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Algebraic Geometry

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Shigeru Itaka

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An Introduction to Birational Geometry
of Algebraic Varieties



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Preface

The aim of this book is to introduce the reader to the geometric theory of algebraic varieties, in particular to the birational geometry of algebraic varieties.

This volume grew out of the author's book in Japanese published in 3 volumes by Iwanami, Tokyo, in 1977. While writing this English version, the author has tried to rearrange and rewrite the original material so that even beginners can read it easily without referring to other books, such as textbooks on commutative algebra. The reader is only expected to know the definition of Noetherian rings and the statement of the Hilbert basis theorem.

The new chapters 1, 2, and 10 have been expanded. In particular, the exposition of D -dimension theory, although shorter, is more complete than in the old version. However, to keep the book of manageable size, the latter parts of Chapters 6, 9, and 11 have been removed.

I thank Mr. A. Sevenster for encouraging me to write this new version, and Professors K. K. Kubota in Kentucky and P. M. H. Wilson in Cambridge for their careful and critical reading of the English manuscripts and typescripts. I held seminars based on the material in this book at The University of Tokyo, where a large number of valuable comments and suggestions were given by students Iwamiya, Kawamata, Norimatsu, Tobita, Tsushima, Maeda, Sakamoto, Tsunoda, Chou, Fujiwara, Suzuki, and Matsuda.

Fall 1981

Shigeru Iitaka

Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter 1	
Schemes	4
1.1 Spectra of Rings	4
1.2 Examples of Spectra as Topological Spaces	7
1.3 Rings of Fractions, the Case A_f	7
1.4 Rings and Modules of Fractions	9
1.5 Nullstellensatz	13
1.6 Irreducible Spaces	14
1.7 Integral Extension of Rings	16
1.8 Hilbert Nullstellensatz	19
1.9 Dimension of $\text{Spec } A$	22
1.10 Sheaves	27
1.11 Structure of Sheaves on Spectra	39
1.12 Quasi-coherent Sheaves and Coherent Sheaves	44
1.13 Reduced Affine Schemes and Integral Affine Schemes	50
1.14 Morphism of Affine Schemes	51
1.15 Definition of Schemes and First Properties	54
1.16 Subschemes	58
1.17 Glueing Schemes	62
1.18 Projective Spaces	63
1.19 S -Schemes and Automorphism of Schemes	64
1.20 Product of S -Schemes	66
1.21 Base Extension	71
1.22 Graphs of Morphisms	72
1.23 Separated Schemes	75
1.24 Regular Functions and Rational Functions	78

1.25 Rational Maps	82
1.26 Morphisms of Finite Type	84
1.27 Affine Morphisms and Integral Morphisms	88
1.28 Proper Morphisms and Finite Morphisms	92
1.29 Algebraic Varieties	95
 Chapter 2	
Normal Varieties	102
2.1 Normal Rings	102
2.2 Normal Points on Schemes	103
2.3 Unique Factorization Domains	105
2.4 Primary Decomposition of Ideals	108
2.5 Intersection Theorem and Complete Local Rings	110
2.6 Regular Local Rings	116
2.7 Normal Points on Algebraic Curves and Extension Theorems	121
2.8 Divisors on a Normal Variety	124
2.9 Linear Systems	127
2.10 Domain of a Rational Map	129
2.11 Pullback of a Divisor	130
2.12 Strictly Rational Maps	133
2.13 Connectedness Theorem	138
2.14 Normalization of Varieties	139
2.15 Degree of a Morphism and a Rational Map	142
2.16 Inverse Image Sheaves	144
2.17 The Pullback Theorem	147
2.18 Invertible Sheaves	150
2.19 Rational Sections of an Invertible Sheaf	152
2.20 Divisors and Invertible Sheaves	154
 Chapter 3	
Projective Schemes	160
3.1 Graded Rings	160
3.2 Homogeneous Spectra	161
3.3 Finitely Generated Graded Rings	162
3.4 Construction of Projective Schemes	164
3.5 Some Properties of Projective Schemes	167
3.6 Chow's Lemma	170
 Chapter 4	
Cohomology of Sheaves	174
4.1 Injective Sheaves	174
4.2 Fundamental Theorems	175
4.3 Flabby Sheaves	177
4.4 Cohomology of Affine Schemes	179

