



Cyclic resultants[☆]

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Abstract

We characterize polynomials having the same set of nonzero cyclic resultants. Generically, for a polynomial f of degree d , there are exactly 2^{d-1} distinct degree d polynomials with the same set of cyclic resultants as f . However, in the generic monic case, degree d polynomials are uniquely determined by their cyclic resultants. Moreover, two reciprocal (“palindromic”) polynomials giving rise to the same set of nonzero cyclic resultants are equal. In the process, we also prove a unique factorization result in semigroup algebras involving products of binomials. Finally, we discuss how our results yield algorithms for explicit reconstruction of polynomials from their cyclic resultants.

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1. Introduction

The m -th cyclic resultant of a univariate polynomial $f \in \mathbb{C}[x]$ is

$$r_m = \text{Res}(f, x^m - 1).$$

We are primarily interested here in the fibers of the map $r : \mathbb{C}[x] \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^{\mathbb{N}}$ given by $f \mapsto (r_m)_{m=0}^{\infty}$. In particular, what are the conditions for two polynomials to give rise to

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the same set of cyclic resultants? For technical reasons, we will only consider polynomials f that do not have a root of unity as a zero. With this restriction, a polynomial will map to a set of all nonzero cyclic resultants. Our main result gives a complete answer to this question.

Theorem 1.1. *Let f and g be polynomials in $\mathbb{C}[x]$. Then, f and g generate the same sequence of nonzero cyclic resultants if and only if there exist $u, v \in \mathbb{C}[x]$ with $\deg(u)$ even, $u(0) \neq 0$, and nonnegative integers $l_1 \equiv l_2 \pmod{2}$ such that*

$$f(x) = x^{l_1} v(x) u(x^{-1}) x^{\deg(u)}$$

$$g(x) = x^{l_2} v(x) u(x).$$

Remark 1.2. All our results involving \mathbb{C} hold over any algebraically closed field of characteristic zero.

Although the theorem statement appears somewhat technical, we present a natural interpretation of the result. Suppose that $g(x) = x^{l_2} v(x) u(x)$ is a factorization as above of a polynomial g with nonzero cyclic resultants. Then, another polynomial f giving rise to this same sequence of resultants is obtained from v by multiplication with the reversal $u(x^{-1}) x^{\deg(u)}$ of u and a factor x^{l_1} in which $l_1 \in \mathbb{N}$ has the same parity as l_2 . In other words, $f(x) = x^{l_1} v(x) u(x^{-1}) x^{\deg(u)}$, and all such f must arise in this manner.

Example 1.3. One can check that the polynomials

$$f(x) = x^3 - 10x^2 + 31x - 30$$

$$g(x) = 15x^5 - 38x^4 + 17x^3 - 2x^2$$

both generate the same cyclic resultants. This follows from the factorizations

$$f(x) = (x - 2) (15x^2 - 8x + 1)$$

$$g(x) = x^2(x - 2) (x^2 - 8x + 15). \quad \square$$

One motivation for the study of cyclic resultants comes from the theory of dynamical systems. Sequences of the form r_m arise as the cardinalities of sets of periodic points for toral endomorphisms. Let A be a d -by- d integer matrix and let $X = \mathbb{T}^d = \mathbb{R}^d / \mathbb{Z}^d$ denote the d -dimensional additive torus. Then, the matrix A acts on X by multiplication mod 1; that is, it defines a map $T : X \rightarrow X$ given by

$$T(\mathbf{x}) = A\mathbf{x} \pmod{\mathbb{Z}^d}.$$

Let $\text{Per}_m(T) = \{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{T}^d : T^m(\mathbf{x}) = \mathbf{x}\}$ be the set of points fixed under the map T^m . Under the ergodicity condition that no eigenvalue of A is a root of unity, it follows (see [Everest and Ward, 1999](#)) that

$$|r_m(f)| = |\text{Per}_m(T)| = |\det(A^m - I)|,$$

in which I is the d -by- d identity matrix, and f is the characteristic polynomial of A . As a consequence of our results, we characterize when the sequence $|\text{Per}_m(T)|$ determines the spectrum of the linear map A lifting T (see [Corollary 1.13](#)).

In connection with number theory, cyclic resultants were also studied by Pierce and Lehmer (Everest and Ward, 1999) in the hope of using them to produce large primes. As a simple example, the Mersenne numbers $M_m = 2^m - 1$ arise as cyclic resultants of the polynomial $f(x) = x - 2$. Indeed, the map $T(x) = 2x \pmod{1}$ has precisely M_m points of period m . Further motivation comes from knot theory (Stevens, 2000), Lagrangian mechanics (Guillemin, 1996; Iantchenko et al., 2002), and, more recently, in the study of amoebas of varieties (Purbhoo, 2004) and quantum computing (Kedlaya, 2004).

The principal result in the direction of our main characterization theorem was discovered by Fried (1988) although certain implications of Fried's result were known to Stark (Duistermaat and Guillemin, 1975). Our approach is a refinement and generalization of the one found in Fried (1988). Given a polynomial $f = a_0x^d + a_1x^{d-1} + \cdots + a_d$ of degree d , the reversal of f is the polynomial $x^d f(1/x)$. Additionally, f is called reciprocal if $a_i = a_{d-i}$ for $0 \leq i \leq d$ (sometimes such a polynomial is called palindromic). Alternatively, f is reciprocal if it is equal to its own reversal. Fried's result may be stated as follows. It will be a corollary of Theorem 1.8 below (the real version of Theorem 1.1).

Corollary 1.4 (Fried). *Let $p(x) = a_0x^d + \cdots + a_{d-1}x + a_d \in \mathbb{R}[x]$ be a real reciprocal polynomial of even degree d with $a_0 > 0$, and let r_m be the m -th cyclic resultants of p . Then, $|r_m|$ uniquely determine this polynomial of degree d as long as the r_m are never 0.*

The following is a direct corollary of our main theorem to the generic case.

