

Pacific Journal of Mathematics

ON SEMI-SIMPLE GROUP ALGEBRAS. I

EUGENE SPIEGEL AND ALLAN TROJAN

ON SEMI-SIMPLE GROUP ALGEBRAS (I)

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For F a field and G a group, let FG denote the group algebra of G over F . Let \mathcal{G} be a class of finite groups, and \mathcal{F} a class of fields. Call the fields F_1 and F_2 ($F_i \in \mathcal{F}, i = 1, 2$) equivalent on \mathcal{G} if for all $G, H \in \mathcal{G}$, $F_1G \simeq F_1H$ if and only if $F_2G \simeq F_2H$. In this note we begin a study of this equivalence relation, taking the case where \mathcal{G} consists of all finite p -groups and \mathcal{F} those fields F , for which FG is semi-simple for all $G \in \mathcal{G}$.

1. Let ζ_n denote a primitive n^{th} root of unity (over the field under consideration). Throughout the paper, p will denote a fixed odd prime, and all fields will be assumed to be of characteristic distinct from p .

For reference, we begin with a result from field theory.

PROPOSITION 1.1. *Suppose F is a field and Ω an extension field of F . Let $K_i = 1, 2$ be fields such that $F \subset K_i \subset \Omega$, and assume that K_1/F is a finite Galois extension. Then the following are equivalent.*

- (i) K_1 and K_2 are linearly disjoint over F
- (ii) $K_1 \otimes_F K_2$ is a field
- (iii) $K_1 \otimes_F K_2 \simeq K_1 K_2$
- (iv) $K_1 \cap K_2 = F$.

Proof. See [1] page 78 and page 149.

Let G be a group of order p^n and K a field. We discuss the structure of KG .

By Maschke's theorem $KG \simeq \sum A_i$, where $A_i \simeq [K]_{n_i} \otimes D_i$, D_i is a finite dimensional division algebra over K , and $[K]_{n_i}$ denotes the ring of $n_i \times n_i$ matrices over K .

If K is a perfect field, then $A_1 \simeq K$ and for $i \neq 1$, the center of D_i is isomorphic to $K(\chi_i) = K(\{\chi_i(g) \mid g \in G\})$, for some nonprincipal irreducible character χ_i of G , $K(\chi_i) \subset K(\zeta_{p^n})$. If T is any nonprincipal irreducible representation of G into the $m \times m$ matrices over an algebraically closed field F then $T(G)$ is a finite p -group and thus contains an element S of order p in its center. Since T is irreducible, this central element must be a scalar matrix of order p , that is, a scalar matrix with diagonal element ζp .

Let χ_T be the character associated with T . Then there is an

element $g \in G$, such that $\chi_T(g) = m\zeta_p$. As $(\text{char } F, m) = 1$, we have $K(\zeta_p) \subset K(\chi_i) \subset K(\zeta_{p^n})$.

Suppose, first, that K is a prime subfield. If K is finite then D_i being a finite division ring must be the field $K(\chi_i)$, which if K is the rational field, by a theorem of Roquette [5], p. 249, again $D_i \simeq K(\chi_i)$.

Assume, now, that K is an arbitrary field with prime subfield F . $GF \simeq F \oplus \sum ([F]_{n_i} \otimes F(\chi_i))$ and $F(\zeta_p) \subset F(\chi_i) \subset F(\zeta_{p^n})$. Let $S_i = F(\chi_i) \cap K$ and $s_i = \deg [S_i/F]$.

