

I. The groups K_0 and K_1

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Grothendieck introduced the group $K_0(R)$ of a commutative ring R as the free abelian group on isomorphism classes of fin.gen. projective R -modules modulo the subgroup generated by elements of the form $[M] - [M'] - [M'']$ for every exact sequence

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

of R -modules. Here $[M] = [M \otimes M'']$ as M'' is projective. $K_0(R)$ becomes a ring by $[M] \cdot [M'] = [M \otimes M']$ as tensor preserves exact sequences of projective modules.

Examples: (1) Let R is a field or more generally local ring

→ f.g. proj. modules are free over local rings

$$\rightarrow rk: K_0(X) \xrightarrow{\sim} \mathbb{Z}$$

$$[R^n] \mapsto n$$

is a ring isomorphism

(2) Let R Dedekind domain.

→ $rk(M) := rk(M \otimes R_p)$ is independent of p

→ f.g. projective modules are sums

$$M = L_1 \oplus \dots \oplus L_r \cong R^{\oplus r} \oplus L_1 \oplus \dots \oplus L_r$$

of rank 1 projective modules

→ rank 1 projective modules are invertible fractional ideals

$$\rightarrow rk \otimes \text{id}: K_0(R) \xrightarrow{\sim} \mathbb{Z} \oplus \text{Cl}(R)$$

$$[M] \rightarrow (rk M, \Lambda_2^{rk M} M)$$

is an isomorphism of rings, where the product on $\mathbb{Z} \oplus \text{Cl}(R)$

$$= (m, L_1) \cdot (n, L_2) = (mn, L_1^n L_2^m)$$

Bass defined $K_1(R) = GL(R)^{ab}$ where $GL(R) = \varprojlim GL_n(R)$ under the inclusions $A \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$. The split exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow SL(R) \rightarrow GL(R) \xrightarrow{\text{det}} R^* = GL_1(R) \rightarrow 0$$

induces a natural isomorphism

$$K_1(R) \cong R^* \oplus SL(R)^{ab}$$

For R local or $R = \mathcal{O}_K$ for K number field, $SL(R)^{ab} = 0$

For R Dedekind with fraction field F , there exists an exact sequence

$$\bigoplus_{p \in \text{Max } R} K_1(\mathbb{F}/p) \rightarrow K_1(R) \rightarrow K_1(F) \xrightarrow{\text{?}} \bigoplus_{\text{prime } p} K_0(\mathbb{F}/p) \rightarrow K_0(R) \rightarrow K_0(F) \rightarrow 0$$

which for $R = \mathcal{O}_K$ recovers

$$0 \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_K^* \rightarrow K^* \xrightarrow{\text{div}} \bigoplus_p \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z} \oplus \text{Cl}(R) \rightarrow \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow 0.$$

Question : How can we continue on the left?

Can we generalize the result to other rings?

II. Higher K-groups

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① The Q-construction

An exact category \mathcal{C} is a full subcategory of an abelian category \mathcal{A} containing a zero object and closed under extensions, i.e. if

$$0 \rightarrow M' \rightarrow M \rightarrow M'' \rightarrow 0 \quad (*)$$

is exact in \mathcal{A} and $M', M'' \in \mathcal{C}$, there exists $\tilde{M} \in \mathcal{C}$ isomorphic to M .

We say that a sequence $M' \rightarrow M \rightarrow M''$ is exact in \mathcal{C} , when $(*)$ is exact in \mathcal{A} .

An additive functor $F: \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ is called exact when

$$F(M') \rightarrow F(M) \rightarrow F(M'')$$

is exact for every exact sequence $M' \rightarrow M \rightarrow M''$ in \mathcal{C} .

Let \mathcal{C} a small exact category. Quillen constructed a new category QC with the same objects as \mathcal{C} and morphisms equivalence classes of diagrams $A \leftarrow D \rightarrow B$, where $(A \leftarrow D \rightarrow B) \sim (A \leftarrow D' \rightarrow B)$ if there exists an isomorphism $D \xrightarrow{\sim} D'$ making

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} & & D & & \\ & \swarrow & \downarrow b & \searrow & \\ A & & & & B \\ & \uparrow & & \downarrow & \\ & & D' & & \end{array}$$

commute (D, D' represent the same subobject in B .) Composition is given by pullback

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} & & D \times D' & & \\ & \swarrow & \downarrow & \searrow & \\ D & \leftarrow & & \rightarrow & D' \\ \uparrow & & & & \downarrow \\ A & \leftarrow & B & \rightarrow & C \end{array}$$

Exact functors $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ induce functors $QC \rightarrow QD$.

