

1 Cartesian Cubical Computational Type Theory: 2 Constructive Reasoning with Paths and Equalities

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12 — Abstract —

13 We present a dependent type theory organized around a Cartesian notion of cubes (with faces,
14 degeneracies, and diagonals), supporting both fibrant and non-fibrant types. The fibrant fragment
15 validates Voevodsky’s univalence axiom and includes a circle type, while the non-fibrant fragment
16 includes exact (strict) equality types satisfying equality reflection. Our type theory is defined
17 by a semantics in cubical partial equivalence relations, and is the first two-level type theory to
18 satisfy the canonicity property: all closed terms of boolean type evaluate to either true or false.

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30 **1 Introduction**

31 Martin-Löf has proposed two rather different approaches to equality in dependent type theory,
32 in the guise of his extensional [24] and intensional [25] type theories. *Extensional type theory*,
33 particularly its realization as Nuprl’s computational type theory [2], is justified by meaning
34 explanations in which closed terms are programs given meaning by an operational semantics,
35 and variables are considered to range over closed terms of their given type.

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36 One consequence is that equations hold whenever they are true for all closed terms; for
 37 instance, $n : \mathbf{nat}, m : \mathbf{nat} \gg n + m \doteq m + n \in \mathbf{nat}$ as a judgmental equality because $N + M$ and
 38 $M + N$ compute the same natural number for any closed natural numbers N, M . Another
 39 consequence is known as *equality reflection*: the equality type $\mathbf{Eq}_A(M, N)$ has at most one
 40 element, and is inhabited if and only if $M \doteq N \in A$ judgmentally.

41 In contrast, in *intensional type theory*, judgmental equality is precisely β - (and at certain
 42 types, η -) equivalence, and context variables are treated as additional axioms whose form is
 43 indeterminate. The identity type $\mathbf{Id}_A(M, N)$ mediates equality reasoning; in an empty context
 44 it is inhabited by a single element if and only if $M \equiv N : A$ judgmentally, but in non-empty
 45 contexts includes additional equalities such as $n : \mathbf{nat}, m : \mathbf{nat} \vdash P : \mathbf{Id}_{\mathbf{nat}}(n + m, m + n)$, which
 46 does not hold judgmentally for variables n, m .

47 Traditional type theories, extensional or intensional, are constructive in the sense that
 48 they admit an interpretation of proofs as programs, often distilled into the *canonicity property*
 49 that closed elements of type \mathbf{bool} evaluate and are judgmentally equal to either \mathbf{true} or \mathbf{false} .
 50 In computational type theory, this is the very definition of $M \in \mathbf{bool}$ (see Theorem 15), while
 51 in intensional type theory, canonicity can be verified by a metatheoretic argument.

52 Homotopy type theory [29] extends intensional type theory with a number of axioms,
 53 including Voevodsky’s univalence axiom [31] and higher inductive types [23]. These axioms
 54 are justified by mathematical models interpreting types as spaces (e.g., simplicial sets [20]
 55 or fibrant objects in a model category [10]), elements of types as points, and identity types
 56 as path spaces. In such models, homotopy type theory serves as a framework for synthetic
 57 homotopy theory [29], in which higher inductive types provide concrete homotopy types (e.g.,
 58 n -spheres), the rules of the identity type assert that all constructions respect paths, and
 59 univalence asserts moreover that all constructions are invariant under homotopy equivalence.

60 Despite the success of homotopy type theory as a medium for synthetic results in homotopy
 61 theory [11, 30, 14], it is believed that certain objects—famously, semi-simplicial types—cannot
 62 be constructed without reference to some notion of exact equality stricter than paths [8, 33].
 63 Because exact equality does not respect paths, any theory with both exact equality and
 64 paths must therefore stratify types into *fibrant types* that respect paths, and *non-fibrant*
 65 *types* that do not. Candidate such *two-level type theories* include the Homotopy Type System
 66 (HTS) of Voevodsky [33] and the two-level type theory of Altenkirch et al. [3].

67 Critically, homotopy type theory and existing two-level type theories lack the aforemen-
 68 tioned canonicity property, because the ordinary judgmental equalities of intensional type
 69 theory do not apply to uses of the univalence axiom or paths in higher inductive types. Nor
 70 are they known to satisfy the weaker *homotopy canonicity* property that for any closed
 71 $M : \mathbf{bool}$ there exists a proof $P : \mathbf{Id}_{\mathbf{bool}}(M, \mathbf{true})$ or $P : \mathbf{Id}_{\mathbf{bool}}(M, \mathbf{false})$ [32].

72 1.1 Contributions

73 We define a two-level computational type theory satisfying the canonicity property, whose
 74 fibrant types include a cumulative hierarchy of univalent universes of fibrant types, universes of
 75 non-fibrant types, dependent function, dependent pair, and path types, and whose non-fibrant
 76 types include also exact equality types with equality reflection.

77 Our type theory is the first two-level type theory with canonicity, and the second univalent
 78 type theory with canonicity, after the cubical type theory of Cohen et al. [17]. Like Cohen
 79 et al. [17], our type theory is inspired by a model of homotopy type theory in cubical sets
 80 [12], and represents n -dimensional cubes as terms parametrized by n variables ranging over
 81 a formal interval. However, the fibrant fragment of our type theory differs from Cohen et al.
 82 [17] by endowing the interval with less (namely, Cartesian) structure, and defining fibrancy

83 with a substantially different uniform Kan condition. Thus we affirmatively resolve the open
84 question of whether Cartesian interval structure constructively models univalence [18, 22].

85 In the spirit of Martin-Löf’s meaning explanations [24], we define the judgments of type
86 theory as relations on programs in an untyped programming language. In Section 2, we define
87 a λ -calculus extended by nominal constants representing elements of a formal interval object
88 [26]. In Section 3, we define a cubical generalization of Allen’s partial equivalence relation
89 (PER) semantics of Nuprl [1], sufficient to describe non-fibrant types and their elements
90 at all dimensions. In Section 4, we define fibrant types as non-fibrant types equipped with
91 two Kan operations, called coercion and homogeneous composition. In Sections 5 and 6
92 we summarize the semantics of each type former, and provide valid rules of inference. We
93 conclude in Section 7 with comparisons to related work.

94 Full details and proofs for our construction are available in our associated preprint [7].
95 Our type theory is currently being implemented in the REDPRL proof assistant [28], in
96 which we have already formalized a proof of univalence (<https://git.io/vFjUQ>).

97 2 Programming language

98 We begin by defining an untyped *cubical programming language*, a call-by-name λ -calculus
99 extended by nominal constants [26], whose terms serve as the types and elements of our
100 cubical type theory. Names (or dimensions) x, y, \dots represent generic elements of an abstract
101 interval \mathbb{I} with two constant elements (or endpoints) $0, 1$. Given any two finite sets of names
102 Ψ, Ψ' , a *dimension substitution* $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$ sends each name in Ψ' to $0, 1$, or a name in Ψ .
103 We write $\langle r/x \rangle : \Psi \rightarrow (\Psi, x)$ for the dimension substitution sending x to $r \in \Psi \cup \{0, 1\}$ and
104 constant on Ψ . Given $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$ and a term M whose free names are contained in Ψ , we
105 write $M\psi$ for the term obtained by replacing each $x \in \Psi$ in M with $\psi(x)$.

