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proof of additive form of Hilbert’s theorem 90

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Set $n = [L : K]$.

First, let there be $x \in L$ such that $y = x - \sigma(x)$. Then

$$\text{Tr}(y) = (x - \sigma(x)) + (\sigma(x) - \sigma^2(x)) + \cdots + (\sigma^{n-1}(x) - \sigma^n(x)) = 0$$

because $x = \sigma^n(x)$.

Now, let $\text{Tr}(y) = 0$. Choose $z \in L$ with $\text{Tr}(z) \neq 0$. Then there exists $x \in L$ with

$$x \text{Tr}(z) = y\sigma(z) + (y + \sigma(y))\sigma^2(z) + \cdots + (y + \sigma(y) + \cdots + \sigma^{n-1}(y))\sigma^{n-1}(z).$$

Since $\text{Tr}(z) \in K$ we have

$$\sigma(x) \text{Tr}(z) = \sigma(y)\sigma^2(z) + (\sigma(y) + \sigma^2(y))\sigma^3(z) + \cdots + (\sigma(y) + \cdots + \sigma^{n-2}(y))\sigma^{n-1}(z) + (\sigma(y) + \cdots + \sigma^{n-1}(y))\sigma^n(z)$$

Now remember that $\text{Tr}(y) = 0$. We obtain

$$\begin{aligned} (x - \sigma(x)) \text{Tr}(z) &= y\sigma(z) + (y + \sigma(y))\sigma^2(z) + \cdots + (y + \sigma(y) + \cdots + \sigma^{n-1}(y))\sigma^{n-1}(z) \\ &\quad - \sigma(y)\sigma^2(z) - (\sigma(y) + \sigma^2(y))\sigma^3(z) - \cdots - (\sigma(y) + \cdots + \sigma^{n-2}(y))\sigma^{n-1}(z) + yz \\ &= y \text{Tr}(z), \end{aligned}$$

so $y = x - \sigma(x)$, as we wanted to show.