

Pacific Journal of Mathematics

**ON THE CONTINUOUS IMAGE OF A SINGULAR CHAIN
COMPLEX**

GLEN EUGENE BREDON

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A continuous surjection $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ between topological spaces is called "ductile" if, for each $y \in Y$ and neighborhood U of y there is a neighborhood V of y which contracts to y through U in such a way that this contraction can be covered by a homotopy of $\pi^{-1}(V)$. It is shown, in this note, that if $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ is ductile and Y is paracompact then the inclusion of the image $\pi_* C_*(X)$ of the singular chain complex of X in the singular chain complex $C_*(Y)$ of Y induces an isomorphism in homology. Thus $H_*(Y)$ can be computed from those singular simplices of Y which are images of singular simplices of X .

This result does not hold, in general, when π is not ductile. This question was brought to our attention (for a specific case) by Klingenberg who plans to use our result in a study of geodesics on a Riemannian manifold. We shall now rephrase the condition that a map be ductile in a more convenient language.

Let \mathcal{M} be the category whose objects are surjective maps $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ between topological spaces and whose morphisms are commutative diagrams

$$\begin{array}{ccc} X & \longrightarrow & X' \\ \pi \downarrow & & \downarrow \pi' \\ Y & \longrightarrow & Y' \end{array}$$

of continuous maps (where $\pi, \pi' \in \mathcal{M}$). This contains an analogue of homotopy, that is a commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} X \times I & \longrightarrow & X' \\ \downarrow \pi \times 1 & & \downarrow \pi' \\ Y \times I & \longrightarrow & Y' \end{array}$$

For $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ and $A \subset Y$ we let π_A denote the restriction $\pi^{-1}(A) \rightarrow A$ of π .

We will say that $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ (in \mathcal{M}) is *ductile* if, for each point $y \in Y$ and neighborhood U of y , there is a neighborhood V of y with $V \subset U$ such that the inclusion $\pi_V \rightarrow \pi_U$ is homotopic (in \mathcal{M}) to a map into $\pi_{\{y\}}$. (Thus V contracts, through U , to $\{y\}$ and this contraction is covered by a homotopy of $\pi^{-1}(V)$.)

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Most nice mappings are ductile. The following are all examples of ductile maps :

- (a) Simplicial maps.
- (b) Let $A \subset X$ both be ANR's (compact metric) and π the map of identifying A to a point.
- (c) $Y = Y_1 \cup Y_2$ where $Y_1, Y_2, Y_1 \cap Y_2$ are ANR's, $X = Y_1 + Y_2$ (disjoint union) and where π is the natural map.
- (d) π is the map of a differentiable manifold X onto its orbit space under some compact Lie group acting differentiably on X (see [1, Chapter VIII, 3.8]). According to Smale this also holds when X is an infinite dimensional manifold.
- (e) Let M be a compact Riemannian manifold and X the space of mappings $S^1 \rightarrow M$ in the uniform metric. Regarding S^1 as the unit circle in the complex plane, S^1 acts on X by $(zf)(z') = f(zz')$. Let Y be the orbit space of this action. According to Švarc [4], this is ductile. According to Smale it falls under the infinite dimensional case of example (d). It is this example that Klingenberg uses in studying geodesics on M .

THEOREM. *Let π be a ductile map of the space X onto the paracompact space Y . Then the inclusion $\pi_*C_*(X) \subset C_*(Y)$ of chain complexes induces an isomorphism in homology.*

For the proof, it is convenient to introduce some notation. For $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ in \mathcal{M} , let $C_*(\pi) = \pi_*C_*(X)$, $H_p(\pi) = H_p(C_*(\pi))$, $C^*(\pi) = \text{Hom}(C_*(\pi), Z)$, and $H^p(\pi) = H^p(C^*(\pi))$. These are functors on \mathcal{M} . It is clear that homotopies in \mathcal{M} induce chain homotopies, and therefore that homotopic maps $\pi \rightarrow \pi'$ induce identical homomorphisms

$$H_p(\pi) \rightarrow H_p(\pi') \quad \text{and} \quad H^p(\pi') \rightarrow H^p(\pi) .$$

Note that, as a subcomplex of $C_*(Y)$, $C_*(\pi)$ admits the operation of subdivision, and that standard methods show that this operation induces an isomorphism in homology.

Also note that if π is ductile, then, with $y \in V \subset U$ as in the definition of ductile, the restriction $H^p(\pi_U) \rightarrow H^p(\pi_V)$ factors through $H^p(\pi_{(y)}) = H^p(y)$ and hence is trivial for $p \neq 0$ and has image Z for $p = 0$. ($H^p(\pi) \rightarrow H^p(\pi_{(y)})$ is clearly surjective). Thus, when π is ductile, the natural map

$$\lim_{\substack{\rightarrow \\ U}} H^p(\pi_U) \rightarrow H^p(\pi_{(y)}) = H^p(y) = \begin{cases} Z, & p = 0 \\ 0, & p \neq 0 \end{cases}$$

is an isomorphism, where U ranges over the neighborhoods of y .

