

A RECIPROCITY LAW FOR POLYNOMIALS WITH BERNOULLI COEFFICIENTS

BY

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ABSTRACT. We study the zeros (mod p) of the polynomial $\beta_p(X) = \sum_k (B_k/k)(X^{p-1-k} - 1)$ for p an odd prime, where B_k denotes the k th Bernoulli number and the summation extends over $1 \leq k \leq p-2$. We establish a reciprocity law which relates the congruence $\beta_p(r) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$ to a congruence $f_p(n) \equiv 0 \pmod{r}$ for r a prime less than p and $n \in \mathbb{Z}$. The polynomial $f_p(x)$ is the irreducible polynomial over $\mathbb{Q}$ of the number $\text{Tr}_L^{\mathbb{Q}(\zeta)} \zeta$, where ζ is a primitive p^2 th root of unity and $L \subset \mathbb{Q}(\zeta)$ is the extension of degree p over $\mathbb{Q}$. These congruences are closely related to the prime divisors of the indices $I(\alpha) = (\mathcal{O} : \mathbb{Z}[\alpha])$, where $\mathcal{O}$ is the integral closure in L and $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}$ is of degree p over $\mathbb{Q}$. We establish congruences (mod p) involving the numbers $I(\alpha)$ and show that their prime divisors $r \neq p$ are closely related to the congruence $r^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$.

0. Introduction. If the Bernoulli numbers B_k , $k = 0, 1, \dots$, are given by the expansion

$$\frac{t}{e^t - 1} = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} B_k \frac{t^k}{k!},$$

then one defines, for p an odd prime, the polynomial

$$\beta_p(X) = \sum_{k=1}^{p-2} \frac{B_k}{k} (X^{p-1-k} - 1).$$

Note that the coefficients of this polynomial are p -integral (Kummer).

In this paper we prove the equivalence of the congruence $\beta_p(r) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$, where r is a prime such that $r < p$, to a polynomial congruence (mod r). In order to construct these polynomial congruences, we introduce a class of cyclic extensions of $\mathbb{Q}$.

Let ζ be a primitive p^2 th root of unity (p an odd prime). Then $\text{Gal}(\mathbb{Q}(\zeta)/\mathbb{Q})$ contains a unique subgroup H of order $p-1$. Let L be the corresponding fixed field. We define

$$(0.1) \quad H_p = \text{Tr}_L^{\mathbb{Q}(\zeta)} \zeta.$$

If one identifies $\text{Gal}(\mathbb{Q}(\zeta)/\mathbb{Q})$ with $(\mathbb{Z}/p^2\mathbb{Z})^\times$ in the usual way, then one finds that $H \equiv \{\alpha^p \pmod{p^2} : 1 \leq \alpha \leq p-1\}$. Hence

$$(0.2) \quad H_p = \sum_{1 \leq \alpha \leq p-1} \zeta^{\alpha^p}.$$

Received by the editors July 5, 1983.

1980 *Mathematics Subject Classification*. Primary 12A35; Secondary 12A50.

Key words and phrases. Bernoulli numbers, Fermat quotients, discriminants, cyclic abelian extensions.

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0002-9947/85 \$1.00 + \$.25 per page

Since Heilbronn raised the problem of finding nontrivial upper bounds for these trigonometric sums, we shall refer to them as Heilbronn sums [9, 2]. These sums are studied in [2] in connection with Fermat quotients; they are also closely related to certain n -dimensional Kloosterman sums (see, for example, [9, p. 342]).

Let $f_p(X)$ denote the irreducible polynomial of H_p over $\mathbf{Q}$. A table of these polynomials and their discriminants ($p \leq 19$) appears in [5, p. 292], where they are studied in connection with problems in cyclotomy.

It will be shown that if p and r are distinct primes with p odd, then the congruence $f_p(n) \equiv 0 \pmod{r}$ has an integral solution if and only if $\beta_p(r) \equiv r^{-1}[r/p] \pmod{p}$. (If $y \in \mathbf{R}$, then $[y]$ is the largest integer $\leq y$.) We shall establish this result by showing that both these congruences hold if and only if $r^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$ (Theorem 4.1).

Let $\mathcal{O}$ denote the ring of integers in L . If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O} - \mathbf{Z}$, then α is of degree p over $\mathbf{Z}$; consequently, $\mathbf{Z}[\alpha]$ is a free abelian group of rank p and the number $I(\alpha) = (O : \mathbf{Z}[\alpha])$ is well defined. We shall study the arithmetic properties of these numbers. In particular, it will be shown that

$$(0.3) \quad I^2(H_p) \equiv (-1)^{(p+1)/2} \pmod{p^2};$$

and if $p \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$, then $I(\alpha) > p$ for every α of degree p over $\mathbf{Z}$. Finally, a prime r divides $I(\alpha)$ for every α of degree p over $\mathbf{Z}$ if and only if $r < p$ and $\beta_p(r) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$.