106 Geometrically, a term M with free dimension names in Ψ (henceforth, a Ψ -dimensional
107 term) represents a $|\Psi|$ -dimensional cube—a point ($|\Psi| = 0$), line ($|\Psi| = 1$), square ($|\Psi| =$
108 2), and so forth. Dimension substitutions are compositions of permutations, *face maps*
109 $\langle 0/x \rangle, \langle 1/x \rangle : \Psi \rightarrow (\Psi, x)$, *diagonal maps* $\langle y/x \rangle : (\Psi, y) \rightarrow (\Psi, x, y)$, and (silent) *degeneracy*
110 *maps* $(\Psi, y) \rightarrow \Psi$, and perform the corresponding geometric operation when applied to a
111 term M . Below, we illustrate the faces of a square M in dimensions $\{x, y\}$; note that the
112 bottom endpoint of the left face and the left endpoint of the bottom face are drawn as a
113 single point, because $\langle 0/x \rangle \langle 1/y \rangle = \langle 1/y \rangle \langle 0/x \rangle$.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 y \swarrow \xrightarrow{x} & M\langle 0/x \rangle \langle 0/y \rangle & \xrightarrow{M\langle 0/y \rangle} & M\langle 1/x \rangle \langle 0/y \rangle \\
 & \downarrow M\langle 0/x \rangle & & \downarrow M\langle 1/x \rangle \\
 & M\langle 0/x \rangle \langle 1/y \rangle & \xrightarrow{M\langle 1/y \rangle} & M\langle 1/x \rangle \langle 1/y \rangle
 \end{array}$$

114

115 This notion of cubes is *Cartesian* because sets of names and dimension substitutions
116 form a free finite-product category generated by the two endpoint maps $\langle 0/x \rangle, \langle 1/x \rangle :$
117 $\emptyset \rightarrow \{x\}$ [22, 9, 15]. In contrast, Cohen et al. [17] equip the interval with a De Morgan
118 algebra structure also containing *connections* $\langle (x \wedge y)/y \rangle, \langle (x \vee y)/y \rangle : (\Psi, x, y) \rightarrow (\Psi, y)$ and
119 *reversals* $\langle (1 - y)/y \rangle : (\Psi, y) \rightarrow (\Psi, y)$. Cartesian cubes are appealing for their ubiquity
120 and simplicity: dimensions behave like structural variables (with exchange, weakening, and
121 contraction), and have a trivial equational theory (as opposed to De Morgan laws).

122 Following Martin-Löf’s meaning explanations [24], we only give operational meaning to
 123 closed terms, and consider term variables to range over closed terms of their given types.
 124 However, we cannot treat dimension names as ranging only over $\{0, 1\}$ —such a semantics
 125 would enforce *uniqueness of identity proofs*, by equating all lines whose boundaries coincide.

126 We therefore define a deterministic small-step operational semantics on terms with no
 127 free term variables, but any number of free dimension names. We write $V \text{ val}$ for values,
 128 $M \mapsto M'$ when M takes one step of computation to M' , and $M \Downarrow V$ (M evaluates to
 129 V), when $M \mapsto^* V$ (in zero or more steps) and $V \text{ val}$. Notably, the operational semantics
 130 are not stable under dimension substitution: because face and diagonal maps can expose
 131 new simplifications, we have neither (1) if $V \text{ val}$ then $V\psi \text{ val}$, nor (2) if $M \mapsto^* M'$ then
 132 $M\psi \mapsto^* M'\psi$. Consider the circle (Section 5.2), inductively generated by a point **base** and
 133 a line loop_x . We arrange that the faces of loop_x are **base** by including an operational step
 134 $(\text{loop}_x)\langle 0/x \rangle = \text{loop}_0 \mapsto \text{base}$. On the other hand, $\text{loop}_x \text{ val}$ because it is a constructor,
 135 contradicting (1). Maps out of the circle are determined by a point P (the image of **base**)
 136 and an abstracted line $x.L$ (the image of loop_x). Thus $\mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c.A}(\text{loop}_x; P, x.L) \mapsto L$ but

$$\begin{aligned}
 137 \quad (\mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c.A}(\text{loop}_x; P, x.L))\langle 0/x \rangle &= \mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c.A\langle 0/x \rangle}(\text{loop}_0; P\langle 0/x \rangle, x.L) \\
 138 &\mapsto \mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c.A\langle 0/x \rangle}(\text{base}; P\langle 0/x \rangle, x.L) \\
 139 &\mapsto P\langle 0/x \rangle \\
 140
 \end{aligned}$$

141 where L and $P\langle 0/x \rangle$ are a priori unrelated, contradicting (2). Fortunately, most rules of the
 142 operational semantics are in fact *cubically stable*, or preserved by dimension substitutions: for
 143 instance, $(\text{loop}_0)\psi \mapsto \text{base}\psi$ for all $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$. We write $M \mapsto_{\square} M'$ when $M\psi \mapsto M'\psi$
 144 for all $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$, and $V \text{ val}_{\square}$ when $V\psi \text{ val}$ for all $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$.

145 We include some operational semantics rules in Fig. 1, but omit the many rules pertaining
 146 to the Kan operations (defined in Section 4), as well as rules that evaluate the principal
 147 argument of an elimination form (for example, $\text{app}(M, N) \mapsto \text{app}(M', N)$ when $M \mapsto M'$).
 148 We adopt the convention that a, b, c, \dots are term variables, x, y, z, \dots are dimension names,
 149 and r, r', r_i are dimension expressions (names x or constants $0, 1$).

150 3 Cubical PER semantics

151 Type theory is built on the judgments of typehood (and equality of types) and membership in
 152 a type (and equality of members in a type). Intensional type theories—including homotopy
 153 type theory and the cubical type theory of Cohen et al. [17]—typically define these judgments
 154 inductively by a collection of syntactic inference rules. We instead define these judgments
 155 semantically as partial equivalence relations (PERs, or symmetric and transitive relations)
 156 on terms, whose meaning is given by the operational semantics described in Section 2.
 157 Such an approach can be seen as a mathematically precise reading of Martin-Löf’s meaning
 158 explanations of type theory [24], or as a relational semantics of type theory in the style of
 159 Tait [27], and is the approach adopted by Nuprl [2]. The role of inference rules is therefore
 160 not definitional, but rather to summarize desirable properties validated by the semantics.

161 We adopt this semantical approach for multiple reasons. By defining types as relations
 162 over programs, we ensure the constructive character of the theory; for instance, it will follow
 163 from the definitions that elements of boolean type are programs that evaluate to **true** or **false**
 164 (Theorem 15). Moreover, because the meaning of open terms is given by their closed (term)
 165 substitution instances, it will naturally follow that judgmental equality is extensional and
 166 that the exact equality type satisfies equality reflection.

$(a:A) \rightarrow B \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\lambda a.M \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\text{app}(\lambda a.M, N) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} M[N/a]$ $(a:A) \times B \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\langle M, N \rangle \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\text{fst}(\langle M, N \rangle) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} M$ $\text{snd}(\langle M, N \rangle) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} N$ $\text{Path}_{x.A}(M, N) \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\langle x \rangle M \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\langle x \rangle M @ r \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} M \langle r/x \rangle$ $\text{Eq}_A(M, N) \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\star \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\text{bool} \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\text{true} \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\text{false} \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\text{if}_{b.A}(\text{true}; T, F) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} T$	$\text{if}_{b.A}(\text{false}; T, F) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} F$ $\mathbb{S}^1 \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\text{base} \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\text{loop}_x \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\text{loop}_\varepsilon \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} \text{base} \quad (\varepsilon \in \{0, 1\})$ $\mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c.A}(\text{base}; P, x.L) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} P$ $\mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c.A}(\text{loop}_x; P, y.L) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} L \langle x/y \rangle$ $\mathbb{V}_x(A, B, E) \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\mathbb{V}_\varepsilon(A_0, A_1, E) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} A_\varepsilon \quad (\varepsilon \in \{0, 1\})$ $\mathbb{V}\text{in}_x(M, N) \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}}$ $\mathbb{V}\text{in}_\varepsilon(M_0, M_1) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} M_\varepsilon \quad (\varepsilon \in \{0, 1\})$ $\mathbb{V}\text{proj}_x(\mathbb{V}\text{in}_x(M, N), F) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} F$ $\mathbb{V}\text{proj}_0(M, F) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} \text{app}(F, M)$ $\mathbb{V}\text{proj}_1(M, F) \mapsto_{\mathbb{D}} M$ $\mathcal{U}_j^\kappa \text{ val}_{\mathbb{D}} \quad (\kappa \in \{\text{pre}, \text{Kan}\})$
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■ **Figure 1** Operational semantics, selected rules.

167 In Allen's PER semantics of Nuprl [1], a type A is interpreted as a symmetric and
 168 transitive relation $\llbracket A \rrbracket$ on values; the judgment $M \doteq N \in A$ holds whenever $M \Downarrow M_0$,
 169 $N \Downarrow N_0$, and $\llbracket A \rrbracket(M_0, N_0)$ (which we henceforth write $\llbracket A \rrbracket^\Downarrow(M, N)$); and $M \in A$ whenever
 170 $M \doteq M \in A$. Thus, ignoring equality, A is defined by its set of values $\{V \text{ val} \mid \llbracket A \rrbracket^\Downarrow(V, V)\}$,
 171 and the elements of A are the programs whose values are elements of that set. (We write \in
 172 rather than $:$ to emphasize the semantic character of these judgments.)