Corollary 1.5. *Let g be a generic polynomial in $\mathbb{C}[x]$ of degree d . Then, there are exactly 2^{d-1} degree d polynomials with the same set of cyclic resultants as g .*

Proof. If g is generic, then g will not have a root of unity as a zero and nor will $g(0) = 0$. Theorem 1.1, therefore, implies that any other degree d polynomial $f \in \mathbb{C}[x]$ giving rise to the same set of cyclic resultants is determined by choosing an even cardinality subset of the roots of g . Such polynomials will be distinct since g is generic. Since there are 2^d subsets of the roots of g and half of them have even cardinality, the theorem follows. \square

Example 1.6. Let $g(x) = (x - 2)(x - 3)(x - 5) = x^3 - 10x^2 + 31x - 30$. Then, there are $2^{3-1} - 1 = 3$ other degree 3 polynomials with the same set of cyclic resultants as g . They are:

$$\begin{aligned} 15x^3 - 38x^2 + 17x - 2 \\ 10x^3 - 37x^2 + 22x - 3 \\ 6x^3 - 35x^2 + 26x - 5. \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

If one is interested in the case of generic monic polynomials, then Theorem 1.1 also implies the following uniqueness result.

Corollary 1.7. *The set of cyclic resultants determines g for generic monic $g \in \mathbb{C}[x]$ of degree d .*

Proof. Again, since g is generic, it will not have a root of unity as a zero and nor will $g(0) = 0$. Theorem 1.1 forces a constraint on the roots of g for there to be a different

monic polynomial f with the same set of cyclic resultants as g . Namely, a subset of the roots of g has product 1, a non-generic situation. \square

As is to be expected, there are analogs of [Theorem 1.1](#) and [Corollary 1.7](#) for the real case involving absolute values.

Theorem 1.8. *Let f and g be polynomials in $\mathbb{R}[x]$. If f and g generate the same sequence of nonzero cyclic resultant absolute values, then there exist $u, v \in \mathbb{C}[x]$ with $u(0) \neq 0$ and nonnegative integers l_1, l_2 such that*

$$f(x) = \pm x^{l_1} v(x) u(x^{-1}) x^{\deg(u)}$$

$$g(x) = x^{l_2} v(x) u(x).$$

Corollary 1.9. *The set of cyclic resultant absolute values determines g for generic monic $g \in \mathbb{R}[x]$ of degree d .*

The generic real case without the monic assumption is more subtle than that of [Corollary 1.5](#). The difficulty is that we are restricted to polynomials in $\mathbb{R}[x]$. However, there is the following:

Corollary 1.10. *Let g be a generic polynomial in the set of degree d elements of $\mathbb{R}[x]$ with at most one real root. Then there are exactly $2^{\lceil d/2 \rceil + 1}$ degree d polynomials in $\mathbb{R}[x]$ with the same set of cyclic resultant absolute values as g .*

Proof. If d is even, then the hypothesis implies that all of the roots of g are nonreal. In particular, it follows from [Theorem 1.8](#) (and genericity) that any other degree d polynomial $f \in \mathbb{R}[x]$ giving rise to the same set of cyclic resultant absolute values is determined by choosing a subset of the $d/2$ pairs of conjugate roots of g and a sign. This gives us a count of $2^{d/2+1}$ distinct real polynomials. When d is odd, g has exactly one real root, and a similar counting argument gives us $2^{\lceil d/2 \rceil + 1}$ for the number of distinct real polynomials in this case. This proves the corollary. \square

A surprising consequence of this result is that the number of polynomials with equal sets of cyclic resultant absolute values can be significantly smaller than the number predicted by [Corollary 1.5](#).

Example 1.11. Let $g(x) = (x - 2)(x + i + 2)(x - i + 2) = x^3 + 2x^2 - 3x - 10$. Then, there are $2^{\lceil 3/2 \rceil + 1} - 1 = 7$ other degree 3 real polynomials with the same set of cyclic resultant absolute values as g . They are:

$$-x^3 - 2x^2 + 3x + 10, \pm(-2x^3 - 7x^2 - 6x + 5),$$

$$\pm(5x^3 - 6x^2 - 7x - 2), \pm(-10x^3 - 3x^2 + 2x + 1).$$

It is important to realize that while

$$f(x) = (1 - 2x)(1 + (i + 2)x)(x - i + 2)$$

$$= (-4 - 2i)x^3 - (10 - i)x^2 + (2 + 2i)x + 2 - i$$

has the same set of actual cyclic resultants (by [Theorem 1.1](#)), it does not appear in the count above since it is not in $\mathbb{R}[x]$. \square

As an illustration of the usefulness of [Theorem 1.1](#), we prove a uniqueness result involving cyclic resultants of reciprocal polynomials. Fried's result also follows in the same way using [Theorem 1.8](#) in place of [Theorem 1.1](#).

Corollary 1.12. *Let f and g be reciprocal polynomials with equal sets of nonzero cyclic resultants. Then, $f = g$.*

Proof. Let f and g be reciprocal polynomials having the same set of nonzero cyclic resultants. Applying [Theorem 1.1](#), it follows that $d = \deg(f) = \deg(g)$ and that

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= v(x)u(x^{-1})x^{\deg(u)} \\ g(x) &= v(x)u(x) \end{aligned}$$

($l_1 = l_2 = 0$ since $f(0), g(0) \neq 0$). But then,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{u(x^{-1})}{u(x)}x^{\deg(u)} &= \frac{f(x)}{g(x)} \\ &= \frac{x^d f(x^{-1})}{x^d g(x^{-1})} \\ &= \frac{u(x)}{u(x^{-1})}x^{-\deg(u)}. \end{aligned}$$

In particular, $u(x) = \pm u(x^{-1})x^{\deg(u)}$. If $u(x) = u(x^{-1})x^{\deg(u)}$, then $f = g$ as desired. In the other case, it follows that $f = -g$. But then $\text{Res}(f, x - 1) = \text{Res}(g, x - 1) = -\text{Res}(f, x - 1)$ is a contradiction to f having all nonzero cyclic resultants. This completes the proof. \square

We now state the application to toral endomorphisms discussed in the introduction.

