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Commentationes Mathematicae Universitatis Carolinae, Vol. 54 (2013), No. 1, 53--68

Persistent URL: <http://dml.cz/dmlcz/143152>

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Fixed-place ideals in commutative rings

ALI REZAEI ALIABAD, MEHDI BADIE

Abstract. Let I be a semi-prime ideal. Then $P_o \in \text{Min}(I)$ is called irredundant with respect to I if $I \neq \bigcap_{P_o \neq P \in \text{Min}(I)} P$. If I is the intersection of all irredundant ideals with respect to I , it is called a fixed-place ideal. If there are no irredundant ideals with respect to I , it is called an anti fixed-place ideal. We show that each semi-prime ideal has a unique representation as an intersection of a fixed-place ideal and an anti fixed-place ideal. We say the point $p \in \beta X$ is a fixed-place point if $O^p(X)$ is a fixed-place ideal. In this situation the fixed-place rank of p , denoted by $\text{FP-rank}_X(p)$, is defined as the cardinal of the set of all irredundant prime ideals with respect to $O^p(X)$. Let p be a fixed-place point, it is shown that $\text{FP-rank}_X(p) = \eta$ if and only if there is a family $\{Y_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ of cozero sets of X such that: 1- $|A| = \eta$, 2- $p \in \text{cl}_{\beta X} Y_\alpha$ for each $\alpha \in A$, 3- $p \notin \text{cl}_{\beta X} (Y_\alpha \cap Y_\beta)$ if $\alpha \neq \beta$ and 4- η is the greatest cardinal with the above properties. In this case p is an F -point with respect to Y_α for any $\alpha \in A$.

Keywords: ring of continuous functions, fixed-place, anti fixed-place, irredundant, semi-prime, annihilator, affiliated prime, fixed-place rank, Zariski topology

Classification: Primary 13Axx; Secondary 54C40

1. Introduction

In this article, any ring R is commutative with unity. A semi-prime ideal means an ideal which is an intersection of prime ideals. For each ideal I of R and each element a of R , we denote the ideals $\{x \in R : ax \in I\}$ by $(I : a)$. When $I = \{0\}$ we write instead $\text{Ann}(a)$ and call this the annihilator of a . If $\text{Ann}(a)$ is maximal in the set of all annihilators of nonzero elements of R , then $\text{Ann}(a)$ is a prime ideal of R , and it is called an affiliated prime ideal. A prime ideal P is said to be a minimal prime ideal over an ideal I , if there are no prime ideals strictly contained in P that contain I . By $\text{Min}(I)$ we mean the set of all minimal prime ideals over I ; we use $\text{Min}(R)$ instead of $\text{Min}(\{0\})$. A ring is called reduced, if the ideal $\{0\}$ is a semi-prime ideal. $\text{Zd}(R)$ stands for the set of all zero divisors of R . A prime ideal P is called a Bourbaki (resp. Zariski-Samuel) associated prime divisor of an ideal I if $(I : x) = P$ (resp., $(I : x)$ is P -primary) for some $x \in R$. We denote the set of Bourbaki (Zariski-Samuel) associated prime divisors of an ideal I by $\text{B}(I)$ (resp., $[\text{Z-S}](I)$). It is clear that if I is a semi-prime ideal, then $\text{B}(I) = [\text{Z-S}](I)$. A representation $I = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{P}} P$ of I as an intersection of prime ideals is called irredundant if no $P \in \mathcal{P}$ may be omitted.

For every $S \subseteq R$, by $h(S)$ and $h^c(S)$ we mean the sets $\{P \in \text{Min}(R) : S \subseteq P\}$ and $\text{Min}(R) \setminus h(S)$, respectively. Recall that the Zariski topology on $\text{Min}(R)$ is the one generated by the closed base $\{h(a) : a \in R\}$.

We assume throughout the paper that any topological space X is Tychonoff, βX is the Stone-Ćech compactification of X and $C(X)$ is the ring of all real valued continuous functions on X . For any $f \in C(X)$, we denote $f^{-1}\{0\}$ and $X \setminus f^{-1}\{0\}$ by $Z(f)$ and $\text{Coz}(f)$, respectively. Supposing $S \subseteq C(X)$, we define $Z(S) = \{Z(f) : f \in S\}$ and we use $Z(X)$ instead of $Z(C(X))$. For any $\mathcal{B} \subseteq Z(X)$, we define $Z^{-1}(\mathcal{B}) = \{f \in C(X) : Z(f) \in \mathcal{B}\}$. Suppose that $A \subseteq \beta X$, then by $M^A(X)$ and $O^A(X)$ we mean the sets $\{f \in C(X) : A \subseteq \text{cl}_{\beta X} Z(f)\}$ and $\{f \in C(X) : A \subseteq \text{int}_{\beta X} \text{cl}_{\beta X} Z(f)\}$, respectively. If $A = \{p\}$ for some $p \in \beta X$, then for brevity, we use the notations $M^p(X)$ and $O^p(X)$. We denote $Z(O^p(X))$ by $\mathcal{O}^p(X)$. An element $p \in \beta X$ is called an F -point with respect to X if $\mathcal{O}^p(X)$ is prime ideal. The set of all isolated points of a topological space X is denoted by $I(X)$. Clearly, $\overline{I(X)} = X$ if and only if X has a smallest dense subspace; exactly, this subspace is equal to $I(X)$. The reader is referred to [6] for other terms and notations.

