

# Invariant Theory of Finite Groups

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# Recall from Week 3

$V$  finite dimensional  $\mathbb{F}$  - vector space,  $G \leq \text{GL}(V)$  finite;

$A := \mathbb{F}[V] = \text{Sym}(V^*) \cong \mathbb{F}[x_1, \dots, x_n]$ , polynomial ring;

$$A^G := \{a \in A \mid g(a) = a, \forall g \in G\}, (\mathbb{N}_0 - \text{graded})$$

**Theorem** (Chevalley-Shephard-Todd):

Consider the following statements:

1.  ${}_{A^G}A$  is free.
2.  $A^G$  is a polynomial ring.
3.  $G \leq \text{GL}(V)$  is generated by pseudo-reflections.

Then the following implications hold: 1.  $\iff$  2.  $\implies$  3.

If  $|G| \in \mathbb{F}^*$  then: 1.  $\iff$  2.  $\iff$  3.

# Modular Counterexample

Let  $\mathbb{F} := \mathbb{F}_p[\epsilon]$  with  $\epsilon^p - \epsilon = 1$  and define  $G := \langle r_1, r_2, r_3 \rangle$  with

$$r_1 := \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, r_2 := \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \text{ and}$$

$$r_3 := \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & \epsilon \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix},$$

Then  $\mathbb{F}[\mathbb{F}^4]^G$  is **not** a polynomial ring.

(Example due to H.E.A. Campbell and D. Wehlau)

# Exercises

- 1 Let  $R$  be a normal integral domain and  $G \leq \text{Aut}(R)$ . Then  $R^G$  is also a normal integral domain.
- 2 Let  $A := \mathbb{F}[V]$ ,  $\mathbb{L} := \text{Quot}(A)$ ,  $G \leq \text{GL}(V)$  finite. Show that  $\mathbb{L} \geq \mathbb{L}^G = \text{Quot}(A^G) =: \mathbb{K}$  is galois with group  $G$ . Conclude that for  $H \leq G$ ,  $H = G \iff A^H = A^G$ .
- 3 Show that the following are equivalent:
  - (a)  $A^G$  is a polynomial ring.
  - (b) There is an hsop  $\{h_1, \dots, h_n\}$  of  $A^G$  with  $|G| = \prod_{i=1}^n \deg h_i$ .  
In particular  $A^G = \mathbb{F}[h_1, \dots, h_n]$  implies  $|G| = \prod_{i=1}^n \deg h_i$ .

# Exercises

4 Assume that  ${}_A A$  is free and let  $W := A/A^{G,+}A$ . Show:

(a)  $W \in \mathbb{F}G\text{-mod}$  of dimension  $|G|$ .

(b)  $W \cong {}_{\mathbb{F}G}\mathbb{F}G$ , the reg. rep. of  $G$ , if and only if  $|G| \in \mathbb{F}^*$ .

(Hint: Use normal basis theorem from Galois theory, Maschke's theorem from representation theory and use the fact that for finite dimensional  $X, Y \in \mathbb{F}G\text{-mod}$  and any field extension  $\mathbb{S} \geq \mathbb{F}$

$$\mathbb{S} \otimes_{\mathbb{F}} X \cong \mathbb{S} \otimes_{\mathbb{F}} Y$$

as  $\mathbb{S}G$ -modules  $\iff X \cong Y$  as  $\mathbb{F}G$ -modules.)

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Rest by standard Galois theory (Artin's theorem, Galois correspondence).

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- (a)  $W \in \mathbb{F}G$  – mod of dimension  $|G|$ .
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If  ${}_A A = \bigoplus_{i=1}^n A^G e_i$ , then

$$W \cong \bigoplus_{i=1}^n A^G e_i / A^{G,+} e_i \cong \bigoplus_{i=1}^n \mathbb{F} e_i \in \mathbb{F}G - \text{mod}.$$

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We have  $1_{\mathbb{F}} \oplus X \cong W$ . If  $W \cong {}_{\mathbb{F}G} \mathbb{F}G$ , then  $1_{\mathbb{F}}$  is projective in  $\mathbb{F}G - \text{mod}$ , hence  $|G| \in \mathbb{F}^*$ .

