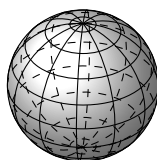


# UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO



## PMATH 348 FIELDS AND GALOIS THEORY

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### Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	1
1.1	Polynomial Equations	1
1.2	Cubic Equations	1
1.3	Quartic Equations	1
1.4	Quintic Equations	1
<b>2</b>	<b>FIELD EXTENSIONS</b>	3
2.1	Degree of Extensions	3
2.2	Algebraic and Transcendental Extensions	4
2.3	Eisenstein's Criterion	7
<b>3</b>	<b>SPLITTING FIELDS</b>	9
3.1	Existence of Splitting Fields	9
3.2	Uniqueness of Splitting Fields	10
3.3	Degree of Splitting Fields	11
<b>4</b>	<b>FINITE FIELDS</b>	12
4.1	Prime Fields	12
4.2	Formal Derivatives and Repeated Roots	12
4.3	Finite Fields	13
4.4	Separable Polynomials	14

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Polynomial Equations

Consider the quadratic equation. Let  $ax^2 + bx + c = 0$  with the leading coefficient  $a \neq 0$ , then we have that,

$$x = \frac{-b \pm \sqrt{b^2 - 4ac}}{2a}$$

We notice immediately that there are a couple of operations that are involved in this equation.

**Definition 1.1.1.** An expression involving only addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and radicals is called a radical. These operations are denoted by  $+$ ,  $-$ ,  $\times$ ,  $\div$  and  $\sqrt[n]{\phantom{x}}$ .

The natural question that is raised is the extension to higher dimensions.

## 1.2 Cubic Equations

All cubic equations can be reduced to the following equation,

$$x^3 + px = q$$

for some  $p, q \in \mathbb{C}$ . A solution to the above equation is of the form

$$x = \sqrt[3]{\frac{q}{2} + \sqrt{\frac{p^3}{27} + \frac{q^2}{4}}} + \sqrt[3]{\frac{q}{2} - \sqrt{\frac{p^3}{27} + \frac{q^2}{4}}} \quad (\text{Cardano's Formula})$$

## 1.3 Quartic Equations

A radical solution can be obtained by reducing a quartic to a cubic equation.

## 1.4 Quintic Equations

- General radical solutions were attempted by Euler, Bézout and Lagrange without success
- In 1799, Ruffini gave a 516 page proof about the unsolvability of quintic equations. His Proof was “almost right”
- In 1824, Abel filled the gap in Ruffini’s proof.

We can now ask ourselves, given a quintic equation, is it solvable by radicals? This question seems to be too hard, so we ask, suppose that a radical solution exists. How does its associated quintic equation look like?

### Two main steps in Galois Theory

1. Link a root of a quintic equation, say  $\alpha$  to  $\mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$ , the smallest field containing  $\mathbb{Q}$  and  $\alpha$ .  $\mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$  is a field. So it has more structures to be played with than  $\alpha$ ; however, our knowledge of  $\mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$  is still too little to answer the question. For example, we do not know how many intermediate fields,  $E$  between  $\mathbb{Q}$  and  $\mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$ . What we mean is how many fields  $E$  satisfy

$$\mathbb{Q} \subseteq E \subseteq \mathbb{Q}(\alpha).$$

2. Link the field  $\mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$  to a group. More precisely, we associate  $\mathbb{Q}(\alpha)/\mathbb{Q}$  to the group

$$\text{Aut}_{\mathbb{Q}}(\mathbb{Q}(\alpha)) = \left\{ \Psi : \mathbb{Q}(\alpha) \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}(\alpha) \text{ an isomorphism and } \Psi|_{\mathbb{Q}} = 1_{\mathbb{Q}} \right\}$$

It can be shown that if  $\alpha$  is “good”, say algebraic,  $\text{Aut}_{\mathbb{Q}}(\mathbb{Q}(\alpha))$  is finite. If  $\alpha$  is “very good”, say constructable, the order of  $\text{Aut}_{\mathbb{Q}}(\mathbb{Q}(\alpha))$  is in certain forms. Moreover, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the intermediate fields between  $\mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$  and  $\mathbb{Q}$  and the subgroups of  $\text{Aut}_{\mathbb{Q}}(\mathbb{Q}(\alpha))$ .

It follows that given some “good”  $\alpha$ , we have that the intermediate fields of  $\mathbb{Q}(\alpha)$  and  $\mathbb{Q}$  are indeed finitely many. This introduces Galois Theory; the interplay between fields and groups.

## 2 Field Extensions

### 2.1 Degree of Extensions

**Definition 2.1.1.** If  $E$  is a field containing another field  $F$ , we say  $E$  is a field extension of  $F$ , denoted by  $E/F$ .

If  $E/F$  is a field extension, we can view  $E$  as a vector space over  $F$ .

1. Addition: For  $e_1, e_2 \in E$ ,  $e_1 + e_2 := e_1 + e_2$  (addition in  $E$ )
2. Scalar Multiplication: For  $c \in F, e \in E$ ,  $c \cdot e := ce$  (multiplication in  $E$ )

**Definition 2.1.2.** The dimension of  $E$  over  $F$  (viewed as a vector space) called the degree of  $E$  over  $F$ , denoted by  $[E : F]$ . If  $[E : F] < \infty$ , we say  $E/F$  is a finite extension. Otherwise,  $E/F$  is an infinite extension.

**Example 2.1.3.**  $[\mathbb{C} : \mathbb{R}] = 2$  is a finite extension since  $\mathbb{C} \cong \mathbb{R} + \mathbb{R}i$ , with  $i^2 = -1$ .

**Example 2.1.4.** Let  $F$  be a field. Then  $[F(x) : F]$  is  $\infty$  since  $\{1, x, x^2, \dots\}$  are linearly independent over  $F$ .

*Remark.*  $F[x] = \{f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + \dots + a_nx^n : a_i \in F, n \in \mathbb{N} \cup \{0\}\}$ , the polynomial ring of  $F$ .

*Remark.*  $F(x) = \{\frac{f(x)}{g(x)} : f(x), g(x) \in F[x]\}$ , the fraction field of the polynomial ring of  $F$ .