Then

$$\begin{aligned} F(\chi_i) \otimes_F K &\simeq F(\chi_i) \otimes_F S_i \otimes_{S_i} K \\ &\simeq (F(\chi_i) \oplus \cdots \oplus F(\chi_i)) \otimes_{S_i} K \text{ see, e.g. [3] p. 177} \\ &\quad \text{(} s_i \text{ summands)} \\ &\simeq K(\chi_i) \oplus \cdots \oplus K(\chi_i) \text{ by Proposition 1.1} \end{aligned}$$

But,

$$\begin{aligned} KG &\simeq FG \otimes_F K \\ &\simeq (F \oplus \sum ([F]_{n_i} \otimes_F (F(\chi_i)))) \otimes_F K \\ &\simeq K \oplus \sum ([F]_{n_i} \otimes_F (K(\chi_i) \oplus \cdots \oplus K(\chi_i))) \\ &\simeq K \oplus \sum ([K(\chi_i)]_{n_i} \oplus \cdots \oplus [K(\chi_i)]_{n_i}) \\ &\simeq K \oplus \sum s_i ([K]_{n_i} \otimes_K K(\chi_i)). \end{aligned}$$

Hence we have shown

LEMMA 1.2. *Let K be a field and G a group of order p^n . Then $KG \simeq K \oplus \sum B_i$ where $B_i \simeq [K]_{n_i} \otimes_K K_i$ and K_i are fields such that $K(\zeta_p) \subset K_i \subset K(\zeta_{p^n})$.*

THEOREM 1.3. *Let L be an extension field of the field K . Let G and H be groups of order p^n . Suppose $K(\zeta_{p^n})$ is linearly disjoint from $L(\zeta_p)$ over $K(\zeta_p)$. Then $KG \simeq KH$ if and only if $LG \simeq LH$.*

Proof. If $KG \simeq KH$, then $LG \simeq KG \otimes_K L \simeq KH \otimes_K L \simeq LH$. Conversely, suppose $LG \simeq LH$.

From Lemma 1.2, $KG \simeq K \oplus \sum ([K]_{n_i} \otimes_K K_i)$, where K_i is a field such that $K(\zeta_p) \subset K_i \subset K(\zeta_{p^n})$. By Proposition 1.1, $K(\zeta_{p^n}) \cap L(\zeta_p) = K(\zeta_p)$. Let $R_i = L \cap K_i$. Then $R_i \subset (L(\zeta_p) \cap K(\zeta_{p^n})) \subset K(\zeta_p)$, so that $R_i = L \cap K(\zeta_p)$, i.e. R_i is independent of i . Write $R_i = R$ and $r = \dim [R/K]$.

$$\begin{aligned} K_i \otimes_K L &\simeq K_i \otimes_K R \otimes_R L \\ &\simeq (K_i \oplus \cdots \oplus K_i) \otimes_R L \\ &\quad \text{(} r \text{ summands)} \\ &\simeq LK_i \oplus \cdots \oplus LK_i \quad \text{by Proposition 1.1} \\ &\simeq rLK_i \end{aligned}$$

Let $LK_i = L_i$ so that

$$L(\zeta_p) \subset L_i \subset L(\zeta_{p^n}) .$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned} LG &\simeq KG \otimes_K L \\ &\simeq (K \oplus \sum ([K]_{n_i} \otimes_K K_i)) \otimes_K L \\ &\simeq L \oplus \sum r([K]_{n_i} \otimes_K L_i) \\ &\simeq L \oplus \sum r([L_i]_{n_i}) \\ &\simeq L \oplus \sum r([L]_{n_i} \otimes_L L_i) . \end{aligned} \tag{*}$$

Pick s_i such that $K_i = K(\zeta_{p^{s_i}})$ and $1 \leq s_i \leq n$.

