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Let *G* be a connected linear algebraic group over a field *k*. We say that *G* is toric-friendly if for any field extension K/k and any maximal *K*-torus *T* in *G* the group G(K) acts transitively on (G/T)(K). Our main result is a classification of semisimple (and under certain assumptions on *k*, of connected) toric-friendly groups.

Introduction

Let k be a field and X be a homogeneous space of a connected linear algebraic group G defined over k. The first question one usually asks about X is whether or not it has a k-point. If the answer is "yes", then one often wants to know whether or not the set X(k) of k-points of X forms a single orbit under the group G(k).

In this paper we shall focus on the case where the geometric stabilizers for the *G*-action on *X* are maximal tori of $G_{\overline{k}} := G \times_k \overline{k}$ (here \overline{k} stands for a fixed algebraic closure of *k*). Such homogeneous spaces arise, in particular, in the study of the adjoint action of a connected reductive group *G* on its Lie algebra or of the conjugation action of *G* on itself; see [Colliot-Thélène et al. 2011]. It is shown in Corollary 4.6 of the same reference (see also [Kottwitz 1982, Lemma 2.1]) that every homogeneous space *X* of this type has a *k*-point, assuming that *G* is split and char(*k*) = 0. Therefore it is natural to ask if this point is unique up to translations by *G*(*k*).

Definition 0.1. Let k be a field. We say that a connected linear k-group G is *toric-friendly* if for every field extension K/k the following condition is satisfied:

(*) For every maximal *K*-torus *T* of $G_K := G \times_k K$, the group G(K) has only one orbit in $(G_K/T)(K)$; equivalently, the natural map $\pi : G(K) \to (G_K/T)(K)$ is surjective.

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Examining the cohomology exact sequence associated to the *K*-subgroup *T* of G_K [Serre 1994, I.5.4, Proposition 36], we see that *G* is toric-friendly if and only if ker[$H^1(K, T) \rightarrow H^1(K, G)$] = 1 for every field extension K/k and every maximal *K*-torus *T* of G_K .

Observe that G is toric-friendly if and only if condition (*) of Definition 0.1 is satisfied for all *finitely generated* extensions K/k.

We are interested in classifying toric-friendly groups. In Section 1 we partially reduce this problem to the case where the group is semisimple. The rest of this paper will be devoted to proving the following classification theorem for semisimple toric-friendly groups.

Main Theorem 0.2. Let k be a field. A connected semisimple k-group G is toricfriendly if and only if G is isomorphic to a direct product $\prod_i R_{F_i/k}G'_i$, where each F_i is a finite separable extension of k and each G'_i is an inner form of PGL_{n_i, F_i} for some integer n_i .

Notation. Unless otherwise specified, k will denote an arbitrary field. For any field K we denote by K_s a separable closure of K.

By a k-group we mean an affine algebraic group scheme over k, not necessarily smooth or connected. However, when talking of a *reductive* or *semisimple* k-group, we implicitly assume smoothness and connectedness.

Let S be a k-group. We denote by $H^i(k, S)$ the *i*-th flat cohomology set for i = 0, 1 [Waterhouse 1979, 17.6]. If S is abelian, we denote by $H^i(k, S)$ the *i*-th flat cohomology group for $i \ge 0$ [Berhuy et al. 2007, Appendix B]. There are exact sequences for flat cohomology similar to those for Galois cohomology, [Waterhouse 1979, 18.1; Berhuy et al. 2007, Appendix B]. When S is smooth, the flat cohomology $H^i(k, S)$ can be identified with Galois cohomology.

1. First reductions

Lemma 1.1. Let $1 \to U \to G \xrightarrow{\varphi} G' \to 1$ be an exact sequence of smooth connected k-groups, where U is unipotent. We assume that U is k-split, that is, has a composition series over k whose successive quotients are isomorphic to $\mathbb{G}_{a,k}$. Then G is toric-friendly if and only if G' is toric-friendly.

Proof. Choose a field extension K/k and a maximal K-torus $T \subset G_K$. Set $T' = \varphi(T) \subset G'_K$, then T' is a maximal torus of G'_K . The map $\varphi^T : T \to T'$ is an isomorphism, because $T \cap U_K = 1$ (as U_K is unipotent). Conversely, let us start from a maximal torus T' of G'_K . The preimage

$$H = \varphi^{-1}(T') \subset G_K$$

of T' is smooth and connected, so any maximal torus T of H maps isomorphically onto T' and therefore it is maximal in G_K .

Now we have a commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{c|c} H^1(K,T) & \longrightarrow & H^1(K,G) \\ \varphi_*^T & & & & & & \\ \varphi_*^T & & & & & & \\ H^1(K,T') & \longrightarrow & H^1(K,G') \end{array}$$

Since $\varphi^T : T \to T'$ is an isomorphism of tori, the left vertical arrow φ^T_* is an isomorphism of abelian groups. On the other hand, by [Sansuc 1981, Lemma 1.13], the right vertical arrow φ_* is a bijective map. We see that the top horizontal arrow in the diagram is injective if and only if the bottom horizontal arrow is injective, which proves the lemma.

Let *k* be a perfect field and *G* be a connected *k*-group. Recall that over a perfect field the unipotent radical of *G* makes sense; that is, the "geometric" unipotent radical over an algebraic closure is defined over *k*, by Galois descent. We denote the unipotent radical of *G* by $R_u(G)$.

Corollary 1.2. Let k be a perfect field, G be a connected k-group, and $R_u(G)$ be its unipotent radical. Then G is toric-friendly if and only if the associated reductive k-group $G/R_u(G)$ is toric-friendly.

Proof. Since *k* is perfect, the smooth connected unipotent *k*-group $R_u(G)$ is *k*-split [Borel 1991, Theorem 15.4], and the corollary follows from Lemma 1.1.