Corollary 1.13. *Let T be an ergodic, toral endomorphism induced by a d -by- d integer matrix A . If there is no subset of the eigenvalues of A with product ± 1 , then the sequence $|\text{Per}_m(T)|$ determines the spectrum of the linear map that defines T .*

Proof. Suppose that T' is another toral endomorphism induced by an integral d -by- d matrix B such that

$$|\text{Per}_m(T)| = |\text{Per}_m(T')|.$$

Let f and g be the characteristic polynomials of A and B , respectively. From the hypothesis of the corollary and the statement of [Theorem 1.8](#), it follows that f and g must be equal. In particular, the eigenvalues of the matrices A and B coincide, completing the proof. \square

Remark 1.14. We note that a more complete characterization is possible using the results of [Theorem 1.8](#); however, the statement is more technical and not very enlightening.

When a degree d polynomial is uniquely determined by its sequence of cyclic resultants, it is natural to ask for an algorithm that performs the reconstruction. In several applications, moreover, explicit inversion using small numbers of resultants is desired (see, for instance, [Iantchenko et al. \(2002\)](#); [Kedlaya \(2004\)](#)). In [Section 5](#), we describe a method that inverts the map r using the first 2^{d+1} cyclic resultants. Empirically, however, only $d + 1$ resultants

suffice, and a conjecture by Sturmfels and Zworski would imply that this is always the case. As evidence for this conjecture, we provide explicit reconstructions for several small examples.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we make a digression into the theory of semigroup algebras and binomial factorizations. The unique factorization result discussed there (Theorem 2.2) will form a crucial component in proving Theorem 1.1. The subsequent section deals with algebraic properties of cyclic resultants, and Section 5 concludes with proofs of our main cyclic resultant characterization theorems. Finally, in the last section, we discuss algorithms for reconstruction.

2. Binomial factorizations

We now switch to the seemingly unrelated topic of binomial factorizations in semigroup algebras. The relationship with cyclic resultants will become clear later. Let A be a finitely generated abelian group and let a_1, \dots, a_n be distinguished generators of A . Let Q be the semigroup generated by a_1, \dots, a_n . The *semigroup algebra* $\mathbb{C}[Q]$ is the \mathbb{C} -algebra with vector space basis $\{s^a : a \in Q\}$ and multiplication defined by $s^a \cdot s^b = s^{a+b}$. Let L denote the kernel of the homomorphism \mathbb{Z}^n onto A . The *lattice ideal* associated with L is the following ideal in $S = \mathbb{C}[x_1, \dots, x_n]$:

$$I_L = \langle x^u - x^v : u, v \in \mathbb{N}^n \text{ with } u - v \in L \rangle.$$

It is well known that $\mathbb{C}[Q] \cong S/I_L$ (e.g. see Miller and Sturmfels (2004)). We are primarily concerned here with certain kinds of factorizations in $\mathbb{C}[Q]$.

Question 2.1. *When is a product of binomials in $\mathbb{C}[Q]$ equal to another product of binomials?*

The answer to this question turns out to be fundamental for the study of cyclic resultants. Our main result in this direction is a certain kind of unique factorization of binomials in $\mathbb{C}[Q]$.

Theorem 2.2. *Let $\alpha \in \mathbb{C}$ and suppose that*

$$s^a \prod_{i=1}^e (s^{u_i} - s^{v_i}) = \alpha s^b \prod_{i=1}^f (s^{x_i} - s^{y_i})$$

are two factorizations of binomials in the ring $\mathbb{C}[Q]$. Furthermore, suppose that for each i , the difference $u_i - v_i$ (resp. $x_i - y_i$) has infinite order as an element of A . Then, $\alpha = \pm 1$, $e = f$, and up to permutation, for each i , there are elements $c_i, d_i \in Q$ such that $s^{c_i}(s^{u_i} - s^{v_i}) = \pm s^{d_i}(s^{x_i} - s^{y_i})$.

Of course, when each side has a factor of zero, the theorem fails. There are other obstructions, however, that make necessary the supplemental hypotheses concerning order. For example, when $A = \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$, we have $\mathbb{C}[Q] = \mathbb{C}[A] \cong \mathbb{Q}[s]/\langle s^2 - 1 \rangle$, and it is easily verified that

$$(1 - s)(1 - s) = 2(1 - s).$$

One might also wonder what happens when the binomials are not of the form $\mathbf{s}^u - \mathbf{s}^v$. The following example exhibits some of the difficulty in formulating a general statement.

Example 2.3. $L = \{(0, b) \in \mathbb{Z}^2 : b \text{ is even}\}$, $I_L = \langle s^2 - 1 \rangle \subseteq \mathbb{C}[s, t]$, $A = \mathbb{Z} \oplus \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$, $Q = \mathbb{N} \oplus \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$. Then,

$$(1 - t^4) = (1 - st)(1 + st)(1 - ist)(1 + ist) = (1 - st^2)(1 + st^2)$$

are three different binomial factorizations of the same semigroup algebra element. \square

We now are in a position to outline our strategy for characterizing those polynomials f and g having the same set of nonzero cyclic resultants (this strategy is similar to the one employed in Fried (1988)). Given a polynomial f and its sequence of r_m , we construct the generating function $E_f(z) = \exp\left(-\sum_{m \geq 1} r_m \frac{z^m}{m}\right)$. This series turns out to be rational with coefficients depending explicitly on the roots of f . Since f and g are assumed to have the same set of r_m , it follows that their corresponding rational functions E_f and E_g are equal. Let G be the (multiplicative) group of units of \mathbb{C} . Then, the divisors of these two rational functions are group ring elements in $\mathbb{Z}[G]$, and their equality forces a certain binomial group ring factorization that is analyzed explicitly. The main results in the introduction follow from this final analysis.

To prove our factorization result, we will pass to the full group algebra $\mathbb{C}[A]$. As above, we represent elements $\tau \in \mathbb{C}[A]$ as $\tau = \sum_{i=1}^m \alpha_i \mathbf{s}^{g_i}$, in which $\alpha_i \in \mathbb{C}$ and $g_i \in A$. The following lemma is quite well known.