We clearly have

$$\deg [L(\zeta_{p^n})/L(\zeta_{p^{s_i}})] \leq \deg [K(\zeta_{p^n})/K(\zeta_{p^{s_i}})]$$

and

$$\deg [L(\zeta_{p^{s_i}})/L(\zeta_p)] \leq \deg [K(\zeta_{p^{s_i}})/K(\zeta_p)] .$$

But $L(\zeta_{p^n}) = LK(\zeta_{p^n})$ is a Galois extension of L , so that

$$\begin{aligned} \deg [L(\zeta_{p^n})/L(\zeta_p)] &= \deg [K(\zeta_{p^n})/(K(\zeta_{p^n}) \cap L(\zeta_p))] \\ &= \deg [K(\zeta_{p^n})/K(\zeta_p)] . \end{aligned}$$

Thus

$$\deg [L(\zeta_{p^n})/L(\zeta_{p^{s_i}})] = \deg [K(\zeta_{p^n})/K(\zeta_{p^{s_i}})] .$$

Since

$$\deg [L(\zeta_{p^n})/L(\zeta_{p^{s_i}})] = \deg [L_i K(\zeta_{p^n})/L_i] = \deg [K(\zeta_{p^n})/(K(\zeta_{p^n}) \cap L_i)] .$$

We must have

$$K(\zeta_{p^n}) \cap L_i = K(\zeta_{p^{s_i}}) = K_i .$$

This together with (*) shows that KG is determined by LG . The result follows.

If L is an extension field of the field K , we call A the maximal abelian p -extension of K in L if A is the composite of all finite abelian p -extensions (of degree a power of p) of K in L .

COROLLARY 1.4. *Let L be an extension field of the field K . Suppose A is the maximal abelian p -extension of K in L . Let G and H be groups of order p^n . Then $LG \simeq LH$ if and only if $AG \simeq AH$.*

Proof. $L \cap A(\zeta_{p^n}) \subset A(\zeta_p)$, and $(\deg [L(\zeta_p)/L], p) = 1$, so that

$L(\zeta_p) \cap A(\zeta_{p^n}) = A(\zeta_p)$. The conclusion now follows from Proposition 1.1 and the theorem.

COROLLARY 1.5. *Let L be an extension field of the field K . Suppose that K is algebraically closed in L . Let G and H be groups of order p^n . Then $KG \simeq KH$ if and only if $LG \simeq LH$.*

2. Let K be a field. The p -sequence $\{\gamma_p(n)\}$, $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$, of K is defined as $\gamma_p(n) = \deg [K(\zeta_{p^{n+2}})/K(\zeta_{p^{n+1}})]$. $\{\nu_p(n)\}$ is of one of the following three types, (see [8]).

- p, p, p, \dots
- $1, 1, 1, \dots, 1, p, p, p, \dots$
- $1, 1, 1, \dots$

Define the p -index of $K = 0$ if $\gamma_p(0) = p$
 n if $\gamma_p(n) = p$ and $\gamma_p(n - 1) = 1$
 ∞ if $\gamma_p(n) = 1$ for all n .

In [8] the following proposition is proved.

PROPOSITION 2.1. *Let K and L be fields. Then K and L are equivalent on the class of all finite abelian p -groups if and only if the p -index of K equals the p -index of L .*

PROPOSITION 2.2. *Let K and L be fields of the same characteristic. Then K and L are equivalent on the class of all finite p -groups if and only if the p -index of K equals the p -index of L .*

Proof. Suppose the p -index of K equals the p -index of L . Let G and H be groups of order p^n . Let F be the prime subfield of K . If the p -index of $K = r < \infty$, let $T = F(\zeta_{p^{r+1}})$, while if the p -index of $K = \infty$, define $T = F(\zeta_p, \zeta_{p^2}, \zeta_{p^3}, \dots)$. Then $T \subset K(\zeta_p)$ and the p -index of T equals the p -index of K .

$KG \simeq KH$ if and only if $K(\zeta_p)G \simeq K(\zeta_p)H$, by Theorem 1.3. Noting that $T(\zeta_{p^n}) \cap K(\zeta_p) = T(\zeta_p)$, we have, by Theorem 1.3, that $KG \simeq KH$ if and only if $TG \simeq TH$. But T depends only upon the characteristic and the p -index of K , and these invariants are identical for L . Hence $LG \simeq LH$ if and only if $TG \simeq TH$, and the result follows.

The converse follows from Proposition 2.1.

