

Title

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1 | Lecture 10

Remark 1.0.1: What we've been calling a *torsor* (a sheaf with a group action plus conditions) is called by some sources a **pseudotorsor** (e.g. the Stacks Project), and what we've been calling a *locally trivial torsor* is referred to as a *torsor* instead.

Recall that statement of ??; we'll now continue with the proof:

Proof (of Hilbert 90).

Observation 1.0.2: Let $\tau = X_{\text{zar}}, X_{\text{ét}}, X_{\text{fppf}}$, then the data of a GL_n -torsor split by a τ -cover $U \rightarrow X$ is the same as descent data for a vector bundle relative to U/X .

This descent data comes from the following:

$$\begin{array}{c} U \times_X U \\ \pi_1 \downarrow \quad \downarrow \pi_2 \\ U \\ \downarrow \\ X \end{array}$$

That U trivializes our torsor means that $\pi^*T = \pi^*G$ as a G -torsor, where G acts on itself by left-multiplication. We have two different ways of pulling back, and identifications with G in both, yielding

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \pi_1^* \pi^* T & \xrightarrow{\sim} & \pi_2^* \pi^* T \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ \pi_1^* \pi^* G & \xrightarrow{\sim} & \pi_2^* \pi^* G \end{array}$$

Both of the bottom objects are isomorphic to $G|_{U \times U}$.

Claim: The top horizontal map is descent data for T , and the bottom horizontal map is an automorphism of a G -torsor and thus is a section to G . I.e. a section to GL_n is an invertible matrix on double intersections (satisfying the cocycle condition) and a cover, which is precisely descent data for a vector bundle.

Using fppf descent, proved previously, we know that descent data for vector bundles is effective. So if we have a locally trivial GL_n -torsor on the fppf site, it's also trivial on the other two sites, yielding the desired maps back and forth. Thus $H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \text{GL}_n)$ is in bijection with n -dimensional vector bundles on X . ■

Exercise 1.0.3(?): See if Hilbert 90 is true for groups other than GL_n .

1.1 Representability and Local Triviality

Question 1.1.1: Suppose G is an affine flat X -group scheme. Are all G -torsors representable by a X -scheme?

Answer 1.1.2: Yes, by the same proof as last time, try working out the details. Idea: you can trivialize a G -torsor flat locally and use fppf descent.

Question 1.1.3: Given a G -torsor T that is fppf locally trivial, is it étale locally trivial?

Answer 1.1.4: In general no, but yes if G is smooth.

Proof (Sketch).

You can take an fppf local trivialization, trivialize by p itself, then slice to get an étale trivialization. Given a torsor $T \rightarrow X$, we can base change it to itself:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} T \times_X T & \longrightarrow & T \\ \downarrow \wr \exists & & \downarrow \\ T & \xrightarrow{f} & X \end{array}$$

The torsor $T \times_X T \rightarrow T$ is trivial since there exists the indicated section given by the diagonal map. Another way to see this is that $T \times T \cong T \times G$ by the G -action map, which is equivalent to triviality here. Here f is smooth map since G itself was smooth and the fibers of T are isomorphic to the fibers of G . We can thus find some U such that

$$\begin{array}{ccc} T \times_X T & \longrightarrow & T \\ \downarrow \wr \exists & & \downarrow \\ T & \xrightarrow{f} & X \\ \uparrow \text{closed} & & \uparrow \\ U & \xrightarrow{\exists \text{ét}} & X \end{array}$$

Here “slicing” means finding such a U , and this can be done using the structure theorem for smooth morphisms. ■

Example 1.1.5 (non-smooth group schemes):

- α_p , the kernel of Frobenius on \mathbb{A}^1 or \mathbb{G}_a ,
- μ_p in characteristic p , representing p th roots of unity, the kernel of Frobenius on \mathbb{G}_m ,
- The kernel of Frobenius on any positive dimensional affine group scheme.
- $\mu_p \times \mathrm{GL}_n$, etc.

1.1.1 What Hilbert 90 Means

Example 1.1.6(?): Let $X = \operatorname{Spec} k, n = 1$, so we're looking at $H^*(\operatorname{Spec} k, \mathbb{G}_m)$.

$$\begin{aligned} H^1((\operatorname{Spec} k)_{\text{zar}}, \mathbb{G}_m) &= 0 \\ &= H^1((\operatorname{Spec} k)_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{G}_m) \\ &= H^1(\operatorname{Gal}(k^s/k), \bar{k}^\times). \end{aligned}$$

The first comes from the fact that we're looking at line bundles of spec of a field, i.e. a point, which are all trivial. The last line comes from our previous discussion of the isomorphism between étale cohomology of fields and Galois cohomology. Etymology: the fact that this cohomology is zero is usually what's called **Hilbert 90**.¹

Let's generalize this observation.