In Section 2, we introduce irredundant families and irredundant prime ideals with respect to a semi-prime ideal. We use these notions to define central concepts of the article: fixed-place ideals, anti fixed-place ideals, and fixed-place rank for the fixed-place ideals. We give equivalence conditions for the above concepts. We prove that the intersection of two fixed-place ideals is fixed-place. In Section 3, we show that each semi-prime ideal has a unique intersection representation of a fixed-place ideal and an anti fixed-place ideal. In Section 4, we obtain some results from viewpoint of the Zariski topology. We show that I is a fixed-place (an anti fixed-place) ideal if and only if the set of isolated points of $\text{Min}(I)$ is a dense subspace ($\text{Min}(I)$ has no isolated point). We introduce fixed-place families in this section, and prove that $\mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Spec}(R)$ is fixed-place if and only if \mathcal{P} is discrete in the Zariski topology. In the final section, we study fixed-place ideals in $C(X)$. We show that the zero ideal of $C(X)$ is fixed-place (anti fixed-place) if and only if $I(X)$ is dense in X (X has no isolated point). We introduce fixed-place points and fixed-place rank of these points and we generalize Proposition 3.1 in [8] and Theorem 3.1 in [10].

2. Fixed-place ideal

By Theorem 2.1 and Proposition 4.11 of [12], each irredundant prime ideal of a semi-prime ideal I is of the form $(I : x)$, for some $x \in R$, and if a semi-prime ideal I is equal to an irredundant intersection of the family $\{P_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ of prime ideals, then $\{P_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ is the set of all irredundant prime ideals of I . We can summarize these facts as follows.

Theorem 2.1. *If I is a semi-prime ideal, then the following statements are equivalent.*

- (a) There is a family \mathcal{P} of prime ideals such that $I = \bigcap \mathcal{P}$ is an irredundant intersection.
- (b) $I = \bigcap \mathcal{B}(I)$.
- (c) $I = \bigcap [Z-S](I)$.
- (d) $I = \bigcap \{(I : x) : x \in R \text{ and } (I : x) \text{ is a prime ideal}\}$.

In this situation, we have

$$\mathcal{P} = \mathcal{B}(I) = [Z-S](I) = \{(I : x) : x \in R \text{ and } (I : x) \text{ is a prime ideal}\}.$$

Definition 2.2. Suppose that I is a semi-prime ideal of a ring R and $\emptyset \neq \mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Min}(I)$. We say \mathcal{P} is *irredundant* with respect to I if $I \neq \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(I) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P$. If $\mathcal{P} = \{P\}$, then we say that P is irredundant with respect to I . If I is equal to the intersection of irredundant prime ideals of I , then we call I a *fixed-place ideal*, exactly, by Theorem 2.1, we have $I = \bigcap \mathcal{B}(I)$. In this situation the *fixed-place rank* of I is denoted by $\text{FP-rank}(I)$, and it is defined by the cardinal of $\mathcal{B}(I)$. If $\mathcal{B}(I) = \emptyset$, i.e., I has no irredundant prime ideal, then we call I an *anti fixed-place ideal*.

The following proposition is an immediate consequence of Theorem 2.1.

Proposition 2.3. If I is a semi-prime ideal of a ring R and $\mathcal{A} \subseteq \mathcal{B}(I) \neq \emptyset$, then $J = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{A}} P$ is a fixed-place ideal and $\mathcal{B}(J) = \mathcal{A}$.

Proposition 2.4. Let I be a semi-prime ideal of a ring R and $\mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Min}(I)$. If $I = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{P}} P$, then $\mathcal{B}(I) \subseteq \mathcal{P}$.

PROOF: If $P_0 \notin \mathcal{P}$, then $\mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Min}(I) \setminus \{P_0\}$. Thus

$$I \subseteq \bigcap_{P_0 \neq P \in \text{Min}(I)} P \subseteq \bigcap_{P_0 \neq P \in \mathcal{P}} P = I \Rightarrow \bigcap_{P_0 \neq P \in \text{Min}(I)} P = I \Rightarrow P_0 \notin \mathcal{B}(I).$$

Hence $\mathcal{B}(I) \subseteq \mathcal{P}$. □

Theorem 2.5. Let I be a semi-prime ideal of a ring R , $\mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Min}(I)$ and $\mathcal{Q} = \{P/I : P \in \mathcal{P}\}$. The family \mathcal{P} is irredundant with respect to I if and only if \mathcal{Q} is irredundant with respect to the zero ideal of the ring R/I .