In order to solve the equivalence problem of the introduction we must eliminate the requirement on the characteristic in Proposition 2.2.

For q a prime, let Q_q denote the field of q -adic numbers.

LEMMA 2.3. *Let $q \neq p$ be a prime, and F a finite extension of Q_q . Suppose R denotes the ring of integers of F . If G is a finite p -group and χ an irreducible character of G , then $R(\chi) = \text{integers } F(\chi)$.*

Proof. Passman's proof of Lemma 1, [5], p. 562, immediately generalizes to this case when we substitute R for Z and F for Q .

PROPOSITION 2.4. *For q a prime, let F be a finite extension of Q_q . Let R be the ring of integers of F , and \bar{R} , the residue class field of F . Suppose G and H are finite groups of order s , with $(s, q) = 1$. Then the following are equivalent*

- (i) $RG \simeq RH$
- (ii) $FG \simeq FH$
- (iii) $\bar{R}G \simeq \bar{R}H$

Proof. (i) \Rightarrow (ii). If $RG \simeq RH$, then

$$FG \simeq RG \otimes_R F \simeq RH \otimes_R F \simeq FH$$

(ii) \Rightarrow (iii).

$F(G)$ determines the ordered pairs $\{f_i, F(\chi_i)\}$, where χ_i is an irreducible character, and $f_i = \text{deg } \chi_i$. Also, $F(\chi_i) \subset F(\zeta_s)$. But F is of characteristic 0, so any absolutely irreducible representation of G can be realized in C , the complex numbers, and any character χ_i , has its values in $Z(\zeta_s)$.

Let Z_q denote the integers modulo q . $Z_q \subset \bar{R}$. As is well known, the characters $\bar{\chi}_i$ of $Z_q(G)$ are given by composition of χ_i with the mapping into the residue class field, which is a subfield of $\bar{R}(\zeta_s)$.

Let $\Pi \in R$ be such that $\text{ord } \Pi = 1$. So π divides q . Then

$$G \xrightarrow{\chi_i} Z(\zeta_s) \longrightarrow \frac{Z(\zeta_s)}{\Pi R \cap Z(\zeta_s)} \simeq Z_q(\zeta_s) \cong \bar{R}(\zeta_s) \text{ defines } \bar{\chi}_i.$$

Now $\text{deg } \bar{\chi}_i = \text{deg } \chi_i$ and by Lemma 2.3.

$$\frac{\text{int}(F(\chi_i))}{(\Pi)} = \frac{R(\chi_i)}{(\Pi)} \simeq \bar{R}(\bar{\chi}_i).$$

Since $(\text{int } F(\chi_i))/(\Pi)$ is determined solely by FG , we have that the pairs $\{\text{deg } \bar{\chi}_i, \bar{R}(\bar{\chi}_i)\}$ are determined by FG and in turn determine $\bar{R}G$.

Now the implication follows.

(iii) \Rightarrow (i)

This implication is just a generalization of Sehgal's [6], Theorem 4, p. 504.

THEOREM 2.5. *Let K and L be fields. Then K and L are equivalent on the class of all finite p -groups if and only if the p -index of K equals the p -index of L .*

Proof. Suppose the p -index of K equals the p -index of L . Let S be the prime subfield of K .

Case (i) the p -index of $K = r < \infty$

Let $T = S(\zeta_{p^{r+1}})$. The p -index of K equals the p -index of T . By Proposition 2.2, K and T are equivalent on the class of all finite p -groups.

If K is of characteristic $q \neq 0$, then T is the residue class field of the local field $Q_q(\zeta_{p^{r+1}})$. By Proposition 2.4, $F = Q_q(\zeta_{p^{r+1}})$ is equivalent to T on the class of all finite p -groups. But adjoining a primitive p^n th root of unity to Q_q , gives a totally unramified extension of Q_q , so that the p -index of F equals the p -index of T .

