

# MATH457 - Algebra 4

Representation Theory; Galois Theory

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## §1 REPRESENTATION THEORY

Recall that in studying group theory, we studied the notation of a group “acting” on a set. Representation theory studies group actions on vector spaces, which takes the notion of a group action on a set, and makes it compatible with the vector space structure.

### §1.1 Introduction

↪ **Definition 1.1** (Linear Representation): A *linear representation* of a group  $G$  is a vector space  $V$  over a field  $\mathbb{F}$  equipped with a map  $G \times V \rightarrow V$  that makes  $V$  a  $G$ -set in such a way that for each  $g \in G$ , the map  $v \mapsto gv$  is a linear homomorphism of  $V$ .

This induces a homomorphism

$$\rho : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}_{\mathbb{F}}(V),$$

or, in particular, when  $n = \dim_{\mathbb{F}} V < \infty$ , a homomorphism

$$\rho : G \rightarrow \text{GL}_n(\mathbb{F}).$$

Alternatively, a linear representation  $V$  can be viewed as a module over the group ring  $\mathbb{F}[G] = \left\{ \sum_{g \in G} \lambda_g g : \lambda_g \in \mathbb{F} \right\}$  (where we require all but finitely many scalars  $\lambda_g$  to be zero).

↪ **Definition 1.2** (Irreducible Representation): A linear representation  $V$  of a group  $G$  is called *irreducible* if there exists no proper, nontrivial *subspace*  $W \subsetneq V$  such that  $W$  is  $G$ -stable.

#### ⊗ Example 1.1:

1. Consider  $G = \mathbb{Z}/2 = \{1, \tau\}$ . If  $V$  a linear representation of  $G$  and  $\rho : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}(V)$ . Then,  $V$  uniquely determined by  $\rho(\tau)$ . Let  $p(x)$  be the minimal polynomial of  $\rho(\tau)$ . Then,  $p(x) \mid x^2 - 1$ . Suppose  $\mathbb{F}$  is a field in which  $2 \neq 0$ . Then,  $p(x) \mid (x - 1)(x + 1)$  and so  $p(x)$  has either  $1, -1$ , or both as eigenvalues and thus we may write

$$V = V_+ \oplus V_-,$$

where  $V_{\pm} := \{v \mid \tau v = \pm v\}$ . Hence,  $V$  is irreducible only if one of  $V_+, V_-$  all of  $V$  and the other is trivial, or in other words  $\tau$  acts only as multiplication by  $1$  or  $-1$ .

2. Let  $G = \{g_1, \dots, g_N\}$  be a finite abelian group, and suppose  $\mathbb{F}$  an algebraically closed field of characteristic  $0$  (such as  $\mathbb{C}$ ). Let  $\rho : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}(V)$  and denote  $T_j := \rho(g_j)$  for  $j = 1, \dots, N$ . Then,  $\{T_1, \dots, T_N\}$  is a set of mutually commuting linear transformations. Then, there exists a simultaneous eigenvector, say  $v$ , for  $\{T_1, \dots, T_N\}$ , and so  $\text{span}(v)$  a  $G$ -stable subspace of  $V$ . Thus, if  $V$  irreducible, it must be that  $\dim_{\mathbb{F}} V = 1$ .

↪ **Theorem 1.1**: If  $G$  a finite abelian group and  $V$  an irreducible finite dimensional representation over an algebraically closed field of characteristic  $0$ , then  $\dim V = 1$ .

PROOF. Let  $\rho : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}(V)$ , label  $G = \{g_1, \dots, g_N\}$  and put  $T_j := \rho(g_j)$  for  $j = 1, \dots, N$ . Then,  $\{T_1, \dots, T_N\}$  a family of mutually commuting linear transformations on  $V$ . Then, there is a simultaneous eigenvector  $v$  for  $\{T_1, \dots, T_N\}$  and thus  $\text{span}(v)$  is  $T_1, \dots, T_N$ -stable and so  $V = \text{span}(v)$ . ■

↪ **Lemma 1.1:** Let  $V$  be a finite dimensional vector space over  $\mathbb{C}$  and let  $T_1, \dots, T_N : V \rightarrow V$  be a family of mutually commuting linear automorphisms on  $V$ . Then, there is a simultaneous eigenvector for  $T_1, \dots, T_N$ .

↪ **Proposition 1.1:** Let  $\mathbb{F}$  a field where  $2 \neq 0$  and  $V$  an irreducible representation of  $S_3$ . Then, there are three distinct (i.e., up to homomorphism) possibilities for  $V$ .

PROOF. Let  $\rho : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}(V)$  and let  $T = \rho((23))$ . Then, notice that  $p_T(x) \mid (x^2 - 1)$  so  $T$  has eigenvalues in  $\{-1, 1\}$ .

If the only eigenvalue of  $T$  is  $-1$ , we claim that  $V$  one-dimensional.

If  $T$  has  $1$  as an eigenvalue. ■

↪ **Proposition 1.2:**  $D_8$  has a unique faithful irreducible representation, of dimension 2 over a field  $F$  in which  $0 \neq 2$ .

PROOF. Write  $G = D_8 = \{1, r, r^2, r^3, v, h, d_1, d_2\}$  as standard. Let  $\rho$  be our irreducible, faithful representation and let  $T = \rho(r^2)$ . Then,  $p_T(x) \mid x^2 - 1 = (x - 1)(x + 1)$  and so  $V = V_+ \oplus V_-$ , the respective eigenspaces for  $\lambda = +1, -1$  respectively for  $T$ . Then, notice that since  $r^2$  in the center of  $G$ , both  $V_+$  and  $V_-$  are preserved by the action of  $G$ , hence one must be trivial and the other the entirety of  $V$ .  $V$  can't equal  $V_+$ , else  $T = I$  on all of  $V$  hence  $\rho$  not faithful so  $V = V_-$ .

Next, it must be that  $\rho(h)$  has both eigenvalues  $1$  and  $-1$ . Let  $v_1 \in V$  be such that  $hv_1 = v_1$  and  $v_2 = rv_1$ . We claim that  $W := \text{span}\{v_1, v_2\}$ , namely  $V = W$  2-dimensional.

We simply check each element.  $rv_1 = v_2$  and  $rv_2 = r^2v_1 = -v_1$  which are both in  $W$  hence  $r$  and thus  $\langle r \rangle$  fixes  $W$ . Next,  $hv_1 = v_1$  and  $vv_2 = vrv_1 = rhv_1 = rv_1 = v_2$  (since  $rhr^{-1} = v$ ) and so  $hv_2 = -v_2$  and  $vv_1 = -v_1$  and so  $W$   $G$ -stable. Finally,  $d_1$  and  $d_2$  are just products of these elements and so  $W$   $G$ -stable. ■

↪ **Definition 1.3** (Isomorphism of Representations): Given a group  $G$  and two representations  $\rho_i : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}_{\mathbb{F}}(V_i)$ ,  $i = 1, 2$  an isomorphism of representations is a vector space isomorphism  $\varphi : V_1 \rightarrow V_2$  that respects the group action, namely

$$\varphi(gv) = g\varphi(v)$$

for every  $g \in G, v \in V_1$ .

## §1.2 Maschke's Theorem

↪ **Theorem 1.2** (Maschke's): Any representation of a finite group  $G$  over  $\mathbb{C}$  can be written as a direct sum of irreducible representations, i.e.

$$V = V_1 \oplus \cdots \oplus V_t,$$

where  $V_j$  irreducible.

**Remark 1.1:**  $|G| < \infty$  essential. For instance, consider  $G = (\mathbb{Z}, +)$  and 2-dimensional representation given by  $n \mapsto \begin{pmatrix} 1 & n \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ . Then,  $n \cdot e_1 = e_1$  and  $n \cdot e_2 = ne_1 + e_2$ . We have that  $\mathbb{C}e_1$  irreducible then. But if  $v = ae_1 + e_2 \in W := V \setminus \mathbb{C}e_1$ , then  $Gv = (a+1)e_1 + e_2$  so  $Gv - v = e_1 \in W$ , contradiction.

**Remark 1.2:**  $|\mathbb{C}|$  essential. Suppose  $F = \mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z}$  and  $V = Fe_1 \oplus Fe_2 \oplus Fe_3$ , and  $G = S_3$  acts on  $V$  by permuting the basis vectors  $e_i$ . Then notice that  $F(e_1 + e_2 + e_3)$  an irreducible subspace in  $V$ . Let  $W = F(w)$  with  $w := ae_1 + be_2 + ce_3$  be any other  $G$ -stable subspace. Then, by applying (123) repeatedly to  $w$  and adding the result, we find that  $(a+b+c)(e_1 + e_2 + e_3) \in W$ . Similarly, by applying (12), (23), (13) to  $w$ , we find  $(a-b)(e_1 - e_2)$ ,  $(b-c)(e_2 - e_3)$ ,  $(a-c)(e_1 - e_3)$  all in  $W$ . It must be that at least one of  $a-b, a-c, b-c$  nonzero, else we'd have  $w \in F(e_1 + e_2 + e_3)$ . Assume wlog  $a-b \neq 0$ . Then, we may apply  $(a-b)^{-1}$  and find  $e_1 - e_2 \in W$ . By applying (23), (13) to this vector and scaling, we find further  $e_2 - e_3$  and  $e_1 - e_3 \in W$ . But then,

$$2(e_1 - e_2) + 2(e_1 - e_3) = e_1 + e_2 + e_3 \in W,$$

so  $F(e_1 + e_2 + e_3)$  a subspace of  $W$ , a contradiction.

↪ **Proposition 1.3:** Let  $V$  be a representation of  $|G| < \infty$  over  $\mathbb{C}$  and let  $W \subseteq V$  a sub-representation. Then,  $W$  has a  $G$ -stable complement  $W'$ , such that  $V = W \oplus W'$ .

PROOF. Denote by  $\rho$  the homomorphism induced by the representation. Let  $W_0$  be any complementary subspace of  $W$  and let

$$\pi : V \rightarrow W$$

be a projection onto  $W$  along  $W_{0'}$ , i.e.  $\pi^2 = \pi$ ,  $\pi(V) = W$ , and  $\ker(\pi) = W_{0'}$ . Let us “replace”  $\pi$  by the “average”

$$\tilde{\pi} := \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \rho(g) \pi \rho(g)^{-1}.$$

Then the following hold:

- (1)  $\tilde{\pi}$   $G$ -equivariant, that is  $\tilde{\pi}(gv) = g\tilde{\pi}(v)$  for every  $g \in G, v \in V$ .
- (2)  $\tilde{\pi}$  a projection onto  $W$ .

Let  $W' = \ker(\tilde{\pi})$ . Then,  $W'$   $G$ -stable, and  $V = W \oplus W'$ . ■

We present an alternative proof to the previous proposition by appealing to the existence of a certain inner product on complex representations of finite groups.

↪ **Definition 1.4:** Given a vector space  $V$  over  $\mathbb{C}$ , a *Hermitian pairing/inner product* is a hermitian-bilinear map  $V \times V \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ ,  $(v, w) \mapsto \langle v, w \rangle$  such that

- linear in the first coordinate;
- conjugate-linear in the second coordinate;
- $\langle v, v \rangle \in \mathbb{R}^{\geq 0}$  and equal to zero iff  $v = 0$ .

↪ **Theorem 1.3:** Let  $V$  be a finite dimensional complex representation of a finite group  $G$ . Then, there is a hermitian inner product  $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$  such that  $\langle gv, gw \rangle = \langle v, w \rangle$  for every  $g \in G$  and  $v, w \in V$ .

PROOF. Let  $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle_0$  be any inner product on  $V$  (which exists by defining  $\langle e_i, e_j \rangle_0 = \delta_i^j$  and extending by conjugate linearity). We apply “averaging”:

$$\langle v, w \rangle := \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \langle gv, gw \rangle_0.$$

Then, one can check that  $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$  is hermitian linear, positive, and in particular  $G$ -equivariant. ■

From this, the previous proposition follows quickly by taking  $W' = W^\perp$ , the orthogonal complement to  $W$  with respect to the  $G$ -invariant inner product that the previous theorem provides.