4.5	Finiteness Theorem	181
4.6	Leray's Spectral Sequence	182
4.7	Cohomology of Affine Morphisms	184
4.8	Riemann–Roch Theorem (in the Weak Form) on a Curve	185
Chapter 5		
	Regular Forms and Rational Forms on a Variety	188
5.1	Modules of Regular Forms and Canonical Derivations	188
5.2	Lemmas	191
5.3	Sheaves of Regular Forms	194
5.4	Birational Invariance of Genera	196
5.5	Adjunction Formula	201
5.6	Ramification Formula	202
5.7	Generalized Adjunction Formula and Conductors	204
5.8	Serre Duality	206
Chapter 6		
	Theory of Curves	208
6.1	Riemann–Roch Theorem	208
6.2	Fujita's Invariant $\Delta(C, D)$	211
6.3	Degree of a Curve	213
6.4	Hyperplane Section Theorem	214
6.5	Hyperelliptic Curves	216
6.6	Λ -Gap Sequence and Weierstrass Points	219
6.7	Wronski Forms	221
6.8	Theorems of Hurwitz and Automorphism Groups of Curves	224
Chapter 7		
	Cohomology of Projective Schemes	226
7.1	The Homomorphism α_M	226
7.2	The Homomorphism β_F	228
7.3	Cohomology Groups of Coherent Sheaves on \mathbf{P}_R^n	230
7.4	Ample Sheaves	235
7.5	Projective Morphisms	239
7.6	Unscrewing Lemma and Its Applications	241
7.7	Projective Normality	246
7.8	Etale Morphisms	248
7.9	Theorems of Bertini	250
7.10	Monoidal Transformations	253
Chapter 8		
	Intersection Theory of Divisors	260
8.1	Intersection Number of Curves on a Surface	260
8.2	Riemann–Roch Theorem on an Algebraic Surface	264

8.3	Intersection Matrix of a Divisor	269
8.4	Intersection Numbers of Invertible Sheaves	271
8.5	Nakai's Criterion on Ample Sheaves	274
Chapter 9		
	Curves on a Nonsingular Surface	278
9.1	Quadric Transformations	278
9.2	Local Properties of Singular Points	281
9.3	Linear Pencil Theorem	287
9.4	Dual Curves and Plücker Relations	291
9.5	Decomposition of Birational Maps	295
Chapter 10		
	D -Dimension and Kodaira Dimension of Varieties	298
10.1	D -Dimension	298
10.2	The Asymptotic Estimate for $l(mD)$	300
10.3	Fundamental Theorems for D -Dimension	302
10.4	D -Dimensions of a $K3$ Surface and an Abelian Variety	306
10.5	Kodaira Dimension	309
10.6	Types of Varieties	311
10.7	Subvarieties of an Abelian Variety	312
Chapter 11		
	Logarithmic Kodaira Dimension of Varieties	320
11.1	Logarithmic Forms	320
11.2	Logarithmic Genera	324
11.3	Reduced Divisor as a Boundary	328
11.4	Logarithmic Ramification Formula	333
11.5	Étale Endomorphisms	336
11.6	Logarithmic Canonical Fibered Varieties	338
11.7	Finiteness of the Group $\text{SBir}(V)$	340
11.8	Some Applications	341
	References	345
	Index	349