Example 1.1.7(?): Let X be any scheme and $n = 1$, then $H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{G}_m) = \operatorname{Pic}(X)$.

Example 1.1.8(?): Let's compute $H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell)$ where ℓ is an invertible function on X . We have a SES of étale sheaves, the **Kummer sequence**,

$$1 \rightarrow \mu_\ell \rightarrow \mathbb{G}_m \xrightarrow{z \mapsto z^\ell} \mathbb{G}_m \rightarrow 1.$$

This is exact in the étale topology since adjoining an ℓ th power of any function gives an étale cover. We get a LES in cohomology

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} & & & & 0 & & \\ & & & \swarrow & & & \\ H^0(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell) & \longrightarrow & H^0(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{G}_m) & \xrightarrow{z \mapsto z^\ell} & H^0(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{G}_m) & & \\ & & \swarrow & & & & \\ H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell) & \longrightarrow & \operatorname{Pic}(X) & \xrightarrow{[\ell]} & \operatorname{Pic}(X) & & \\ & & \swarrow & & & & \\ H^2(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell) & \longrightarrow & \dots & & & & \end{array}$$

We know that $H^0(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{G}_m)$ are invertible functions on X , and the red term is what we'd like to compute.

Suppose now $H^0(X, \mathcal{O}_X) = k = \bar{k}$, then $H^0(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell) = \mu_\ell(k)$ since it is the kernel of the ℓ th power map. We can also compute $H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell)$, since our diagram reduces to

¹This is called "90" since Hilbert numbered his theorems in at least one of his books.

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
& & & & 0 \\
& & & \nearrow & \\
\mu_\ell(k) & \xleftarrow{\quad} & k^\times & \xrightarrow{z \mapsto z^\ell} & k^\times \\
& & \searrow \delta & & \\
H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell) & \xrightarrow{\quad} & \text{Pic}(X)[\ell] & \xrightarrow{[\ell]} & \text{Pic}(X) \\
& & \nearrow & & \\
H^2(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell) & \xrightarrow{\quad} & \dots & &
\end{array}$$

where surjectivity of δ follows from the fact that $k = \bar{k}$ and thus every element has an ℓ th root, making H^1 the kernel of $[\ell]$.

Example 1.1.9(?): Let X/k with $k = \bar{k}$ with ℓ invertible in k , then (claim) $\mathbb{Z}/\ell\mathbb{Z} \cong \mu_\ell$ given by sending a generator to some choice of a primitive ℓ th root of unity. To be explicit, we have a representation $\mathbb{Z}/\ell\mathbb{Z} = \text{hom}(\cdot, \text{Spec } k[t]/t(t-1)\cdots(t-\ell+1))$ and $\mu_\ell = \text{Spec } k[t]/t^\ell - 1$. These are both disjoint unions of points, and hence schemes of dimension zero since ℓ is invertible in the base and the Chinese Remainder Theorem, so one can write down the isomorphism explicitly between the schemes and hence the functors they represent.

Corollary 1.1.10(?).

If $\mu_\ell \subseteq k$, then

$$H^i(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{Z}/\ell\mathbb{Z}) = H^i(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell).$$

Since the isomorphism depends on the choice of a primitive root, this will not be Galois equivariant, which will come up when we talk about Galois actions on étale cohomology. This already happens for H^0 , since $G \curvearrowright \mathbb{Z}/\ell\mathbb{Z}$ trivially but not on μ_ℓ .

1.1.2 Geometric Interpretations

Let X be an affine scheme, we now know $H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{F}_p) = \text{coker}(\mathcal{O}_X \xrightarrow{x^p - x} \mathcal{O}_X)$, the Artin-Schreier map, and these are \mathbb{F}_p -torsors. We also know $H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{Z}/\ell\mathbb{Z})$ in terms of the LES if $k = \bar{k}$ and $\text{ch}(k) = p$, and this is a $\mathbb{Z}/\ell\mathbb{Z}$ -torsor. Being torsors here geometrically means they're covering spaces with those groups as Galois groups.

Question 1.1.11: How does one write down these torsors/covering spaces?

Example 1.1.12(?): Given

$$[Y] \in H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{F}_p) = \text{coker}(\mathcal{O}_X \xrightarrow{x^p - x} \mathcal{O}_X)$$

where we write $[Y]$ to denote thinking of the torsor as some geometric object, how to we write down the covering space? Using Artin-Schreier, we can write $Y = \{y^p - y = a\}$ for some $a \in \mathcal{O}_X$, an **Artin-Schreier covering**.

