

# LECTURE NOTES $F$ -SINGULARITIES

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ABSTRACT. These are lectures notes for a course on  $F$ -singularities given at the CIMAT in the Spring Semester 2024.

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## 1. REGULARITY (A CRASH COURSE)

This is a course about  $F$ -singularities and in particular about singularities. In a nutshell, singularities are the absence of regularity. Before defining what a regular ring is, we need the notion of *projective and global dimensions*.

**1.1. Projective resolutions and other homological algebra stuff.** Let  $M$  be a module over a ring  $R$ .<sup>1</sup>

**Exercise 1.1.** Prove that there is an exact sequence of  $R$ -modules

$$0 \rightarrow K_1 \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

where  $P_0$  is free and so projective. Iterate this to obtain an exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow K_i \rightarrow P_{i-1} \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

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<sup>1</sup>All rings are commutative with unity 1.

where the  $P_i$ 's are free. The module  $K_i$  is referred to as *a syzygy module*.

**Definition 1.1** (Resolutions). An exact sequence

$$\cdots \rightarrow P_{i+1} \rightarrow P_i \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P_1 \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

is called a *free (resp. projective) resolution* of  $M$  if all the  $P_i$ 's are free (resp. projective). We may denote a projective resolution as  $P_\bullet \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$ .<sup>2</sup>

**Exercise 1.2.** Prove that free resolutions always exist, *i.e.* the category of  $R$ -modules has “enough projectives.”

**Definition 1.2** (Projective dimension). The module  $M$  is said to have *finite projective dimension* if there is a projective resolution  $P_\bullet \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$  such that  $P_i = 0$  for all  $i \gg 0$ . In such case, the *projective dimension* of  $M$  is

$$\text{pd } M = \text{pd}_R M := \min\{n \in \mathbb{N} \mid \exists P_\bullet \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0 \text{ such that } P_i = 0 \forall i > n\}.$$

If  $M$  has not finite projective dimension we write  $\text{pd } M = \infty$ .

**Exercise 1.3.** Prove that  $M$  is projective iff  $\text{pd } M = 0$ .

Next lemma is key.

**Lemma 1.3.** Suppose that there are two exact sequences of  $R$ -modules

$$0 \rightarrow K_n \rightarrow P_{n-1} \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

and

$$0 \rightarrow K'_n \rightarrow P'_{n-1} \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P'_0 \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

where  $1 \leq n \in \mathbb{N}$  and the  $P_i$  and  $P'_i$  are projective. Then

- (a)  $K_n \oplus P'_{n-1} \oplus P_{n-2} \oplus \cdots \cong K'_n \oplus P_{n-1} \oplus P'_{n-2} \oplus \cdots$
- (b)  $K_n$  is projective iff so is  $K'_n$ .

*Proof.* Note that (b) follows from (a).<sup>3</sup> The proof of (b) is lengthy and left as an exercise. Hint: Proceed by induction on  $n$ . Prove the case  $n = 1$  first and then reduce the inductive case to this one.  $\square$

It can be used to prove the following.

**Exercise 1.4.** Let

$$0 \rightarrow K_n \rightarrow P_{n-1} \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

be an exact sequences where the  $P_i$ 's are projective. Prove that

- (a)  $\text{pd } M \leq n$  iff  $K_n$  is projective.
- (b) If  $\text{pd } M \geq n$  then  $\text{pd } K_n = \text{pd } M - n$ .

**Exercise 1.5.** Suppose that  $R$  is noetherian and that  $M$  is finitely generated. Prove that

$$\text{pd}_R M = \sup\{\text{pd}_{R_{\mathfrak{p}}} M_{\mathfrak{p}} \mid \mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } R\} = \sup\{\text{pd}_{R_{\mathfrak{m}}} M_{\mathfrak{m}} \mid \mathfrak{m} \text{ maximal}\}$$

**Exercise 1.6.** Prove that

$$\text{pd}(M \oplus N) = \max\{\text{pd } M, \text{pd } N\}.$$

<sup>2</sup>Over local rings projective modules are free (Kaplansky's theorem). That is, projective modules are locally free. The converse, however, isn't true (unless the module in question is finitely generated).

<sup>3</sup>Observe that for this is absolutely essential to use projectiveness instead of freeness.

The above exercise generalizes as follows.

**Exercise\* 1.7.** Let

$$0 \rightarrow M' \rightarrow M \rightarrow M'' \rightarrow 0$$

be an exact sequence of  $R$ -modules. Show the following statements.

- (a) If two of the modules in the exact sequence have finite projective dimension then so does the third one.
- (b) In that case (*i.e.* the three modules have finite projective dimension), then

$$\text{pd } M \leq \max\{\text{pd } M', \text{pd } M''\},$$

- (c) and if the inequality is strict then  $\text{pd } M'' = \text{pd } M' + 1$ .

**Definition 1.4** (Minimal free resolution). Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a noetherian local ring and  $M$  a finitely generated  $R$ -module. A free resolution  $P_\bullet \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$  is said to be *minimal* if

$$\phi_i(P_{i+1}) \subset \mathfrak{m}P_i \quad \forall i \in \mathbb{N}$$

where  $\phi_i: P_{i+1} \rightarrow P_i$  is the homomorphism from the free resolution.

**Exercise 1.8.** In the setup of Definition 1.4, let  $K_i := \ker \phi_{i-1}$  for all  $i \geq 1$ . Prove that  $\mu(P_0) = \mu(M)$  and  $\mu(P_i) = \mu(K_i)$  for all  $i \geq 1$ . Here, we let

$$\mu(-) = \dim_{\mathcal{K}} - \otimes_R \mathcal{K}$$

denote the minimal number of generators.

**Exercise 1.9.** Show that minimal free resolutions exist.

**Exercise 1.10.** In the setup of Definition 1.4, let  $P_\bullet \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$  and  $P'_\bullet \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$  be two minimal free resolutions. Show that  $\mu(P_i) = \mu(P'_i)$  for all  $i \in \mathbb{N}$ .

The above two exercises guarantee that the following definition makes sense.

**Definition 1.5** (Betti numbers). In the setup of Definition 1.4, the  $i$ -th Betti number of  $M$  is defined as  $\beta_i(M) := \mu(P_i)$  where  $P_\bullet \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$  is any minimal free resolution.

*Remark 1.6.* Sometimes people talk about the Betti numbers of  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$ , in that case, they refer to the Betti numbers of  $\mathcal{K}$ .

**Exercise 1.11.** Let  $P_\bullet \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$  be a minimal free resolution. Prove that  $P_i = 0$  if (and only if)  $i > \text{pd } M$ . That is,

$$\text{pd } M = \sup\{i \in \mathbb{N} \mid \beta_i(M) \neq 0\}$$

**Exercise 1.12.** Prove that

$$\beta_i(M) = \dim_{\mathcal{K}} \text{Tor}_i(\mathcal{K}, M), \quad \forall i \in \mathbb{N}.$$

and conclude that

$$\text{pd } M = \sup\{i \in \mathbb{N} \mid \text{Tor}_i(\mathcal{K}, M) \neq 0\} \leq \text{pd } \mathcal{K}.$$

**Definition 1.7** (Global dimension). The *global dimension* of a ring  $R$  is the supremum of the projective dimensions of finitely generated  $R$ -modules.

**Corollary 1.8.** *The global dimension of a local ring is the projective dimension of its residue field.*

*Remark 1.9* (Regular sequences and depth). Recall that a *regular element*  $r \in R$  on an  $R$ -module  $M$  is one for which  $\cdot r: M \rightarrow M$  is injective but not surjective. A *regular sequence*  $r_1, \dots, r_d \in R$  on  $M$  is defined by the following two conditions:

- (a)  $r_1$  is regular on  $M$ , and
- (b)  $r_i$  is regular on  $M/(r_1, \dots, r_{i-1})M$  for all  $i = 2, \dots, d$ .

Given an ideal  $\mathfrak{a} \subset R$ , the *depth of  $\mathfrak{a}$  on  $M$* , denoted by  $\text{depth}_R(\mathfrak{a}, M)$ , is the maximal length of a regular sequence on  $M$  of elements in  $\mathfrak{a}$ . When  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is local, we may write  $\text{depth } M = \text{depth}_R M = \text{depth}_R(\mathfrak{m}, M)$ . In that case, we also have:

$$\text{depth } M = \min\{i \in \mathbb{N} \mid \text{Ext}^i(\mathcal{K}, M) \neq 0\}.$$

This formula can be proved as follows (details are left to the reader). First, prove that if  $r_1, \dots, r_d \in R$  is a regular sequence on  $M$  then

$$\text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, M) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } i < d, \\ \text{Hom}_R(\mathcal{K}, M/(r_1, \dots, r_d)M) & \text{if } i = d. \end{cases}$$

This can be proved by induction on  $d$ . The base step  $d = 0$  is trivial. For the inductive step, consider the exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow M \xrightarrow{\cdot r_1} M \rightarrow M/r_1M \rightarrow 0$$

Next, apply the functor  $\text{Hom}_R(\mathcal{K}, -)$  to it. Since  $r_1 \in \mathfrak{m}$ , it acts like 0 on  $\mathcal{K}$  and so  $\text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, \cdot r_1) = 0$ . This means that the long exact sequence on Ext's breaks down into exact sequences

$$0 \rightarrow \text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, M) \rightarrow \text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, M/r_1M) \rightarrow \text{Ext}_R^{i+1}(\mathcal{K}, M) \rightarrow 0$$

Since  $r_2, \dots, r_d$  is a regular sequence on  $M/r_1M$ , we may apply the inductive hypothesis and conclude.

**Exercise 1.13.** Here's an important trick to know (particularly, when dealing with Frobenius). Prove that if  $r_1, \dots, r_n$  is a regular sequence on  $M$  then so is  $r_1^{e_1}, \dots, r_d^{e_d}$  for any sequence of exponents  $e_1, \dots, e_n \in \mathbb{N}$ .

**Exercise 1.14.** Prove that if  $r, s$  is a regular sequence then so is  $s, r$ . Find an example of a regular sequence of three elements which is no longer regular after swapping two elements.

*Remark 1.10* (Permutations of regular sequences). In general, it turns out that the notion of regular sequence (for more than two elements) is susceptible to the order of the elements. However, this is not the case if we work over a local ring (or in a graded setup). Indeed, given a local ring  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$ , if  $r_1, \dots, r_d$  is an  $(M)$ -regular sequence then so is any permutation of them. Naturally, it suffices to prove this for transpositions of elements. This is something you may try to prove yourself in an elementary fashion (although not so easy). There's, however, a neat (but not so elementary) proof based on a much more general principle. To any sequence of elements we may attach its *Koszul complex*. It turns out that if the sequence is regular its Koszul complex is acyclic. The converse is true over local rings assuming the elements of the sequence belong to the maximal ideal (and in the morally local graded setup). Since the Koszul complex is independent of the permutation of elements in the sequence, then so is the notion of regularity over local rings.

**Theorem 1.11** (Auslander–Buchsbaum formula). *In the setup of Definition 1.4, if  $\text{pd } M < \infty$  then*

$$\text{pd } M + \text{depth } M = \text{depth } R.$$

*In particular, if  $R$  has finite global dimension it is at most  $\text{depth } R$ .*

*Proof.* We only sketch a proof and leave the details to the reader as an exercise. The proof is an induction on  $\text{pd } M$ . If  $\text{pd } M = 0$  then  $M$  is free and so  $\text{depth } M = \text{depth } R$ . If  $\text{pd } M = 1$  then there is an exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow R^{\oplus m} \xrightarrow{\phi} R^{\oplus n} \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

which we may assume to be minimal, *i.e.* we may assume that the entries of the  $n \times m$   $R$ -matrix  $\phi: R^{\oplus m} \rightarrow R^{\oplus n}$  are in  $\mathfrak{m}$ . Consider next the long exact sequence on  $\text{Ext}$  obtained by applying the functor  $\text{Hom}_R(\mathcal{K}, -)$  (write it down yourself). Observe that  $\text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, R^{\oplus k}) = \text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, R)^{\oplus k}$  and that

$$\text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, \phi): \text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, R)^{\oplus m} \rightarrow \text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, R)^{\oplus n}$$

is given by the  $\mathcal{K}$ -matrix obtained by reducing  $\phi$  modulo  $\mathfrak{m}$ . In particular,  $\text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, \phi) = 0$  and so there is an exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow \text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, R)^{\oplus n} \rightarrow \text{Ext}_R^i(\mathcal{K}, M) \rightarrow \text{Ext}_R^{i+1}(\mathcal{K}, R)^{\oplus m} \rightarrow 0$$

From this, we see that  $\text{depth } M = \text{depth } R - 1$ . This shows the base step of the induction. For the inductive step, suppose  $\text{pd } M \geq 2$  and consider an exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow N \rightarrow R^{\oplus m} \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

where  $\text{pd } N = \text{pd } M - 1$ . Use the corresponding long exact sequence on  $\text{Ext}$ 's obtained by applying  $\text{Hom}_R(\mathcal{K}, -)$  to find the relationship between the depths of  $M$  and  $N$  (which is  $\text{depth } N = \text{depth } M + 1$ ). Use the inductive hypothesis to conclude.  $\square$

*Remark 1.12.* It is not difficult to see (using Krull's height theorem and prime avoidance) that every regular sequence can be extended to a system of parameters.<sup>4</sup> In particular,  $\text{depth } R \leq \dim R$ .<sup>5</sup> When this equality happens to be an equality one says that  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is *Cohen–Macaulay*. Thus, a local ring is Cohen–Macaulay if and only if every system of parameters<sup>6</sup> is a regular sequence.