From this proposition, Maschke’s follows by repeatedly applying this logic. Since at each stage  $V$  is split in two, eventually the dimension of the resulting dimensions will become zero since  $V$  finite dimensional. Hence, the remaining vector spaces  $V_1, \dots, V_t$  left will necessarily be irreducible, since if they weren’t, we could apply the proposition further.

↪ **Theorem 1.4** (Schur's Lemma): Let  $V, W$  be irreducible representations of a group  $G$ . Then,

$$\text{Hom}_G(V, W) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } V \not\cong_G W \\ \mathbb{C} & \text{if } V \cong_G W \end{cases}$$

where  $\text{Hom}_G(V, W) = \{T : V \rightarrow W \mid T \text{ linear and } G\text{-equivariant}\}$ .

PROOF. Suppose  $V \not\cong_G W$  and let  $T \in \text{Hom}_G(V, W)$ . Then, notice that  $\ker(T)$  a subrepresentation of  $V$  (a subspace that is a representation in its own right), but by assumption  $V$  irreducible hence either  $\ker(T) = V$  or  $\{0\}$ .

If  $\ker(T) = V$ , then  $T$  trivial, and if  $\ker(T) = \{0\}$ , then this implies  $T : V \rightarrow \text{im}(T) \subset W$  a representation isomorphism, namely  $\text{im}(T)$  a irreducible subrepresentation of  $W$ . This implies that, since  $W$  irreducible,  $\text{im}(T) = W$ , contradicting the original assumption.

Suppose now  $V \cong_G W$ . Let  $T \in \text{Hom}_G(V, W) = \text{End}_G(V)$ . Since  $\mathbb{C}$  algebraically closed,  $T$  has an eigenvalue,  $\lambda$ . Then, notice that  $T - \lambda I \in \text{End}_G(V)$  and so  $\ker(T - \lambda I) \subset V$  a, necessarily trivial because  $V$  irreducible, subrepresentation of  $V$ . Hence,  $T - \lambda I = 0 \Rightarrow T = \lambda I$  on  $V$ . It follows that  $\text{Hom}_G(V, W)$  a one-dimensional vector space over  $\mathbb{C}$ , so namely  $\mathbb{C}$  itself. ■

↪ **Corollary 1.1**: Given a general representation  $V = \bigoplus_{j=1}^t V_j^{m_j}$ ,

$$m_j = \dim_{\mathbb{C}} \text{Hom}_G(V_j, V).$$

↪ **Definition 1.5** (Trace): The trace of an endomorphism  $T : V \rightarrow V$  is the trace of any matrix defining  $T$ . Since the trace is conjugation-invariant, this is well-defined regardless of basis.

↪ **Proposition 1.4**: Let  $W \subseteq V$  a subspace and  $\pi : V \rightarrow W$  a projection. Then,  $\text{tr}(\pi) = \dim(W)$ .

↪ **Theorem 1.5**: If  $\rho : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}_{\mathbb{F}}(V)$  a complex representation of  $G$ , then

$$\dim(V^G) = \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \text{tr}(\rho(g)),$$

where  $V^G = \{v \in V : gv = v \forall g \in G\}$ .

PROOF. Let  $\pi = \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \rho(g)$ . Then,

$$\begin{aligned}
\pi^2 &= \left(\frac{1}{\#G}\right)^2 \sum_{g \in G} \sum_{h \in G} \rho(gh) \\
&= \left(\frac{1}{\#G}\right)^2 \#G \sum_{g \in G} \rho(g) = \pi.
\end{aligned}$$

We show  $V^G = \text{im}(\pi)$ . If  $v \in \text{im}(\pi)$ , then  $v = \pi(w)$ , so for every  $h \in G$ ,

$$\begin{aligned}
\rho(h)v &= \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \rho(hg)w \\
&= \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{hg \in G} \rho(hg)w \\
&= \pi(w) = v,
\end{aligned}$$

so  $v \in V^G$ . Conversely, if  $v \in V^G$ , then

$$\pi(v) = \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \rho(g)v = \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} v = v,$$

so  $v \in \text{im}(\pi)$ . Hence,  $\pi$  a projection with image  $V^G$ , so we conclude

$$\dim(V^G) = \text{tr}(\pi) = \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \text{tr}(\rho(g)).$$

■

### §1.3 Characters, Orthogonality, Number of Irreducible Representations

↪ **Definition 1.6:** Let  $\dim(V) < \infty$  and  $G$  a group. The *character* of  $V$  is the function

$$\chi_V : G \rightarrow \mathbb{C}, \quad \chi_V(g) := \text{tr}(\rho(g)).$$

↪ **Proposition 1.5:** Characters are class functions, namely constant on conjugacy classes.

PROOF. Follows from the fact that the trace of a matrix is conjugation invariant. ■

↪ **Proposition 1.6:** Given two representations  $V, W$  of  $G$ , there is a natural action of  $G$  on  $\text{Hom}(V, W)$  given by  $g * T = g \circ T \circ g^{-1}$ . Then,

$$\text{Hom}(V, W)^G = \{T : V \rightarrow W \mid g * T = T\},$$

so

$$\text{Hom}(V, W)^G = \text{Hom}_G(V, W).$$

↪ **Proposition 1.7:** Suppose  $V = V_1^{m_1} \oplus \cdots \oplus V_t^{m_t}$  a representation of  $G$  written in irreducible form. Then,

$$\text{Hom}_G(V_j, V) = \mathbb{C}^{(m)_j}.$$

PROOF. By Maschke's Theorem and Schur's Lemma combined,

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Hom}_G(V_j, V) &= \text{Hom}_G(V_j, V_1^{m_1} \oplus \cdots \oplus V_t^{m_t}) \\ &= \bigoplus_{i=1}^t \text{Hom}_G(V_j, V_i)^{m_i} \\ &= \mathbb{C}^{m_j} \end{aligned}$$

■

↪ **Proposition 1.8:** If  $V, W$  are two representations, then so is  $V \oplus W$  with point-wise action, and  $\chi_{V \oplus W} = \chi_V + \chi_W$ .

PROOF. We may pick an appropriate basis for  $g \in G$  such that  $g$  acts on  $V \oplus W$  as

$$g = \begin{pmatrix} [\rho_V(g)] & 0 \\ 0 & [\rho_W(g)] \end{pmatrix},$$

where  $\rho_V, \rho_W$  are the matrix representations of  $g$  acting on  $V, W$  respectively. From this, it is immediate that  $\text{tr}(g) = \text{tr}(\rho_V(g)) + \text{tr}(\rho_W(g)) = \chi_V + \chi_W$ . ■

↪ **Theorem 1.6:**  $\chi_{\text{Hom}(V, W)} = \overline{\chi_V} \chi_W$ .

PROOF. Let  $g \in G$  and  $e_1, \dots, e_n$  an eigenbasis for  $V$  such that  $ge_i = \lambda_i e_i$  and  $f_1, \dots, f_m$  an eigenbasis for  $W$  such that  $gf_j = \mu_j f_j$ . Then,

$$\{\varphi_i^j : V \rightarrow W \mid \varphi_i^j(e_\ell) = f_j \cdot \delta_i^\ell, 1 \leq i \leq n, 1 \leq j \leq m\}$$

is a basis for  $\text{Hom}(V, W)$ , upon which  $g$  acts by

$$\begin{aligned} g\varphi_i^j(g^{-1}e_\ell) &= g\varphi_i^j(\lambda_\ell^{-1}e_\ell) \\ &= \lambda_\ell^{-1}gf_j\delta_i^\ell \\ &= \lambda_\ell^{-1}\mu_j\delta_i^\ell, \end{aligned}$$

hence

$$\text{tr}(g) = \left( \sum_{i=1}^n \lambda_i^{-1} \right) \left( \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \right) = \left( \sum_{i=1}^n \overline{\lambda_i} \right) \left( \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \right) = \left( \sum_{i=1}^n \overline{\lambda_i} \right) \left( \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j \right) = \overline{\chi_V(g)} \chi_W(g)$$



where we use the fact that  $\lambda^{-1} = \bar{\lambda}$  being a root of unity, and complex conjugation is linear. ■

↪ **Theorem 1.7** (Orthogonality of Irreducible Group Characters): Suppose  $V_1, \dots, V_t$  is a list of irreducible representations of  $G$  and  $\chi_1, \dots, \chi_t$  are their corresponding characters. Then, the  $\chi_j$ 's naturally live in the space  $L^2(G) \simeq \mathbb{C}^{\#G}$ , which we can equip with the inner product

$$\langle f_1, f_2 \rangle : \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \overline{f_1(g)} f_2(g).$$

Then,

$$\langle \chi_i, \chi_j \rangle = \delta_i^j.$$

PROOF.

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \chi_i, \chi_j \rangle &= \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \overline{\chi_i(g)} \chi_j(g) \\ &= \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \chi_{\text{Hom}(V_i, V_j)}(g) \\ &= \dim_{\mathbb{C}} \left( \text{Hom}(V_i, V_j)^G \right) \\ &= \begin{cases} \dim_{\mathbb{C}}(\mathbb{C}) & i = j \\ \dim_{\mathbb{C}}(0) & i \neq j \end{cases} = \delta_i^j. \end{aligned}$$

■

↪ **Corollary 1.2:**  $\chi_1, \dots, \chi_t$  orthonormal vectors in  $L^2(G)$ .

↪ **Corollary 1.3:**  $\chi_1, \dots, \chi_t$  linearly independent, so in particular  $t \leq \#G = \dim L^2(G)$ .

↪ **Corollary 1.4:**  $t \leq h(G) := \# \text{ conjugacy classes}$ .

PROOF. We have that  $L_c^2(G) \subseteq L^2(G)$ , where  $L_c^2(G)$  is the space of  $\mathbb{C}$ -valued functions on  $G$  that are constant on conjugacy classes. It's easy to see that  $\dim_{\mathbb{C}}(L_c^2(G)) = h(G)$ . Then, since  $\chi_1, \dots, \chi_t$  are class functions, they live naturally in  $L_c^2(G)$  and hence since they are linearly independent, there are at most  $h(G)$  of them. ■

**Remark 1.3:** We'll show this inequality is actually equality soon.

↪ **Theorem 1.8** (Characterization of Representation by Characters): If  $V, W$  are two complex representations, they are isomorphic as representations  $\Leftrightarrow \chi_V = \chi_W$ .

PROOF. By Maschke's,  $V = V_1^{m_1} \oplus \dots \oplus V_t^{m_t}$  and hence  $\chi_V = m_1\chi_1 + \dots + m_t\chi_t$ . By orthogonality,  $m_j = \langle \chi_V, \chi_j \rangle$  for each  $j = 1, \dots, t$ , hence  $V$  completely determined by  $\chi_V$ . ■

↪ **Definition 1.7** (Regular Representation): Define

$$\begin{aligned} V_{\text{reg}} &:= \mathbb{C}[G] \text{ with left mult.} \\ &\simeq L^2(G) \text{ with } (g * f)(x) := f(g^{-1}x), \end{aligned}$$

the “regular representation” of  $G$ .

↪ **Proposition 1.9**:  $\chi_{\text{reg}}(g) = \begin{cases} \#G & \text{if } g = \text{id} \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases}$ .

PROOF. If  $g = \text{id}$ , then  $g$  simply acts as the identity on  $V_{\text{reg}}$  and so has trace equal to the dimension of  $V_{\text{reg}}$ , which has as basis just the elements of  $G$  hence dimension equal to  $\#G$ . If  $g \neq \text{id}$ , then  $g$  cannot fix any basis vector, i.e. any other element  $h \in G$ , since  $gh = h \Leftrightarrow g = \text{id}$ . Hence,  $g$  permutes every element in  $G$  with no fixed points, hence its matrix representation in the standard basis would have no 1s on the diagonal hence trace equal to zero. ■

↪ **Theorem 1.9**: Every irreducible representation of  $V, V_j$ , appears in  $V_{\text{reg}}$  at least once, specifically, with multiplicity  $\dim_{\mathbb{C}}(V_j)$ . Specifically,

$$V_{\text{reg}} = V_1^{d_1} \oplus \dots \oplus V_t^{d_t},$$

where  $d_j := \dim_{\mathbb{C}}(V_j)$ .