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If  $|G| \in \mathbb{F}^*$ , then  $A = A^{G,+} A \oplus X$  with  $W \cong X \in \mathbb{F}G - \text{mod}$ .

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for  $Y := \bigoplus_{g \in G} \mathbb{F}^g \ell \subseteq \mathbb{L}$  we have  $Y \cong {}_{\mathbb{F}G} \mathbb{F}G$  and

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$$\mathbb{K} \otimes_{\mathbb{F}} Y \cong \mathbb{L} \cong \mathbb{K} \otimes_{\mathbb{F}} X \in \mathbb{K}G - \text{mod};$$

$$\Rightarrow Y \cong X \cong W.$$

# From Exercise 3:

To prove that  $A^G$  is polynomial ring:

- 1 Guess a set of  $n$  homogeneous algebra generators  $a_1, \dots, a_n \in A^G$ .
- 2 Show that  $A$  is finite over  $\mathbb{F}[a_1, \dots, a_n]$ .
- 3 Show that the degree of  $\text{Quot}(A)$  over  $\mathbb{F}(a_1, \dots, a_n)$  equals  $|G|$ , e.g. by showing that  $\prod_{i=1}^n \deg a_i = |G|$ .

**Theorem** (Kemper): sufficient to show 3. +  $\{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$  algebraically independent.

# Examples

1. **Elementary symmetric**  $e_1, \dots, e_n \in \mathbb{F}[X_1, \dots, X_n]^{\Sigma_n}$ ,  
clearly  $\mathbb{F}[\underline{X}]$  integral over  $\mathbb{F}[\underline{e}]$

$$\prod_i \deg e_i = n! = |\Sigma_n| \Rightarrow \mathbb{F}[\underline{X}]^{\Sigma_n} = \mathbb{F}[\underline{e}]$$

2. **Dickson - invariants**  $d_{i,n} \in \mathbb{F}_q[V]^{\text{GL}(V)}$  defined by

$$F_n(T) := \prod_{v \in V^*} (T - v) = \sum_{i=0}^n d_{i,n} T^{q^{n-i}},$$

so  $\mathbb{F}_q[V]$  integral over  $\mathbb{F}_q[\underline{d}]$ .

$$\prod_i \deg d_{i,n} = |\text{GL}(V)| \Rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q[V]^{\text{GL}(V)} = \mathbb{F}_q[\underline{d}].$$

3. **Unipotent-invariants**  $b_i \in \mathbb{F}_q[V]^{P_n(V)}$  with

$P_n(V) = \text{Syl}_p(\text{GL}(V))$ , with orbit-products  $b_i$  of degree  $q^{i-1}$ .

As seen last week:  $\{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$  hsop with

$$\prod_i \deg b_i = q^{\frac{n(n-1)}{2}} = |P_n(V)| \Rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q[V]^{P_n(V)} = \mathbb{F}_q[\underline{b}].$$

# Nakajima groups

Let  $\text{char } \mathbb{F} = p > 0$ ,  $P \leq \text{GL}(V)$  a  $p$ -group. Can find basis  $B = \{x_1, \dots, x_n\}$  of  $V^*$  with  $M_B(g)$  upper unitriangular  $\forall g \in P$ .

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i.e.  $P_i$  is "one-column-group"

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & \cdots & 0 & * & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & * & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & * & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

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- $P$  is called a **Nakajima-group** with respect to  $B$ , if  $P = P_n P_{n-1} \cdots P_1$ .

# Nakajima groups

**Theorem** :  $P$  is Nakajima-group with respect to  $B \iff$   
 $\mathbb{F}[V]^P = \mathbb{F}[N(x_1), \dots, N(x_n)]$ .

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**Open problem** : Characterization of modular representations of finite groups with polynomial rings of invariants.

# Non-linear group actions

**Theorem** : (Fl.-Woodcock) Let  $|P| = p^n$  with  $p = \text{char } \mathbb{F}$ .  
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localization of  $\mathbb{F}[V_{\text{reg}}]$ .