1. Local results. In the sequel, p will be an odd prime number, while $\mathbf{Q}_p$ will denote the field of p -adic numbers; $\mathbf{Z}_p$ is the ring of p -adic integers. If A is a ring, we denote by $A^\times$ the multiplicative group consisting of the units of A . If L is a field which is a finite extension of $\mathbf{Q}_p$, then we write $N(L^\times)$ for the image of $L^\times$ under the norm map from L to $\mathbf{Q}_p$. If $m \in \mathbf{Z}_p$, then $m^{\mathbf{Z}}$ stands for the multiplicative group consisting of the integral powers of m and μ_{p-1} denotes the group consisting of the roots of unity in $\mathbf{Q}_p$. Finally, for $i = 1, 2$, U_i is the subgroup $1 + p^i \mathbf{Z}_p$ of $\mathbf{Z}_p^\times$.

It is well known that $\mathbf{Q}_p$ possesses exactly $p + 1$ cyclic extensions of degree p . We shall need an explicit description of the norm groups of these extensions. With this object in mind, we introduce the following subgroups of $\mathbf{Q}_p^\times$: Let $u_0 = 1, u_1, \dots, u_{p-1}$ be p distinct representatives of the quotient group U_1/U_2 . Then it is clear that $G_i = (u_i p)^{\mathbf{Z}} \cdot \mu_{p-1} \cdot U_2$, $i = 0, \dots, p-1$, and $G_p = p^{\mathbf{Z}} \cdot \mu_{p-1} \cdot U_1$ are $p + 1$ distinct open subgroups of $\mathbf{Q}_p^\times$ of index p . These are the only subgroups of $\mathbf{Q}_p^\times$ having this property: If H is a subgroup of $\mathbf{Q}_p^\times$ of index p , then, since μ_{p-1} is of order $p-1$ which is prime to p , the group μ_{p-1} is contained in H . Therefore, in order to count the subgroups of $\mathbf{Q}_p^\times$ of index p , we need only consider the subgroups of $\mathbf{Q}_p^\times / \mu_{p-1} \cong \mathbf{Z} \oplus \mathbf{Z}_p$; it is trivial that the latter group contains exactly $p + 1$ subgroups of index p .

Let $\mathbf{C}_p$ denote an algebraic closure of $\mathbf{Q}_p$. Then, by local class field theory, the groups G_i correspond to the cyclic extensions L_i of $\mathbf{Q}_p$ in $\mathbf{C}_p$ of degree p over $\mathbf{Q}_p$ in such a manner that for $i = 0, \dots, p$, we have $N(L_i^\times) = G_i$. In particular, L_0 is the unique subfield of $\mathbf{C}_p$ such that L_0 is a finite abelian extension of $\mathbf{Q}_p$ and

$$(1.1) \quad N(L_0^\times) = p^{\mathbf{Z}} \cdot \mu_{p-1} \cdot U_2.$$

It we take the structure of the norm groups G_i into account, we see that L_0 is the only extension L of degree p over $\mathbf{Q}_p$ such that for some element π of L it follows that $N\pi = p$.

Let K be the extension in $\mathbf{C}_p$ of $\mathbf{Q}_p$ obtained by adjoining a primitive p^2 th root of unity ζ to $\mathbf{Q}_p$ and let L' be the subfield of K of degree p over $\mathbf{Q}_p$. If we write $\pi = N_{L'}^K(\zeta - 1)$, then $N_{\mathbf{Q}_p}^{L'}(\pi) = N_{\mathbf{Q}_p}^K(\zeta - 1) = p$. It follows from the remark in the preceding paragraph that $L' = L_0$.

Let ψ be a nontrivial character on $\mathbf{Q}_p^\times / N(L_0^\times)$; then it follows from (1.1) that ψ has conductor $p^2\mathbf{Z}_p$. Since there are precisely $p - 1$ nontrivial characters on $\mathbf{Q}_p^\times / N(L_0^\times)$, it follows from the conductor-discriminant formula (see e.g. [10, p. 240]) that

$$(1.2) \quad d = p^{2(p-1)}\mathbf{Z}_p,$$

where d denotes the discriminant of the extension $L_0/\mathbf{Q}_p$. It is clear that L_0 is a fully ramified extension $\mathbf{Q}_p$; therefore

$$(1.3) \quad D = \mathfrak{P}^{2(p-1)},$$

where D denotes the different of the extension and $\mathfrak{P}$ is the maximal ideal in the ring of integers $\mathcal{O}$ of L_0 .