In particular,

$$\#G = d_1^2 + \dots + d_t^2.$$

PROOF. Write  $V_{\text{reg}} = V_1^{m_1} \oplus \dots \oplus V_t^{m_t}$ . We'll show  $m_j = d_j$  for each  $j = 1, \dots, t$ . We find

$$\begin{aligned} m_j &= \langle \chi_{\text{reg}}, \chi_j \rangle \\ &= \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \overline{\chi_{\text{reg}}(g)} \chi_j(g) \\ &= \frac{1}{\#G} \#G \chi_j(\text{id}) = \chi_j(\text{id}) = d_j, \end{aligned}$$

since the trace of the identity element acting on a vector space is always the dimension of the space. In particular, then

$$\begin{aligned}\#G &= \dim_{\mathbb{C}}(V_{\text{reg}}) = \dim_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1^{d_1} \oplus \cdots \oplus V_t^{d_t}) \\ &= d_1 \cdot \dim_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1) + \cdots + d_t \cdot \dim_{\mathbb{C}}(V_t) \\ &= d_1^2 + \cdots + d_t^2.\end{aligned}$$

■

↪ **Theorem 1.10:**  $t = h(G)$ .

PROOF. Remark that  $\mathbb{C}[G]$  has a natural ring structure, combining multiplication of coefficients in  $\mathbb{C}$  and internal multiplication in  $G$ . Define a group homomorphism

$$\underline{\rho} = (\rho_1, \dots, \rho_t) : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}(V_1) \times \cdots \times \text{Aut}(V_t),$$

collecting all the irreducible representation homomorphisms into a single vector. Then, this extends naturally by ( $\mathbb{C}$ -)linearity to a ring homomorphism

$$\underline{\rho} : \mathbb{C}[G] \rightarrow \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1) \oplus \cdots \oplus \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_t).$$

By picking bases for each  $\text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_j)$ , we find that  $\dim_{\mathbb{C}}(\text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_j)) = d_j^2$  hence  $\dim_{\mathbb{C}}(\text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1) \oplus \cdots \oplus \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_t)) = d_1^2 + \cdots + d_t^2 = \#G$ , as we saw in the previous theorem. On the other hand,  $\dim_{\mathbb{C}}(\mathbb{C}[G]) = \#G$  hence the dimensions of the two sides are equal. We claim that  $\underline{\rho}$  is an isomorphism of rings. By dimensionality as  $\mathbb{C}$ -vector spaces, it suffices to show  $\underline{\rho}$  injective.

Let  $\theta \in \ker(\underline{\rho})$ . Then,  $\rho_j(\theta) = 0$  for each  $j = 1, \dots, t$ , i.e.  $\theta$  acts as 0 on each of the irreducibles  $V_1, \dots, V_t$ . Applying Maschke's, it follows that  $\theta$  must act as zero on every representation, in particular on  $\mathbb{C}[G]$ . Then, for every  $\sum \beta_g g \in \mathbb{C}[G]$ ,  $\theta \cdot (\sum \beta_g g) = 0$  so in particular  $\theta \cdot 1 = 0$  hence  $\theta = 0$  in  $\mathbb{C}[G]$ . Thus,  $\underline{\rho}$  has trivial kernel as we wanted to show and thus  $\mathbb{C}[G]$  and  $\text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1) \oplus \cdots \oplus \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_t)$  are isomorphic as rings (moreover, as  $\mathbb{C}$ -algebras).

We look now at the centers of the two rings, since they are (in general) noncommutative. Namely,

$$Z(\mathbb{C}[G]) = \left\{ \sum \lambda_g g \mid \left( \sum \lambda_g g \right) \theta = \theta \left( \sum \lambda_g g \right) \forall \theta \in \mathbb{C}[G] \right\}.$$

Since multiplication in  $\mathbb{C}$  is commutative and “factors through” internal multiplication, it follows that  $\sum \lambda_g g \in Z(\mathbb{C}[G])$  iff it commutes with every group element, i.e.

$$\begin{aligned}
\left(\sum \lambda_g g\right)h &= h\left(\sum \lambda_g g\right) \Leftrightarrow \sum_g (\lambda_g h^{-1}gh) = \sum_g \lambda_g g \\
&\Leftrightarrow \sum_g \lambda_{h^{-1}gh} = \sum_g \lambda_g g \\
&\Leftrightarrow \lambda_{h^{-1}gh} = \lambda_g \quad \forall g \in G.
\end{aligned}$$

Hence,  $\sum \lambda_g g \in Z(\mathbb{C}[G])$  iff  $\lambda_{h^{-1}gh} = \lambda_g$  for every  $g, h \in G$ . It follows, then, that the induced map  $g \mapsto \lambda_g$  is a class function, and thus  $\dim_{\mathbb{C}}(Z(\mathbb{C}[G])) = h(G)$ .

On the other hand,  $\dim_{\mathbb{C}}(Z(\text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_j))) = 1$  (by representing as matrices, for instance, one can see that only scalar matrices will commute with all other matrices), hence  $\dim_{\mathbb{C}}(Z(\text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1) \oplus \dots \oplus \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_t))) = t$ .  $\underline{\rho}$  naturally restricts to an isomorphism of these centers, hence we conclude justly  $t = h(G)$ . ■

**Remark 1.4:** By picking bases for each irreducible representation  $V_1, \dots, V_t$ , we can realize more concretely that

$$\mathbb{C}[G] \simeq M_{d_1}(\mathbb{C}) \oplus \dots \oplus M_{d_t}(\mathbb{C}),$$

where  $d_j := \dim(V_j)$ ; in short, then,  $\mathbb{C}[G]$  is completely determined, as a group-ring, by

- the number of conjugacy classes in  $G$ ,  $t$ ; and
- the dimension of each irreducible representation,  $d_1, \dots, d_t$ .

In particular, then, there may exist two non-isomorphic groups with isomorphic group rings.

## §1.4 Fourier Analysis on Finite Abelian Groups

↪ **Definition 1.8:** For a finite group  $G$ , let

$$L^2(G) = \{\text{square integrable functions } G \rightarrow \mathbb{C}\},$$

equipped with the  $L^2$ -norm,  $\|f\|^2 = \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} |f(g)|^2$ . This is a vector space isomorphic to  $\mathbb{C}^{\#G}$ . We make the space a Hilbert space by defining

$$\langle f_1, f_2 \rangle = \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \overline{f_1(g)} f_2(g).$$

↪ **Definition 1.9:** Denote by  $\hat{G} = \{\chi_1, \dots, \chi_N\}$  the set of irreducible characters of  $G$ . Then,  $\hat{G}$  is an orthonormal family of functions in  $L^2(G)$ .

We suppose for now  $G$  abelian. In this case,  $\#\hat{G} = \#G$  so  $\hat{G}$  is an orthonormal basis for  $L^2(G)$  (comparing dimensions). In particular, one can prove that  $\hat{G}$  is abstractly isomorphic to  $G$  as a group.

↪ **Definition 1.10:** Given  $f \in L^2(G)$ , the function  $\hat{f} : \hat{G} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  is defined by

$$\hat{f}(\chi) = \frac{1}{\#G} \sum_{g \in G} \bar{\chi}(g) f(g),$$

called the *Fourier transform* of  $f$  over  $G$ . Then,

$$f = \sum_{\chi \in \hat{G}} \hat{f}(\chi) \chi,$$

is called the *Fourier inversion formula*.

⊗ **Example 1.2:** Consider  $G = \mathbb{R}/\mathbb{Z}$ .  $L^2(G)$  space of  $\mathbb{C}$ -valued periodic functions on  $\mathbb{R}$  which are square integrable on  $[0, 1]$ . Then,  $\hat{G}$  abstractly isomorphic to  $\mathbb{Z}$ . Write  $\hat{G} = \{\chi_n \mid n \in \mathbb{Z}\}$ . Then, remark that

$$\chi_n : \mathbb{R}/\mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^\times, \quad \chi_n(x) = e^{2\pi i n x}$$

gives the characteristic function for any integer  $n$ . More precisely, it's not hard to see that the map  $\mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^\times, x \mapsto e^{2\pi i n x}$  factors through (is constant on integer multiples)  $\mathbb{Z}$ .

To speak about orthogonality of members of  $\hat{G}$ , we must define a norm. We can identify  $\mathbb{R}/\mathbb{Z}$  with  $[0, 1]$ , and so write

$$\langle f_1, f_2 \rangle := \int_0^1 \overline{f_1(x)} f_2(x) dx.$$

Then, it's not hard to see

$$\langle \chi_n, \chi_m \rangle = \int_0^1 e^{-2\pi i (m-n)x} dx = \delta_m^n.$$

⊗ **Example 1.3:** Let  $G = \mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z}$  under addition. Note that  $G$  then a subgroup of  $\mathbb{R}/\mathbb{Z}$ , and in particular,

$$\hat{G} = \{\chi_0, \chi_1, \dots, \chi_{N-1}\}, \quad \chi_j(k) := e^{2\pi i j k / N}.$$

Then, one notices

$$\chi_{j_1} \cdot \chi_{j_2} = \chi_{j_1 + j_2},$$

so there is indeed a natural group structure on  $\hat{G}$ . Then, the Fourier transform in this case gives, for  $f \in L^2(\mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z})$ ,

$$\hat{f}(n) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} e^{-2\pi i n k / N} f(k).$$

### 1.4.1 Application to Computing Particular Infinite Series

We consider an application of the theory we've developed on  $G = \mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z}$  to study particular infinite summations. It's well known that the harmonic series  $1 + \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{3} + \dots$  diverges. A natural extension is to study modified such series, for instance  $1 - \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{5} - \frac{1}{7} + \dots$  and to ask if this series converges, and if it does, to what?

To approach this question, we more generally consider, for  $f \in L^2(\mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z})$  (i.e. a complex-valued  $N$ -periodic function defined on the integers), the series

$$S(f) := \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{f(n)}{n},$$

when the summation exists. Remark then that  $f \mapsto S(f)$  is linear. So, it suffices to consider the value of  $S(f)$  on a basis of  $L^2(\mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z})$ , which we've derived in the previous example, namely  $\hat{G} = \{\chi_j : j = 0, \dots, N-1\}$ . We can explicitly compute  $S(\chi_j)$ :

$$\begin{aligned} S(\chi_j) &= \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{\chi_j(n)}{n} \\ &= \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{x^n}{n}, \quad x := e^{\frac{2\pi i j}{N}} \\ &= -\log(1-x), \end{aligned}$$

where the final sequence converges on the unit circle in the complex plane centered at the  $1 + 0i$ .

In particular, if  $j = 0$ ,  $S(\chi_0)$  diverges. Otherwise, each  $\chi_j$  maps onto the roots of unity hence the convergence is well-defined. In particular, then, we find

$$S(\chi_j) = \begin{cases} -\log\left(1 - e^{2\pi i \frac{j}{N}}\right) & \text{if } j \neq 0 \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases}.$$

Now, for a general function  $f \in L^2(\mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z})$ , we find by the Fourier inversion formula

$$S(f) = S(\hat{f}(0)\chi_0 + \dots + \hat{f}(N-1)\chi_{N-1}),$$

which certainly diverges if  $\hat{f}(0) \neq 0$ . Otherwise, we find by linearity

$$S(f) = \sum_{j=1}^{N-1} \hat{f}(j)(-\log(1-x)).$$

So, returning to our original example, we can define  $f \in L^2(\mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z})$  by  $f(n) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } n \text{ even} \\ 1 & \text{if } n=1+4k \\ -1 & \text{if } n=3+4k \end{cases}$ . Then, we find

$$\begin{aligned}
1 - \frac{1}{3} + \frac{1}{5} - \frac{1}{7} + \frac{1}{9} - \dots &= S(f) \\
&= \frac{1}{2i}(S(\chi_1) - S(\chi_3)) \\
&= \frac{1}{2i}(-\log(1-i) + \log(1+i)) \\
&= \frac{1}{2i}\left(-\log(\sqrt{2}) + \frac{\pi i}{4} + \log(\sqrt{2}) + \frac{\pi i}{4}\right) = \frac{\pi}{4}.
\end{aligned}$$

### §1.5 Fourier Analysis on Non-Abelian Finite Groups

When  $G$  abelian, recall that  $\mathbb{C}[G]$  was a commutative ring isomorphic to  $\bigoplus_{\chi \in \hat{G}} \mathbb{C}$ . More generally, we find an isomorphism

$$\Phi : \mathbb{C}[G] \rightarrow \bigoplus_{j=1}^h \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_j) \simeq \bigoplus_{j=1}^h M_{d_j \times d_j}(\mathbb{C}),$$

where  $h = h(G)$ ,  $V_j$  enumerate the irreducible representations of  $G$ , and  $d_j := \dim_{\mathbb{C}}(V_j)$ .

