THE PERIPHERALITY OF IRREDUCIBLE ELEMENTS OF LATTICE

J. W. Lea
THE PERIPHERALITY OF IRREDUCIBLE ELEMENTS OF A LATTICE

J. W. Lea, Jr.

Irreducible elements, which are not cutpoints, and meet complemented elements are peripheral in certain compact lattices and semilattices.

The purpose of this note is to extend the results of A. D. Wallace [12]; i.e., to show that meet irreducible elements and meet complemented elements are peripheral in certain topological lattices and semilattices. Meet irreducible elements have played a key role in embedding theorems for topological lattices obtained by K. A. Baker and A. R. Stralka [2] and by the author [10].

1. Preliminaries. If \( S \) is a semilattice and \( x \in S \), then \( M(x) = \{ y \in S : x \leq y \} \); \( L(x) \) is defined dually; if \( x \leq y \), then

\[
[x, y] = M(x) \cap L(y)
\]

An element \( x \) in a semilattice \( S \) is meet irreducible if \( a, b \in S \) and \( x = a \land b \) imply \( x = a \) or \( x = b \). We denote the set of all meet irreducible elements of \( S \) by \( MI(S) \). If \( S \) has a 0, an element \( x \in S \) is meet complemented if there is a \( y \in S \) such that \( y \neq 0 \) and \( x \land y = 0 \). The width \( w(X) \) of a partially ordered set \( X \) is the maximum number of elements in a set of incomparable elements.

A topological semilattice \( S \) is said to have small semilattices at \( x \) if \( x \) has a basis of neighborhoods which are subsemilattices of \( S \); \( S \) is a Lawson semilattice if it has small semilattices at every point.

Basic definitions, notations, and properties of Alexander cohomology and codimension may be found in [11] and [4]. The point \( x \in X \), a topological space, is marginal in a regular space \( X \) if and only if for any open set \( U \) containing \( x \), there exists an open set \( V \) containing \( x \) and contained in \( U \) such that the natural homomorphism \( H^*(X) \to H^*(X \setminus V) \) is an isomorphism [8, Th. 1.3]. A point \( x \in X \), a topological space, is peripheral if for any open set \( U \) containing \( x \), there exists an open set \( V \) containing \( x \) and contained in \( U \) such that the homomorphism \( i^*: H^*(X, X \setminus V) \to H^*(X, X \setminus U) \) induced by the inclusion mapping \( i \) is the trivial or zero homomorphism. A point is inner if it is not peripheral.

2. Peripheral elements. J. D. Lawson and B. Madison [9, Th. 3.2] have proved that cutpoints of compact, connected spaces are
inner points. This result and Theorem 2.1 locate all the meet irreducible elements of a semilattice.

**THEOREM 2.1.** Let $S$ be a compact, connected, locally connected Lawson semilattice. If $p \in S$ is meet irreducible and is not a cutpoint of $S$, then $p$ is marginal in $S$.

**Proof.** Let $p \in U$, an open subset of $S$. Since $p$ is not a cutpoint of $S$, it is known [14, III 4.15] that there exists an open set $V$ containing $p$ such that $V \subset U$ and $S \setminus V$ is connected. If $x, y \in S \setminus \{p\}$, then $x \land y \in S \setminus \{p\}$ because $p$ is meet irreducible. Thus $S \setminus \{p\}$ is a locally compact Lawson semilattice. Hence there exists a compact subsemilattice $W \subset S \setminus \{p\}$ such that $S \setminus V \subset W$ [6, Lemma 5.2]. Since $S \setminus V$ is connected, the closed semilattice $B$ generated by $S \setminus V$ is a compact, connected subsemilattice of $W$; $B$ is acyclic [13]; thus $H^*(S) \to H^*(B)$ is an isomorphism. Since $S \setminus V \subset B \subset W \subset S \setminus \{p\}$, we have $p \in S \setminus B \subset V \subset U$. Therefore $p$ is marginal in $S$ and hence peripheral in $S$ [8, Th. 1.8].

**COROLLARY 2.2.** Let $L$ be a compact, connected topological lattice of finite codimension. If $p \in L$ is not a cutpoint of $L$ and $p$ is either meet irreducible or join irreducible, then $p$ is marginal in $L$.

