

19. INTRODUCTION TO FIELD AUTOMORPHISMS

**Definition:** Let  $K \subseteq L$  be fields. An *automorphism* of  $L$  is a bijection  $\sigma : L \rightarrow L$  with  $\sigma(x + y) = \sigma(x) + \sigma(y)$  and  $\sigma(xy) = \sigma(x)\sigma(y)$ . An *automorphism of  $L$  fixing  $K$*  is an automorphism of  $L$  obeying  $\sigma(a) = a$  for all  $a \in K$ . We write  $\text{Aut}(L)$  for the automorphisms of  $L$  and  $\text{Aut}(L/K)$  for the automorphisms of  $L$  fixing  $K$ .

**Problem 19.1.** Let  $K \subseteq L$  be fields. Let  $f(x)$  be a polynomial in  $K[x]$ ; let  $\{\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_r\}$  be the roots of  $f$  in  $L$ .

- (1) Show that  $\text{Aut}(L/K)$  maps  $\{\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_r\}$  to itself.
- (2) Show that stabilizer of  $\theta_j$  in  $\text{Aut}(L/K)$  is  $\text{Aut}(L/K(\theta_j))$ .
- (3) Let  $L = \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt[4]{2})$  and let  $f(x) = x^2 - 2$ . Show that the roots of  $f(x)$  in  $L$  are  $\{\pm\sqrt{2}\}$  and show that  $\text{Aut}(L/\mathbb{Q})$  fixes both of them.

**Problem 19.2.** Let  $K$  be a field, let  $f$  be a polynomial in  $K[x]$ , let  $L$  be a splitting field for  $f$  and let  $\{\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_n\}$  be the roots of  $f$  in  $L$ . Assume  $\{\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_n\}$  are distinct.<sup>1</sup>

- (1) Show that the action of  $\text{Aut}(L/K)$  takes  $\{\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_n\}$  to itself.
- (2) Show that this action of  $\text{Aut}(L/K)$  gives an **injection**  $\text{Aut}(L/K) \hookrightarrow S_n$ .

**Problem 19.3.** Let  $K, f, L$  and  $\{\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_n\}$  be as in Problem 19.2. Let  $g(x)$  be an irreducible factor of  $f(x)$  in  $K[x]$  and renumber the  $\theta$ 's so that  $\{\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_m\}$  are the roots of  $g$  in  $L$ . Show that  $\{\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_m\}$  is the  $\text{Aut}(L/K)$ -orbit of  $\theta_1$  in  $L$ . Hint: Apply Problem 18.6 to the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 K[\theta_i] & \xleftarrow{\cong} & K[x]/g(x)K[x] & \xrightarrow{\cong} & K[\theta_j] \\
 \downarrow & & & & \downarrow \\
 L & \text{-----} & & & L
 \end{array}$$

**Problem 19.4.** Let  $L$  be the splitting field of  $x^3 - 2$  over  $\mathbb{Q}$ . Show that  $\text{Aut}(L/\mathbb{Q}) \cong S_3$ .

**Problem 19.5.** Let  $L = \mathbb{Q}(\cos \frac{2\pi}{7})$ . Show that  $\text{Aut}(L/\mathbb{Q}) \cong C_3$ .

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<sup>1</sup>This happens if and only if  $\text{GCD}(f(x), f'(x)) = 1$ , see the homework.