If K is of characteristic 0 let $F = T$. No matter what the characteristic of K , we have associated to K a field F , of characteristic 0, of the same p -index as K , and equivalent to K on the class of all finite p -groups. In a similar fashion, associate to L a field F' of characteristic 0. By Proposition 2.2, we must have K and L equivalent on the class of all finite p -groups.

Case (ii). The p -index of $K = \infty$

Let G and H be groups of order p^n . $K(\zeta_p) \supset S(\zeta_{p^n})$

$$\begin{aligned} KG \simeq KH &\iff K(\zeta_p)G \simeq K(\zeta_p)H && \text{(by Theorem 1.3)} \\ &\iff S(\zeta_{p^n})G \simeq S(\zeta_{p^n})H && \text{(by Theorem 1.3)} \end{aligned}$$

If K is of characteristic 0, then

$$KG \simeq KH \text{ if and only if } Q(\zeta_{p^n})G \simeq Q(\zeta_{p^n})H.$$

Suppose K is of characteristic $q \neq 0$. Then $S(\zeta_{p^n})$ is the residue class field of the local field $Q_q(\zeta_{p^n})$. By Proposition 2.4, $S(\zeta_{p^n})G \simeq S(\zeta_{p^n})H$ if and only if $Q_q(\zeta_{p^n})G \simeq Q_q(\zeta_{p^n})H$. But $Q_q(\zeta_{p^n}) \supset Q(\zeta_{p^n})$, so that, by Theorem 1.3, $S(\zeta_{p^n})G \simeq S(\zeta_{p^n})H$ if and only if $Q(\zeta_{p^n})G \simeq Q(\zeta_{p^n})H$. No matter what characteristic K has, $KG \simeq KH$ if and only if $Q(\zeta_{p^n})G \simeq Q(\zeta_{p^n})H$. Since such a statement also holds for L , the result follows.

The converse is immediate by Proposition 2.2.

Let C_n denote a cyclic group of order n .

COROLLARY 2.6. *Let K be a field. Then K and Q are equivalent on the class of all finite p -groups if and only if $K(C_{p^2}) \neq K(C_p \oplus C_p)$.*

Proof. Assume K is equivalent to Q on all finite p -groups. As $Q(C_p \oplus C_p) \neq Q(C_{p^2})$, then $K(C_p \oplus C_p) \neq K(C_{p^2})$.

Conversely, suppose $K(C_p \oplus C_p) \neq K(C_{p^2})$.

Let $\{\gamma_p(n)\}_{n=0,1,2,\dots}$ be the p -sequence for K . If $\gamma_p(0) = 1$, then $\zeta_{p^2} \in K(\zeta_p)$, and by Lemma 1.2 $K(C_p \oplus C_p) \simeq K(C_{p^2}) \simeq K \oplus aK(\zeta_p)$ where $a(\deg [K(\zeta_p)/K]) = (p^2 - 1)$. Thus $\gamma_p(0) = p$, and the p -index of K , like that of Q is 0. The result follows by Theorem 2.5.

Let $[K]_p$ denote the equivalence class of all fields F , such that the p -index of F equals the p -index of K . The equivalence classes consist of $[Q]_p = [Q(\zeta_p)]_p, [Q(\zeta_{p^2})]_p, [Q(\zeta_{p^3})]_p, \dots$ and $[C]_p$. The class $[K]_p$, if $[K]_p \neq [C]_p$, contains an infinite number of prime subfields. For if the p -index of K is r , then by Dirichlet's theorem, there are an infinite number of primes q , such that $q \equiv (1 + p^{r+1}) \pmod{p^{r+2}}$. For any such prime q , $\zeta_{p^{r+1}} \in Z_q$, but $\zeta_{p^{r+2}} \notin Z_q$. It would be interesting to know if there is a prime q such that $[Z_q]_p = [Q]_p$ for all odd primes $p \neq q$. (When $q = 2$, for example, the first prime for which this fails is $p = 1093$.)