**1.2. Regular local rings.** Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a noetherian local ring. Then, by Nakayama's lemma, its so-called *embedded dimension*

$$\text{edim } R := \mu(\mathfrak{m}) = \dim_{\mathcal{K}} \mathfrak{m} \otimes \mathcal{K} = \dim_{\mathcal{K}} \mathfrak{m}/\mathfrak{m}^2$$

is finite.

**Exercise 1.15.** Use Krull's ideal theorem to conclude that the embedded dimension is at least the Krull's dimension of the local ring. In particular, noetherian local rings have finite dimension.

<sup>4</sup>Indeed, Krull's height theorem let us see that if  $r_1, \dots, r_n \in R$  is a regular sequence then  $(r_1, \dots, r_n)$  has height  $n$ . On the other hand, prime avoidance can be used to see that an ideal  $(r_1, \dots, r_n)$  that has height  $n$  can be extended to a system of parameters.

<sup>5</sup>More generally,  $\text{depth}(\mathfrak{a}, R) \leq \text{ht } \mathfrak{a}$ .

<sup>6</sup>A system of parameters for a local ring  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is a collection  $x_1, \dots, x_{\dim R}$  such that  $\sqrt{(x_1, \dots, x_{\dim R})} = \mathfrak{m}$ . System of parameters always exist.

**Definition 1.13** (Regular local ring). A noetherian local ring  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{K})$  is said to be *regular* if the inequality

$$\text{edim } R \geq \dim R$$

is an equality.

**Exercise 1.16.** Prove that if  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{K})$  is a noetherian local ring such that  $\mathfrak{m}$  is generated by a regular sequence then it is regular.

The converse of this exercise is also true but a bit harder to prove.

**Theorem 1.14.** *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{K})$  be a regular (noetherian) local ring. Then every set of minimal generators of  $\mathfrak{m}$  (aka regular system of parameters) is a regular sequence. In particular,  $\text{pd}_R \mathbb{K} = \dim R$ .<sup>7</sup>*

This result can be seen as a consequence of the following.

**Theorem 1.15.** *A regular local ring is an integral domain.*<sup>8</sup>

Recall the following useful, generalized form of prime avoidance.

**Lemma 1.16** (Prime avoidance). *Suppose that  $\mathfrak{a} \subset \mathfrak{a}_1 \cup \cdots \cup \mathfrak{a}_k$  where all but up to two of the ideals  $\mathfrak{a}_i$  are prime. Then  $\mathfrak{a} \subset \mathfrak{a}_i$  for some  $i = 1, \dots, k$ .*

**Lemma 1.17.** *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{K})$  be a local ring of positive dimension. Then  $R$  contains a regular element not in  $\mathfrak{m}^2$ . That is, there is  $r \in \mathfrak{m} \setminus \mathfrak{m}^2$  that avoids all associated primes.*

*Proof.* Use prime avoidance. □

*Sketch of the proof of Theorem 1.15.* Set  $d = \dim R < \infty$ . Let's do induction on  $d$ . If  $d = 0$ , the regularity of  $R$  implies that  $0 = \dim_{\mathbb{K}} \mathfrak{m}/\mathfrak{m}^2$  and so  $\mathfrak{m} = 0$  by Nakayama's lemma. This means that  $R$  is a field and we're done.

Assume now that  $d > 0$  and that all regular local rings of dimension  $< d$  are integral domains. By Lemma 1.17, there is  $r \in \mathfrak{m} \setminus \mathfrak{m}^2$  a regular element. Observe that

- $R/rR$  is a local ring whose maximal ideal is generated by  $d - 1$  elements (one less than the number of generators of  $\mathfrak{m}$ ), and
- the dimension of  $R/rR$  is  $d - 1$ .

In particular,  $R/rR$  is a regular local ring of dimension  $d - 1$ . By the inductive hypothesis, it is an integral domain and so  $rR = (r)$  is a prime ideal. Further, observe that  $(r) \subset R$  cannot be a minimal prime. Let  $\mathfrak{p} \subset R$  be a minimal prime of  $R$  that is contained in  $(r)$ . We're done if we can prove that  $\mathfrak{p} = 0$ . Let  $x \in \mathfrak{p}$ , and so  $x = yr$  for some  $y \in R$ . In fact,  $y \in \mathfrak{p}$  as  $r \notin \mathfrak{p}$ . In other words,  $\mathfrak{p} = r\mathfrak{p}$ . Since  $r \in \mathfrak{m}$ , Nakayama's lemma yields that  $\mathfrak{p} = 0$ ; as desired. □

**Corollary 1.18.** *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{K})$  be a local ring and  $r \in \mathfrak{m} \setminus \mathfrak{m}^2$ .<sup>9</sup> Then,  $R$  is regular if and only if  $r$  is a regular element and  $R/rR$  is regular.*

Summing up, regular local rings have finite global dimension equal to its dimension. It turns out that the converse is also true and it's a deep result due to Auslander–Buchsbaum and Serre. To prove this, we need the following observation.

<sup>7</sup>In particular, regular local rings are Cohen–Macaulay, i.e.  $\text{depth } R = \dim R$ .

<sup>8</sup>In fact, they are UFDs and so normal integral domains.

<sup>9</sup>Note that this is to say that  $r$  is part of a minimal set of generators for  $\mathfrak{m}$ .

**Exercise 1.17.** Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a local ring and  $M$  be a finitely generated  $R$ -module. Let  $r \in R$  be a regular element on  $R$  and on  $M$ . Prove that

$$\mathrm{pd}_{R/rR} M/rM = \mathrm{pd}_R M$$

Hint: Show that a minimal free resolution  $P_\bullet \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$  becomes a minimal free resolution of  $M/rM$  after base change by  $R/rR$ . Notice that this is tantamount to the vanishing

$$\mathrm{Tor}_i^R(R/rR, M) = 0, \quad \forall i > 0.$$

But this can be seen from the fact that

$$0 \rightarrow R \xrightarrow{\tau} R \rightarrow R/rR \rightarrow 0$$

and

$$0 \rightarrow M \xrightarrow{\tau} M \rightarrow M/rM \rightarrow 0$$

are both exact.

We're ready to prove the main result in this section. Please take a moment to appreciate its beauty.

**Theorem 1.19** (Auslander–Buchsbaum–Serre). *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a local noetherian ring. Then, the following statements are equivalent.*

- (a)  $R$  is regular (i.e.  $\mathfrak{m}$  is generated by a regular sequence)
- (b) The global dimension of  $R$  is  $\dim R$
- (c)  $\mathrm{pd}_R \mathcal{K}$  is finite.

*Proof.* It only remains to explain why (c) implies (a). This is an induction on  $d := \dim R < \infty$ . If  $d = 0$ , then the Auslander–Buchsbaum formula yields that  $\mathrm{pd}_R \mathcal{K} = 0$  and so that  $\mathcal{K}$  is a free  $R$ -module. Hence,  $R = \mathcal{K}$  and we're done.

Let's assume that  $d > 0$  and that (c) implies (a) for those local rings of dimension  $< d$ . Since  $R$  is positive dimensional, we can find a regular element  $r \in \mathfrak{m} \setminus \mathfrak{m}^2$  and it suffices to prove that the local ring  $(R/rR, \mathfrak{m}/rR, \mathcal{K})$  is regular (which has dimension  $d - 1$ ). To that end, we can apply the inductive hypothesis and prove that  $\mathrm{pd}_{R/rR} \mathcal{K}$  is finite. For this, apply Exercise 1.17.  $\square$

**Exercise 1.18.** Prove the following two corollaries.

**Corollary 1.20.** *If  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is a regular local ring then so is  $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$  for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \mathrm{Spec} R$ .*

**Corollary 1.21** (Hilbert's syzygy theorem). *Let  $\mathcal{K}$  be a field. Then, every finitely generated  $\mathcal{K}[x_1, \dots, x_n]$ -module has a free resolution of length at most  $n$ .*

**1.3. General regular rings.** With the above in place, we can finally define regular rings beyond the local case.

**Definition 1.22** (Regular rings of finite dimension). We say that a noetherian ring of finite Krull dimension  $\dim R$  is regular if any of the following equivalent conditions hold:

- (a) The local ring  $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is regular for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \mathrm{Spec} R$ .
- (b) The global dimension of  $R$  is at most  $\dim R$  (i.e. every finitely generated module has projective dimension at most  $\dim R$ ).
- (c)  $R$  has finite global dimension.

**Exercise 1.19.** Prove that the above conditions are indeed equivalent.

**Definition 1.23** (Regular rings). Let  $R$  be a noetherian ring. Then  $R$  is said to be regular if  $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is a regular local ring for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \operatorname{Spec} R$ .

**Exercise 1.20.** Prove that if  $R$  is regular then so is  $W^{-1}R$  for any multiplicative set  $W \subset R$ .

**Exercise 1.21.** Prove that for a regular ring its global dimension equals its dimension.

**1.4. Complete regular rings and the Cohen structure theorems.** Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a noetherian local ring. Recall that its completion is the canonical homomorphism

$$R \rightarrow \hat{R} := \varprojlim_n R/\mathfrak{m}^n$$

It turns out that  $\hat{R}$  is a noetherian local ring with maximal ideal  $\hat{\mathfrak{m}} = \mathfrak{m}\hat{R}$ , residue field  $\mathcal{K}$ , and dimension  $\dim R$ . Moreover,  $R \rightarrow \hat{R}$  is a faithfully flat local homomorphism. In particular,  $R$  is regular if and only if so is  $\hat{R}$ .

*Remark 1.24.* More generally, the completion of an  $R$ -module  $M$  is the  $\hat{R}$ -module

$$\hat{M} := \varprojlim_n M/\mathfrak{m}^n M.$$

Notice that there is a canonical  $\hat{R}$ -linear map

$$\hat{R} \otimes_R M \rightarrow \hat{M}$$

but it may not be an isomorphism. However, it is an isomorphism if  $M$  is finitely generated.

**Exercise 1.22.** Prove that  $\operatorname{depth} R = \operatorname{depth} \hat{R}$ . In particular,  $R$  is Cohen–Macaulay iff so is  $\hat{R}$ .

**Example 1.25.** If  $R = \mathcal{K}[x_1, \dots, x_n]/\mathfrak{a}$  and  $\mathfrak{m} = (x_1, \dots, x_n)$ , then  $\hat{R}_{\mathfrak{m}} = \mathcal{K}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]/\mathfrak{a}$ .

Recall that  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is said to be complete if  $R \rightarrow \hat{R}$  is an isomorphism. It turns out that  $\hat{R}$  is complete. In fact, every quotient of  $\hat{R}$  is a noetherian complete local ring.

*Remark 1.26* (Characteristic). Recall that the characteristic of a ring  $R$ , say  $\operatorname{char} R$ , is the only nonnegative integer  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  such that  $(n) = \ker(\mathbb{Z} \rightarrow R)$ . Note that if  $R$  is an integral domain (*i.e.* a field) then  $\operatorname{char} R$  is either 0 or a prime number  $p$ .

**Exercise 1.23.** Prove that  $R$  contains a field as a subring if and only if  $\operatorname{char} R = \operatorname{char} \kappa(\mathfrak{p})$  for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \operatorname{Spec} R$ . Here  $\kappa(\mathfrak{p})$  denotes the residue field of  $R$  at  $\mathfrak{p}$ .

For this reason, those rings that contain a field as a subring are referred to as rings of *equi-characteristic*. If a ring does not contain a field then it is said to have *mixed-characteristic*.

If  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is a local ring, then it has equicharacteristic iff  $\operatorname{char} R = \operatorname{char} \mathcal{K}$ . If it is mixed characteristic then  $\operatorname{char} \mathcal{K} = p > 0$  but  $0 \neq p \in R$ .