Algebra  $A$  can be used to obtain a *structure theorem* for  
Galois-ring extensions with group  $P$ .

# UFD

**Theorem** : Let  $A$  be UFD,  $G$  a finite group acting on  $A$  such that

- $G$  acts trivially on  $A^*$
- $\text{Hom}(G, A^*) = 1$

(e.g.  $A^* = A_0 = \mathbb{F}$  and  $G = [G, G]$  or  $|G| = p^k$ ,  $p = \text{char } \mathbb{F}$ .)

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**Proof**: Let  $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec}_1(A^G)$ ; **need to show** :  $\mathfrak{p}$  is principal ideal.

**know** :  $\exists P \in \text{Spec}_1(A)$  with  $P \cap A^G = \mathfrak{p}$  ("lying over").

**know** :  $P = fA$  with prime  $f \in A$ .

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**Proof:** Let  $H := \{g \in G \mid {}^g f \sim f \text{ are associated}\}$ , then

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Let  $G := \bigoplus_{r \in \mathcal{R}} rH$  and  $N_f := \prod_{r \in \mathcal{R}} {}^r f$ , then

$${}^g N_f = \lambda(g) N_f \text{ with } \lambda \in \text{Hom}(G, A^*) = 1.$$

Hence  $N_f \in A^G$ .

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Clearly  $N_f A^G \subseteq fA \cap A^G = P \cap A^G = \mathfrak{p}$ , hence

$$\mathfrak{p} = N_f A^G.$$

# Nakajima's theorem

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For  $I, J \in \mathcal{F}_A$ :  $I \sim_{\text{Artin}} J \iff I^{-1} = J^{-1}$  (equivalence relation)

$\mathcal{D}_A := \mathcal{F}_A / \sim_{\text{Artin}} \cong \bigoplus_{\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec}_1(A)} \mathbb{Z} \cdot d(\mathfrak{p})$  (free abelian group).

Let  $\mathcal{H}_A := \{[xA] \mid x \in \mathbb{K}\} \leq \mathcal{D}_A$  (principal fractional ideals)

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**Theorem** Let  $G \leq \text{GL}(V)$  with  $W := \langle r \mid r \text{ reflection in } G \rangle \trianglelefteq G$ .

Then

$$\mathcal{C}_{AG} \cong \{\rho \in \text{Hom}(G, \mathbb{F}^*) \mid \text{res}_W(\rho) = 1\}.$$

# Non - CM invariant rings

(Campbell, Hughes, Kemper, Shank, Wehlau)

Assume  $N \triangleleft G$  with  $G/N = \langle \bar{g} \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/p$ ,  $p = \text{char } \mathbb{F}$ .

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$$\Rightarrow 0 = \begin{vmatrix} f_1 & f_2 & f_3 \\ f_1 & f_2 & f_3 \\ a_1 & a_2 & a_3 \end{vmatrix} = u_{23}f_1 + u_{31}f_2 + u_{12}f_3,$$

$$u_{ij} := \begin{vmatrix} f_i & f_j \\ a_i & a_j \end{vmatrix} \in A^G \setminus (f_i, f_j)A^G. \Rightarrow (f_1, f_2, f_3) \text{ not a regular}$$

sequence in  $A^G$ . But for  $m \geq 3$ ,  $J$  contains partial hsop of length  $\geq 3$  and in CM-ring, partial hsops are regular sequences.

# Modular CM invariant rings

An element  $g \in \text{GL}(V)$  is called a **bi-reflection**, if  $\text{rk}(g - \text{id}_V) \leq 2$ .

**Theorem** (Kemper): Let  $P \leq \text{GL}(V)$  be a  $p$ -group ( $p = \text{char } \mathbb{F}$ ) such that  $\mathbb{F}[V]^P$  is Cohen-Macaulay, then  $P$  is generated by bi-reflections.

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**Corollary** :  $\mathbb{F}[V^{\oplus 3}]^P$  is **not** Cohen-Macaulay.