**Theorem 1.** If  $E/K$  and  $K/F$  are finite field extensions, then  $E/F$  is a finite field extension and

$$[E : F] = [E : K][K : F]$$

In particular,  $K$  is an intermediate field of an field extension  $E/F$ , then  $[K : F] \mid [E : F]$ .

*Proof.* Suppose  $[E : K] = m$  and  $[K : F] = n$ . Let  $\{a_i, \dots, a_m\}$  be a basis of  $E/K$  and  $\{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$  be a basis of  $K/F$ . It suffices to show  $\{a_i b_j : 1 \leq i \leq m, 1 \leq j \leq n\}$  is a basis of  $E/F$ .

**Claim.** Every element of  $E$  is a linear combination of  $\{a_i b_j\}$  over  $F$ .

For  $e \in E$ , we have

$$e = \sum_{i=1}^m k_i a_i$$

with  $k_i \in K$ . Also, for each  $k_i \in K$ , we have

$$k_i = \sum_{j=1}^n c_{ij} b_j$$

with  $c_{ij} \in F$ . Thus,

$$e = \sum_{i=1}^m \sum_{j=1}^n c_{ij} b_j a_i.$$

**Claim.** The set  $\{a_i b_j : 1 \leq i \leq m, 1 \leq j \leq n\}$  is linearly independent over  $F$ .

Suppose that

$$\sum_{i=1}^m \sum_{j=1}^n c_{ij} b_j a_i = 0$$

with  $c_{ij} \in F$ . Since  $\sum_{j=1}^n c_{ij} b_j \in K$  and  $\{a_1, \dots, a_m\}$  are independent over  $K$ . We have

$$\sum_{j=1}^n c_{ij} b_j = 0.$$

Since  $\{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$  are independent over  $F$ , we have  $c_{ij} = 0$ .

Combining both claims, we see that  $\{a_i b_j, 1 \leq i \leq m, 1 \leq j \leq n\}$  is a basis of  $E/F$  and we have  $[E : F] = [E : K][K : F]$ .  $\square$

## 2.2 Algebraic and Transcendental Extensions

**Definition 2.2.1.** Let  $E/F$  be a field extension and  $\alpha \in E$ . We say  $\alpha$  is algebraic over  $F$  if there exists  $f(x) \in F[x] \setminus \{0\}$  with  $f(\alpha) = 0$ . Otherwise,  $\alpha$  is transcendental over  $F$ .

**Example 2.2.2.**  $\frac{e}{d} \in \mathbb{Q}$ ,  $\sqrt{2}$ ,  $\sqrt[3]{7} + 2i$  are algebraic over  $\mathbb{Q}$  (see Assignment 1) but  $e$  (Hermite, 1873) and  $\pi$  (Lindemann, 1882) are transcendental over  $\mathbb{Q}$ .

Let  $E/F$  be a field extension and  $\alpha \in E$ . Let  $F[\alpha]$  denote the smallest subfield of  $E$  containing  $F$  and  $\alpha$ . For  $\alpha, \beta \in E$ , we define  $F[\alpha, \beta]$  and  $F(\alpha, \beta)$  similarly.

**Definition 2.2.3.** If  $F = F(\alpha)$  for some  $\alpha \in E$ , we say  $E$  is a simple extension of  $F$ .

**Definition 2.2.4.** Let  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  be two rings which contain a field  $F$ . A ring homomorphism  $\Psi : R_1 \rightarrow R_2$  is said to be a  $F$ -homomorphism if  $\Psi|_F = 1_F$ .

**Theorem 2.** Let  $E/F$  be a field extension and  $\alpha \in E$ . If  $\alpha$  is transcendental over  $F$ , then

$$F[\alpha] \cong F[x] \quad \text{and} \quad F(\alpha) \cong F(x)$$

In particular,  $F[\alpha] \neq F(\alpha)$ .

*Remark.* In fact, if  $\alpha$  is algebraic, indeed  $F[\alpha] = F(\alpha)$ .

*Proof.* Let  $\Psi : F(x) \rightarrow F(\alpha)$  be the unique  $F$ -homomorphism defined by  $\Psi(x) = \alpha$ . Thus, for  $f(x), g(x) \in F[x]$ ,  $g(x) \neq 0$ ,

$$\Psi\left(\frac{f(x)}{g(x)}\right) = \frac{f(\alpha)}{g(\alpha)} \in F(\alpha).$$

Notice that this is indeed a well-defined map as  $g(x) \neq 0$  implies  $g(\alpha) \neq 0$  since  $\alpha$  is transcendental. Since  $F(x)$  is a field and  $\ker(\Psi)$  is an ideal of  $F(x)$ , we have  $\ker(\Psi) = F(x)$  or trivial. Thus  $\Psi = 0$  or  $\Psi$  is injective. Since  $\Psi(x) = \alpha \neq 0$ ,  $\Psi$  must be injective. Also, since  $F(x)$  is a field,  $\text{im}(\Psi)$  contains a field generated by  $F$  and  $\alpha$ , in other words,  $F(\alpha) \subseteq \text{im}(\Psi)$ . Thus,  $\text{im}(\Psi) = F(\alpha)$  and  $\Psi$  is surjective. It follows that  $\Psi$  is an isomorphism and we have

$$F[\alpha] \cong F[x] \quad \text{and} \quad F(\alpha) \cong F(x).$$

$\square$

**Theorem 3.** Let  $E/F$  be a field extension and  $\alpha \in E$ . If  $\alpha$  is algebraic over  $F$ , there exists a unique monic irreducible polynomial  $p(x) \in F[x]$  such that there exists a  $F$ -homomorphism

$$\Psi : F[x]/\langle p(x) \rangle \rightarrow F[\alpha] \quad \text{with } \Psi(x) = \alpha$$

from which we conclude  $F[\alpha] \cong F(\alpha)$ .

*Proof.* Consider the unique  $F$ -homomorphism  $\Psi : F[x] \rightarrow F[\alpha]$  defined by  $\Psi(x) = \alpha$ . Thus, for  $f(x) \in F[x]$ , we have  $\Psi(f) = f(\alpha)$ . Since  $F[x]$  is a ring,  $\text{im}(\Psi)$  contains a ring generated by  $F$  and  $\alpha$ , in other words,  $F[\alpha] \subseteq \text{im}(\Psi)$ . Thus,  $\text{im}(\Psi) = F[\alpha]$ .