Suppose that  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is complete. A complete local subring  $(\Lambda, p\Lambda, \mathcal{K}) \subset (R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is referred to as a coefficient ring. This entails that  $\mathfrak{m} \cap \Lambda = p\Lambda$  and  $p = \operatorname{char} \mathcal{K} \geq 0$ . There are three cases:

- $R$  has equi-characteristic and so  $\Lambda$  is a field contained in  $R$  that maps isomorphically to  $\mathcal{K}$ .
- $R$  has mixed-characteristic and  $0 \neq p \in R$  is not nilpotent. In that case,  $(\Lambda, p\Lambda, \mathcal{K})$  is a complete DVR. We'll refer to this rings as *Cohen rings*.



- $R$  has mixed-characteristic and  $p \in R$  is nilpotent (i.e.  $\text{char } R = p^n$  for some  $n > 1$ ). In that case,  $(\Lambda, p\Lambda, \mathcal{K})$  is an artinian local ring.

**Theorem 1.27** (Cohen structure theorem I). *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a complete (noetherian) local ring. Then:*

- (a)  $R$  has a coefficient ring.
- (b) There is a surjective homomorphism  $\Lambda[[x_1, \dots, x_n]] \rightarrow R$  where  $\Lambda$  is either a field or a Cohen ring. Moreover,  $\Lambda$  can be taken as a coefficient ring of  $R$  if  $p \in R$  isn't nilpotent. In particular,  $R$  is a quotient of a regular complete local ring.

*Remark 1.28.* The most difficult part is to show the existence of a coefficient ring. If  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  has equi-characteristic  $p > 0$  and  $\mathcal{K}$  is perfect. Then it turns out that

$$\mathcal{K}_0 := \bigcap_{e \in \mathbb{N}} R^{p^e}$$

is the only coefficient field of  $R$ . Here,  $R^{p^e} = \{r^{p^e} \in r \in R\}$ .

**Theorem 1.29** (Cohen structure theorem II). *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a complete regular local ring. Then:*

- If  $R$  has equi-characteristic then  $R \cong \mathcal{K}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]$ .
- If  $R$  has mixed-characteristic then there is a Cohen ring  $\Lambda$  such that

$$R \cong \begin{cases} \Lambda[[x_1, \dots, x_n]] & \text{if } p \in R \text{ is a regular element} \\ \Lambda[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]/(p - f) \text{ for some } f \in \mathfrak{m}^2 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

We say that  $R$  is unramified in the former case.

**Theorem 1.30** (Cohen–Gabber structure theorem III). *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a complete local ring that either is equi-characteristic or is an integral domain. Then, there exists a subring  $A \subset R$  such that:*

- (a)  $A$  is a complete local ring,
- (b)  $A \subset R$  is finite induces an isomorphism on residue fields and is generically étale,
- (c)  $A \cong \Lambda[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]$  where  $\Lambda$  is a field or a Cohen ring.

**Exercise 1.24.** In the setup of Theorem 1.30, show that  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is Cohen–Macaulay if and only if  $A \subset R$  is free (i.e.  $R$  is a projective  $A$ -module). Hint: Use the Auslander–Buchsbaum formula.

**Exercise 1.25.** Let  $R$  be a noetherian equi-characteristic ring. Prove that  $R$  is regular iff  $\hat{R}_{\mathfrak{p}} \cong \kappa(\mathfrak{p})[[x_1, \dots, x_{\text{ht } \mathfrak{p}}]]$  for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } R$ . Recall that  $\kappa(\mathfrak{p}) := \mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}}/\mathfrak{p}R_{\mathfrak{p}} = \mathcal{K}(R/\mathfrak{p})$  denotes the residue field of  $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ .

## 2. THE FROBENIUS ENDOMORPHISM AND KUNZ'S THEOREM

From now on unless otherwise stated, we are going to assume that all rings have prime characteristic  $p$ . That is, all rings are  $\mathbb{F}_p$ -algebras. We always use the shorthand notation

$$q := p^e.$$

Further, we'll assume that all rings are noetherian. The *Frobenius endomorphism* of a ring  $R$  is the homomorphism of  $\mathbb{F}_p$ -algebras

$$F = F_R: R \rightarrow R, \quad r \mapsto r^p.$$

By iterating, we also have  $F^e: r \mapsto r^q$  for all  $e \in \mathbb{N}$ . We let  $R^q \subset R$  be the image subring of  $F^e$ .

**Exercise 2.1.** Prove that  $F: R \rightarrow R$  is indeed a homomorphism of  $\mathbb{F}_p$ -algebras. Prove that  $\text{Spec } F^e: \text{Spec } R \rightarrow \text{Spec } R$  is the identity.

**Exercise 2.2.** Prove that  $R$  is reduced iff  $F^e$  is injective for some/all  $e \in \mathbb{N}$ .

**Exercise 2.3.** Recall that a ring  $R$  is reduced iff its total ring of fractions  $\mathcal{K}(R)$  is a product of fields  $K_1 \times \cdots \times K_n$ . Then, we may define  $\bar{\mathcal{K}}(R)$  as  $\bar{K}_1 \times \cdots \times \bar{K}_n$  where  $\bar{K}_i$  is an algebraic closure of  $K_i$ . Hence  $r^{1/q}$  is well-defined in  $\bar{\mathcal{K}}(R)$  for all  $r \in \mathcal{K}(R)$ . Show that

$$R^{1/q} := \{r^{1/q} \in \bar{\mathcal{K}}(R) \mid r \in R\} \subset \bar{\mathcal{K}}(R)$$

is a subring that contains  $R$ . Moreover, show that  $R \subset R^{1/q}$ ,  $F^e: R \rightarrow R$ , and  $R^q \rightarrow R$  are isomorphic as  $R$ -algebras.

**Definition 2.1** (Frobenius powers). Let  $\mathfrak{a} \subset R$  be an ideal. Then  $\mathfrak{a}^{[q]}$  is the extension ideal of  $\mathfrak{a}$  along  $F^e$ , and it's called the  $e$ -th Frobenius power of  $\mathfrak{a}$ .

Note that if  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  is a homomorphism of rings then there is a commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} R & \xrightarrow{\theta} & S \\ F^e \downarrow & & \downarrow F^e \\ R & \xrightarrow{\theta} & S \end{array}$$

**Exercise 2.4.** Prove that the above diagram is cartesian for all  $e \in \mathbb{N}$  if  $\theta$  is a localization  $R \rightarrow W^{-1}R$ . Show that if  $\theta: R \rightarrow R/\mathfrak{a}$  is a quotient then the diagram is cartesian iff  $\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} = \mathfrak{a}$ .

More generally, the following notation is going to be useful.

**Notation 2.2** (Frobenius pushforward). Let  $M$  be an  $R$ -module. We let

$$F_*^e M := \{F_*^e m \mid m \in M\}$$

be the  $R$ -module defined by the rules  $F_*^e m + F_*^e m' = F_*^e(m + m')$  and  $rF_*^e m = F_*^e r^q m$ . In other words,  $F_*^e M$  is the restriction of scalars of  $M$  along  $F^e$ . Thus,  $F_*^e M$  is identical to  $M$  as an abelian group but the  $R$ -scalar action is being twisted by Frobenius. Likewise, if  $M = S$  is an  $R$ -algebra then  $F_*^e S$  is an  $R$ -algebra with the product  $(F_*^e s)(F_*^e s') = F_*^e(ss')$ . Again,  $F_*^e S$  is the exact same thing as  $S$  as a ring, what changes is the  $R$ -algebra structure.

**Exercise 2.5.** Prove that  $R$  is reduced iff  $F_*^e R$  is a faithful  $R$ -module for some/all  $e$ .

**Exercise 2.6.** Prove that

$$F_*^e \hat{R} = \widehat{(F_*^e R)}.$$

With the above notation in place, we see that the commutative diagram above induces a ring homomorphism

$$F_\theta^e: S \otimes_R F_*^e R \rightarrow F_*^e S, \quad s \otimes F_*^e r \mapsto F_*^e s^q \theta(r)$$

which is called the *relative Frobenius* of  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$ .

**Exercise 2.7.** Prove that  $\text{Spec } F_\theta^e$  is a (universal) homeomorphism.

**Theorem 2.3** (Kunz's theorem). *Let  $R$  be a (noetherian) ring. Then  $R$  is regular iff  $F^e: R \rightarrow R$  is (faithfully) flat for some/all  $e > 0$ .*

*Remark 2.4* (The socle). Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a local ring and  $M$  be a finitely generated  $R$ -module. The *socle* of  $M$  is the submodule

$$\mathrm{Soc}(M) := \{m \in M : m\mathfrak{m} = 0\} \cong \mathrm{Hom}_R(\mathcal{K}, M) = \mathrm{Ext}_R^0(\mathcal{K}, M).$$

In particular,  $\mathrm{depth} M = 0$  iff  $\mathrm{Soc} M \neq 0$ . Since  $\bigcap_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \mathfrak{m}^n M = 0$ , it follows that, if  $\mathrm{depth} M = 0$ , there is  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  such that  $\mathrm{Soc} M \not\subset \mathfrak{m}^n M$ . Let  $c := \mathrm{depth} R$  and  $r_1, \dots, r_c \in R$  be a regular sequence. Set  $\mathfrak{a} := (r_1, \dots, r_c)$ . Observe that  $\mathrm{depth}_R R/\mathfrak{a} = 0$ . Then, we may find  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  such that

$$\mathrm{Soc}_R(R/\mathfrak{a}) \not\subset \mathfrak{m}^n(R/\mathfrak{a}).$$

**Lemma 2.5.** *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a local ring of depth  $c$ . Then there is  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  such that for all infinite minimal free resolutions*

$$\dots \rightarrow R^{\oplus \beta_{i+1}(M)} \xrightarrow{\phi_i} R^{\oplus \beta_i(M)} \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow R^{\beta_0(M)} \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

*the entries of the matrix  $\phi_{c+1}$  are not all contained in  $\mathfrak{m}^n$  (i.e. the image of  $\phi_{c+1}$  is not inside  $\mathfrak{m}^n R^{\oplus b_{c+1}} = (\mathfrak{m}^n)^{\oplus b_{c+1}}$ ). Here  $b_i := \beta_i(M)$ .*

*Proof.* Note that, by the Auslander–Buchsbaum formula, we have that  $b_{c+1} \neq 0$  as the resolution has infinite length. This is gonna be important below.

Let  $\mathfrak{a} = (r_1, \dots, r_c)$  and  $n$  be as in Remark 2.4. In particular, for  $N := \mathrm{Soc}_R(R/\mathfrak{a})$  we have that  $N \not\subset \mathfrak{m}^n N$ . Observe that

$$\mathrm{pd}_R R/\mathfrak{a} = c$$

and so

$$\mathrm{Tor}_{c+1}^R(M, R/\mathfrak{a}) = 0.$$

This implies that after base changing the given infinite minimal free resolution we obtain that

$$(R/\mathfrak{a})^{\oplus b_{c+2}} \xrightarrow{\phi_{c+1}/\mathfrak{a}} (R/\mathfrak{a})^{\oplus b_{c+1}} \xrightarrow{\phi_c/\mathfrak{a}} (R/\mathfrak{a})^{\oplus b_c}$$

is exact in the middle. In other words,

$$\ker \phi_c/\mathfrak{a} \subset \mathrm{im} \phi_{c+1}/\mathfrak{a}$$

Now, since the given resolution is minimal, we have that the entries of  $\phi_c$  are all in  $\mathfrak{m}$  and so

$$N^{\oplus b_{c+1}} \subset \ker \phi_c/\mathfrak{a}.$$

Thus, putting everything together, if (for the sake of contradiction) the image of  $\phi_{c+1}$  is inside  $(\mathfrak{m}^n)^{\oplus b_{c+1}}$ , it would follow that

$$N^{\oplus b_{c+1}} \subset (\mathfrak{m}^n(R/\mathfrak{a}))^{\oplus b_{c+1}}.$$

But, since  $b_{c+1} \neq 0$ , this implies that

$$N \subset \mathfrak{m}^n(R/\mathfrak{a}),$$

which contradicts the construction of  $n$ . Isn't math just so cool? □

**Lemma 2.6.** *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a local ring and  $M$  be an  $R$ -module. Then  $\hat{M}$  is a flat  $\hat{R}$ -module whenever  $\mathrm{Tor}_1^R(M, \mathcal{K}) = 0$  and in particular whenever  $M$  is flat.<sup>10</sup>*

*Proof.* This is a particular case of [Sta23, Tag 0AGW]. □

<sup>10</sup>Be cautious, the same can't be said about freeness and hence about projectivity.