Introduction

The purpose of algebraic geometry is to study comprehensively varieties defined by a set of polynomial equations in many variables

$$f_1(X_1, \dots, X_n) = \dots = f_r(X_1, \dots, X_n) = 0.$$

Properties of varieties should be independent of the choice of coordinate systems. For example, the variety defined by $X_2 = 0$ ($r = 1, n = 2$) is equivalent to that defined by $Y_1 - Y_2^2 = 0$ ($r = 1, n = 2$) under the invertible transformation $X_1 = Y_2, X_2 = Y_1 - Y_2^2$. This equivalence is interpreted as the existence of an isomorphism of rings

$$\frac{k[X_1, X_2]}{(X_2)} \cong \frac{k[Y_1, Y_2]}{(Y_1 - Y_2^2)}.$$

Thus, the study of a set of polynomial equations can be reduced to the study of a commutative ring $k[X_1, \dots, X_n]/\mathfrak{a}$, where \mathfrak{a} is an ideal generated by f_1, \dots, f_r . From this viewpoint, one arrives naturally at the concepts of affine schemes and then of schemes.

However, ever since the last century, it has been believed that the more essential properties of varieties are those which are birationally invariant.

A plane curve is defined by an irreducible polynomial $\varphi(X, Y)$. The degree of φ is said to be the degree of the curve. Plane curves defined by irreducible polynomials f_1 and f_2 are birationally equivalent if the field $Q(k[X, Y]/(f_1))$ is isomorphic to $Q(k[X, Y]/(f_2))$, where $Q(R)$ denotes the field of fractions of the integral domain R .

The degree is not, however, a birational invariant. As Abel noted, the number of linearly independent Abelian differentials of the first kind (also called regular 1-forms) on a given curve C is more important than the degree, since it is a birational invariant. This number is called the genus of

C , denoted by $g(C)$. Curves can be classified into the following three classes according to their genera:

The class I: $g(C) = 0$.

The class II: $g(C) = 1$.

The class III: $g(C) \geq 2$.

A similar birational classification for 2-dimensional varieties (called surfaces) was obtained by Italian algebraic geometers around the beginning of our own century.

Given a variety V of dimension n , many birational invariants can be defined, such as the plurigena, the i -th irregularity, and the Kodaira dimension. Let $\kappa(V)$ denote the Kodaira dimension of V , which can take the values $-\infty, 0, 1, \dots, n$. By means of the Kodaira dimension, varieties of dimension n can be classified into $n + 2$ classes. When $n = 1$, this classification agrees with that given by the genus.

Many fundamental properties of the Kodaira dimension have been found, giving some basic information about the structure of varieties.

Let V be a variety of dimension n and suppose that $\kappa(V) \geq 0$. Then by Theorem 10.3 (fibering theorem), there exists a dominating morphism $f: V^* \rightarrow W$ such that (1) V^* is birationally equivalent to V , (2) $\dim W = \kappa(V)$, (3) general fibers $f^{-1}(x)$ are irreducible, and (4) for a (strictly) general point x of W , $\kappa(f^{-1}(x)) = 0$.

Varieties V with $\kappa(V) = n$ are said to be of general type or of hyperbolic type. Roughly speaking, almost all varieties are of hyperbolic type and these have rather general properties in common. For example, if V is of hyperbolic type, then the automorphism group $\text{Aut}(V)$ of V is a finite group.

The number of linearly independent regular 1-forms on a complete non-singular variety V is also a birational invariant, denoted by $q(V)$. In particular, if $\dim V = 1$, then $q(V)$ turns out to be the genus of V . In general, an Abelian variety of dimension $q(V)$, the Albanese variety $\text{Alb}(V)$, is associated with V , together with the Albanese map $\alpha_V: V \rightarrow \text{Alb}(V)$.

Recently Kawamata proved that if $\kappa(V) = 0$, then α_V is surjective and general fibers $\alpha_V^{-1}(x)$ are irreducible. Thus in the case where $\kappa(V) = 0$ and $q(V) > 0$, the structure of V can be studied using Albanese maps. However, nothing is known about V when $\kappa(V) = q(V) = 0$. If $\dim V = 2$, it has been shown that such a V is birationally equivalent to a K3 surface or an Enriques surface.