Lemma 2.4. *If $0 \neq \alpha \in \mathbb{C}$ and $g \in A$ has infinite order, then $1 - \alpha \mathbf{s}^g \in \mathbb{C}[A]$ is not a zero-divisor.*

Proof. Let $0 \neq \alpha \in \mathbb{C}$, $g \in A$ and $\tau = \sum_{i=1}^m \alpha_i \mathbf{s}^{g_i} \neq 0$ be such that

$$\tau = \alpha \mathbf{s}^g \tau = \alpha^2 \mathbf{s}^{2g} \tau = \alpha^3 \mathbf{s}^{3g} \tau = \dots$$

Suppose that $\alpha_1 \neq 0$. Then, the elements \mathbf{s}^{g_1} , \mathbf{s}^{g_1+g} , \mathbf{s}^{g_1+2g} , \dots appear in τ with nonzero coefficient, and since g has infinite order, these elements are all distinct. It follows, therefore, that τ cannot be a finite sum, and this contradiction finishes the proof. \square

Since the proof of the main theorem involves multiple steps, we record several facts that will be useful later. The first result is a verification of the factorization theorem for a special case.

Lemma 2.5. *Fix an abelian group C . Let $\mathbb{C}[C]$ be the group algebra with \mathbb{C} -vector space basis given by $\{\mathbf{s}^c : c \in C\}$ and set $R = \mathbb{C}[C][t, t^{-1}]$. Suppose that $c_i, d_i, b \in C$, m_i, n_i are nonzero integers, $q \in \mathbb{Z}$, and $z \in \mathbb{C}$ are such that*

$$\prod_{i=1}^e (1 - \mathbf{s}^{c_i} t^{m_i}) = z \mathbf{s}^b t^q \prod_{i=1}^f (1 - \mathbf{s}^{d_i} t^{n_i})$$

holds in R . Then, $e = f$ and after a permutation, for each i , either $\mathbf{s}^{c_i} t^{m_i} = \mathbf{s}^{d_i} t^{n_i}$ or $\mathbf{s}^{c_i} t^{m_i} = \mathbf{s}^{-d_i} t^{-n_i}$.

Proof. Let $\text{sgn} : \mathbb{Z} \setminus \{0\} \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$ denote the standard sign map $\text{sgn}(n) = n/|n|$ and set $\gamma = z\mathbf{s}^b t^q$. Rewrite the left-hand side of the given equality as

$$\prod_{i=1}^e (1 - \mathbf{s}^{c_i} t^{m_i}) = \prod_{\text{sgn}(m_i)=-1} -\mathbf{s}^{c_i} t^{m_i} \prod_{i=1}^e \left(1 - \mathbf{s}^{\text{sgn}(m_i)c_i} t^{|m_i|}\right).$$

Similarly for the right-hand side, we have

$$\prod_{i=1}^f (1 - \mathbf{s}^{d_i} t^{n_i}) = \prod_{\text{sgn}(n_i)=-1} -\mathbf{s}^{d_i} t^{n_i} \prod_{i=1}^f \left(1 - \mathbf{s}^{\text{sgn}(n_i)d_i} t^{|n_i|}\right).$$

Next, set

$$\eta = \gamma \prod_{\text{sgn}(m_i)=-1} -\mathbf{s}^{-c_i} t^{-m_i} \prod_{\text{sgn}(n_i)=-1} -\mathbf{s}^{d_i} t^{n_i}$$

so that our original equation may be written as

$$\prod_{i=1}^e \left(1 - \mathbf{s}^{\text{sgn}(m_i)c_i} t^{|m_i|}\right) = \eta \prod_{i=1}^f \left(1 - \mathbf{s}^{\text{sgn}(n_i)d_i} t^{|n_i|}\right).$$

Comparing the lowest degree term (with respect to t) on both sides, it follows that $\eta = 1$. It is enough, therefore, to prove the claim in the case when

$$\prod_{i=1}^e (1 - \mathbf{s}^{c_i} t^{m_i}) = \prod_{i=1}^f (1 - \mathbf{s}^{d_i} t^{n_i}) \tag{2.1}$$

and the m_i, n_i are positive. Without loss of generality, suppose the lowest degree nonconstant term on both sides of (2.1) is t^{m_1} with coefficient $-\mathbf{s}^{c_1} - \dots - \mathbf{s}^{c_u}$ on the left and $-\mathbf{s}^{d_1} - \dots - \mathbf{s}^{d_v}$ on the right. Here, u (resp. v) corresponds to the number of m_i (resp. n_i) with $m_i = m_1$ (resp. $n_i = m_1$).

Since the set of distinct monomials $\{\mathbf{s}^c : c \in C\}$ is a \mathbb{C} -vector space basis for the ring $\mathbb{C}[C]$, equality of the t^{m_1} coefficients above implies that $u = v$ and that up to permutation, $\mathbf{s}^{c_j} = \mathbf{s}^{d_j}$ for $j = 1, \dots, u$ (here is where we use that the characteristic of \mathbb{C} is zero).

Lemma 2.4 and induction complete the proof. \square

Lemma 2.6. Let $P = (p_{ij})$ be a d -by- n integer matrix such that every row has at least one nonzero integer. Then, there exists $\mathbf{v} \in \mathbb{Z}^n$ such that the vector $P\mathbf{v}$ does not contain a zero entry.

Proof. Let P be a d -by- n integer matrix as in the hypothesis of the lemma, and for $h \in \mathbb{Z}$, let $\mathbf{v}_h = (1, h, h^2, \dots, h^{n-1})^T$. Assume, by way of contradiction, that $P\mathbf{v}$ contains a zero entry for all $\mathbf{v} \in \mathbb{Z}^n$. Then, in particular, this is true for all \mathbf{v}_h as above. By the (infinite) pigeonhole principle, there exists an infinite set of $h \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that (without loss of generality) the first entry of $P\mathbf{v}_h$ is zero. But then,

$$f(h) := \sum_{i=1}^n p_{1i} h^{i-1} = 0$$

for infinitely many values of h . It follows, therefore, that $f(h)$ is the zero polynomial, contradicting our hypothesis and completing the proof. \square

Lemma 2.6 will be useful in verifying the following fact.

