

7 Coordinate ring of an affine algebraic set. Morphisms of affine algebraic sets. Category of affine algebraic sets.

7.1 Coordinate ring of an affine algebraic set.

Definition 7.1. Let k be a field, $V \subseteq k^n$ an affine algebraic set, $\mathcal{I}(V)$ the ideal of V . The ring $k[V] := k[x_1, \dots, x_n] / \mathcal{I}(V)$ is called the **coordinate ring** of V .

Remark 7.2. Let k be a field, $V \subseteq k^n$ an affine algebraic set, $\mathcal{I}(V)$ the ideal of V . Let $f \in k[x_1, \dots, x_n]$. The polynomial f defines a polynomial function $k^n \rightarrow k$. Let f_V be the restriction of f to the set V , $f_V = f|_V$. Then $f_V = g_V$ if and only if $f + \mathcal{I}(V) = g + \mathcal{I}(V)$.

Proof. Indeed, $f_V = g_V$ means that $f(a_1, \dots, a_n) = g(a_1, \dots, a_n)$, for all $(a_1, \dots, a_n) \in V$, that is $(f - g)(a_1, \dots, a_n) = 0$, for all $(a_1, \dots, a_n) \in V$, or, equivalently, $f - g \in \mathcal{I}(V)$. \square

Remark 7.3. Let k be a field, $V \subseteq k^n$ an affine algebraic set, $\mathcal{I}(V)$ the ideal of V . Let $\kappa: k[x_1, \dots, x_n] \rightarrow k[V]$ be the canonical epimorphism, $\kappa(f) = \bar{f} := f + \mathcal{I}(V)$. Then $k[V]$ is a k -ring finitely generated over k by $\bar{x}_1, \dots, \bar{x}_n$.

Remark 7.4. Let k be algebraically closed, $V \subseteq k^n$ an affine algebraic set, $\mathcal{I}(V)$ the ideal of V . Then $k[V]$ has no nonzero nilpotents.

Proof. By Hilbert Nullstellensatz, $\mathcal{I}(V)$ is radical, so that, by Lemma 6.7, $k[V] = k[x_1, \dots, x_n] / \mathcal{I}(V)$ has no nonzero nilpotents. \square

Theorem 7.5. Let k be algebraically closed. Then a k -ring A is isomorphic to a coordinate ring of an affine algebraic set $V \subseteq k^n$ if and only if it is finitely generated over k and has no nonzero nilpotents.

Proof. Let $A = k[t_1, \dots, t_n]$ be a ring finitely generated over k with no nonzero nilpotents. The map

$$k[x_1, \dots, x_n] \rightarrow A, \quad f \mapsto f(t_1, \dots, t_n)$$

is a well-defined ring epimorphism. Define by \mathfrak{a} its kernel. The ring $k[x_1, \dots, x_n] / \mathfrak{a} \cong A$ has no nonzero nilpotents, hence, by Lemma 6.7, the ideal \mathfrak{a} is radical. Thus $\mathfrak{a} = \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{Z}(\mathfrak{a}))$ and, consequently, $A \cong k[\mathcal{Z}(\mathfrak{a})]$. \square

Example 7.6. One easily checks that:

- $V = k^n$, $k[V] \cong k[x_1, \dots, x_n]$;
- $V = \emptyset$, $k[V] \cong 0$;
- $V = \{(a_1, \dots, a_n)\}$, $k[V] \cong k$.

Example 7.7. Let $V = \mathcal{Z}(f)$, where $f \in k[x_1, \dots, x_n]$ is square-free and k is algebraically closed. Then $k[V] \cong k[x_1, \dots, x_n] / (f) \cong k[\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n]$ where $f(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) = 0$.

Proof. By Hilbert Nullstellensatz $\mathcal{I}(V) = \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{Z}(f)) = \text{rad}(f)$. One easily checks that $(f) = \text{rad}(f)$ if and only if f is square-free, which follows that $k[V] \cong k[x_1, \dots, x_n] / (f) \cong k[\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n]$, where $\alpha_i = x_i + (f)$, for $i \in \{1, \dots, n\}$. \square

Example 7.8. Let $V = \mathcal{Z}(a_1x_1 + \dots + a_nx_n - b)$, where $a_1, \dots, a_n, b \in k$ and k is algebraically closed. Then $k[V] \cong k[x_1, \dots, x_{n-1}]$.