Now, for $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ fixed, let S^* be the (differential) presheaf on

Y defined by $S^*(U) = C^*(\pi_U) = \text{Hom}(\pi_* C_*(\pi^{-1}(U)), Z)$. S^* clearly satisfies the axiom (F2) of Godement [2]. Let \mathcal{S}^* be the sheaf generated by S^* . The kernel $S_0^*(Y)$ of the natural map $C^*(\pi) = S^*(Y) \rightarrow \mathcal{S}^*(Y)$ consists of those cochains with empty support (that is, which vanish on “small” simplices of $C_*(\pi)$).

LEMMA. $H^*(S_0^*(Y)) = 0$.

Proof. For an open covering \mathfrak{U} of Y let $C_{\mathfrak{U}}^{\text{ll}}(\pi)$ be the subcomplex of $C_*(\pi)$ generated by those singular simplices which are contained in some member of \mathfrak{U} . A standard argument using subdivision shows that $H_*(C_{\mathfrak{U}}^{\text{ll}}(\pi)) \rightarrow H_*(C_*(\pi))$ is an isomorphism. If $C_{\mathfrak{U}}^*(\pi) = \text{Hom}(C_{\mathfrak{U}}^{\text{ll}}(\pi), Z)$ it follows that $H^*(C^*(\pi)) \rightarrow H^*(C_{\mathfrak{U}}^*(\pi))$ is an isomorphism. Thus if $K_{\mathfrak{U}}^* = \ker\{C^*(\pi) \rightarrow C_{\mathfrak{U}}^*(\pi)\}$ then $H^*(K_{\mathfrak{U}}^*) = 0$. But clearly $S_0^*(Y) = \bigcup_{\mathfrak{U}} K_{\mathfrak{U}}^* = \lim K_{\mathfrak{U}}^*$. Thus $H^*(S_0^*(Y)) = H^*(\lim K_{\mathfrak{U}}^*) = \lim H^*(K_{\mathfrak{U}}^*) = 0$.

Now suppose that Y is paracompact. Then by [2; 3,9.1, p. 159], the sequence

$$0 \rightarrow S_0^*(Y) \rightarrow S^*(Y) \rightarrow \mathcal{S}^*(Y) \rightarrow 0$$

is exact, so that $H^*(\pi) = H^*(S^*(Y)) \approx H^*(\mathcal{S}^*(Y))$.

Since each S^p is an S^0 -module, it follows that each \mathcal{S}^p is an \mathcal{S}^0 -module. \mathcal{S}^0 is just the ordinary singular cochain sheaf of Y in degree zero and hence it is flabby. Since Y is paracompact it follows that each \mathcal{S}^p is soft.

Let $\mathcal{H}^*(\mathcal{S}^*)$ be the derived sheaf of \mathcal{S}^* . By standard facts, the stalk of this sheaf at $y \in Y$ is $\mathcal{H}^*(\mathcal{S}^*)_y = \lim_{y \in U} H^*(S^*(U)) = \lim_{y \in U} H^*(\pi_U)$ (U ranging over the neighborhoods of y). We have seen that, when π is ductile, this is identified with $H^*(y)$. Thus, when π is ductile, \mathcal{S}^* is a resolution of the constant sheaf Z .

If \mathcal{C}^* is the ordinary singular sheaf of Y , the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} H^*(C^*(Y)) & \rightarrow & H^*(S^*(Y)) = H^*(C^*(\pi)) \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ H^*(\mathcal{C}^*(Y)) & \rightarrow & H^*(\mathcal{S}^*(Y)) \end{array}$$

commutes (note that $\mathcal{C}^* = \mathcal{S}^*$ when π is the identity). If Y is paracompact, the vertical maps are isomorphisms and so is the lower map when π is ductile (see [2, 4.6.2, p. 173]).

We wish to obtain this isomorphism on the homology level. Note that $C_*(Y)/C_*(\pi)$ is a free chain complex (generated by those singular simplices not in the image of π). We wish to show that $H_*(C_*(Y)/C_*(\pi)) = 0$, under the hypotheses of the theorem. We know that the cohomology of this chain complex is trivial. Thus, by the universal coefficient theorem, it suffices to show that, for any abelian

group A , $\text{Hom}(A, Z) = 0 = \text{Ext}(A, Z)$ implies that $A = 0$. This is proved in [3, Theorem 8.5] and completes the proof of our theorem.