PROOF: We know that

$$I(a) \in \bigcap_{P/I \in \text{Min}(R/I) \setminus \mathcal{Q}} \frac{P}{I} = \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(I) \setminus \mathcal{P}} \frac{P}{I} \Leftrightarrow a \in \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(I) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P.$$

Thus

$$\bigcap_{P/I \in \text{Min}(R/I) \setminus \mathcal{Q}} \frac{P}{I} = \{0\} \Leftrightarrow \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(I) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P = I.$$

Therefore, \mathcal{P} is irredundant with respect to ideal I if and only if \mathcal{Q} is irredundant with respect to the zero ideal of the ring R/I . □

By the above theorem, we can see that for studying the fixed-place ideals it is sufficient to focus on the zero ideal of the reduced rings. Thus, in the remainder of this section we assume that R is reduced. By this assumption, it is clear that if P is a minimal prime ideal of R , then P is irredundant with respect to the zero ideal if and only if P is an affiliated prime ideal.

Proposition 2.6. *Suppose that R is a ring and $\mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Min}(R)$.*

- (a) *If $\mathcal{P} \cap \mathcal{B}(\{0\}) \neq \emptyset$, then \mathcal{P} is irredundant with respect to $\{0\}$.*
 (b) *If $J = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P$,*

$$\emptyset \neq \mathcal{S} = \{P \in \text{Min}(R) : P \notin \mathcal{B}(\{0\}) \text{ and } P \not\supseteq J\} \text{ and}$$

$$\emptyset \neq \mathcal{T} = \{P \in \text{Min}(R) : P \notin \mathcal{B}(\{0\}) \text{ and } P \supseteq J\}$$

then \mathcal{S} is irredundant with respect to the zero ideal, where $\mathcal{S} \cap \mathcal{B}(\{0\}) = \emptyset$. Also, \mathcal{T} is not irredundant with respect to the zero ideal.

PROOF: The proof is straightforward. □

In this part, we study the irredundant family with respect to the zero ideal and give some equivalent conditions.

Proposition 2.7. *Let $\mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Min}(R)$. If \mathcal{P} is an irredundant family with respect to the zero ideal R , then there exists $0 \neq a \in R$ such that $\bigcap \mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Ann}(a)$.*

PROOF: Since \mathcal{P} is an irredundant family with respect to the zero ideal of R , we have that

$$\bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(R) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P \neq \{0\}.$$

Say $0 \neq a \in \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(R) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P$. For any $b \in \bigcap_{a \in \mathcal{P}} P$,

$$ab \in \bigcap_{P \in (\text{Min}(R) \setminus \mathcal{P}) \cup \mathcal{P}} P = \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(R)} P = \{0\}.$$

Therefore, $\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{P}} P \subseteq \text{Ann}(a)$. □

Lemma 2.8. *For each element $a \in R$, we have $\text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a)) = h^c(a)$.*

PROOF: We claim that $a \notin P$ for each $P \in \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a))$. Suppose, on the contrary, that $a \in P$ for some $P \in \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a))$. Then

$$\exists b \notin P, ab \in \text{Ann}(a) \Rightarrow a^2b = 0 \Rightarrow ab = 0 \Rightarrow b \in \text{Ann}(a) \Rightarrow b \in P,$$

which is impossible. Now, we prove that P is a minimal prime ideal for each $P \in \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a))$. To see this,

$$\forall x \in P \quad \exists y \notin P \quad xy \in \text{Ann}(a) \Rightarrow xy a = 0.$$

But $ya \notin P$, hence P is a minimal prime ideal and therefore $P \in h^c(a)$. Consequently, $\text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a)) \subseteq h^c(a)$. Now, we show that $h^c(a) \subseteq \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a))$.

Suppose that $P \in h^c(a)$. It is sufficient to show that $\text{Ann}(a) \subseteq P$. But it is evident, because $a \text{Ann}(a) = \{0\} \subseteq P$. \square

Proposition 2.9. *Let a be a nonzero element of R and $\mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a))$. The family \mathcal{P} is irredundant with respect to the zero ideal of R if and only if \mathcal{P} is irredundant with respect to $\text{Ann}(a)$.*

PROOF: \Rightarrow) Suppose that the assertion of the proposition is false, then

$$\text{Ann}(a) = \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a)) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P.$$

Thus

$$\begin{aligned} \{0\} &= \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(R)} P = \left(\bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a))} P \right) \cap \left(\bigcap_{\substack{P \in \text{Min}(R) \\ P \notin \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a))}} P \right) \\ &= \left(\bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a)) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P \right) \cap \left(\bigcap_{\substack{P \in \text{Min}(R) \\ P \notin \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a))}} P \right) = \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(R) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, \mathcal{P} is not irredundant with respect to the zero ideal of R and this is a contradiction.