In the case where $\kappa(V) = -\infty$ and $q(V) > 0$, consider again the Albanese map $\alpha_V: V \rightarrow \text{Alb}(V)$. One has a morphism $\psi: V \rightarrow Z$ obtained from the Stein factorization of $\alpha_V: V \rightarrow \alpha_V(V)$. Then it is conjectured that $\kappa(\psi^{-1}(x)) = -\infty$ for a general point x of Z . Actually, this has been proved for $n \leq 3$ (by Enriques for $n = 2$; by Viehweg for $n = 3$). The case where $\kappa(V) = -\infty$ and $q(V) = 0$ seems the most difficult case to study. When $n = 2$, such a V is a rational surface, i.e., a surface birationally equivalent to $\mathbf{P}^1 \times \mathbf{P}^1$. This fact.

discovered by Castelnuovo, was the starting point of the classification theory of algebraic surfaces by the Italian school. But in the higher dimensional case, nothing is known about such V .

Chapter 10 may serve as a guide to this rapidly developing theory of birational classification of varieties.

It is unreasonable to say that only birationally invariant properties are worth studying. For instance, the affine line A^1 is quite different from $G_m = A^1 - \{0\}$, which are both very important. However, they are birationally equivalent.

Any variety is birationally equivalent to a complete variety. Thus, when considering noncomplete varieties and studying their properties, we can no longer use birational equivalence. However, in this case, a more delicate equivalence relation, called proper birational equivalence, is introduced (see Chapter 2). One can find many proper-birational invariants such as the logarithmic genera, logarithmic irregularities, and logarithmic Kodaira dimension, which are defined by making use of logarithmic forms. A proper birational equivalence between affine normal varieties is just an isomorphism between them; hence the corresponding normal rings are isomorphic. Thus, in our study of proper birational properties of varieties, the theory of (normal) rings and birational geometry are unified; thus the theorems on Kodaira dimension could be translated into ring theory and so on.

Algebraic geometry should be a synthesis of algebra and geometry. But, in practice, it has been an algebraic approach to geometry. Our new birational geometry (e.g., proper birational geometry) is not only a revival of old birational geometry but is also a beginning of some grand unified theory of algebra and geometry.

Chapter 1

Schemes

§1.1 Spectra of Rings

a. We begin by defining spectra of commutative rings with identity, which are the base spaces of the affine schemes introduced in §1.11.

In all that follows, commutative rings A, B, \dots with identity elements $1_A, 1_B, \dots$ are referred to simply as *rings*, and ring homomorphisms $\varphi: A \rightarrow B$ are assumed to satisfy $\varphi(1_A) = 1_B$.

Definition. The *spectrum* of a ring A is the set of all prime ideals of A , denoted by $\text{Spec } A$.

Note that the ring A itself is not considered to be a prime ideal.

If $\varphi: A \rightarrow B$ is a ring homomorphism and \mathfrak{p} is a prime ideal of B , then $\varphi^{-1}(\mathfrak{p})$ is also a prime ideal of A . We note that $1_A \notin \varphi^{-1}(\mathfrak{p})$, since $1_B \notin \mathfrak{p}$ and $\varphi(1_A) = 1_B$.

Definition. The mapping ${}^a\varphi: \text{Spec } B \rightarrow \text{Spec } A$ defined by ${}^a\varphi(\mathfrak{p}) = \varphi^{-1}(\mathfrak{p})$ is said to be the *mapping associated with* φ .

EXAMPLE 1.1. (i) For the trivial ring 0 , we have $\text{Spec } 0 = \emptyset$.

(ii) If k is a field (a field is always assumed to be nontrivial, i.e., $k \neq \{0\}$), then $\text{Spec } k = \{(0)\}$.

(iii) $\text{Spec } \mathbb{Z} = \{(0)\} \cup \{(p) \mid p \text{ is a prime number}\}$.