Let

$$I = \ker(\Psi) = \{f(x) \in F[x] : f(\alpha) = 0\}.$$

Since  $\alpha$  is algebraic,  $I \neq \{0\}$ . We have  $F[x]/I \cong \text{im}(\Psi) = F[\alpha] \subseteq F(\alpha)$ , a subring of a field  $F(\alpha)$ . Thus,  $F[x]/I$  is an integral domain so  $I$  is a prime ideal. It follows that  $I = \langle p(x) \rangle$ , where  $p(x)$  is irreducible. If we assume  $p(x)$  is monic, then it is unique. It follows that

$$F[x]/\langle p(x) \rangle \cong F[\alpha].$$

Since  $p(x)$  is irreducible,  $F[x]/\langle p(x) \rangle$  is a field. So  $F[\alpha]$  is a field. It follows that  $F[\alpha] = F(\alpha)$ .  $\square$

**Definition 2.2.5.** If  $\alpha$  is algebraic over a field  $F$ , the unique monic polynomial irreducible polynomial  $p(x)$  in Theorem 3 is called the minimal polynomial of  $\alpha$  over  $F$ .

*Remark.* From the proof of Theorem 3, if  $f(x) \in F[x]$  with  $f(\alpha) = 0$ , then  $p(x) \mid f(x)$ .

**Theorem 4.** Let  $E/F$  be a field extension and  $\alpha \in E$ .

1.  $\alpha$  is transcendental over  $F$  if and only if  $[F(\alpha) : F]$  is  $\infty$ .
2.  $\alpha$  is algebraic over  $F$  if and only if  $[F(\alpha) : F] < \infty$ .

Moreover, if  $p(x)$  is the minimal polynomial of  $\alpha$  over  $F$ , we have  $[F(\alpha) : F] = \deg(p)$  and  $\{1, \alpha, \alpha^2, \dots, \alpha^{\deg(p)-1}\}$  is a basis of  $F(\alpha)/F$ .

*Proof.* It suffices to prove the forward direction for each statement as the inverse direction implies the other statement.

(1) **Forwards:** From Theorem 2, if  $\alpha$  is transcendental over  $F$ , then  $F(x) \cong F(\alpha)$ . In  $F(x)$ , the elements  $\{1, x, x^2, \dots\}$  are linearly independent over  $F$ . Thus,  $[F(\alpha) : F]$  is  $\infty$ .

(2) **Forwards:** From Theorem 3, if  $\alpha$  is algebraic over  $F$ ,  $F[x]/\langle p(x) \rangle \cong F(\alpha)$  with the map  $x \mapsto \alpha$ . Note that,

$$F[x]/\langle p(x) \rangle \cong \{r(x) \in F[x] : \deg(r) < \deg(p)\} \quad (\deg(0) = -\infty)$$

Thus,  $\{1, x, x^2, \dots, x^{\deg(p)-1}\}$  forms a basis for  $F[x]/\langle p(x) \rangle$ . It follows that  $[F(\alpha) : F] = \deg(p)$  and  $\{1, \alpha, \alpha^2, \dots, \alpha^{\deg(p)-1}\}$  is a basis of  $F(\alpha)/F$ .  $\square$

**Theorem 5.** Let  $E/F$  be a field extension. If  $[E : F] < \infty$ , then there exists  $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n \in E$  such that

$$F \subsetneq F(\alpha_1) \subsetneq \dots \subsetneq F(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = E.$$

*Proof.* We proceed with induction on  $[E : F]$ . If  $[E : F] = 1$ ,  $E = F$ . Suppose that  $[E : F] > 1$  and the statement holds for any field extension  $\tilde{E}/\tilde{F}$  with  $[\tilde{E} : \tilde{F}] < [E : F]$ . Let  $\alpha_1 \in E/F$ . By Theorem 1,

$$[E : F] = [E : F(\alpha_1)][F(\alpha_1) : F].$$

Since  $[F(\alpha) : F] > 1$ , we have  $[E : F] > [E : F(\alpha_1)]$ . By induction hypothesis, there exists  $\alpha_2, \dots, \alpha_n$  such that

$$F(\alpha_1) \subsetneq \dots \subsetneq F(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = E.$$

Thus, we have

$$F \subsetneq F(\alpha_1) \subsetneq \dots \subsetneq F(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = E.$$

as desired.  $\square$

**Definition 2.2.6.** A field extension  $E/F$  is algebraic if every  $\alpha \in E$  is algebraic over  $F$ . Otherwise, it is transcendental.

**Theorem 6.** Let  $E/F$  be a field extension. If  $[E : F] < \infty$ , then  $E/F$  is algebraic.

*Proof.* Suppose  $[E : F] = n$ . For  $\alpha \in E$ , the elements  $\{1, \alpha, \dots, \alpha^n\}$  are not linearly independent over  $F$ . Thus, there exists  $c_i \in F$  for all  $i = 0, \dots, n$ , not all 0, such that

$$\sum_{i=0}^n c_i \alpha^i = 0$$

Thus,  $\alpha$  is a root of the polynomial  $\sum_{i=0}^n c_i \alpha^i \in F[x]$  so it is algebraic over  $F$ .  $\square$

**Theorem 7.** Let  $E/F$  be a field extension. Define,

$$L := \{\alpha \in E : [F(\alpha) : F] < \infty\}.$$

Then  $L$  is an intermediate field of  $E/F$ .