↪ **Definition 1.11** (Fourier Transform): Given a function  $f : G \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ , denote by

$$\theta_f = \sum_{g \in G} f(g)g$$

its corresponding element in  $\mathbb{C}[G]$ . Then, its corresponding image under  $\Phi$  in  $\bigoplus \text{End}(V_j)$  is called the *Fourier transform* of  $f$ , i.e.

$$\hat{f} = (T_1, \dots, T_h) \in \bigoplus \text{End}(V_j),$$

a  $h$ -tuple of matrices where  $T_i$  a  $d_i \times d_i$  matrix.

#### 1.5.1 Random Products in Groups

↪ **Definition 1.12** (Probability Measure on a Group): A probability measure on a group  $G$  is a function  $\mu : G \rightarrow [0, \infty)$  such that  $\sum_g \mu(g) = 1$ . Then, we can view  $\mu$  as living naturally both in  $\mathbb{R}^G$  and  $\mathbb{R}[G]$  through the standard identification.

One of the key properties we notice by viewing  $\mu$  as living in  $\mathbb{R}[G]$  is in multiplication; multiplication in  $\mathbb{R}[G]$  corresponds to convolution of functions. Namely, if  $\mu_1, \mu_2$  two measures on  $G$ , then

$$(\mu_1 \otimes \mu_2)(g) = \sum_{\substack{(g_1, g_2) \in G \times G, \\ g_1 g_2 = g}} \mu_1(g_1) \mu_2(g_2) = \mu_1 \times_{\mathbb{R}[G]} \mu_2$$

$$= \mathbb{P}(\text{getting } g \text{ from a random product of } g_1, g_2 \text{ with } g_i \text{ picked according to } \mu_i).$$

For a fixed probability measure  $\mu$ , then, we wish to investigate the limiting behavior of  $\mu^{\otimes N}$  ( $\mu$  convolved with itself  $N$  times for large  $N$ ), which corresponds to the likelihood of obtaining a particular element from large numbers of products in the group.

↪ **Definition 1.13:** Define the support

$$\text{supp}(\mu) = \{g \in G \mid \mu(g) \neq 0\},$$

and the 2 subgroups

$$G_\mu := \text{subgroup generated by } g \in \text{supp}(\mu),$$

$$G_\mu^+ := \text{subgroup generated by } \{g^{-1}h \mid g, h \in \text{supp}(\mu)\}.$$

Notice then  $G_\mu^+ \subset G_\mu \subset G$ .

↪ **Theorem 1.11:** Let  $\mu$  a probability measure on  $G$ . Then, if  $G_\mu^+ = G$ , then  $\lim_{N \rightarrow \infty} \mu^{\otimes N} = \mu_{\text{unif}}$ , where  $\mu_{\text{unif}}$  the uniform probability distribution which assigns  $\frac{1}{\#G}$  to each element in  $G$ .

## §1.6 Character Tables of $S_4, A_5$ and $\text{GL}_3(\mathbb{F}_2)$

### 1.6.1 $S_4$

For  $S_4$ , we denote the conjugacy classes by  $1A, 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 4A$  as the conjugacy classes of elements of the form  $()$ ,  $(12)(34)$ ,  $(12)$ ,  $(123)$ ,  $(1234)$  respectively.

	1A	2A	2B	3A	4A
$\chi_1$	1	1	1	1	1
$\chi_2$	1	1	-1	1	-1
$\chi_3$	2	2	0	-1	0
$\chi_4$	3	-1	1	0	-1
$\chi_5$	3	-1	-1	0	1

$\chi_1$  is the trivial representation.  $\chi_2$  is the sign representation given by  $\sigma \mapsto \text{sgn}(\sigma) \in \{-1, 1\} \subseteq \mathbb{C}^\times$ .  $\chi_3$  comes from noticing that  $K_4 = \mathbb{Z}/2 \times \mathbb{Z}/2 = 1A \sqcup 2A \subseteq S_4$  gives  $S_4/K_4 \simeq S_3$ . We then can find a new representation by composing the quotient map  $\pi : S_4 \rightarrow S_3$  with a representation  $\rho : S_3 \rightarrow \text{Aut}_{\mathbb{C}}(V)$ . Remember that there are three irreducible representations of  $S_3$ . The first two are the trivial and sign, already accounted for here. The last is the unique two-dimensional representation where  $\chi(2A) = 0$  and  $\chi(3A) = -1$  (these are the conjugacy classes in  $S_3$  now). Under the quotient map, then, we find that

- since  $1A, 2A$  contained in  $K_4$ , they are mapped to the identity in  $\text{Aut}(\mathbb{C}^2)$  so have trace 2;
- $2B, 4A$  must be mapped to elements of order 2 in  $S_3$  (i.e. in  $2A$ ) under  $\pi$  and thus must have trace 0;
- $3A$  must map to elements of order 3 in  $S_3$  under  $\pi$  so must have trace  $-1$ .

This characterizes  $\chi_3$ .

$\chi_4$  comes from the standard representation on a 4 dimensional vector space (by permuting basis vectors), then subtracting off the trivial representation. This results in a character where each entry equals the number of fixed points each conjugacy class has, minus 1.



$\chi_5$  comes from considering the homomorphism representation found from  $V_5 = \text{Hom}(V_2, V_4)$ , where  $V_2, V_4$  the vector spaces upon which  $\chi_2, \chi_4$  “act”. Hence,  $V_5$  is a three dimensional representation, with  $\chi_5 = \bar{\chi}_2\chi_4$ .

### 1.6.2 $A_5$

For  $A_5$ , denote the conjugacy classes  $1A, 2A, 3A, 5A, 5B$ .

	1A	2A	3A	5A	5B
$\chi_1$	1	1	1	1	1
$\chi_2$	4	0	1	-1	-1
$\chi_3$	5	1	-1	0	0
$\chi_4$	3	-1	0	$1 + \zeta + \zeta^{-1}$	$1 + \zeta^2 + \zeta^{-2}$
$\chi_5$	3	-1	0	$1 + \zeta^2 + \zeta^{-2}$	$1 + \zeta + \zeta^{-1}$

$\chi_1$  trivial.  $\chi_2$  comes from the standard representation, minus the trivial.  $\chi_3$  similarly comes from the action of  $A_5$  on the coset space  $S_5/F_{20}$ , or equivalently on  $A_5/D_{10}$ , minus the trivial again.

For the last two, we can check by dimensionality that it must be that the dimensions of both must be 3, so we are looking for representations  $\rho : A_5 \rightarrow \text{Aut}_{\mathbb{C}}(\mathbb{C}^3)$ . Let  $g \in 5A$ . Notice then that  $g$  must have at most three eigenvalues, which are fifth roots of unity. But also, notice that  $g$  and  $g^{-1}$  are conjugate in  $A_5$ , and namely  $g, g^{-1} \in 5A$ . Hence, since a linear transformation has inverse eigenvalues of its inverse, it follows that the set of eigenvalues for  $g$  must be closed under taking inverses. So, the eigenvalues must be of the form  $\{1, \zeta, \zeta^{-1}\}$  or  $\{1, \zeta^2, \zeta^{-2}\}$  where  $\zeta$  a primitive root of unity. It follows then that either  $\text{tr}(5A) = 1 + \zeta + \zeta^{-1}$  or  $1 + \zeta^2 + \zeta^{-2}$ , with, by symmetrical argument, gives the trace of  $5B$  since  $g \in 5A \Rightarrow g^2 \in 5B$ .

Then, to find  $\chi(3A) =: x_3$ , taking the inner product with  $\chi_2$  we find

$$\begin{aligned}
 0 &= 12 + 20x_3 - 12(1 + \zeta + \zeta^{-1}) - 12(1 + \zeta^2 + \zeta^{-2}) \\
 &= 20x_3 - 12 \left( \underbrace{1 + \zeta + \zeta^2 + \zeta^3 + \zeta^4}_{=0} \right) \Rightarrow x_3 = 0.
 \end{aligned}$$

From here, one can compute  $\chi(2A)$  using orthogonality relations.

### 1.6.3 $\text{GL}_3(\mathbb{F}_2)$

size:	1	21	56	42	24	24
	1A	2A	3A	4A	7A	7B
$\chi_1$	1	1	1	1	1	1
$\chi_2$	6	2	0	0	-1	-1
$\chi_3$	7	-1	1	-1	0	0

$\chi_1$  trivial. We consider  $\chi_V$  given by  $G$  acting on  $\mathbb{F}_2^3$  in the standard way (as three by three matrices) Then, the character is just given by the number of fixed points each element has, so in this case the number of fixed nonzero vectors.

- 1A 7, being the dimension

- A typical element of  $2A$  looks like  $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & & 1 \\ & 1 & \\ & & 1 \end{pmatrix}$  which has trace 3.
- $g \in 3A$  has minimal polynomial  $(x-1)(x^2+x+1)$  so has a one-dimensional eigenspace so fixes one nonzero vector.
- $g \in 4A$  has minimal polynomial  $(x-1)^3$  so by similar reasoning as  $3A$  fixes a one-dimensional eigenspace.
- $g \in 7A$  or  $7B$  must cyclically permute the basis vectors so fixes none so has trace 0.

In summary:

	1A	2A	3A	4A	7A	7B
$\chi_V$	7	3	1	1	0	0

This is not irreducible by checking orthogonality relations, but we obtain  $\chi_2$  by subtracting off  $\chi_1$ .

For  $\chi_3$ , consider  $X = \{\text{syllow} - 7 \text{ subgroups}\}$ . One can check  $\#X = 8$ , and we have a natural action of  $G$  on  $X$  by conjugation, which is isomorphic to the action of  $G$  on  $G/N(\text{Sylow} - 7)$  so  $H := N(\text{Sylow} - 7)$  has cardinality 21. Then, the trace of each element is just the number of fixed cosets each element has acting on  $G/H$ . We then subtract off 1 from this number to obtain  $\chi_3$ .

- $g \in 1A$  must have trace 8 so  $\chi_3(1A) = 7$
- if  $g \in 2A$ ,  $gaH = aH \Leftrightarrow a^{-1}ga \in H$ , but  $g$  of order 2 and thus so is  $a^{-1}ga$ , but  $H$  a group of cardinality of order 21 so such an element can't live in it. Thus  $g$  has no fixed points and  $\chi_3(2A) = -1$ . In particular  $g$  as a permutation looks like 4 disjoint 2 cycles.
- if  $g \in 4A$ , similar reasoning follows and we find  $\chi_3(4A) = -1$  and  $g$  looks like 2 disjoint 4 cycles.
- $g \in 7A, 7B$  must act as a 7-cycle and so has one fixed point and thus  $\chi_3(7A) = \chi_3(7B) = 0$ .
- we can compute  $\chi_3(3A)$  by checking the orthogonality relations by taking the inner product of it with itself. Computing this we find that  $\chi_3(3A) = \pm 1$ . We conclude it must be 1 by remarking that  $3A$  acts on  $G/H$  either by a single 3 cycles (hence with 5 fixed points) or two three cycles (hence with 2), so it must be that the second case holds which gives us a character of 1.

## §1.7 Induced Representations

Let  $G$  a finite group and  $H \subseteq G$ , and take  $\chi \in \text{Hom}(H, \mathbb{C}^\times)$  a one-dimensional representation of  $H$ . Consider the space

$$V_\chi = \{f : G \rightarrow \mathbb{C} \mid f(xh) = \chi(h) \cdot f(x) \forall h \in H\}.$$

Then,

### ↪ Proposition 1.10:

1.  $G$  acts (linearly) on  $V_\chi$  by the rule  $gf(x) = f(g^{-1}x), \forall x \in G$ .
2.  $\dim(V_\chi) = [G : H]$

PROOF.

