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HOMOGENEOUS EXTENSIONS OF C^*-ALGEBRAS AND K-THEORY. I[1]

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Let L denote the bounded operators on a complex, separable, infinite-dimensional Hilbert space, K the ideal of compact operators, $Q = L/K$ the Calkin algebra, and π: $L \longrightarrow Q$ the natural map. Brown, Douglas, and Fillmore (BDF) [1], [2] initiated the study of unitary equivalence classes of extensions of C^*-algebras of the form

$$\begin{array}{ccccccccc} 0 & \longrightarrow & K & \longrightarrow & E & \longrightarrow & A & \longrightarrow & 0 \\ & & \| & & \downarrow & & \downarrow{\scriptstyle \tau} & & \\ 0 & \longrightarrow & K & \longrightarrow & L & \longrightarrow & Q & \longrightarrow & 0 \end{array}$$

for fixed separable nuclear C^*-algebras A. The resulting group of equivalence classes is denoted $\text{Ext}(A)$, or $\text{Ext}(X)$ when $A = C(X)$, the ring of continuous complex-valued functions on a compact metric space X. In [2], BDF show that $\text{Ext}(X) \cong K_1(X)$ when X is a finite complex. If X is of finite dimension then $\text{Ext}(X)$ has been calculated by Kahn, Kaminker, and the author (KKS) [3]:

$$\text{Ext}(X) \cong {}^sK_1(X) \overset{\text{def}}{\equiv} K^0(FX)$$

where ${}^sK_*(X) = K^*(FX)$ is Steenrod K-homology and FX is a CW-approximation for the function spectrum $\{F(X, S^n)\}$. In particular, if X is a closed subset of S^{2n} then

$$\text{Ext}(X) \cong [S^{2n} - X, Q^r] \equiv K^0(S^{2n} - X)$$

where Q^r denotes the group of invertible elements of Q with the subspace topology, and $[X, Y]$ denotes basepoint-preserving homotopy classes of based maps $X \longrightarrow Y$. *Henceforth X and Y are understood to be finite-dimensional compact metric spaces.*

For a topological space Y and $*$-algebra B, the continuous functions $C(Y, B)$ form a $*$-algebra. In particular, we consider the algebra $C(Y, L_{*s})$, where L_{*s} denotes L with the strong-* topology. This is a C^*-algebra with

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C^*-norm equal to the sup norm provided that Y is compact metric. Let $\mathcal{Q}(Y) = C(Y, L_{*s})/C(Y, K)$ be the quotient C^*-algebra.

Pimsner, Popa, and Voiculescu (PPV) [6], [7] consider a substantial generalization of the BDF work. They consider unitary equivalence classes of extensions of the form

$$\begin{array}{ccccccccc} 0 & \longrightarrow & C(Y, K) & \longrightarrow & E & \longrightarrow & A & \longrightarrow & 0 \\ & & \| & & \downarrow & & \downarrow \tau & & \\ 0 & \longrightarrow & C(Y, K) & \longrightarrow & C(Y, L_{*_s}) & \longrightarrow & \mathcal{Q}(Y) & \longrightarrow & 0 \end{array}$$

which are homogeneous; the various restrictions

$$A \xrightarrow{\tau} \mathcal{Q}(Y) \xrightarrow{p_y} \mathcal{Q}$$

are extensions. If A is a separable nuclear C^*-algebra then a group $\mathrm{Ext}(Y; A)$ is obtained, and if Y is a based space with basepoint y_0 then a reduced group $\mathrm{Ext}(Y, y_0; A)$ is obtained.

In this note we determine the groups $\mathrm{Ext}(Y, y_0; C(X))$, denoted $L(Y, X)$ for brevity.

Define $L_n(Y, X)$ by

$$L_n(Y, X) = \begin{cases} L(Y, X) & n \text{ odd}, \\ L(Y, SX) & n \text{ even}. \end{cases}$$

Results of PPV imply that for X fixed, $L_*(-, X)$ is a cohomology theory and that for Y fixed, $L_*(Y, -)$ is a Steenrod homology theory [4]. Furthermore, Bott periodicity is satisfied in each variable, and there is an interchange isomorphism $L_*(Y, SX) \cong L_*(SY, X)$.