Let *k* be a field. We recall that a *k*-group *G* is called *special* if $H^1(K, G) = 1$ for every field extension K/k. This notion was introduced by J.-P. Serre [1958]. Semisimple special groups over an algebraically closed field were classified by A. Grothendieck [1958]; we shall use his classification later on.

Recall that a *k*-torus *T* is called quasitrivial, if its character group X(T) is a permutation Galois module. Split tori and, more general, quasitrivial tori are special.

Proposition 1.3. Let $1 \to C \to G \xrightarrow{\varphi} G' \to 1$ be an exact sequence of k-groups, where G and G' are reductive, and $C \subset G$ is central, hence of multiplicative type (not necessarily connected or smooth).

- (a) If G is toric-friendly, so is G'.
- (b) If C is a special k-torus, then G is toric-friendly if and only if G' is toric-friendly.

Proof. Let K/k be a field extension. The map $T \mapsto T' := \varphi(T)$ is a bijection between the set of maximal *K*-tori $T \subset G_K$ and the set of maximal *K*-tori $T' \subset G'_K$

(the inverse map is $T' \mapsto T := \varphi^{-1}(T')$). For such T and $T' = \varphi(T)$ we have commutative diagrams

$$\begin{array}{cccc} G_K & \xrightarrow{\varphi} & G'_K & & G(K) & \xrightarrow{\varphi} & G'(K) \\ \pi & & & & & & \\ \pi & & & & & & \\ G_K/T & \xrightarrow{\varphi_*} & G'_K/T' & & & & \\ & & & & & & \\ G_K/T)(K) & \xrightarrow{\varphi_*} & & & \\ & & & & \\ & & & & \\ & & & & \\ \end{array}$$

where $\varphi_*: G_K/T \xrightarrow{\sim} G'_K/T'$ is an isomorphism of *K*-varieties, and the induced map on *K*-points $\varphi_*: (G_K/T)(K) \to (G'_K/T')(K)$ is a bijection. Now, if *G* is toric-friendly, then the map $\pi: G(K) \to (G_K/T)(K)$ is surjective, and we see from the right-hand diagram that then the map $\pi': G'(K) \to (G'_K/T')(K)$ is surjective as well. This shows that *G'* is toric-friendly, thus proving (a).

To prove (b), assume that G' is toric-friendly and C is a special k-torus. Then the map $\pi': G'(K) \to (G'_K/T')(K)$ is surjective (because G' is toric-friendly) and the map $\varphi: G(K) \to G'(K)$ is surjective (because C is special). We see from the right-hand diagram that the map $\pi: G(K) \to (G_K/T)(K)$ is surjective as well. Hence G is toric-friendly.

We record the following immediate corollary of Proposition 1.3(b).

Corollary 1.4. Let G be a reductive k-group. Suppose that the radical R(G) is a special k-torus (in particular, this condition is satisfied if R(G) is a quasitrivial k-torus). Then G is toric-friendly if and only if the semisimple group G/R(G) is toric-friendly.

The next result follows from Corollaries 1.2 and 1.4. It partially reduces the problem of classifying toric-friendly groups G to the case where G is semisimple.

Corollary 1.5. Let k be a perfect field. Let G be a connected k-group containing a split maximal torus. Then G is toric-friendly if and only if the semisimple group G/R(G) is toric-friendly.

The following two lemmas will be used to reduce the problem of classifying *adjoint* semisimple toric-friendly groups G to the case where G is an absolutely simple adjoint k-group.

Lemma 1.6. A direct product $G = G' \times_k G''$ of connected k-groups is toric-friendly if and only if both G' and G'' are toric-friendly.

Proof. Let K/k be a field extension. Let $T' \subset G'_K$ and $T'' \subset G''_K$ be maximal K-tori, then $T := T' \times_K T'' \subset G_K$ is a maximal K-torus, and every maximal K-torus

in G_K is of this form. The commutative diagram

shows that every *K*-point of G_K/T lifts to *G* if and only if every *K*-point of G'_K/T' lifts to *G'* and every *K*-point of G''_K/T'' lifts to *G''*.

Lemma 1.7. Let l/k be a finite separable field extension, G' a connected *l*-group, and $G = R_{l/k}G'$. Then G is toric-friendly if and only if G' is toric-friendly.

Proof. Let K/k be a field extension. Then $l \otimes_k K = L_1 \times \cdots \times L_r$, where L_i are finite separable extensions of K. It follows that $G_K = \prod_i R_{L_i/K} G'_{L_i}$. Let $T \subset G_K$ be a maximal K-torus, then $T = \prod_i R_{L_i/K} T'_i$, where T'_i is a maximal L_i -torus of G'_{L_i} for each i. We have

$$G(K) = G_K(K) = \left(\prod_i R_{L_i/K} G'_{L_i}\right)(K) = \prod_i G'_{L_i}(L_i) = \prod_i G'(L_i)$$

and similarly $(G_K/T)(K) = \prod_i (G'_{L_i}/T'_i)(L_i)$, yielding a commutative diagram

If G' is toric-friendly, then the right vertical arrow in the diagram is surjective, hence the left vertical arrow is surjective and G is toric-friendly.