\Leftarrow) Let $\mathcal{P} \subseteq \text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a)) = h^c(a)$ be irredundant with respect to $\text{Ann}(a)$. We show that \mathcal{P} is irredundant with respect to the zero ideal. On the contrary

$$\{0\} = \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(R) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P = \left(\bigcap_{P \in h^c(a) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P \right) \cap \left(\bigcap_{P \in h(a)} P \right).$$

Since $\bigcap_{P \in h(a)} P \not\subseteq Q$ for each $Q \in h^c(a)$, it follows that

$$\forall Q \in h^c(a) \quad \bigcap_{P \in h^c(a) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P \subseteq Q.$$

Hence

$$\bigcap_{P \in h^c(a) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P \subseteq \bigcap_{P \in h^c(a)} P = \text{Ann}(a) \quad \Rightarrow \quad \bigcap_{P \in h^c(a) \setminus \mathcal{P}} P = \text{Ann}(a),$$

which is a contradiction. \square

An immediate consequence of the above proposition is that $\text{Min}(\text{Ann}(a))$ is irredundant with respect to the zero ideal of R .

Proposition 2.10. *If the zero ideal in a ring R is a fixed-place ideal, then $\text{Zd}(R) = \bigcup_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P$.*

PROOF: Clearly, $\bigcup_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P \subseteq \text{Zd}(R)$. We only need to show that $\text{Zd}(R) \subseteq \bigcup_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P$. On the contrary, suppose that there exists a zero divisor a which is not in $\bigcup_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P$, then a nonzero element b exists such that $ab = 0$. Since for

each $P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})$, $a \notin P$ and $ab = 0 \in P$, it follows that $0 \neq b \in \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P$. This contradicts our assumption. \square

Now, we are going to show that the intersection of two fixed-place ideals is also a fixed-place ideal. To see this, we need the following lemma.

Lemma 2.11. *If I and J are two fixed-place ideals of R such that $I \not\subseteq P$ for each $P \in \mathcal{B}(J)$ and $J \not\subseteq P$ for each $P \in \mathcal{B}(I)$, then $I \cap J$ is a fixed-place ideal.*

PROOF: Clearly, we have $I \cap J = \bigcap \{P \in \text{Spec}(R) : P \in \mathcal{B}(I) \cup \mathcal{B}(J)\}$. Now, by Theorem 2.1, it is enough to prove that $\mathcal{B}(I \cap J) = \mathcal{B}(I) \cup \mathcal{B}(J)$. To prove this, suppose that $P_0 \in \mathcal{B}(I) \cup \mathcal{B}(J)$. Without loss of generality, we may assume that $P_0 \in \mathcal{B}(I)$. On the contrary, let $I \cap J = \bigcap_{\substack{P \in \mathcal{B}(I) \cup \mathcal{B}(J) \\ P \neq P_0}} P$. Thus

$$\begin{aligned} \bigcap_{\substack{P \in \mathcal{B}(I) \cup \mathcal{B}(J) \\ P \neq P_0}} P \subseteq P_0 &\Rightarrow J \cap \left(\bigcap_{\substack{P \in \mathcal{B}(I) \\ P \neq P_0}} P \right) \subseteq P_0 \\ \Rightarrow \bigcap_{\substack{P \in \mathcal{B}(I) \\ P \neq P_0}} P \subseteq P_0 &\Rightarrow \bigcap_{\substack{P \in \mathcal{B}(I) \\ P \neq P_0}} P = I, \end{aligned}$$

which is a contradiction. \square

Theorem 2.12. *If I and J are two fixed-place ideals of R , then $I \cap J$ is also a fixed-place ideal.*

PROOF: Let $I' = \bigcap \{P \in \mathcal{B}(I) : P \not\subseteq J\}$ and $J' = \bigcap \{P \in \mathcal{B}(J) : P \not\subseteq I'\}$. Then, it is clear that $I \cap J = I' \cap J = I' \cap J'$, $\mathcal{B}(J') = \{P \in \mathcal{B}(J) : P \not\subseteq I'\}$ and $\mathcal{B}(I') = \{P \in \mathcal{B}(I) : P \not\subseteq J\}$. Therefore

$$(1) \quad \forall P \in \mathcal{B}(I') \quad J' \not\subseteq P, \quad \forall P \in \mathcal{B}(J') \quad I' \not\subseteq P.$$

On the other side, $I \subseteq I'$ and $J \subseteq J'$. Therefore, I' and J' are two fixed-place ideals such that they satisfy the condition of Lemma 2.11 and consequently $I' \cap J' = I \cap J$ is a fixed-place ideal. \square

In the following, we show that if I is not a fixed-place ideal, then there is no smallest fixed-place ideal containing I .

