MATHEMATICS OF COMPUTATION, VOLUME 29, NUMBER 129
JANUARY 1975, PAGES 1–6

The Resultant of the Cyclotomic Polynomials $F_m(ax)$ and $F_n(bx)$

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Abstract. The resultant $\rho(F_m(ax), F_n(bx))$ is calculated for arbitrary positive integers m and n, and arbitrary nonzero complex numbers a and b. An addendum gives an extended bibliography of work on cyclotomic polynomials published since 1919.

1. Introduction. Let $F_n(x)$ denote the cyclotomic polynomial of degree $\varphi(n)$ given by

$$F_n(x) = \prod_{k=1}^{n}{}'(x - e^{2\pi ik/n}),$$

where the $'$ indicates that k runs through integers relatively prime to the upper index n, and $\varphi(n)$ is Euler's totient. The resultant $\rho(F_m, F_n)$ of any two cyclotomic polynomials was first calculated by Emma Lehmer [9] in 1930 and later by Diederichsen [21] and the author [64]. It is known that $\rho(F_m, F_n) = 1$ if $(m, n) = 1$, $m > n > 1$. This implies that for any integer q the integers $F_m(q)$ and $F_n(q)$ are relatively prime if $(m, n) = 1$.

Divisibility properties of cyclotomic polynomials play a role in certain areas of the theory of numbers, such as the distribution of quadratic residues, difference sets, perfect numbers, Mersenne-type numbers, and primes in residue classes. There has also been considerable interest lately in relations between the integers $F_p(q)$ and $F_q(p)$, where p and q are distinct primes. In particular, Marshall Hall informs me that the Feit-Thompson proof [47] could be shortened by nearly 50 pages if it were known that $F_p(q)$ and $F_q(p)$ are relatively prime, or even if the smaller of these integers does not divide the larger. Recently, N. M. Stephens [69] has shown that when $p = 17$ and $q = 3313$, the prime $112643 = 2pq + 1$ divides both $F_p(q)$ and $F_q(p)$. These remarks suggest a study of relations connecting the polynomials $F_p(qx)$ and $F_q(px)$. For example, if the resultant of $F_p(qx)$ and $F_q(px)$ were equal to 1 it would follow that the integers $F_p(q)$ and $F_q(p)$ are relatively prime. In this note we use the method developed in [64] to calculate the resultant $\rho(F_m(ax), F_n(bx))$ for arbitrary positive integers m and n, and arbitrary nonzero complex numbers a and b (see Theorem 1). When m and n are distinct primes p and q the results of Theorem 1 simplify considerably to give the explicit formula

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Received March 18, 1974.
AMS (MOS) subject classifications (1970). Primary 10A40; Secondary 12A20.
Key words and phrases. Cyclotomic polynomials, resultants.

$$\rho(F_q(ax), F_p(bx)) = \frac{a^{pq} - b^{pq}}{a^p - b^p} \frac{a - b}{a^q - b^q} \quad \text{if } a \neq b,$$

(1)

$$= a^{(p-1)(q-1)} \quad \text{if } a = b.$$

Unfortunately this formula sheds no light on the g.c.d of the integers $F_q(p)$ and $F_p(q)$.

An addendum to the paper gives an extended bibliography of work on cyclotomic polynomials published since 1919. The report by Dickson et al. in [1] contains a history of earlier work in this area.

2. A Product Formula for $\rho(F_m(ax), F_n(bx))$. We assume throughout this section that m and n are integers > 1 and that a and b are arbitrary non-zero complex numbers.

THEOREM 1. *We have*

$$\rho(F_m(ax), F_n(bx)) = b^{\varphi(m)\varphi(n)} \prod_{d \mid n} F_{m/\delta}\left(\frac{a^d}{b^d}\right)^{\mu(n/d)\varphi(m)/\varphi(m/\delta)}, \tag{2}$$

where $\delta = (m, d)$ for each divisor d of n.