② The classifying space

The nerve \mathcal{NC} of a small category \mathcal{C} is the simplicial set with

$$\mathcal{NC}_0 = \text{ob } \mathcal{C}$$

$$\mathcal{NC}_1 = \text{Mor } \mathcal{C}$$

$$\mathcal{NC}_n = \{(A_0 \xrightarrow{f_0} A_1 \xrightarrow{f_1} \cdots \xrightarrow{f_n} A_n)\}$$

and face and degeneracy maps given by

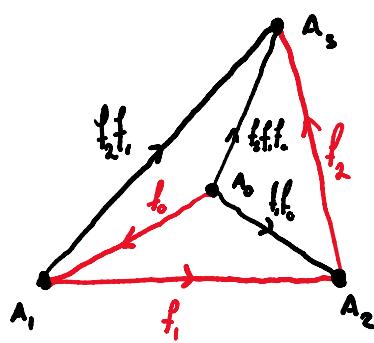
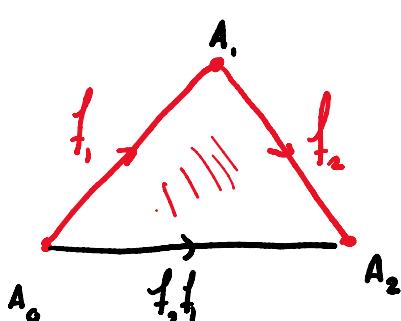
$$d_i(A_0 \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow A_n) = (A_0 \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow A_{i-1} \rightarrow A_{i+1} \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow A_n)$$

$$s_i(A_0 \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow A_n) = (A_0 \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow A_i \xrightarrow{\text{id}} A_i \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow A_n)$$

The classifying space \mathcal{BC} is the geometric realization of \mathcal{NC}

$$\mathcal{BC} = \coprod_n \mathcal{NC}_n \times \Delta^n / \sim$$

where $\Delta^n = \{(x_0, \dots, x_n) \in \mathbb{R}^n : \sum x_i = 1\}$, $(d_i x, p) \sim (x, d_i p)$ and $(s_i x, p) \sim (x, s_i p)$.



The assignment $\mathcal{C} \mapsto B\mathcal{C}$ extends to a (2-)functor sending

- categories \rightarrow CW
- functors \rightarrow cellular maps
- nat. transformations \rightarrow homotopies

Therefore also

- adjunctions \rightarrow homotopy equivalences
- categories with initial obj. \rightarrow contractible spaces

[3] $K(\mathcal{C})$ and $K(R)$

Let \mathcal{C} a small exact category and $1 = \{ \overset{\text{id}}{\circ} \} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ the functor picking out the zero object. It induces a cellular map

$$BQ1L = \{ \text{pt} \} \rightarrow BG\mathcal{C}$$

making $BG\mathcal{C}$ a pointed space.

Proposition: $BG\mathcal{C}$ is path-connected and

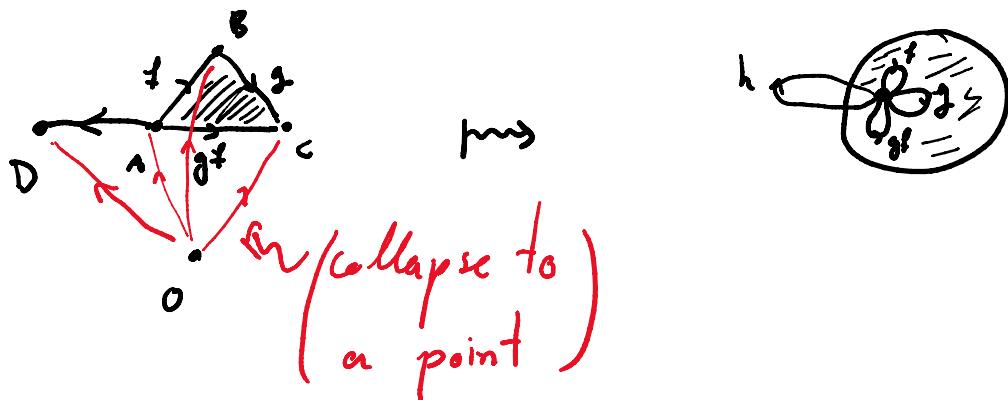
$$\pi_1 BG\mathcal{C} = \frac{\text{free abelian group on } \text{Ob}\mathcal{C}}{\langle [S] - [A] - [C] : A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C \text{ exact} \rangle}$$