For every $\alpha \in L_0$, we denote by $\omega(\alpha)$ the order of α at $\mathfrak{P}$. If π is of order 1 at $\mathfrak{P}$ and $f(X)$ is the irreducible polynomial of π over $\mathbf{Q}_p$, then it follows from (1.3) that

$$(1.4) \quad \omega(f'(\pi)) = 2(p - 1).$$

On account of (1.1) and (1.3) we now have for a unique $\varepsilon \in \mu_{p-1}$ and a unique $a(\pi) \in \mathbf{Z}_p$ that

$$(1.5) \quad N(f'(\pi)) = \varepsilon(1 + a(\pi)p^2)p^{2(p-1)}.$$

We shall show in §5 that $\varepsilon = -1$.

Finally, we now show that for $\alpha \in L_0^\times$, we have

$$(1.6) \quad \omega(\alpha - \sigma\alpha) > \omega(\alpha)$$

for every σ in the Galois group of the extension L_0 over $\mathbf{Q}_p$. Indeed, it follows from (1.1) that, if $x \in L_0^\times$ is such that $Nx = 1$, then $x \in 1 + \mathfrak{P}$. The result now follows if we put $x = \sigma\alpha/\alpha$.

2. Heilbronn sums. In the sequel, ζ , L , $\mathcal{O}$ and H_p will be as defined in the Introduction. Let $\mathfrak{P}$ be the prime ideal in $\mathcal{O}$ that lies above p . If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}$, we denote by $\omega(\alpha)$ the order of α at $\mathfrak{P}$.

Note that, if we imbed L in an algebraic closure of $\mathbf{Q}_p$, then the field L_0 given by (1.1) is the completion of L at $\mathfrak{P}$. Consequently, the different D of the extension $L/\mathbf{Q}$ is given by (1.3).

The following proposition deals with two rather special properties of Heilbronn sums:

PROPOSITION 2.1. (a) $\omega(H_p + 1) = 1$.

(b) If r is a rational prime such that $r \neq p$ and R is a prime ideal in $\mathcal{O}$ that lies above r , then, for some $\sigma \in \text{Gal}(L/\mathbf{Q})$, it follows that $\sigma H_p \not\equiv H_p \pmod{R}$.

PROOF. (a) Let $\pi = (\zeta - 1)$ be the prime ideal in $\mathbf{Z}[\zeta]$ that lies above p . Then every p^2 th root of unity is $1 \pmod{\pi}$ and H_p is the sum of $p - 1$ distinct p^2 th roots of unity (see (0.2)). Consequently

$$(2.1) \quad \omega(H_p + 1) \geq 1.$$

Since $\text{Tr}_{\mathbf{Q}}^L D^{-1} \subseteq \mathbf{Z}$ and $p\mathcal{O} = \mathfrak{P}^p$, by (1.3), we have $\text{Tr}_{\mathbf{Q}}^L(D^{-1}) = \text{Tr}_{\mathbf{Q}}^L(\mathfrak{P}^{-2p} \cdot \mathfrak{P}^2) = p^{-2} \text{Tr}_{\mathbf{Q}}^L(\mathfrak{P}^2) \subseteq \mathbf{Z}$; in particular

$$(2.2) \quad \text{Tr}_{\mathbf{Q}}^L(\mathfrak{P}^2) \subseteq p^2 \mathbf{Z}.$$

Suppose that $\omega(H_p + 1) > 1$, then, by (2.2), $\text{Tr}_{\mathbf{Q}}^L(H_p + 1) \equiv 0 \pmod{p^2}$. On the other hand, $\text{Tr}_{\mathbf{Q}}^{\mathbf{Q}(\zeta)}(\zeta) = 0$ and it follows from (0.1) that $\text{Tr}_{\mathbf{Q}}^L(H_p + 1) = p - a$ contradiction. The result now follows from (2.1).

A proof of (b) appears in [2].