173 We generalize Nuprl's semantics by instead interpreting types as *cubical sets*: every type
 174 has a PER of Ψ -dimensional values for every Ψ , and each $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$ sends its Ψ -dimensional
 175 values to its Ψ' -dimensional values. Complications arise when defining the latter functorial
 176 action. First, dimension substitutions can engender computation even on values, so the action
 177 of ψ must send V to the *value* of the program $V\psi$. Second, substitution-then-evaluation
 178 is not necessarily functorial: if $V\psi \Downarrow V'$, there is in general no relationship between the
 179 values of $V\psi\psi'$ and $V'\psi'$. Third, types are themselves programs because of dependency,
 180 and therefore suffer from the same coherence issues. We solve these issues by interpreting
 181 (Ψ -dimensional) types as *value-coherent Ψ -PERs on values*:

182 ► **Definition 1.** A Ψ -relation α (on values) is a family of binary relations α_ψ for every Ψ'
 183 and $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$, over Ψ' -dimensional terms (values). If α_ψ varies only in the choice of Ψ'
 184 and not ψ , we say α is *context-indexed* and write $\alpha_{\Psi'}$ for α_ψ .

185 ► **Definition 2.** For any Ψ -relation on values α , define the Ψ -relation $\text{Tm}(\alpha)(M, N)$ to hold
 186 when for all $\psi_1 : \Psi_1 \rightarrow \Psi$ and $\psi_2 : \Psi_2 \rightarrow \Psi_1$, $\alpha_{\psi_1\psi_2}^\Downarrow$ relates pairwise $M_1\psi_2$, $M\psi_1\psi_2$, $N_1\psi_2$,
 187 and $N\psi_1\psi_2$, where $M\psi_1 \Downarrow M_1$ and $N\psi_1 \Downarrow N_1$.

188 A Ψ -relation α can be precomposed with a dimension substitution $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$, yielding
 189 a Ψ' -relation $(\alpha\psi)_{\psi'} := \alpha_{\psi\psi'}$.

190 ► **Definition 3.** A Ψ -relation on values α is *value-coherent*, or $\text{Coh}(\alpha)$, when for all $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$,
 191 if $\alpha_\psi(V, V')$ then $\text{Tm}(\alpha\psi)(V, V')$.

192 Definition 1 captures the idea that types vary with dimension substitutions (for example,
 193 $\mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c.\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}}(\text{loop}_x; A, x.B)$ under $\langle 0/x \rangle$), Definition 2 lifts Ψ -relations on values to arbitrary
 194 terms by substitution-then-evaluation, and Definition 3 defines functoriality of that lifting.

195 ► **Remark.** Writing \mathbb{C} for the category of sets of names and dimension substitutions, a
 196 value-coherent context-indexed PER determines a functor $\mathbb{C}^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$, and a value-coherent
 197 Ψ -PER determines a functor $(\mathbb{C}/\Psi)^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathbf{Set}$.

198 3.1 Judgments

199 We define the judgments of our type theory relative to a value-coherent context-indexed
 200 PER of types, each of which gives rise to another PER. In the style of Allen [1] and recently,
 201 Anand and Rahli [4], we present this data in a single relation.

202 ► **Definition 4.** A *cubical type system* is a relation $\tau(\Psi, A_0, B_0, \varphi)$ over Ψ -dimensional values
 203 A_0, B_0 , and binary relations φ over Ψ -dimensional values, satisfying:

- 204 ■ **Functionality:** if $\tau(\Psi, A_0, B_0, \varphi)$ and $\tau(\Psi, A_0, B_0, \varphi')$ then $\varphi = \varphi'$.
- 205 ■ **PER-valuation:** if $\tau(\Psi, A_0, B_0, \varphi)$ then φ is a PER.
- 206 ■ **Symmetry:** if $\tau(\Psi, A_0, B_0, \varphi)$ then $\tau(\Psi, B_0, A_0, \varphi)$.
- 207 ■ **Transitivity:** if $\tau(\Psi, A_0, B_0, \varphi)$ and $\tau(\Psi, B_0, C_0, \varphi)$ then $\tau(\Psi, A_0, C_0, \varphi)$.
- 208 ■ **Value-coherence:** $\text{Coh}(\{(\Psi, A_0, B_0) \mid \tau(\Psi, A_0, B_0, \varphi)\})$.

209 The first three components of τ define a Ψ -PER for every Ψ , which we write τ^Ψ . If
 210 $\text{Tm}(\tau^\Psi)(A, B)$, then the fourth component of τ assigns a Ψ -PER to A, B sending each
 211 $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$ to the relation φ^ψ where $\tau^\Psi(\Psi', A\psi, B\psi, \varphi^\psi)$. We write this Ψ -PER $\llbracket A \rrbracket$; it is
 212 unique by functionality, and independent from the choice of B by symmetry and transitivity.

213 For the remainder of this section, fix a cubical type system τ . We start by defining the
 214 closed judgments relative to τ : when are A and B equal Ψ -dimensional types, and when are
 215 M and N equal Ψ -dimensional elements of A ?

216 ► **Definition 5.** $A \doteq B \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$ holds when $\text{Tm}(\tau^\Psi)(A, B)$ and $\text{Coh}(\llbracket A \rrbracket)$. We write
 217 $A \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$ for $A \doteq A \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$.

218 ► **Definition 6.** $M \doteq N \in A [\Psi]$, presupposing² $A \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$, when $\text{Tm}(\llbracket A \rrbracket)(M, N)$. We
 219 write $M \in A [\Psi]$ for $M \doteq M \in A [\Psi]$.

220 We extend the judgments to open terms by functionality: an open type (resp., elements)
 221 is a map sending equal elements of the context to equal closed types (resp., elements). The
 222 open judgments must be defined simultaneously, by induction on the length of the context.

223 ► **Definition 7.** $(a_1 : A_1, \dots, a_n : A_n) \text{ ctx } [\Psi]$ when $A_1 \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$, $a_1 : A_1 \gg A_2 \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$,
 224 \dots , and $a_1 : A_1, \dots, a_{n-1} : A_{n-1} \gg A_n \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$.

225 ► **Definition 8.** $a_1 : A_1, \dots, a_n : A_n \gg B \doteq B' \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$, presupposing $(a_1 : A_1, \dots, a_n :$
 226 $A_n) \text{ ctx } [\Psi]$, when for any $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$, $N_1 \doteq N'_1 \in A_1\psi [\Psi']$, $N_2 \doteq N'_2 \in A_2\psi[N_1/a_1] [\Psi']$,
 227 \dots , and $N_n \doteq N'_n \in A_n\psi[N_1, \dots, N_{n-1}/a_1, \dots, a_n] [\Psi']$, when

$$228 \quad B\psi[N_1, \dots, N_n/a_1, \dots, a_n] \doteq B'\psi[N'_1, \dots, N'_n/a_1, \dots, a_n] \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi'].$$

² A presupposition is a fact that must be established before a judgment can be sensibly considered. Here,
 it does not make sense to demand $\text{Tm}(\llbracket A \rrbracket)(M, N)$ unless $\llbracket A \rrbracket$ is known to exist by $A \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$.

229 Under the same hypotheses, $a_1 : A_1, \dots, a_n : A_n \gg M \doteq M' \in B [\Psi]$ when

$$230 \quad M\psi[N_1, \dots, N_n/a_1, \dots, a_n] \doteq M'\psi[N'_1, \dots, N'_n/a_1, \dots, a_n] \in B\psi[N_1, \dots, N_n/a_1, \dots, a_n] [\Psi'].$$

231 Given the distinct roles of term variables and dimension names in Definition 8, it is
 232 natural for our judgments to separate the contexts $(a_1 : A_1, \dots, a_n : A_n)$ and Ψ . In REDPRL,
 233 we utilize a single mixed context of terms and dimensions, as do Cohen et al. [17].

234 ► **Remark.** Allen’s PER semantics are an instance of our semantics, in the case that types
 235 are constant presheaves and terms have no free dimension names. If M, N, A , and B have
 236 no free dimensions, then $A \doteq B \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$ if and only if $\tau^\downarrow(\Psi', A, B, \llbracket A \rrbracket_{\Psi'})$ for all Ψ' , and
 237 $M \doteq N \in A [\Psi]$ if and only if $(\llbracket A \rrbracket_{\Psi'})^\downarrow(M, N)$ for all Ψ' .