(iv) If $k[X]$ is a ring of polynomials over an algebraically closed field k , then

$$\text{Spec } k[X] = \{(0)\} \cup \{(X - \alpha) \mid \alpha \in k\}.$$

which can be written as $\text{Spec } k[X] = \{*\} \cup k$ with the abbreviations $* = (0)$, $\alpha = (X - \alpha)$.

(v) If $k[X, Y]$ is a polynomial ring in two variables over an algebraically closed field k , then

$$\text{Spec } k[X, Y] = \{(0)\} \cup \{(f) \mid f \text{ is a nonconstant irreducible polynomial in } X \text{ and } Y\} \cup \{(X - \alpha, Y - \beta) \mid (\alpha, \beta) \in k^2\}.$$

PROOF OF (v). Clearly, it suffices to show that every nonprincipal prime ideal \mathfrak{p} is of the form $(X - \alpha, Y - \beta)$. Let $f \in \mathfrak{p} \setminus \{0\}$ be a polynomial with $\deg_Y f$ minimal such that f is irreducible. Since \mathfrak{p} is nonprincipal, there is an element $g \in \mathfrak{p} \setminus (f)$. By the Euclidean algorithm in the ring $k(X)[Y]$, there is a $p \in k[X] \setminus (0)$ and $q, r \in k[X, Y]$ satisfying $pg = qf + r$, where either $r = 0$ or $\deg_Y r < \deg_Y f$. It follows that $r = 0$ by the choice of f and because $r = pg - qf \in \mathfrak{p}$. But then $p \in (f)$ because (f) is a prime ideal, $pg = qf \in (f)$, and $g \notin (f)$. Thus $\deg_Y f \leq \deg_Y p = 0$; i.e., $f \in k[X]$. Since k is algebraically closed and $f \in k[X]$ is irreducible, f must be linear and so \mathfrak{p} contains a polynomial of the form $X - \alpha$ with $\alpha \in k$. Interchanging the roles of X and Y , one also sees that \mathfrak{p} contains a polynomial of the form $Y - \beta$ with $\beta \in k$. But then \mathfrak{p} contains the maximal ideal $(X - \alpha, Y - \beta)$ and hence must be equal to it (cf. Exercise 1.1).

The reader can easily verify that the maximal ideals of $k[X, Y]$ are precisely those of the form $(X - \alpha, Y - \beta)$ with $(\alpha, \beta) \in k^2$. \square

b. We shall introduce a topology on $\text{Spec } A$. For any ideal \mathfrak{a} of A , define the set $V(\mathfrak{a})$ to be $\{\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } A \mid \mathfrak{p} \supseteq \mathfrak{a}\}$, and for any $f \in A$, define $V(f)$ to be $\{\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } A \mid \mathfrak{p} \ni f\}$. Then, $V(f) = V(fA)$ and the following properties are easily verified:

- (i) $V(0) = \text{Spec } A$, $V(1) = \emptyset$.
- (ii) If \mathfrak{a} and \mathfrak{b} are ideals such that $\mathfrak{a} \subseteq \mathfrak{b}$, then $V(\mathfrak{a}) \supseteq V(\mathfrak{b})$.
- (iii) $V(\mathfrak{a} \cap \mathfrak{b}) = V(\mathfrak{a}\mathfrak{b}) = V(\mathfrak{a}) \cup V(\mathfrak{b})$. In particular, $V(fg) = V(f) \cup V(g)$ for all $f, g \in A$.
- (iv) If $\{\mathfrak{a}_\lambda \mid \lambda \in \Lambda\}$ is a set of ideals of A , then $V(\sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} \mathfrak{a}_\lambda) = \bigcap_{\lambda \in \Lambda} V(\mathfrak{a}_\lambda)$.
- (v) For any ideal \mathfrak{a} of A , if $\varphi: A \rightarrow A/\mathfrak{a}$ is the natural homomorphism then ${}^a\varphi: \text{Spec}(A/\mathfrak{a}) \rightarrow \text{Spec } A$ is one-to-one and $\text{Im } {}^a\varphi = V(\mathfrak{a})$.