Lemma 2.7. *Let A be a finitely generated abelian group and a_1, \dots, a_d elements in A of infinite order. Then, there exists a homomorphism $\phi : A \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}$ such that $\phi(a_i) \neq 0$ for all i .*

Proof. Write $A = B \oplus C$, in which C is a finite group and B is free of rank n . If $n = 0$, then there are no elements of infinite order; therefore, we may assume that the rank of B is positive. Since a_1, \dots, a_d have infinite order, their images in the natural projection $\pi : A \rightarrow B$ are nonzero. It follows that we may assume that A is free and a_i are nonzero elements of A .

Let e_1, \dots, e_n be a basis for A , and write

$$a_i = p_{i1}e_1 + \dots + p_{in}e_n$$

for (unique) integers $p_{ij} \in \mathbb{Z}$. To determine a homomorphism $\phi : A \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}$ as in the lemma, we must find integers $\phi(e_1), \dots, \phi(e_n)$ such that

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &\neq p_{i1}\phi(e_1) + \dots + p_{in}\phi(e_n) \\ &\dots \\ 0 &\neq p_{d1}\phi(e_1) + \dots + p_{dn}\phi(e_n). \end{aligned} \tag{2.2}$$

This, of course, is precisely the consequence of Lemma 2.6 applied to the matrix $P = (p_{ij})$, finishing the proof. \square

Recall that a *trivial unit* in the group ring $\mathbb{C}[A]$ is an element of the form αs^a in which $0 \neq \alpha \in \mathbb{C}$ and $a \in A$. The main content of Theorem 2.2 is contained in the following result. The technique of embedding $\mathbb{C}[A]$ into a Laurent polynomial ring is also used by Fried in Fried (1988).

Lemma 2.8. *Let A be an abelian group. Two factorizations in $\mathbb{C}[A]$,*

$$\prod_{i=1}^e (1 - s^{g_i}) = \eta \prod_{i=1}^f (1 - s^{h_i}),$$

in which η is a trivial unit and $g_i, h_i \in A$ all have infinite order are equal if and only if $e = f$ and there is some nonnegative integer p such that, up to permutation,

- (1) $g_i = h_i$ for $i = 1, \dots, p$
- (2) $g_i = -h_i$ for $i = p + 1, \dots, e$
- (3) $\eta = (-1)^{e-p} s^{g_{p+1} + \dots + g_e}$.

Proof. The if-direction of the claim is a straightforward calculation. Therefore, suppose that one has two factorizations as in the lemma. It is clear we may assume that A is finitely generated. By Lemma 2.7, there exists a homomorphism $\phi : A \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}$ such that $\phi(g_i), \phi(h_i) \neq 0$ for all i . The ring $\mathbb{C}[A]$ may be embedded into the Laurent ring, $R = \mathbb{C}[A][t, t^{-1}]$, by way of

$$\psi \left(\sum_{i=1}^m \alpha_i \mathbf{s}^{a_i} \right) = \sum_{i=1}^m \alpha_i \mathbf{s}^{a_i} t^{\phi(a_i)}.$$

Write $\eta = \alpha \mathbf{s}^b$. Then, applying this homomorphism to the original factorization, we have

$$\prod_{i=1}^e \left(1 - \mathbf{s}^{g_i} t^{\phi(g_i)} \right) = \alpha \mathbf{s}^b t^{\phi(b)} \prod_{i=1}^f \left(1 - \mathbf{s}^{h_i} t^{\phi(h_i)} \right).$$

Lemma 2.5 now applies to give us that $e = f$ and there is an integer p such that, up to permutation,

- (1) $g_i = h_i$ for $i = 1, \dots, p$
- (2) $g_i = -h_i$ for $i = p + 1, \dots, e$.

We are therefore left with verifying statement (3) of the lemma. Using **Lemma 2.4**, we may cancel equal terms in our original factorization, leaving us with the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned} \prod_{i=p+1}^e (1 - \mathbf{s}^{g_i}) &= \eta \prod_{i=p+1}^e (1 - \mathbf{s}^{-g_i}) \\ &= \eta (-1)^{e-p} \prod_{i=p+1}^e \mathbf{s}^{-g_i} \prod_{i=p+1}^e (1 - \mathbf{s}^{g_i}). \end{aligned}$$

Finally, one more application of **Lemma 2.4** gives us that $\eta = (-1)^{e-p} \mathbf{s}^{g_{p+1} + \dots + g_e}$ as desired. This finishes the proof. \square

We may now prove **Theorem 2.2**.

Proof of Theorem 2.2. Let

$$\mathbf{s}^a \prod_{i=1}^e (\mathbf{s}^{u_i} - \mathbf{s}^{v_i}) = \alpha \mathbf{s}^b \prod_{i=1}^f (\mathbf{s}^{x_i} - \mathbf{s}^{y_i})$$

be two factorizations in the ring $\mathbb{C}[Q]$. View this expression in $\mathbb{C}[A]$ and factor each element of the form $(\mathbf{s}^u - \mathbf{s}^v)$ as $\mathbf{s}^u (1 - \mathbf{s}^{v-u})$. By assumption, each such $v - u$ has infinite order. Now, apply **Lemma 2.8**, giving us that $\alpha = \pm 1$, $e = f$, and that after a permutation, for each i either $\mathbf{s}^{v_i - u_i} = \mathbf{s}^{y_i - x_i}$ or $\mathbf{s}^{v_i - u_i} = \mathbf{s}^{x_i - y_i}$. It easily follows from this that for each i , there are elements $c_i, d_i \in Q$ such that $\mathbf{s}^{c_i} (\mathbf{s}^{u_i} - \mathbf{s}^{v_i}) = \pm \mathbf{s}^{d_i} (\mathbf{s}^{x_i} - \mathbf{s}^{y_i})$. This completes the proof of the theorem. \square

3. Cyclic resultants and rational functions

We begin with some preliminaries concerning cyclic resultants. Let $f(x) = a_0 x^d + a_1 x^{d-1} + \dots + a_d$ be a degree d polynomial over \mathbb{C} , and let the companion matrix for f be given by

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & -a_d/a_0 \\ 1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & -a_{d-1}/a_0 \\ 0 & 1 & \cdots & 0 & -a_{d-2}/a_0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & 1 & -a_1/a_0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Also, let I denote the d -by- d identity matrix. Then, we may write (Cox et al., 1998, p. 77)

$$r_m = a_0^m \det(A^m - I). \tag{3.1}$$

This equation can also be expressed as

$$r_m = a_0^m \prod_{i=1}^d (\alpha_i^m - 1), \tag{3.2}$$

in which $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_d$ are the roots of $f(x)$.