In conclusion we give an example of a map $\pi; X \rightarrow Y$ which is not ductile even though each point $y \in Y$ has a neighborhood U such that $\pi^{-1}(U)$ can be deformed into $\pi^{-1}(y)$. Indeed the conclusion of the theorem does not hold for this example.

Let Y_1 be the interval $[0, 1]$ on the x -axis of the $x - y$ plane and for $n > 1$ let Y_n be the upper semicircle ($y \geq 0$) with radius $1/n$ and center at $(1/n, 0)$. Let $Y = \bigcup_{n=1}^{\infty} Y_n$ and let X be the disjoint union of the Y_n with $\pi: X \rightarrow Y$ the natural map.

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Pacific Journal of Mathematics

Vol. 15, No. 4

December, 1965

Robert James Blattner, <i>Group extension representations and the structure space</i>	1101
Glen Eugene Bredon, <i>On the continuous image of a singular chain complex</i>	1115
David Hilding Carlson, <i>On real eigenvalues of complex matrices</i>	1119
Hsin Chu, <i>Fixed points in a transformation group</i>	1131
Howard Benton Curtis, Jr., <i>The uniformizing function for certain simply connected Riemann surfaces</i>	1137
George Wesley Day, <i>Free complete extensions of Boolean algebras</i>	1145
Edward George Effros, <i>The Borel space of von Neumann algebras on a separable Hilbert space</i>	1153
Michel Mendès France, <i>A set of nonnormal numbers</i>	1165
Jack L. Goldberg, <i>Polynomials orthogonal over a denumerable set</i>	1171
Frederick Paul Greenleaf, <i>Norm decreasing homomorphisms of group algebras</i>	1187
Fletcher Gross, <i>The 2-length of a finite solvable group</i>	1221
Kenneth Myron Hoffman and Arlan Bruce Ramsay, <i>Algebras of bounded sequences</i>	1239
James Patrick Jans, <i>Some aspects of torsion</i>	1249
Laura Ketchum Kodama, <i>Boundary measures of analytic differentials and uniform approximation on a Riemann surface</i>	1261
Alan G. Konheim and Benjamin Weiss, <i>Functions which operate on characteristic functions</i>	1279
Ronald John Larsen, <i>Almost invariant measures</i>	1295
You-Feng Lin, <i>Generalized character semigroups: The Schwarz decomposition</i>	1307
Justin Thomas Lloyd, <i>Representations of lattice-ordered groups having a basis</i>	1313
Thomas Graham McLaughlin, <i>On relative coimmunity</i>	1319
Mitsuru Nakai, <i>Φ-bounded harmonic functions and classification of Riemann surfaces</i>	1329
L. G. Novoa, <i>On n-ordered sets and order completeness</i>	1337
Fredos Papangelou, <i>Some considerations on convergence in abelian lattice-groups</i>	1347
Frank Albert Raymond, <i>Some remarks on the coefficients used in the theory of homology manifolds</i>	1365
John R. Ringrose, <i>On sub-algebras of a C^*-algebra</i>	1377
Jack Max Robertson, <i>Some topological properties of certain spaces of differentiable homeomorphisms of disks and spheres</i>	1383
Zalman Rubinstein, <i>Some results in the location of zeros of polynomials</i>	1391
Arthur Argyle Sagle, <i>On simple algebras obtained from homogeneous general Lie triple systems</i>	1397
Hans Samelson, <i>On small maps of manifolds</i>	1401
Annette Sinclair, <i>$\varepsilon(z)$-closeness of approximation</i>	1405
Edsel Ford Stiel, <i>Isometric immersions of manifolds of nonnegative constant sectional curvature</i>	1415
Earl J. Taft, <i>Invariant splitting in Jordan and alternative algebras</i>	1421
L. E. Ward, <i>On a conjecture of R. J. Koch</i>	1429
Neil Marchand Wigley, <i>Development of the mapping function at a corner</i>	1435
Horace C. Wisner, <i>Embedding a circle of trees in the plane</i>	1463
Adil Mohamed Yaqub, <i>Ring-logics and residue class rings</i>	1465
John W. Lamperti and Patrick Colonel Suppes, <i>Correction to: Chains of infinite order and their application to learning theory</i>	1471
Charles Vernon Coffman, <i>Correction to: Non-linear differential equations on cones in Banach spaces</i>	1472
P. H. Doyle, III, <i>Correction to: A sufficient condition that an arc in S^n be cellular</i>	1474
P. P. Saworotnow, <i>Correction to: On continuity of multiplication in a complemented algebra</i>	1474
Basil Gordon, <i>Correction to: A generalization of the coset decomposition of a finite group</i>	1474