Proposition 2.13. *Let I be a semi-prime ideal of a ring R . If I is not fixed-place, then the set of all fixed-place ideals containing I has no minimal element.*

PROOF: On the contrary, suppose that J is a minimal element of that set. Consequently, $J \cap P$ is a fixed-place ideal for each $P \in \text{Min}(I)$. Thus $J = J \cap P$, hence $J \subseteq P$. This implies that $J = \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(I)} P = I$. It follows that I is a fixed-place ideal, which is a contradiction. \square

3. Unique decomposition

Let \mathcal{P} be the set of all subsets of $\text{Spec}(R)$. Throughout this section \sim and \leq denote the relations on \mathcal{P} defined by

$$\mathcal{S} \leq \mathcal{T} \Leftrightarrow \forall P_1 \in \mathcal{S}, \exists P_2 \in \mathcal{T} \quad P_1 \subseteq P_2$$

and

$$\mathcal{S} \sim \mathcal{T} \Leftrightarrow \bigcap \mathcal{S} = \bigcap \mathcal{T}.$$

It is easy to check that \mathcal{P} with relation \leq is a complete lattice, in which $\text{Spec}(R)$ is the greatest element and \emptyset is the smallest element. Furthermore, the relation \sim is an equivalence relation. If we put $\mathfrak{P} = \{[\mathcal{S}] : \mathcal{S} \subseteq \text{Spec}(R)\}$ and $\mathfrak{I} = \{I : I \text{ is a semi-prime ideal of } R\}$, then the function $K : \mathfrak{P} \rightarrow \mathfrak{I}$ (resp. $H : \mathfrak{I} \rightarrow \mathfrak{P}$) is defined by $K([\mathcal{S}]) = \bigcap [\mathcal{S}]$ (resp. $H(I) = [\text{Min}(I)]$). Throughout this section we use the above notation.

Lemma 3.1. *Let $\{\mathcal{S}_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ and $\{\mathcal{T}_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ be two families of subsets of $\text{Spec}(R)$. If $\mathcal{S}_\alpha \sim \mathcal{T}_\alpha$ for each $\alpha \in A$, then $[\bigcup_{\alpha \in A} \mathcal{S}_\alpha] = [\bigcup_{\alpha \in A} \mathcal{T}_\alpha]$.*

PROOF: The proof is standard. \square

Definition 3.2. We call two families \mathcal{S} and \mathcal{T} of \mathcal{P} *essentially disjoint* if

$$\forall P \in \mathcal{S} \quad \bigcap \mathcal{T} \not\subseteq P, \quad \forall P \in \mathcal{T} \quad \bigcap \mathcal{S} \not\subseteq P.$$

In this way, we call two classes \mathcal{S} and \mathcal{T} essentially disjoint, if there are two essentially disjoint families \mathcal{S} and \mathcal{T} in \mathcal{S} and \mathcal{T} , respectively. Finally, we say two semi-prime ideals I and J are essentially disjoint if $[H(I)]$ and $[H(J)]$ are essentially disjoint.

Theorem 3.3. *If I is a semi-prime ideal of R , then we can write I as a unique intersection of a fixed-place ideal and an anti fixed-place ideal which are essentially disjoint.*

PROOF: Let $J = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(I)} P$, $\mathcal{A} = \{P \in \text{Min}(I) : P \notin \mathcal{B}(I), P \not\supseteq J\}$, $K = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{A}} P$ and $\mathcal{B} = \{P \in \text{Min}(I) : P \notin \mathcal{B}(I), P \supseteq J\}$. Then

$$I = \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(I)} P = \left(\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(I)} P \right) \cap \left(\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}} P \right) \cap \left(\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{A}} P \right) = J \cap K.$$

By Corollary 2.3, J is fixed-place. We claim that $\mathcal{A} \subseteq \text{Min}(K)$, because for each $P_\circ \in \mathcal{A}$, $K \subseteq P \subseteq P_\circ$, we have $I \subseteq K \subseteq P \subseteq P_\circ$. Since $P_\circ \in \text{Min}(I)$, $P = P_\circ$ and therefore $P_\circ \in \text{Min}(K)$. By Proposition 2.4, $\mathcal{B}(K) \subseteq \mathcal{A}$. For each $P_\circ \in \mathcal{A}$,

$$\begin{aligned} P_\circ \supseteq I &= \bigcap_{P_\circ \neq P \in \text{Min}(I)} P = \left(\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(I)} P \right) \cap \left(\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}} P \right) \cap \left(\bigcap_{P_\circ \neq P \in \mathcal{A}} P \right) \\ &= J \cap \left(\bigcap_{P_\circ \neq P \in \mathcal{A}} P \right). \end{aligned}$$

Since $J \not\subseteq P_o$, we can write

$$\bigcap_{P_o \neq P \in \mathcal{A}} P \subseteq P_o \quad \Rightarrow \quad K = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{A}} P = \left(\bigcap_{P_o \neq P \in \mathcal{A}} P \right) \cap P_o = \bigcap_{P_o \neq P \in \mathcal{A}} P.$$