3. Bernoulli numbers and Fermat quotients. Let p be an odd prime. For x an integer such that $(x, p) = 1$, let $q(x)$ denote the Fermat quotient $(x^{p-1} - 1)/p \pmod{p}$. It follows from the definition of $q(x)$ that

$$(3.1) \quad q(xy) \equiv q(x) + q(y) \pmod{p}, \quad (xy, p) = 1.$$

PROPOSITION 3.1. *Let x be an integer such that $(x, p) = 1$. Then*

$$(3.2) \quad q(x) \equiv \beta_p(x) - \frac{1}{x} \left[\frac{x}{p} \right] \pmod{p}.$$

REMARK. Dickson [1, p. 112] attributes a formula similar to (3.2) to Nielsen (1915). The formula, as cited by Dickson, is incorrect, for the second term on the right-hand side of (3.2) is omitted. Since the original source is quite inaccessible (to the author), we have devised a proof of (3.2) in the formalism of p -adic measures as developed by Mazur [7].

PROOF. We shall adhere to the notation and conventions of Koblitz [6, Chapter 2] in our application of p -adic measures in the sequel. The following is a brief summary of the results that will be needed: For every $x \in \mathbf{Z}$ which is prime to p , there exists a $\mathbf{Z}_p$ -valued p -adic measure $\mu_{1,x}$ such that for $k \in \mathbf{Z}$, we have

$$(M1) \quad \mu_{1,x}(k + p\mathbf{Z}_p) = \frac{1}{x} \left[\frac{kx}{p} \right] + \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{x} - 1 \right), \quad k \geq 0,$$

$$(M2) \quad \int_{\mathbf{Z}_p} \alpha^{k-1} \mu_{1,x} = (1 - x^{-k}) \frac{B_k}{k}, \quad k \geq 1,$$

and

$$(M3) \quad \mu_{1,x}(\mathbf{Z}_p^\times) = 0.$$

Here $\mathbf{Z}_p$ denotes the ring of p -adic integers, while $\mathbf{Z}_p^\times$ is the group of units in $\mathbf{Z}_p$. Note that, since $\mu_{1,x}$ is $\mathbf{Z}_p$ -valued, for a $\mu_{1,x}$ -integrable function f on $\mathbf{Z}_p$, we have $\int_{\mathbf{Z}_p} f \mu_{1,x} \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$ whenever $f(x) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$ on $\mathbf{Z}_p$. By (M2), we have

$$\int_{\mathbf{Z}_p} \alpha^{p-2} \mu_{1,x} = (1 - x^{-(p-1)}) B_{p-1} / (p - 1).$$

Since $pB_{p-1} \equiv -1 \pmod{p}$, on account of the von Staudt congruence, it follows that

$$\int_{\mathbf{Z}_p} \alpha^{p-2} \mu_{1,x} \equiv (1 - x^{-(p-1)})/p \pmod{p}.$$

By (3.1), if x^{-1} denotes the inverse of $x \pmod{p^2}$, then $q(x^{-1}) \equiv -q(x) \pmod{p}$. We have shown that

$$(3.3) \quad q(x) \equiv \int_{\mathbf{Z}_p} \alpha^{p-2} \mu_{1,x} \pmod{p}.$$

By (M3), we have for $p > 3$

$$\beta_p(x) \equiv \sum_{k=1}^{p-2} \frac{B_k}{k} (x^{-k} - 1) \equiv B_1(x^{-1} - 1) - \int_{\mathbf{Z}_p} (\alpha + \cdots + \alpha^{p-3}) \mu_{1,x} \pmod{p}.$$

Since the integrand is $0 \pmod{p}$ if $\alpha \in p\mathbf{Z}_p$ and $\mathbf{Z}_p^\times = \mathbf{Z}_p - p\mathbf{Z}_p$, we have, by (M3), that

$$(3.4) \quad \beta_p(x) \equiv B_1(x^{-1} - 1) - \int_{\mathbf{Z}_p^\times} (1 + \alpha + \cdots + \alpha^{p-3}) \mu_{1,x} \pmod{p}.$$

By (3.3), the integral is congruent $\pmod{p}$ to

$$(3.5) \quad \int_{\mathbf{Z}_p^\times} (1 + \alpha + \cdots + \alpha^{p-2}) \mu_{1,x} - q(x).$$

If $\alpha \in \mathbf{Z}_p^\times - (1 + p\mathbf{Z}_p)$, the integrand is equal to $(1 - \alpha^{p-1})/(1 - \alpha) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$; hence (3.5) is congruent to

$$(3.6) \quad \begin{aligned} \int_{1+p\mathbf{Z}_p} (p-1) \mu_{1,x} - q(x) &\equiv -\mu_{1,x}(1 + p\mathbf{Z}_p) - q(x) \\ &\equiv -\frac{1}{x} \left[\frac{x}{p} \right] - \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{x} - 1 \right) - q(x) \end{aligned}$$

in view of (M1) (with $k = 1$). The result (3.2) (for $p > 3$) now follows upon subtracting (3.6) from $B_1(x^{-1} - 1) = -(x^{-1} - 1)/2$ in (3.4). The case $p = 3$ is easily checked.