1. We need to show  $gf \in V_\chi$ . We compute,

$$gf(xh) = f(g^{-1}(xh)) = f((g^{-1}x)h) = \chi(h)f(g^{-1}x) = \chi(h)(gf)(x),$$

for any  $x \in G, h \in H, f \in V_\chi$ , as required.

2. Let  $a_1, \dots, a_t$  be a set of coset representatives for  $H$ , i.e.  $G = a_1H \sqcup \dots \sqcup a_tH$ . Then, we claim that the map  $f \mapsto (f(a_1), \dots, f(a_t)), V_\chi \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^t$  a  $\mathbb{C}$ -vector space isomorphism.

*Injective:* If  $f$  in the kernel of this map, then  $f(a_1) = \dots = f(a_t) = 0$ . But  $f \in V_\chi$  so  $f(a_jh) = \chi(h)f(a_j) = 0$  for any  $h \in H, j = 1, \dots, t$ . Any element in  $G$  is in some  $a_jH$  so equals  $a_jh$  for some  $h \in H$ , so we conclude that  $f$  must be identically 0 and so this map injective.

*Surjective:* Given  $(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_t) \in \mathbb{C}^t$ , define  $f$  by  $f(a_j) := \lambda_j$  for each  $j$ , and “extend” naturally to behave under action of  $H$ , namely  $f(a_jh) := \chi(h)f(a_j) = \chi_h\lambda_j$ . ■

The representation  $V_\chi$  is called the *induced* representation of  $\chi$  from  $H$  to  $G$ . We sometimes write

$$V_\chi = \text{Ind}_H^G \chi.$$

If  $H$  is a quotient of  $G$ , then any representation of  $H$  gives a representation of  $G$  (we’ve done this many times before, such as with  $S_4$  and  $S_3$ ). But in general, these aren’t easy to come by. But if  $H$  just a subgroup of  $G$ , which are far more common, then we can use the induced representation technique above to look at representations of  $G$ .

Let  $\psi : H \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^\times$  some one-dimensional representation of  $H$  and  $V_\psi = \text{Ind}_H^G \psi$ . We wish to find the induced character  $\chi_{V_\psi}$ .

We begin by looking for a basis for  $V_\psi$ . For any  $a \in G$ , define  $f_a \in V_\psi$  defined by

$$f_a : G \rightarrow \mathbb{C}, \quad f_a(g) := \begin{cases} \psi(h) & \text{if } g = ah \in aH \\ 0 & \text{if } g \notin aH \end{cases}.$$

Then, if  $a_1, \dots, a_t$  coset representatives for  $H$  in  $G$ ,  $\beta := \{f_{a_1}, \dots, f_{a_t}\}$  a basis for  $V_\psi$ .

Now, given  $g \in G$ , what is the matrix of  $g$  acting on  $V_\psi$  with respect to the basis  $\beta$ ? We have that

$$g \cdot f_{a_j}(x) = f_{a_j}(g^{-1}x) = f_{ga_j}(x),$$

since, more precisely

$$gf_{a_j}(a_i) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } g^{-1}a_i \notin a_jH \\ \psi(h) & \text{if } g^{-1}a_i = a_jh' \end{cases}$$

and we can extend to general  $g \in G$ . Hence, if  $a_1, \dots, a_t$  are coset representatives,  $ga_jH = a_iH$  for each  $a_j$  and some  $a_i$ , i.e.  $g$  permutes the coset representatives, modulo  $H$ . Hence,  $ga_j = a_ih_{ij}$  for some  $h_{ij} \in H$ . So,

$$gf_{a_j} = f_{a_ih_{ij}} = \psi(h_{ij})f_{a_i}.$$

Write  $ga_iH = a_{i'}H$  so  $ga_i = a_{i'}h_i$ . With this,  $gf_{a_1} = \psi(h_1)f_{a_1}$ , etc, and so in each  $i$ th column of our matrix there is a single nonzero entry in the  $i'$ th row with entry  $\psi(h_i)$ .

Thus,

$$\chi_{V_\psi}(g) = \sum_{\substack{i \mid ga_i = a_{i'}h_i, \\ h_i \in H}} \psi(h_i) = \sum_{i=1}^t \tilde{\psi}(a_i^{-1}ga_i),$$

namely, we only sum over the  $h_i$ 's that land in the diagonal, which are only those that come from  $g$  fixing the respective cosets. We put  $\tilde{\psi}$  to be  $\psi$  on  $H$  and 0 elsewhere. In all, then, we have proven the following theorem.

↪ **Theorem 1.12:** Let  $H \subseteq G$  and  $\psi : H \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^\times$  a one-dimensional representation of  $H$ . Then, the induced character from  $H$  to  $G$  is given by

$$\chi_{\text{Ind}_H^G \psi}(g) = \sum_{\substack{aH \in G/H, \\ \text{s.t. } a^{-1}ga \in H}} \psi(a^{-1}ga) = \sum_{a \in G/H} \tilde{\psi}(a^{-1}ga),$$

where

$$\tilde{\psi}(g) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } g \notin H \\ \psi(h) & \text{if } g \in H \end{cases}$$

Let's massage.

↪ **Theorem 1.13:**

$$\chi_{V_\psi}(g) = \chi_{\text{Ind}_H^G \psi}(g) = \frac{\#G}{\#H} \cdot \frac{1}{\#C(g)} \sum_{\gamma \in C(g) \cap H} \psi(\gamma),$$

where  $C(g)$  the conjugacy class of the element  $g$ ,

PROOF.

$$\begin{aligned} \chi_{V_\psi}(g) &= \sum_{\substack{aH \in G/H, \\ \text{s.t. } a^{-1}ga \in H}} \psi(a^{-1}ga) \\ &= \frac{1}{\#H} \sum_{\substack{a \in G, \\ \text{s.t. } a^{-1}ga \in H}} \psi(a^{-1}ga) \\ &= \frac{\#Z(g)}{\#H} \sum_{\substack{a \in Z(g)/G, \\ \text{s.t. } a^{-1}ga \in H}} \psi(a^{-1}ga) \\ &= \frac{\#G}{\#H} \frac{1}{\#C(g)} \sum_{\gamma \in C(g) \cap H} \psi(\gamma), \end{aligned}$$

where  $Z(g) = \{b \in G \mid bg = gb\}$  the centralizer of  $G$ , where  $\#Z(g) = \frac{\#G}{\#C(g)}$  by the orbit-stabilizer theorem (from  $G$  acting on  $C(g)$  by conjugation). ■

### 1.7.1 Back to $\text{GL}_3(\mathbb{F}_2)$

Let  $H \subseteq G = \text{GL}_3(\mathbb{F}_2)$  the normalizer of a Sylow-7 subgroup; then  $\#H = 21$  (8 Sylow-7 subgroups,  $\frac{168}{8} = 21$ ). Let

$$\psi : H \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^\times$$

and

$$V = \text{Ind}_H^G \psi$$

the induced character. Then, we know  $\dim(V) = 168/21 = 8$ . Let  $P_7$  be some Sylow-7 subgroup. Then, we find that

$$H/P_7 \simeq \mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z},$$

so our representation factors to

$$\begin{aligned} H &\twoheadrightarrow \mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^\times, \\ 1 &\mapsto e^{2\pi i/3}. \end{aligned}$$

So specializing our formula we found in the previous section, we know

$$\chi_{V_\psi}(g) = \frac{8}{\#C(g)} \sum_{\gamma \in H \cap C(g)} \psi(\gamma).$$

We compute for  $g$  in distinct conjugacy classes:

#	C	$\chi_{V_\psi}$
1	1A	8
21	2A	0
56	3A	-1
42	4A	0
24	7A	1
24	7B	1

- The case for 1A is simple.
- The case for 2A and 4A are trivial since for  $C = 2A, 4A$ ,  $C \cap H = \emptyset$ , since  $H$  a group of odd cardinality, and  $C$  consists only of elements of even order, hence they must have empty intersection, so the summation in the character formula is over nothing.
- For 3A, we need to compute  $3A \cap H$ . We know that

$$\varphi : H \twoheadrightarrow \mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z},$$

so it must be that

$$P_7 \mapsto 0, \quad 7 \text{ elts of order } 3 \mapsto 1, \quad 7 \text{ elts of order } 3 \mapsto 2,$$

so

$$3A \cap H = \varphi^{-1}(1) \sqcup \varphi^{-1}(2).$$

Hence,

$$\begin{aligned}\chi_{V_\psi}(3A) &= \frac{1}{7} \left( \sum_{g \in \varphi^{-1}(1)} \psi(g) + \sum_{g \in \varphi^{-1}(2)} \psi(g) \right) \\ &= \frac{1}{7} [7e^{2\pi i/3} + 7e^{4\pi i/3}] \\ &= e^{2\pi i/3} + e^{4\pi i/3} = -1.\end{aligned}$$

- For  $g \in 7A$ ,

$$\chi_{V_\psi}(g) = \frac{8}{24} \sum_{g \in 7A \cap H} \psi(g).$$

It's easy to see  $\psi(g) = 1$ , since  $g$  of order 7. So, the difficulty lies in computing the size  $7A \cap H$ . There are certainly 6 elements of order 7 in  $H$ , but which are in  $7A$  versus  $7B$ ? The key fact to notice is that, if  $g \in 7A$ ,  $g^2, g^4 \in 7A$  as well, and  $g^{-1} = g^6, g^3$  and  $g^5$  are in  $7B$ , which one verifies by checking the minimal polynomials of the two sets of elements (either  $x^3 + x + 1, x^3 + x^2 + 1$ ). Thus,

$$\chi_{V_\psi}(g) = \frac{1}{3}(1 + 1 + 1) = 1,$$

for both  $g \in 7A, 7B$ .

One can take the inner product  $\langle \chi_{V_\psi}, \chi_{V_\psi} \rangle$  and find that it is equal to 1, hence this new representation is irreducible. Naming this representation  $\chi_4$ , we find the character table so far to be (from the previous section):

size:	1	21	56	42	24	24
	1A	2A	3A	4A	7A	7B
$\chi_1$	1	1	1	1	1	1
$\chi_2$	6	2	0	0	-1	-1
$\chi_3$	7	-1	1	-1	0	0
$\chi_4$	8	0	-1	0	1	1
$\chi_5$	$d_5$	?	?	?	?	?
$\chi_6$	$d_6$	?	?	?	?	?

We know then from the general theory that we are missing two representations. We know that the sum of the squares of the dimensions should equal the cardinality of the group, so

$$168 = 1 + 36 + 49 + 64 + d_5^2 + d_6^2 \Rightarrow d_5^2 + d_6^2 = 18.$$

It's not hard to see the only way this is possible is that  $d_5 = 3, d_6 = 3$ .

## §1.8 Tensor Products

We are often interested in generating new representations from exists ones. Suppose  $V_1, V_2$  are two representations.

- *Direct sum*:

$$V_1 \oplus V_2,$$

with character  $\chi_{V_1 \oplus V_2} = \chi_{V_1} + \chi_{V_2}$ .

- *Hom representation*: given by  $G$  acting on

$$\text{Hom}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1, V_2),$$

given by

$$g * T = g \circ T \circ g^{-1}, \quad g \in G, T \in \text{Hom}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1, V_2),$$

which had character  $\chi_{\text{Hom}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1, V_2)} = \overline{\chi_{V_1}} \cdot \chi_{V_2}$ .

- *Dual representation*: given by the action on  $V_1^* := \text{Hom}(V_1, \mathbb{C})$  defined by  $g\ell = \ell \circ g^{-1}$ . This gives  $\chi_{V_1^*} = \overline{\chi_{V_1}}$

We define now the *tensor representation*:

↪ **Definition 1.14** (Tensor Product): Given representations  $V_1, V_2$ , put

$$V_1 \otimes V_2 = \text{Hom}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1^*, V_2).$$

Then, one readily verifies  $\dim(V_1 \otimes V_2) = \dim(V_1) \cdot \dim(V_2)$ .

