

# Logarithms

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June 26, 2013

## Plan

- Logarithmic functions and logarithms

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- Standard examples

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- History and motivation

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- Standard examples
- History and motivation
- $k$ -radius primes
- Computational and theoretical results
- Open problem

## Logarithmic functions

A **logarithmic function** (of length  $k$ ) is a function

$$f : \{1, 2, \dots, k\} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}/k\mathbb{Z}$$

satisfying

$$f(ab) = f(a) + f(b)$$

whenever both sides make sense (i.e., whenever  $a, b, ab \in \{1, 2, \dots, k\}$ ).



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There are  $k^{\pi(k)}$  logarithmic functions of length  $k$ : the primes below  $k$  can be assigned arbitrary images, and then all other values are determined by the logarithmic property.

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We must have  $f(1) = 0$ .

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Some examples arise naturally ...

## Logarithmic functions: example

Suppose that  $p = k + 1$  is prime, and that  $g$  generates  $(\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z})^*$ .

Given  $a \in \{1, \dots, k\}$ , we can view  $a$  as an element of  $(\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z})^*$ , and define  $f(a)$  by

$$a = g^{f(a)},$$

the discrete logarithm of  $a$  to base  $g$ .

Then  $f$  is a logarithmic function.

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Then  $f$  is a logarithmic function.

N.B., the definition of a logarithmic function does not here require  $f(c) = f(a) + f(b)$  whenever  $c \equiv ab \pmod{p}$ , although this is true.

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In the example above,  $f$  is bijective. This is not a requirement for logarithmic functions in general, and when it happens we endow our logarithmic function with a special name ...

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- There are other examples...

## Logarithms: another family of examples

Suppose that  $p = 2k + 1$  is prime.

Let  $\hat{f}(a) \in \mathbb{Z}/2k\mathbb{Z}$  be a discrete logarithm in  $(\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z})^*$ .

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This is certainly a logarithmic function of length  $k$ .

If  $f(a) = f(b)$ , then either  $a = b$  or  $a \equiv -b \pmod{p}$ ; for  $a$  and  $b$  between 1 and  $k$ , the latter is not possible, so  $f$  is injective, and hence bijective.

## Logarithms: the story so far

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- Logarithms of length  $k$  exist for all  $k < 195$  (more on larger  $k$  later).



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- As soon as a logarithm of length  $k$  exists, one can scale it to get  $\varphi(k)$  others.
- One can also shuffle the values of the logarithms of certain primes.
- Logarithms of length  $k$  exist for all  $k < 195$  (more on larger  $k$  later).
- $k = 184$  is the smallest length for which a logarithm exists, but for which there is no logarithm of that length coming from any of the above number-theoretic ideas.

## Logarithms: motivation

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- group theory
- number theory
- coding theory

## A digression: $k$ -radius sequences

An  $n$ -ary  $k$ -radius sequence is a finite sequence from the alphabet  $\{0, 1, \dots, n - 1\}$  such that any 2 distinct elements of the alphabet are at most  $k$  terms apart in the sequence.

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In other words, if one slides a window that covers  $k + 1$  terms of the sequence along the sequence, then every possible pair of elements is seen through the window at some point.

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These have been used in certain caching strategies.



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A  $k$ -radius prime is a prime  $p$  such that:

- $p \equiv 1 \pmod{2k}$ ;
- the elements  $1^{(p-1)/k}, 2^{(p-1)/k}, \dots, k^{(p-1)/k}$  are pairwise distinct when reduced modulo  $p$ .

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Note that the listed elements are  $k$ th roots of unity modulo  $p$ , and there are only  $k$  of these.



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Taking discrete logs with any chosen  $k$ -th root of unity as a base gives a logarithm of length  $k$ .

## A digression: $k$ -radius primes and sequences

**Proposition** (Blackburn, M [2012])

If  $p$  is a  $k$ -radius prime, then there is a  $p$ -ary  $k$ -radius sequence of length

$$(p + k - 1)(p - 1)/(2k) + 1 .$$

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This is asymptotically good: it is easy to see that the length has to be greater than  $p(p - 1)/(2k)$ .

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We also constructed  $k$ -radius sequences from logarithms, going via tilings.

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Writing them to base 307, they are  $307^0, 307^1, 307^4, 307^2, 307^3, 307^5, 307^6$ . Hence ...