Conversely, assume that *G* is toric-friendly. Let L/l be a field extension and $T' \subset G'_L$ a maximal *L*-torus. Set K := L and T := T' in the diagram above. Then we can identify *L* with one of L_i in the decomposition $l \otimes_k K = L_1 \times \cdots \times L_r$, say with L_1 . In this way we identify G'_L with G'_{L_1} and G'_L/T' with G'_{L_1}/T'_1 . Since *G* is toric-friendly, the left vertical arrow in the diagram is surjective, hence the right vertical arrow is also surjective. This means that the map $G'(L_i) \to (G'_{L_i}/T'_i)(L_i)$ is surjective for each *i* and in particular, for i = 1. Consequently, the map $G'(L) \to (G'_L/T')(L)$ is surjective, and G' is toric-friendly, as desired. \Box

2. The elementary obstruction

2.1. Let *K* be a field and *X* be a smooth geometrically integral *K*-variety. Write $\mathfrak{g} = \operatorname{Gal}(K_s/K)$, where K_s is a fixed separable closure of *K*. Recall from [Colliot-Thélène and Sansuc 1987, Definition 2.2.1] that the *elementary obstruction* $\operatorname{ob}(X)$

is the class in $\operatorname{Ext}^{1}_{\mathfrak{a}}(K_{s}(X)^{*}/K_{s}^{*}, K_{s}^{*})$ of the extension

$$1 \to K_s^* \to K_s(X)^* \to K_s(X)^* / K_s^* \to 1.$$

In particular, ob(X) = 0 if and only if this extension of g-modules splits. If X has a K-point, then ob(X) = 0 [Colliot-Thélène and Sansuc 1987, Proposition 2.2.2(a)]. Conversely, if Y is a T-torsor over K for some K-torus T, and ob(Y) = 0, then Y has a K-point, by Lemma 2.1(iv) of [Borovoi et al. 2008]. However, if X is an H-torsor over K for some simply connected semisimple K-group H, then ob(X) = 0 even when X has no K-points; see Lemma 2.2(viii) of that same reference. (The standing assumption in [Borovoi et al. 2008] is that char(K) = 0; however, the proofs of Lemmas 2.1(iv) and 2.2(viii) go through in arbitrary characteristic.)

The following key lemma was suggested to us by J.-L. Colliot-Thélène.

Lemma 2.2. Let K be a field, T be a K-torus, H be a simply connected semisimple K-group, X be a H-torsor over K and Y be a T-torsor over K. If Y has an F-point over the function field F = K(X) of X, then Y has a K-point.

Proof. Since *H* is simply connected, ob(X) = 0; see Section 2.1 above. Suppose *Y* has an *F*-point. This means that there exist a *K*-rational map $X \dashrightarrow Y$. By [Wittenberg 2008, Lemma 3.1.2], if we have a *K*-rational map $X \dashrightarrow Y$ between smooth geometrically integral *K*-varieties, then ob(X) = 0 implies ob(Y) = 0. Since *T* is a *K*-torus, if ob(Y) = 0, then $Y(K) \neq \emptyset$; see Section 2.1 above. Thus in our situation *Y* has a *K*-point, as claimed.

Lemma 2.3. Let k be a field. Assume we have a commutative diagram of k-groups



where G is a smooth connected k-group, the vertical map $T \rightarrow G$ is the inclusion of a maximal k-torus T into G, and H is semisimple and simply connected. If there exists a field extension K/k such that the map

$$H^1(K, S) \to H^1(K, T)$$

is nontrivial, then G is not toric-friendly.

Proof. Choose K and $s \in H^1(K, S)$ such that the image $t \in H^1(K, T)$ of s in $H^1(K, T)$ is nontrivial. Let $h \in H^1(K, H)$ be the image of $s \in H^1(K, S)$ in $H^1(K, H)$, and let $g \in H^1(K, G)$ be the image of t (and of h) in $H^1(K, G)$, as

shown in the commutative diagram below:

$$\begin{array}{cccc} H^1(K,S) \longrightarrow H^1(K,T) & s \longrightarrow t \\ & & & & & & & \\ & & & & & & & \\ & & & & & & & \\ H^1(K,H) \longrightarrow H^1(K,G) & & & & h \longrightarrow g \end{array}$$

Let *X* be an *H*-torsor over *K* representing *h* and let F = K(X) be the function field of *X*. We denote by h_F the image of *h* in $H^1(F, H)$, and similarly we define s_F , t_F , and g_F . Clearly *X* has an *F*-point, hence $h_F = 1$ in $H^1(F, H)$ and therefore $g_F = 1$ in $H^1(F, G)$. On the other hand, by Lemma 2.2, $t_F \neq 1$. We conclude that the kernel of the natural map $H^1(F, T) \rightarrow H^1(F, G)$ contains $t_F \neq 1$ and hence, is nontrivial. This implies that *G* is not toric-friendly.

2.4. Let G be a reductive k-group. Let G^{ss} be the derived group of G (it is semisimple), and let G^{sc} be the universal cover of G^{ss} (it is semisimple and simply connected). Consider the composed homomorphism $f: G^{sc} \twoheadrightarrow G^{ss} \hookrightarrow G$.

Let K/k be a field extension. There is a canonical bijective correspondence $T \leftrightarrow T^{sc}$ between the set of maximal *K*-tori $T \subset G_K$ and the set of maximal *K*-tori $T^{sc} \subset G^{sc}$. Starting from a maximal *K*-torus $T \subset G_K$, we define a maximal *K*-torus $T^{sc} := f^{-1}(T) \subset G_K^{sc}$. Conversely, starting from a maximal *K*-torus $T^{sc} \subset G_K^{sc}$, we define a maximal *K*-torus $T := f(T^{sc}) \cdot R(G)_K \subset G_K$, where R(G) is the radical of G.

Proposition 2.5. Let G be a reductive k-group. Let G^{sc} and $f: G^{sc} \to G$ be as in Section 2.4 above. Let K/k be a field extension, $T \subset G_K$ be a maximal K-torus of G_K , and set $T^{sc} = f^{-1}(T) \subset G_K^{sc}$ as above. If the natural map $H^1(K, T^{sc}) \to H^1(K, T)$ is nontrivial, then G is not toric-friendly.

Proof. Immediate from Lemma 2.3.