Proof. As in the previous example, $k[V] \cong k[x_1, \dots, x_n] / (a_1x_1 + \dots + a_nx_n - b) \cong k[\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n]$, where $a_1\alpha_1 + \dots + a_n\alpha_n = b$. Relabelling, if necessary, we may assume that $a_n \neq 0$. Further, we may assume that $a_n = 1$, since $\mathcal{Z}(a_1x_1 + \dots + a_nx_n - b) = \mathcal{Z}\left(\frac{a_1}{a_n}x_1 + \dots + \frac{a_n}{a_n}x_n - \frac{b}{a_n}\right)$. Thus

$$\alpha_n = b - a_1\alpha_1 - \dots - a_{n-1}\alpha_{n-1},$$

and the ring $k[V] \cong k[\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n]$ is generated by the elements $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_{n-1}$. It suffices to show that these elements are algebraically independent: indeed, if $g(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_{n-1}) = 0$, for some $g \in k[x_1, \dots, x_{n-1}]$, then

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{I}(V) &= 0_{k[V]} = g(\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_{n-1}) = g(x_1 + \mathcal{I}(V), \dots, x_{n-1} + \mathcal{I}(V)) \\ &= g(x_1, \dots, x_{n-1}) + \mathcal{I}(V), \end{aligned}$$

so that $g \in \mathcal{I}(V) = (h)$, that is h divides g in the ring $k[x_1, \dots, x_n]$. But this is impossible, since x_n appears in h with a nonzero coefficient, and does not appear in any of the monomials of g . Thus $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_{n-1}$ are algebraically independent over k , and thus $k[\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_{n-1}] \cong k[x_1, \dots, x_{n-1}]$. \square

7.2 Basic notions from category theory.

Definition 7.9. A *category* \mathcal{C} consists of a class of **objects** $\text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$, denoted by A, B, C, \dots and a class of **morphisms** (or **arrows**) $\text{Ar}(\mathcal{C})$ together with:

1. classes of pairwise disjoint arrows $\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(A, B)$, one for each pair of objects $A, B \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$; and elements f of the class $\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(A, B)$ shall be called a **morphism** from A to B and denoted by $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ or $f: A \rightarrow B$,
2. functions $\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(B, C) \times \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(A, B) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(A, C)$, for each triple of objects $A, B, C \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$, called **composition** of morphisms; for morphisms $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ and $B \xrightarrow{g} C$ values of this function shall be denoted by $(g, f) \mapsto g \circ f$, and the morphism $A \xrightarrow{g \circ f} C$ shall be called the composition of morphisms $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ and $B \xrightarrow{g} C$.

Moreover, we require that the following two axioms hold true:

Associativity. If $A \xrightarrow{f} B$, $B \xrightarrow{g} C$ and $C \xrightarrow{h} D$ are morphisms in \mathcal{C} , then

$$h \circ (g \circ f) = (h \circ g) \circ f.$$

Identity. For every object $B \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$ there exists a morphism $B \xrightarrow{1_B} B$ such that for all morphisms $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ and $B \xrightarrow{g} C$

$$1_B \circ f = f \text{ and } g \circ 1_B = g.$$

If the classes $\text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$ and $\text{Ar}(\mathcal{C})$ are sets, we shall call the category \mathcal{C} **small**. If all classes $\text{Hom}(A, B)$ are sets, we shall call the category \mathcal{C} **locally small**.

Example 7.10.

1. We shall set the notation for a number of familiar categories here:

- Set is the category of sets with functions as morphisms;

- \mathcal{Grp} is the category of groups with group homomorphisms as morphisms;
- \mathcal{Top} is the category of topological spaces with continuous functions as morphisms.
- \mathcal{Ab} is the category of Abelian groups;
- \mathcal{Rng} is the category of rigs;
- \mathcal{Field} is the category of fields;
- $k - \mathcal{Vect}$ is the category of k – vector spaces;
- $k - \mathcal{Alg}_{fg}^0$ is the category of finitely generated k -algebras over an algebraically closed field k with no nonzero nilpotent elements.

All these categories are locally small, but not small.

2. The notion of a category allows for a different take on familiar constructions in mathematics. For example, consider a partial order (P, \leq) . One checks that considering the elements of P as objects, and defining morphisms by

$$a \rightarrow b \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad a \leq b$$

one obtains a category, which is small provided P is a set.

Definition 7.11. Let \mathcal{C} be a category. If, for two objects $A, B \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$ there exist morphisms $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ and $B \xrightarrow{g} A$ such that

$$f \circ g = 1_B \text{ and } g \circ f = 1_A$$

then we say that objects A and B are **isomorphic** and write $A \cong B$.

