountable closed subset of X contains a copy of 2^ω .

Dream

Is it true that $\text{cl}(Y) \cap \bigcup_{n \in \omega} T_n$ is uncountable whenever $Y \subseteq Z$ is uncountable?

Reality

If Z consists only of increasing functions, then

$$\text{cl}(Z) \cap \bigcup_{n \in \omega} T_n \subseteq \{s \frown \langle \omega, \omega, \dots \rangle : s \in \omega^{<\omega}\},$$

which is countable!

The solution comes from a property of certain subsets of 2^ω . Since the speaker is just a romantic little guy, he decided to name it after the lovely area of Vienna where he lives...

Introducing



the Grinzing property!

The Grinzing property

Definition

We will say that a subset W of 2^ω has the *Grinzing property* (briefly, the GP) if it is uncountable and for every uncountable $Y \subseteq W$ there exist uncountable subsets Y_α of Y for $\alpha \in \omega_1$ such that $\text{cl}(Y_\alpha) \cap \text{cl}(Y_\beta) = \emptyset$ whenever $\alpha \neq \beta$, where the closure is taken in 2^ω .

Notice that an uncountable $W \subseteq 2^\omega$ has the GP if and only if every subset of W of size ω_1 has the GP.

Could the whole 2^ω have the GP?

Theorem

- Assume CH. Then 2^ω does not have the GP.
- Assume MA + \neg CH. Then 2^ω has the GP.

Why do we care?

As we have just seen, it is consistent that **all** uncountable subsets of 2^ω have the GP. Therefore, it seems likely that there exists at least **one** in ZFC...

Question

Is it possible to prove in ZFC that there exists a subset of 2^ω with the GP?

This would allow us to finish the proof of the main theorem!

Let W be a subset of 2^ω with the GP such that $|W| = \omega_1$.

Fix an injective enumeration $W = \{g_\alpha : \alpha \in \omega_1\}$.

	Old "proof"	New proof
T	$(\omega + 1)^\omega$	$(\omega + 1)^\omega \times 2^\omega$
T_n	$\{x \in (\omega + 1)^\omega : x(n) = \omega\}$	$\{x \in (\omega + 1)^\omega : x(n) = \omega\} \times 2^\omega$
Z	$\{f_\alpha : \alpha \in \omega_1\}$	$\{\langle f_\alpha, g_\alpha \rangle : \alpha \in \omega_1\}$

Notice that each $T_n \approx (\omega + 1)^\omega \times 2^\omega \approx 2^\omega$ as before.

Define

$$X = Z \cup \bigcup_{n \in \omega} T_n \subseteq (\omega + 1)^\omega \times 2^\omega$$

The PSP(analytic) still fails

As before, Z is a G_δ subset of X . If Z contained a copy of 2^ω , then $\pi[Z]$ would too, where $\pi : \omega^\omega \times 2^\omega \rightarrow \omega^\omega$ is the projection on the first coordinate.

Thanks to the GP, we can finally prove the PSP(closed)

As before, we have to prove that $\text{cl}(Y) \cap \bigcup_{n \in \omega} T_n$ is uncountable for every uncountable $Y \subseteq Z$. The difference is that now, it **will** be enough to prove $\text{cl}(Y) \cap \bigcup_{n \in \omega} T_n \neq \emptyset$ for every such Y . In fact, Y will be in the form $\{\langle f_\alpha, g_\alpha \rangle : \alpha \in S\}$ for some uncountable $S \subseteq \omega_1$. Then look at

$$\{g_\alpha : \alpha \in S\} \subseteq W$$

and use the fact that W has the GP.



OK then. Why is it non-empty?

Fix an uncountable $Y \subseteq Z$. We have to prove that

$$\text{cl}(Y) \cap \bigcup_{n \in \omega} T_n \neq \emptyset.$$

Since being a well-ordered unbounded family is preserved by taking uncountable subsets, we can assume that $Y = Z$.

By an old lemma, there exists $f \in (\omega + 1)^\omega \setminus \omega^\omega$ and a sequence $\langle \alpha_n : n \in \omega \rangle$ of elements of ω_1 such that

$$\langle f_{\alpha_n} : n \in \omega \rangle \longrightarrow f$$

Since 2^ω is compact, there exists $g \in 2^\omega$ and a subsequence of $\langle g_{\alpha_n} : n \in \omega \rangle$ that converges to g in 2^ω .