Definition. The topology on $\text{Spec } A$ is introduced by taking the sets in $\{V(\mathfrak{a}) \mid \mathfrak{a} \text{ ideals of } A\}$ as the closed sets.

The open sets of this topology are just those of the form

$$D(\mathfrak{a}) = \text{Spec } A \setminus V(\mathfrak{a}) = \{\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec } A \mid \mathfrak{p} \not\supseteq \mathfrak{a}\}.$$

When expressed in terms of the $D(\mathfrak{a})$, properties (i) through (v) will be referred to as properties (i') through (v'), respectively. For example, in view

of the property (iv'), if \mathfrak{a} is the ideal generated by $\{f_\lambda \mid \lambda \in \Lambda\}$, then

$$D(\mathfrak{a}) = \bigcup_{\lambda \in \Lambda} D(f_\lambda),$$

where $D(f) = \text{Spec } A \setminus V(f) = \{p \in \text{Spec } A \mid p \not\supseteq f\}$.

Note that the sets $D(f)$ form an open base for the topology of $\text{Spec } A$.

The following properties of the mapping ${}^a\varphi: \text{Spec } B \rightarrow \text{Spec } A$ associated with $\varphi: A \rightarrow B$ are easily verified.

Proposition 1.1

- (i) ${}^a\varphi$ is continuous. More precisely, if $f \in A$, then $({}^a\varphi)^{-1}(D(f)) = D(\varphi(f))$, and if \mathfrak{a} is an ideal of A , then $({}^a\varphi)^{-1}(V(\mathfrak{a})) = V(\mathfrak{a}B)$, where $\mathfrak{a}B$ is the ideal of B generated by $\varphi(\mathfrak{a})$.
- (ii) For any ideal \mathfrak{b} of B , one has

$${}^a\varphi(V(\mathfrak{b})) \subseteq V(\varphi^{-1}(\mathfrak{b})).$$
- (iii) If $\varphi: A \rightarrow A/\mathfrak{a}$ is the natural homomorphism, then ${}^a\varphi: \text{Spec } A/\mathfrak{a} \rightarrow \text{Spec } A$ is a homeomorphism of $\text{Spec } A/\mathfrak{a}$ onto $V(\mathfrak{a})$.
- (iv) If $\varphi: A \rightarrow B$ is surjective, then ${}^a\varphi$ is a homeomorphism of $\text{Spec } B$ onto the closed subset $V(\text{Ker } \varphi)$ of $\text{Spec } A$.
- (v) On the other hand, if ${}^a\varphi: \text{Spec } B \rightarrow \text{Spec } A$ is surjective, then $V(\text{Ker } \varphi) = V(\varphi^{-1}(0)) = \text{Spec } A$. Hence $\text{Ker } \varphi$ is a subset of every prime ideal of A .

For the proof of the next propositions, we need a result from ring theory.

Definition. If \mathfrak{a} is an ideal of A , the radical $\sqrt{\mathfrak{a}}$ is $\{a \in A \mid a^m \in \mathfrak{a} \text{ for some integer } m > 0\}$. $\sqrt{(0_A)}$ is said to be the nilradical of A , which consists of all nilpotent elements of A .

$\sqrt{\mathfrak{a}}$ is an ideal containing \mathfrak{a} .

c. The following result is a key lemma in the first stage of the theory of spectra.

Lemma 1.1. If \mathfrak{a} is a proper ideal (i.e., $\mathfrak{a} \neq A$) of A , then there exists a maximal ideal containing \mathfrak{a} .