Let $e_i(y_1, \dots, y_d)$ be the i -th elementary symmetric function in the variables y_1, \dots, y_d (we set $e_0 = 1$). Then, we know that $a_i = (-1)^i a_0 e_i(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_d)$ and that

$$r_m = a_0^m \sum_{i=0}^d (-1)^i e_{d-i}(\alpha_1^m, \dots, \alpha_d^m). \tag{3.3}$$

We first record an auxiliary result.

Lemma 3.1. *Let $F_k(z) = \prod_{1 \leq i_1 < \dots < i_k \leq d} (1 - a_0 \alpha_{i_1} \cdots \alpha_{i_k} z)$ with $F_0(z) = 1 - a_0 z$. Then,*

$$\sum_{m=1}^{\infty} a_0^m e_k(\alpha_1^m, \dots, \alpha_d^m) z^m = -z \cdot \frac{F'_k}{F_k},$$

in which F'_k denotes $\frac{dF_k}{dz}$.

Proof. For $k = 0$, the equation is easily verified. When $k > 0$, the calculation is still fairly straightforward:

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} a_0^m e_k(\alpha_1^m, \dots, \alpha_d^m) z^m &= \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \sum_{i_1 < \dots < i_k} a_0^m \alpha_{i_1}^m \cdots \alpha_{i_k}^m \cdot z^m \\ &= \sum_{i_1 < \dots < i_k} \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} a_0^m \alpha_{i_1}^m \cdots \alpha_{i_k}^m \cdot z^m \\ &= \sum_{i_1 < \dots < i_k} \frac{a_0 \alpha_{i_1} \cdots \alpha_{i_k} z}{1 - a_0 \alpha_{i_1} \cdots \alpha_{i_k} z} \\ &= \frac{-z \cdot \frac{d}{dz} \left[\prod_{i_1 < \dots < i_k} (1 - a_0 \alpha_{i_1} \cdots \alpha_{i_k} z) \right]}{\prod_{i_1 < \dots < i_k} (1 - a_0 \alpha_{i_1} \cdots \alpha_{i_k} z)} \\ &= -z \cdot \frac{F'_k}{F_k}. \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

We are now ready to state and prove the rationality result mentioned in Section 2.

Lemma 3.2. $R_f(z) = \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} r_m z^m$ is a rational function in z .

Proof. We simply compute that

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} r_m z^m &= \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \sum_{i=0}^d (-1)^i a_0^m e_{d-i}(\alpha_1^m, \dots, \alpha_d^m) \cdot z^m \\ &= \sum_{i=0}^d (-1)^i \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} a_0^m e_{d-i}(\alpha_1^m, \dots, \alpha_d^m) \cdot z^m \\ &= -z \cdot \sum_{i=0}^d (-1)^i \cdot \frac{F'_{d-i}}{F_{d-i}}. \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

Manipulating the expression for $R_f(z)$ occurring in Lemma 3.2, we also have the following fact.

Corollary 3.3. If d is even, let $G_d = \frac{F_d F_{d-2} \cdots F_0}{F_{d-1} F_{d-3} \cdots F_1}$ and if d is odd, let $G_d = \frac{F_d F_{d-2} \cdots F_1}{F_{d-1} F_{d-3} \cdots F_0}$. Then,

$$\sum_{m=1}^{\infty} r_m z^m = -z \frac{G'_d}{G_d}.$$

In particular, it follows that

$$\exp\left(-\sum_{m=1}^{\infty} r_m \frac{z^m}{m}\right) = G_d. \tag{3.4}$$

Example 3.4. Let $f(x) = x^2 - 5x + 6 = (x - 2)(x - 3)$. Then, $r_m = (2^m - 1)(3^m - 1)$ and $F_0(z) = 1 - z$, $F_1(z) = (1 - 2z)(1 - 3z)$, $F_2(z) = 1 - 6z$. Thus,

$$R_f(z) = -z \left(\frac{F'_2}{F_2} - \frac{F'_1}{F_1} + \frac{F'_0}{F_0} \right) = \frac{6z}{1 - 6z} - \frac{2z}{1 - 2z} - \frac{3z}{1 - 3z} + \frac{z}{1 - z}$$

and

$$\exp\left(-\sum_{m=1}^{\infty} r_m \frac{z^m}{m}\right) = \frac{(1 - 6z)(1 - z)}{(1 - 2z)(1 - 3z)}. \quad \square$$

Following Fried (1988), we discuss how to deal with absolute values in the real case. Let $f \in \mathbb{R}[x]$ have degree d such that the r_m as defined above are all nonzero. We examine the sign of r_m using Eq. (3.2). First notice that a complex conjugate pair of roots of f does not affect the sign of r_m . A real root α of f contributes a sign factor of $+1$ if $\alpha > 1$, -1 if $-1 < \alpha < 1$, and $(-1)^m$ if $\alpha < -1$. Let E be the number of zeros of f in $(-1, 1)$ and let D be the number of zeros in $(-\infty, -1)$. Also, set $\epsilon = (-1)^E$ and $\delta = (-1)^D$. Then, it follows that

$$\frac{r_m}{|r_m|} = \epsilon \cdot \delta^m. \tag{3.5}$$

In particular,

$$|r_m| = \epsilon(\delta a_0)^m \prod_{i=1}^d (\alpha_i^m - 1). \tag{3.6}$$

In other words, the sequence of $|r_m|$ is obtained by multiplying each cyclic resultant of the polynomial $\tilde{f} := \delta f = \delta a_0 x^d + \delta a_1 x^{d-1} + \dots + \delta a_d$ by ϵ . Denoting by \tilde{G}_d the rational function determined by \tilde{f} as in (3.3), it follows that

$$\exp\left(-\sum_{m=1}^{\infty} |r_m| \frac{z^m}{m}\right) = (\tilde{G}_d)^\epsilon. \tag{3.7}$$