**Lemma 2.7** ([Sta23, Tag 039V]). *Let  $R \rightarrow S$  a homomorphism of rings and  $M$  be an  $S$ -module. If  $M$  is a flat  $R$ -module and a faithfully flat  $S$ -module then  $R \rightarrow S$  is flat.*

**Exercise 2.8.** Let  $R$  be a (noetherian ring). Then,  $F_R^e$  is flat as an  $R$ -module iff  $F_*^e R_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is flat as an  $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ -module for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \operatorname{Spec} R$ . If  $R$  is local, then  $F^e R$  is flat as an  $R$ -module iff  $F^e \hat{R}$  is flat as an  $\hat{R}$ -module. Hint: Apply the two previous lemmas.

**Exercise 2.9.** Let  $R = \mathbb{K}[x_1, \dots, x_d]$  be a polynomial ring over a field  $\mathbb{K}$  (or more generally over a ring  $\mathbb{K}$  whose Frobenius is free). Let  $\{F_*^e \lambda\}_{\lambda \in \Lambda}$  be a  $\mathbb{K}$ -basis for  $F_*^e \mathbb{K} = \mathbb{K}^{1/q}$  (which we may assume contains  $F_*^e 1$ ). Prove that

$$\{F_*^e \lambda x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_d^{i_d}\}_{\lambda \in \Lambda, 0 \leq i_1, \dots, i_d \leq q-1}$$

is an  $R$ -basis for  $F_*^e R$ . Suppose now that  $\Lambda$  is finite so that  $F_*^e R$  is free of finite rank. Consider the corresponding dual basis

$$\{\phi_{\lambda, i_1, \dots, i_d} := (F_*^e \lambda x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_d^{i_d})^\vee\}_{\lambda \in \Lambda, 0 \leq i_1, \dots, i_d \leq q-1}$$

for  $\operatorname{Hom}_R(F_*^e R, R)$ . Show that

$$F_*^e R \rightarrow \operatorname{Hom}_R(F_*^e R, R), \quad F_*^e 1 \mapsto \Phi^e := \phi_{1, q-1, \dots, q-1}$$

is an isomorphism. We will be referring to  $\Phi^e$  as the  $e$ -th (power of the) Frobenius trace of  $R$ .

**Exercise 2.10.** Conclude that  $F_*^e \mathbb{K}[[x_1, \dots, x_d]]$  is a flat  $\mathbb{K}[[x_1, \dots, x_d]]$ -module. Show that it is free if  $[\mathbb{K}^{1/p} : \mathbb{K}] < \infty$ . What about the converse?

*Proof of Kunz's theorem.* We may assume that  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{K})$  is local. Moreover, we may assume that  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{K})$  is complete. If  $R$  is regular then  $R \cong \mathbb{K}[[x_1, \dots, x_{\dim R}]]$  and we're done by Exercise 2.10.

Conversely, suppose that  $F^e : R \rightarrow R$  is flat. We want to prove that  $\operatorname{pd}_R \mathbb{K} < \infty$ . Suppose, for the sake of contradiction that there is an infinite minimal free resolution

$$\cdots \rightarrow R^{\oplus \beta_{i+1}(\mathbb{K})} \xrightarrow{\phi_i} R^{\oplus \beta_i(\mathbb{K})} \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow R^{\beta_0(\mathbb{K})} \rightarrow \mathbb{K} \rightarrow 0$$

That is,  $\beta_{c+1}(\mathbb{K}) \neq 0$  for  $c = \operatorname{depth} R$ . Since  $F^e : R \rightarrow R$  is flat for all  $e$ , we can base change this infinite minimal free resolution to obtain a minimal free resolution

$$\cdots \rightarrow R^{\oplus \beta_{i+1}(\mathbb{K})} \xrightarrow{\phi_i^{[q]}} R^{\oplus \beta_i(\mathbb{K})} \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow R^{\beta_0(\mathbb{K})} \rightarrow R/\mathfrak{m}^{[q]} \rightarrow 0$$

where  $\phi_i^{[q]}$  is the matrix obtained from  $\phi_i$  by raising its entries to the  $q$ -th power. In particular, the entries of  $\phi_i^{[q]}$  belong to  $\mathfrak{m}^{[q]} \subset \mathfrak{m}^q$  for all  $i$  and in particular for  $i = \operatorname{depth} R + 1$ . This, however, contradicts Lemma 2.5 as  $\mathfrak{m}^q \subset \mathfrak{m}^n$  for all  $e \gg 0$  such that  $q \geq n$ .  $\square$

**2.1. Relative version of Kunz's theorem.** There is a relative version of Kunz's theorem that goes by the name of Radu–André's theorem. To state it, we need to recall the following definition (the relative notion of  $F$ -regularity).

**Definition 2.8** (Regular algebras). Let  $\theta : R \rightarrow S$  be an  $R$ -algebra (where  $R$  and  $S$  are noetherian). We say that  $\theta$  is *regular* if it is flat and all its fibers are *geometrically regular*. That is, for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \operatorname{Spec} R$  the  $\kappa(\mathfrak{p})$ -algebra  $S \otimes_R \kappa(\mathfrak{p})$  is noetherian and regular (and noetherian) after any base change by a finitely generated field extension  $\mathbb{K}/\kappa(\mathfrak{p})$ .<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup>It suffices to ask this for all finite purely inseparable extensions  $\mathbb{K}/\kappa(\mathfrak{p})$ .

**Theorem 2.9** (Radu–André). *Let  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  be an  $R$ -algebra. Then,  $\theta$  is regular iff  $F_\theta^e$  is (faithfully) flat for all/some  $e > 0$ .*

*On the proof.* The most important step is to show that if  $\theta$  is regular then  $S \otimes_R F_*^e R$  is noetherian. With that in place, the result can be obtained from the absolute Kunz theorem and the critere de planitude par fibres. I hope to add more details later on.  $\square$

**2.2. Bhatt–Scholze’s generalization of Kunz’s theorem.** The (colimit) perfection of a ring  $R$  is

$$R \rightarrow R_{\text{perf}} := \text{colim}(R \xrightarrow{F} R \xrightarrow{F} R \rightarrow \cdots)$$

We say that  $R$  is perfect iff  $R \rightarrow R_{\text{perf}}$  is an isomorphism, *i.e.* Frobenius is an isomorphism on  $R$ . Observe that  $R_{\text{perf}}$  is perfect. Perfect rings are rarely noetherian. In fact, a noetherian perfect ring is a finite product of perfect fields.

**Exercise 2.11.** Prove that  $\text{Spec } R \rightarrow \text{Spec } R_{\text{perf}}$  is a homeomorphism. Conclude that the perfection of a noetherian local ring has finite dimension.

**Theorem 2.10** (Bhatt–Scholze). *Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a complete local ring (of prime characteristic  $p$ ). Then its perfection is  $R_{\text{perf}}$  has finite global dimension.*

*Proof.* TO BE ADDED.  $\square$

This result easily proves Kunz’s theorem as follows. Recall that the substantial part of Kunz’s theorem is that if  $F^e: R \rightarrow R$  is flat for a complete local ring then  $R$  is regular, *i.e.*  $R$  has finite global dimension. That is, we must show that there is  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  such that for all  $R$ -modules one has that

$$\text{Tor}_i^R(\mathcal{K}, M) = 0$$

for all  $i \geq n$ . To that end, one observes that  $R \rightarrow R_{\text{perf}}$  is faithfully flat and that

$$R_{\text{perf}} \otimes_R \text{Tor}_i^R(\mathcal{K}, M) = \text{Tor}_i^{R_{\text{perf}}} (R_{\text{perf}} \otimes_R \mathcal{K}, R_{\text{perf}} \otimes_R M).$$

Then, we can take  $n$  to be the global dimension of  $R_{\text{perf}}$ , which is finite by Bhatt–Scholze’s theorem.

**Exercise 2.12.** Let  $R \rightarrow S$  be faithfully flat. Show that the global dimension of  $R$  is no more than the global dimension of  $S$ .

### 3. $F$ -FINITENESS AND GABBER’S THEOREM

In studying regularity and therefore singularities, one imposes noetherianity as a basic finiteness condition. In studying  $F$ -singularities, one imposes one additional condition. Namely,

**Definition 3.1.** An  $\mathbb{F}_p$ -algebra  $R$  is  $F$ -finite if  $F^e: R \rightarrow R$  is finite for some/all  $e > 0$  (*i.e.*  $F_*^e R$  is a finitely generated  $R$ -module for all  $e$ ).

**Exercise 3.1.** Let  $R$  be  $F$ -finite. Show that so are its localizations, quotients, and polynomial extensions  $R[x_1, \dots, x_n]$ . Prove that a field  $\mathcal{K}$  is  $F$ -finite iff  $[\mathcal{K}^{1/q} : \mathcal{K}] < \infty$ . Conclude that in such case  $\mathcal{K}$ -algebras that are either essentially of finite type or complete are  $F$ -finite.

**Exercise 3.2.**  $F$ -finiteness has nothing to do with noetherianity. Show that there are noetherian rings that aren’t  $F$ -finite and vice-versa.

*Remark 3.2* ( $F$ -finiteness equals kählerianity over  $\mathbb{F}_p$ ). According to Fogarty,  $R/\mathbb{F}_p$  is  $F$ -finite iff its  $R$ -module of Kähler differentials  $\Omega_{R/\mathbb{F}_p}$  is finitely generated, in which case  $R/\mathbb{F}_p$  is referred to as kählerian. See [Fog80]. The forward implication is rather trivial and can be left as an exercise for those familiar with Kähler differentials. Although this equivalence is conceptually satisfying, we won't use it in the sequel.

Kunz's theorem takes a much simpler form in that case.

**Theorem 3.3** (Kunz's theorem in the  $F$ -finite case). *Let  $R$  be an  $F$ -finite (and noetherian)  $\mathbb{F}_p$ -algebra. Then,  $R$  is regular if and only if  $F_*^e R$  is a projective (i.e. locally free of finite rank)  $R$ -module. If  $R$  is further local, it is regular iff  $F_*^e R$  is free of finite rank.*

**Exercise 3.3.** Show that if  $R$  is  $F$ -finite then its regular locus is (Zariski-)open.

**Exercise 3.4.** Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be an  $F$ -finite local ring. Show that its completion  $R \rightarrow \hat{R}$  is regular. Hint: Show that  $F_{\hat{R}/R}$  is an isomorphism and then conclude using Radu–André's theorem.

**Exercise 3.5.** Suppose that  $R$  is a regular  $F$ -finite ring and  $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } R$ . Show that the following inclusion of ideals

$$\{r \in R \mid \phi(F_*^e r) \in \mathfrak{p}, \forall \phi \in \text{Hom}_R(F_*^e R, R)\} \supset \mathfrak{p}^{[q]}$$

is an equality.

**Definition 3.4** ( $p$ -basis). A (regular)  $p$ -basis for a regular  $F$ -finite  $R/\mathbb{F}_p$  is a set  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  such that

$$F_*^e R = \bigoplus_{0 \leq i_1, \dots, i_n \leq q-1} R F_*^e x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_n^{i_n}.$$

In particular, the rank of  $F_*^e R$  is  $q^n$ .

*Remark 3.5.* According to Tyc, a  $p$ -basis is the same thing as a *differential basis* (i.e.  $\Omega_{R/\mathbb{F}_p} = \bigoplus_{i=1}^n R dx_i$ ). See [Tyc88]. In particular,  $F$ -finite fields always admit a  $p$ -basis.

**Exercise 3.6.** Let  $R := \mathbb{F}_p[x, y]/(x^2 + y^2 - 1)$ . Prove that  $R$  is regular iff  $p \neq 2$ . However,  $R$  admits a  $p$ -basis iff  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$ . Hint: the point is that  $-1 = p - 1 \in \mathbb{F}_p$  has a square if and only  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$ .

**Example 3.6.** Let  $\mathcal{K}$  be an  $F$ -finite field. Note that  $\mathcal{K}[x_1, \dots, x_n]$  and  $\mathcal{K}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]$  both admit a  $p$ -basis.