Proof: We will write $(A \rightarrow B)$ and $(B \leftarrow C)$ for $(A \xrightarrow{\text{id}} A \rightarrow B)$ and $(B \leftarrow C \xrightarrow{\text{id}} C)$ respectively. Every morphism in QC may be factored as $(A \leftarrow C \rightarrow B) = (C \rightarrow B) \circ (A \leftarrow C)$ and

$$(B \rightarrow C) \circ (A \rightarrow B) = (A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C)$$

$$(B \leftarrow C) \circ (A \leftarrow B) = (A \leftarrow B \leftarrow C)$$

For every $A \in \mathcal{C}$, there exists a morphism $(0 \rightarrow A)$, so $B\text{QC}$ is connected. Moreover those maps form a maximal tree in the 1-skeleton of $B\text{QC}$, so $\pi_1(B\text{QC})$ is generated by $\{f \in \text{Mor } \text{QC} \text{ under the relations } [0 \rightarrow A] = 1 \text{ and } [gf] = [f] \cdot [g]\}$



Reductions: $[0 \rightarrow A] \cdot [A \rightarrow B] = [0 \rightarrow B] \rightsquigarrow [A \rightarrow B] = 1$

$$[0 \leftarrow A] \cdot [A \leftarrow B] = [0 \leftarrow B]$$

$$[A \leftarrow C \rightarrow B] = [A \leftarrow C] = [0 \leftarrow A]^{-1} \cdot [0 \leftarrow C]$$

Therefore, $\pi_1(B\text{QC})$ is generated by $[0 \leftarrow A]$ for $A \in \text{Ob } \mathcal{C}$.

~ If $A \rightarrow B \xrightarrow{f} C$ is exact, then $(C \leftarrow B) \circ (0 \rightarrow C) = (A \rightarrow B) \circ (0 \leftarrow A)$ by the diagram below

$$\text{so } [0 \leftarrow B] = [0 \leftarrow C][0 \leftarrow A] \quad (*)$$

In particular, for every $A, B, C \in \mathcal{C}$,

$$[0 \leftarrow B][0 \leftarrow A] = [0 \leftarrow A][0 \leftarrow B]$$

as $A \rightarrow A \oplus B \rightarrow B$ and $B \rightarrow A \oplus B \rightarrow A$ are exact.

~ It suffices to prove no other relations exist. Given $f = (A \leftarrow D_1 \rightarrow B)$ and $g = (B \leftarrow D_2 \rightarrow C)$, let K be ker $(D_2 \rightarrow B)$. The diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} 0 & \rightarrow & K & \xrightarrow{h} & D_2 & \rightarrow & B \rightarrow 0 \\ & & \downarrow & & \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ 0 & \rightarrow & K & \xrightarrow{\text{(co)}} & D_2 \times D_1 & \rightarrow & D_1 \rightarrow 0 \end{array}$$

(This diagram also shows that $D_1 \times D_2 \in \mathcal{C}$, so composition in QC is well-defined)

has exact rows so by $(*)$

$$[0 \leftarrow D_2] = [0 \leftarrow B] \cdot [0 \leftarrow K],$$

$$[0 \leftarrow D_1 \times D_2] = [0 \leftarrow D_1] \cdot [0 \leftarrow K].$$

so

$$[f] \cdot [g] = [gf] \iff$$

$$[0 \leftarrow A]^* [0 \leftarrow D_1] [0 \leftarrow B]^* [0 \leftarrow D_2] = [0 \leftarrow A]^* [0 \leftarrow D_1 \times D_2] \iff$$

$$[0 \leftarrow D_1] [0 \leftarrow B]^* [0 \leftarrow B] [0 \leftarrow K] = [0 \leftarrow D_1] [0 \leftarrow K].$$

Therefore, $[f] \cdot [g] = [gf]$ follows from $(*)$. We conclude that $\pi_*(\mathcal{QC})$ is generated by $[0 \leftarrow A]$ for $A \in \mathcal{C}$ with only relation $[0 \leftarrow B] = [0 \leftarrow C][0 \leftarrow A]$ for $A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C$ exact and that the generators commute.