More concretely, let  $v_1 \in V_1$  and  $v_2 \in V_2$ . Then for  $\ell \in V_1^*$ , we can define

$$v_1 \otimes v_2(\ell) := \ell(v_1) \cdot v_2 \in V_2.$$

One readily verifies that this definition genuinely defines an element of  $\text{Hom}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1^*, V_2)$ .

One notices too that  $\otimes$  is *bilinear* in both arguments, namely for any  $v_1, v_1' \in V_1, v_2, v_2' \in V_2, \lambda \in \mathbb{C}$  and  $\ell \in V_1^*$ , then

$$(\lambda v_1 + v_1') \otimes v_2 = \lambda(v_1 \otimes v_2) + (v_1' \otimes v_2),$$

and also

$$v_1 \otimes (\lambda v_2 + v_2') = \lambda(v_1 \otimes v_2) + (v_1 \otimes v_2').$$

Let  $e_1, \dots, e_n$  a basis for  $V_1$  and  $f_1, \dots, f_m$  a basis for  $V_2$ , and consider  $v_1 = a_1 e_1 + \dots + a_n e_n, v_2 = b_1 f_1 + \dots + b_m f_m$  for  $a_i, b_j \in \mathbb{C}$ . Then, using the bilinearity, we find

$$\begin{aligned} v_1 \otimes v_2 &= (a_1 e_1 + \dots + a_n e_n) \otimes (b_1 f_1 + \dots + b_m f_m) \\ &= \sum a_i b_j (e_i \otimes f_j), \end{aligned}$$

so we find from this that the elements  $e_i \otimes f_j$  for  $1 \leq i \leq n, 1 \leq j \leq m$  span  $V_1 \otimes V_2$  and hence define a basis.

Now,  $G$  acts on  $V_1 \otimes V_2$  by the rule

$$g \cdot (v_1 \otimes v_2) = (gv_1) \otimes (gv_2).$$

Hence, we find

$$\chi_{V_1 \otimes V_2} = \chi_{\text{Hom}(V_1^*, V_2)} = \overline{\chi_{V_1^*}} \cdot \chi_{V_2} = \chi_{V_1} \cdot \chi_{V_2},$$

using the character properties above.

We can also prove this directly. Let  $g \in G$  and let  $e_1, \dots, e_n$  be a basis for  $V_1$  of eigenvectors for  $g$ , and  $f_1, \dots, f_m$  a basis for  $V_2$  of eigenvectors for  $g$ . Suppose  $g \cdot e_i = \lambda_i e_i$ ,  $g \cdot f_j = \mu_j f_j$ , for some  $\lambda_i, \mu_j \in \mathbb{C}$ . Then,

$$g \cdot (e_i \otimes f_j) = (g \cdot e_i) \otimes (g \cdot f_j) = (\lambda_i e_i \otimes \mu_j f_j) = (\lambda_i \mu_j)(e_i \otimes f_j).$$

Hence, we find

$$\text{tr}(\rho_{V_1 \otimes V_2})(g) = \sum_{\substack{i=1, \dots, n \\ j=1, \dots, m}} \lambda_i \mu_j = \sum_{i=1}^n \lambda_i \sum_{j=1}^m \mu_j = \chi_{V_1}(g) \cdot \chi_{V_2}(g).$$

⊗ **Example 1.4** ( $A_5$ ): Recall the character table of  $A_5$ ,

	1	15	20	12	12
	1A	2A	3A	5A	5B
$\chi_1$	1	1	1	1	1
$\chi_2$	4	0	1	-1	-1
$\chi_3$	5	1	-1	0	0
$\chi_4$	3	-1	0	$1 + \zeta + \zeta^{-1}$	$1 + \zeta^2 + \zeta^{-2}$
$\chi_5$	3	-1	0	$1 + \zeta^2 + \zeta^{-2}$	$1 + \zeta + \zeta^{-1}$

We consider various tensors of representations:

	1A	2A	3A	5A	5B
$V_2 \otimes V_3$	9	1	0	-1	-1

which we notice to equal the character of  $\chi_4 \oplus \chi_5$ ; namely,  $V_2 \otimes V_3 \simeq V_4 \oplus V_5$ .

Also

	1A	2A	3A	5A	5B
$V_2 \otimes V_4$	12	0	0	$\frac{-1-\sqrt{5}}{2}$	$\frac{-1+\sqrt{5}}{2}$

from which we find

$$V_2 \otimes V_4 \simeq V_3 \oplus V_4 \oplus V_5.$$

## §1.9 Cute Applications of Representation Theory

### 1.9.1 The Pillaging Knights



Suppose we are given  $N$  knights, whom, after a long night of pillaging, sit at a round table to share their spoils of war. Each knight decides to split his earnings equally among his two neighbors. What happens after many iterations?

The wealth distribution may be modelled as a function on  $\mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z}$ ; each knight is identified with some element of  $\mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z}$ , and the wealth is given by  $f : \mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ . Then,

$$f \in L^2(\mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z}) = \bigoplus_{j=0}^{N-1} \mathbb{C} \cdot e^{2\pi i j x / N}.$$

Then, “wealth distribution” can be seen as a function  $T : L^2 \rightarrow L^2$  given by

$$Tf(x) := \frac{1}{2}(f(x-1) + f(x+1)).$$

Then,

$$\begin{aligned} Te^{2\pi i j x / N} &= \frac{1}{2}(e^{2\pi i j (x+1) / N} + e^{2\pi i j (x-1) / N}) \\ &= \frac{1}{2}(e^{2\pi i j / N} + e^{-2\pi i j / N})e^{2\pi i j x / N} \\ &= \cos(2\pi j / N)e^{2\pi i j x / N}. \end{aligned}$$

Then, we may write  $f = \hat{f}(0)f_0 + \hat{f}(1)f_1 + \dots + \hat{f}(N-1)f_{N-1}$ , so

$$Tf = \hat{f}(0)f_0 + \hat{f}(1)\cos\left(\frac{2\pi}{N}\right)f_1 + \dots + \hat{f}(N-1)\cos\left(\frac{2\pi(N-1)}{N}\right)f_{N-1},$$

and hence

$$\widehat{Tf}(j) = \hat{f}(j)\cos\left(\frac{2\pi j}{N}\right).$$

Thus,

$$T^M \widehat{f}(j) = \hat{f}(j)\left(\cos\left(\frac{2\pi j}{N}\right)\right)^M.$$

### 1.9.2 Functions on Mathematical Objects with Symmetry Groups

Let  $X$  a “mathematical object”,  $G$  a group of symmetries and  $V = L^2(X) = \mathbb{C}$ -valued functions on  $X$ . We assume  $X$  finite (hence  $G$  finite and  $V$  finite). We are interested in studying operators  $T : L^2(X) \rightarrow L^2(X)$ .

Suppose  $X$  a set of vertices of a graph; define for  $\varphi \in L^2(X)$ ,  $(T\varphi)(x) = \sum_{(y,x) \text{ an edge}} \varphi(y)$ ;  $T$  the adjacent operator, extended to functions on  $\mathbb{C}$ . We claim  $T$  commutes with the action of  $G$ ; write  $y \sim x$  if the vertex  $y$  adjacent to the vertex  $x$ :

$$\begin{aligned} (T \circ g)(\varphi)(x) &= T(g\varphi)(x) \\ &= \sum_{y \sim x} (g\varphi)(y) \\ &= \sum_{y \sim x} \varphi(g^{-1}y), \end{aligned}$$

while on the other hand

$$\begin{aligned}
 (g \circ T)(\varphi)(x) &= g(T(\varphi))(x) \\
 &= T(\varphi)(g^{-1}x) \\
 &= \sum_{y \sim g^{-1}x} \varphi(y),
 \end{aligned}$$

which are equal upon change of index.

Suppose  $X$  the faces of a cube, and  $V = L^2(X)$ . Define

$$T\varphi(F) = \frac{1}{4} \sum_{F' \text{ adjacent to } F} \varphi(F').$$

What is the spectrum of  $T$ ?

↪ **Theorem 1.14:** If  $V = V_1 \oplus \dots \oplus V_t$ , where the  $V_j$ 's are distinct irreducible representations of  $G$ , then  $T$  maps  $V_j$  to itself, and in particular acts as a scalar on  $V_j$ .

PROOF.  $T$  can be written as a  $t \times t$  "matrix of matrices",  $(T_{ij})$ , where  $T_{ij} : V_j \rightarrow V_i$ . Moreover, each  $T_{ij} \in \text{Hom}_G(V_j, V_i)$  (being  $G$ -equivariant). More specifically:

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 & V & \xrightarrow{T} V \\
 \eta_j \nearrow & & \searrow \pi_i \\
 V_j & \xrightarrow{T_{ij}} & V_i
 \end{array}$$

Where  $\eta_j \in \text{Hom}_G(V_j, V)$  the inclusion map,  $\pi_i \in \text{Hom}_G(V, V_i)$  the projection map (one readily verifies they are actually  $G$ -equivariant) and by construction  $T \in \text{Hom}_G(V, V)$ ; hence,  $T_{ij} = \pi_i T \eta_j \in \text{Hom}_G(V_j, V_i)$ . By Schur's Lemma, then,  $T_{ij} = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } i \neq j \\ \lambda_i & \text{if } i = j \end{cases}$ .

So, if  $v \in V_j$ ,  $T(v) \in V_j$  since

$$\begin{aligned}
 T(v) &= \pi_1 T(v) + \pi_2 T(v) + \dots + \pi_t T(v) \\
 &= T_{1j}v + \dots + T_{tj}v \\
 &= T_{jj}v = \pi_j v.
 \end{aligned}$$

■

**Remark 1.5:** More generally whenever  $T : V \rightarrow V$  is linear and  $V = V_1 \oplus \dots \oplus V_t$ , then we may write

$$v = (v_1, \dots, v_t)^t,$$

where  $v_j \in V_j$  i.e.  $v = v_1 + \dots + v_t$ . In this notation,

$$Tv = \begin{pmatrix} T_{11} & T_{12} & \dots & T_{1t} \\ T_{21} & T_{22} & \dots & T_{2t} \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ T_{t1} & T_{t2} & \dots & T_{tt} \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} v_1 \\ v_2 \\ \vdots \\ v_t \end{pmatrix},$$

where  $T_{ij} \in \text{Hom}(V_j, V_i)$ .

### 1.9.3 Functions on a Cube

Let  $X$  = set of faces of a cube, and  $V = L^2(X)$  acted on by  $G = S_4$ , the symmetry group the cube. Let  $T : V \rightarrow V$  be defined by

$$T(\psi)(x) = \frac{1}{4} \sum_{y \sim x} \psi(y),$$

where  $y \sim x$  means  $y, x$  are adjacent faces; the sum is over all faces adjacent to  $x$ . Notice that  $T$  is  $G$ -equivariant; moreover we can view it as a 4-way “sharing” of the value on adjacent faces, as in the knight example but now sitting on a cube rather than a circle.

We aim to decompose  $L^2(X)$  into a sum of irreducible representations. We have the character table of  $S_4$ ;

	1	6	3	8	6
	1A	2A	2B	3A	4A
$\chi_1$	1	1	1	1	1
$\chi_2$	1	-1	1	1	-1
$\chi_3$	2	0	2	-1	0
$\chi_4$	3	1	-1	0	-1
$\chi_5$	3	-1	-1	0	1
$L^2(X)$	6	0	2	0	2

If  $\chi$  the character of  $L^2(X)$  then  $\chi = m_1\chi_1 + \dots + m_5\chi_5$ ; we determine  $m_i$  by taking the inner product of  $\chi$  with each of the irreducible characters; whence we may write

$$\begin{aligned} L^2(X) &= V_1 \oplus V_3 \oplus V_5 \\ &= \{\text{constant functions}\} \oplus L^2(X)_{+,0} \oplus L^2(X)_{-} \end{aligned}$$

We'll say a function  $\varphi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  is *even* if  $\varphi(x) = \varphi(x')$  where  $x'$  the face opposite of  $x$ . The space, call it  $L^2(X)_+$ , of even functions is naturally  $G$ -stable; if  $\varphi \in L^2(X)_+$  and  $g \in G$ , then  $g\varphi(x) = \varphi(g^{-1}x)$  while also  $\varphi(g^{-1}x) = \varphi(g^{-1}x')$ , hence we find  $\varphi(g^{-1}x) = \varphi(g^{-1}x')$ , hence  $G$  sends even functions to even functions.