*Remark 3.7* (On restriction, extension, and co-extension of scalars). Let  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  be an  $R$ -algebra, and say  $f := \text{Spec } \theta: \text{Spec } S \rightarrow \text{Spec } R$ . This induces three covariant functors  $f_*, f^*, f^!$ ; respectively known as *restriction*, *extension*, and *co-extension of scalars*. The restriction of scalars functor  $f_*$  goes from the category of  $S$ -modules to the one of  $R$ -modules. If we have a morphism of  $S$ -modules  $N \rightarrow N'$ , we can think of it as a morphism of  $R$ -modules by restricting scalars along  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$ , which we denote by  $f_* N \rightarrow f_* N'$ . On the other hand, the functor of extension of scalars (aka base change)  $f^*$  goes from the category of  $R$ -modules to the one of  $S$ -modules and it's defined by base change. Namely, if  $\phi: M \rightarrow M'$  is a morphism of  $R$ -modules then its extension of scalars is the morphism of  $S$ -modules

$$f^* M := S \otimes_R M \xrightarrow{S \otimes_R \phi: s \otimes m \mapsto s \otimes \phi(m)} f^* M' := S \otimes_R M'.$$

Finally, the functor  $f^!$  of co-extension of scalars goes from  $R$ -modules to  $S$ -modules and is defined as follows. If  $\phi: M \rightarrow M'$  is a morphism of  $R$ -modules then  $f^!\phi$  is the following morphism of  $S$ -modules:

$$\begin{aligned} f^!M &:= \text{Hom}_R(S, M) \rightarrow f^!M' := \text{Hom}_R(S, M') \\ \mu &\mapsto \phi \circ \mu \end{aligned}$$

It is important to notice that  $\text{Hom}_R(S, M)$  is indeed an  $S$ -module, where the scalar action of  $S$  is given by

$$s\mu := \mu \circ (\cdot s): s' \mapsto \mu(ss').$$

Thus, it may be better to denote this as a right action, *i.e.* we may write  $\mu s$  instead of  $s\mu$ . Note that  $\text{Hom}_R(S, R)$  is also an  $R$ -module where  $r\mu = (\cdot r) \circ \mu: s \mapsto r\mu(s)$ . Nevertheless, these two linear structures are related as follows:

$$r\mu = \mu\theta(r),$$

from which one may say that the  $S$ -module structure determines the  $R$ -module one (by restriction of scalars).

These three functors are related by the adjointness:

$$f^* \dashv f_* \dashv f^!$$

Indeed, the co-unit  $\epsilon: f^*f_* \rightarrow \text{id}$  is given by

$$\epsilon_N S \otimes_R N \xrightarrow{s \otimes n \mapsto sn} N$$

whereas the unit  $\eta: \text{id} \rightarrow f_*f^*$  is given by

$$\eta_M: M \xrightarrow{m \mapsto 1 \otimes m} S \otimes_R M.$$

Likewise, the co-unit  $\text{Tr}: f_*f^! \rightarrow \text{id}$  for the adjointness  $f_* \dashv f^!$  is known as *the trace* and is defined as

$$\text{Tr}_M: \text{Hom}_R(S, M) \xrightarrow{\mu \mapsto \mu(1)} M$$

whereas its unit  $\nu: \text{id} \rightarrow f^!f_*$  is the natural transformation

$$\begin{aligned} \nu_N: N &\rightarrow \text{Hom}_R(S, N) \\ n &\mapsto (s \mapsto sn). \end{aligned}$$

**Exercise 3.7.** Show that the above pairs of units and co-units define a pair of adjointness relations  $f^* \dashv f_* \dashv f^!$ . That is, show that there are commutative diagrams of natural transformations

$$\begin{array}{ccc} f^* & \xrightarrow{f^*\eta} & f^*f_*f^* \\ & \searrow \text{id} & \downarrow \epsilon f^* \\ & & f^* \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{ccc} f_* & \xrightarrow{\eta f_*} & f_*f^*f_* \\ & \searrow \text{id} & \downarrow f_*\epsilon \\ & & f_* \end{array}$$

defining  $f^* \dashv f_*$ . Likewise, for  $f_* \dashv f^!$ , show that we have commutative diagrams of natural transformations

$$\begin{array}{ccc} f_* & \xrightarrow{f_*\nu} & f_*f^!f_* \\ & \searrow \text{id} & \downarrow \text{Tr } f_* \\ & & f_* \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{ccc} f^! & \xrightarrow{\nu f^!} & f^!f_*f^! \\ & \searrow \text{id} & \downarrow f^!\text{Tr} \\ & & f^! \end{array}.$$

The above means that the natural maps

$$\mathrm{Hom}_S(f^* M, N) \xrightarrow{\psi \mapsto f_* \psi \circ \eta_M} \mathrm{Hom}_R(M, f_* N) \text{ and } \mathrm{Hom}_R(M, f_* N) \xrightarrow{\phi \mapsto \epsilon_N \circ f^* \phi} \mathrm{Hom}_S(f^* M, N)$$

are inverse to each other. Similarly, the natural maps

$$\mathrm{Hom}_S(N, f^! M) \xrightarrow{\psi \mapsto \mathrm{Tr}_M \circ f_* \psi} \mathrm{Hom}_R(f_* N, M) \text{ y } \mathrm{Hom}_R(f_* N, M) \xrightarrow{\phi \mapsto f^! \phi \circ \nu_N} \mathrm{Hom}_S(N, f^! M)$$

are mutually inverse.

**Exercise 3.8.** Notice that  $f_*$  is exact and so that  $f^*$  is right-exact whereas  $f^!$  is left exact. Observe that  $f^*$  is exact iff  $f_* S$  is flat but  $f^!$  is exact iff  $f_* S$  is projective.

**Exercise 3.9.** Show that the mapping

$$\mathrm{Hom}(f^*, f^!) \rightarrow f^! R := \mathrm{Hom}_R(S, R), \quad \xi \mapsto \xi_R(1)$$

is a bijection, what's its inverse?

This finishes our general observations on restriction, extension, and co-extension of scalars. How does all this apply to  $F^e$ ?

**Exercise 3.10.** Suppose that  $R/\mathbb{F}_p$  admits a  $p$ -basis (and so it is in particular regular and  $F$ -finite), say  $x_1, \dots, x_n$ . Let

$$\{\phi_{i_1, \dots, i_d} := (F_*^e x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_d^{i_d})^\vee\}_{0 \leq i_1, \dots, i_d \leq q-1}$$

be the corresponding dual basis for  $\mathrm{Hom}_R(F_*^e R, R)$ . Show that:

(a) The  $F_*^e R$ -linear mapping

$$F_*^e R \rightarrow \mathrm{Hom}_R(F_*^e R, R), \quad F_*^e 1 \mapsto \Phi^e := \phi_{q-1, \dots, q-1}$$

is an isomorphism. We will be referring to  $\Phi^e$  as the  $e$ -th (power of the) Frobenius trace of  $R$ .

(b) The equalities

$$\Phi^{e-1} \circ F_*^{e-1} \Phi^1 = \Phi^e = \Phi^1 \circ F_* \Phi^{e-1}.$$

hold, which justifies to say that  $\Phi^e$  is the  $e$ -th power of  $\Phi := \Phi^1$ . In fact,  $\Phi^e = \Phi^a \circ F_*^a \Phi^b$  whenever  $e = a + b$ .

(c) For all  $r \in R$  and  $\mathfrak{a}, \mathfrak{b} \subset R$  ideals,

$$(\Phi^e r)(F_*^e \mathfrak{a}) \subset \mathfrak{b} \iff r \in \mathfrak{b}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a}.$$

(d) For every ideal  $\mathfrak{a} \subset R$  with quotient  $R \rightarrow A := R/\mathfrak{a}$ , there is an exact sequence of  $F_*^e R$ -modules

$$0 \rightarrow \mathfrak{a} F_*^e R = F_*^e \mathfrak{a}^{[q]} \rightarrow F_*^e (\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a}) \xrightarrow{F_*^e r \mapsto (\Phi^e r)/\mathfrak{a}} \mathrm{Hom}_A(F_*^e A, A) \rightarrow 0$$

which induces an isomorphism of  $F_*^e A$ -modules

$$F_*^e \left( \frac{\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a}}{\mathfrak{a}^{[q]}} \right) \xrightarrow{\cong} \mathrm{Hom}_A(F_*^e A, A).$$

(e) If  $x_n \in R$  is not a unit then  $x_1, \dots, x_{n-1}$  yields a  $p$ -basis on  $R/x_n R$ . Furthermore, if  $I \subset \{1, \dots, n\}$  is such that  $(x_i \mid i \in I) \neq R$  then  $\{x_i\}_{i \in I}$  is a regular sequence on  $R$ .

(f) If all the  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  are units then  $\dim R = 0$ .

(g) More generally,  $\dim R \leq n$ .



- (h) Relabel if necessary so that  $x_1, \dots, x_m$  is such that  $S/(x_1, \dots, x_m)$  is zero dimensional. Show that the canonical map

$$R^{\text{perf}} := \bigcap_e R^q \xrightarrow{\subseteq} S \rightarrow S/(x_1, \dots, x_m)$$

is injective.

- (i) Conclude that  $R^{\text{perf}}$  is noetherian and so a product of perfect fields.

**Theorem 3.8** (Gabber [Gab04]). *Let  $R/\mathbb{F}_p$  be  $F$ -finite (and noetherian). Then, there is an  $F$ -finite regular ring  $S$  admitting a  $p$ -basis (and so having) finite dimension such that  $R$  is a homomorphic image of  $S$ , i.e. there is a quotient  $S \twoheadrightarrow R$ .*

*Main idea of the proof.* The proof is constructive. Let  $F_*r_1, \dots, F_*r_n \in F_*R$  be  $R$ -generators of  $F_*R$ . Equivalently,  $r_1, \dots, r_n \in R$  are generators of  $R$  as an  $R^p$ -module. Consider the  $R$ -algebra

$$S_e := R[x_1, \dots, x_n]/(x_1^q - r_1, \dots, x_n^q - r_n)$$

Observe that its  $e$ -th Frobenius factors as follows

$$\begin{array}{ccc} S_e & \xrightarrow{F^e} & S_e \\ & \searrow \phi_e & \uparrow \\ & & R \end{array}$$

Moreover, the map  $\phi_e$  further factors as

$$\begin{array}{ccc} S_e & \xrightarrow{\sigma_e} & S_{e-1} \\ & \searrow \phi_e & \swarrow \phi_{e-1} \\ & & R \end{array}$$

Where  $\sigma_e$  acts like Frobenius on  $R$  and as the identity on the  $x$ 's. Therefore, we may take the limit over this inverse system to obtain

$$S := \varprojlim_{e \in \mathbb{N}} S_e$$

Concretely, recall that an element  $s \in S$  can be thought of as a sequence  $(s_0, s_1, s_2, \dots)$  where  $s_e \in S_e$  and  $\sigma_e(s_e) = s_{e-1}$ . In particular, we may define (with a slight abuse of notation)

$$x_i := (r_i, x_i, x_i, \dots) \in S$$

as the constant sequence.<sup>12</sup> Now, note that  $S_e$  is an  $S_{e-1}$ -algebra and its Frobenius factors as

$$\begin{array}{ccc} S_e & \xrightarrow{F} & S_e \\ & \searrow \varphi_e & \uparrow \vartheta_e \\ & & S_{e-1} \end{array}$$

<sup>12</sup>Caution, not every element of  $R$  can be lifted to  $S$ . In fact,  $S$  isn't in any meaningful way an  $R$ -algebra.

And, moreover, such factorization is compatible with the structural maps of the inverse system defined  $S$ . More precisely, we have the following commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 & & S_{e+1} & \xrightarrow{F} & S_{e+1} \\
 & \swarrow \sigma_{e+1} & & \searrow \varphi_{e+1} & \\
 S_e & \xleftarrow{F} & S_e & \xleftarrow{\sigma_{e+1}} & S_e \\
 & \searrow \varphi_e & \uparrow \vartheta_e & \swarrow \sigma_e & \\
 & & S_{e-1} & & 
 \end{array}$$

Therefore, by taking the inverse limit, we obtain a commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 S & \xrightarrow{F} & S \\
 & \searrow \varphi & \uparrow \vartheta \\
 & & S
 \end{array}$$

of rings. One readily sees that  $\varphi$  is injective and therefore  $S$  is reduced. On the other hand,

$$\{x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_n^{i_n}\}_{0 \leq i_1, \dots, i_n \leq p-1}$$

is a basis for  $S$  as an  $S$ -module by restriction of scalars along  $\theta$ . Thus, putting everything together, we see that

$$F_*S = \bigoplus_{0 \leq i_1, \dots, i_n \leq p-1} SF_*x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_n^{i_n}.$$

Thus, we're done if  $S$  is noetherian, which is the content of the theorem. This is actually an involved proof. Those interested, can try themselves or read a proof in [MP].  $\square$

**Corollary 3.9.**  *$F$ -finite rings have finite dimension.*

*Remark 3.10.* Corollary 3.9 was originally obtained by Kunz [Kun76]. However, I understand his proof is flawed due to some equi-dimensionality issues. Nonetheless, there are proofs of Corollary 3.9 that are independent of Gabber's result. I think we'll see one later on.