THEOREM 1. *Let X and Y be finite-dimensional compact metric spaces. Then there exist isomorphisms*

$$\Gamma_*^{Y,X}: L_*(Y, X) \longrightarrow K^*(Y \wedge FX)$$

such that

(1) *for each fixed Y, Γ_* is a natural equivalence of Steenrod homology theories,*

(2) *for each fixed X, Γ_* is a natural equivalence of cohomology theories,*

(3) *when $Y = S^0$ the natural equivalence corresponds to the* KKS *natural equivalence $\mathrm{Ext}_*(X) \cong K^*(FX)$,*

(4) *the natural diagram of isomorphisms*

$$\begin{array}{ccc} L_*(Y, S^2X) & \longrightarrow & K^*(Y \wedge F(S^2X)) \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ L_*(S^2Y, X) & \longrightarrow & K^*(S^2Y \wedge FX) \end{array}$$

commutes, where the vertical maps are the interchange isomorphisms and the horizontal maps are instances of Γ_*. *(The* K^* *interchange is induced by the natural equivalence* $Y \wedge F(S^2X) \cong S^2Y \wedge FX$.*)*

Theorem 1 is the principal result; the other theorems are more or less immediate consequences of it. The proof of Theorem 1 follows the pattern of proof of [3, Theorem C].

THEOREM 2. *If* X *is a closed subset of* S^{2n} *then there is an isomorphism*

$$L(Y, X) \cong K^0(Y \wedge (S^{2n} - X)).$$

This is obvious given the fact that the suspension spectrum of $(S^{2n} - X)$ will serve stably as a replacement for FX. To completely destabilize, use the identification of $K^0(W)$ with $[W, \mathcal{Q}^r]$ and obtain

$$L(Y, X) \cong [Y \wedge (S^{2n} - X), \mathcal{Q}^r].$$

For computations when Y is a finite complex the following theorem is particularly useful.

THEOREM 3 (KÜNNETH THEOREM). *Suppose that* $K^*(Y)$ *is finitely generated as a graded abelian group. Then there is a natural short exact sequence*

$$0 \longrightarrow (K^1(Y) \otimes {}^sK_0(X)) \oplus (K^0(Y) \otimes {}^sK_1(X)) \xrightarrow{\alpha} L(Y, X) \longrightarrow$$

$$\xrightarrow{\beta} \operatorname{Tor}(K^1(Y), {}^sK_1(X)) \oplus \operatorname{Tor}(K^0(Y), {}^sK_0(X)) \longrightarrow 0$$

In particular, if $K^*(Y)$ *is free abelian (e.g., if* $Y = S^n$, CP^n, $G_k(C^n)$, $U(n)$, G *a compact connected, simply-connected Lie group) then* α *is an isomorphism. If* X *is a finite complex then the sequence splits unnaturally.*

Theorem 3 allows us to express $L(Y, X)$ in terms of $K^*(Y)$ and ${}^sK_*(X) \cong \operatorname{Ext}_*(X)$. For example, if X and Y are subsets of the plane and Y is a finite complex with $(n + 1)$ path components, then

$$L(Y, X) = (Z^n \otimes [C - X, Z]) \oplus ([Y, S^1] \otimes \hom([X, Z], Z)).$$

Note that $L(S^1, S^0) \cong 0 \oplus Z \cong Z$. This group stores the obstruction to the following lifting problem. If $f: S^1 \longrightarrow \mathcal{Q}$ is a continuous function which takes values in the projections of $\mathcal{Q}$ then each $f(\lambda)$ may be lifted to a projection in L. (This corresponds to the first summand in $L(S^1, S^0)$ vanishing.) However there is an obstruction to finding a *continuous* projection-valued lift for f measured by the second summand. This obstruction is not immediate from the BDF analysis.

G. G. Kasparov has also studied extensions of C^*-algebras by somewhat different techniques. He has announced [5] an isomorphism involving his theory K_*K:

$$K_*K(C(X), C(Y)) \cong K^*(Y \wedge DX)$$

for finite complexes X and Y, where DX is the classical Spanier-Whitehead dual. Theorem 1 then implies that

$$L_*(Y, X) \cong K_*K(C(X), C(Y))$$

for finite complexes. Thus the Kasparov and PPV machines do coincide on finite complexes.[2]

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Details of this work will, of course, appear elsewhere.

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[2]Jonathan Rosenberg and the author have shown recently that if Y is a locally compact subset of R^n and A is a separable nuclear (not necessarily unital) C^*-algebra, then the Kasparov group $\mathrm{Ext}(A, C(Y))$ which classifies *all* extensions of the form $0 \to C(Y, K) \to E \to A \to 0$ is isomorphic to the PPV group $\mathrm{Ext}(Y^+, +; A^+)$, where Y^+ is the one-point compactification of Y and A^+ is the unitalization of A.