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Received February 4, 1975, and in revised form May 23, 1975.

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The *Pacific Journal of Mathematics* is issued monthly as of January 1966. Regular subscription rate: \$72.00 a year (6 Vols., 12 issues). Special rate: \$36.00 a year to individual members of supporting institutions.

Subscriptions, orders for back numbers, and changes of address should be sent to Pacific Journal of Mathematics, 103 Highland Boulevard, Berkeley, California, 94708.

PUBLISHED BY PACIFIC JOURNAL OF MATHEMATICS, A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

Printed at Kokusai Bunken Insatsusha (International Academic Printing Co., Ltd.),
8-8, 3-chome, Takadanobaba, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160, Japan.

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Aharon Atzmon, <i>A moment problem for positive measures on the unit disc</i>	317
Peter W. Bates and Grant Bernard Gustafson, <i>Green's function inequalities for two-point boundary value problems</i>	327
Howard Edwin Bell, <i>Infinite subrings of infinite rings and near-rings</i>	345
Grahame Bennett, Victor Wayne Goodman and Charles Michael Newman, <i>Norms of random matrices</i>	359
Beverly L. Brechner, <i>Almost periodic homeomorphisms of E^2 are periodic</i>	367
Beverly L. Brechner and R. Daniel Mauldin, <i>Homeomorphisms of the plane</i>	375
Jia-Arng Chao, <i>Lusin area functions on local fields</i>	383
Frank Rimi DeMeyer, <i>The Brauer group of polynomial rings</i>	391
M. V. Deshpande, <i>Collectively compact sets and the ergodic theory of semi-groups</i>	399
Raymond Frank Dickman and Jack Ray Porter, <i>θ-closed subsets of Hausdorff spaces</i>	407
Charles P. Downey, <i>Classification of singular integrals over a local field</i>	417
Daniel Reuven Farkas, <i>Miscellany on Bieberbach group algebras</i>	427
Peter A. Fowler, <i>Infimum and domination principles in vector lattices</i>	437
Barry J. Gardner, <i>Some aspects of T-nilpotence. II: Lifting properties over T-nilpotent ideals</i>	445
Gary Fred Gruenhagen and Phillip Lee Zenor, <i>Metritzation of spaces with countable large basis dimension</i>	455
J. L. Hickman, <i>Reducing series of ordinals</i>	461
Hugh M. Hilden, <i>Generators for two groups related to the braid group</i>	475
Tom (Roy Thomas Jr.) Jacob, <i>Some matrix transformations on analytic sequence spaces</i>	487
Elyahu Katz, <i>Free products in the category of k_w-groups</i>	493
Tsang Hai Kuo, <i>On conjugate Banach spaces with the Radon-Nikodým property</i>	497
Norman Eugene Liden, <i>K-spaces, their antispace and related mappings</i>	505
Clinton M. Petty, <i>Radon partitions in real linear spaces</i>	515
Alan Saleski, <i>A conditional entropy for the space of pseudo-Menger maps</i>	525
Michael Singer, <i>Elementary solutions of differential equations</i>	535
Eugene Spiegel and Allan Trojan, <i>On semi-simple group algebras. I</i>	549
Charles Madison Stanton, <i>Bounded analytic functions on a class of open Riemann surfaces</i>	557
Sherman K. Stein, <i>Transversals of Latin squares and their generalizations</i>	567
Ivan Ernest Stux, <i>Distribution of squarefree integers in non-linear sequences</i>	577
Lowell G. Sweet, <i>On homogeneous algebras</i>	585
Lowell G. Sweet, <i>On doubly homogeneous algebras</i>	595
Florian Vasilescu, <i>The closed range modulus of operators</i>	599
Arthur Anthony Yanushka, <i>A characterization of the symplectic groups $P\text{Sp}(2m, q)$ as rank 3 permutation groups</i>	611
James Juei-Chin Yeh, <i>Inversion of conditional Wiener integrals</i>	623