*Question 3.11* (Noether normalization of  $F$ -finite rings). Is an  $F$ -finite ring a finite (separable) extension of an  $F$ -finite regular ring that admits a  $p$ -basis?

**Corollary 3.12.**  *$F$ -finite rings admit a canonical module.<sup>13</sup> Namely,*

$$\omega_R := \text{Ext}_S^{\dim S - \dim R}(R, S),$$

where  $S \twoheadrightarrow R$  is as in Theorem 3.8.

*Remark 3.13.* By the way, not all excellent rings admit a canonical module, see [?]. This is an aspect in which  $F$ -finite rings beat excellent ones.

**Exercise\* 3.11.** Prove that  $R$  is Cohen–Macaulay iff  $\text{Ext}_S^i(R, S) = 0$  for all  $i \neq \dim S - \dim R$ . So far, we've only defined local Cohen–Macaulay rings. Take the definition of general Cohen–Macaulay as being Cohen–Macaulay at all localizations at prime ideals (so you may reduce to the local case).

<sup>13</sup>Don't worry at all if you don't know what this means. It's a little bit of a mess but we'll get back to it later when we need it. But it's a really important thing worth noting right away.

I hope the above convinces the reader that  $F$ -finite rings are pretty awesome. There's yet another reason why this is the case. Those rings that are pretty awesome for algebraic geometry have already been axiomatized and named, namely *excellent rings*.<sup>14</sup> Their definition is a bit of a mouthful though.

**Definition 3.14.** A noetherian ring is said to be *excellent* if

- (a) the completion homomorphism  $R_{\mathfrak{p}} \rightarrow \hat{R}_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is regular for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \operatorname{Spec} R$ ,
- (b) all  $R$ -algebras of finite type have open regular loci, and
- (c) all  $R$ -algebras of finite type are catenary (aka universally catenary).

**Theorem 3.15** (Kunz [Kun76]).  *$F$ -finite rings are excellent. Conversely, a local ring  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{K})$  is  $F$ -finite if (and only if) it is excellent and  $\mathbb{K}$  is  $F$ -finite.*

*Remark 3.16* (On the proof). The proof is too lengthy to be worthwhile doing here. However, the reader should be able to prove already as an exercise that  $F$ -finite rings satisfy the first two properties of excellence; which are referred to as *quasi-excellent*, using Radu–André's theorem for (a). Furthermore, the point is the  $F$ -finite property is already a notion of excellence in positive characteristics that is much better to deal with than excellence itself. So for instance, there will be many properties excellent rings have and we'll need that can be obtained directly from  $F$ -finiteness. So that's the approach we'll take. A very nice detailed proof can be found in [MP].

#### 4. $F$ -PURITY, $F$ -SPLITTINGS, AND FEDDER'S CRITERION

Ok, here we are, we're ready to introduce our first notion of  $F$ -singularity. Let  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  be an  $R$ -algebra and  $f := \operatorname{Spec} \theta: \operatorname{Spec} S \rightarrow \operatorname{Spec} R$ . Recall that  $\theta$  is flat if  $f^*$  is an exact functor and it is faithfully flat if it further satisfies any and so all of the following equivalent conditions (for a flat morphism):

- (a) For every  $R$ -module  $M$ , if  $M \neq 0$  then  $f^*M \neq 0$ .
- (b) For every sequence  $M' \rightarrow M \rightarrow M''$  of  $R$ -modules, if  $f^*M' \rightarrow f^*M \rightarrow f^*M''$  is exact then is exact  $M' \rightarrow M \rightarrow M''$ .
- (c) The map  $f$  is surjective.
- (d) For every maximal ideal  $\mathfrak{m} \in \operatorname{Spec} S$ , we have  $\mathfrak{m}S \neq S$ .

Recall that, since  $\operatorname{Spec} F = \operatorname{id}$ , flatness and faithful flatness are the same thing for the Frobenius map. And by Kunz's theorem, they're the same as the regularity of the ring. So what's a natural weakening for faithful flatness?

**Definition 4.1** (Purity and splitness). We say that  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  is *pure* if

$$\eta_M: M \rightarrow f_*f^*M$$

is injective for all  $R$ -modules  $M$ . We say that  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  is *split* if

$$\operatorname{Tr}_R: f_*f^!R \rightarrow R$$

is surjective.

*Remark 4.2.* Observe that  $\eta_M = \eta_R \otimes M$ , and so the purity of  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  means that  $\eta_R = \theta: R \rightarrow S$  remains injective after tensoring with any  $R$ -module  $M$ . On the other hand,

<sup>14</sup>Feel free to read their Wikipedia entry to glimpse at why.

note that  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  is split iff there is  $\phi \in \text{Hom}_R(S, R)$  such that  $\phi(1) = 1$ , *i.e.* such that the following diagram commutes

$$\begin{array}{ccc} R & \xrightarrow{\eta_R=\theta} & S \\ & \searrow \text{id} & \downarrow \phi \\ & & R \end{array}$$

We may refer to any such  $\phi$  as a  $\theta$ -splitting. In particular, one can tensor this diagram by  $M$  to get that  $\phi \otimes_R M: f_* f^* M \rightarrow M$  is a splitting of  $\eta_M$ , which forces  $\eta_M$  to be injective. In other words,

$$\text{SPLITNESS} \implies \text{PURITY}$$

what about the converse?

**Exercise 4.1.** Show that in the definition of purity we may have restricted to finitely generated  $R$ -modules  $M$  only.

**Proposition 4.3** (Faithfull flatness implies purity). *If  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  is faithfully flat then it is pure.*

*Proof.* Let  $M$  be an  $R$ -module. Then,  $\eta_M: M \rightarrow f_* f^* M$  is injective if and only if so is

$$f^* \eta_M: f^* M \rightarrow f^* f_* f^* M$$

However, according to Exercise 3.7, the map

$$\epsilon_{f^* M}: f^* f_* f^* M \rightarrow f^* M$$

is a splitting of  $f^* \eta_M$ . And so we're done.  $\square$

**Exercise 4.2.** Let  $\mathbb{Z}_{(p)} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_p$  the canonical homomorphism, *i.e.*  $p$ -adic completion. It is faithfully flat and so pure. Show that it is not split, so that purity doesn't imply splitness.

**Exercise 4.3.** Show that  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  is pure (resp. faithfully flat) iff so is  $\theta_{\mathfrak{p}}: R_{\mathfrak{p}} \rightarrow S_{\mathfrak{p}}$  for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } R$ . Prove that if  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  is split then so are  $\theta_{\mathfrak{p}}: R_{\mathfrak{p}} \rightarrow S_{\mathfrak{p}}$  for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } R$ . What about the converse?

One reason why splitness doesn't have a behavior as nice as the one exhibit by purity is that  $\text{Hom}$  doesn't commute with flat base change. However,

**Exercise 4.4.** Let  $M, N$  be  $R$ -modules and consider a flat  $R$ -algebra  $T$ . Consider the canonical homomorphism of  $T$ -modules

$$T \otimes_R \text{Hom}_R(M, N) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_T(T \otimes_R M, T \otimes_R N), \quad 1 \otimes \phi \mapsto T \otimes_R \phi.$$

Prove that it is an isomorphism if  $M$  is finitely presented Hint: Use a presentation of  $M$  to reduce to the free case where it is trivial. Conclude that if  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  is a finite  $R$ -algebra such that  $\theta_{\mathfrak{p}}: R_{\mathfrak{p}} \rightarrow S_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is split for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } R$  then  $\theta$  is split.

The next ingredient to elucidate when splitness is the same as purity is the so-called *Matlis Duality*.

**4.1. A quick overview of Matlis duality.** I strongly recommend/urge you to go read the appendix of [ILL<sup>+</sup>07] if you haven't heard about Matlis Duality and all the stuff around it. But, in a nutshell, here's the deal [Sta23, Tag 08Z9]. Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{k})$  be an equi-characteristic complete local ring.<sup>15</sup> We consider an *injective hull*

$$E = E(\mathbb{k}) = E_R(\mathbb{k})$$

of  $\mathbb{k}$  (as an  $R$ -module). By the definition,  $E \supset \mathbb{k}$  is an injective  $R$ -module such that every non-zero submodule of it intersect  $\mathbb{k}$  non-trivially. As a matter of fact,  $E$  exists and is unique up to non-unique isomorphism.<sup>16</sup> For notation ease, let  $\mathcal{N}$  be the (full) subcategory of noetherian  $R$ -modules (*i.e.* f.g.  $R$ -modules) and  $\mathcal{A}$  the one of artinian  $R$ -modules. Then,  $\mathcal{D} := \mathrm{Hom}_R(-, E)$  induces a faithful exact (contravariant) functor

$$\mathcal{D}: \mathcal{N} \rightarrow \mathcal{A}$$

and at the same time

$$\mathcal{D}: \mathcal{A} \rightarrow \mathcal{N}$$

and, moreover, there are natural isomorphisms

$$\mathrm{id}_{\mathcal{N}} \cong \mathcal{D} \circ \mathcal{D} \quad \mathrm{id}_{\mathcal{A}} = \mathcal{D} \circ \mathcal{D}.$$

In other words,  $\mathcal{D}$  induces an anti-equivalence between the category of noetherian  $R$ -modules and the one of artinian  $R$ -modules! That's pretty wild if you ask me. Now, we might come back to it later on with the details. For now, this is all I need you to know. For example, the above relies on the canonical map

$$R \xrightarrow{r \mapsto \cdot r} \mathrm{Hom}_R(E, E)$$

being an isomorphism (telling you that  $R$  and  $E$  are Matlis dual to one another). Use this to show the following.

**Exercise 4.5.** Show that, for every finitely generated  $R$ -module  $M$ , the (finitely generated  $R$ -module)  $\mathrm{Hom}_R(M, R)$  is Matlis dual to the artinian  $R$ -module  $E \otimes_R M$ .

Later on, we'll see the so-called local duality theorem, which is (at the very least) an extremely powerful tool to compute Matlis duals. For instance, it tells you that the Matlis dual of  $\mathrm{Hom}_R(M, \omega_R)$  (which is noetherian) is the *local cohomology* module  $H_{\mathfrak{m}}^{\dim R}(M)$  (which is artinian).<sup>17</sup> In particular,  $\omega_R$  is the Matlis dual of  $H_{\mathfrak{m}}^{\dim R}(R)$ , and  $E = H_{\mathfrak{m}}^{\dim R}(\omega_R)$ .

We started our remark assuming that  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{k})$  is complete. If we drop this hypothesis, we obtain instead a natural isomorphism

$$\hat{R} \otimes_R - \xrightarrow{\cong} \mathcal{D} \circ \mathcal{D}$$

on  $\mathcal{N}$ . In particular, we obtain a canonical isomorphism

$$\hat{R} \xrightarrow{\cong} \mathrm{Hom}_R(E, E)$$

which realizes  $E$  as an  $\hat{R}$ -module! In fact,  $E$  is an injective hull of  $\mathbb{k}$  as an  $\hat{R}$ -module. Let that sink in. Thus, an injective hull of  $\mathbb{k}$  as an  $\hat{R}$ -module is the same as one as an  $R$ -module. This is gonna come up below. Here's an example worth having in mind that illustrates this.

<sup>15</sup>That is, it is a  $\mathbb{k}$ -algebra.

<sup>16</sup>This is a very general thing—it has nothing to do with  $\mathbb{k}$  being the residue field nor  $R$  being a complete local ring.

<sup>17</sup>Here, we use that  $R$  is complete to say that it has a canonical module  $\omega_R$ , say  $\omega_R = \mathrm{Hom}_A(R, A)$  where  $A \subset R$  is any noether normalization.

**Example 4.4** (Explicit description of injective hulls of residue fields). The injective hull of the residue field, although rather mysterious looking at first, it's often in practice a very explicit object. Let's consider, for example,  $R = \mathbb{k}[x_1, \dots, x_n]_{(x_1, \dots, x_n)}$ . It turns out that we may take  $E$  to be the  $\mathbb{k}$ -vector space

$$E = E_R(\mathbb{k}) := \bigoplus_{0 < i_1, \dots, i_n \in \mathbb{N}} \mathbb{k} \cdot \frac{1}{x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_n^{i_n}} \xleftarrow{u := \frac{1}{x_1 \cdots x_n} \leftarrow 1} \mathbb{k}$$

where the  $R$ -linear action is what you expect:

$$x_j \cdot \frac{1}{x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_n^{i_n}} = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_j^{i_j-1} \cdots x_n^{i_n}} & \text{if } i_j > 1, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

In particular, a fix  $1/(x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_n^{i_n})$  is killed by all monomials of sufficiently large degree. This is why the above action extends to an  $\hat{R} = \mathbb{k}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]$ -linear! That is,  $E$  is also and  $\hat{R}$ -module. In fact, it equals  $E_{\hat{R}}(\mathbb{k})$ . Check this:

**Exercise 4.6.** Verify that the above  $E$  is an injective hull of  $\mathbb{k}$  over both  $R$  and  $\hat{R}$ .

The element

$$u := \frac{1}{x_1 \cdots x_n} \in E$$

is particularly distinguished gentleman. It's called the *socle element* of  $E$ . To see why, do the following exercise.