Remark: The map $\text{ob}\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \pi_3 \mathcal{BQC}$ sends A to the loop
 $(0 \leftarrow A \xrightarrow{\text{id}} A) \cdot (0 \leftarrow 0 \rightarrow A)^{-1}$

Def: The K-theory space of a small exact category \mathcal{C} is the pointed CW complex

$$K(\mathcal{C}) = \text{S}^2 \mathcal{BQC} := \text{Top}_*(S^2, \mathcal{BQC})$$

The K-theory groups are the abelian groups

$$K_n(\mathcal{C}) = \pi_n S^2 \mathcal{BQC} = \pi_{n+1} \mathcal{BQC}.$$

Let R commutative ring. The category $\mathcal{P}(R)$ of f.g. projective R -modules is exact, being a full subcategory of the abelian category $\text{Mod}(R)$ of R -modules. We define $K(R) = K(\mathcal{C})$ for any small category \mathcal{C} equivalent to $\mathcal{P}(R)$.

Different choices of \mathcal{C} give homotopy equivalent spaces, so

$$K_n(R) = \pi_n K(R)$$

are well-defined up to natural isomorphism.

A ring homomorphism $f: R \rightarrow S$ induces an exact functor $\mathcal{P}(R) \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(S)$ by $M \mapsto M \otimes_R S$ and therefore a cellular map

$$f^*: K(R) \rightarrow K(S)$$

well defined up to homotopy, making K into a functor

$$K: \text{Rings} \rightarrow H_0(\text{Top})$$

III. The Main Theorems

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- Additivity: Let $F' \rightarrow F \rightarrow F''$ as sequence of exact functors $\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$, such that $F'(A) \rightarrow F(A) \rightarrow F''(A)$ is exact for every $A \in \mathcal{C}$. Then

$$F_* = F'_* + F''_* : K_n \mathcal{C} \rightarrow K_n \mathcal{D}$$

for every $n \in \mathbb{N}$.

- Resolution: Let $\mathcal{P} \subset \mathcal{C}$ exact subcategory, closed under extensions and kernels at \rightarrow , such that every $M \in \mathcal{C}$ has a finite \mathcal{P} -resolution, i.e. there exists an exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow P_n \rightarrow P_{n-1} \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$$

with each $P_i \in \mathcal{P}$. Then $K(\mathcal{P}) \cong K(\mathcal{C})$, so $K_n(\mathcal{P}) \cong K_n(\mathcal{C})$ for all n .

Corollary: Let $M(R)$ the category of finitely generated R -modules. If R is a regular noetherian ring, then

$$K(R) \xrightarrow{\sim} K(M(R)) =: G(R)$$

- Devissage: Let \mathcal{B} a full subcategory of an abelian category \mathcal{A} , closed under subobjects, quotients and finite products in \mathcal{A} . If every object $M \in \mathcal{A}$ has a finite filtration $0 = M_0 \subset M_1 \subset \dots \subset M_n = M$ with $M_i/M_{i-1} \in \mathcal{B}$ for all i , then $K(\mathcal{B}) \cong K(\mathcal{A})$.
- Localization: Let \mathcal{B} full subcategory of an abelian category \mathcal{A} , closed under subobjects, quotients and extensions. Then there exists a long exact sequence

$$\dots \rightarrow K_{n+1}(\mathcal{A}/\mathcal{B}) \rightarrow K_n(\mathcal{B}) \rightarrow K_n(\mathcal{A}) \rightarrow K_n(\mathcal{A}/\mathcal{B}) \rightarrow \dots$$

where \mathcal{A}/\mathcal{B} is obtained from \mathcal{A} by inverting morphisms whose kernel and cokernel are in \mathcal{B} .