PROOF. We use the notation and properties of $\rho(A, B)$ described in [64, pp. 457–458]. From the multiplicative property $\rho(A, BC) = \rho(A, B)\rho(A, C)$ and the factorization

$$F_n(x) = \prod_{d \mid n} (x^d - 1)^{\mu(n/d)}$$

we find, as in [64, Section 4],

$$\rho(F_m(ax), F_n(bx)) = \prod_{d \mid n} f(d)^{\mu(n/d)}, \tag{3}$$

where

$$f(d) = \rho(F_m(ax), (bx)^d - 1) = \rho((bx)^d - 1, F_m(ax))$$

since $\rho(A, B) = \rho(B, A)$ when $\deg A \deg B$ is even. Using Eq. (2.4) of [64], we have

$$f(d) = a^{d\varphi(m)} \prod_{k=1}^{m}{}' \left(\frac{b^d}{a^d} e^{2\pi i k d/m} - 1\right) = b^{d\varphi(m)} \prod_{k=1}^{m}{}' \left(\frac{a^d}{b^d} - e^{2\pi i k d/m}\right).$$

In the last exponential we write

$$\frac{kd}{m} = \frac{kd/\delta}{m/\delta}, \quad \text{where } \delta = (m, d), (m/\delta, d/\delta) = 1,$$

and then use the Lemma on p. 457 of [64] to obtain

$$f(d) = b^{d\varphi(m)} \prod_{k=1}^{m/\delta}{}' \left(\frac{a^d}{b^d} - e^{2\pi i k/(m/\delta)} \right)^{\varphi(m)/\varphi(m/\delta)}$$

$$= b^{d\varphi(m)} F_{m/\delta}\left(\frac{a^d}{b^d}\right)^{\varphi(m)/\varphi(m/\delta)}.$$

Using this in (3) along with the relation $\Sigma_{d/n}\, d\mu(n/d) = \varphi(n)$, we obtain (2).

3. Special Cases of Theorem 1. If $(m, n) = 1$, then $\delta = (m, d) = 1$ for each divisor d of n, and Theorem 1 simplifies as follows:

THEOREM 2. *If* $(m, n) = 1$ *we have*

$$\rho(F_m(ax), F_n(bx)) = b^{\varphi(mn)} \prod_{d\,|\,n} F_m\left(\frac{a^d}{b^d}\right)^{\mu(n/d)}. \tag{4}$$

Next, we take $n = p^\alpha$ where p is prime, $p \nmid m$, and $\alpha \geqslant 1$. Let $c = a/b$. Then the product in (4) has only two factors with nonzero exponent, those corresponding to $d = p^{\alpha-1}$ and $d = p^\alpha$. Hence the product simplifies to $F_m(c^{p^\alpha})/F_m(c^{p^{\alpha-1}})$. But by Dickson's formula [1, p. 32]

$$F_m(x^{p^\alpha})/F_m(x^{p^{\alpha-1}}) = F_{mp^\alpha}(x), \tag{5}$$

valid if $p \nmid m$, the last quotient simplifies to $F_{mp^\alpha}(c)$. Therefore we have proved:

THEOREM 3. *If* p *is prime and* $p \nmid m$, *then for* $ab \neq 0$ *and each integer* $\alpha \geqslant 1$ *we have*

$$\rho(F_m(ax), F_{p^\alpha}(bx)) = b^{\varphi(mp^\alpha)} F_{mp^\alpha}(a/b).$$

Finally, we take $\alpha = 1$ and $m = q$, where q is a prime $\neq p$, to obtain:

THEOREM 4. *If* p *and* q *are distinct primes and* $ab \neq 0$, *we have*

$$\rho(F_q(ax), F_p(bx)) = b^{(p-1)(q-1)} F_{pq}(a/b). \tag{6}$$

Note. If $a = b$, then $F_{pq}(1) = 1$ and $\rho(F_q(ax), F_p(ax)) = a^{(p-1)(q-1)}$. To calculate $F_{pq}(a/b)$ when $a \neq b$ it is preferable to use Dickson's formula (5) with $\alpha = 1$ and $x = a/b$ to write

$$F_{pq}(a/b) = F_q(x^p)/F_q(x) = \frac{x^{pq} - 1}{x^p - 1}\,\frac{x - 1}{x^q - 1}.$$

Using this in (6) we obtain the explicit formula (1) referred to in the introduction.

Addendum. *Bibliography on Cyclotomic Polynomials.* This bibliography updates the list of references on cyclotomic polynomials which appears in Chapter II of the report by Dickson et al. in [1], and fills a gap (entry [2]). The titles, which are listed chronologically, were obtained from *Fortschritte der Mathematik*, *Zentralblatt für Mathematik,* and *Mathematical Reviews.* References to these review jornals are indicated by F, Z, or MR, respectively. Except for Storer's

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Added in proof. For further papers on cyclotomic polynomials, see

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