## A digression: $k$ -radius primes and logarithms

1		0
2		1
3		4
4	$\mapsto$	2
5		3
6		5
7		6

is a logarithm of length 7.

## Logarithms from number theory

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Working in cyclotomic fields, and using density results for primes with certain character values, one can show:

**Theorem** (Mills, 1963) If  $k$  is odd, then any logarithmic function (and hence any logarithm) arises in this way. Indeed for infinitely many primes.

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**Theorem** (Mills, 1963) If  $k$  is odd, then any logarithmic function (and hence any logarithm) arises in this way. Indeed for infinitely many primes.

Elliott (1970) gave the density, with an estimate for the error.

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So 5 is a square mod  $p$ , and  $5^{(p-1)/10}$  is a square of a 10th root of unity, so cannot be a primitive 10th root of unity.



## Logarithms from number theory: $k$ even

So

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
				↓					
0	4	3	8	1	7	9	2	6	5

is an example of a logarithm that does not come from computing discrete logarithms in the 10th roots of unity modulo *any* prime.

## Logarithms from number theory: $k$ even

Mills (1963) showed that when  $k$  is even a logarithmic function  $f$  comes from discrete logarithms in the  $k$ th roots of unity modulo  $p$  for some prime  $p$  (and indeed infinitely many) if and only if

$f(m)$  is even if one of the following holds:

- $m \mid k$  and  $m \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$ ;
- $4m \mid k$ .

## Logarithms from number theory: $k$ even

For  $k$ -radius primes, the condition is slightly simpler.

A logarithm  $f$  of length  $k$  comes from a  $k$ -radius prime if and only if

- if  $2m \mid k$  then  $f(m)$  is even.

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This works for odd and even  $k$ !

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One can show that this condition implies Mills' condition in all cases.

## Logarithms: some terminology

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Those logarithms that come from primes  $\equiv 1 \pmod{k}$  we call **KM-logarithms** (Kummer-Mills).

Those that come from  $k$ -radius primes are more special: we call them **special KM-logarithms**.

## Logarithms: computational results

For  $k \leq 300$ , there are logarithms of length  $k$  **except** for

$k = 195, 205, 208, 211, 212, 214, 217, 218, 220, 227, 229, 235, 242,$   
 $244, 246\text{--}248, 252, 253, 255, 257\text{--}259, 263\text{--}267, 269, 271, 274, 275,$   
 $279, 283, 286, 287, 289\text{--}291, 294, 295, 297, 298.$



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In addition, there are no KM-logarithms of length  $k$  for

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In addition, there are no KM-logarithms of length  $k$  for

$k = 184, 234, 236.$

In addition, there are no special KM-logarithms of length  $k$  for

$k = 4, 12, 60, 180, 182, 190, 196, 222, 238, 268, 276, 282, 292.$

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And one of length 360.

## $k$ -radius primes: density

Let  $N_k$  be the number of special KM-logarithms of length  $k$ .



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$$c_k = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\varphi(2k)} \cdot \frac{N_k}{k^{\pi(k)}} & \text{if } k \text{ is odd,} \\ \frac{1}{\varphi(2k)} \cdot \frac{N_k 2^{\omega(k/2)}}{k^{\pi(k)}} & \text{if } k \text{ is even.} \end{cases}$$

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**Theorem** (Blackburn, M [2012])

The number of  $k$ -radius primes below  $x$  is asymptotic to  $c_k x / \log x$  (as  $x \rightarrow \infty$ ).

## Open problems

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## A logarithm of length 342

2	3	5	7	11	13	17	19	23	29
1	139	232	150	102	329	226	171	146	17

⋮

277	281	283	293	307	311	313	317	331	337
298	309	313	314	319	326	327	339	340	341

## A logarithm of length 342

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	1	139	2	232	140	150	3	278	233

11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
102	141	329	151	29	4	226	279	171	234

⋮

333	334	335	336	337	338	339	340	341	342
323	268	159	293	341	317	134	118	63	108



## A logarithm of length 360

2	3	5	7	11	13	17	19	23	29
2	125	194	273	141	37	191	292	349	324

⋮

307	311	313	317	331	337	347	349	353	359
236	241	271	285	290	331	334	344	348	358

## A logarithm of length 360

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
0	2	125	4	194	127	273	6	250	196

11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
141	129	37	275	319	8	191	252	292	198

⋮

351	352	353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360
52	151	348	110	139	299	229	1	358	90