*Proof.* If  $\alpha, \beta \in L$  with  $\beta \neq 0$ , we need to show that  $\alpha \pm \beta, \alpha\beta, \frac{\alpha}{\beta} \in L$ . By definition of  $L$ , we have  $[F(\alpha) : F] < \infty$  and  $[F(\beta) : F] < \infty$ . Consider the field  $F(\alpha, \beta)$ . Since the minimal polynomial of  $\alpha$  over  $F(\beta)$  divides the minimal polynomial of  $\alpha$  over  $F$  (the minimal polynomial of  $\alpha$  over  $F$ , say  $p(x) \in F[x]$ , is also a polynomial over  $F(\beta)$ ). In other words,  $p(x) \in F(\beta)[x]$  such that  $p(\alpha) = 0$ , we have

$$[F(\alpha, \beta) : F(\beta)] \leq [F(\alpha) : F].$$

Combining this with Theorem 1, we have

$$\begin{aligned} [F(\alpha, \beta) : F] &= [F(\alpha, \beta) : F(\beta)][F(\beta) : F] \\ &\leq [F(\alpha) : F][F(\beta) : F] \end{aligned}$$

Since  $\alpha + \beta \in F(\alpha, \beta)$ , it follows that

$$[F(\alpha + \beta) : F] \leq [F(\alpha, \beta) : F] < \infty,$$

so  $a + b \in L$ . We can follow a similar line to show  $\alpha - \beta, \alpha\beta, \frac{\alpha}{\beta} \in L$ . So  $L$  is a field.  $\square$

**Definition 2.2.7.** Let  $E/F$  be a field extension. The set,

$$L := \{\alpha \in E : [F(\alpha) : F] < \infty\}$$

is called the algebraic closure of  $F$  in  $E$ .

**Definition 2.2.8.** A field  $F$  is algebraically closed if for any algebraic extension  $E/F$ , we have  $E = F$ .

**Example 2.2.9.** By the Fundamental Theorem of Algebra,  $\mathbb{C}$  is algebraically closed.

### 2.3 Eisenstein's Criterion

**Definition 2.3.1.** Let  $f(x) = a_n x^n + \cdots + a_1 x + a_0 \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$ . We say  $f(x)$  is primitive if  $a_n > 0$  and  $\gcd(a_0, \dots, a_n) = 1$ .

**Lemma.** Every non-zero polynomial  $f(x) \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$  can be written uniquely as a product  $F(x) = c f_0(x)$  where  $c \in \mathbb{Q}$  and  $f_0(x)$  is a primitive polynomial on  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ . Moreover,  $f(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$  if and only if  $c \in \mathbb{Z}$ . If so, then  $|c|$  is the greatest common divisor of the coefficients of  $f(x)$  and the sign of  $c$  is the sign of the leading coefficient of  $f(x)$ .

**Theorem** (Gauss' Lemma for  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ ). Let  $f(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$  be non-constant. If  $f(x)$  is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ , then it is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$ .

**Example 2.3.2.** The converse of Section 2.3 is not true. Consider the polynomial  $2x + 8$  is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$ , but  $2x + 8 = 2(x + 4)$  is reducible in  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ .

*Remark.*  $f(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$  is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$  if and only if either

1.  $f(x)$  is a prime integer
2.  $f(x)$  is a primitive polynomial which is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$

**Theorem 8** (Eisenstein's Criterion for  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ ). Let  $f(x) = a_n x^n + \cdots + a_1 x + a_0 \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$  and let  $p$  be a prime integer. Suppose that  $p \nmid a_n$ ,  $p \mid a_i$  for all  $0 \leq i \leq (n-1)$  and  $p^2 \nmid a_0$ , then  $f(x)$  is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$ . In particular, if  $f(x)$  is primitive, then it is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ .

*Proof.* Consider the map  $f : \mathbb{Z}[x] \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_p[x]$  defined by

$$f(x) \mapsto \bar{f}(x) = \bar{a}_n x^n + \cdots + \bar{a}_1 x + \bar{a}_0$$

where  $\bar{a}_i = a_i \pmod{p} \in \mathbb{Z}_p$ . Since  $p \nmid a_n$  and  $p \mid a_i$  for all  $0 \leq i \leq (n-1)$ , we have  $\bar{f}(x) = \bar{a}_n x^n$  with  $\bar{a}_n \neq 0$ . If  $f(x)$  is reducible in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$ , then it can be factored in  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$  into polynomials of positive degree, say  $f(x) = g(x)h(x)$  with  $g(x), h(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$  and  $\deg(g), \deg(h) \geq 1$ . It follows that  $\bar{a}_n x^n = \bar{g}(x)\bar{h}(x)$  from which we see that  $\bar{g}(x)$  and  $\bar{h}(x)$  have no constant terms in  $\mathbb{Z}_p[x]$ , as  $\mathbb{Z}_p[x]$  is a UFD. Since the constants of both  $g(x)$  and  $h(x)$  are divisible by  $p$ , this implies that the constant of  $f(x)$  is divisible by  $p^2$ , which leads to a contradiction. So,  $f(x)$  is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$   $\square$

**Example 2.3.3.** The polynomial  $2x^7 + 3x^4 + 6x^2 + 12$  is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$  by applying Eisenstein's Criterion with  $p = 3$ .



**Example 2.3.4.** Consider the  $n^{\text{th}}$  cyclotomic polynomial defined by

$$\Phi_n(x) = \sum_{\substack{1 \leq k \leq n \\ \gcd(k, n) = 1}} \left( x - e^{2i\pi \frac{k}{n}} \right).$$

If  $n = p$  where  $p$  is a prime number, then  $\xi_p = e^{\frac{2i\pi}{p}} = \cos \frac{2\pi}{p} + i \sin \frac{2\pi}{p}$  (the  $p^{\text{th}}$  root of 1) is a root of the  $p^{\text{th}}$  cyclotomic polynomial. Notice here, since  $p$  is co-prime with all  $1 \leq k \leq p$ , we have

$$\Phi_p(x) = x^{p-1} + x^{p-2} + \cdots + x + 1 = \frac{x^p - 1}{x - 1}$$

Eisenstein's Criterion does not imply the irreducibility of  $\Phi_p(x)$  immediately; however, consider

$$\Phi_p(x+1) = \frac{(x+1)^p - 1}{x} = x^{p-1} + \binom{p}{1}x^{p-2} + \cdots + \binom{p}{p-2}x + \binom{p}{p-1} \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$$

with the Binomial Theorem. Since  $p$  is prime,  $p \nmid 1$ ,  $p \mid \binom{p}{i}, \forall i \in \{1, \dots, p-1\}$  and  $p^2 \nmid \binom{p}{p-1}$ . Here, Eisenstein's Criterion gives that  $\Phi_p(x+1)$  is irreducible in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$ , but if  $\Phi_p(x) = g(x)f(x)$ , then  $\Phi_p(x+1) = g(x+1)h(x+1)$  gives a factorization for  $\Phi_p(x+1)$ , so  $\Phi_p(x)$  must be irreducible in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$  as well. Furthermore, since  $\Phi_p(x)$  is primitive,  $\Phi_p(x)$  is also irreducible in  $\mathbb{Z}[x]$ .