4. Proofs of the main theorems

Let G be the multiplicative group generated by the nonzero roots $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_d$ of f . Because of the multiplicative structure of G , we represent vector space basis elements of the group ring $\mathbb{C}[G]$ as $[\alpha]$, $\alpha \in G$; multiplication is given by $[\alpha] \cdot [\beta] = [\alpha\beta]$. The divisor (in $\mathbb{C}[G]$) of the rational function G_d defined by Corollary 3.3 is

$$\begin{aligned} &(-1)^{d+1} \left(\sum_{k \text{ odd}} \sum_{i_1 < \dots < i_k} [(a_0 \alpha_{i_1} \dots \alpha_{i_k})^{-1}] - \sum_{k \text{ even}} \sum_{i_1 < \dots < i_k} [(a_0 \alpha_{i_1} \dots \alpha_{i_k})^{-1}] \right) \\ &= [a_0^{-1}] \prod_{i=1}^d ([\alpha_i^{-1}] - [1]). \end{aligned} \tag{4.1}$$

Let us remark that for ease of presentation above, when $k = 0$, we have assigned

$$\sum_{i_1 < \dots < i_k} [(a_0 \alpha_{i_1} \dots \alpha_{i_k})^{-1}] = [a_0^{-1}],$$

which corresponds to the factor of $F_0(z) = 1 - a_0 z$ in G_d . With this computation in hand, we now prove our main theorems.

Proof of Theorem 1.1. Let f and g be polynomials as in the hypothesis, and suppose that the multiplicity of 0 as a root of f (resp. g) is l_1 (resp. l_2). Then, $f(x) = x^{l_1}(a_0 x^{d_1} + \dots + a_{d_1})$ and $g(x) = x^{l_2}(b_0 x^{d_2} + \dots + b_{d_2})$ in which a_0 and b_0 are not 0. Let $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_{d_1}$ and $\beta_1, \dots, \beta_{d_2}$ be the nonzero roots of f and g , respectively, and let G be the multiplicative group generated by these elements. Since f and g both generate the same sequence of cyclic resultants, it follows that the divisors (in the group ring $\mathbb{C}[G]$) of their corresponding rational functions (see (3.4)) are equal. By above, such divisors factor, giving us that

$$(-1)^{d_1} [a_0^{-1}] \prod_{i=1}^{d_1} ([1] - [\alpha_i^{-1}]) = (-1)^{d_2} [b_0^{-1}] \prod_{i=1}^{d_2} ([1] - [\beta_i^{-1}]).$$

Since we have assumed that f and g generate a set of nonzero cyclic resultants, neither of them can have a root of unity as a zero. Therefore, Lemma 2.8 applies to give us that $d := d_1 = d_2$ and that, up to a permutation, there is a nonnegative integer p such that

- (1) $\alpha_i = \beta_i$ for $i = 1, \dots, p$
- (2) $\alpha_i = \beta_i^{-1}$ for $i = p + 1, \dots, d$
- (3) $(-1)^{d-p} = 1, a_0 b_0^{-1} = \beta_{p+1} \cdots \beta_d$.

Set $u(x) = (x - \beta_{p+1}) \cdots (x - \beta_d)$, which has even degree, and let $v(x) = b_0(x - \beta_1) \cdots (x - \beta_p)$ (note that if $p = 0$, then $v(x) = b_0$) so that $g(x) = x^{l_2} v(x) u(x)$. Now,

$$u(x^{-1})x^{\deg(u)} = (-1)^{d-p} \beta_{p+1} \cdots \beta_d (x - \beta_{p+1}^{-1}) \cdots (x - \beta_d^{-1}),$$

and thus

$$\begin{aligned} f(x) &= x^{l_1} a_0 b_0^{-1} v(x) (x - \beta_{p+1}^{-1}) \cdots (x - \beta_d^{-1}) \\ &= x^{l_1} v(x) u(x^{-1}) x^{\deg(u)}. \end{aligned}$$

It remains only to argue that $l_1 \equiv l_2 \pmod{2}$. However, from formula (3.2) with $m = 1$, it is easily seen that $(-1)^{l_1} = (-1)^{l_2}$. The converse is also straightforward from (3.2), and this completes the proof of the theorem. \square

The proof of Theorem 1.8 is similar, employing Eq. (3.7) in place of (3.4).

Proof of Theorem 1.8. Since multiplication of a real polynomial by a power of x does not change the absolute value of a cyclic resultant, we may assume $f, g \in \mathbb{R}[x]$ have nonzero roots. The result now follows from (3.7) and the argument used to prove the if-direction of Theorem 1.1. \square

5. Reconstructing dynamical systems from their zeta functions

In this section, we describe how to explicitly reconstruct a polynomial from its cyclic resultants. For an ergodic toral endomorphism as in the introduction, sequences $|r_m|$ correspond to cardinalities of sets of periodic points. In particular, the *zeta function*,

$$Z(T, z) = \exp \left(- \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} |\text{Per}_m(T)| \frac{z^m}{m} \right),$$

of the dynamical system in question is simply another way of writing Eq. (3.7).

In many of the applications (Duistermaat and Guillemin, 1975; Iantchenko et al., 2002; Kedlaya, 2004; Stevens, 2000), the defining polynomial is reciprocal, and the techniques discussed here restrict easily to this special case. Furthermore, since reciprocal polynomials are uniquely determined without any genericity assumptions (see Corollaries 1.4 and 1.12), the computational organization is simpler.

Let $f(x) = a_0 x^d + a_1 x^{d-1} + \cdots + a_d$ be a degree d polynomial with indeterminate coefficients a_i . We distinguish between two cases. In the first situation, the variable a_0 is replaced by 1 so that f is monic; while in the second, we set $a_i = a_{d-i}$ for $i = 1, \dots, d$ so that f is reciprocal.

Although the results mentioned in this paper only imply that the full sequence of cyclic resultants determine f when it is (generic) monic or reciprocal, a finite number of resultants is sufficient. Specifically, as detailed in forthcoming work (Hillar and Levine, submitted for publication), it is shown that 2^{d+1} resultants are enough. Empirical evidence

suggests that this is far from tight, and a conjecture of Sturmfels and Zworski asserts the following.