If $\ell \neq \text{ch}(k)$ and $[Z] \in H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell)$ and assume $\text{Pic}(X) = 0$. Then we can write

$$H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mu_\ell) = \text{coker}(\mathcal{O}_X \xrightarrow{x \mapsto x^\ell} \mathcal{O}_X^\times)$$

In this case, $Z = \{z^\ell = f\}$ where $f \in \mathcal{O}_X^\times$ is an element representing the class in cohomology, and $\mu_\ell \curvearrowright Z$ by multiplication by z .

Remark 1.1.13: The process of explicitly writing down covers is called **explicit geometric class field theory**, which gives a recipe for writing down abelian covers of covers. In general, for $\text{Pic}(X) \neq 0$, the Picard group plays a crucial role.

1.2 Computing the Cohomology of Curves

This is one of Daniel's favorite topics in the entire course!

Theorem 1.2.1(?).

Let X/k be a smooth curve over $k = \bar{k}$, then

$$H^i(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{G}_m) = \begin{cases} \mathcal{O}_X(X)^\times & i = 0 \\ \text{Pic}(X) & i = 1 \\ 0 & \text{else,} \end{cases}$$

noting that $\mathcal{O}_X(X)^\times$ are the global sections of \mathbb{G}_m , i.e. invertible functions on X .

The first two cases we've done, $i > 1$ is the hard case.

Corollary 1.2.2(?).

For X a smooth proper connected curve of genus g , $k = \bar{k}$, and $\ell \neq \text{ch}(k)$ is prime,

$$H^i(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z}) = \begin{cases} \mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z} & i = 0 \\ \text{Pic}(X)[\ell^n] = (\mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z})^{2g} & i = 1 \\ \mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z} & i = 2 \\ 0 & i > 2 \end{cases}.$$

Proof (of corollary).

We'll use some theory of abelian varieties: $\text{Pic}^0(X) = \text{Jac}(X)$, and we have a SES

$$0 \rightarrow \text{Jac}(X) \rightarrow \text{Pic}(X) \xrightarrow{\deg} \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow 0,$$

where we identify the Néron-Severi group as \mathbb{Z} .^a We'll use that $\text{Jac}(X)$ is a g -dimensional abelian variety, and so $\text{Jac}(X)[\ell^n] \cong_{\text{Grp}} (\mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z})^{2g}$.

The Kummer sequence

$$1 \rightarrow \mu_{\ell^n} \rightarrow \mathbb{G}_m \rightarrow \mathbb{G}_m \rightarrow 1$$

yields a LES where we identify $\mu_{\ell^n} \cong \mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z}$:

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
& & & & 0 \\
& & \swarrow & & \\
H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z}) & \longrightarrow & \text{Pic}(X) & \xrightarrow{[\ell]} & \text{Pic}(X) \\
& \nwarrow & & & \\
H^2(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z}) & \longrightarrow & 0 & \longrightarrow & 0
\end{array}$$

So we're just computing the kernel and cokernel of $[\ell]$.

Computing H^1 : We'll need one more fact: $\text{Jac}(X)(\bar{k})$ is a divisible group. We can identify

$$H^1(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z}) = \text{Pic}(X)[\ell^n] = \text{Jac}(X) = (\mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z})^{2g}.$$

where the 2nd equality uses the fact that $\text{Pic}(X)$ is an extension of \mathbb{Z} by an abelian variety and \mathbb{Z} has no torsion, and the last equality is general theory of abelian varieties.

Computing H^2 : Since $\text{Jac}(X)$ is divisible, we can identify

$$\text{coker}(\text{Pic}(X) \xrightarrow{[\ell^n]} \text{Pic}(X)) \cong \text{coker}(\mathbb{Z} \xrightarrow{[\ell^n]} \mathbb{Z}) = \mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z}.$$

The vanishing of higher cohomology follows from the vanishing for \mathbb{G}_m . So assuming the theorem and the theory of abelian varieties proves this corollary. ■

^aSee Hartshorne Ch. 4, or anything that discusses cohomology of curves.

Exercise 1.2.3(?): Check this using the snake lemma after applying multiplication by ℓ to the SES.

Remark 1.2.4: X is a scheme over \bar{k} , and if it started over some subfield L then $\text{Gal}(L/\bar{k}) \curvearrowright X$ and thus the corresponding functors. These isomorphisms will not be Galois equivariant, and the $\mathbb{Z}/\ell^n \mathbb{Z}$ showing up in degree 2 cohomology will admit a Galois action via the cyclotomic character.

1.2.1 Proof of Theorem

We want to show that $H^{>1}(X_{\text{ét}}, \mathbb{G}_m) = 0$.