**Example 2.3.5.** Let  $p$  be prime and  $\xi_p = e^{\frac{2i\pi}{p}}$ . Since it is a root of  $\Phi_p(x)$ , which is irreducible, by Theorem 4,

$$[\mathbb{Q}(\xi_p) : \mathbb{Q}] = \deg(\Phi_p(x)) = p - 1.$$

The field  $\mathbb{Q}(\xi_p)$  is called the  $p^{\text{th}}$  cyclotomic extension on  $\mathbb{Q}$ .

**Example 2.3.6.** Let  $\bar{\mathbb{Q}}$  be the algebraic closure of  $\mathbb{Q}$  in  $\mathbb{C}$ . Since  $\xi_p \in \mathbb{Q}$ , we have

$$[\bar{\mathbb{Q}} : \mathbb{Q}] \geq [\mathbb{Q}(\xi_p) : \mathbb{Q}] = p - 1.$$

Since  $p \rightarrow \infty$ , we have  $[\bar{\mathbb{Q}} : \mathbb{Q}]$  is  $\infty$ . We have seen in Theorem 6 that if  $E/F$  is finite, then  $E/F$  is algebraic. However, this example shows that the converse is false.



Now, let  $R$  be any unique factorization domain and let  $F$  be its fraction field. Then  $R[x]$  is a subring of  $F[x]$ .

**Lemma** (Gauss' Lemma). *Let  $R$  be a UFD with the fraction field  $F$ . Let  $f(x) \in R[x]$  be non-constant. If  $f(x)$  is irreducible in  $R[x]$ , then it is irreducible in  $F[x]$ .*

**Theorem 9** (Eisenstein's Criterion). *Let  $R$  be a UFD with the fraction field  $F$ . Let  $\ell$  be an irreducible element of  $R$ . If  $f(x) = a_n x^n + \cdots + a_1 x + a_0 \in R[x]$  with  $n \geq 1$ ,  $\ell \nmid a_n$ ,  $\ell \mid a_i$ , for all  $0 \leq i \leq n-1$  and  $\ell^2 \nmid a_0$ , then  $f(x)$  is irreducible in  $F[x]$ .*

### 3 Splitting Fields

**Definition 3.0.1.** Let  $E/F$  be a field extension. We say  $f(x) \in R[x]$  splits over  $E$  if  $E$  contains all roots of  $f(x)$ . In other words,  $f(x)$  is a product of linear factors in  $E[x]$ .

**Definition 3.0.2.** Let  $\tilde{E}/F$ ,  $f(x) \in F[x]$  and  $F \subseteq E \subseteq \tilde{E}$ . If

1.  $f(x)$  splits over  $E$
2. there is no proper subfield of  $E$  such that  $f(x)$  splits over  $E$ ,

then we say  $E$  is a splitting field of  $f(x) \in F[x]$  in  $\tilde{E}$ .

#### 3.1 Existence of Splitting Fields

**Theorem 10.** Let  $p(x) \in F[x]$  be irreducible. The quotient ring  $F[x]/\langle p(x) \rangle$  is a field containing  $F$  and a root of  $p(x)$ .

*Proof.* Since  $p(x)$  is irreducible, the ideal  $I = \langle p(x) \rangle$  is maximal. Thus,  $E = F[x]/I$  is a field. Consider the map

$$\Psi : F \rightarrow E, \quad a \mapsto a + I$$

Since  $F$  is a field and  $\Psi \neq 0$ ,  $\Psi$  is injective. Thus, by identifying  $F$  with  $\Psi(F)$ ,  $F$  is a subfield of  $E$ .

**Claim.** Let  $\alpha = x + I \in E$ . Then  $\alpha$  is a root of  $p(x)$ .

Notice,

$$\begin{aligned} p(x) &= a_0 + a_1x + \cdots + a_nx^n \\ &= (a_0 + I) + (a_1 + I)x + \cdots + (a_n + I)x^n \\ &\in E[x]. \end{aligned}$$

Thus, we have

$$\begin{aligned} p(\alpha) &= (a_0 + I) + (a_1 + I)\alpha + \cdots + (a_n + I)\alpha^n \\ &= (a_0 + I) + (a_1 + I)(x + I) + \cdots + (a_n + I)(x + I)^n \\ &= (a_0 + a_1x + \cdots + a_nx^n) + I && (\text{since } (x + I)^i = x^i + I) \\ &= p(x) + I \\ &= 0 + I \\ &= I \end{aligned}$$

Thus,  $\alpha = x + I \in E$  is a root of  $p(x)$ . □

**Theorem 11** (Kronecker). Let  $f(x) \in F[x]$ . There exists a field  $E$  containing  $F$  such that  $f(x)$  splits over  $E$ .

*Proof.* We proceed with induction on  $\deg(f)$ . If  $\deg(f) = 1$ , let  $E = F$  and we are done. Suppose  $\deg(f) > 1$  and the statement holds for all  $g(x)$  with  $\deg(g) < \deg(f)$  ( $g(x)$  need not to be in  $F[x]$ ). We write  $f(x) = p(x)h(x)$ , where  $p(x), h(x) \in F[x]$  and  $p(x)$  is irreducible. By Theorem 10, there exists a field  $K$  such that  $F \subseteq K$  and  $K$  containing a root of  $p(x)$ , say  $\alpha$ . Thus,  $p(x) = (x - \alpha)q(x)$  and  $f(x) = (x - \alpha)g(x)h(x)$  where  $q(x) \in K[x]$ . Since  $\deg(hq) < \deg(f)$ , by induction, there exists a field  $E$  containing  $K$  over which  $h(x)q(x)$  splits. It follows that  $f(x)$  splits over  $E$ . □