Proposition 2.6. Let G be a semisimple k-group, $f : G^{sc} \to G$ be the universal covering and $C := \ker(f)$. Then the following conditions are equivalent:

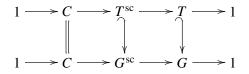
- (a) G is toric-friendly.
- (b) The map $H^1(K, T^{sc}) \to H^1(K, T)$ is trivial (identically zero) for every field extension K/k and every maximal K-torus T^{sc} of G^{sc} . Here $T := f(T^{sc})$.
- (c) The map $H^1(K, C) \to H^1(K, T^{sc})$ is surjective for every field extension K/k and every maximal K-torus T^{sc} of G^{sc} .
- (d) The connecting homomorphism $\partial_T : H^1(K, T) \to H^2(K, C)$ is injective for every field extension K/k and every maximal K-torus T of G.
- (e) The natural map $H^1(K, T) \rightarrow H^1(K, G)$ is injective for every field extension K/k and every maximal K-torus T of G.

Proof. (a) \Rightarrow (b) by Proposition 2.5. Examining the cohomology sequence

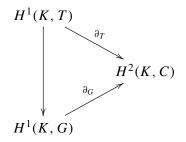
$$H^1(K, C) \to H^1(K, T^{\mathrm{sc}}) \to H^1(K, T) \to H^2(K, C)$$

associated to the exact sequence $1 \to C \to T^{sc} \to T \to 1$ of *k*-groups, we see that (b), (c) and (d) are equivalent.

(d) \Rightarrow (e): The diagram



of K-groups induces compatible connecting morphisms



Suppose $\alpha, \beta \in H^1(K, T)$ map to the same element in $H^1(K, G)$. Then the diagram above shows that $\partial_T(\alpha) = \partial_T(\beta)$ in $H^2(K, C)$. Part (d) now tells us that $\alpha = \beta$.

(e) \Rightarrow (a) is obvious, since (a) is equivalent to the assertion that $H^1(K, T) \rightarrow H^1(K, G)$ has trivial kernel for every K and T; see Definition 0.1.

Corollary 2.7. With the assumptions and notation of *Proposition 2.6*, if *G* is toricfriendly and quasisplit, then

- (a) the map $H^1(K, G^{sc}) \to H^1(K, G)$ is trivial for every K/k,
- (b) the map $H^1(K, C) \to H^1(K, G^{sc})$ is surjective for every K/k,
- (c) the connecting map $\partial_G : H^1(K, G) \to H^2(K, C)$ has trivial kernel for every K/k.

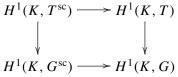
Proof. Examining the cohomology sequence

$$H^1(K, C) \to H^1(K, G^{\mathrm{sc}}) \to H^1(K, G) \to H^2(K, C)$$

associated to the exact sequence $1 \rightarrow C \rightarrow G^{sc} \rightarrow G \rightarrow 1$, we see that (a), (b) and (c) are equivalent.

To prove (a), recall that since G_K is quasisplit, by a theorem of Steinberg [1965, Theorem 1.8] every $x^{sc} \in H^1(K, G^{sc})$ lies in the image of the map $H^1(K, T^{sc}) \rightarrow$

 $H^1(K, G^{sc})$ for some maximal *K*-torus T^{sc} of G_K^{sc} . Since *G* is toric-friendly, by Proposition 2.6 the map $H^1(K, T^{sc}) \to H^1(K, T)$ is trivial. The commutative diagram



now shows that the image of x^{sc} in $H^1(K, G)$ is 1. Thus the map $H^1(K, G^{sc}) \rightarrow H^1(K, G)$ is trivial.

Theorem 2.8. Let G be a split semisimple k-group and $f: G^{sc} \to G$ be its universal covering map. If G is toric-friendly, then G^{sc} is special.

Proof. Let T^{sc} be a split maximal torus of G^{sc} . Recall that T^{sc} is special (as is any split torus). Set $C = \ker f$, then $C \subset T^{sc}$. For any field extension K/k, the map $H^1(K, C) \to H^1(K, G^{sc})$ factors through $H^1(K, T^{sc}) = 1$ and hence is trivial. By Corollary 2.7(b) this map is also surjective. This shows that $H^1(K, G^{sc}) = 1$ for every K/k, that is, G^{sc} is special.

Remark 2.9. Our proof of Theorem 2.8 goes through for any (not necessarily split) semisimple *k*-group *G*, as long as G^{sc} contains a special maximal *k*-torus T^{sc} . In particular, Theorem 2.8 remains valid for any quasisplit semisimple *k*-group *G*, in view of Lemma 2.10 below. This lemma is a special case of [Colliot-Thélène et al. 2004, Lemma 5.6]; however, for the sake of completeness we supply a short self-contained proof.

Lemma 2.10. Let G be a semisimple, simply connected, quasisplit k-group over a field k. Let $B \subset G$ be a Borel subgroup defined over k, and let $T \subset B \subset G$ be a maximal k-torus of G contained in B. Then T is a quasitrivial k-torus.

Proof. We write \overline{k} for a fixed algebraic closure of k. Let $\mathbb{X}^{\vee}(T)$ denote the group of cocharacters of T. Let $R^{\vee} = R^{\vee}(G_{\overline{k}}, T_{\overline{k}}) \subset \mathbb{X}^{\vee}(T)$ denote the coroot system of $G_{\overline{k}}$ with respect to $T_{\overline{k}}$, and let $\Pi^{\vee} \subset R^{\vee}$ denote the basis of R^{\vee} corresponding to B. The Galois group $\operatorname{Gal}(k_s/k)$ acts on $\mathbb{X}^{\vee}(T)$. Since T, G, and B are defined over k, the subsets R^{\vee} and Π^{\vee} of $\mathbb{X}^{\vee}(T)$ are invariant under this action. Since G is simply connected, Π^{\vee} is a \mathbb{Z} -basis of $\mathbb{X}^{\vee}(T)$. Thus $\operatorname{Gal}(k_s/k)$ permutes the \mathbb{Z} -basis Π^{\vee} of $\mathbb{X}^{\vee}(T)$; in other words, T is a quasitrivial torus. \square

Remark 2.11. A similar assertion for *adjoint* quasisplit groups was proved by G. Prasad [1989, Proof of Lemma 2.0].