This implies that $P_o \notin \mathcal{B}(K)$ and therefore $\mathcal{B}(K) = \emptyset$, thus K is an anti fixed-place ideal. Now, suppose that $I = J_1 \cap K_1$ where J_1 is a fixed-place ideal, K_1 is an anti fixed-place ideal and J_1 and K_1 are essentially disjoint. So there are some essentially disjoint families of prime ideals \mathcal{P} and \mathcal{Q} such that $J_1 = \bigcap \mathcal{P}$ and $K_1 = \bigcap \mathcal{Q}$. Since J_1 is fixed-place, we can assume that $\mathcal{P} = \mathcal{B}(J_1)$. Now, we prove that $J_1 = J$. To prove this, it is enough to show that $\mathcal{B}(J) = \mathcal{B}(J_1)$. If $P_o \in \mathcal{B}(J) = \mathcal{B}(I)$, then there exists $a \in R$ such that $P_o = (I : a)$, thus $P_o = (J_1 \cap K_1 : a) = (J_1 : a) \cap (K_1 : a)$. Since K_1 is anti fixed-place, by Theorem 2.1, we have $P_o \neq (K_1 : a)$. Hence $P_o = (J_1 : a)$ and this implies that $P_o \in \mathcal{B}(J_1)$. Therefore, $\mathcal{B}(J) \subseteq \mathcal{B}(J_1)$. Conversely, if $P_o \in \mathcal{B}(J_1)$, then $K_1 \not\subseteq P_o$ and so there exists $a \in K_1 \setminus P_o$. Hence, $(I : a) = (J_1 \cap K_1 : a) = (J_1 : a) = \bigcap_{a \notin P \in \mathcal{B}(J_1)} P$. Since $(J_1 : a)$ is fixed-place and $P_o \in \mathcal{B}(J_1 : a)$, Theorem 2.1 shows that there exists $b \in R$ such that $((J_1 : a) : b) = P_o$. Therefore, $(I : ab) = ((I : a) : b) = ((J_1 : a) : b) = P_o$. This implies that $P_o \in \mathcal{B}(I) = \mathcal{B}(J)$, thus $\mathcal{B}(J_1) \subseteq \mathcal{B}(J)$, and therefore $J_1 = J$. To complete the proof, we must show that $K = K_1$. Clearly, since $J \cap K = I = J_1 \cap K_1$, for each $Q \in \mathcal{Q}$, we have $J = J_1 \not\subseteq Q$ and so $K \subseteq Q$. It follows that $K \subseteq K_1$. By the same manner we can see $K_1 \subseteq K$. Thus, $K_1 = K$. \square

Proposition 3.4. *The zero ideal in a reduced ring R is fixed-place if and only if $\text{Ann}(a)$ is fixed-place, for each $a \in \text{Zd}(R)$.*

PROOF: \Rightarrow) Since the zero ideal is a fixed-place ideal, $\{0\} = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P$. Thus $\text{Ann}(a) = (0 : a) = \left(\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P \right) : a = \bigcap_{a \notin P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P$ for each $a \in \text{Zd}(R)$. By Corollary 2.3, it implies that $\text{Ann}(a)$ is a fixed-place ideal.

\Leftarrow) By Theorem 3.3, $\{0\} = J \cap K$ where J is a fixed-place ideal, K is an anti fixed-place ideal and J and K are essentially disjoint. To obtain contradiction, suppose that $\{0\}$ is not fixed-place, then $J \neq \{0\}$, so there exists $0 \neq a \in J$. It is clear that $a \in \text{Zd}(R)$. Consequently

$$(1) \quad \text{Ann}(a) = (0 : a) = (J \cap K : a) = (K : a).$$

Since $\text{Ann}(a)$ is a fixed-place ideal, it has an irredundant prime ideal P . Hence, by Theorem 2.1, there exists an element b in R such that $(\text{Ann}(a) : b) = P$. We conclude from (1) that $(K : ab) = ((K : a) : b) = (\text{Ann}(a) : b) = P$. Theorem 2.1 shows that $P \in \mathcal{B}(K)$, which contradicts our assumption. \square

The following corollary is an immediate consequence of Theorem 2.5 and Proposition 3.4. This corollary will be needed to prove the next proposition.

Corollary 3.5. *Suppose that J is a semi-prime ideal of a ring R . The ideal J is fixed-place if and only if $(J : a)$ is a fixed-place ideal for each $a \in R$ where $J \subset (J : a)$.*

Proposition 3.6. *The zero ideal in a reduced ring R is an anti fixed-place ideal if and only if $\text{Ann}(a)$ is an anti fixed-place ideal for each $a \in \text{Zd}(R)$.*

PROOF: \Rightarrow) On the contrary, if for some $a \in \text{Zd}(R)$, $\text{Ann}(a)$ is not anti fixed-place, then there exist b in R and a prime ideal P such that $P = (\text{Ann}(a) : b)$, by Theorem 2.1. In this way $P = (\text{Ann}(a) : b) = (0 : ab) = \text{Ann}(ab)$. So, by Theorem 2.1, $P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})$, which is impossible.