This space already contains constant function, so we want to consider the complementary space;

$$L^2(X)_{+,0} := \left\{ \varphi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{C} \mid \varphi \text{ even and } \sum_{x \in X} \varphi(x) = 0 \right\}.$$

Similarly, consider  $L^2(X)_-$  = space of odd functions =  $\{\varphi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{C} \mid \varphi(x') = -\varphi(x)\}$ .

Our  $T$  above preserves  $V_1, V_3, V_5$ . Namely,

$$T(\mathbb{1}_X) = \mathbb{1}_X,$$

so 1 an eigenvalue with eigenvector “1”. If  $\varphi \in V_5$ ,

$$T(\varphi) = 0,$$

so 0 an eigenvalue with multiplicity 3. If  $\varphi \in V_3$ , suppose  $\varphi$   $a, b, c$  on adjacent faces so  $a + b + c = 0$ ; then

$$T(\varphi)(x) = \frac{1}{4}(a + a + c + c) = -\frac{1}{2}b = -\frac{1}{2}\varphi(x),$$

so

$$T\varphi = -\frac{1}{2}\varphi,$$

hence  $-\frac{1}{2}$  an eigenvalue with multiplicity 2.

## §2 MIDTERM PRACTICE

↪ **Proposition 2.1:** Let  $G = D_8$  be the dihedral group of order 8. Write down the character table of  $G$ .

PROOF. We can realize  $G$  as a subgroup of  $S_4$  by identifying vertices of the square with numbers 1 through 4; this gives the following class equation for  $G$ :

$$\begin{aligned} G &= \{1\} \sqcup \{(13)(24)\} \sqcup \{(1234), (1432)\} \sqcup \{(12)(34), (14)(23)\} \sqcup \{(24), (13)\} \\ &=: (1) \sqcup (2) \sqcup (3) \sqcup (4) \sqcup (5). \end{aligned}$$

Remark that  $(1) \cup (2) \simeq \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$ , and in particular is equal to the center of  $G$ . Hence, if we let  $\rho$  be a representation of  $G$ , we can “factor through” the center, and consider instead

$$\rho : G/(1) \cup (2) \rightarrow \text{Aut}_{\mathbb{C}}(V).$$

One readily verifies that  $G/(1) \cup (2) \simeq K_4$ , which is an abelian group hence every such irreducible representation is one-dimensional, and in particular there are 4 of them. In each,  $\chi((2)) = \chi((1)) = 1$ , and  $\chi$  is always just a second root of unity (namely either 1 or minus 1). In particular, we can choose  $\chi((3))$  and  $\chi((5))$  to be either 1 or minus 1, then  $\chi((4))$  is must be equal to the product of these. This gives 4 total options;

$$\underline{\quad \quad \quad} \begin{array}{c} | \\ (1) \quad (2) \quad (3) \quad (4) \quad (5) \end{array}$$

$\chi_1$	1	1	1	1	1
$\chi_2$	1	1	1	-1	-1
$\chi_3$	1	1	-1	-1	1
$\chi_4$	1	1	-1	1	-1
$\chi_5$	2	-2	0	0	0

The last row can either be computed via orthogonality relations, or by considering the action of  $D_8$  described in Proposition 1.2. ■

↪ **Proposition 2.2:** Let  $G$  be a finite group in which every element is conjugate to its inverse.

(a) Give an example of such a group.

(b) Show that the character of any complex representation of such a group is real-valued (all the entries of the character table are real).

PROOF. (a)  $S_n$ , among others.

(b) We know  $\chi(g^{-1}) = \overline{\chi(g)}$  (always). But if  $g$  conjugate to  $g^{-1}$ , since  $\chi$  a class function,  $\chi(g^{-1}) = \chi(g)$  so combining these two equalities we find  $\chi(g) = \overline{\chi(g)}$ , which is only possible if  $\chi(g)$  real, namely has no imaginary part. ■

↪ **Proposition 2.3:** Let  $G$  a finite group and  $\rho : G \rightarrow \text{GL}_n(\mathbb{R})$  a homomorphism. Show that for any integer  $t \geq 1$ , the matrix

$$M = \sum_{\text{ord}(g)=t} \rho(g)$$

is diagonalizable.

PROOF. There exists a  $G$ -equivariant inner product  $(\cdot, \cdot)$  on  $\mathbb{R}^n$  (by replacing any arbitrary inner product with an averaging over the group). Then, for any  $x, y \in \mathbb{R}^n$ , we find

$$(Mx, y) = \sum_{\text{ord}(g)=t} (\rho(g)x, y) = \sum_{\text{ord}(g)=t} (x, \rho(g)^{-1}y) = \left( x, \sum_{\text{ord}(g)=t} \rho(g^{-1})y \right),$$

but  $\text{ord}(g) = \text{ord}(g^{-1})$ , so we may change indices  $g \rightarrow g^{-1}$  without changing the summation, and find

$$(Mx, y) = \left( x, \sum_{\text{ord}(g)=t} \rho(g)y \right) = (x, My),$$

hence  $M = M^*$ , namely  $M$  self-adjoint. By the spectral theorem, it follows that  $M$  diagonalizable. ■

↪ **Proposition 2.4:** Let  $\chi$  be the character of a 2-dimensional representation of a finite group  $G$ , and assume that  $g$  is of order 4 for which  $\chi(g) = 0$ . Prove that  $\chi(g^2)$  is either plus or minus 2.

PROOF. Suppose  $\rho(g) = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & -a \end{pmatrix}$ , so  $\chi(g) = 0$  as needed. Then,

$$\rho(g^2) = \begin{pmatrix} a^2 + bc & 0 \\ 0 & a^2 + bc \end{pmatrix},$$

so  $\chi(g^2) = 2(a^2 + bc)$ , while also  $g$  of order 4 so

$$I = \rho(g^4) = \begin{pmatrix} (a^2 + bc)^2 & 0 \\ 0 & (a^2 + bc)^2 \end{pmatrix},$$

hence  $a^2 + bc = \pm 1$ , and thus

$$\chi(g^2) = \pm 2.$$

■

↪ **Proposition 2.5:** Let  $D_8$  be the dihedral group of order 8 and  $Q$  the quaternion group. Show that the group rings  $\mathbb{C}[D_8]$  and  $\mathbb{C}[Q]$  are isomorphic, while the group rings  $\mathbb{R}[D_8]$  and  $\mathbb{R}[Q]$  are not.

PROOF. We know that

$$\mathbb{C}[D_8] \simeq \bigoplus_{j=1}^5 \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_j) \simeq \bigoplus_{j=1}^5 M_{d_j}(\mathbb{C}),$$

with similar for  $\mathbb{C}[Q]$ . But recall that  $D_8$  and  $Q$  have “identical” character tables, namely they have the same number of irreducible complex representations with the same distribution of dimensions, hence it follows by this characterization that the group rings are isomorphic.

■

↪ **Proposition 2.6:** Let  $D_8$  be the dihedral group on 4 elements and  $Q$  the group of quaternions. Show that the group rings  $\mathbb{C}[D_8]$  and  $\mathbb{C}[Q]$  are isomorphic, but the groups rings  $\mathbb{R}[D_8]$  and  $\mathbb{R}[Q]$  are not.

PROOF. Recall from proving that the number of irreducible representations is equal to the number of conjugacy classes of a group, we know

$$\mathbb{C}[D_8] = \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_1) \oplus \cdots \oplus \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_5),$$

where  $V_1, \dots, V_5$  enumerate the irreducible representations; recall that we have four 1-dimensional representations and a final 2-dimensional representations, we find by picking bases for each  $V_i$  that

$$\mathbb{C}[D_8] = \mathbb{C} \oplus \mathbb{C} \oplus \mathbb{C} \oplus \mathbb{C} \oplus M_2(\mathbb{C}).$$

But  $Q$  has the same number of irreducible representations with the same dimensions, hence

$$\mathbb{C}[Q] = \mathbb{C} \oplus \mathbb{C} \oplus \mathbb{C} \oplus \mathbb{C} \oplus M_2(\mathbb{C}),$$

hence the two are isomorphic.

For  $\mathbb{R}[D_8]$ , recall that all of the representations are real-valued, so we may realize the same type of isomorphism, and find

$$\mathbb{R}[D_8] = \mathbb{R} \oplus \mathbb{R} \oplus \mathbb{R} \oplus \mathbb{R} \oplus M_2(\mathbb{R}).$$

However, in  $Q$ , all of the representations are real other than the 2-dimensional one, which cannot be realized as a 2-dimensional representation over  $\mathbb{R}$ ; however, as a group ring,

$$\mathbb{R}[Q] = \mathbb{R} \oplus \mathbb{R} \oplus \mathbb{R} \oplus \mathbb{R} \oplus \mathbb{H},$$

where  $\mathbb{H}$  the ring of Hamiltonian quaternions. This is a 4-dimensional real-vector space (namely, we can identify it as a subspace of  $M_4(\mathbb{R})$  by identifying  $i$  with  $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$ ,  $j$  with  $\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ , and  $k$  with  $\begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$ ). Hence, these two real-valued group rings cannot be isomorphic. ■

↪ **Proposition 2.7:** Write down the character table of the symmetry group  $G = S_4$  of the cube. Write the character of the permutation representation of  $G$  acting on the 8 vertices of the cube, and use the character table to write this character as a sum of irreducible characters.

PROOF. See Table 1 for the character table of  $G$  (and its derivation). The character  $\chi_C$  of the permutation representation is given, for each conjugacy class, the number of fixed points of  $G$  acting on the vertices (derived [here](#)):

	1A	2A	2B	3A	4A
$\chi_C$	8	0	0	2	0

To write  $\chi_C$  as a sum of irreducible characters, take the inner product of  $\chi_C$  with each irreducible character; one should find

$$\chi_C = \chi_1 + \chi_2 + \chi_4 + \chi_5.$$

■

↪ **Proposition 2.8:** Let  $C$  be a conjugacy class in a finite group  $G$ . Show that the element

$$\alpha_C := \sum_{g \in C} g \in \mathbb{C}[G]$$

belongs to the center of the complex group ring of  $G$ . If  $\rho : G \rightarrow \text{GL}_n(\mathbb{C})$  is an irreducible representation of  $G$ , show that the matrix

$$\rho(\alpha_C) := \sum_{g \in C} \rho(g) \in M_n(\mathbb{C})$$

is a scalar matrix and write down the scalar in terms of the character of  $\rho$ .

PROOF. It suffices to check that  $\alpha_C$  commutes with every  $h \in G$  since  $\mathbb{C}$  is obviously commutative; we find

$$h\alpha_C h^{-1} = \sum_{g \in C} hgh^{-1} = \sum_{\tilde{g} \in C} \tilde{g} = \alpha_C,$$

where the summation remains fixed under the change of indexing  $\tilde{g} = hgh^{-1}$ , since conjugacy classes are by virtue closed under conjugation.

Next, we can view  $\rho(\alpha_C)$  as a homomorphism  $V \rightarrow V$  where  $V = \mathbb{C}^n$  the corresponding vector space representation. In this case, the same proof as above gives that  $\rho(\alpha_C)$  actually a  $G$ -equivariant homomorphism on  $V$ , and so by Schur's Lemma,  $\rho(\alpha_C) = \lambda I_n$  for some  $\lambda \in \mathbb{C}$ . To compute  $\lambda$ , we can compute traces; on the one hand, we have  $\text{tr}(\lambda I_n) = n \cdot \lambda$ , while also

$$\text{tr}(\rho(\alpha_C)) = \sum_{g \in C} \text{tr}(\rho(g)) = \sum_{g \in C} \chi(g) = \#C \cdot \chi(C),$$

where  $\chi$  the corresponding character of  $\rho$ , and where we use the fact that  $\chi$  constant on conjugacy classes. Comparing these, we conclude  $\lambda = \frac{\#C \cdot \chi(C)}{n}$ ; noting that  $n = \chi(1)$ , then

$$\rho(\alpha_C) = \frac{\#C \cdot \chi(C)}{\chi(1)} I_n.$$

■

↪ **Proposition 2.9:** State Maschke's Theorem about complex finite dimensional representations of finite groups. Give a counterexample to illustrate that it can fail to be true when  $G = \mathbb{Z}$  is the infinite cyclic group.

