P-COMMUTATIVE BANACH *-ALGEBRAS(1), (2)

BY

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ABSTRACT. Let $A$ be a complex *-algebra. If $f$ is a positive functional on $A$, let $I_f = \{ x \in A : f(x^* x) = 0 \}$ be the corresponding left ideal of $A$. Set $P = \bigcap I_f$, where the intersection is over all positive functionals on $A$. Then $A$ is called $P$-commutative if $xy - yx \in P$ for all $x, y \in A$. Every commutative *-algebra is $P$-commutative and examples are given of noncommutative *-algebras which are $P$-commutative. Many results are obtained for $P$-commutative Banach *-algebras which extend results known for commutative Banach *-algebras. Among them are the following: If $A^2 = A$, then every positive functional on $A$ is continuous. If $A$ has an approximate identity, then a nonzero positive functional on $A$ is a pure state if and only if it is multiplicative. If $A$ is symmetric, then the spectral radius in $A$ is a continuous algebra seminorm.

1. Introduction. The theory of commutative Banach *-algebras is, generally speaking, much better understood than the corresponding noncommutative theory. The purpose of this paper is to study a new class of noncommutative Banach *-algebras, called $P$-commutative Banach *-algebras, which properly contains the class of commutative Banach *-algebras; as we shall see, many of the well-known properties of commutative Banach *-algebras remain true for $P$-commutative algebras.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In §2 we introduce the notation and terminology which we shall use throughout. In §3 we define $P$-commutative algebras, prove some theorems concerning subalgebras, ideals, and quotients, and then discuss several examples. In §4 we show that if $A$ is a $P$-commutative Banach *-algebra satisfying $A^2 = A$, then every positive functional on $A$ is automatically continuous. N. Varopoulos [9] proved the same result for commutative Banach *-algebras with continuous involution. I. Murphy [5] gave a different proof which did not require continuity of the involution. We also show that if $A$ is a $P$-commutative Banach *-algebra with an approximate identity, then the existence of a nonzero positive functional on $A$ implies the existence of a multiplicative linear functional on $A$; and in fact, a nonzero positive linear functional is a pure state if

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and only if it is multiplicative. In §5 we study $P$-commutative Banach *-algebras which are symmetric. We show, among other things, that the spectral radius in such an algebra is a continuous algebra seminorm. An example will show that the assumption of symmetry cannot be dropped. Finally we show that an arbitrary Banach *-algebra with an approximate identity is $P$-commutative if its spectral radius $\nu(x)$ satisfies $\nu(x^*x) \leq (x)^2$ for all $x$.

2. Preliminaries. We shall consider only associative complex linear algebras. By a *-algebra we will mean an algebra with an involution $x \to x^*$; that is, a conjugate-linear anti-automorphism of period two. In normed algebras identities will be assumed to have norm one, and approximate identities will be two-sided and bounded by one. If $A$ is a *-algebra, we denote by $A_e$ the algebra obtained from $A$ by adjoining an identity. We let $J$ (or $J_A$) denote the Jacobson radical of $A$, and $R$ (or $R_A$) the reducing ideal of $A$; that is, the intersection of the kernels of all irreducible *-representations of $A$ on Hilbert spaces ($R$ is called the *-radical in [7]). For typographical convenience we let $J_e$ denote the radical of $A_e$ (similarly, we write $R_e$). The words "multiplicative linear functional" will be abbreviated "MLF". If $f$ is a positive functional on $A$, we set $I_f = \{x \in A : f(x^*x) = 0\}$. A positive functional $f$ on $A$ will be called "pure" if for every positive functional $g$ on $A$ satisfying $g(x^*x) \leq f(x^*x)$ for all $x \in A$, it follows that $g = \lambda f$ for some $0 \leq \lambda \leq 1$.

Now let $A$ denote a Banach *-algebra. A continuous positive functional $f$ on $A$ will be called a "state" if $\|f\| = 1$. We denote by $\sigma(x)$ (or $\sigma_A(x)$) the spectrum of an element $x$ in $A$, and by $\nu(x)$ (or $\nu_A(x)$) the spectral radius of $x$. We remark that if $A$ has an approximate identity, then every positive functional $f$ on $A$ is representable [8]; a positive functional $f$ on $A$ is said to be representable if there exists a *-representation $\pi$ of $A$ on a Hilbert space $H$ and a cyclic vector $\eta \in H$ such that $f(x) = \langle \pi(x)\eta, \eta \rangle$ for every $x \in A$. In particular, $f$ is Hermitian, continuous, and satisfies $f(R) = 0$. Finally, we remark that any results we use from C. Rickart's book [7] will not require the assumption of local continuity of the involution by virtue of J. Ford's square root lemma [3].