238 3.2 Properties of Judgments

239 The main result of this paper is the construction of a cubical type system closed under a
 240 variety of type formers. However, many global properties of judgments hold in *any* cubical
 241 type system. For instance, equality judgments are all symmetric, transitive, and closed under
 242 dimension substitution (if $\mathcal{J} [\Psi]$ and $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$, then $\mathcal{J}\psi [\Psi']$). Open judgments satisfy the
 243 hypothesis (if $(\Gamma, a : A, \Gamma') \text{ ctx} [\Psi]$ then $\Gamma, a : A, \Gamma' \gg a \in A [\Psi]$) and weakening rules. Equal
 244 types have the same elements (if $A \doteq B \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$ and $M \doteq N \in A [\Psi]$ then $M \doteq N \in B [\Psi]$).

245 To prove $M \in A [\Psi]$ in a particular cubical type system, we must compare the definition
 246 of $\llbracket A \rrbracket$ with the evaluation behavior of all dimension substitution instances of M . When all
 247 instances of M begin to evaluate in lockstep, it suffices to consider only M itself (Lemma 9);
 248 otherwise, it suffices to show that the instances of M become coherent up to equality at A ,
 249 after some number of steps (Lemma 10).

250 ► **Lemma 9** (Head expansion). *If $M' \in A [\Psi]$ and $M \mapsto_{\text{red}}^* M'$, then $M \doteq M' \in A [\Psi]$.*

251 ► **Lemma 10.** *Suppose that M is a Ψ -dimensional term, and we have a family of terms*
 252 *$\{M_\psi\}$ for each $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$ such that $M\psi \mapsto^* M_\psi$. If $M_\psi \doteq (M_{\text{id}_\Psi})\psi \in A\psi [\Psi']$ for all ψ ,*
 253 *then $M \doteq M_{\text{id}_\Psi} \in A [\Psi]$.*

254 Once we have established that substitution-then-evaluation of M is functorial, it follows
 255 that the instances of M are equal to the instances of its value.

256 ► **Lemma 11.** *If $M \in A [\Psi]$, then $M \Downarrow V$ and $M \doteq V \in A [\Psi]$.*

257 On the other hand, certain properties typical of intensional type theories are generally
 258 *not* expected to hold in our semantics. To check $M \in A [\Psi]$, one must, at minimum, show
 259 that M terminates; this is clearly undecidable, because M can be an arbitrary untyped
 260 term. Moreover, terms do not have unique types, because the meanings of types need not be
 261 disjoint. In fact, modern Nuprl has a “Base” type containing every term [4].

262 4 Kan types

263 The judgmental apparatus described in Section 3 accounts for *non-fibrant* or *pretypes*—whose
 264 paths are not necessarily composable or invertible. A pretype is *Kan fibrant*, or a Kan
 265 type, when equipped with two *Kan operations*: coercion (`coe`) and homogeneous composition
 266 (`hcom`). Coercion for a (Ψ, x) -dimensional type states that elements of $A\langle r/x \rangle$ can be coerced
 267 to $A\langle r'/x \rangle$ for any r, r' , and this operation is the identity when $r = r'$. The coercion of
 268 M is written $\text{coe}_{x.A}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M)$. For example, if $M \in A\langle 0/x \rangle [\emptyset]$, then $\text{coe}_{x.A}^{0 \rightsquigarrow 1}(M) \in A\langle 1/x \rangle [\emptyset]$.

269 Moreover, $\text{coe}_{x.A}^{0 \rightsquigarrow x}(M) \in A[x]$ is a line in A whose $\langle 0/x \rangle$ face is M (because $0 = x\langle 0/x \rangle$),
 270 and whose $\langle 1/x \rangle$ face is $\text{coe}_{x.A}^{0 \rightsquigarrow 1}(M)$.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \begin{array}{c} x \\ \downarrow \\ y \end{array} & & \\
 \begin{array}{c} \xrightarrow{M} \\ \text{coe}_{x.A}^{0 \rightsquigarrow x}(M) \\ \xrightarrow{\text{coe}_{x.A}^{0 \rightsquigarrow 1}(M)} \end{array} & & \\
 & & \begin{array}{c} \xrightarrow{M} \\ \text{hcom}_A^{0 \rightsquigarrow y}(M; x=0 \hookrightarrow y.N_0, x=1 \hookrightarrow y.N_1) \\ \xrightarrow{\text{hcom}_A^{0 \rightsquigarrow 1}(M; x=0 \hookrightarrow y.N_0, x=1 \hookrightarrow y.N_1)} \end{array} \\
 & & \begin{array}{c} N_0 \quad \quad \quad N_1 \\ \downarrow \quad \quad \quad \downarrow \\ \text{hcom}_A^{0 \rightsquigarrow y}(M; x=0 \hookrightarrow y.N_0, x=1 \hookrightarrow y.N_1) \\ \downarrow \quad \quad \quad \downarrow \\ \text{hcom}_A^{0 \rightsquigarrow 1}(M; x=0 \hookrightarrow y.N_0, x=1 \hookrightarrow y.N_1) \end{array}
 \end{array}$$

271

272 Homogeneous composition is significantly more complicated, but essentially states that
 273 any open box in A (an n -cube without an interior or one of its faces) has a composite (the
 274 missing face). For example, given two lines in y , $N_0 \in A\langle 0/x \rangle[y]$ and $N_1 \in A\langle 1/x \rangle[y]$, and
 275 a line in x , $M \in A[x]$, that agrees with the y -lines when $y = 0$ ($M\langle 0/x \rangle \doteq N_\varepsilon \in A\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle[\emptyset]$
 276 for $\varepsilon \in \{0, 1\}$), we can obtain an x -line that agrees with the y -lines when $y = 1$, written
 277 $\text{hcom}_A^{0 \rightsquigarrow 1}(M; x=0 \hookrightarrow y.N_0, x=1 \hookrightarrow y.N_1)$. Moreover, we can obtain the interior of that
 278 square, its *filler*, by composing to y rather than 1. The difficulty of homogeneous composition
 279 is that we must define arbitrary open boxes, at any dimension, in a manner that commutes
 280 with substitution. We introduce *dimension context restrictions* Ξ , or sets of pairs of dimension
 281 expressions (suggestively written as equations), to describe the spatial relationship between
 282 the faces of an open box.

283 ► **Definition 12.** A context restriction $\overline{r_i = r'_i}$ is *valid* in Ψ when all r_i, r'_i are dimension
 284 expressions in Ψ , and either $r_i = r'_i$ for some i , or $r_i = r_j, r'_i = 0$, and $r'_j = 1$ for some i, j .

285 ► **Definition 13.** A restricted judgment $\mathcal{J}[\Psi \mid \overline{r_i = r'_i}]$ holds when $\mathcal{J}\psi[\Psi']$ holds for every
 286 $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$ for which $r_i\psi = r'_i\psi$ for all i .

287 Restricted judgments behave as one might expect: $\mathcal{J}[\Psi \mid \emptyset]$ if and only if $\mathcal{J}[\Psi]$,
 288 $\mathcal{J}[\Psi, x \mid x = 0]$ if and only if $\mathcal{J}\langle 0/x \rangle[\Psi]$, and $\mathcal{J}[\Psi \mid 0 = 1]$ always. Crucially, they are
 289 closed under dimension substitution: if $\mathcal{J}[\Psi \mid \Xi]$ and $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$, then $\mathcal{J}\psi[\Psi' \mid \Xi\psi]$.

290 ► **Definition 14.** $B \doteq B' \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}}[\Psi]$, presupposing $B \doteq B' \text{ type}_{\text{pre}}[\Psi]$, when for all $\psi : \Psi' \rightarrow \Psi$,
 291 the rules in Fig. 2 hold, setting $A := B\psi$ and $A' := B'\psi$.

292 Operationally, both hcom and coe evaluate their type argument and behave according
 293 to the outermost type former. For each type former, we will first show that the formation,
 294 introduction, elimination, computation, and eta rules hold; then, using those rules, we show
 295 that if its component types are Kan, then it is Kan (for example, if $A \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}}[\Psi]$ and
 296 $a : A \gg B \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}}[\Psi]$, then $(a:A) \rightarrow B \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}}[\Psi]$). The only exceptions are exact equality
 297 types $\text{Eq}_A(M, N)$ (Section 5.5), which are not generally Kan even when A is Kan.