It follows that the corresponding subsequence of $\langle \langle f_{\alpha_n}, g_{\alpha_n} \rangle : n \in \omega \rangle$ converges to $\langle f, g \rangle$, which is clearly an element of $\bigcup_{n \in \omega} T_n$.



A set with the Grinzing property in ZFC

Theorem (Todorčević)

There exists a subtree \mathcal{T} of $\omega^{<\omega_1}$ and a system $\langle K_s : s \in \mathcal{T} \rangle$ of perfect subsets of 2^ω satisfying the following properties.

- *Each level of \mathcal{T} is countable and non-empty.*
- *$K_t \subsetneq K_s$ whenever $t \supsetneq s$.*
- *$K_s \cap K_t = \emptyset$ whenever $s \perp t$.*

Since there are no strictly descending ω_1 -sequences of closed subsets of 2^ω , any tree \mathcal{T} as above must be Aronszajn.

Miller found a mistake in my “proof” of the following result, and kindly supplied a new one, based on the above theorem.

Corollary (Miller)

There exists a subset of 2^ω with the GP.

Proof of Miller's result

Let \mathcal{T} and $\langle K_s : s \in \mathcal{T} \rangle$ be given by Todorćević's theorem. Let $W = \{w_s : s \in \mathcal{T}\}$ where each $w_s \in K_s$ and they are distinct. We will show that W has the GP.

Fix an uncountable $Y \subseteq W$ and let \mathcal{S} be the subtree of \mathcal{T} generated by $\{s \in \mathcal{T} : w_s \in Y\}$. Assume without loss of generality that $\{t \in \mathcal{S} : t \supseteq s\}$ is uncountable for every $s \in \mathcal{S}$.

Notice that \mathcal{S} cannot be Souslin, otherwise forcing with \mathcal{S} would yield a strictly descending ω_1 -sequence of closed subsets of 2^ω , contradicting the fact that ω_1 is preserved.

So we can fix an uncountable antichain $\langle s_\alpha : \alpha \in \omega_1 \rangle$ in \mathcal{S} . It is easy to check that setting $Y_\alpha = Y \cap K_{s_\alpha}$ for $\alpha \in \omega_1$ yields uncountable subsets of Y with pairwise disjoint closures in 2^ω .



Generalizing the Grinzing property

Definition

Fix cardinals κ, λ such that $\omega_1 \leq \kappa \leq \mathfrak{c}$ and $\lambda \leq \kappa$. We will say that a subset W of 2^ω has the (κ, λ) -Grinzing property (briefly, the (κ, λ) -GP) if $|W| \geq \kappa$ and for every $Y \subseteq W$ such that $|Y| \geq \kappa$ there exist subsets Y_α of Y for $\alpha \in \lambda$ such that $|Y_\alpha| \geq \kappa$ for each α and $\text{cl}(Y_\alpha) \cap \text{cl}(Y_\beta) = \emptyset$ whenever $\alpha \neq \beta$, where the closure is taken in 2^ω .

Just like in the case of the ordinary GP, a subset W of 2^ω of size at least κ has the (κ, λ) -GP if and only if every subset of W of size κ has the (κ, λ) -GP.

Also, it is clear that the (κ, λ) -GP gets stronger as λ gets bigger. Furthermore, the (ω_1, ω_1) -GP is simply the GP.

It is easy to show that 2^ω has the (κ, ω) -GP for every cardinal $\kappa \leq \mathfrak{c}$ of uncountable cofinality. The following proposition shows that the restriction on the cofinality is really necessary.

Proposition

Let κ be a cardinal of countable cofinality such that $\omega_1 < \kappa < \mathfrak{c}$. Then no subset of 2^ω has the $(\kappa, 2)$ -GP.

Some of the “old” results generalize in a straightforward way.

Theorem

- *Assume MA. Then 2^ω has the (κ, κ) -GP for every $\kappa < \mathfrak{c}$ of uncountable cofinality.*
- *Assume $\mathfrak{b} = \kappa$. Then 2^ω does not have the (κ, ω_1) -GP.*

In particular, as we have already seen, the statement

“ 2^ω has the $(\mathfrak{c}, \mathfrak{c})$ -GP”

is false under CH. Can it be consistently true?

Theorem (Miller, 1983)

It is consistent that for every $Y \subseteq 2^\omega$ of size \mathfrak{c} there exists a continuous function $f : 2^\omega \rightarrow 2^\omega$ such that $f[Y] = 2^\omega$.