3. The definition, immediate consequences, and some examples. Let $A$ be a *-algebra, and let $P = \bigcap I_f$, where the intersection is taken over all positive functionals on $A$.

**Proposition 3.1.** $P$ is a two-sided ideal in $A$.

**Proof.** Since $P$ is the intersection of a family of left ideals, it suffices to show that $P$ is a right ideal. If $f$ is a positive functional on $A$ and $y \in A$, set $f_y(x) = f(y^*xy)$ for each $x \in A$. Then $f_y$ is a positive functional on $A$, and if
$x \in P$, we have $f[(xy)^*(xy)] = f(y^*x^*yx) = f_y(x^*x) = 0$. Hence $xy \in P$ and $P$ is a right ideal. Q.E.D.

The following definition was suggested to the author by Professor R. S. Doran.

**Definition 3.2.** A $*$-algebra $A$ is said to be $P$-commutative if $xy - yx \in P$ for every $x, y \in A$.

**Proposition 3.3.** Let $A$ be a $P$-commutative $*$-algebra. Then $A_e$ is $P$-commutative.

**Proof.** It is clear that $P_A \subseteq P_e$. Now let $(x, \lambda), (y, \alpha) \in A_e$. Then $(x, \lambda)(y, \alpha) - (y, \alpha)(x, \lambda) = (xy - yx, 0) \in P_A$ since $A$ is $P$-commutative. Therefore, $A_e$ is $P$-commutative. Q.E.D.

**Proposition 3.4.** Let $A$ be a $P$-commutative $*$-algebra, $B$ a $*$-algebra, and $\phi$ a $*$-homomorphism of $A$ onto $B$. Then $B$ is $P$-commutative.

**Proof.** Let $f$ be an arbitrary positive functional on $B$. Then $f \circ \phi$ is a positive functional on $A$; so if $x \in P_A$, then $0 = (f \circ \phi)(x^*x) = f[(\phi(x))^*\phi(x)]$, and thus, $\phi(x) \in P_B$. Hence, if $\phi(x), \phi(y)$ are arbitrary elements of $B$, then $\phi(x)\phi(y) - \phi(y)\phi(x) = \phi(xy - yx) \in \phi(P_A) \subseteq P_B$. Therefore, $B$ is $P$-commutative. Q.E.D.

It follows from Proposition 3.4 that if $I$ is a $*$-ideal in $A$, then $A/I$ is a $P$-commutative $*$-algebra.

For the remainder of this paper, unless stated otherwise, $A$ will denote a Banach $*$-algebra.

Since for every Banach $*$-algebra $A$, it is true that $R = \bigcap_{f \in \mathcal{F}} f$ representable (see [7, 4.6.8, p. 226]), it is true that $P \subseteq R$. So we see immediately that if $A$ is $P$-commutative, then $A/R$ is commutative. In particular, if $A$ is $P$-commutative and reduced (i.e., $R = \{0\}$), then $A$ is commutative. Now if $A$ has an approximate identity, then every positive functional on $A$ is representable, and hence, $P = R$ and $A$ is $P$-commutative if and only if $A/R$ is commutative.

It is not surprising that a closed $*$-subalgebra of a $P$-commutative Banach $*$-algebra need not be $P$-commutative. We will give an example later in this section to illustrate this fact. However, we have the following result.

**Proposition 3.5.** Let $A$ be a $P$-commutative symmetric Banach $*$-algebra with an approximate identity $\{e_\alpha\}$. If $B$ is a closed $*$-subalgebra of $A$ containing $\{e_\alpha\}$, then $B$ is $P$-commutative.

**Proof.** We adjoin identities to $A$ and $B$ to obtain $A_e$ and $B_1$ (we use the notation $B_1$ in this proposition only so that we may distinguish between the reducing ideals $R_e$ of $A_e$ and $R_1$ of $B_1$). Now $A_e$ is $P$-commutative and symmetric [7, 4.7.9, p. 233], and $B_1$ is a closed $*$-subalgebra of $A_e$. Since both $A$ and
B possess approximate identities, all positive functionals are representable, and it follows that \( P_A = R_A = R_e \) and \( P_B = R_B = R_1 \). So by [7, 4.7.19, p. 237], we have that \( P_B = R_1 = B_1 \cap R_e = B_1 \cap R_A = B \cap P_A \); it follows that \( B \) is \( P \)-commutative. Q.E.D.