As an application of (3.2), we prove the following

COROLLARY. *If $p \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$, then*

$$(3.7) \quad \sum_{2(\bmod 4)} \frac{B_k}{k} = \frac{B_2}{2} + \frac{B_6}{6} + \frac{B_{10}}{10} + \cdots + \frac{B_{p-3}}{p-3} \not\equiv 0 \pmod{p}.$$

PROOF. Let n_p be an integer such that $n_p^2 \equiv -1 \pmod{p}$ and $1 < n_p < p$. We shall prove

$$(3.8) \quad \sum_{2(\bmod 4)} \frac{B_k}{k} \equiv \frac{1}{4} [(n_p + 1) - (n_p^2 + 1)/p] \pmod{p}.$$

It is easily seen that for $l \in \mathbf{Z}$, we have $q(-1 + lp) \equiv l \pmod{p}$. Therefore, if we write $n_p^2 = -1 + lp$, we find that $q(n_p^2) \equiv l \equiv (n_p^2 + 1)/p \pmod{p}$.

Hence, by (3.1), it follows that $q(n_p) \equiv (n_p^2 + 1)/2p$. On account of (3.2),

$$\begin{aligned} (n_p^2 + 1)/2p &\equiv \beta_p(n_p) \equiv \sum_{k=1}^{p-3} \frac{B_k}{k} (n_p^{-k} - 1) \\ &\equiv \frac{1}{2}(n_p + 1) + \sum_{k \geq 2} \frac{B_k}{k} (n_p^{-k} - 1) \pmod{p}. \end{aligned}$$

Since $B_k = 0$ if $k \geq 3$ is odd, and $n_p^{-k} \equiv 1$ or $-1 \pmod{p}$, according to whether $k \equiv 0$ or $2 \pmod{4}$, we see that (3.8) holds.

Suppose now that (3.7) does not hold; then by (3.8), we have $n_p^2 + 1 \equiv p(n_p + 1) \pmod{p^2}$. Since both $n_p^2 + 1$ and $p(n_p + 1)$ are positive and less than p^2 , it must follow that $n_p^2 + 1 = p(n_p + 1)$ —which is impossible.

4. Reciprocity law. We shall prove the following

THEOREM 4.1. *Let r and p be distinct primes with p odd. Let F denote the family of irreducible polynomials of elements in $\mathcal{O}$. Then the following statements are equivalent:*

- (a) $\beta_p(r) \equiv \frac{1}{r} \left[\frac{r}{p} \right] \pmod{p}$.
- (b) $f_p(n) \equiv 0 \pmod{r}$ for some $n \in \mathbf{Z}$.
- (c) For every $f(X) \in F$ there exists an integer m such that $f(m) \equiv 0 \pmod{r}$.

In the course of the proof of Theorem 4.1 we shall characterise the numbers $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}$ for which the theorem remains valid if we replace $f_p(X)$ in (b) by $\text{Irr}(\alpha, L/\mathbf{Q}, X)$. If r is a prime number and R a prime ideal in $\mathcal{O}$ that divides r , we write $\bar{\mathcal{O}}_R = \mathcal{O}/R$ and $\bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r = \mathbf{Z}/r\mathbf{Z}$. If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}$, we denote the image of α under the natural map $\mathcal{O} \rightarrow \bar{\mathcal{O}}_R$ by α_R . Finally, we write $G = \text{Gal}(L/\mathbf{Q})$.

Note that since p is the only prime that ramifies in the extension $L/\mathbf{Q}$ and the extension is of prime degree, every prime number $r \neq p$ either splits completely in $\mathcal{O}$ or remains prime when lifted to $\mathcal{O}$.

LEMMA 4.2. *Let r be a prime number $\neq p$. The congruences $f(x) \equiv 0 \pmod{r}$, $f(X) \in F$, all have solutions in $\mathbf{Z}$ if and only if r splits completely in $\mathcal{O}$.*

PROOF. Suppose r does not split completely in $\mathcal{O}$. Then $R = r\mathcal{O}$ is prime and $\bar{\mathcal{O}}_R$ is a separable field extension of $\bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r$ of degree p . Choose μ in $\mathcal{O}$ such that μ_R generates $\bar{\mathcal{O}}_R$ over $\bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r$. Then, obviously, $\sigma\mu \not\equiv \mu \pmod{R}$ for at least one $\sigma \neq \text{id}$ in G and $\mu \not\equiv n \pmod{R}$ for every $n \in \mathbf{Z}$; hence, the polynomial $\text{Irr}(\mu, L/\mathbf{Q}, X)$ has no integral solutions modulo r . Conversely, if r splits completely in $\mathcal{O}$, then $\bar{\mathcal{O}}_R = \bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r$ for every $R|r$ and the congruences all have solutions in $\mathbf{Z}$ modulo r .