3. Examples in type A

Let *k* be a field and *A* a central simple *k*-algebra of dimension n^2 . We write $GL_{1,A}$ for the *k*-group with $GL_{1,A}(R) = (A \otimes_k R)^*$ for any unital commutative *k*-algebra

R (here ()* denotes the group of invertible elements). The *k*-group $GL_{1,A}$ is an inner form of $GL_{n,k}$.

Let *K* be a field. Recall that an *n*-dimensional commutative étale *K*-algebra is a finite product $E = \prod_i L_i$, where each L_i is a finite separable field extension of *K* and $\sum_i [L_i : K] = n$. For such $E = \prod_i L_i$ we define a *K*-torus $R_{E/K} \mathbb{G}_{m,E} :=$ $\prod_i R_{L_i/K} \mathbb{G}_{m,L_i}$, then $(R_{E/K} \mathbb{G}_{m,E})(K) = E^*$. Clearly the *K*-torus $R_{E/K} \mathbb{G}_{m,E}$ is quasitrivial.

Proposition 3.1. Let k be a field, and let A/k be a central simple k-algebra of dimension n^2 .

- (a) The k-group $G = GL_{1,A}$ is toric-friendly.
- (b) The k-group $PGL_{1,A} := GL_{1,A}/\mathbb{G}_{m,k}$ is toric-friendly.
- (c) In particular, $GL_{n,k}$ and $PGL_{n,k}$ are toric-friendly.

Proof. (a) Let K/k be a field extension and let

$$T \subset G_K = \mathrm{GL}_{1,A\otimes_k K}$$

be a maximal *K*-torus. Let *E* be the centralizer of *T* in $A \otimes_k K$. An easy calculation over a separable closure K_s of *K* shows that *E* is an *n*-dimensional commutative étale *K*-subalgebra of $A \otimes_k K$ and that $T = R_{E/K} \mathbb{G}_{m,E}$. It follows that *T* is quasitrivial, hence special. Since all maximal *K*-tori $T \subset G_K$ are special, *G* is toric-friendly.

(b) follows from (a) and Corollary 1.4. To deduce (c) from (a) and (b), set $A = M_n(k)$ (the matrix algebra).

We now come to the main result of this section, which asserts that a toric-friendly semisimple groups of type *A* is necessarily an adjoint group.

Proposition 3.2. Let k be a field. Consider a k-group $G = (SL_{n_1} \times \cdots \times SL_{n_r})/C$, where $C \subset \mu := \mu_{n_1} \times \cdots \times \mu_{n_r}$ is a central subgroup of $G^{sc} = SL_{n_1} \times \cdots \times SL_{n_r}$, not necessarily smooth. If $C \neq \mu$, then G is not toric-friendly.

Before proceeding with the proof, we fix some notation. Let L/K be a finite separable field extension of degree *n*. Set

$$R_{L/K}^1(\mathbb{G}_m) := \ker[N_{L/K} : R_{L/K}\mathbb{G}_{m,L} \to \mathbb{G}_{m,K}],$$

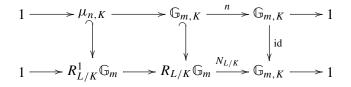
where $N_{L/K}$ is the norm map. Clearly $R^1_{L/K}(\mathbb{G}_m)$ can be embedded into $SL_{n,K}$ as a maximal *K*-torus. The embedding $K \hookrightarrow L$ induces an embedding $\mu_{n,K} \hookrightarrow R^1_{L/K}\mathbb{G}_m$, where n = [L:K].

The following two lemmas are undoubtedly known. We include short proofs below because we have not been able to find appropriate references.

Lemma 3.3. There is a commutative diagram

where the horizontal arrows are canonical isomorphisms, the right vertical arrow is induced by the embedding $\mu_n \hookrightarrow R^1_{L/K} \mathbb{G}_m$, and the left vertical arrow is the natural projection.

Proof. Apply the flat cohomology functor to the commutative diagram of commutative *K*-groups



and use Hilbert's Theorem 90.

Lemma 3.4. Suppose $r \mid n$. Then there is a commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} K^*/K^{*n} & \stackrel{\cong}{\longrightarrow} H^1(K, \mu_n) \\ & & & & \downarrow^{(n/r)_*} \\ K^*/K^{*r} & \stackrel{\cong}{\longrightarrow} H^1(K, \mu_r) \, , \end{array}$$

where the horizontal arrows are canonical isomorphisms, the right vertical arrow is induced by the homomorphism $\mu_n \xrightarrow{n/r} \mu_r$ given by $x \mapsto x^{n/r}$, and the left vertical arrow is the natural projection.

Proof. Similar to that of Lemma 3.3, using the commutative diagram

Example 3.5. The group $G = SL_{n,k}$ $(n \ge 2)$ is not toric-friendly.

Proof. Since SL_n is special, it suffices to construct an extension K/k and a maximal *K*-torus $T := R^1_{L/K}(\mathbb{G}_m)$ such that $H^1(K, T) \neq 1$. In view of Lemma 3.3 it suffices to show that $N_{L/K}(L^*) \neq K^*$ for some field extension K/k and some finite

separable field extension L/K of degree *n*. This is well known; see for example the proof of [Rowen 1980, Proposition 3.1.46]. We include a short proof below as a way of motivating a related but more complicated argument at the end of the proof of Proposition 3.2.

Let $L := k(x_1, ..., x_n)$, where $x_1, ..., x_n$ are independent variables, and $K := L^{\Gamma}$, where Γ is the cyclic group of order *n* that acts on *L* by cyclically permuting $x_1, ..., x_n$. For $0 \neq a \in k[x_1, ..., x_n]$, let deg $(a) \in \mathbb{N}$ denote the degree of *a* as a polynomial in $x_1, ..., x_n$. If $a \in k(x_1, ..., x_n)$ is of the form a = b/c with nonzero $b, c \in k[x_1, ..., x_n]$, then we define deg $(a) = \deg(b) - \deg(c)$. This yields the usual degree homomorphism deg : $L^* \to \mathbb{Z}$. Since $N_{L/K}(a) = \prod_{\gamma \in \Gamma} \gamma(a)$, we see that deg $(N_{L/K}(a)) = n \deg(a)$ is divisible by *n*, for every $a \in L^*$. On the other hand, $s_1 = x_1 + \cdots + x_n \in K$ has degree 1. This shows that $N_{L/K}(L^*) \neq K^*$, as claimed.

