

Let  $\zeta_n = e^{2\pi i/n}$  be a primitive  $n$ th root of unity and let  $\gcd(k, n) = 1$ . Then  $\zeta_n^k$  is also a primitive  $n$ th root of unity. Therefore, the field  $\mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n^k)$  has degree  $\phi(n)$  over  $\mathbb{Q}$ . Complex conjugation is an automorphism of order 2 and

$$\cos(2\pi k/n) = \frac{1}{2}(\zeta_n^k + \zeta_n^{-k})$$

is fixed by complex conjugation. Therefore,  $\mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n^k)$  is degree greater than one over the field  $\mathbb{Q}(\cos(2\pi k/n))$ . Since  $\zeta_n^k$  is a root of the quadratic equation

$$X^2 - 2\cos(2\pi k/n)X + 1 = 0,$$

the field  $\mathbb{Q}(\zeta_n^k)$  is degree at most 2 over the field  $\mathbb{Q}(\cos(2\pi k/n))$ , hence of degree exactly 2. Therefore,  $\cos(2\pi k/n)$  is algebraic of degree exactly  $\phi(n)/2$  over  $\mathbb{Q}$ .

Now consider  $\cos(\pi a/b)$ , where  $\gcd(a, b) = 1$ . If  $a$  is odd, rewrite this as  $\cos(2\pi a/2b)$ , which has degree  $\frac{1}{2}\phi(2b)$  over  $\mathbb{Q}$ , since  $\gcd(a, 2b) = 1$ . If  $a$  is even, let  $a = 2a'$  and rewrite as  $\cos(2\pi a'/b)$ . Since  $\gcd(a', b)$  divides  $\gcd(a, b) = 1$ , we have  $\gcd(a', b) = 1$ , so the cosine has degree  $\frac{1}{2}\phi(b)$  over  $\mathbb{Q}$ .

So the final answer is:  $\cos(\pi a/b)$  is algebraic of degree  $\frac{1}{2}\phi(2b)$  if  $a$  is odd and is algebraic of degree  $\frac{1}{2}\phi(b)$  when  $b$  is even.

Note that if  $b$  is odd, then  $\phi(2b) = \phi(b)$ , so the degree is  $\frac{1}{2}\phi(b)$  for both parities of  $a$ .

The case of sine is similar, but more complicated. Given  $n$ , let  $n' = \text{lcm}(4, n)$  and let  $\zeta = e^{2\pi i/n'}$  be a primitive  $n'$ th root of unity. Let  $\gcd(k, n') = 1$ , so  $\zeta^k$  is also a primitive  $n'$ th root of unity. Then  $\sin(2\pi k/n')$  is in  $\mathbb{Q}(\zeta)$  and is fixed by complex conjugation, so  $\mathbb{Q}(\zeta)$  has degree at least 2 over  $\mathbb{Q}(\sin(2\pi k/n'))$ . But we have the sequence of fields

$$\mathbb{Q}(\sin(2\pi k/n')) \subset \mathbb{Q}(\sin(2\pi k/n'), i) \subseteq \mathbb{Q}(\zeta).$$

Since  $i$  is a root of  $X^2 + 1 = 0$ , the first containment is of degree exactly 2. Since  $\zeta^k$  is a root of the quadratic equation  $X^2 - 2i\sin(2\pi k/n')X + 1$ , the second inclusion is of degree 1 or 2.

I believe that the latter degree is 1 when  $n'$  is a power of 2 and is 2 otherwise, but I haven't checked this. In any case, we get that  $\sin(2\pi k/n')$  is algebraic of degree either  $\frac{1}{2}\phi(n')$  or  $\frac{1}{4}\phi(n')$ . This can be converted to a statement about  $\sin(\pi a/b)$ .