DEFINITION. Let $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}$. Then α is *basic* if, for every rational prime $r \neq p$ and prime divisor R or r in $\mathcal{O}$, it follows that $\bar{\mathcal{O}}_R = \bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r[\alpha_R]$.

REMARK. It is clear that if α generates a power basis of $\mathcal{O}$ over $\mathbf{Z}$, then α is basic. However, this is not a fruitful approach to the construction of examples of basic numbers since it will be shown in §5 that $\mathcal{O}$ has no power basis whenever $p \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$. (On the other hand, if $p = 3$, then $\mathcal{O} = \mathbf{Z}[H_3]$!)

LEMMA 4.3. *If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}$, then the following statements are equivalent:*

- (i) α is basic.

(ii) If $r (\neq p)$ is prime and $\text{Irr}(\alpha, L/\mathbf{Q}, n) \equiv 0 \pmod{r}$ for some $n \in \mathbf{Z}$, then the congruences $f(x) \equiv 0 \pmod{r}$, $f(X) \in F$ all have solutions in $\mathbf{Z}$.

(iii) If $r (\neq p)$, $R|r$ and $\alpha \equiv n \pmod{R}$ for some $n \in \mathbf{Z}$, then r splits completely in $\mathcal{O}$.

(iv) If the prime $r (\neq p)$ does not split in $\mathcal{O}$, then, for some $\sigma \in G$, it follows that $\sigma\alpha \not\equiv \alpha \pmod{r\mathcal{O}}$.

PROOF. It is clear from Lemma 4.2 that (ii) and (iii) are equivalent. We shall prove (i) $\Rightarrow$ (iii) $\Rightarrow$ (iv) $\Rightarrow$ (i).

(i) $\Rightarrow$ (iii): If (i) holds and $\alpha \equiv n \pmod{R}$, then $\bar{\mathcal{O}}_R = \bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r[\alpha_R] = \bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r$; hence the residue class degree of R over r is 1 and r splits completely in $\mathcal{O}$.

(iii) $\Rightarrow$ (iv): Suppose r does not split in $\mathcal{O}$ and $r \neq p$. Then $R = r\mathcal{O}$ is prime; if $\sigma\alpha \equiv \alpha \pmod{R}$ for every $\sigma \in G$, then for some $n \in \mathbf{Z}$ we have $\alpha \equiv n \pmod{R}$, in contradiction to (iii).

(iv) $\Rightarrow$ (i): If r splits completely in $\mathcal{O}$, then $\alpha_R \in \bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r$ and $\bar{\mathcal{O}}_R = \bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r = \bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r[\alpha_R]$ for every $R|r$. Suppose that r does not split completely in $\mathcal{O}$. Then $R = r\mathcal{O}$ is prime and by (iv), we have $\alpha_R \notin \bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r$. Since $\bar{\mathcal{O}}_R/\bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r$ is a field extension of prime degree, we have that $\bar{\mathcal{O}}_R = \bar{\mathbf{Z}}_r[\alpha_R]$.

LEMMA 4.4. *The rational prime r splits completely in $\mathcal{O}$ if and only if $r^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$.*

PROOF. This is immediate from the factorisation properties of rational primes when lifted to $\mathbf{Q}(\xi)$.

PROOF OF THEOREM 4.1. It follows from Proposition 2.1(b) and Lemma 4.3(iv) that H_p is basic; hence (b) and (c) are equivalent, on account of Lemma 4.3(ii). By Lemma 4.2, Lemma 4.4 and Proposition 3.1 statements (a) and (c) hold if and only if $r^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$. The proof is complete.

REMARKS. 1. In [2] it is shown that $q(2) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$ if and only if $f_p(0) = -NH_p$ is even, N being the norm from L to $\mathbf{Q}$. Consequently, the following statements are equivalent:

- (i) $2^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$;
- (ii) NH_p is even;
- (iii) $\beta_p(2) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$.