PROOF. Let \mathfrak{F} be the set of all proper ideals of A containing \mathfrak{a} . Then \mathfrak{F} is not empty, since $\mathfrak{a} \in \mathfrak{F}$. The set \mathfrak{F} is naturally ordered by set inclusion, i.e., $\mathfrak{a}_\lambda \leq \mathfrak{a}_\mu$ if and only if $\mathfrak{a}_\lambda \subseteq \mathfrak{a}_\mu$. We shall show that \mathfrak{F} is an inductively ordered set. In fact, letting $\{\mathfrak{a}_\lambda \mid \lambda \in \Lambda\}$ be an arbitrary linearly ordered subset of \mathfrak{F} , define $\mathfrak{a}_* = \bigcup_{\lambda \in \Lambda} \mathfrak{a}_\lambda$, which becomes a proper ideal, i.e., $\mathfrak{a}_* \in \mathfrak{F}$ and $\mathfrak{a}_\lambda \leq \mathfrak{a}_*$ for any $\lambda \in \Lambda$. Hence, the ordered set \mathfrak{F} is inductive.

By Zorn's lemma, \mathfrak{F} has a maximal element \mathfrak{m} , which is a maximal ideal containing \mathfrak{a} . □

Corollary

- (i) $\text{Spec } A = \emptyset$ if and only if $A = 0$.
 (ii) $V(\mathfrak{a}) = \emptyset$ if and only if $\mathfrak{a} = A$.

EXAMPLE 1.2. Let $a_1, \dots, a_r \in A$. If there is no prime ideal containing a_1, \dots, a_r , then there exist b_1, \dots, b_r in A such that $a_1 b_1 + \dots + a_r b_r = 1$.

PROOF. Let $\mathfrak{a} = \sum_{j=1}^r a_j A$. If $\mathfrak{a} \neq A$, then there exists a prime ideal \mathfrak{p} containing \mathfrak{a} by Lemma 1.1. \square

§1.2 Examples of Spectra as Topological Spaces

a. In $X = \text{Spec } \mathbb{Z}$, the closed sets are X , \emptyset , and the sets of the form $\{(p_1), \dots, (p_s)\}$, i.e., the finite sets of prime numbers.

b. Let k be an algebraically closed field and $k[X]$ be the corresponding polynomial ring. Then as was seen in Example 1.1(iv), $\text{Spec } k[X]$ can be written as $\{*\} \cup k$. Since any ideal of $k[X]$ is either (0) , (1) , or (f) , where $f \in k[X] \setminus k$, the closed sets are $\{*\} \cup k$, \emptyset , and the sets of the form $\{\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_s\}$ where the λ_i are the roots of $f(x) = 0$ for such an f .

Note that in this case a union of finitely many closed sets F_1, F_2, \dots, F_r , none of which is the whole space is not the whole space. In other words, if U_1, \dots, U_r are nonempty open sets, then $U_1 \cap \dots \cap U_r$ is not empty.

Now, let $A = k[X, Y]$ as in Example 1.1(v). Then

$$\text{Spec } A = \{*\} \cup \{(f) \mid f \in k[X, Y] \setminus k \text{ is irreducible}\} \cup k^2.$$

If we consider k^2 as the topological space with the topology induced from $\text{Spec } A$, then the closed sets are k^2 , \emptyset , and finite unions of the finite sets and the sets of the form $\{(a, b) \in k^2 \mid \varphi(a, b) = 0\}$ for $\varphi \in k[X, Y]$. This is easily checked, since A is Noetherian.

c. Let $A = k[[X]]$, the formal power series ring over a field k . Then $\text{Spec } A = \{(0), (X)\}$. The closed sets are $\{(0), (X)\}$, $\{(X)\}$, and \emptyset . Hence, the closure of (0) is the whole space. $\text{Spec } A$ is a topological space with two points which is not discrete.

§1.3 Rings of Fractions, the Case A_f

Let A be a ring. For any element f of A , define A_f to be $A[X]/(fX - 1)$, where $A[X]$ is the ring of polynomials over A . Letting $\psi_f(a) = a \bmod (fX - 1)$ for $a \in A$, and $\xi = X \bmod (fX - 1)$, one has the ring homomorphism