**Theorem 12.** Every  $f(x) \in F[x]$  has a splitting field, which is a finite extension of  $F$ .

*Proof.* For  $f(x) \in F[x]$ , by Theorem 11, there exists a field extension  $E/F$  over which  $f(x)$  splits, say  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots, \alpha_n$  are roots of  $f(x) \in E$ . Consider  $F(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)$ . The field contains all the roots of  $f(x)$  and  $f(x)$  does not split over any proper subfield of it. Thus,  $F(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)$  is the splitting field of  $f(x)$  in  $E$ . In addition, since  $\alpha_i$  are all algebraic,  $F(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)/F$  is finite.  $\square$

### 3.2 Uniqueness of Splitting Fields

We have seen from Theorem 12 that for a field extension  $\tilde{E}/F$ , a splitting field of  $f(x) \in F[x]$  in  $E$  is of the form  $F(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)$  where  $\alpha_i$  are roots of  $f(x)$  in  $\tilde{E}$ . Thus, it is unique within  $\tilde{E}$ .

If we change  $E/F$  to a different field extension, say  $E'/F$ , what is the relation between the splitting field of  $f(x)$  in  $E$  and the one in  $E'$ ?

**Definition 3.2.1.** Let  $\phi : R \rightarrow R'$  be a ring homomorphism, and  $\Phi : R[x] \rightarrow R'[x]$  be the unique ring homomorphism satisfying  $\Phi|_R = \phi$  and  $\Phi(x) = x$ . In this case, we say  $\Phi$  extends  $\phi$ . More generally, if  $R \subseteq S$ ,  $R' \subseteq S'$ , and  $\Phi : S \rightarrow S'$  is a ring homomorphism with  $\Phi|_R = \phi$ , we say  $\Phi$  extends  $\phi$ .

**Theorem 13.** Let  $\phi : F \rightarrow F'$  be an isomorphism of fields and  $f(x) \in F[x]$ . Let  $\Phi : F[x] \rightarrow F'[x]$  be the unique ring homomorphism which extends  $\phi$ . Let  $f'(x) = \Phi(f(x))$  and  $E/F$  and  $E'/F'$  be splitting fields of  $f(x)$  and  $f'(x)$  respectively. Then there exists an isomorphism  $\Psi : E \rightarrow E'$ .

*Proof.* We proceed with induction on  $[E : F]$ . If  $[E : F] = 1$ , then  $f(x)$  is a product of linear factors in  $F[x]$ , and so is  $f'(x)$  in  $F'[x]$ . Thus,  $E = F$  and  $E' = F'$  so take  $\Psi = \phi$  and we are done. Now, suppose  $[E : F] < \infty$  and the statement is true for all field extensions  $\tilde{E}/\tilde{F}$  with  $[\tilde{E} : \tilde{F}] < [E : F]$ . Let  $p(x) \in F[x]$  be an irreducible factor of  $f(x)$  with  $\deg(p) > 1$  and let  $p'(x) = \Phi(p(x))$  (such  $p(x)$  exists as if all irreducible factors of  $f(x)$  are of degree 1, then  $[E : F] = 1$ ). Let  $\alpha \in E$  and  $\alpha' \in E'$  be roots of  $p(x)$  and  $p'(x)$  respectively. From Theorem 3, we have an  $F$ -isomorphism,

$$F(\alpha) \cong F[x]/\langle p(x) \rangle, \quad \alpha \mapsto x + \langle p(x) \rangle$$

Similarly, there is an  $F'$ -isomorphism,

$$F'(\alpha') \cong F'[x]/\langle p'(x) \rangle, \quad \alpha' \mapsto x + \langle p'(x) \rangle$$

Consider the isomorphism  $\Phi : F[x] \rightarrow F'[x]$  which extends  $\phi$ . Since  $p'(x) = \Phi(p(x))$ , there exists a field isomorphism,

$$\tilde{\Phi} : F[x]/\langle p(x) \rangle \rightarrow F'[x]/\langle p'(x) \rangle, \quad x + \langle p(x) \rangle \mapsto x + \langle p'(x) \rangle$$

which extends  $\phi$ . It follows that there exists a field isomorphism,

$$\tilde{\phi} : F(\alpha) \rightarrow F'(\alpha'), \quad \alpha \mapsto \alpha'$$

which extends  $\phi$ . Note that since  $\deg(p) > 1$ ,  $[E : F(\alpha)] < [E : F]$ . Since  $E$  (respectively  $E'$ ) is the splitting field of  $f(x) \in F(\alpha)[x]$  (respectively  $f(x) \in F(\alpha')[x]$ ) over  $F(\alpha)$  (respectively  $F(\alpha')$ ), by induction, there exists  $\Psi : E \rightarrow E'$  which extends  $\tilde{\phi}$ . Thus,  $\Psi$  extends  $\phi$ .  $\square$

**Corollary 14.** Any two splitting fields of  $f(x) \in F[x]$  over  $F$  are  $F$ -isomorphic. Thus, we say “the” splitting field of  $f(x)$  over  $F$ .

*Proof.* Let  $\phi : F \rightarrow F$  be the identity map and apply Theorem 13  $\square$

### 3.3 Degree of Splitting Fields

**Theorem 15.** *If  $E/F$  is the splitting field of  $f(x)$ , then  $[E : F] \mid \deg(f)!$ .*

*Proof.* We proceed by induction on  $\deg(f)$ . If  $\deg(f) = 1$ , choose  $E = F$  and we have  $[E : F] \mid 1$ . Suppose  $\deg(f) > 1$  and the statement holds for all  $g(x)$  with  $\deg(g) < \deg(f)$ . We break this down into 2 cases.

**Case 1:** If  $f(x) \in F[x]$  is irreducible and  $\alpha \in E$  is a root of  $f(x)$ , by Theorem 13,

$$F(\alpha) \cong F[x]/\langle f(x) \rangle \quad \text{and} \quad [F(\alpha) : F] = \deg(f) = n.$$

We write  $f(x) = (x - \alpha)g(x) \in F(\alpha)[x]$  with  $g(x) \in F(\alpha)[x]$ . Since  $E$  is the splitting field of  $g(x)$  over  $F(\alpha)$  and  $\deg(g) = n - 1$ , by induction hypothesis,  $[E : F(\alpha)] \mid (n - 1)!$ . Since  $[E : F] = [E : F(\alpha)][F(\alpha) : F]$ , it follows that  $[E : F] \mid n!$ .