3.6. *Proof of Proposition 3.2.* Let K/k be a field extension. For each i = 1, ..., r, let L_i be a separable field extension of degree n_i over K, and let $T = T_1 \times \cdots \times T_r$ be a maximal K-torus of G^{sc} , where $T_i := R^1_{L_i/K}(\mathbb{G}_m)$. By Proposition 2.6 it suffices to show that the composition

$$H^{1}(K,C) \to H^{1}(K,\mu) \to H^{1}(K,T)$$
⁽²⁾

is not surjective for some choice of extensions K/k and L_i/K_i . Since $C \not\subseteq \mu$, there exist a prime p and a nontrivial character $\chi : \mu \to \mu_p$ such that $\chi(C) = 1$. By Proposition 1.3(a) we may assume that $C = \ker(\chi)$. For notational simplicity, let us suppose that n_1, \ldots, n_s are divisible by p and n_{s+1}, \ldots, n_r are not, for some $0 \le s \le r$. Then it is easy to see that χ is of the form

$$\chi(c_1,\ldots,c_r)=c_1^{d_1n_1/p}\cdots c_s^{d_sn_s/p}$$

for some integers d_1, \ldots, d_s . Since χ is nontrivial on μ , we have $s \ge 1$ and d_i is not divisible by p for some $i = 1, \ldots, s$, say for i = 1. That is, we may assume that d_1 is not divisible by p.

Lemma 3.3 gives a concrete description of the second map in (2). To determine the image of the map $H^1(K, C) \rightarrow H^1(K, \mu)$, we examine the cohomology exact sequence

induced by the exact sequence $1 \to C \to \mu \xrightarrow{\chi} \mu_p \to 1$. The image of $H^1(K, C)$ in $H^1(K, \mu)$ is the kernel of χ_* . By Lemma 3.4, χ_* maps the class of (a_1, \ldots, a_r) in $H^1(K, \mu) = \prod_{i=1}^r K^*/K^{*n_i}$ to the class of $a_1^{d_1} \cdots a_s^{d_s}$ in $H^1(K, \mu_p) = K/K^{*p}$. In other words, the image of $H^1(K, C)$ in $H^1(K, \mu)$ is the subgroup of classes of *r*-tuples (a_1, \ldots, a_r) in $H^1(K, \mu) = \prod_{i=1}^r K^*/K^{*n_i}$ such that $a_1^{d_1} \ldots a_s^{d_s} \in K^{*p}$. Hence, the image of $H^1(K, C)$ in $H^1(K, T) = \prod_{i=1}^r K^*/N_{L_i/K}(L_i^*)$ consists of classes of *r*-tuples (a_1, \ldots, a_r) such that $a_1^{d_1} \ldots a_s^{d_s} \in K^{*p}$.

It remains to construct a field extension K/k, separable field extensions L_i/K of degree n_i for i = 1, ..., r, and an element $\alpha \in H^1(K, T) = \prod_{i=1}^r K^*/N_{L_i/K}(L_i^*)$, which cannot be represented by $(a_1, ..., a_r) \in (K^*)^r$ such that $a_1^{d_1} \cdots a_s^{d_s} \in K^{*p}$. This will show that the map $H^1(K, C) \to H^1(K, T)$ is not surjective, as claimed.

Set $L := k(x_1, ..., x_n)$, where $n = n_1 + \cdots + n_r$ and $x_1, ..., x_n$ are independent variables. The symmetric group S_n acts on L by permuting these variables; we embed $S_{n_1} \times \cdots \times S_{n_r}$ into S_n in the natural way, by letting S_{n_1} permute the first n_1 variables, S_{n_2} permute the next n_2 variables, etc. Set $K := L^{S_{n_1} \times \cdots \times S_{n_r}}$, $s_1 := x_1 + \cdots + x_n \in K$ and

$$L_1 := K(x_1), \ L_2 := K(x_{n_1+1}), \ \dots \ L_r := K(x_{n_1+\dots+n_{r-1}+1}).$$

Clearly $[L_i:K] = n_i$. We claim the class of $(s_1, 1, ..., 1)$ in $\prod_{i=1}^r K^* / N_{L_i/K}(L_i^*)$ cannot be represented by any $(a_1, ..., a_r) \in (K^*)^r$ with $a_1^{d_1} \cdots a_s^{d_s} \in K^{*p}$.

Let deg : $L^* \to \mathbb{Z}$ be the degree map, as in Example 3.5. Arguing as we did there, we see that deg $(N_{L_i/K}(a))$ is divisible by n_i for every i = 1, ..., r and every $a \in L_i^*$. In particular, $(a_1, ..., a_r) \mapsto \text{deg}(a_i) + n_i \mathbb{Z}$ is a well-defined function $\prod_{i=1}^r K^*/N_{L_i/K}(L_i^*) \to \mathbb{Z}/n_i \mathbb{Z}$, and consequently,

$$f(a_1,\ldots,a_n) := d_1 \deg(a_1) + \cdots + d_s \deg(a_s) + p\mathbb{Z}$$

is a well-defined function $H^1(K, T) \to \mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z}$. We have

$$f(a_1,\ldots,a_n) = \deg(a_1^{d_1}\cdots a_s^{d_s}).$$

If $a_1^{d_1} \cdots a_s^{d_s} \in K^{*p}$, then $f(a_1, \ldots, a_r) = 0$ in $\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z}$. On the other hand, since $\deg(1) = 0$, $\deg(s_1) = 1$ and d_1 is not divisible by p, we conclude that $f(s_1, 1, \ldots, 1)$ is nonzero in $\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z}$. This proves the claim and the proposition.