**Exercise 4.7.** Prove that  $\text{Soc } E = \mathbb{k} \cdot u$ , where  $\mathbb{k} \cdot u$  is the copy of  $\mathbb{k}$  inside  $E$ .

It's also customary to give  $E$  a  $\mathbb{Z}$ -grading by declaring

$$\deg \frac{1}{x_1^{i_1} \cdots x_n^{i_n}} := -(i_1 + \cdots + i_n)$$

Let  $E_d$  the direct summand of  $E$  of degree  $d$  (e.g.  $E_d = 0$  for all  $d > -n$ ). Letting  $S_d$  denote the  $\mathbb{k}$ -module of polynomials of degree  $d$ , the above induces a perfect pairing of  $\mathbb{k}$ -modules

$$S_d \otimes_{\mathbb{k}} E_{-n-d} \rightarrow E_{-n} = \mathbb{k} \cdot u \cong \mathbb{k}.$$

The above tell us how to write down an injective hull of  $\mathbb{k}$  over  $\mathbb{k}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]$ . But what about other complete  $\mathbb{k}$ -algebras, i.e. quotients of  $\mathbb{k}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]$ ? Let  $A := \mathbb{k}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]/\mathfrak{a}$  be a complete local  $\mathbb{k}$ -algebra. Then, we may take its injective hull of the residue field as

$$E_A(\mathbb{k}) := \{\varepsilon \in E = E_{\hat{R}}(\mathbb{k}) \mid \varepsilon \mathfrak{a} = 0\} = \text{Hom}_{\hat{R}}(A, E),$$

which is an (injective)  $A$ -module by definition—it is annihilated by  $\mathfrak{a}$ .

**Exercise 4.8.** Verify that this is indeed an injective hull of  $\mathbb{k}$  over  $A$  and show that its socle is  $\mathbb{k} \cdot u$ . In particular,  $u \in E_A(\mathbb{k})$  and we refer to it as the *socle element* of  $E_A(\mathbb{k})$ .<sup>18</sup>

This is in fact just a particular case of the following.

**Theorem 4.5** ([ILL<sup>+</sup>07, Theorem A.25]). *Let  $\theta: (R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathbb{k}) \rightarrow (S, \mathfrak{n}, \ell)$  be a local finite homomorphism. Then,  $E_S(\ell) = \text{Hom}_R(S, E_R(\mathbb{k}))$ .*

<sup>18</sup>Probably we should be saying a socle element. A socle element is any generator of the socle and they differ up to multiplication by units of  $\mathbb{k}$ . I guess it's ok to say the socle when it has been chosen in such a specific way.

The above explicit description of injective hulls has the virtue of telling us why the following holds.

**Exercise 4.9.** Let  $\mathcal{L}/\mathcal{K}$  be an arbitrary extension of fields and consider the canonical local and flat homomorphism

$$R_{\mathcal{K}} := \mathcal{K}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]] \rightarrow R_{\mathcal{L}} := \mathcal{L}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]$$

obtained as the  $(x_1, \dots, x_n)$ -adic completion of the flat canonical homomorphism

$$\mathcal{K}[x_1, \dots, x_n] \rightarrow \mathcal{L}[x_1, \dots, x_n] = \mathcal{L} \otimes_{\mathcal{K}} \mathcal{K}[x_1, \dots, x_n].$$

Show that

$$E_{R_{\mathcal{L}}}(\mathcal{L}) = R_{\mathcal{L}} \otimes_{R_{\mathcal{K}}} E_{R_{\mathcal{K}}}(\mathcal{K}),$$

where the socle element of  $E_{R_{\mathcal{L}}}(\mathcal{L})$  corresponds to 1 tensor the socle element of  $E_{R_{\mathcal{K}}}(\mathcal{K})$ . More generally, use this to show that, if  $\mathfrak{a} \subset R_{\mathcal{K}}$  is an ideal, then

$$E_{R_{\mathcal{L}}/\mathfrak{a}R_{\mathcal{L}}}(\mathcal{L}) = R_{\mathcal{L}}/\mathfrak{a}R_{\mathcal{L}} \otimes_{R_{\mathcal{K}}/\mathfrak{a}} E_{R_{\mathcal{K}}/\mathfrak{a}}(\mathcal{K})$$

and that likewise the socle element base changes to the socle element. Observe that  $R_{\mathcal{K}}/\mathfrak{a} \rightarrow R_{\mathcal{L}}/\mathfrak{a}R_{\mathcal{L}}$  is a (faithfully) flat local homomorphism and so pure. In particular, we obtain a canonical commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} E_{R_{\mathcal{K}}/\mathfrak{a}}(\mathcal{K}) & \xrightarrow{\quad} & E_{R_{\mathcal{L}}/\mathfrak{a}R_{\mathcal{L}}}(\mathcal{L}) \\ & \nwarrow \scriptstyle 1 \mapsto u & \nearrow \scriptstyle 1 \mapsto u \\ & \mathcal{K} & \end{array}$$

where the diagonal arrows are the socle maps.

**Exercise 4.10.** Show that a map  $\phi \in \text{Hom}_R(E, M)$  is injective if (and only if)  $\phi(u) \neq 0$  (where  $u \in E$  is the socle element).

**4.2. Back to purity vs splitness.** Using Matlis duality we can see the following.

**Proposition 4.6.** Let  $\theta: (R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K}) \rightarrow S$  be an  $R$ -algebra such that  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  is complete (and equi-characteristic). Let  $E$  the injective hull of  $\mathcal{K}$  and  $u \in E$  be a socle element. Then, the following statements are equivalent

- (a)  $\theta$  is pure.
- (b)  $\eta_E: E \rightarrow S \otimes_R E$  is injective.
- (c)  $0 \neq 1 \otimes u \in S \otimes_R E$ .
- (d)  $\theta$  is split.

*Proof.* We only need to explain why (b) implies (d) (see Exercise 4.10). That is, we gotta show that the trace

$$\text{Tr}_R: \text{Hom}_R(S, R) \rightarrow R$$

is surjective assuming that

$$\eta_E: E \rightarrow S \otimes_R E$$

is injective. Applying the exact contravariant functor  $\mathcal{D}(-) = \text{Hom}_R(-, E)$ ,<sup>19</sup> we obtain that  $\mathcal{D}(\eta_E)$  is surjective. However, we have the following commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \text{Hom}_R(S, R) & \xrightarrow{\text{Tr}_R} & R \\ \sigma \mapsto \sigma \otimes E \downarrow & & \downarrow \cong: 1 \mapsto \text{id}_E \\ \text{Hom}_R(S \otimes_R E, E) & \xrightarrow{\mathcal{D}(\eta_E)} & \text{Hom}_R(E, E) \end{array}$$

where the right-hand vertical arrow is an isomorphism by Matlis duality. We claim that the left-hand vertical arrow is an isomorphism too. Indeed, recall that by  $\otimes$ -Hom adjointness

$$\text{Hom}_R(S \otimes_R E, E) \xleftarrow[\psi(s)(\varepsilon) \leftarrow s \otimes \varepsilon \leftarrow \psi]{\phi \mapsto (s \mapsto \phi \circ E \otimes (s: R \rightarrow S))} \text{Hom}_R(S, \text{Hom}_R(E, E))$$

is an isomorphism. Moreover, the composition

$$\text{Hom}_R(S, R) \xrightarrow{\sigma \mapsto \sigma \otimes E} \text{Hom}_R(S \otimes_R E, E) \xrightarrow{\phi \mapsto (s \mapsto \phi \circ E \otimes (s: R \rightarrow S))} \text{Hom}_R(S, \text{Hom}_R(E, E))$$

is exactly

$$f^!(R \xrightarrow{\cong: 1 \mapsto \text{id}_E} \text{Hom}_R(E, E))$$

and so an isomorphism. This proves the proposition. Isn't all this nonsense just pretty?  $\square$

**Exercise 4.11.** In the setup of Proposition 4.6, let  $M$  be an  $R$ -module. Prove that  $\mathcal{D}$  of  $\eta_{\mathcal{D}(M)}$  is (up to canonical isomorphism)  $\text{Tr}_M$ . Hint: in Proposition 4.6 we did the case  $M = R$ .

**Scholium 4.7.** Let  $\theta: (R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K}) \rightarrow S$  be a finite  $R$  algebra such that  $R$  is complete. Then,  $\eta_E$  and  $\text{Tr}_R$  are Matlis dual to one another. More generally,  $\eta_{\mathcal{D}(M)}$  and  $\text{Tr}_M$  are Matlis dual to one another for all finitely generated  $R$ -modules  $M$ .

**Corollary 4.8.** Let  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  be a finite  $R$ -algebra. If  $\theta$  is pure then it is split.

*Proof.* Since  $\theta$  is finite, we may assume that  $R$  is local (see Exercise 4.4). Since  $R \rightarrow \hat{R}$  is faithfully flat, we assume that  $R$  is further complete (see Exercise 4.4). The result then follows from Proposition 4.6.  $\square$

**Corollary 4.9.** Let  $\theta: (R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K}) \rightarrow S$  be an  $R$ -algebra and  $E$  be an injective hull of  $\mathcal{K}$  with socle element  $u \in E$ . The following statements are equivalent:

- (a)  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  is pure.
- (b)  $\eta_E: E \rightarrow S \otimes_R E$  is injective (i.e.  $0 \neq 1 \otimes u \in S \otimes_R E$ ).
- (c)  $\hat{\theta}: \hat{R} \rightarrow \hat{S}$  is pure.

*Proof.* Let's start showing the equivalence between (b) and (c). For this, we use that  $E$  is automatically an injective hull of  $\mathcal{K}$  as an  $\hat{R}$ -module. Observe that  $\eta_E: E \rightarrow \hat{S} \otimes_{\hat{R}} E$  factors as

$$E \xrightarrow{\eta_E} S \otimes_R E \rightarrow \hat{S} \otimes_R E = \hat{S} \otimes_{\hat{R}} E$$

where the second map is  $E$  tensor the canonical faithfully flat (and so pure) homomorphism  $S \rightarrow \hat{S}$ , whence it is injective. This means that  $E \rightarrow \hat{S} \otimes_{\hat{R}} E$  is injective iff so is  $E \rightarrow S \otimes_R E$ .

It remains to explain why (c) implies (a). Assume that  $\hat{\theta}$  is pure and so split. Let  $\phi \in \text{Hom}_{\hat{R}}(\hat{S}, \hat{R})$  be a splitting. Now, let  $M$  be an  $R$ -module. Since  $R \rightarrow \hat{R}$  is faithfully flat,

<sup>19</sup>Whose exactness simply means that  $E$  is an injective  $R$ -module



to show that  $\eta_M: M \rightarrow S \otimes_R M$  is injective, we may do it after base changing it to  $\hat{R}$ . But  $\hat{R} \otimes_R \eta_M$  is injective because it is split by the composition

$$\hat{R} \otimes_R S \otimes_R M \rightarrow \hat{S} \otimes_R M \xrightarrow{\phi \otimes M} \hat{R} \otimes_R M,$$

where the first map is  $M$  tensor the canonical map  $\hat{R} \otimes_R S \rightarrow \hat{S}$ , □

**4.3. The purity and splitness of Frobenius.** We made it, here's the key concept in the theory.

**Definition 4.10** ( $F$ -purity and  $F$ -splitness). Let  $R/\mathbb{F}_p$  be a noetherian  $\mathbb{F}_p$ -algebra. We say that  $R$  is  $F$ -pure (resp.  $F$ -split) if  $F^e: R \rightarrow R$  is pure (resp. split) for some/all  $0 \neq e \in \mathbb{N}$ . A map  $\phi \in \text{Hom}_R(F_*^e R, R)$  such that  $\phi(F_*^e 1) = 1$  is referred to as an  $F^e$ -splitting.

**Corollary 4.11.** Both regular rings and  $F$ -split rings are  $F$ -pure. Further,  $F$ -pure rings are reduced.

**Corollary 4.12.** A ring  $R$  is  $F$ -pure if and only if  $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is  $F$ -pure for all  $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } R$ .