A related result is given next.

**Proposition 3.6.** Let \( A \) be a \( P \)-commutative symmetric Banach *-algebra. If \( I \) is a closed *-ideal of \( A \) having an approximate identity, then \( I \) is \( P \)-commutative.

**Proof.** We have that \( P_A \subset R_A = J_A \) and \( P_I = R_I = J_I \). Since \( I \) is an ideal, it follows that \( J_I = I \cap J_A \). Thus, we obtain \( P_I \supset I \cap P_A \). The inclusion \( P_I \subset I \cap P_A \) is obvious; hence \( I \) is \( P \)-commutative. Q.E.D.

We now give some examples. We begin by giving a few examples of noncommutative, \( P \)-commutative Banach *-algebras.

**Example 3.7.** Let \( A \) be a noncommutative radical Banach *-algebra (i.e., \( J_A = R_A = A \)). Then, for \( A_e \), we have that \( P_e = R_e = A \). Now if \( (x, \lambda), (y, \alpha) \in A_e \), then \( (x, \lambda)(y, \alpha) - (y, \alpha)(x, \lambda) = (xy - yx, 0) \in A = P_e \) which implies \( A_e \) is \( P \)-commutative. Obviously, \( A_e \) is noncommutative.

We next construct an example which is semisimple.

**Example 3.8.** Let \( A \) be a semisimple, noncommutative Banach algebra with norm \( \|\cdot\| \) and involution \( x \rightarrow x' \). Let \( A = \{(x, y): x, y \in A'\} \). We denote elements of \( A \) by either \((x, y)\) or \( a, b, \) etc. Furnish \( A \) with pointwise algebraic operations, norm \( \|(x, y)\| = \|x\|' + \|y\|' \), and involution \( (x, y)^* = (y', x') \). Then \( A \) is noncommutative and semisimple. We now show that \( A \) is \( P \)-commutative. Let \( f \) be a positive functional on \( A \), let \( x \) be an arbitrary element in \( A' \), and set \( a = (x, 0) \). Then \( a^*a = 0 \) implies \( f(a^*a) = 0 \); hence \( a \in I_f \) and since \( f \) was arbitrary, \( a \in P \). Similarly, every element of \( A \) of the form \((0, y)\) is in \( P \). But, since \( P \) is an ideal in \( A \), it follows that \((x, y) \in P \) for every \( x, y \in A' \); i.e., \( A = P \). Therefore, \( A \) is \( P \)-commutative.

In Example 3.8, if \( A \) has an identity \( e \), then \( A \) is an example of a Banach *-algebra having no nonzero positive functionals. Indeed, let \( f \) be a positive functional on \( A \), choose an arbitrary \( a \in A \), and let \( 1 = (e, e) \) denote the identity of \( A \). Then \( |f(a)|^2 = |f(1 \cdot a)|^2 \leq f(1)f(a^*a) = 0 \) and so \( f \equiv 0 \) on \( A \).

We next use Example 3.8 to show that a closed *-subalgebra of a \( P \)-commutative algebra need not be \( P \)-commutative.

**Example 3.9.** Let \( A' \) be as in 3.8 above but with the added assumption that it is reduced. Now let \( B = \{(x, x): x \in A'\} \). Then \( B \) is a closed noncommutative *-subalgebra of \( A \). We show that \( B \) is not \( P \)-commutative. Let \( \pi \) be a *-representation of \( A' \) on some Hilbert space \( H \). Then the map \( \pi_B: B \rightarrow B(H) \) defined by
$\pi_B[(x, x)] = \pi(x)$ is a $*$-representation of $B$ on $H$ and $x \in \ker(\pi)$ if and only if $(x, x) \in \ker(\pi_B)$. Since $A'$ is reduced, $B$ is reduced. Therefore, since $B$ is non-commutative, it follows that $B$ cannot be $P$-commutative.