Conjecture 5.1. *A generic monic polynomial $f(x) \in \mathbb{C}[x]$ of degree d is determined by its first $d + 1$ cyclic resultants. Moreover, if f is (non-monic) reciprocal of even degree d , then the number of resultants needed for inversion is given by $d/2 + 2$.*

A straightforward algorithm for inverting N cyclic resultants is as follows. Its correctness when $N = 2^{d+1}$ follows from Cox et al. (1998) and the results of Hillar and Levine (submitted for publication).

Algorithm 5.2. (Specific reconstruction of a polynomial from its cyclic resultants)

Input: Positive integer d and a sequence of $r_1, \dots, r_N \in \mathbb{C}$.

Output: The coefficients a_i ($i = 0, \dots, d$) corresponding to f .

(1) Compute a lexicographic Gröbner basis \mathcal{G} for the ideal

$$I = \langle r_1 - \text{Res}(f, x - 1), \dots, r_N - \text{Res}(f, x^N - 1) \rangle.$$

(2) Solve the resulting triangular system of equations for a_i using back-substitution. \square

If the data are given in terms of cyclic resultant absolute values (for the real case), then more care must be taken in implementing Algorithm 5.2. Examining expression (3.5), there are two possible sequences of viable r_m that come from a given sequence of (generically generated) cyclic resultant absolute values $|r_m|$; they are $\{|r_m|\}$ and $\{-|r_m|\}$. By the uniqueness in Corollaries 1.7 and 1.9, however, only one of these sequences can come from a monic polynomial. Therefore, the corresponding modification is to run Algorithm 5.2 on both these inputs. For one of these sequences, it will generate the Gröbner basis (1); while for the other, it will output the desired reconstruction.

Finding “universal” equations expressing the coefficients a_i in terms of the resultants r_i is also possible using a similar strategy.

Algorithm 5.3. (Formal reconstruction of a polynomial from its cyclic resultants)

Input: Positive integers d and N .

Output: Equations expressing a_i ($i = 0, \dots, d$) parameterized by r_1, \dots, r_N .

(1) Let $R = \mathbb{Q}[a_0, \dots, a_d, r_1, \dots, r_N]$ and let \prec be any elimination term order with $\{a_i\} \prec \{r_j\}$.

(2) Compute the reduced Gröbner basis \mathcal{G} for the ideal

$$I = \langle r_1 - \text{Res}(f, x - 1), \dots, r_N - \text{Res}(f, x^N - 1) \rangle.$$

(3) Output a triangular system of equations for a_i in terms of the r_i . \square

A few remarks concerning Algorithm 5.3 are in order. If the a_i are indeterminates, a monic polynomial with coefficients a_i will be generic. Therefore, the first $N = 2^{d+1}$ cyclic resultants of f will determine it as a polynomial in x over an algebraic closure of $\mathbb{Q}(a_1, \dots, a_d)$. It then follows from general theory (for instance, quantifier elimination for ACF, algebraically closed fields) that each a_i can be expressed as a rational function in the r_i ($i = 1, \dots, N$). The same result holds for reciprocal polynomials with indeterminate

coefficients. It is an interesting and difficult problem to determine these rational functions for a given d . As motivation for future work on this problem, we use [Algorithm 5.3](#) to find these expressions explicitly for several small cases.

When $f = a_0x + a_1$ is linear, we need only two nonzero cyclic resultants to recover the coefficients a_0, a_1 . An inversion is given by the formulae:

$$a_0 = \frac{r_2^2 - r_1}{2r_1}, \quad a_1 = \frac{-r_1^2 - r_2}{2r_1}.$$

In the quadratic case, a monic $f = x^2 + a_1x + a_2$ is also determined by two nonzero resultants:

$$a_1 = \frac{r_1^2 - r_2}{2r_1}, \quad a_2 = \frac{r_1^2 - 2r_1 + r_2}{2r_1}.$$

When $f = x^3 + a_1x^2 + a_2x + a_3$ has degree three, four resultants suffice, and inversion is given by

$$a_1 = \frac{-12r_2r_1^3 - 12r_1r_2^2 + 3r_2^3 - r_2r_1^4 - 8r_2r_1r_3 + 6r_1^2r_4}{24r_2r_1^2},$$

$$a_2 = \frac{-r_1^2 - 2r_1 + r_2}{2r_1},$$

$$a_3 = \frac{-3r_2^3 + r_2r_1^4 + 8r_2r_1r_3 - 6r_1^2r_4}{24r_1^2r_2}.$$

Reconstruction for $d = 4$ is also possible using five resultants; however, the expressions are too cumbersome to list here.

As a final example, we describe the reconstruction of a degree 6 monic, reciprocal polynomial $f = x^6 + a_1x^5 + a_2x^4 + a_3x^3 + a_2x^2 + a_1x + 1$ from its first four cyclic resultants:

$$P = -540r_1^2r_2r_4 - 13824r_1^3r_2 + r_1^6r_2 + 27r_2^3r_1^2 + 9r_1^4r_2^2 + 27r_2^4$$

$$- 432r_1^3r_2^2 - 648r_1r_2^3 - 72r_1^5r_2 - 448r_3r_1^3r_2 + 192r_3r_1r_2^2$$

$$+ 108r_1^4r_4 + 1536r_1^2r_2r_3 + 2592r_1^3r_4 + 1728r_1^4r_2 + 5184r_1^2r_2^2,$$

$$Q = r_1^2(-16r_3r_2 + 9r_4r_1),$$

$$R = -648r_1r_2^3 + 27r_2^3r_1^2 + 27r_2^4 - 576r_3r_1r_2^2 + 2592r_1^3r_4 + r_1^6r_2$$

$$- 72r_1^5r_2 + 9r_1^4r_2^2 + 1728r_1^4r_2 - 432r_1^3r_2^2 + 320r_3r_1^3r_2$$

$$- 324r_1^4r_4 - 13824r_1^3r_2 + 5184r_1^2r_2^2 + 1536r_1^2r_2r_3 - 108r_1^2r_2r_4,$$

$$a_1 = \frac{1}{192}P/Q, \quad a_2 = \frac{-4r_1 + r_1^2 + r_2}{4r_1}, \quad a_3 = \frac{-1}{96}R/Q.$$

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