Definition 7.12. Let \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{D} be categories. A **covariant functor** F from \mathcal{C} to \mathcal{D} is a pair of maps $\text{Ob}(\mathcal{C}) \rightarrow \text{Ob}(\mathcal{D})$ and $\text{Ar}(\mathcal{C}) \rightarrow \text{Ar}(\mathcal{D})$ (denoted by the same symbol F), that assign to each object $A \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$ an object $F(A) \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{D})$ and to each morphism $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ in $\text{Ar}(\mathcal{C})$ a morphism $F(A) \xrightarrow{F(f)} F(B)$ in $\text{Ar}(\mathcal{D})$ in a way that the following two axioms are satisfied:

1. $F(1_A) = 1_{F(A)}$, for every object $A \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$;
2. $F(g \circ f) = F(g) \circ F(f)$, for all arrows $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ and $B \xrightarrow{g} C$ in $\text{Ar}(\mathcal{C})$.

A **contravariant functor** is defined in an analogous way, but to each morphism $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ in $\text{Ar}(\mathcal{C})$ a morphism $F(B) \xrightarrow{F(f)} F(A)$ in $\text{Ar}(\mathcal{D})$ is assigned and the axiom 2. is replaced with:

$$2'. F(g \circ f) = F(f) \circ F(g), \text{ for all arrow } A \xrightarrow{f} B \text{ and } B \xrightarrow{g} C \text{ in } \text{Ar}(\mathcal{C}).$$

Example 7.13.

1. **Identity functors.** For every category \mathcal{C} the map $I_{\mathcal{C}}: \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}$ given by

$$I_{\mathcal{C}}(A) = A, \text{ for every object } A \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C}), \quad I_{\mathcal{C}}(f) = f, \text{ for every morphism } A \xrightarrow{f} B \text{ in } \mathcal{C}$$

is a covariant functor that shall be called the identity functor.

2. **Forgetful functors.** The map $F: \mathcal{G}rp \rightarrow \mathcal{S}et$ given by

$$F(G) = G, \text{ for every object } G \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{G}rp), \quad F(f) = f, \text{ for every morphism } G \xrightarrow{f} H \text{ in } \mathcal{G}rp$$

is a covariant functor that shall be called the forgetful functor. In the same way we can define forgetful functors $\mathcal{R}ng \rightarrow \mathcal{S}et$, $\mathcal{T}op \rightarrow \mathcal{S}et$ etc.

3. **Free functors.** The map $F: \mathcal{S}et \rightarrow \mathcal{A}b$ given by

$$F(X) = \text{free Abelian group with basis } X, \text{ for every object } X \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{A}b),$$

and

$$F(f) = \text{the uniquely defined morphism } \bar{f} \text{ s.t. } \bar{f}|_X = f, \text{ for every morphism } X \xrightarrow{f} Y \text{ in } \mathcal{S}et$$

is a covariant functor that creates free Abelian groups. In the same way we can define free functors $\mathcal{S}et \rightarrow \mathcal{G}rp$ etc.

4. For a category \mathcal{C} we define the **opposite category** \mathcal{C}^{op} as follows: $\text{Ob}(\mathcal{C}^{op}) = \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$, and for $A, B \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C}^{op})$

$$\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}^{op}}(A, B) = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(B, A)$$

and

$$f^{op} \circ g^{op} = (g \circ f)^{op}.$$

For example if \mathcal{C} consists of the following objects and morphisms:

$$A \rightarrow B \rightarrow C \rightarrow D,$$

then \mathcal{C}^{op} is of the following form:

$$A \leftarrow B \leftarrow C \leftarrow D.$$

If $F: \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ is a contravariant functor, then $\bar{F}: \mathcal{C}^{op} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ defined by

$$\bar{F}(A) = F(A), \text{ for every object } A \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C}^{op}), \bar{F}(f^{op}) = F(f), \text{ for every morphism } A \xrightarrow{f} B \text{ in } \mathcal{C}$$

is a covariant functor.

Definition 7.14. Let \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{D} be categories. A covariant functor $F: \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ is **faithful** if for all objects $A, B \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$ the induced function

$$\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(A, B) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{D}}(F(A), F(B))$$

is injective. If, moreover, it is surjective, then F shall be called **fully faithful**.