298 These Kan operations are variants of the uniform Kan conditions first proposed by
 299 Bezem et al. [12]. In unpublished work in 2014, Licata and Brunerie [22] and Coquand
 300 [18] considered uniform Kan operations in Cartesian cubical sets, but did not succeed in
 301 defining univalent type theories based on those operations. Our Kan operations introduce
 302 two important innovations. First, we allow open boxes with sides attached along *diagonals*
 303 $x = z$, in addition to faces; this is essential to construct univalent universes (Sections 5.6
 304 and 6). Second, the validity condition requires that every box must contain at least one
 305 opposing pair of sides $x = 0$ and $x = 1$; this sharpens our canonicity results for higher
 306 inductive types (Section 5.2). We defer further comparison of Kan operations to Section 7.

$$\begin{array}{c}
\begin{array}{c}
\overline{} \\
r_i = r'_i \text{ valid } [\Psi] \\
A \doteq A' \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi] \\
M \doteq M' \in A [\Psi] \\
(\forall i, j) \quad N_i \doteq N'_j \in A [\Psi, y \mid r_i = r'_i, r_j = r'_j] \\
(\forall i) \quad N_i \langle r/y \rangle \doteq M \in A [\Psi \mid r_i = r'_i]
\end{array} \\
\hline
\text{hcom}_A^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M; r_i = r'_i \hookrightarrow y.N_i) \doteq \begin{cases} \text{hcom}_{A'}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M'; r_i = r'_i \hookrightarrow y.N'_i) \in A [\Psi] \\ M \in A [\Psi] & \text{when } r = r' \\ N_i \langle r'/y \rangle \in A [\Psi] & \text{when } r_i = r'_i \end{cases} \\
\\
\begin{array}{c}
A \doteq A' \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi, x] \quad M \doteq M' \in A \langle r/x \rangle [\Psi] \\
\hline
\text{coe}_{x.A}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M) \doteq \begin{cases} \text{coe}_{x.A'}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M') \in A \langle r'/x \rangle [\Psi] \\ M \in A \langle r/x \rangle [\Psi] & \text{when } r = r' \end{cases}
\end{array}
\end{array}$$

■ **Figure 2** Kan operations.

5 Type formers

307

308 We proceed to construct a cubical type system with booleans and the circle (as a representative
309 higher inductive type), and closed under dependent function and pair types, path types,
310 exact equality types, and univalent universes. (Our preprint [7] also includes an empty type
311 and natural numbers.) Each of these type formers is given meaning as a value-coherent
312 Ψ -PER on values, and shown to validate the appropriate rules of inference. (We focus on
313 closed-term rules, from which the open rules follow.) In this section we analyze each type
314 former separately, excepting pretype and Kan universes, which we defer to Section 6.

5.1 Booleans

315

316 There are two boolean values at every dimension: $\llbracket \text{bool} \rrbracket_{\Psi} = \{(\text{true}, \text{true}), (\text{false}, \text{false})\}$.
317 This context-indexed PER is clearly value-coherent, as the constructors are unaffected by
318 dimension substitution. The canonicity property follows directly from this definition:

319 ► **Theorem 15** (Canonicity). *If $M \in \text{bool} [\Psi]$ then $M \Downarrow V$ and $M \doteq V \in \text{bool} [\Psi]$, for
320 $V = \text{true}$ or $V = \text{false}$.*

321 **Proof.** Then $\text{Tm}(\llbracket \text{bool} \rrbracket)(M, M)$, so $M \Downarrow V$ and $\llbracket \text{bool} \rrbracket(V, V)$. By Lemma 11, $M \doteq V \in$
322 $\text{bool} [\Psi]$, and by the definition of $\llbracket \text{bool} \rrbracket$, $V = \text{true}$ or $V = \text{false}$. ◀

323 Consistency is similar: $\text{true} \doteq \text{false} \in \text{bool} [\Psi]$ implies $\llbracket \text{bool} \rrbracket(\text{true}, \text{false})$, which is impossible.

324 The rules in Fig. 3 all hold: true and false are elements, the elimination rule holds
325 essentially by Theorem 15, and the computation rules hold by Lemma 9. The Kan operations
326 of bool are identity functions, because every line in bool is degenerate.

5.2 Circle

327

328 It is tempting to define the circle as the least context-indexed PER generated by a base point
329 and a loop: $\llbracket \mathbb{S}^1 \rrbracket_{\Psi}(\text{base}, \text{base})$ and $\llbracket \mathbb{S}^1 \rrbracket_{(\Psi, x)}(\text{loop}_x, \text{loop}_x)$. Unlike bool , \mathbb{S}^1 has non-degenerate

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \overline{\text{bool type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]} \qquad \overline{\text{true} \in \text{bool} [\Psi]} \qquad \overline{\text{false} \in \text{bool} [\Psi]} \\
 \\
 \frac{b : \text{bool} \gg A \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi] \quad M \doteq M' \in \text{bool} [\Psi] \quad T \doteq T' \in A[\text{true}/b] [\Psi] \quad F \doteq F' \in A[\text{false}/b] [\Psi]}{\text{if}(M; T, F) \doteq \text{if}(M'; T', F') \in A[M/b] [\Psi]} \\
 \\
 \frac{T \in A [\Psi]}{\text{if}(\text{true}; T, F) \doteq T \in A [\Psi]} \qquad \frac{F \in A [\Psi]}{\text{if}(\text{false}; T, F) \doteq F \in A [\Psi]} \\
 \hline
 \overline{\mathbb{S}^1 \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]} \qquad \overline{\text{base} \in \mathbb{S}^1 [\Psi]} \qquad \overline{\text{loop}_r \in \mathbb{S}^1 [\Psi]} \qquad \overline{\text{loop}_\varepsilon \doteq \text{base} \in \mathbb{S}^1 [\Psi]} \\
 \\
 \frac{c : \mathbb{S}^1 \gg A \doteq A' \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi] \quad M \doteq M' \in \mathbb{S}^1 [\Psi] \quad P \doteq P' \in A[\text{base}/c] [\Psi] \quad L \doteq L' \in A[\text{loop}_x/c] [\Psi, x] \quad (\forall \varepsilon) L\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle \doteq P \in A[\text{base}/c] [\Psi]}{\mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c,A}(M; P, x.L) \doteq \mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c,A'}(M'; P', x.L') \in A[M/c] [\Psi]} \\
 \\
 \frac{P \in B [\Psi]}{\mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c,A}(\text{base}; P, x.L) \doteq P \in B [\Psi]} \qquad \frac{L \in B [\Psi, x] \quad (\forall \varepsilon) L\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle \doteq P \in B\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle [\Psi]}{\mathbb{S}^1\text{-elim}_{c,A}(\text{loop}_r; P, x.L) \doteq L\langle r/x \rangle \in B\langle r/x \rangle [\Psi]}
 \end{array}$$

■ **Figure 3** Boolean and circle type.

lines, so we must explicitly add composites of open boxes to \mathbb{S}^1 if we want it to be Kan. We therefore equip \mathbb{S}^1 with the following *free* Kan structure (writing ξ_i to abbreviate $r_i = r'_i$):

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \text{hcom}_{\mathbb{S}^1}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M; \overrightarrow{\xi_i \hookrightarrow y.N_i}) \mapsto_{\text{ob}} M \qquad \text{if } r = r' \\
 \text{hcom}_{\mathbb{S}^1}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M; \overrightarrow{\xi_i \hookrightarrow y.N_i}) \mapsto N_j\langle r'/y \rangle \qquad \text{if } r \neq r', r_j = r'_j, r_i \neq r'_i \text{ for } i < j \\
 \text{hcom}_{\mathbb{S}^1}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M; \overrightarrow{\xi_i \hookrightarrow y.N_i}) \text{ val} \qquad \text{if } r \neq r', r_i \neq r'_i \\
 \text{coe}_{x.\mathbb{S}^1}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M) \mapsto_{\text{ob}} M
 \end{array}$$

These operational semantics satisfy the equations in Fig. 2: when $r = r'$ in hcom , line (1) applies; when $r_i = r'_i$, line (2) applies; and in every hcom , one of lines (1–3) applies. Disequalities are needed in lines (2–3) to maintain determinacy. To account for value hcom s, we add a clause that $\llbracket \mathbb{S}^1 \rrbracket_{\Psi}(\text{hcom}_{\mathbb{S}^1}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M; \overrightarrow{\xi_i \hookrightarrow y.N_i}), \text{hcom}_{\mathbb{S}^1}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M'; \overrightarrow{\xi_i \hookrightarrow y.N'_i}))$ whenever these are values and satisfy the premises of the hcom rule in Fig. 2. Value-coherence of $\llbracket \mathbb{S}^1 \rrbracket$ follows from the operational semantics of $\text{hcom}_{\mathbb{S}^1}$ and the premises of the hcom typing rule. By limiting the Kan operations to valid context restrictions, we ensure that $\llbracket \mathbb{S}^1 \rrbracket_{\emptyset}$ contains no hcom s—there are no valid restrictions at dimension \emptyset in which $r_i \neq r'_i$ for all i .