\Leftarrow) By Theorem 3.3, there is a fixed-place ideal J and an anti fixed-place ideal K such that $\{0\} = J \cap K$. Suppose that the zero ideal is not an anti fixed-place ideal, so $K \neq \{0\}$. Hence there exists $0 \neq a \in K$. It is clear that $a \in \text{Zd}(R)$ and

$$(2) \quad \text{Ann}(a) = (0 : a) = (J \cap K : a) = (J : a).$$

Since J is a fixed-place ideal, $(J : a)$ is also a fixed-place ideal, by Corollary 3.5. So, we can conclude from (2) that $\text{Ann}(a)$ is a fixed-place ideal, which is a contradiction. \square

4. Fixed-place ideal and Zariski topology

Throughout this section, for convenience, by Z we mean the set $\text{Min}(R)$.

Theorem 4.1. *Let R be a reduced ring and $\mathcal{P} \subseteq Z$. The family \mathcal{P} is irredundant with respect to the zero ideal of R if and only if $\text{int}_Z \mathcal{P} \neq \emptyset$.*

PROOF: \Rightarrow) Since \mathcal{P} is an irredundant family with respect to the zero ideal of R , we have

$$\bigcap_{P \in Z \setminus \mathcal{P}} P \neq \{0\}.$$

Hence, there is a nonzero element $a \in \bigcap_{P \in Z \setminus \mathcal{P}} P$. Obviously, $\emptyset \neq h^c(a) \subseteq \mathcal{P}$. Therefore, $\text{int}_Z \mathcal{P} \neq \emptyset$.

\Leftarrow) Since $\text{int}_Z \mathcal{P} \neq \emptyset$, there is an element $a \in R$ such that

$$\emptyset \neq h^c(a) \cap Z \subseteq \mathcal{P} \Rightarrow Z \setminus \mathcal{P} \subseteq h(a) \neq Z \Rightarrow 0 \neq a \in \bigcap_{P \in h(a)} P \subseteq \bigcap_{P \in Z \setminus \mathcal{P}} P.$$

Consequently, \mathcal{P} is irredundant with respect to the zero ideal. \square

An immediate conclusion of the above theorem is the following corollary.

Corollary 4.2. *Let P be a minimal prime ideal of a reduced ring R . The ideal P is an isolated point of Z if and only if $P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})$.*

Corollary 4.3. *The zero ideal of a reduced ring R is anti fixed-place if and only if Z has no isolated point.*

PROOF: It is evident, by Corollary 4.2. \square

Theorem 4.4. *The zero ideal of a reduced ring R is a fixed-place ideal if and only if $\overline{I(Z)} = Z$.*

PROOF: \Rightarrow) Clearly, by Corollary 4.2, $\mathcal{B}(\{0\}) = I(Z)$. On the other side,

$$\text{cl}_Z \mathcal{B}(\{0\}) = h\left(\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P\right) = h(\{0\}) = Z.$$

Thus, $\overline{I(Z)} = Z$.

\Leftarrow) Using Corollary 4.2, since $\overline{I(Z)} = Z$, we have $Z = \text{cl}_Z \mathcal{B}(\{0\})$. So, we can write

$$\begin{aligned} Z &= \text{cl}_Z \mathcal{B}(\{0\}) = h\left(\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P\right) \\ \Rightarrow \quad h\left(\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P\right) &= Z \quad \Rightarrow \quad \{0\} = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the zero ideal is fixed-place. \square

Definition 4.5. Let \mathcal{P} be a family of prime ideals of a ring R . We say \mathcal{P} is a *fixed-place family*, whenever $\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{P}, P \neq P_0} P \not\subseteq P_0$ for each $P_0 \in \mathcal{P}$. Obviously, if \mathcal{P} is a fixed-place family, by Theorem 2.1, the ideal $I = \bigcap \mathcal{P}$ is fixed-place and $\mathcal{B}(I) = \mathcal{P}$.

Theorem 4.6. *Let \mathcal{P} be a family of prime ideals of a ring R . The family \mathcal{P} is fixed-place if and only if \mathcal{P} is discrete as a subspace of $\text{Spec}(R)$ with Zariski topology.*

PROOF: \Rightarrow) For convenience, assume that $V(S)$ denotes the set of all prime ideals containing $S \subseteq R$. Suppose that $P_0 \in \mathcal{P}$ and $I = \bigcap \mathcal{P}$. It is enough to show that P_0 is isolated in $\text{Min}(I)$ with Zariski topology. Set $J = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{P}, P \neq P_0} P$. Since \mathcal{P} is a fixed-place family, we have $J \not\subseteq P_0$. Clearly, $V(J) \cap \text{Min}(I) = \text{Min}(I) \setminus \{P_0\}$ and hence P_0 is isolated in $\text{Min}(I)$.

\Leftarrow) Consider $P_0 \in \mathcal{P}$. Since P_0 is isolated in \mathcal{P} , there exists an ideal K of R such that $V(K) \cap \mathcal{P} = \mathcal{P} \setminus \{P_0\}$. It follows that $K \not\subseteq P_0$, $K \subseteq \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{P}, P \neq P_0} P$ and hence $\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{P}, P \neq P_0} P \not\subseteq P_0$. Therefore, \mathcal{P} is a fixed-place family. \square

5. Fixed-place ideal and $C(X)$

This section is divided in two parts. First we study the zero ideal of $C(X)$ and give two equivalent topological conditions. In the second part, we introduce the fixed-place point and the fixed-place rank of this point. Throughout this section $I(X)$ denotes the set of all isolated points of a topological space X .