**Proof.** Since $L$ is compact and connected, its breadth is equal to its codimension [7, Cor. 2.4]. Hence $L$ is a Lawson semilattice with respect to either $\lor$ or $\land$ [7, Th. 1.1]. Finally, $L$ is locally connected [1, Th. 2]; therefore the conclusion follows from Theorem 2.1.

Peripheral elements need not belong to $(MI(L) \cup JJ(L))^*$. Examples may be found in $I^3$, the unit cube.

**THEOREM 2.3.** Let $S$ be a compact, connected, locally connected topological semilattice with 1. If $p \in S$ and $M(p)^\circ = \emptyset$, then $M(p)$ is contained in the set of peripheral elements of $L$.

**Proof.** We define $F : S \times S \to S$ by $F(x, y) = x \land y$ for all $x, y \in S$. Then $F$ is continuous and $F(1, x) = x$ for all $x \in S$. If $s \in M(p)$ and $s$ is an inner point of $S$, then there exists an open set $U$ containing 1 such that for each $u \in U$ there is a $v \in S$ with $u \land v = s$ [8, Th. 3.4]. This implies $U \subset M(s) \subset M(p)$ so that $M(p)^\circ \neq \emptyset$ contrary to hypothesis. Thus $s$ is peripheral in $S$; since $s$ was an
arbitrary element of $M(p)$, $M(p)$ consists entirely of peripheral elements of $S$.

As noted above a compact, connected topological lattice $L$ is locally connected and has a 1; thus if $M(p)^\circ = \emptyset$ in such a lattice, then $M(p)$ consists of peripheral elements of $L$.

The set of peripheral elements of a topological space need not be closed [8, p. 261]. However, we have the following.

**Corollary 2.4.** Let $L$ be a compact, connected topological lattice of finite codimension. If $A = \{x \in L: M(x)^\circ = \emptyset\}$, then each element of $A^*$ is peripheral in $L$.

**Proof.** Let $x \in A^*$ and suppose that $x$ is an inner point of $L$. Let $\{x_\alpha\}$ be a net in $A$ which converges to $x$. Then $\{x_\alpha \vee x\}$ also converges to $x$, and since $M(x_\alpha \vee x) \subseteq M(x_\alpha)$, we must have

$$M(x_\alpha \vee x)^\circ = \emptyset.$$  

Thus $\{x_\alpha \vee x\} \subseteq A$. By Theorem 2.3 and our assumption that $x$ is inner, $M(x)^\circ \neq \emptyset$. Since the codimension of $L$ is finite we may choose an inner point $y$ of $L$ such that $y \in M(x)^\circ$ [8, Th. 2.6]; thus $y$ is also an inner point of $M(x)$ [8, Th. 1.4]. Since $x$ is the zero of $M(x)$ and $y$ is inner in $M(x)$, it follows from the proof of Theorem 2.3 that there must be an open subset $U$ of $M(x)$ which contains $x$ and such that $u \in U$ implies $u \leq y$. The net $\{x_\alpha \vee x\}$ converges to $x$ and $\{x_\alpha \vee x\} \subseteq M(x)$; therefore there exists an $\alpha$ such that $x_\alpha \vee x \in U$. Hence $x_\alpha \vee x \leq y$; therefore $y \in M(x_\alpha \vee x)$ which implies

$$M(y) \subseteq M(x_\alpha \vee x).$$ 

But $M(y)^\circ \subseteq M(y) \subseteq M(x_\alpha \vee x)$ and $M(y)^\circ \neq \emptyset$ since $y$ is an inner point of $L$. Thus $M(x_\alpha \vee x)^\circ \neq \emptyset$ contrary to $x_\alpha \vee x \in A$. This contradiction completes the proof.

The set $A^*$ of Corollary 2.4 has some interesting properties not necessarily held by either the set of all peripheral elements or by the set of all meet irreducible elements of a lattice.