The rules for the circle can be found in Fig. 3, including the eliminator mapping from \mathbb{S}^1 into any Kan type with a point P and line $x.L$ satisfying $L\langle 0/x \rangle \doteq L\langle 1/x \rangle \doteq P$. The eliminator sends base to P , loop_y to $L\langle y/x \rangle$, and $\text{hcom}_{\mathbb{S}^1}$ to a Kan composition in the target type. (See our preprint [7] for the latter operational semantics step, which requires a derived notion of *heterogeneous* composition in which the type varies across the open box.) It is therefore essential that the target type is Kan.

5.3 Dependent function and pair types

When $A \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$ and $a : A \gg B \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$,

$$\llbracket (a:A) \rightarrow B \rrbracket_{\psi} = \{(\lambda a.N, \lambda a.N') \mid a : A\psi \gg N \doteq N' \in B\psi [\Psi']\}$$

$$\llbracket (a:A) \times B \rrbracket_{\psi} = \{(\langle M, N \rangle, \langle M', N' \rangle) \mid M \doteq M' \in A\psi [\Psi'] \wedge N \doteq N' \in B\psi[M/a] [\Psi']\}$$

Rules for dependent function and dependent pair types are listed in Fig. 4, including judgmental η principles. The Kan operations for dependent function types are:

$$\text{hcom}_{(a:A) \rightarrow B}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M; \overrightarrow{\xi_i \hookrightarrow y.N_i}) \mapsto_{\text{app}} \lambda a. \text{hcom}_B^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(\text{app}(M, a); \overrightarrow{\xi_i \hookrightarrow y.\text{app}(N_i, a)})$$

$$\text{coe}_{x.(a:A) \rightarrow B}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(M) \mapsto_{\text{app}} \lambda a. \text{coe}_{x.B[\text{coe}_{x.A}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(a)/a]}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(\text{app}(M, \text{coe}_{x.A}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(a)))$$

If $A \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]$ and $a : A \gg B \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]$, then by the above steps, and the introduction, elimination, and eta rules, $(a:A) \rightarrow B \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]$ (and similarly [7], $(a:A) \times B \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]$).

5.4 Path types

Whenever $A \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi, x]$ and $P_{\varepsilon} \doteq P'_{\varepsilon} \in A\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle [\Psi]$ for $\varepsilon \in \{0, 1\}$, $\llbracket \text{Path}_{x.A}(P_0, P_1) \rrbracket_{\psi} = \{(\langle x \rangle M, \langle x \rangle M') \mid M \doteq M' \in A\psi [\Psi', x] \wedge \forall \varepsilon. (M\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle \doteq P_{\varepsilon}\psi \in A\psi\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle [\Psi'])\}$. That is, paths are abstracted lines with specified endpoints, and dimension abstraction $(\langle x \rangle M)$ and application $(M@r)$ pack and unpack them. Rules for path types are listed in Fig. 4; once again, Kan operations (see [7]) ensure that $\text{Path}_{x.A}(P_0, P_1) \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]$ when $A \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi, x]$.

Note that, while the identity type is necessary in homotopy type theory to define all path structure, in this setting the path type merely internalizes a preexisting judgmental notion of paths. For Kan types A , the homotopy-type-theoretic elimination principle for $\text{Id}_A(M, N)$ is definable, but as in Cohen et al. [17], its computation rule holds only up to a path.

5.5 Exact equality types

Whenever $A \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$, $M \in A [\Psi]$, and $N \in A [\Psi]$, we have $\llbracket \text{Eq}_A(M, N) \rrbracket_{\psi} = \{(\star, \star) \mid M\psi \doteq N\psi \in A\psi [\Psi']\}$. That is, $\text{Eq}_A(M, N)$ is (uniquely) inhabited if and only if $M \doteq N \in A [\Psi]$, and therefore equality reflection holds. Rules for equality types are listed in Fig. 4.

Unlike the previous cases, $\text{Eq}_A(M, N)$ is not necessarily Kan when A is Kan, because coercion in $\text{Eq}_A(M, N)$ implies uniqueness of identity proofs in A . We allow $\text{Eq}_A(M, N) \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]$ when A is *discrete Kan* [7], roughly, contains only degenerate paths (for example, $A = \text{bool}$).

5.6 Univalence

Voevodsky's univalence axiom [31] concerns a notion of *type equivalence* $\text{Equiv}(A, B)$:

$$\text{isContr}(C) := C \times ((c:C) \rightarrow (c':C) \rightarrow \text{Path}_{_C}(c, c'))$$

$$\text{Equiv}(A, B) := (f:A \rightarrow B) \times ((b:B) \rightarrow \text{isContr}((a:A) \times \text{Path}_{_B}(\text{app}(f, a), b)))$$

Essentially, $\text{Equiv}(A, B)$ if there is a map $A \rightarrow B$ such that the (homotopy) preimage in A of any point in B is contractible (has exactly one point up to homotopy). In homotopy type theory, univalence states that $\text{idtoequiv} : \text{Id}_{\mathcal{U}}(A, B) \rightarrow \text{Equiv}(A, B)$ (definable in intensional type theory) is itself an equivalence. By a theorem of Licata [21], univalence is equivalent to the existence of a map $\text{ua} : \text{Equiv}(A, B) \rightarrow \text{Id}_{\mathcal{U}}(A, B)$ and a homotopy $\text{ua}_{\beta}(E)$ between the functions underlying the equivalences E and $\text{idtoequiv}(\text{ua}(E))$.