2. D. H. and E. Lehmer [5] show that if $f_p(n) \equiv 0 \pmod{r}$ for some $n \in \mathbf{Z}$, then $q(r) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$. By Lemmas 4.3 and 4.4 this provides an alternative proof of the fact that H_p is basic. They raised the question whether $f_p(X)$ could ever assume even values. We see from Remark 1 that it may happen and if it does, then $f_p(n)$ will be even when $n \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$; this happens for $p \leq 6.10^9$ exactly when $p = 1093$ or $p = 3511$ [4].

5. Discriminants. If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}$, we denote by $d(\alpha)$ the discriminant of the irreducible polynomial of α over $\mathbf{Q}$. Since L is a totally real field, the absolute discriminant d_L of the extension $L/\mathbf{Q}$ is positive; hence, by (1.2), $d_L = p^{2(p-1)}$. Consequently, if $\alpha \in \mathcal{O} - \mathbf{Z}$, and $I(\alpha) = (\mathcal{O} : \mathbf{Z}[\alpha])$, then

$$(5.1) \quad d(\alpha) = I^2(\alpha) p^{2(p-1)}.$$

Furthermore, if $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}$, then

$$(5.2) \quad d(\alpha) = (-1)^{p(p-1)/2} N_{\mathbf{Q}}^L(f'(\alpha)),$$

where $f(X) = \text{Irr}(\alpha, L/\mathbf{Q}, X)$.

It is shown in [5] that if $r (\neq p)$ is a prime divisor of $d(H_p)$, then $r^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$. It will be shown that the converse also holds, provided $r < p$. Indeed, we shall prove

PROPOSITION 5.1. (a) *If $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}$ is basic, then for every prime divisor $r \neq p$ of $d(\alpha)$, we have $r^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$.*

(b) *If r is a prime number, then $r|I(\alpha)$ for every $\alpha \in \mathcal{O} - \mathbf{Z}$ if and only if $r < p$ and $r^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$.*

PROOF. (a) Let $G = \text{Gal}(L/\mathbf{Q})$. If $r|d(\alpha)$ and $R|r$ in $\mathcal{O}$, then for some $\sigma, \tau \in G$ such that $\sigma \neq \tau$ we have $\sigma\alpha \equiv \tau\alpha \pmod{R}$. Suppose that $r \neq p$ and $r^{p-1} \not\equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$. Then, by Lemma 4.4, we have that $R = r\mathcal{O}$ is prime. In particular, R remains invariant under the action of G . Hence $\tau^{-1}\sigma\alpha \equiv \alpha \pmod{R}$. Since G is cyclic and of prime degree, $\sigma\alpha \equiv \alpha \pmod{R}$ for every $\sigma \in G$, in contradiction to Lemma 4.3(iv).

(b) Let $r < p$ be such that $r^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$. Then, by Lemma 4.4, r splits completely in $\mathcal{O}$. Let $R|r$ in $\mathcal{O}$; then $\mathcal{O}/R = \mathbf{Z}/r\mathbf{Z}$ possesses r distinct residue classes, i.e. $\alpha \pmod{R}$ can assume at most r distinct values. On the other hand G possesses $p > r$ elements. On account of Dirichlet's Box Principle, we conclude that for some $\sigma, \tau \in G$ such that $\sigma \neq \tau$, we have $\sigma\alpha \equiv \tau\alpha \pmod{R}$. Hence $r|d(\alpha)$ and $r|I(\alpha)$ by (5.1).

Conversely, if $r|I(\alpha)$ for every $\alpha \in \mathcal{O} - \mathbf{Z}$, then $r|I(H_p)$ so that by (5.1) and (a) we have $r^{p-1} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^2}$. Finally, it follows from Hensel's theory of indices of numbers fields [3] that if $r|I(\alpha)$ for every $\alpha \in \mathcal{O} - \mathbf{Z}$, then r cannot exceed $p - 1$, p being the degree of the extension $L/\mathbf{Q}$ (see [8, Proposition 4.13, p. 165]).

The observations of §1 will enable us to prove the following

THEOREM 5.2 (a) *If $\pi \in \mathcal{O}$ is of order 1 at the prime ideal above p , then*

$$I^2(\pi) \equiv (-1)^{(p+1)/2} \pmod{p^2}.$$

(b) *If $p \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$, then $I(\alpha) > p$ for every $\alpha \in \mathcal{O} - \mathbf{Z}$.*

REMARK. Note that (0.3) now follows from (a), Proposition 2.1(a) and the observation that $I(H_p + 1) = I(H_p)$.