PROOF. See [Thm. 1.2](#) for the statement. The typical counter example is the two-dimensional representation of  $\mathbb{Z}$  given by  $n \mapsto \begin{pmatrix} 1 & n \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ . One can show that while  $\mathbb{C} \cdot e_1$  an irreducible one-dimensional subspace, there is no complementary irreducible one-dimensional space.

■



↪ **Proposition 2.10:** Let  $Q = \{\pm 1, \pm i, \pm j, \pm k\}$  be the Quaternion group of order 8. What are the dimensions of the irreducible representations of  $Q$ ? Realize the abstract group  $Q$  as a “concrete” group of matrices with complex entries.

PROOF. There are 4 irreducible representations of dimension 1, and a unique (faithful) irreducible representation of dimension 2 (the first four can be found by modding out the center of  $Q$  which gives a homomorphism to  $\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{Z}/2$ ; the last can be found by just computing orthogonality relations).

The “concrete” realization, as a subgroup of  $GL_2(\mathbb{C})$ , is given by  $1 \leftrightarrow I_2$ ,  $-1 \leftrightarrow -I_2$ , and

$$i \leftrightarrow \begin{pmatrix} i & 0 \\ 0 & -i \end{pmatrix}, \quad j \leftrightarrow \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad k \leftrightarrow \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ -i & 0 \end{pmatrix},$$

with  $-i, -j, -k$  defined in the obvious way (this, of course, up to conjugation of every element; this certainly isn't unique). ■

↪ **Proposition 2.11:** Let  $C_1, C_2, C_3$  be three conjugacy classes in a finite group  $G$ , and let  $N(C_1, C_2, C_3)$  be the number of solutions to the equation  $g_1 g_2 g_3 = 1$  with  $g_j \in C_j$  (with  $1 \leq j \leq 3$ ). Show that

$$N(C_1, C_2, C_3) = \frac{\#C_1 \#C_2 \#C_3}{\#G} \sum_{\chi} \frac{\chi(C_1) \chi(C_2) \chi(C_3)}{\chi(1)},$$

where the sum is taken over the irreducible characters  $\chi$  of  $G$ , and  $\chi(C_j)$  is a notation for  $\chi(g)$  with  $g$  any element of  $C_j$ .

PROOF. (A First Proof) The key observation is to notice that, using the notations of 3 questions ago, consider the element  $\alpha_{C_1} \alpha_{C_2} \alpha_{C_3} \in \mathbb{C}[G]$ ; one notices that the coefficient of this element corresponding to the identity in  $G$  is equal to  $N(C_1, C_2, C_3)$ . We'd like to “pick out” this element, which we can do by taking the inner product of the element with  $\chi_{\text{reg}}$ , the character of the regular representation; this gives on the one hand

$$\chi_{\text{reg}}(\alpha_{C_1} \alpha_{C_2} \alpha_{C_3}) = \#G \cdot N(C_1, C_2, C_3).$$

On the other hand, we know that  $\chi_{\text{reg}} = \sum_{\chi} \chi(1) \cdot \chi$ , where the summation ranges over the irreducible representations of  $G$ ; so, it suffices to find the character of  $\alpha_{C_1} \alpha_{C_2} \alpha_{C_3}$  on each representation. If  $\rho$  an irreducible representation with character  $\chi$ , then using three questions ago, we find

$$\begin{aligned}
\chi(\alpha_{C_1}\alpha_{C_2}\alpha_{C_3}) &= \text{tr}(\rho(\alpha_{C_1})\rho(\alpha_{C_2})\rho(\alpha_{C_3})) \\
&= \text{tr}\left(\frac{\#C_1 \cdot \chi(C_1)}{\chi(1)} \cdot \frac{\#C_2 \cdot \chi(C_2)}{\chi(1)} \cdot \frac{\#C_3 \cdot \chi(C_3)}{\chi(1)} I_{\chi(1)}\right) \\
&= \#C_1\#C_2\#C_3 \frac{\chi(C_1)\chi(C_2)\chi(C_3)}{\chi(1)^2}.
\end{aligned}$$

Hence, we find that

$$\begin{aligned}
\#G \cdot N(C_1, C_2, C_3) &= \chi_{\text{reg}}(\alpha_{C_1}\alpha_{C_2}\alpha_{C_3}) \\
&= \sum_{\chi} \chi(1) \chi(\alpha_{C_1}\alpha_{C_2}\alpha_{C_3}) \\
&= \#C_1\#C_2\#C_3 \sum_{\chi} \frac{\chi(C_1)\chi(C_2)\chi(C_3)}{\chi(1)},
\end{aligned}$$

giving the answer upon dividing both sides by  $\#G$ . ■

PROOF. (A Second Proof) Recall the isomorphism of rings

$$\underline{\rho} = (\rho_1, \dots, \rho_h) : \mathbb{C}[G] \rightarrow \bigoplus_{i=1}^h \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_i),$$

developed earlier to find the number of irreducible characters of a group. From question 2., we know that

$$\begin{aligned}
\underline{\rho}(\alpha_{C_1}\alpha_{C_2}\alpha_{C_3}) &= (\rho_1(\alpha_{C_1})\rho_1(\alpha_{C_2})\rho_1(\alpha_{C_3}), \dots, \rho_h(\alpha_{C_1})\rho_h(\alpha_{C_2})\rho_h(\alpha_{C_3})) \\
&= \left( \#C_1\#C_2\#C_3 \frac{\chi_1(C_1)\chi_1(C_2)\chi_1(C_3)}{\chi_1(1)} I_{\chi_1(1)}, \dots, \#C_1\#C_2\#C_3 \frac{\chi_h(C_1)\chi_h(C_2)\chi_h(C_3)}{\chi_h(1)} I_{\chi_h(1)} \right) \\
&= \#C_1\#C_2\#C_3 \cdot \left( \frac{\chi_1(C_1)\chi_1(C_2)\chi_1(C_3)}{\chi_1(1)} I_{\chi_1(1)}, \dots, \frac{\chi_h(C_1)\chi_h(C_2)\chi_h(C_3)}{\chi_h(1)} I_{\chi_h(1)} \right),
\end{aligned}$$

where  $\chi_i$  the character of  $\rho_i$ . Restricting to the vector space structure of  $\mathbb{C}[G]$ , we know that  $\mathbb{C}[G] \simeq L^2(G)$ , the space of complex-valued functions on  $G$ . Then, notice that  $N(C_1, C_2, C_3)$  is the coefficient of  $\alpha_{C_1}\alpha_{C_2}\alpha_{C_3}$  corresponding to 1 in the group ring, or, viewing this element as a function, call it  $f$ , in  $L^2(G)$ , the value of  $f(1)$ .  $L^2(G)$  is endowed with a natural inner product, and we can find  $f(1)$  by taking the inner product of  $f$  with the function  $\delta_1 : G \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  given by  $\delta_1(g) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } g = \text{id} \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases}$ , which gives

$$\langle f, \delta_1 \rangle = \frac{1}{\#G} \cdot f(1).$$

On the other hand, there is a corresponding natural inner product on the vector space  $\bigoplus_{i=1}^h \text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_i)$ . Namely, on each space  $\text{End}_{\mathbb{C}}(V_i)$ , the natural inner product is

$$\langle A, B \rangle_* := \text{tr}(AB^*),$$

where  $B^*$  denotes the conjugate transpose of  $B$ . Then, the inner product on the direct sum of the spaces is given by the sum such inner products on each component, i.e. given  $A = (A_1, \dots, A_h), B = (B_1, \dots, B_h)$ , we define

$$\langle A, B \rangle_+ := \sum_{i=1}^h \text{tr}(A_i B_i^*).$$

I claim that this inner product is “equivalent” to the original one on  $L^2(G)$ . Namely, given  $f_1, f_2 \in L^2(G)$ , note that  $\rho_i(f_2)^* = \overline{\rho_i(f_2)} = \rho_i(f_2^{-1})$ , so we find

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \underline{\rho}(f_1), \underline{\rho}(f_2) \rangle_+ &= \sum_{i=1}^h \text{tr}(\rho_i(f_1) \rho_i(f_2)^*) \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^h \text{tr}(\rho_i(f_1) \rho_i(f_2^{-1})) \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^h \text{tr}(\rho_i(f_1 f_2^{-1})) \\ &= \sum_{\chi} \chi(f_1 f_2^{-1}) \end{aligned}$$

Finally, notice that

$$\underline{\rho}(\delta_1) = (\rho_1(1), \dots, \rho_h(1)) = (I_{\chi_1(1)}, \dots, I_{\chi_h(1)})$$

From which we find

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \underline{\rho}(f), \underline{\rho}(\delta_1) \rangle_+ &= \sum_{i=1}^h \text{tr} \left( \#C_1 \#C_2 \#C_3 \frac{\chi_i(C_1) \chi_i(C_2) \chi_i(C_3)}{\chi_i(1)} I_{\chi_i(1)} \right) \\ &= \sum_{\chi} \#C_1 \#C_2 \#C_3 \cdot \chi(C_1) \chi(C_2) \chi(C_3) \end{aligned}$$

■

### §3 GALOIS THEORY

The original motivation of Galois Theory was the study of polynomial equations and so-called “solvability by radicals”. More modernly, the motivation is in the study of fields via their symmetries.

One original question was with solving the cubic equation,  $ax^3 + bx^2 + cx + d = 0$ . We outline the proof here. Without loss of generality, one assumes  $a = 1$  and  $b = 0$ , by dividing by  $a$  (if  $a = 0$ , this reduces to a quadratic) and making an appropriate summation. This gives the so-called “depleted cubic” equation, we write

$$x^3 + px + q = 0.$$

Writing  $x = u + v$ , we find

$$\begin{aligned} (u + v)^3 + p(u + v) + q &= 0 \\ \Rightarrow u^3 + v^3 + 3uv(u + v) + p(u + v) + q &= 0 \\ \Rightarrow [u^3 + v^3 + q] + (3uv + p)(u + v) &= 0; \end{aligned}$$

then, if  $u^3 + v^3 + q = 0$  and  $3uv + p = 0$ , we find a solution; namely, we have now a system of two equations

$$\begin{cases} u^3 + v^3 = -q \\ uv = -\frac{p}{3} \end{cases}.$$

Cubing the second, we find

$$\begin{cases} u^3 + v^3 = -q \\ u^3 v^3 = -\frac{p^3}{27} \end{cases},$$

from which we see  $u^3$  and  $v^3$  are solutions to a quadratic equation

$$x^2 + qx - \frac{p^3}{27} = 0;$$

this equation is often called the “quadratic resolvent” of the cubic. Hence, by applying the quadratic formula, we know

$$u^3, v^3 = \frac{-q \pm \sqrt{p^2 + 4p^3/27}}{2}$$

so

$$u, v = \sqrt[3]{\frac{-q \pm \sqrt{p^2 + 4p^3/27}}{2}}.$$

Substituting back to our original expression, we find our general solution

$$x = \sqrt[3]{\frac{-q + \sqrt{p^2 + 4p^3/27}}{2}} + \sqrt[3]{\frac{-q - \sqrt{p^2 + 4p^3/27}}{2}}$$

to the cubic equation. One notices that this should give 9 solutions (3 cube roots exists, for each cube root), and in general gives complex numbers. We’ll discuss the implications of this to follow.

There is a similar formula for the general quartic equation, involving square, cube, and fourth roots, with a similar method leading to a resolvent cubic. However, attempting the same method for the quintic equation leads to a resolvent sextic equation, which is clearly no help at all. We’ll see that this is intimately tied to the symmetries, namely, the symmetry groups, of the roots of the respective polynomials.