**Case 2:** If  $f(x)$  is not irreducible, write  $f(x) = g(x)h(x)$  with  $g(x), h(x) \in F[x]$ ,  $\deg(g) = m$ ,  $\deg(h) = k$ ,  $1 \leq m, k < n$  and  $m + k = n$ . Let  $K$  be the splitting field of  $g(x)$  over  $F$ . Since  $\deg(g) = m$ , by induction,  $[K : F] \mid m!$ . Since  $E$  is the splitting field of  $h(x)$  over  $K$  and  $\deg(h) = k$ , by induction hypothesis,  $[E : K] \mid k!$ . Thus,  $[E : F] \mid m!k!$ , which is a factor of  $n!$  as

$$\frac{n!}{m!k!} = \binom{n}{m} \in \mathbb{Z}$$

□

## 4 Finite Fields

### 4.1 Prime Fields

**Definition 4.1.1.** The prime field of a field  $F$  is the intersection of all subfields of  $F$ .

**Theorem 16.** If  $F$  is a field, then its prime field is isomorphic to either  $\mathbb{Q}$  or  $\mathbb{Z}_p := \mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z}$  for some prime  $p$ .

*Proof.* Consider the ring map  $\chi : \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow F$  defined by

$$\chi(n) = n \cdot 1 = \underbrace{1 + \cdots + 1}_{n \text{ times}}$$

Let  $I = \ker(\chi)$ , the kernel of  $\chi$ . Since  $\mathbb{Z}/I \cong \text{im}(\chi)$ , a subring of  $F$ , it is an integral domain. Thus,  $I$  is a prime ideal. We break this down to two cases.

Case 1: If  $I = \langle 0 \rangle$ , then  $\mathbb{Z} \subseteq F$ . Since  $F$  is a field,  $\mathbb{Q} = \text{Frac}(\mathbb{Z}) \subseteq F$ .

Case 2: If  $I = \langle p \rangle$ , then

$$\mathbb{Z}_p = \mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z} \cong \text{im } \chi \subseteq F$$

□

**Definition 4.1.2.** Given a field  $F$ , if its prime field is isomorphic to  $\mathbb{Q}$  (respectively  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ ), we say  $F$  has characteristic 0 (respectively characteristic  $p$ ) denoted by  $\text{ch}(F) = 0$  (respectively  $\text{ch}(F) = p$ ).

*Remark.* Note that if  $\text{ch}(F) = p$ , for  $a, b \in F$ ,

$$(a + b)^p = a^p + b^p.$$

Using this property, the following proposition follows.

**Proposition 17.** Let  $F$  be a field with  $\text{ch}(F) = p$  and let  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ . Then, the map  $\phi : F \rightarrow F$  given by  $u \mapsto u^{p^n}$  is an injective  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ -homomorphism of fields. If  $F$  is finite, then  $\phi$  is a  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ -isomorphism of  $F$ .

### 4.2 Formal Derivatives and Repeated Roots

**Definition 4.2.1.** If  $F$  is a field, the monomials  $\{1, x, x^2, \dots\}$  for a  $F$ -basis of  $F[x]$ . Define the linear operator

$$D : F[x] \rightarrow F[x]$$

by  $D(1) = 0$  and  $D(x^i) = ix^{i-1}$  for all  $i \in \mathbb{N}$ . Thus for

$$f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + \cdots + a_nx^n, a_i \in F$$

we have

$$D(f)(x) = a_1 + 2a_2x + \cdots + na_nx^{n-1}.$$

Note that

1.  $D$  is linear:  $D(f + g) = D(f) + D(g)$
2.  $D$  respects the Leibniz Rule:  $D(fg) = (D(f))g + f(D(g))$ .

We call  $D(f) = f'$  the formal derivative of  $f$ .

**Theorem 18.** Let  $F$  be a field and  $f(x) \in F[x]$ .

1. If  $\text{ch}(F) = 0$ , then  $f'(x) = 0$  if and only if  $f(x) = c$  for some  $c \in F$ .
2. If  $\text{ch}(F) = p$ , then  $f'(x) = 0$  if and only if  $f(x) = g(x^p)$  for some  $g(x) \in F[x]$

*Proof.* 1. Backwards is trivial. Suppose we have  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + \cdots + a_nx^n$ , then  $f'(x) = a_1 + 2a_2x + \cdots + na_nx^{n-1} = 0$ . This implies that  $ia_i = 0$  for all  $1 \leq i \leq n$ . Since  $\text{ch}(F) = 0$ ,  $i \neq 0$ . Thus,  $a_i = 0$  for all  $i \geq 1$ . This,  $f(x) = a_0 \in F$ .

2. Forwards. For  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + \cdots + a_nx^n$ ,  $f'(x) = a_1 + 2a_2x + \cdots + na_nx^{n-1} = 0$  implies that  $ia_i = 0$  for all  $1 \leq i \leq n$ . Since  $\text{ch}(F) = p$ ,  $ia_i = 0$  implies that  $ia_i = 0$  implies that  $a_i = 0$  unless  $p \mid i$ . Thus,

$$f(x) = a_0 + a_px^p + \cdots + a_{mp}x^{mp} = g(x^p)$$

where  $g(x) = a_0 + a_px^p + \cdots + a_{mp}x^m \in F[x]$ .

Backwards. Write  $g(x) = b_0 + b_1x + \cdots + b_mx^m \in F[x]$ . Then,

$$f(x) = g(x^p) = b_0 + b_1x^p + \cdots + b_mx^{mp}.$$

Thus,  $f'(x) = pb_1x^{p-1} + 2pb_2x^{2p-1} + \cdots + mpb_mx^{pm-1}$ . Since  $\text{ch}(F) = p$ , we have  $f'(x) = 0$ . □

**Definition 4.2.2.** Let  $E/F$  is a field extension and  $f(x) \in F[x]$ . We say  $\alpha \in E$  is a repeated root of  $f(x)$  if  $f(x) = (x - \alpha)^2g(x)$  for some  $g(x) \in E[x]$ .