Example 3.10. Let $B$ be any noncommutative, symmetric Banach $*$-algebra with continuous involution, identity $e$, and center $Z$, and assume that $P''$ is non-commutative. Let $A$ be the closed $*$-subalgebra of $B$ generated by $Z$ and $P''$. Then $A$ is noncommutative and has identity $e$. We show that $A$ is $P$-commutative. Since $B$ is symmetric and $e \in A$, we have that $P_A = R_A = A \cap R_B = R_B$. Now let $z_1 + r_1, z_2 + r_2 \in A$. Then $(z_1 + r_1)(z_2 + r_2) - (z_2 + r_2)(z_1 + r_1) = r_1 r_2 - r_2 r_1 \in R_A$. Since $R_A$ is closed in $A$ and since every element of $A$ is the limit of elements of the form $z + r$, where $z \in Z, r \in R_B$, it follows that $xy - yx \in R_A$ for every $x, y \in A$, i.e. $A$ is $P$-commutative.

We next give an example showing that $P$ is not always equal to $R$. It also shows that, in general, nothing can be said about the relationship between $J$ and $P$.

Example 3.11. Let $A$ be the set of all formal power series, $\sum a_n z^n$, satisfying $\sum |a_n|/n! < \infty$ (it will be understood that the sum runs from $n = 1$ to $\infty$). Give $A$ the usual algebraic operations, norm defined by $\|\sum a_n z^n\| = \sum |a_n|/n!$, and involution $\sum a_n z^n \rightarrow \sum \overline{a_n} z^n$. Then $A$ is a commutative, radical Banach $*$-algebra, so $J = R = A$. We show that $P \neq A$. Consider $f: A \rightarrow C$ defined by $f(\sum a_n z^n) = a_1$. Then $f$ is clearly linear, and $f$ is positive since $f[\sum \overline{a_n} z^n](\sum a_n z^n)] = |a_1|^2 \geq 0$. Since there exist power series in $A$ for which $a_1 \neq 0$, it follows that $f \neq A$ which implies $P \neq A$.

4. Multiplicative linear functionals and continuity of positive functionals. If $A$ is a Banach $*$-algebra, we denote by $A^2$ the set of all finite sums of products of pairs of elements from $A$. I. Murphy [5] proved the following result:

Theorem. Assume $A^2 = A$ and let every nonzero positive functional on $A$ dominate a continuous nonzero positive functional. Then every positive functional on $A$ is continuous.

As a corollary, Murphy proved that if $A$ is commutative and satisfies $A^2 = A$, then every positive functional on $A$ is continuous. We extend this result to $P$-commutative algebras. The proof follows Murphy's essentially, the main deviation being in showing that $f_u(x^* x) = f_x(u^* u)$.

Theorem 4.1. If $A$ is a $P$-commutative Banach $*$-algebra satisfying $A^2 = A$, then every positive functional on $A$ is continuous.

Proof. Let $f$ be a nonzero positive functional on $A$. Then $f$ is Hermitian since every $x$ in $A$ can be written in the form $x = \sum_i^n \lambda_i x_i^* x_i$ (see [5]). For
Wayne Tiller

every \( u \in A \), let \( f_u \) be the positive functional defined in the proof of Proposition 3.1. Then \( f_u \) is continuous on \( A \) (see [7, 4.5.4, (ii), p. 215]). Now if \( f_u \equiv 0 \) for every \( u \in A \), then \( |f(u^*x^*y)|^2 \leq |f(u^*x^*u)f(y^*y)| = 0 \) for every \( u, x, y \in A \); hence, \( f(A^3) = 0 \) which is false since \( A^3 = A \). So we may choose \( u \in A \) such that \( f_u \neq 0 \), and since \( f_{au} = |\alpha|^2 f_u \), we may assume that \( \|u^*u\| < 1 \). Ford’s square root lemma then provides an element \( v \in A_e \) such that \( v^*v = e - u^*u \). Now we show that \( f_u(x^*x) = f_x(u^*u) \) for every \( x \in A \). Recall that \( I_f \) is a left ideal in \( A \). It is well known that the linear space \( A/I_f \), together with the inner product \( (\cdot | \cdot) \) defined by \( (x + I_f|y + I_f) = f(y^*x) \), is a pre-Hilbert space. Furthermore, since \( A \) is \( P \)-commutative, it follows that \( (x + I_f) = x^2 + I_f \) for every \( x \in A \). Therefore, we have

\[
|f_u(x^*x)| = |f(u^*x^*xu)| = |(xu + I_f|xu + I_f)| = |(ux + I_f|ux + I_f)| = f(x^*u^*ux) = f_x(u^*u).
\]

Now for every \( x \in A \),

\[
(f - f_u)(x^*x) = f(x^*x) - f_u(x^*x) = f(x^*x) - f_x(u^*u)
\]

\[
= f(x^*(e - u^*u)x) = f(x^*v^*vx) = f[(vx)^*(vx)] \geq 0
\]

since \( f \) is positive on \( A \) and \( A \) is an ideal in \( A_e \). So \( f \) dominates \( f_u \), and by an application of Murphy’s theorem, we see that every positive functional on \( A \) is continuous. Q.E.D.