Proposition: Let R Dedekind domain. There exists a long exact sequence

$$\cdots \rightarrow K_n(F) \rightarrow \bigoplus_{p \in \text{Max } R} K_n(R/p) \rightarrow K_n(R) \rightarrow K_n(F) \rightarrow \cdots$$

Proof: Let $\mathcal{M} = M(R)$, \mathcal{B} = subcategory of torsion modules

- $\mathcal{M}/\mathcal{B} \cong M(F) = P(F)$
- $K(R) \cong K(\mathcal{B})$ as Dedekind rings are Noetherian regular
- Every module $M \in \mathcal{B}$ can be decomposed uniquely, as

$$M = R/\rho_1^{e_1} \oplus R/\rho_2^{e_2} \oplus \cdots \oplus R/\rho_n^{e_n}$$
for ρ_i nonzero primes of R .
- For every finite set of primes S of R , let $\mathcal{B}_S \subset \mathcal{B}$ the full subcategory on the modules whose summands correspond to primes in S . Since \mathcal{B}_S is closed under quotients, subobjects and extensions, it is abelian and $\mathcal{B}_S \hookrightarrow \mathcal{B}$ is exact. Moreover

$$\mathcal{B} = \varinjlim_S \mathcal{B}_S$$

and the collection of such S is filtered, so

$$K_n(\mathcal{B}) = \varinjlim_S K_n(\mathcal{B}_S)$$

- Let $S = \{\rho_1, \dots, \rho_m\}$, then every $M \in \mathcal{B}_S$ is of the form

$$M = R/\rho_1^{e_1} \oplus \cdots \oplus R/\rho_i^{e_i} \oplus \cdots \oplus R/\rho_m^{e_m}$$

so it has a filtration where the quotients are $R/\rho_1, \dots, R/\rho_m$, obtaining by using filtrations for each term $R/\rho_i^{e_i}$, such as

$$0 \subset R/\rho_i^{e_{ij}-1} \subset R/\rho_i^{e_{ij}-2} \subset \cdots \subset R/\rho_i^{e_{ij}}.$$

- Let \mathcal{B}'_S the full subcategory of \mathcal{B}_S on objects of the form $(R/p_1)^{e_1} \oplus \dots \oplus (R/p_m)^{e_m}$. This is closed under subobjects, quotients and products, so by Devissage,

$$K_n(\mathcal{B}_S) \cong K_n(\mathcal{B}'_S)$$

- $\mathcal{B}'_S = \prod_{i=1}^m \mathcal{P}(R/p_i)$, since $\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{P}}((R/p_i)^{e_i}, (R/p_j)^{e_j}) = 0$ for $i \neq j$.

Therefore, $K(\mathcal{B}'_S) = \prod_i K(R/p_i)$

$$K_n(\mathcal{B}'_S) = \bigoplus_i K_n(R/p_i)$$

- $K_n(\mathcal{B}) = \varinjlim_{\{p_1, \dots, p_n\}} \bigoplus_i K_n(R/p_i) = \bigoplus_p K_n(R/p)$.

Remark: The morphism $K_n(R/m) \rightarrow K_n(R)$ is the transfer morphism defined as follows: If $f: R \rightarrow S$ is finite, it induces an exact functor $M(S) \rightarrow M(R)$ by restricting scalars. This induces a map

$$f_*: G(R) \rightarrow G(S)$$

and thus a map

$$f_*: K_n(R) \rightarrow K_n(S)$$

where R, S regular.

Remark: There is a generalization of this result to higher dimensional rings: If R is a regular Noetherian ring of finite dimension, then there exists a 4th quadrant spectral sequence with

$$E_2^{pq} = \bigoplus_{\text{ord}(p)=p} K_{p-q}(f_{\text{reg}}(R/p)) \Rightarrow K_{-p-q}(R)$$

IV. K-groups of Rings of Integers

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Quillen computed

$$K_{2n-1}(\mathbb{F}_q) = \mathbb{Z}/(q^n - 1)$$

$$K_{2n}(\mathbb{F}_q) = 0$$

for $n \geq 1$.