Corollary

It is consistent that 2^ω has the $(\mathfrak{c}, \mathfrak{c})$ -GP.

The following fundamental question remains open.

Question

*For which cardinals κ, λ such that $\omega_1 \leq \lambda \leq \kappa \leq \mathfrak{c}$ and κ has uncountable cofinality is it possible to prove in ZFC that there exists a **subset** of 2^ω with the (κ, λ) -GP?*

Generalizing the perfect set property

Definition

Fix an uncountable cardinal κ . Let X be a space and Γ a pointclass. We will say that X has the κ -perfect set property for Γ subsets (briefly, the κ -PSP(Γ)) if for every Γ subset A of X either $|A| < \kappa$ or A contains a copy of 2^ω .

Notice that the κ -PSP(Γ) gets stronger as κ gets smaller and as Γ gets bigger.

Also, it is clear that the ω_1 -PSP(Γ) is simply the PSP(Γ).

As an example, we can rephrase a classical theorem using this terminology.

Theorem (Sierpiński)

Every Polish space has the ω_2 -PSP(Σ_2^1).

The Holy Grail

The following is the most general question that we can imagine on this subject.

Question

What is the status of the statement

“For every space X , if X has the κ -PSP(Γ) then X has the κ' -PSP(Γ')”

as κ, κ' range over all uncountable cardinals and Γ, Γ' range over all pointclasses?

Generalizing the main result to arbitrary κ

Assuming $\mathfrak{b} > \kappa$, it is easy to see that the κ -PSP(closed) implies the κ -PSP(analytic). But we do not know the answer to the following question.

Question

Does $\mathfrak{b} = \kappa$ imply that there exists a space with the κ -PSP(closed) but not the κ -PSP(analytic)?

The proof that we have given in the case $\kappa = \omega_1$ would go through under the following assumption.

“There exists a subset of 2^ω with the (κ, ω_1) -GP”

We do not know whether the above holds for every κ of uncountable cofinality (or even regular uncountable).

A new proof of a theorem of Todorčević?

Given an infinite cardinal κ , recall that a subset D of \mathbb{R} is κ -dense if $|U \cap D| = \kappa$ for every non-empty open $U \subseteq \mathbb{R}$. Let BA_κ denote the following statement.

Whenever D, E are κ -dense subsets of \mathbb{R} , there exists a homeomorphism $h : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ such that $h[D] = E$.

Theorem (Cantor, 1895)

BA_ω holds.

Theorem (Baumgartner, 1984)

Assume PFA. Then BA_{ω_1} holds.

Theorem (Todorčević, 1988)

BA_b fails.

Assume that we could prove the following.

“There exists a subset of 2^ω with the (\mathfrak{b}, ω_1) -GP”

Then we could give a new proof of the result of Todorćević. The new “proof” would actually give two \mathfrak{b} -dense sets which are distinguished by a concrete property.

A \mathfrak{b} -dense $D \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ with the (\mathfrak{b}, ω_1) -GP.

Fix a base $\{U_n : n \in \omega\}$ for \mathbb{R} and $K_n \subseteq U_n$ for $n \in \omega$ such that $K_n \approx 2^\omega$. Let W_n be a subset of K_n of size \mathfrak{b} with the (\mathfrak{b}, ω_1) -GP. One can easily check that $D = \bigcup_{n \in \omega} W_n$ is \mathfrak{b} -dense in \mathbb{R} and has the (\mathfrak{b}, ω_1) -GP.

A \mathfrak{b} -dense $E \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ without the (\mathfrak{b}, ω_1) -GP.

Fix a nowhere dense $K \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ such that $K \approx 2^\omega$. By a theorem from a previous slide, we can fix $Z \subseteq K$ such that $|Z| = \mathfrak{b}$ and Z does not have the (\mathfrak{b}, ω_1) -GP. Extend Z to a \mathfrak{b} -dense subset E of \mathbb{R} . It is clear that E does not have the (\mathfrak{b}, ω_1) -GP.



Ultrafilters and the perfect set property

From now on, we assume that every filter \mathcal{F} is on ω .

In particular, every filter \mathcal{F} can be identified with a subspace $\mathcal{F} \subseteq 2^\omega$ through characteristic functions.

We also assume $\{\text{cofinite sets}\} \subseteq \mathcal{F}$.