**Theorem 19.** Let  $E/F$  is a field extension and  $f(x) \in F[x]$ . Then  $\alpha$  is a repeated root of  $f(x)$  if and only if  $(x - \alpha)$  divides both  $f$  and  $f'$ . In other words,  $(x - \alpha) \mid \gcd(f, f')$ .

*Proof.* Forwards. Suppose  $f(x) = (x - \alpha)^2g(x)$ . Then,

$$\begin{aligned} f'(x) &= 2(x - \alpha)g(x) + (x - \alpha)^2g'(x) \\ &= (x - \alpha)(2g(x) + (x - \alpha)g'(x)) \end{aligned}$$

Thus,  $(x - \alpha)$  divides both  $f$  and  $f'$ .

Backwards. Suppose  $(x - \alpha)$  divides both  $f$  and  $f'$ . We write  $f(x) = (x - \alpha)h(x)$  where  $h(x) \in E[x]$ . Then,  $f'(x) = h(x) + (x - \alpha)h'(x)$ . Since  $f'(\alpha) = 0$ , we have  $h(\alpha) = 0$ . Thus,  $(x - \alpha)$  is a factor of  $h(x)$  and  $f(x) = (x - \alpha)^2g(x)$  for some  $g(x) \in E[x]$ . □

**Corollary 20.** Let  $F$  be a field and  $f(x) \in F[x]$ . Then  $f(x)$  has no repeated roots if and only if  $\gcd(f, f') = 1$ .

### 4.3 Finite Fields

**Proposition 21.** If  $F$  is a finite field, then  $\text{ch}(F) = p \neq 0$  for some prime  $p$  and  $|F| = p^n$  for some  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ .

*Proof.* Since  $F$  is a finite field, by Theorem 16, its prime field is  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ . Since  $F$  is a finite dimensional vector space over  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ , we have

$$F \cong \underbrace{\mathbb{Z}_p \times \cdots \times \mathbb{Z}_p}_{n \text{ summands}}.$$

Thus  $|F| = p^n$ . □

**Theorem 22.** *Let  $F$  be a field and  $F^* = F \setminus \{0\}$ , multiplicative group of nonzero elements of  $F$ . Let  $G$  be a finite subgroup of  $F^*$ , then  $G$  is a cyclic group. In particular, if  $F$  is a finite field, then  $F^*$  is a cyclic group.*

*Proof.* If  $G = \langle 1 \rangle$ , the result follows immediately. Otherwise, since  $G$  is a finite abelian group,

$$G \cong \mathbb{Z}/n_1\mathbb{Z} \times \cdots \times \mathbb{Z}/n_r\mathbb{Z}$$

where  $n_i > 1$  and  $n_1 \mid \cdots \mid n_r$ . Since  $n_r \left( \mathbb{Z}/n_1\mathbb{Z} \times \cdots \times \mathbb{Z}/n_r\mathbb{Z} \right) = 0$ , it follows that every  $u \in G$  is a root of  $x^{n_r} - 1 \in F[x]$ . Since the polynomial has at most  $n_r$  distinct roots in  $F$ , we have  $r = 1$  and  $G \cong \mathbb{Z}/n_r\mathbb{Z}$ . □

By taking  $u$  to be a generator of the multiplicative group  $F^*$ , we have the following corollary.

**Corollary 23.** *If  $F$  is a finite field, then  $F$  is a simple extension of  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ . In other words,  $F = \mathbb{Z}_p(u)$  for some  $u \in F$ .*

**Proposition 24.** *Let  $p$  be prime and  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ . Then  $F$  is a finite field with  $|F| = p^n$  if and only if  $F$  is a splitting field of  $x^{p^n} - x$  over  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ .*

*Proof. Forwards:* If  $|F| = p^n$ , then  $|F^*| = p^n - 1$ . Thus, every  $u \in F$  satisfies  $u^{p^n-1} = 1$  and thus is a root of  $x(x^{p^n-1} - 1) = x^{p^n} - x \in \mathbb{Z}_p[x]$ . Since  $0 \in F$  is also a root of  $x^{p^n} - x$ , the polynomial  $x^{p^n} - x$  has distinct  $p^n$  distinct roots in  $F$ . In other words, it splits over  $F$ . Thus  $F$  is a splitting field of  $x^{p^n} - x$  over  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ .

*Backwards:* Suppose  $F$  is a splitting field of  $f(x) = x^{p^n} - x$  over  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ . Since  $\text{ch}(F) = p$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned} f'(x) &= p^n x^{p^n-1} - 1 \\ &\equiv -1 \pmod{p}. \end{aligned}$$

Now, since  $\gcd(f, f') = 1$ , by Corollary 20,  $f(x)$  has  $p^n$  distinct roots in  $F$ . Let  $E$  be the set of the roots of  $f(x)$  in  $F$ . Let  $\varphi : F \rightarrow F$  be given by  $u \mapsto u^{p^n}$ . For  $u \in F$ ,  $u$  is a root of  $f(x)$  if and only if  $\varphi(u) = u$ . Thus, the set  $E$  is a subfield of  $F$  of order  $p^n$  which contains  $\mathbb{Z}_p$ . Since  $F$  is a splitting field, it is generated over  $\mathbb{Z}_p$  by the roots of  $f(x)$ , in other words, the elements of  $E$ . Thus,  $F = \mathbb{Z}_p(E) = E$ . □

As a direct consequence of Proposition 24 and Corollary 14, we have the following corollary.

**Corollary 25** (E. H. Moore). *Let  $p$  be a prime and  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ . Then any two finite field of order  $p^n$  are isomorphic.*

## 4.4 Separable Polynomials

**Definition 4.4.1.** Let  $F$  be a field and  $f(x) \in F[x]$ ,  $f \neq 0$ . If  $f(x)$  is irreducible, we say  $f(x)$  is separable over  $F$  if it has no repeated root in any extension  $E$  of  $F$ . In the general case, we say  $f(x)$  is separable over  $F$  if each irreducible factor of  $f$  is separable over  $F$ .

**Example 4.4.2.**  $f(x) = (x - 2)^2$  is separable over  $\mathbb{Q}$ .