**Proposition 2.5.** Let $L$ and $A^*$ be as in Corollary 2.4.

1. $x \leq y$ and $x \in A^*$ imply $y \in A^*$.
2. $A^*$ is connected.
3. If the breadth of $L$, $b(L)$, is two then $A^*$ consists of meet irreducible elements of $L$.
4. If $b(L) = 2$ and $w(MI(L)) = n$, then $A^*$ is the union of at most $n$ compact, connected chains.
(5) If \( A^* \) is a sublattice of \( L \), then \( A^* = M(\bigwedge A^*) \) and \( b(A^*) = cd(A^*) < b(L) = cd(L) \).

**Proof.** (1) Clearly \( A \) is an increasing set; hence \( A^* \) is also.

(2) For each \( x \in A^* \), \( M(x) \) is a connected subset of \( A^* \) which contains 1. Thus \( A^* \) is connected.

(3) Let \( x \in A^* \). Since \( M(x) \subseteq A^* \) and \( b(L) = 2 \), \( b(M(x)) = cd(M(x)) = 1 \) [8, Th. 3.2]. Thus \( x = a \land b \) implies \( x = a \) or \( x = b \).

(4) Since \( A^* \subseteq M(L) \), \( w(A^*) \leq n \). Hence by Dilworth's theorem [5, Th. 1.1], \( A^* \) is the union of \( n \) or fewer chains. These chains may be chosen to be compact and connected.

(5) If \( A^* \) is a sublattice of \( L \), then \( z \in A^* \) belongs to \( A^* \) and \( A^* = M(z) \). As noted above \( b(A^*) = cd(A^*) < cd(L) = b(L) \).

If \( b(L) > 2 \), then \( M(x) \subseteq A^* \) need not imply \( M(x) \) is a chain; examples may be found in \( I^3 \), the unit cube.

Let \( L = I^3 \{(x, y): 0 < x < 1/4, 3/4 < y < 1 \} \). Then \( L \) is a compact, connected, distributive topological lattice of breadth two and \( A^* \) is a proper subset of \( M(L) \).

**Example 2.6.** Let

\[
L = \{(x_i): 0 \leq x_i \leq 1\} \cup \{(x_i): -1 \leq x_i \leq 0\} \subseteq \prod_{i=1}^{\infty} R_i,
\]

\( R_i \) the set of real numbers for \( i = 1, 2, \ldots \). With the order and topology inherited from \( \prod_{i=1}^{\infty} R_i \), i.e., \( (x_i) \leq (y_i) \) if and only if \( x_i \leq y_i \) for \( i = 1, 2, \ldots \), \( L \) is a compact, connected topological lattice. Since \( p = (p_i) \) with \( p_i = 0 \) for \( i = 1, 2, \ldots \) is a cutpoint of \( L \), \( p \) is an inner point of \( L \). Any \( (x_i) \in L \) with \( 0 < x_i \leq 1 \) for infinitely many \( i \) has the property that \( M((x_i)) = 0 \) is empty. Thus

\[
p \in \{(x_i): M((x_i)) = \emptyset\}^*.
\]

**Theorem 2.7.** Let \( L \) be a compact, connected topological lattice. If \( a, b \in L \) and \( a \) is a meet complement for \( b \), then \([0, a]\) and \([0, b]\) are contained in the set of peripheral elements of \( L \).

**Proof.** We define \( F: L \times L \to L \) by \( F(x, y) = x \lor y \) for all \( x, y \in L \). Then \( F \) is continuous and \( F(0, y) = y \) for all \( y \in L \). Let \( x \in [0, a] \setminus \{0\}; \) then \( x \lor b \leq a \lor b = 0 \) which implies \( x \lor b = 0 \).

If \( x \) is not peripheral in \( L \), then there exists an open set \( U \) containing \( 0 \) such that for each \( s \in U \) there is a \( t \in L \) for which \( s \lor t = x \) [8, Th. 3.4]. Since \( [0, b] = b \lor L \), it is connected; thus \( U \cap (0, b) \neq \emptyset \).

Let \( s \in U \cap (0, b) \) and let \( t \in L \) be such that \( s \lor t = x \). Then \( s \leq x \) and \( s \leq b; \) thus \( s \leq x \lor b = 0 \) which implies \( s = 0 \) contrary to
s \in (0, b]$. Hence $x$ is peripheral in $L$. That $0$ is peripheral is a consequence of Theorem 2.3. Thus each element of $[0, a]$ is peripheral in $L$. The proof for $[0, b]$ is similar.