Given any coinfinite $z \in \mathcal{F}$, notice that $z \uparrow = \{x \in 2^\omega : z \subseteq x\}$ is a copy of 2^ω contained in \mathcal{F} .

Similarly, one sees that every filter has the PSP(open).

Theorem (Medini and Milovich, 2012)

- *There exists an ultrafilter without the PSP(closed).*
- *Assume MA(countable). Then there exists an ultrafilter with the PSP(analytic).*

Conjecture

For ultrafilters, the PSP(analytic) and the PSP(closed) are equivalent.

Question (Medini and Milovich, 2012)

For ultrafilters, is the PSP(analytic) equivalent to being a P-point?

Theorem (He and Zhang, 2014)

- *Every P-point has the PSP^+ (analytic).*
- *Assume $\text{MA} + \neg\text{CH}$. Then there exists a non-P-point with the PSP^+ (analytic).*

The “+” denotes the following strong version of the perfect set property, where we require K to be “bounded”.

Definition

Fix a pointclass Γ . A filter \mathcal{F} has the *strong perfect set property for Γ subsets* (briefly, the $\text{PSP}^+(\Gamma)$) if every Γ subset of \mathcal{F} is either countable or it contains a copy K of 2^ω such that $K \subseteq z \uparrow$ for some $z \in \mathcal{F}$.

Sacks measurability and indestructibility

Definition (Marczewski)

A space $X \subseteq 2^\omega$ has *property (s)* if for every perfect $K \subseteq 2^\omega$ there exists a perfect $K' \subseteq K$ such that $K' \subseteq X$ or $K' \subseteq 2^\omega \setminus X$.

Definition

Let \mathcal{U} be an ultrafilter in V . We say that \mathcal{U} is *preserved* in $W \supseteq V$ if \mathcal{U} generates an ultrafilter in W .

Theorem (Miller, 2009)

Let \mathcal{U} be an ultrafilter. Then the following are equivalent.

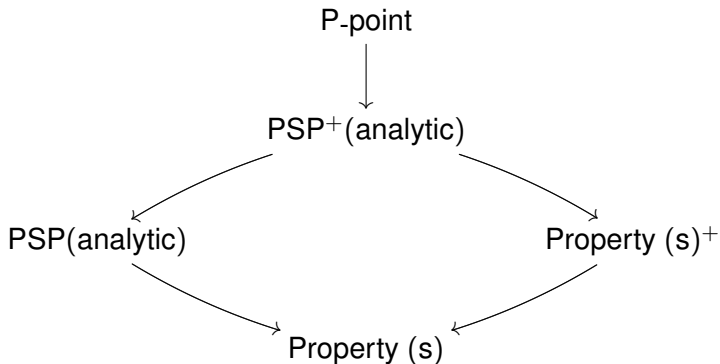
- 1 \mathcal{U} is preserved by Sacks forcing.
- 2 \mathcal{U} is preserved in some extension that adds a new real.
- 3 For every perfect subset K of 2^ω there exists a perfect $K' \subseteq K$ and $z \in \mathcal{U}$ such that $K' \subseteq z \uparrow$ or $K' \subseteq (\omega \setminus z) \downarrow$.

We will call *property (s)⁺* the condition that appears in (3).

Towards a complete picture

Conjecture

The following implications (and their obvious consequences) are the only ones that are provable in ZFC.



What we know so far

Theorem (Miller, 2009)

Assume MA(countable). Then there exists an ultrafilter that has property (s) but not property (s)⁺.

Using the method of Miller, it is possible to prove the following.

Theorem

Assume that CH plus the following conditions hold.

- *There exists a Π_1^1 set without the perfect set property.*
- *Every Σ_2^1 set has the property of Baire.*

Then there exists an ultrafilter that has property (s) but not the PSP(closed).

Together with the result of He and Zhang, these are the only known counterexamples.

Four existential questions

Shelah showed that it is consistent that there are no P-points. But for each one of the other four notions, the corresponding problem remains open.

Question (Steprāns)

Is there an ultrafilter with property (s) in ZFC?

Question (Miller, 2009)

Is there an ultrafilter with property (s)⁺ in ZFC?

Question (Medini and Milovich, 2012)

Is there an ultrafilter with the PSP(analytic) in ZFC?

Question

Is there an ultrafilter with the PSP⁺(analytic) in ZFC?

Thank you for your attention



and good night!