Therefore, for F/\mathbb{Q} a number field and R Dedekind with $\text{Frac } R = F$

$$(i) \quad 0 \rightarrow K_1(R) \rightarrow K_1(F) \rightarrow \bigoplus_p K_0(\mathcal{O}_F/p) \rightarrow K_0(R) \rightarrow K_0(F) \rightarrow 0$$

$$(ii) \quad 0 \rightarrow K_2(R) \rightarrow K_2(F) \rightarrow \bigoplus_p K_1(\mathcal{O}_F/p) \rightarrow 0$$

$$(iii) \quad 0 \rightarrow K_{2n}(\mathcal{O}_F) \rightarrow K_{2n}(F) \rightarrow \bigoplus_{p \mid n} K_{2n-1}(\mathcal{O}_F/p) \rightarrow K_{2n-1}(F) \rightarrow 0 \quad \text{for } n \geq 2$$

Remarks: (1) To get that the map $\bigoplus_p K_1(\mathcal{O}_F/p) \rightarrow K_1(\mathcal{O}_F)$ is trivial and thus (i), (ii) are exact, we use that $SL(q_F)^{ab} = 0$ and so $K_1(\mathcal{O}_F) = \mathcal{O}_F^\times \rightarrow F^\times = K_1(F)$ is injective.

(2) Soulé proved that $K_{2n-1}(R) \rightarrow K_{2n-1}(F)$ is injective, so

- $K_n(R) \xrightarrow{\sim} K_n(F) \quad \text{for } n > 1 \text{ odd}$

- $0 \rightarrow K_n(R) \rightarrow K_n(F) \rightarrow \bigoplus_p K_n(\mathcal{O}_F/p) \rightarrow 0 \quad \text{for } n > 0 \text{ even}$

What is known?

Take $R = \mathcal{O}_F$ - $r = \# \text{ real embeddings } F \hookrightarrow \mathbb{R}$
 $2s = \# \text{ complex embeddings } F \hookrightarrow \mathbb{C}$

• Borel-Quillen : $K_n(R)$ is finitely generated for all n and

$$\text{rk } K_n(R) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } n=0 \\ r+s-1 & \text{if } n=1 \\ r+s & \text{if } n \equiv 1 \pmod{4} \text{ & } n \geq 2 \\ s & \text{if } n \equiv 3 \pmod{4} \\ 0 & \text{if } n \geq 2 \text{ even} \end{cases} \quad \begin{aligned} \mathbb{Z} \otimes_{\mathbb{Z}} R &= \mathbb{Z}^{r+s-1} \\ R^* &\cong \mathbb{Z}^{r+s-1} \oplus \mu(F) \end{aligned}$$

If F is totally imaginary and $n = 2i-1 \geq 3$ odd,

$$K_n(F) = \mathbb{Z}^s \oplus \mathbb{Z}/w_i(F)$$

while if F has a real embedding,

$$K_n(F) = \begin{cases} \mathbb{Z}^{r+s} \oplus \mathbb{Z}/w_i(F) & n \equiv 1 \pmod{8} \\ \mathbb{Z}^s \oplus \mathbb{Z}/2w_i(F) \oplus (\mathbb{Z}/2)^{r-1} & n \equiv 3 \pmod{8} \\ \mathbb{Z}^{r+s} \oplus \mathbb{Z}/\frac{1}{2}w_i(F) & n \equiv 5 \pmod{8} \\ \mathbb{Z}^s \oplus \mathbb{Z}/w_i(F) & n \equiv 7 \pmod{8} \end{cases}$$

for

$$w_i(F) = T_{w_i^{(1)}}(F)$$

where

$$w_i^{(1)}(F) = \sup \left\{ l^2 \mid \text{Gal}(F(\sqrt[l^2]{\alpha})/F) \text{ has exponent dividing } i \right\}$$

References

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References

- ~ Grayson : Quillen's work in alg. K-theory
- ~ Weibel : The K-book
- ~ Weibel : Alg. K-theory of rings of integers in local & global fields

Epilogue - Fun / Useful Fact

For X regular scheme of finite type, the assignment

$$U \mapsto K_n(U)$$

forms a presheaf of groups. If K_n denotes its sheafification, then

$$H^n(X; K_n) \simeq CH_n(X)$$

is the Chow group of cycles of codimension n up to rational equivalence.