The following lemma is well known [2, 2.2.10, p. 28] for the case when \( A \) has isometric involution. A slight modification of the proof in [2] shows that it is true for Banach algebras with arbitrary involution. We therefore omit the proof.

**Lemma 4.2.** Let \( A \) be a Banach *-algebra with approximate identity \( \{e_\alpha \} \). Let \( \pi \) be a nondegenerate *-representation of \( A \) on a Hilbert space \( H \), and let \( 1 \) denote the identity operator on \( H \). Then \( \lim_{\alpha} \pi(e_\alpha) = 1 \), where the limit is in the strong operator topology on \( B(H) \).

It is well known that on a commutative Banach *-algebra a nonzero positive functional is a pure state if and only if it is multiplicative.

**Theorem 4.3.** Let \( A \) be a \( P \)-commutative Banach *-algebra with approximate identity \( \{e_\alpha \} \). Then a nonzero positive functional \( f \) on \( A \) is a pure state if and only if it is multiplicative.

**Proof.** Let \( f \) be a pure state on \( A \). Since \( A \) has an approximate identity, \( f(R) \equiv 0 \) and so we may define a function \( f' : A/R \to C \) by \( f'(x + R) = f(x) \). Clearly \( f' \) is linear and positive, and it is easy to check that it is also pure and that \( \|f'\| \leq \|f\| \). Now positive scalar multiples of pure positive functionals are...
pure positive functionals; hence, there exists a scalar \( \lambda, \; 0 < \lambda \leq 1 \), such that 
\( \lambda f' \) is a pure state on \( A/R \). Since \( A/R \) is commutative, it follows that \( \lambda f' \) is multiplicative which implies that \( \lambda f \) is multiplicative on \( A \). Now \( f \) is representable, so we may write 
\( f(x) = (\pi(x) \eta | \eta) \), where \( \pi \) is a *-representation on the Hilbert space \( H \) and \( \eta \in H \). Then by Lemma 4.2, we see that 
\( \lim a f(e_a) = \|\eta\|^2 \); and 
\( \|\eta\|^2 \leq \|f\| \) since \( \|e_a\| \leq 1 \) for every \( a \). Now if we choose \( x \in A \) such that 
\( f(x) \neq 0 \), then 
\( \lambda f(x) = \lim (\lambda f)(xe_a) = (\lambda f)(x) \lim (\lambda f)(e_a) \) which implies 
\( \lim (\lambda f)(e_a) = 1 \) or 
\( \lim f(e_a) = 1/\lambda \geq 1 \) since \( \lambda \leq 1 \). But 
\( \lim f(e_a) = \|\eta\|^2 \leq \|f\| = 1 \), and hence 
\( 1/\lambda = \lim f(e_a) = 1 \); thus \( \lambda = 1 \) and so \( f \) is multiplicative on \( A \). This proves the first half of the theorem.

Now assume that \( f \) is a nonzero positive MLF on \( A \). Again \( f(R) \equiv 0 \), so we define \( f' \) as before. Then \( f' \) is positive and multiplicative on \( A/R \) and, hence, is a pure state. Therefore, \( f \) is pure. If we choose \( x \in A \) such that \( f(x) \neq 0 \), then 
\( f(x) = \lim f(xe_a) = f(x) \lim f(e_a) \) which implies 
\( \lim f(e_a) = 1 \); hence \( \|f\| \geq 1 \). But 
\( \|f\| \leq \|f'\| = 1 \) implies \( \|f\| = 1 \), and therefore \( f \) is a state. Q.E.D.