The following corollaries are immediate.

**Corollary 2.8.** Let $L$ be a compact, connected topological lattice. If $a$, $b \in L$ are not related, then $[a, a \lor b]$, $[b, a \lor b]$, $[a \land b, a]$, and $[a \land b, b]$ are contained in the set of peripheral elements of $[a \land b, a \lor b]$.

**Corollary 2.9.** Let $L$ be a compact, connected topological lattice. If for $p \in L$ there is a $q \in L$ such that $q$ is not related to $p$ and either $p \in M(p \land q)^o$, or $p \in L(p \lor q)^o$, then $p$ is peripheral in $L$.

3. Questions. 3.1. It is known [8, Ex. 1.9] that peripheral elements of topological spaces need not be marginal. Is this true for compact, connected lattices?

3.2. If $B$ is the set of all peripheral (marginal) elements of a compact lattice $L$, is $B$ closed in $L$?

References


Received November 4, 1971 and in revised form October 5, 1972. A major part of this paper consists of a portion of the author's dissertation presented to the Graduate School of the Louisiana State University and directed by Professor J. D. Lawson.

**Middle Tennessee State University**
Kenneth Paul Baclawski and Kenneth Kapp, *Induced topologies for quasigroups and loops* ................................................................. 393
D. G. Bourgin, *Fixed point and min – max theorems* .................. 403
J. L. Brenner, *Zolotarev’s theorem on the Legendre symbol* ........ 413
Jospeh Atkins Childress, Jr., *Restricting isotopies of spheres* ........ 415
John Edward Coury, *Some results on lacunary Walsh series* ........ 419
James B. Derr and N. P. Mukherjee, *Generalized Sylow tower groups. II* 427
Paul Frazier Duvall, Jr., Peter Fletcher and Robert Allen McCoy, *Isotopy Galois spaces* ............................................................. 435
Mary Rodriguez Embry, *Strictly cyclic operator algebras on a Banach space* ............................... 443
Abi (Abiadbollah) Fattahi, *On generalizations of Sylow tower groups* ........ 453
Burton I. Fein and Murray M. Schacher, *Maximal subfields of tensor products* ... 479
Ervin Fried and J. Sichler, *Homomorphisms of commutative rings with unit element* ......................... 485
Kenneth R. Goodearl, *Essential products of nonsingular rings* ........ 493
George Grätzer, Bjarni Jónsson and H. Lakser, *The amalgamation property in equational classes of modular lattices* ................................. 507
H. Groemer, *On some mean values associated with a randomly selected simplex in a convex set* .................. 525
Marcel Herzog, *Central 2-Sylow intersections* ......................... 535
Joel Saul Hillel, *On the number of type-k translation-invariant groups* ........ 539
Ronald Brian Kirk, *A note on the Mackey topology for \((C^b(X)^*, C^b(X))\)* .......................... 543
J. W. Lea, *The peripherality of irreducible elements of lattice* ........ 555
John Stewart Locker, *Self-adjointness for multi-point differential operators* .... 561
Robert Patrick Martineau, *Splitting of group representations* ........ 571
Robert Massagli, *On a new radical in a topological ring* ............. 577
Fred Richman, *The constructive theory of countable abelian p-groups* ........ 621
Edward Barry Saff and J. L. Walsh, *On the convergence of rational functions which interpolate in the roots of unity* ....................... 639
Harold Eugene Schlais, *Non-aposyndesis and non-hereditary decomposability* ................................................................. 643
Mark Lawrence Teply, *A class of divisible modules* ................. 653
Edward Joseph Tully, Jr., \(\mathfrak{A}\)-commutative semigroups in which each homomorphism is uniquely determined by its kernel* ......................... 669
Garth William Warner, Jr., *Zeta functions on the real general linear group* .... 681
Keith Yale, *Cocycles with range \([\pm 1]\)* .............................. 693
Chi-Lin Yen, *On the rest points of a nonlinear nonexpansive semigroup* 699