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \frac{A \doteq A' \text{ type}_{\kappa} [\Psi] \quad a : A \gg B \doteq B' \text{ type}_{\kappa} [\Psi]}{(a:A) \rightarrow B \doteq (a:A') \rightarrow B' \text{ type}_{\kappa} [\Psi]} \quad \frac{a : A \gg M \doteq M' \in B [\Psi]}{\lambda a.M \doteq \lambda a.M' \in (a:A) \rightarrow B [\Psi]} \\
 \frac{M \doteq M' \in (a:A) \rightarrow B [\Psi] \quad N \doteq N' \in A [\Psi]}{\text{app}(M, N) \doteq \text{app}(M', N') \in B[N/a] [\Psi]} \quad \frac{a : A \gg M \in B [\Psi] \quad N \in A [\Psi]}{\text{app}(\lambda a.M, N) \doteq M[N/a] \in B[N/a] [\Psi]} \\
 \frac{M \in (a:A) \rightarrow B [\Psi]}{M \doteq \lambda a.\text{app}(M, a) \in (a:A) \rightarrow B [\Psi]} \\
 \hline
 \frac{A \doteq A' \text{ type}_{\kappa} [\Psi] \quad a : A \gg B \doteq B' \text{ type}_{\kappa} [\Psi]}{(a:A) \times B \doteq (a:A') \times B' \text{ type}_{\kappa} [\Psi]} \\
 \frac{M \doteq M' \in A [\Psi] \quad N \doteq N' \in B[M/a] [\Psi]}{\langle M, N \rangle \doteq \langle M', N' \rangle \in (a:A) \times B [\Psi]} \quad \frac{P \doteq P' \in (a:A) \times B [\Psi]}{\text{fst}(P) \doteq \text{fst}(P') \in A [\Psi]} \\
 \frac{P \doteq P' \in (a:A) \times B [\Psi]}{\text{snd}(P) \doteq \text{snd}(P') \in B[\text{fst}(P)/a] [\Psi]} \quad \frac{M \in A [\Psi]}{\text{fst}(\langle M, N \rangle) \doteq M \in A [\Psi]} \\
 \frac{N \in B [\Psi]}{\text{snd}(\langle M, N \rangle) \doteq N \in B [\Psi]} \quad \frac{P \in (a:A) \times B [\Psi]}{P \doteq \langle \text{fst}(P), \text{snd}(P) \rangle \in (a:A) \times B [\Psi]} \\
 \hline
 \frac{A \doteq A' \text{ type}_{\kappa} [\Psi, x] \quad (\forall \varepsilon) P_{\varepsilon} \doteq P'_{\varepsilon} \in A\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle [\Psi]}{\text{Path}_{x.A}(P_0, P_1) \doteq \text{Path}_{x.A'}(P'_0, P'_1) \text{ type}_{\kappa} [\Psi]} \quad \frac{M \doteq M' \in A [\Psi, x] \quad (\forall \varepsilon) M\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle \doteq P_{\varepsilon} \in A\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle [\Psi]}{\langle x \rangle M \doteq \langle x \rangle M' \in \text{Path}_{x.A}(P_0, P_1) [\Psi]} \\
 \frac{M \doteq M' \in \text{Path}_{x.A}(P_0, P_1) [\Psi]}{M @ r \doteq M' @ r \in A\langle r/x \rangle [\Psi]} \quad \frac{M \in \text{Path}_{x.A}(P_0, P_1) [\Psi]}{M @ \varepsilon \doteq P_{\varepsilon} \in A\langle \varepsilon/x \rangle [\Psi]} \\
 \frac{M \in A [\Psi, x]}{\langle x \rangle M @ r \doteq M\langle r/x \rangle \in A\langle r/x \rangle [\Psi]} \quad \frac{M \in \text{Path}_{x.A}(P_0, P_1) [\Psi]}{M \doteq \langle x \rangle (M @ x) \in \text{Path}_{x.A}(P_0, P_1) [\Psi]} \\
 \hline
 \frac{A \doteq A' \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi] \quad M \doteq M' \in A [\Psi] \quad N \doteq N' \in A [\Psi]}{\text{Eq}_A(M, N) \doteq \text{Eq}_{A'}(M', N') \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]} \quad \frac{M \doteq N \in A [\Psi]}{\star \in \text{Eq}_A(M, N) [\Psi]} \\
 \frac{E \in \text{Eq}_A(M, N) [\Psi]}{M \doteq N \in A [\Psi]} \quad \frac{E \in \text{Eq}_A(M, N) [\Psi]}{E \doteq \star \in \text{Eq}_A(M, N) [\Psi]}
 \end{array}$$

■ **Figure 4** Dependent functions, dependent pairs, paths, and exact equalities.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
\begin{array}{ccc}
M & & \\
\downarrow F & \dashrightarrow \text{Vin}_x(M, N) & \\
\text{app}(F, M) \doteq N\langle 0/x \rangle & \xrightarrow{N} & N\langle 1/x \rangle
\end{array} & \in & \begin{array}{ccc}
A & & \\
\downarrow F & \dashrightarrow \mathbf{V}_x(A, B, \langle F, _ \rangle) & \\
B\langle 0/x \rangle & \xrightarrow{B} & B\langle 1/x \rangle
\end{array}
\end{array}$$

391

392 We achieve both conditions by defining a new type former “ \mathbf{V} ”, such that whenever
393 $A \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi, x \mid x = 0]$, $B \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi, x]$, and $E \in \text{Equiv}(A, B) [\Psi, x \mid x = 0]$, $\mathbf{V}_x(A, B, E)$
394 is a type with faces $A\langle 0/x \rangle$ and $B\langle 1/x \rangle$, whose elements are pairs of $N \in B [\Psi, x]$ and
395 $M \in A\langle 0/x \rangle [\Psi]$ such that E sends M to exactly $N\langle 0/x \rangle$. (Bezem et al. [13] employ the
396 same approach in their “ \mathbf{G} ” types.) We then define:

$$397 \quad \text{idtoequiv} := \lambda p. \text{coe}_{x. \text{Equiv}(A, p @ x)}^{0 \rightsquigarrow 1} (\langle \lambda a. a, \text{idisequiv} \rangle)$$

$$398 \quad \text{ua} := \lambda e. \langle x \rangle \mathbf{V}_x(A, B, e)$$

$$399 \quad \text{ua}_\beta := \lambda e. \lambda a. \langle x \rangle \text{coe}_{x. B}^{x \rightsquigarrow 1} (\text{app}(\text{fst}(e), a))$$

401 where idisequiv is a proof that the identity function is an equivalence, and ua_β relies on coercion
402 across an equivalence: $\text{coe}_{x. \mathbf{V}_x(A, B, E)}^{0 \rightsquigarrow r'}(M) \mapsto_{\text{id}} \text{Vin}_{r'}(M, \text{coe}_{x. B}^{0 \rightsquigarrow r'}(\text{app}(\text{fst}(E\langle 0/x \rangle), M)))$.

403 When implementing $\text{coe}_{x. \mathbf{V}_x(A, B, E)}^{y \rightsquigarrow r'}(M)$, we make essential use of an open box with a
404 diagonal $y = r'$ side, to ensure coercion $y \rightsquigarrow y$ is the identity. (See our preprint [7] for this
405 and the other Kan operations.) We have formalized the full proof of univalence for our
406 system in REDPRL (see <https://git.io/vFjUQ>).

407 6 Universes

Finally, we define two cumulative hierarchies of universes, $\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{pre}}$ and $\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}$, classifying pretypes
and Kan types respectively, each closed under the appropriate type formers, and satisfying:

$$\frac{}{\mathcal{U}_j^\kappa \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]} \quad \frac{A \doteq A' \in \mathcal{U}_j^\kappa [\Psi]}{A \doteq A' \text{ type}_\kappa [\Psi]} \quad \frac{A \doteq A' \in \mathcal{U}_j^\kappa [\Psi]}{A \doteq A' \in \mathcal{U}_{j+1}^\kappa [\Psi]} \quad \frac{A \doteq A' \in \mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]}{A \doteq A' \in \mathcal{U}_j^{\text{pre}} [\Psi]}$$

408 In order for our type theory to be a suitable setting for synthetic homotopy theory, it is
409 essential that $\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}$ is Kan; this is needed, for example, to define maps $\mathbb{S}^1 \rightarrow \mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}$ used in
410 the calculation of the fundamental group of the circle [29]. As with \mathbb{S}^1 , universes are not
411 automatically Kan, so we equip both with free Kan structure analogous to $\text{hcom}_{\mathbb{S}^1}$.

412 Because elements of $\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{pre}}$ are pretypes, we must ensure $\text{hcom}_{\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{pre}}}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(A; \xi_i \hookrightarrow y. B_i) \text{ type}_{\text{pre}} [\Psi]$
413 for pretypes A, \overline{B}_i satisfying the appropriate equations. We define these types to be empty.
414 Similarly, we require $\text{hcom}_{\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}}^{r \rightsquigarrow r'}(A; \xi_i \hookrightarrow y. B_i) \text{ type}_{\text{Kan}} [\Psi]$ for Kan types A, \overline{B}_i satisfying
415 the appropriate equations. In order to equip $\text{hcom}_{\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}}$ with Kan operations, we define its
416 elements to be open boxes consisting of an element $M \in A [\Psi]$, and a family of elements
417 $N_i \in B_i\langle r'/y \rangle [\Psi \mid \xi_i]$ such that $\text{coe}_{y. B_i}^{r' \rightsquigarrow r}(N_i) \doteq M \in A [\Psi \mid \xi_i]$. The diagram below illustrates
418 an element of $H := \text{hcom}_{\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}}^{0 \rightsquigarrow 1}(A; x = 0 \hookrightarrow y. B_0, x = 1 \hookrightarrow y. B_1)$.