If \( A \) is \( P \)-commutative and has an approximate identity, we set

\[ M = \{f : f \text{ is a nonzero positive MLF on } A \} = \{f : f \text{ is a pure state}\} \]

(\( M \) may be empty). Since the image of every irreducible *-representation of \( A \) must be commutative, and since the commutant of each image is just the set of scalar operators \([7, \text{4.4.12, p. 211}]\), we see that \( M \) is precisely the set of irreducible *-representations of \( A \). Therefore, \( R = \bigcap \ker(f) \) (\( f \in M \)). If we furnish \( M \) with the relative weak *-topology, then, as in the commutative case, \( M \) is a locally compact Hausdorff space. If \( A \) has an identity, then \( M \) is compact. If we define the map \( x \rightarrow \hat{x} \) of \( A \) into \( C_0(M) \) (the continuous functions on \( M \) which vanish at infinity) by 
\( \hat{x}(f) = f(x) \), then \( x \rightarrow \hat{x} \) is a norm decreasing *-homomorphism. It is injective if and only if \( A \) is reduced.

5. Symmetric, \( P \)-commutative Banach *-algebras. In this section we study \( P \)-commutative Banach *-algebras which are symmetric. Two results for such algebras have already been obtained (see 3.5, 3.6).

Proposition 5.1. Let \( A \) be symmetric and \( P \)-commutative. Then a two-sided ideal in \( A \) is primitive if and only if it is maximal modular.

Proof. The "if" part is true for any algebra. Now let \( I \) be a primitive ideal in \( A \). Then since \( A \) is symmetric \( R = J \), and therefore, \( R \subseteq I \). If \( \theta \) is the quotient map of \( A \) onto \( A/R \), then \( \theta(I) = I/R \) is a primitive ideal in \( A/R \). But \( A/R \) commutative implies \( I/R \) is maximal modular which implies \( I = \theta^{-1}(I/R) \) is maximal modular in \( A \). Q.E.D.

It is well known that if \( A \) is a commutative Banach *-algebra, then \( A \) is
symmetric if and only if every MLF on $A$ is Hermitian.

**Theorem 5.2.** If $A$ is symmetric and $P$-commutative, then every MLF on $A$ is Hermitian (hence positive).

**Proof.** Let $\ell$ be a MLF on $A$. Then $R = J \subseteq \ker (\ell)$ since $\ker (\ell)$ is a primitive ideal in $A$. If we define $\ell ' : A/R \rightarrow C$ by $\ell ' (x + R) = \ell (x)$, then $\ell '$ is a Hermitian MLF on $A/R$ since $A/R$ is commutative. Therefore, $\ell$ is Hermitian.

Q.E.D.

The converse of Theorem 5.2 is not true; that is, there exist nonsymmetric $P$-commutative algebras on which every MLF is Hermitian.

**Example 5.3.** Let $A$ be a noncommutative Banach $*$-algebra having identity $e$, involution $x \rightarrow x'$, and no nonzero MLF's. Let $B$ be a commutative, symmetric, semisimple Banach $*$-algebra with identity (denoted by $e$ also) and involution $z \rightarrow z^*$. Now set $D = \{(x, y, z) : x, y \in A, z \in B\}$. Give $D$ pointwise algebra operations, involution $(x, y, z)^* = (y', x', z^*)$, and $l_1$-norm. Then $D$ is just the product of $B$ with Example 3.8; therefore, $D$ is $P$-commutative. Now if $\phi$ is a MLF on $D$, then $\phi ([x, y, 0]) = 0$ for every $x, y \in A$ since $A$ has no nonzero MLF's. Thus, the functionals $\phi : D \rightarrow C$, defined by $\phi [(x, y, z)] = \phi_B (z)$, where $\phi_B$ is a MLF on $B$, are the only MLF's on $D$. But since $B$ is symmetric and commutative, all the $\phi_B$'s are Hermitian; thus $\phi$ is Hermitian. It remains to show that $D$ is not symmetric. Let $x$ be an invertible element of $A$. Set $y = -(x^{-1})'$ and $z \in B$. Then $(e, e, e) + (x, y, z)^* (x, y, z) = (e + y' x, e + x' y, e + z^* z) = (0, 0, e + z^* z)$ which cannot be invertible in $D$. Thus, $D$ is not symmetric.

We remark that if $A$ is $P$-commutative and symmetric, then there is a one-to-one correspondence between the set of all MLF's on $A$ and the set of maximal modular two-sided ideals of $A$. Indeed, let $I$ be such an ideal. Then $A$ symmetric implies $R = I$; therefore $A/I$ is commutative. The same argument as used for the analogous commutative result now applies (see [6, p. 192]).