4. Groups of type C_n and outer forms of A_n

Proposition 4.1. *No absolutely simple* k*-group of type* C_n $(n \ge 2)$ *is toric-friendly.*

Proof. Clearly we may assume that k is algebraically closed. We may also assume that G is adjoint, see Proposition 1.3(a). We see that $G = PSp_{2n}$ and $G^{sc} = Sp_{2n}$. By Example 3.5, SL₂ is not toric-friendly. This means that there exist a field extension K/k, a maximal K-torus $S \subset SL_{2,K}$, and a cohomology class $a_S \in H^1(K, S)$ such

that $a_S \neq 1$. We consider the standard embedding

$$(\operatorname{SL}_2)^n = (\operatorname{Sp}_2)^n \hookrightarrow \operatorname{Sp}_{2n}, \quad n \ge 2.$$

Set $T^{sc} = S^n \subset (Sp_2)^n \subset Sp_{2n} = G^{sc}$. Let $\iota : S \hookrightarrow T^{sc} = S^n$ be the embedding as the first factor. Set $a^{sc} = \iota_*(a_S) \in H^1(K, T^{sc})$. Let *T* be the image of T^{sc} in $G = PSp_{2n}$, and let *a* be the image of a^{sc} in $H^1(K, T)$.

Now observe that the homomorphism

$$\chi: T^{\mathrm{sc}} = S^n \to S, \quad (x_1, \dots, x_n) \mapsto x_1 x_2^{-1},$$

factors through *T* (recall that $n \ge 2$). Since $\chi \circ \iota = id_S$, we see that $a \ne 1$. On the other hand, the image of a^{sc} in $H^1(K, G^{sc})$ is 1 (because $G^{sc} = \text{Sp}_{2n}$ is special), hence $a \in \ker[H^1(K, T) \to H^1(K, G)]$, and we see that $G = \text{PSp}_{2n}$ is not toric-friendly.

Proposition 4.2. No absolutely simple k-group of outer type A_n $(n \ge 2)$ is toricfriendly.

Lemma 4.3. Let k be a field, K/k a separable quadratic extension, and D/K a central division algebra of dimension r^2 over K with an involution σ of the second kind (i.e., σ acts nontrivially on K and trivially on k). Then there exists a finite separable field extension F/k such that $K_F := K \otimes_k F$ is a field and $D \otimes_K K_F$ is split, that is, K_F -isomorphic to the matrix algebra $M_r(K_F)$.

Proof of the lemma. Since there are no nontrivial central division algebras over finite fields, we may assume that k and K are infinite. Let

$$H = \{x \in D \mid x^{\sigma} = x\}$$

denote the k-space of Hermitian elements of D. Consider the embedding $D \hookrightarrow M_r(K_s)$ induced by an isomorphism $D \otimes_K K_s \cong M_r(K_s)$, where K_s is a separable closure of K. An element x of D is called semisimple regular if its image in $D \otimes_K K_s \cong M_r(K_s)$ is a semisimple matrix with r distinct eigenvalues. A standard argument using an isomorphism $D \otimes_k K_s \cong M_r(K_s) \times M_r(K_s)$ shows that there is a dense open subvariety H_{reg} in the space H, consisting of semisimple regular elements. Clearly H_{reg} is defined over k and contains k-points.

Let $x \in H_{reg}(k) \subset D$ be a semisimple regular Hermitian element. Let *L* be the centralizer of *x* in *D*. Since *x* is Hermitian (σ -invariant), the *k*-algebra *L* is σ -invariant. Since *x* is semisimple and regular, the algebra *L* is a commutative étale *K*-subalgebra of *D* of dimension *r* over *K*, as is easily seen by passing to K_s . Clearly *L* is a field, [L:K] = r, and *L* is separable over *k*. Since $L \subset D$ and [L:K] = r, the field *L* is a splitting field for *D*; see, for example, [Pierce 1982, Corollary 13.3]. Since $L \supset K$, we see that σ acts nontrivially on L. Let $F = L^{\langle \sigma \rangle}$ denote the subfield of L consisting of elements fixed by σ . Then [L:F] = 2 and [F:k] = r. Clearly F is separable over k. Since $F \cap K = k$ and FK = L, we conclude that $L = K \otimes_k F := K_F$. This completes the proof of the lemma.

4.4. *Proof of Proposition 4.2.* By Proposition 1.3(a) we may assume that *G* is adjoint. By Lemma 4.3 there is a finite separable field extension F/k such that $G_F \cong \text{PSU}(L^{n+1}, h)$, where L/F is a separable quadratic extension and *h* is a Hermitian form on L^{n+1} . It suffices to prove that $G_F = \text{PSU}(L^{n+1}, h)$ is not toric-friendly.

Set $S = R_{L/F}^1 \mathbb{G}_m$. We set $G_F^{sc} = SU(L^{n+1}, h)$. We may assume that h is a diagonal form [Knus 1991, Proposition 6.2.4(1); Scharlau 1985, Theorem 7.6.3]. Consider the diagonal torus $S^{n+1} \subset U(L^{n+1}, h)$ and set $T^{sc} = S^{n+1} \cap SU(L^{n+1}, h)$.

We claim that there exists a field extension K/F such that $H^1(K, S) \neq 1$. Indeed, take K = F((t)), the field of formal Laurent series over F. Then by [Serre 1968, Proposition V.2.3(c)], $H^1(K, S) \cong H^1(F, S) \times \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \neq 1$.