*Remark 4.13.* The same can't be said about  $F$ -splitness. In fact, there are regular rings that aren't  $F$ -split; see [?]. This is why I don't think you can think of  $F$ -splitness as an honest notion of singularity, unless it matches  $F$ -purity by some good external reason.

**Corollary 4.14.** Suppose that  $R$  is either a complete local ring or  $F$ -finite. Then, it is  $F$ -pure iff it is  $F$ -split.

**Corollary 4.15.** Let  $(R, \mathfrak{m}, \mathcal{K})$  be a local ring. Then it is  $F$ -pure if and only if  $\hat{R}$  is  $F$ -split.

**Exercise 4.12.** Let  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  be a pure (resp. split)  $R$ -algebra. Prove that if  $S$  is  $F$ -pure (resp.  $F$ -split) then so is  $R$ . Conclude that “direct summands” of regular rings are  $F$ -pure.

**Exercise 4.13.** Working in the setup of Exercise 4.9, prove that  $R_{\mathcal{K}}/\mathfrak{a}$  is  $F$ -pure (i.e.  $F$ -split) if and only if so is  $R_{\mathcal{L}}/\mathfrak{a}R_{\mathcal{L}}$ . Hint: The forward implication “ $\Rightarrow$ ” follows at once from Exercise 4.12 as  $A_{\mathcal{K}} := R_{\mathcal{K}}/\mathfrak{a} \rightarrow A_{\mathcal{L}} := R_{\mathcal{L}}/\mathfrak{a}R_{\mathcal{L}}$  is faithfully flat and so pure. The converse is the more interesting part. To prove it, use Exercise 4.9 to chase the socle element along the following commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} E_{A_{\mathcal{K}}}(\mathcal{K}) & \xrightarrow{\eta} & F_*^e A_{\mathcal{K}} \otimes_{A_{\mathcal{K}}} E_{A_{\mathcal{K}}}(\mathcal{K}) \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \theta \\ E_{A_{\mathcal{L}}}(\mathcal{L}) & \xrightarrow{\eta} & F_*^e A_{\mathcal{L}} \otimes_{A_{\mathcal{L}}} E_{A_{\mathcal{L}}}(\mathcal{L}) \end{array}$$

where the map  $\theta$  is injective as it corresponds to the canonical map

$$F_*^e A_{\mathcal{K}} \otimes_{A_{\mathcal{K}}} E_{A_{\mathcal{K}}}(\mathcal{K}) \rightarrow F_*^e A_{\mathcal{L}} \otimes_{F_*^e A_{\mathcal{K}}} (F_*^e A_{\mathcal{K}} \otimes_{A_{\mathcal{K}}} E_{A_{\mathcal{K}}}(\mathcal{K})),$$

which is injective as  $A_{\mathcal{K}} \rightarrow A_{\mathcal{L}}$  and so  $F_*^e A_{\mathcal{K}} \rightarrow F_*^e A_{\mathcal{L}}$  are pure.

**4.4. Fedder's criterion.** How to know when a ring is  $F$ -pure you may wonder? Fedder's criterion is the answer. Let's start with a warm up and let's express Fedder's criterion for rings that admit a  $p$ -basis.

**Exercise 4.14** (Fedder's criterion for  $p$ -bases). Let  $S$  be a regular  $F$ -finite ring that admits a  $p$ -basis; see Exercise 3.10. Let  $\mathfrak{a} \subset S$  be an ideal with quotient  $R := S/\mathfrak{a}$ . Let  $\mathfrak{p} \subset \mathfrak{a}$  be

a prime ideal, which we may think of as a prime ideal of  $R$ . In the context of the exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow F_*^e \mathfrak{a}^{[q]} \rightarrow F_*^e(\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a}) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_R(F_*^e R, R) \rightarrow 0$$

Show that  $\text{Hom}_R(F_*^e R, \mathfrak{p})$  corresponds to

$$F_*^e \left( \frac{(\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a}) \cap \mathfrak{p}^{[q]}}{\mathfrak{a}^{[q]}} \right)$$

Conclude that  $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is  $F$ -pure if and only if  $\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a} \not\subset \mathfrak{p}^{[q]}$ .

Of course, Fedder's criterion is not very useful unless we can compute  $\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a}$ , which is in general no joke. There's, however, an important case that isn't terribly hard. Namely,

**Lemma 4.16.** *Let  $\mathfrak{a} \subset S$  be generated by a regular sequence  $f_1, \dots, f_n$  (here, we don't assume that  $S$  is regular) that remains regular after any permutation.<sup>20</sup> Then, the inclusion*

$$\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a} \supset (f_1^q, \dots, f_n^q, (f_1 \cdots f_n)^{q-1})$$

*is an equality.*

*Proof.* We proceed by induction on  $n$ . If  $n = 1$ , we readily see that  $(f)^{[q]} : (f) = (f^{q-1})$  as soon as  $f$  is a regular element on  $S$ . Indeed, if  $sf = hf^q$  then  $s = hf^{q-1}$  as  $f$  is not a zero-divisor. Assume the result for all  $1, \dots, n-1$ . Let  $s \in S$  be such that

$$sf_i = \sum_{j=1}^n s_{ij} f_j^q, \quad \forall i = 1, \dots, n$$

for some matrix  $s_{ij} \in S$ . We want to show that  $s$  is divisible by  $(f_1 \cdots f_n)^{q-1}$  module  $(f_1^q, \dots, f_n^q)$ . Now, we use Exercise 1.13 to say that  $f_1^q, \dots, f_{n-1}^q, f_n$  is a regular sequence. So, if we look at the  $n$ -th equation above, this tells us that  $s - s_{nn} f_n^{q-1} \in (f_1^q, \dots, f_{n-1}^q)$  and so we may assume that  $s$  is divisible by  $f_n^{q-1}$ . That is, we're free to replace  $s$  by, say,  $s' f_n^{q-1}$ . Let's look then at the equations

$$s' f_n^{q-1} f_i = \sum_{j=1}^n s_{ij} f_j^q, \quad \forall i = 1, \dots, n-1.$$

Since  $f_1^q, \dots, f_{n-1}^q, f_n^{q-1}$  is a regular sequence, we conclude that  $s' f_i - s_{in} f_n \in (f_1^q, \dots, f_{n-1}^q)$  for all  $i = 1, \dots, n-1$ . In particular,  $s' f_i \in (f_1^q, \dots, f_{n-1}^q, f_n)$  for all  $i = 1, \dots, n-1$ . Now, here's the thing, let's use that  $f_n, f_1^q, \dots, f_{n-1}^q$  is a regular sequence<sup>21</sup> together with the inductive hypothesis to conclude that

$$s' \in (f_1^q, \dots, f_{n-1}^q, (f_1 \cdots f_{n-1})^{q-1}, f_n)$$

and so

$$s = s' f_n^{q-1} \in (f_1^q, \dots, f_{n-1}^q, (f_1 \cdots f_n)^{q-1});$$

as required. □

*Remark 4.17.* I don't know whether Lemma 4.16 still works if we drop the permutability assumption. I think I might've heard people claim it without it but I'm not sure. Certainly, I don't see how to prove it without this hypothesis. Do you? If so, please let me know!

<sup>20</sup>For instance, we may assume that  $n \leq 2$  or well that  $S$  is either local or that it is a polynomial ring over a field and the  $f_i$ 's are homogeneous. See Remark 1.10.

<sup>21</sup>And here's where we need that we need to be able to permute the elements in the regular sequence!

**Corollary 4.18** (Fedder's criterion of complete intersections). *Let  $S$  be an  $F$ -finite regular ring such that  $\mathrm{Hom}_S(F_*^e S, S)$  is principally generated by a (Frobenius trace)  $\Phi^e$  as an  $F_*^e S$ -module.<sup>22</sup> If  $\mathfrak{a} \subset S$  is generated by a permutable regular sequence, then  $\mathrm{Hom}_R(F_*^e R, R)$  is principally generated by the restriction of  $\Phi^e(f_1 \cdots f_n)^{q-1}$  as an  $F_*^e R$ -module. Moreover, if  $S$  admits a  $p$ -basis, then  $R$  is  $F$ -pure at  $\mathfrak{p} \subset \mathfrak{a}$  if and only if  $(f_1 \cdots f_n)^{q-1} \notin \mathfrak{p}^{[q]}$ .<sup>23</sup>*

**Exercise 4.15.** Let  $f := x_0^n + \cdots + x_d^n \in S := \mathbb{F}_p[x_0, \dots, x_d]$ . Use Fedder's criterion to characterize those triples  $(p, n, d)$  for which  $R := S/f$  is  $F$ -pure. Good luck and have fun!

**Lemma 4.19** (Colon ideals and flat base change). *Let  $\theta: R \rightarrow S$  be a flat algebra and  $\mathfrak{a}, \mathfrak{b} \subset R$  be ideals. Then, the inclusion of ideals*

$$(\mathfrak{b} :_R \mathfrak{a})S \subset \mathfrak{b}S :_S \mathfrak{a}S$$

*is an equality.*

*Proof.* Since  $\theta$  is flat, the canonical surjective map  $S \otimes_R \mathfrak{a} \rightarrow \mathfrak{a}S$  is an isomorphism for all ideals  $\mathfrak{a} \subset S$ . On the other hand, writing  $\mathfrak{a} = (a_1, \dots, a_n)$  (which uses noetherianity) yields an exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow \mathfrak{b} : \mathfrak{a} \xrightarrow{\subseteq} R \xrightarrow{r \mapsto (ra_1, \dots, ra_n)} (R/\mathfrak{b})^{\times n}$$

We may FLAT base change it to obtain an exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow S \otimes_R (\mathfrak{b} : \mathfrak{a}) \rightarrow S \xrightarrow{s \mapsto (sa_1, \dots, sa_n)} (S/\mathfrak{b}S)^{\times n}$$

which implies what we want.  $\square$

**Exercise 4.16.** Let  $\theta: (R, \mathfrak{m}) \rightarrow (S, \mathfrak{n})$  be a local homomorphism and  $\mathfrak{a} \subset R$  be an ideal. Show that  $\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a} \subset \mathfrak{m}^{[q]}$  if  $(\mathfrak{a}S)^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a}S \subset \mathfrak{n}^{[q]}$ . Show that the converse holds if  $\theta$  is flat (and so faithfully flat). Hint: use the previous Lemma 4.19.

**Theorem 4.20** (Local Fedder's criterion). *Let  $(S, \mathfrak{n}, \mathcal{K})$  be a regular local ring and  $\mathfrak{a} \subset \mathfrak{n} \subset S$  be an ideal. Then, the local ring  $(R := S/\mathfrak{a}, \mathfrak{m} := \mathfrak{n}/\mathfrak{a}, \mathcal{K})$  is  $F$ -pure if and only if  $\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a} \not\subset \mathfrak{n}^{[q]}$ .*

*Proof.* Notice that we may assume that  $S$  and so  $R$  are complete. Indeed,  $F$ -purity is preserved and can be checked after completion (see Corollary 4.15). Furthermore,  $\hat{R} = \hat{S}/\hat{\mathfrak{a}}\hat{S}$ , and  $\mathfrak{a}^{[q]} : \mathfrak{a} \not\subset \mathfrak{n}^{[q]}$  if and only if  $\hat{\mathfrak{a}}^{[q]} : \hat{\mathfrak{a}} \not\subset \hat{\mathfrak{n}}^{[q]}$  (see Exercise 4.16), where  $\hat{\mathfrak{a}} := \hat{\mathfrak{a}}\hat{S}$  and  $\hat{\mathfrak{n}} = \hat{\mathfrak{n}}\hat{S}$ .

So it suffices to show the case  $S = \mathcal{K}[[x_1, \dots, x_d]]$ . If  $\mathcal{K}$  and so  $S$  were  $F$ -finite then we're done as we'd have a  $p$ -basis (see Exercise 4.14). To reduce to that case, we consider  $S' := \mathcal{K}_{\mathrm{perf}}[[x_1, \dots, x_n]]$  where  $\mathcal{K}_{\mathrm{perf}} \supset \mathcal{K}$  is the perfection of  $\mathcal{K}$  (which is a perfect and so  $F$ -finite field). We can then apply Exercise 4.13 and Exercise 4.16 to  $S \rightarrow S'$  to conclude.  $\square$

## 5. CANONICAL MODULES

## 6. CARTIER ALGEBRAS AND SCHWEDE'S CORRESPONDENCE

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<sup>22</sup>For instance, if either  $S$  admits a  $p$ -basis or it is local. It turns out that this is a general abstract property local Gorenstein rings enjoy as we'll see later on. And, as you may expect, regular local rings are Gorenstein.

<sup>23</sup>This last part only needs that  $f_1, \dots, f_n$  is a regular sequence on  $R_{\mathfrak{p}}$ .

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