Proposition 7.15. Let \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{D} be categories, let $F: \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ be a fully faithful functor. Then, for all objects $A, B \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$, $A \cong B$ if and only if $F(A) \cong F(B)$.

Proof. Fix two objects $A, B \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$ and assume that $A \cong B$. Let $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ and $B \xrightarrow{g} A$ be two morphisms such that $f \circ g = 1_B$ and $g \circ f = 1_A$. Then

$$1_{F(B)} = F(1_B) = F(f \circ g) = F(f) \circ F(g) \text{ and } 1_{F(A)} = F(1_A) = F(g \circ f) = F(g) \circ F(f)$$

so that the morphisms $F(A) \xrightarrow{F(f)} F(B)$ and $F(B) \xrightarrow{F(g)} F(A)$ establish the isomorphism $F(A) \cong F(B)$.

Conversely, assume $F(A) \cong F(B)$ and let $F(A) \xrightarrow{\varphi} F(B)$ and $F(B) \xrightarrow{\psi} F(A)$ be two morphisms such that $\varphi \circ \psi = 1_{F(B)}$ and $\psi \circ \varphi = 1_{F(A)}$. Since the maps $\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(A, B) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{D}}(F(A), F(B))$ and $\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(B, A) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{D}}(F(B), F(A))$ are surjective, there exist morphisms $A \xrightarrow{f} B$ and $B \xrightarrow{g} A$ such that $\varphi = F(f)$ and $\psi = F(g)$. Thus

$$1_{F(B)} = \varphi \circ \psi = F(f) \circ F(g) = F(f \circ g) \text{ and } 1_{F(A)} = \psi \circ \varphi = F(g) \circ F(f) = F(g \circ f).$$

On the other hand, $F(1_A) = 1_{F(A)}$ and $F(1_B) = 1_{F(B)}$. Since the maps $\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(A, B) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{D}}(F(A), F(B))$ and $\text{Hom}_{\mathcal{C}}(B, A) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{D}}(F(B), F(A))$ are injective, this yields

$$f \circ g = 1_B \text{ and } g \circ f = 1_A. \quad \square$$

Definition 7.16. Let \mathcal{C} and \mathcal{D} be categories. A covariant functor $F: \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ is called an **equivalence of categories** if it is fully faithful and essentially surjective, that is for every object $B \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{D})$ there is an object $A \in \text{Ob}(\mathcal{C})$ such that $F(A) \cong B$.

7.3 Category of affine algebraic sets.

Definition 7.17. Let $V \subseteq k^n$ and $W \subseteq k^m$ be affine algebraic sets. A **morphism** $f: V \rightarrow W$ is a map such that there exist $f_1, \dots, f_m \in k[V]$ such that $f(a) = (f_1(a), \dots, f_m(a))$, for all $a \in V$.

Remark 7.18. Let $V \subseteq k^n$ and $W \subseteq k^m$ be affine algebraic sets, let $f_1, \dots, f_m \in k[V]$. Then $f = (f_1, \dots, f_m): V \rightarrow W$ is a morphism if and only if

$$g(f_1, \dots, f_m) = 0 \in k[V] \text{ for all } g \in \mathcal{I}(W).$$

Proof. Indeed, one easily checks that

$$\begin{aligned} (f_1(a_1, \dots, a_n), \dots, f_m(a_1, \dots, a_n)) \in W &\Leftrightarrow g(f_1(a_1, \dots, a_n), \dots, f_m(a_1, \dots, a_n)) = 0 \text{ for all } g \in \mathcal{I}(W) \\ &\Leftrightarrow g(f_1, \dots, f_m)(a_1, \dots, a_n) = 0 \text{ for all } g \in \mathcal{I}(W) \\ &\Leftrightarrow g(f_1, \dots, f_m) \in \mathcal{I}(V) \text{ for all } g \in \mathcal{I}(W) \\ &\Leftrightarrow g(f_1, \dots, f_m) = 0 \in k[V] \text{ for all } g \in \mathcal{I}(W). \end{aligned}$$

□

Example 7.19. Consider the following easy examples.

- Let $f \in k[V]$. Then $f: V \rightarrow k$ is a morphism.
- Let $f: k^n \rightarrow k^m$ be a linear map. Then f is a morphism.
- Let $f: \mathcal{Z}(xy - 1) \rightarrow k$ be given by $f(x, y) = x$. Then f is a morphism.
- Let $f: k \rightarrow \mathcal{Z}(y^2 - x^3)$ be given by $f(t) = (t^2, t^3)$. Then f is a morphism.