Now let $a_S \in H^1(K, S)$, $a_S \neq 1$, and consider the embedding

$$\iota: S \hookrightarrow T^{\mathrm{sc}} \subset S^{n+1}, \quad x \mapsto (x, x^{-1}, 1, \dots, 1).$$

Set $a^{sc} = \iota_*(a_S) \in H^1(K, T^{sc})$. Let *T* be the image of T^{sc} in $G_F = \text{PSU}(L^{n+1}, h)$ and *a* be the image of a^{sc} in $H^1(K, T)$.

Note that the homomorphism

$$\chi: T^{\mathrm{sc}} \to S, \quad (x_1, \ldots, x_n, x_{n+1}) \mapsto x_1 x_3^{-1},$$

factors through *T* (recall that $n \ge 2$). Since $\chi \circ \iota = id_S$, we see that $a \ne 1$. Now by Proposition 2.5, G_F and hence *G* are not toric-friendly.

5. Classification of semisimple toric-friendly groups

Lemma 5.1. Let k be an algebraically closed field. If a semisimple k-group G is toric-friendly, then it is adjoint of type A, that is, $G \cong \prod_i \text{PGL}_{n_i}$ for some integers $n_i \ge 2$.

Proof. First assume that *G* is simple. By Theorem 2.8 the simply connected cover G^{sc} of *G* is special. By a theorem of Grothendieck [1958, Theorem 3], G^{sc} is special if and only if *G* is of type A_n , $n \ge 1$ or C_n , $n \ge 2$. Proposition 4.1 rules out the second possibility. Thus *G* is of type *A*.

Now let *G* be semisimple. By Proposition 1.3(a), G^{ad} is toric-friendly. Write $G^{ad} = \prod_i G_i$, where each G_i is an adjoint simple group, then by Lemma 1.6 each G_i is toric-friendly. As we have seen, this implies that each G_i is of type *A*, that is, isomorphic to PGL_{*n_i*} for some n_i . By Proposition 3.2, *G* is adjoint, that is, $G = G^{ad} = \prod_i PGL_{n_i}$.

5.2. *Proof of the Main Theorem 0.2.* If *G* is toric-friendly, then clearly $G_{\overline{k}}$ is toric-friendly, where \overline{k} is an algebraic closure of *k*. By Lemma 5.1, *G* is adjoint of type *A*. Write $G = \prod_i R_{F_i/k}G'_i$, where each F_i/k is a finite separable extension and G'_i is a form of PGL_{*n*_i, F_i . By Lemmas 1.6 and 1.7, each G'_i is toric-friendly, and by Proposition 4.2, G'_i is an *inner* form of PGL_{*n*_i, F_i .}}

Conversely, by Proposition 3.1 an inner form G'_i of PGL_{*n_i,F_i* is toric-friendly. By Lemmas 1.6 and 1.7, the product $G = \prod_i R_{F_i/k}G'_i$ is toric-friendly.}

Corollary 5.3. Let G be a nontrivial semisimple k-group. Then there exist a field extension K/k and a maximal K-torus $T \subset G$ that is not special. Equivalently, there exist a field extension K/k and a maximal K-torus T of G such that $H^1(K, T) \neq 1$.

Proof. Assume the contrary, that is, that for any field extension K/k, any maximal K-torus $T \subset G_K$ is special. We may and shall assume that G is split. Recall that for a (quasi)split group, by [Steinberg 1965, Theorem 11.1], every element of $H^1(K, G)$ lies in the image of the map $H^1(K, T) \rightarrow H^1(K, G)$ for some maximal K-torus T of G. Thus, under our assumption we have $H^1(K, G) = 1$ for every field extension K/k, that is, G is special. By [Grothendieck 1958, Theorem 3], this is only possible if G is simply connected and has components only of types A and C. On the other hand, G is clearly toric-friendly (see Definition 0.1), and by the Main Theorem 0.2 no nontrivial simply connected semisimple group can be toric-friendly, a contradiction.

The next result follows immediately from the Main Theorem 0.2 and Corollary 1.4.

Corollary 5.4. *Let G be a split reductive k*-*group. The group G is toric-friendly if and only if it satisfies these two conditions:*

- (a) the center Z(G) of G is a k-torus, and
- (b) the adjoint group $G^{ad} := G/Z(G)$ is a direct product of simple adjoint groups of type A.

Note that in condition (a) we allow the trivial *k*-torus {1}.

By Corollary 1.4 if G is a reductive k-group such that G/R(G) is toric-friendly and R(G) is special, then G is toric-friendly. The example below shows that when G/R(G) is toric-friendly but R(G) is not special, G need not be toric-friendly.

Example 5.5. Let $k = \mathbb{R}$, $G = U_2$, the unitary group in two complex variables. Then Z(G) is the group of scalar matrices in G, it is connected, hence R(G) = Z(G) and $G/R(G) = G^{ad} = PSU_2$. Since PSU_2 is an inner form of $PGL_{2,\mathbb{R}}$, by the Main Theorem 0.2 it is toric-friendly. However, the group $G = U_2$ is not toric-friendly. This does not contradict Corollary 1.4, because R(G) = Z(G) is not special: $H^1(\mathbb{R}, Z(G)) = \mathbb{R}^* / N_{\mathbb{C}/\mathbb{R}}(\mathbb{C}^*) \cong \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$.

To show that $G = U_2$ is not toric-friendy, set $S = R^1_{\mathbb{C}/\mathbb{R}} \mathbb{G}_m$. Let *T* be the diagonal maximal \mathbb{R} -torus of U_2 . Set $G^{sc} = SU_2$, $T^{sc} = T \cap SU_2$, then $T^{sc} \cong S$.

Let $a^{sc} \in H^1(\mathbb{R}, T^{sc})$ be the cohomology class of the cocycle given by the element $-1 \in T^{sc}(\mathbb{R})$ of order 2. Let $a \in H^1(\mathbb{R}, T)$ be the image of a^{sc} in $H^1(\mathbb{R}, T)$. Clearly $a \neq 1$. By Proposition 2.5, *G* is not toric-friendly.

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