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How close is a  $A^G$  to being a Cohen-Macaulay ring ?

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$$\text{depth}(A^G) = \text{Dim}(A^G) \iff A^G \text{ CM.}$$

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**Lemma:** Let  $C \leq B$  graded connected over  $\mathbb{F}$  with  ${}_C B$  finite and  ${}_C B = C \oplus X$ . Then  $\text{depth}(B) \leq \text{depth}(C)$ .

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If  $H \leq G$  with  $[G : H]1_{\mathbb{F}} \neq 0$ , then *relative* trace:

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**However** :  $\mathbb{F}[V]^{\Sigma_p}$  poly, but  $\mathbb{F}[V]^P$  not CM for  $P \in \text{Syl}_p(\Sigma_p)$ ,  $p \geq 5$ .

# The relative transfer ideal

Let  $\mathbb{F} = \overline{\mathbb{F}}$  and fix  $P \leq G \in \text{Syl}_p(G)$ .

$$I_P^G := \sum_{Q < P} t_Q^G(A^Q) \trianglelefteq A^G.$$

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(Fl. 1998,2002)
- $\text{depth } A^G = \text{grade}(\mathfrak{i}, A^G) + \dim V^P$ ; (Fl., Shank 2000)  
where  $\text{grade}(\mathfrak{i}, A^G) := \text{length of a max. reg. sequence in } \mathfrak{i}$ .

# Calculation of $\text{grade}(\mathfrak{i}, A^G)$

Using D Rees' definition

$$\text{grade}(\mathfrak{i}, A^G) = \min\{k \mid \text{Ext}_{A^G}^k(A^G/\mathfrak{i}, A^G) \neq 0\} \leq h := \text{ht}(\mathfrak{i}).$$

$$A^G = H^0(G, A) \Rightarrow$$

one can approach computation of  $\text{grade}(\mathfrak{i}, A^G)$  via  
Ellingsrud - Skjelbred spectral sequence (1980):

$$E_2^{p,q} = \text{Ext}_{A^G}^p(A^G/\mathfrak{i}, H^q(G, A)) \Rightarrow H^n(T),$$

with  $H^n(T) = 0$ , for  $n = p + q < h$ .

# Minimal depth and cohomology

(with G Kemper, RJ Shank, J Elmer)

$c := \min \{k > 0 \mid H^k(G, A) \neq 0\} =:$  "cohomological connectivity"

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• equality, if and only if  $\mathfrak{i} \cdot \alpha = 0$  for some  $0 \neq \alpha \in H^c(G, A)$ .

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**Criterion:**  $\exists 0 \neq \alpha \in H^c(G, A)$  with  $\text{res}_Q^G(\alpha) = 0 \forall Q < P \implies \text{depth}(A^G)$  minimal.

(J. Elmer (2008)): " $\Leftarrow$ " is also true.

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## Theorem

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- if  $G$  is  $p$ -nilpotent with cyclic  $P \in \text{Syl}_p(G)$ ;
- for  $G = P$  cyclic: Ellingsrud-Skjelbred (1980);
- for infinite families of  $\mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p$ -representations including
- all non-projective indecomposable representations of  $\mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_2$  in  $\text{char}(\mathbb{F}) = 2$ .

# Module structure of $\mathbb{F}[V]$

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$V$  is **indecomposable** if  $V = U \oplus W \Rightarrow U = 0$  or  $W = 0$ .

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- In **modular** case: # of iso-types of **indecomposables** "generically wild" (=infinite and "unclassifiable".)

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Method+results used to obtain...

# General modular degree bound

...long conjectured, now a Theorem of P Symonds (2009): For arbitrary finite  $G \leq \text{GL}(V)$ :

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However, usually not sharp e.g.:

$$\beta(\mathbb{F}_p[V]^{\mathbb{Z}/p}) = (p - 1)\dim(V^{\mathbb{Z}/p}) + p - 2 \text{ (generically),}$$

(former  $2p - 3$ -conjecture for  $V_{reg}$  (Fl., Sezer, Shank, Woodcock, 2006)).