Example 7.20. One easily checks that:

- $\mathcal{Z}(y - x^k) \cong k$ via $f(x, y) = x$ and $g(t) = (t, t^k)$;

- $f: \mathcal{Z}(xy - 1) \rightarrow k$ given by $f(x, y) = x$ is not an isomorphism;
 - $f: k \rightarrow \mathcal{Z}(y^2 - x^3)$ given by $f(t) = (t^2, t^3)$ is not an isomorphism, even though it is a bijection.
- * We shall denote $k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{f}\mathcal{f}$ the category of affine algebraic sets over an algebraically closed field k with morphisms defined above.

Theorem 7.21. *Let k be algebraically closed and consider the categories $k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{f}\mathcal{f}$ and $k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{l}\mathcal{g}_{\mathcal{f}\mathcal{g}}^0$. The assignment*

$$F(V) = k[V] \text{ for an affine algebraic set } V \subseteq k^n$$

and

$$F(\varphi) = \varphi^* \text{ for a morphism of affine algebraic sets } \varphi: V \rightarrow W,$$

where $\varphi^*: k[W] \rightarrow k[V]$ is given by the formula

$$\varphi^*(f) = g \circ \varphi$$

defines an equivalence of categories $k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{f}\mathcal{f}^{\text{op}}$ and $k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{l}\mathcal{g}_{\mathcal{f}\mathcal{g}}^0$.

Proof. The map F assigns to an affine algebraic set $V \subseteq k^n$ a finitely generated k -algebra with no nilpotent elements by Theorem 7.5. By the same result F is also essentially surjective. If $\varphi: V \rightarrow W$ is a morphism between affine algebraic sets V and W , and if $g \in k[W]$, then $g \circ \varphi \in k[V]$. Moreover, the map $\varphi^*: k[W] \rightarrow k[V]$ is a homomorphism of k -algebras. Thus F defines a contravariant functor between categories $k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{f}\mathcal{f}$ and $k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{l}\mathcal{g}_{\mathcal{f}\mathcal{g}}^0$, or, equivalently, a covariant functor between the categories $k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{f}\mathcal{f}^{\text{op}}$ and $k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{l}\mathcal{g}_{\mathcal{f}\mathcal{g}}^0$. It remains to check that it is fully faithful.

Assume that $\varphi, \psi: V \rightarrow W$ are morphisms of affine algebraic sets and that $\varphi^* = \psi^*$. Say $\varphi = (\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_m)$ and $\psi = (\psi_1, \dots, \psi_m)$ with $\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_m, \psi_1, \dots, \psi_m \in k[V]$. Consider the element $\bar{x}_1 = x_1 + \mathcal{I}(V) \in k[W]$. Since $\bar{x}_1 \circ \varphi = \varphi^*(\bar{x}_1) = \psi^*(\bar{x}_1) = \bar{x}_1 \circ \psi$ it follows that $\varphi_1 = x_1(\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_m) = x_1(\psi_1, \dots, \psi_m) = \psi_1$. Likewise $\varphi_j = \psi_j$, for $j \in \{2, \dots, m\}$, so that the map $\text{Hom}_{k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{f}\mathcal{f}}(V, W) \rightarrow \text{Hom}_{k - \mathcal{A}\mathcal{l}\mathcal{g}_{\mathcal{f}\mathcal{g}}^0}(F(V), F(W))$ is injective.

Finally, let $f: k[W] \rightarrow k[V]$ be a homomorphism of k -algebras. We shall show that $f = \varphi^*$, for some morphism $\varphi: V \rightarrow W$. Indeed, consider the elements $\bar{x}_j = x_j + \mathcal{I}(W)$, for $j \in \{1, \dots, m\}$. Then $\varphi_j = f(\bar{x}_j) \in k[V]$, $j \in \{1, \dots, m\}$, and consider the map $\varphi = (\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_m): V \rightarrow k^m$. Clearly $f = \varphi^*$ and all that is left to show is that $\varphi(V) \subseteq W$. Fix $H \in \mathcal{I}(W)$. Then $H(\bar{x}_1, \dots, \bar{x}_m) = 0$ in $k[W]$, hence also $f(H) = 0$ on V . Fix $(a_1, \dots, a_n) \in V$; then $H(\varphi(a_1, \dots, a_n)) = f(H)(a_1, \dots, a_n) = 0$, and therefore $\varphi(a_1, \dots, a_n) \in W$. \square