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
\begin{array}{ccc}
\text{coe}_{y. B_0}^{1 \rightsquigarrow 0}(N_0) & \xrightarrow{M} & \text{coe}_{y. B_1}^{1 \rightsquigarrow 0}(N_1) \\
\downarrow \text{box}^{0 \rightsquigarrow 1}(M; N_0, N_1) & & \downarrow \\
N_0 & \dashrightarrow & N_1
\end{array} & \in & \begin{array}{ccc}
\cdot & \xrightarrow{A} & \cdot \\
B_0 \downarrow & H & \downarrow B_1 \\
B_0\langle 1/y \rangle & \dashrightarrow & B_1\langle 1/y \rangle
\end{array}
\end{array}$$

419

420 When $r = r'$, $H \doteq A$ and $\text{box} \doteq M$. When ξ_i holds, $H \doteq B_i\langle r'/y \rangle$ and $\text{box} \doteq N_i$. These agree
 421 when both $r = r'$ and ξ_i hold: $A \doteq B_i\langle r'/y \rangle = B_i\langle r'/y \rangle$ and $M \doteq \text{coe}_{y.B_i}^{r' \rightsquigarrow r}(N_i) \doteq N_i$.

422 For the complete definition of $\text{hcom}_{\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}}$ and its Kan operations, see our preprint [7]. Coer-
 423 cision requires heterogeneous compositions that may not be valid in the sense of Definition 12,
 424 but which are nevertheless definable in our setting. (Such compositions are closely related to
 425 the $\forall i.\varphi$ operation of Cohen et al. [17].) Finally, to ensure these Kan operations agree with
 426 those of A when $r = r'$, we once again make essential use of open boxes with diagonal sides.

427 Intuitively, each universe $[\mathcal{U}_j^\kappa]$ is defined as the least context-indexed PER closed under all
 428 type formers yielding κ -types, that are present in a type theory with j universes. Of course,
 429 typehood and membership are mutually defined ($\text{Eq}_A(M, N)$ $\text{type}_{\text{pre}}[\Psi]$ when $M, N \in A[\Psi]$),
 430 so the values of each universe depend on both the names *and* semantics of types.

431 Following Allen [1], we make this construction precise by introducing *candidate cubical type*
 432 *systems*, relations $\tau(\Psi, A_0, B_0, \varphi)$ as in Definition 4 without any conditions of functionality,
 433 symmetry, and so forth. Candidate cubical type systems form a complete lattice when
 434 ordered by inclusion, so we define each universe as the least fixed point of a monotone
 435 operator (guaranteed to exist by the Knaster–Tarski fixed point theorem).

436 For each κ , we define an operator $F^\kappa(\tau^u, \tau^{\text{pre}}, \tau^{\text{Kan}})$ whose arguments are candidate
 437 cubical type systems defining (1) all smaller universes, (2) pretype formers, and (3) Kan type
 438 formers, following the meanings given in Section 5. These operators are monotone because
 439 $\text{Tm}(-)$ is monotone, and hence the judgments defined in Section 3 are monotone in τ .

440 Then construct the simultaneous least fixed points $\tau_i^\kappa = F^\kappa(\tau_i^u, \tau_i^{\text{pre}}, \tau_i^{\text{Kan}})$ for each $i \geq 0$,
 441 where τ_i^u defines each $[\mathcal{U}_j^\kappa]$ (for $j < i$) as $\tau_i^u(\Psi, \mathcal{U}_j^\kappa, \mathcal{U}_j^\kappa, \{(A_0, B_0) \mid \tau_j^\kappa(\Psi, A_0, B_0, _)\})$, that
 442 is, the typehood relation of τ_j^κ . We establish by induction that each τ_i^κ is in fact a cubical
 443 type system in the sense of Definition 4, and each is closed under the appropriate type
 444 formers. We take the “outermost” cubical type system τ_ω^{pre} (containing universes for all j)
 445 as our model, validating every rule presented in this paper. This construction requires no
 446 classical reasoning, and in fact Anand and Rahli [4] carry out Allen’s original Nuprl semantics
 447 inside the Coq proof assistant using inductive types rather than fixed points.

448 7 Conclusion and Related Work

449 We have constructed a two-level type theory with fibrant, univalent universes closed under
 450 dependent function, dependent pair, and path types. The non-fibrant (pretype) level
 451 includes these type formers as well as exact (strict) equality types with equality reflection.
 452 Following the tradition of the Nuprl computational type theory [2] and Martin-Löf’s meaning
 453 explanations, our types are relations over untyped programs equipped with an operational
 454 semantics, and thereby satisfy canonicity (Theorem 15) by construction. Full details and
 455 proofs are available in our associated preprint [7]. An early version of our cubical PER
 456 semantics appeared in Angiuli et al. [6], but for a type theory including neither univalence,
 457 nor universes, nor exact equality, and equipped with less expressive Kan operations.

458 We are currently implementing the REDPRL [28] proof assistant based on this type
 459 theory. REDPRL implements a proof refinement sequent calculus in the style of Nuprl,
 460 rather than the natural deduction rules presented in this paper; we view it as the extension
 461 of core Nuprl to a higher-dimensional notion of program.

462 Cavallo and Harper [16] define a schema of higher inductive types constructible in the
 463 semantic framework we describe. Their *fiber family* type validates the rules of the homotopy-
 464 type-theoretic identity type (strictly, unlike path types). Our type theory, extended with
 465 fiber families, constitutes a fully computational model of univalent intensional type theory.

7.1 Two-level type theories

Voevodsky’s HTS [33] extends homotopy type theory with exact equality types satisfying equality reflection. Our semantics validate the rules of HTS, excepting resizing rules. More recently, Altenkirch et al. [3] have proposed a two-level type theory with two intensional identity types: one to internalize paths, and the other satisfying uniqueness of identity proofs and function extensionality, but not equality reflection. Both theories consider all strict equality types non-fibrant, and neither theory satisfies canonicity, because univalence (and in the latter, uniqueness of identity proofs and function extensionality) are added as axioms that do not compute.

Our contributions to two-level type theory are twofold: (1) we define the first two-level type theory satisfying canonicity, and (2) by introducing the notion of discrete Kan types (see our preprint [7]), we obtain a type theory in which some exact equality types are fibrant.

7.2 Cubical type theories

Our use of cubical structure and uniform Kan conditions traces back to the Bezem et al. [12] cubical set model of type theory, which has only face and degeneracy maps. The cubical type theory of Cohen et al. [17] uses a De Morgan algebra of cubes containing not only face, diagonal, and degeneracy maps, but also connection and reversal maps.

From a proof-theoretic perspective, our semantics can be seen as *cubical logical relations* suitable for proving canonicity (and consistency) for a set of inference rules. In fact, Huber’s canonicity argument [19] for Cohen et al. [17] resembles our PER semantics in various ways, most notably his “expansion lemma,” which is closely related to Lemma 10.

The fibrant fragment of our system constitutes the second univalent type theory with canonicity—after the cubical type theory of Cohen et al. [17]—and the first to employ Cartesian cubical structure. Licata and Brunerie [22] and Coquand [18] previously considered Cartesian cubes, but did not succeed in defining univalent universes. However, neither considered Kan operations with diagonal sides $x = z$, which figure prominently in our constructions of both univalence and fibrant universes. Diagonal sides also permit us to define connections in Kan types, although we remain unable to define an involutive reversal operation, as in Cohen et al. [17].

In ongoing work with Brunerie, Coquand, and Licata [5], we are investigating proof-theoretic and category-theoretic aspects of “diagonal” Kan composition. That project includes an Agda formalization of the Kan operations of various type formers, including a variant of the “Glue” types employed by Cohen et al. [17] to obtain both univalence and fibrancy of the universe. Here we decompose Glue types into \mathbf{V} and $\mathbf{hcom}_{\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}}$, simplifying \mathbf{ua}_{β} .

Unlike prior Kan conditions, we restrict to open boxes containing a pair of sides $x = 0, x = 1$ (Definition 12), in order to trivialize all Kan compositions at dimension zero. Thus we obtain a stronger canonicity result for the circle than Cohen et al. [17]: if $M \in \mathbb{S}^1[\emptyset]$ then $M \Downarrow \mathbf{base}$. We believe this property to be valuable for programming applications of cubical type theory, by allowing higher inductive types to function as observables at dimension zero. The tradeoff is that we must develop additional machinery to define coercion in $\mathbf{hcom}_{\mathcal{U}_j^{\text{Kan}}}$, essentially because the $\forall i.\varphi$ operation of Cohen et al. [17] does not preserve box validity.

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