**Theorem 5.4.** Let $A$ be symmetric and $P$-commutative. Then $R = \{x \in A : \nu (x) = 0\}$.

**Proof.** Since $R = J$, it follows that $x \in R$ implies $\nu (x) = 0$. Conversely, let $x \in A, \nu (x) = 0$. Since $A_e$ is $P$-commutative and symmetric, and since $\nu_A (x) = \nu_e (x)$ and $R_A = R_e$, we may assume that $A$ has an identity. Let $f \in M$ (if $M = \emptyset$, the theorem is clear). Then $f^*$ (usual definition) is a MLF on $A/R$. But $\nu (x) = 0$ implies $\nu_{A/R} (x) = 0$; hence $0 = f^* (x + R) = f (x)$ since $A/R$ is commutative. Therefore, $x \in \bigcap \ker (f) \ (f \in M)$ implies $x \in R$ (see the paragraph following Theorem 4.3). Q.E.D.

**Lemma 5.5.** Suppose $A$ is symmetric, $P$-commutative, and has an identity.
Then for every $x$ in $A$, $\sigma(x) = \{f(x) : f \in M\}$.

**Proof.** The containment $\sigma(x) \subseteq \{f(x) : f \in M\}$ follows immediately from Theorem 4.3 and [4, Theorem 4.10]. Now suppose that $\lambda = f(x)$ for some $f \in M$. Since $f'(x + R) = f(x) = \lambda$, it follows that $\lambda \in \sigma_{A/R}(x + R)$. Since $\sigma_{A/R}(x + R) \subseteq \sigma(x)$, the lemma follows. Q.E.D.

**Theorem 5.6.** Let $A$ be symmetric and $P$-commutative. Then for every $x, y \in A$, $\nu(xy) \leq \nu(x)\nu(y)$ and $\nu(x + y) \leq \nu(x) + \nu(y)$.

**Proof.** We may assume $A$ has an identity. Then by Lemma 5.5, $\nu(xy) = \sup |f(xy)| \leq (\sup |f(x)|)(\sup |f(y)|) = \nu(x)\nu(y)$, where the supremums are taken over all $f$ in $M$. Similarly, $\nu(x + y) = \sup |f(x + y)| \leq \sup |f(x)| + \sup |f(y)| = \nu(x) + \nu(y)$. Q.E.D.

From Theorem 5.6 we see that $\nu(\cdot)$ is a continuous algebra seminorm in a symmetric, $P$-commutative Banach *-algebra.

We next give an example to show that, without the assumption of symmetry, $\nu(\cdot)$ need not be an algebra seminorm.

**Example 5.7.** Let $B$ be a noncommutative Banach *-algebra with an identity and having two elements $x$ and $y$ satisfying $\nu_B(xy) > \nu_B(x)\nu_B(y)$. We may assume that $\nu_B(y) = \nu_B(x)$. Now form the $P$-commutative algebra $A$ of Example 3.8 using $B$. Then $A$ is not symmetric (see Example 5.3). It is easy to check that $\sigma_A[(x, y)] = \sigma_B(x) \cup \sigma_B(y)$. It follows that $\nu_A[(x, y)(y, x)] = \nu_A[(xy, yx)] = \nu_B(xy) > \nu_B(x)\nu_B(y) = \nu_A[(x, y)]\nu_A[(y, x)]$.

**Theorem 5.8.** Let $A$ be a Banach *-algebra with an approximate identity. If $\nu(x^*x) \leq \nu(x)^2$ for every $x \in A$, then $A$ is $P$-commutative.

**Proof.** We first note that $R_A = \bigcap \text{Ker}(f)$, where the intersection is over all positive functionals on $A$. This is proved in [6, p. 259] for algebras with an identity. It is easily extended to the present situation since $R_A = R_e$ and every positive functional is representable. Now let $f$ be an arbitrary positive functional on $A$ and $f'$ its extension to $A_e$. Then for every $x \in A$, $|f(x)| \leq f'(e)\nu(x^*x)^{1/2} \leq f'(e)\nu(x)$, and by [1, Corollary 3] $f(xy) = f(yx)$ for every $x, y \in A$. Hence $xy - yx \in \bigcap \text{Ker}(f) = R_A$ for every $x, y \in A$; $A$ is therefore $P$-commutative. Q.E.D.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


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