Algebraic Groups

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Abstract

The topic of algebraic groups is a rich subject combining both group-theoretic and algebro-geometric-theoretic techniques. Examples include the general linear group GL_n, the special orthogonal group SO_n or the symplectic group Sp_n. Algebraic groups play an important role in algebraic geometry, representation theory and number theory.

In this course, we will take the functorial approach to the study of linear algebraic groups (more generally, affine group schemes) equivalent to the study of Hopf algebras. The classical view of an algebraic group as a variety will come up as a special case of a smooth algebraic group scheme. Our algebraic approach will be independent (even complementary) to the analytic approach taken in the course on Lie groups.

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1.1 Group objects

Let $\mathscr{C}$ be a category with a final object and finite products.

1.1.1 Definition: A **group object G in $\mathscr{C}$** is an object in $\mathscr{C}$ along with multiplication, identity, and inverse morphisms satisfying the usual axioms.

One thing is that we are using that there is a final object $*$ along with our identity morphism $e : * \to G$. Here Jarrod explictly used the fact that there is a unique map to $*$.

Example 1.1
If $\mathscr{C}$ is Set, then G is a group. If $\mathscr{C}$ = Top, then G is a topological group, smooth manifolds give Lie groups, and finally (interesting to us):

1.1.2 Definition: Let S be a scheme and let $\mathscr{C}$ be the category of schemes over S. Then a group object G in $\mathscr{C}$ is a **group scheme over S.**

WHen k is a field and $\mathscr{C}$ is schemes of finite type over k, we get a group scheme of finite type over k. There is not a great consensus on what makes an **algebraic group**, but this is what we will use.

When we instead restrict to *affine schemes* we get an affine groupe scheme of finite tipe over k, or a **linear algebraic group.**

1.2 Examples

$\mathbb{G}_m = \operatorname{Spec} k[t]_t$ is one.

If we consider the map $f : \mathbb{G}_m \to \mathbb{G}_m$ which on the level of elements sends $t \mapsto t^p$, the kernel is

$$\mu_p = \ker(f) = \operatorname{Spec} k[t]/(t^p - 1)$$

and that's great, but when $\operatorname{char} k = p$, this causes the group scheme to be **unreduced**. This is (apparently) a case when you need to use schemes.

1.3 The Functorial Approach

Let $\mathscr{C}$ be a category with object X. Define the functor $h_X : \mathscr{C}^{op} \to \mathbf{Set}$ where

$$h_X(Y) = \operatorname{Hom}_{\mathscr{C}}(Y, X).$$

Then we have

1.3.1 Lemma (Yoneda)
Let $G : \mathscr{C}^{op} \to \mathbf{Set}$ be a functor. There is a natural bijection

$$G(X) \simeq \operatorname{Nat}(h_X, G).$$

1.3.2 Proposition
A group object G in $\mathscr{C}$ is the same as an aobject $X \in \mathscr{C}$ together with a choice of factorization of $h_X : \mathscr{C} \to \mathbf{Set}$ through $\mathbf{Grp}$.

1.4 Exercises

(a) Spell out all the details of the proof of the above propositon.

(b) Given a group object G, define in two ways what it means for it to act on another object. (In coordinates and functorially).

1.5 Some Interesting Facts

If we had to write down five results that we'd like to get out of this class:

1.5.1 Proposition
Every affine group scheme of finite type over a field embeds into GL_n as a closed subgroup.

1.5.2 Theorem (Cheballey's Theorem)
Let G be a finite type group scheme over a field. Then it factors as

$$1 \to H \to G \to A \to 1$$

where A is abelian and H is affine (linear algebraic).

1.5.3 Proposition
If G is an affine group scheme of finite type over k, then we have af actorization

$$1 \to U \to G \to R \to 1$$

where U is unipotent and R is reductive.

1.5.4 Proposition
$H \subseteq G$ a subgroup scheme. Then G/H is a projective scheme.

Finally we want to talk about Tanakka duality and how the representations of G define G itself.