PROOF. (a) As a first step we show, in the notation of §1, that $\varepsilon = -1$ in (1.5). Let $\pi \in L_0$ be such that $\omega(\pi) = 1$ and let $f(X)$ denote the irreducible polynomial of π over $\mathbf{Q}_p$. Write $G = \text{Gal}(L_0/\mathbf{Q}_p)$. Since $f'(\pi) = \prod_{\sigma \neq \text{id}} (\pi - \sigma\pi)$, it follows from (1.4) that $\sum_{\sigma \neq \text{id}} \omega(\pi - \sigma\pi) = 2(p - 1)$. If we now take (1.6) into account, we find for every $\sigma \in G$ satisfying $\sigma \neq \text{id}$, that

$$(5.3) \quad \omega(\pi - \sigma\pi) = 2.$$

For the remainder of the proof, σ will denote a fixed generator of G . We define the sequence $v_1, v_2, \dots$ by the formula $\sigma^k \pi = v_k \pi$, $k \geq 1$. By (5.3), we have for some

$a \in \mathbf{Z}_p^\times$ that $v_1 \equiv 1 + a\pi \pmod{\mathfrak{P}^2}$. We prove inductively that

$$(5.4) \quad v_k \equiv (1 + ka\pi) \pmod{\mathfrak{P}^2}, \quad k \geq 1.$$

Suppose that (5.4) holds for $k = l$, $l \geq 1$. Since $\sigma^{l+1}\pi = v_{l+1}\pi$ and $\sigma^{l+1}\pi = \sigma(v_l\pi) = (\sigma v_l)v_1\pi$, we have

$$v_{l+1} = v_1(\sigma v_l) \equiv (1 + a\pi)(1 + la\sigma\pi) \equiv 1 + (l+1)a\pi \pmod{\mathfrak{P}^2};$$

the proof of (5.4) is complete. Since G is cyclic and of order p ,

$$\begin{aligned} f'(\pi) &= \prod_{k=1}^{p-1} (\pi - \sigma^k \pi) = \left\{ \prod_k (1 - v_k) \right\} \pi^{p-1} = \left\{ \prod_k (-ka\pi + O(\pi^2)) \right\} \pi^{p-1} \\ &= (-1)^{p-1} (p-1)! a^{p-1} \pi^{2(p-1)} + O(\pi^{2p-1}) = (-1) \pi^{2(p-1)} + O(\pi^{2p-1}), \end{aligned}$$

where for $k \geq 1$ the symbol $O(\pi^k)$ stands for an element in $\mathfrak{P}^k$. Consequently, $f'(\pi)/\pi^{2(p-1)} \equiv -1 \pmod{\mathfrak{P}}$. Since $N(-1 + \mathfrak{P}) \subset -1 + p\mathbf{Z}_p$ and $N(\pi^{2(p-1)}) \equiv p^{2(p-1)} \pmod{p^{2p-1}}$ it follows that

$$(5.5) \quad N(f'(\pi))/p^{2(p-1)} \equiv -1 \pmod{p}.$$

By (1.5), the same congruence holds with ε in the place of -1 on the right-hand side of (5.5). Since the elements of μ_{p-1} are pairwise incongruent modulo p , we see that $\varepsilon = -1$. Consequently, if we imbed L into L_0 , we see that the congruence (5.5) holds modulo p^2 in $\mathbf{Z}$ provided π lies in L . The proof of (a) is complete in view of (5.1) and (5.2).

(b) Let $\alpha \in \mathcal{O} - \mathbf{Z}$. Since $\mathcal{O}/\mathfrak{P} = \mathbf{Z}/p\mathbf{Z}$ and $\mathbf{Z}[\alpha + n] = \mathbf{Z}[\alpha]$ for every $n \in \mathbf{Z}$, we may assume that $\omega(\alpha) \geq 1$. If $p \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$ and $\omega(\alpha) = 1$, it follows from (a) that $I^2(\alpha) \equiv -1 \pmod{p^2}$. In particular, $I(\alpha) \geq l$, where l is the smallest positive number such that $l^2 \equiv -1 \pmod{p^2}$; it is trivial that $l > p$. If $\omega(\alpha) > 1$, then, by (1.6) we have for every $\sigma \in G$ that $\omega(\alpha - \sigma\alpha) \geq 3$. Let $f(X)$ denote the irreducible polynomial of α over $\mathbf{Q}$. Then $\omega(f'(\alpha)) \geq 3(p-1)$; consequently, $d(\alpha) \equiv 0 \pmod{p^{3(p-1)}}$. By (5.1), we find that $I(\alpha)$ is divisible by p^k , $k = (p-1)/2$. In particular, $I(\alpha) > p$.

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