Lemma 5.1. *Let A be a subset of a topological space X . The subset A is dense in X if and only if $M^A(X) = O^A(X) = \{0\}$.*

PROOF: \Rightarrow) Suppose that $f \in M^A(X)$. Since $A \subseteq Z(f)$, A is dense in X and $Z(f)$ is closed, so $Z(f) = X$. Consequently, $M^A(X) = O^A(X) = \{0\}$.

\Leftarrow) If A is not dense in X , then there is a point p in X such that $p \notin \text{cl}_X A$. Thus, there is a function f in $C(X)$ such that $p \notin Z(f)$ and $A \subseteq \text{int}_X Z(f)$, hence $0 \neq f \in O^A(X)$. This clearly forces $M^A(X) \supseteq O^A(X) \neq 0$. \square

Theorem 5.2. *Let $I(X)$ be the set of all isolated points of X , then $\mathcal{B}(\{0\}) = \{O^p(X) : p \in I(X)\}$.*

PROOF: Define $A = \{p \in \beta X : \exists P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\}) \ O^p(X) \subseteq P\}$. We first prove that A is a subset of each dense subset of βX . Assume that D is a dense subset of βX . Fix $\mathcal{P} = \{P \in \text{Min}(C(X)) : \exists p \in D \ O^p \subseteq P\}$. If P_o is a minimal prime ideal and $P_o \notin \mathcal{P}$, then

$$\bigcap_{P_o \neq P \in \text{Min}(C(X))} P \subseteq \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{P}} P = \bigcap_{p \in D} \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(O^p(X))} P = \bigcap_{p \in D} O^p(X) = O^D(X).$$

By Lemma 5.1, $O^D(X) = \{0\}$, thus $\bigcap_{P_o \neq P \in \text{Min}(C(X))} P = \{0\}$. It shows that $P_o \notin \mathcal{B}(\{0\})$, and therefore $\mathcal{B}(\{0\}) \subseteq \mathcal{P}$. Now suppose $p \in A$, then there exists $P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})$ such that $O^p(X) \subseteq P$. Therefore $P \in \mathcal{P}$ and consequently there exists $p' \in D$ such that $O^{p'}(X) \subseteq P$. By [6, 2.11] and [6, 4I.4], every prime z -ideal contains a unique $O^x(X)$ for some $x \in \beta X$, hence $p = p' \in D$ and therefore $A \subseteq D$, which is desired. It is easily seen that the intersection of all dense subset of βX is equal to $I(X)$, thus $A \subseteq I(X)$, and therefore

$$(3) \quad \mathcal{B}(\{0\}) \subseteq \{O^p(X) : p \in I(X)\}.$$

Now, consider $p_o \in I(X)$. Then it is clear that $O^{p_o}(X)$ is prime and

$$\bigcap_{O^{p_o} \neq P \in \text{Min}(C(X))} P \supseteq \bigcap_{p_o \neq p \in X} O^p(X) = O^{X \setminus \{p_o\}}(X) \neq 0.$$

Hence, $O^{p_o}(X) \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})$. Thus

$$(4) \quad \mathcal{B}(\{0\}) \supseteq \{O^p : p \in I(X)\}.$$

From (3) and (4), we obtain $\mathcal{B}(\{0\}) = \{O^p(X) : p \in I(X)\}$. \square

Corollary 5.3. *A space X has an isolated point if and only if the space $\text{Min}(C(X))$ has an isolated point.*

PROOF: Applying Corollary 4.2 and Theorem 5.2, it follows clearly. \square

Corollary 5.4. *The zero ideal of $C(X)$ is anti fixed-place if and only if X has no isolated point.*

PROOF: By Corollary 4.3 and Theorem 5.2, it is obvious. \square

Theorem 5.5. *The zero ideal in the ring $C(X)$ is fixed-place if and only if $\overline{I(X)} = X$. Then $\text{FP-rank}(\{0\}) = |I(X)|$.*

PROOF: \Rightarrow) Since the zero ideal is a fixed-place ideal, Theorem 5.2 shows that

$$\{0\} = \bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P = \bigcap_{p \in I(X)} O^p(X) = O^{I(X)}(X).$$

We conclude from Lemma 5.1 that $I(X)$ is dense in X .

\Leftarrow) Since $\overline{I(X)} = X$, by Lemma 5.1, $O^{I(X)}(X) = \{0\}$. Now, using Theorem 5.2, we have

$$\bigcap_{P \in \mathcal{B}(\{0\})} P = \bigcap_{p \in I(X)} O_p = O^{I(X)} = \{0\}.$$

Therefore, the zero ideal of $C(X)$ is fixed-place. \square

Corollary 5.6. $I(X)$ is a dense subspace if and only if the set of isolated points of $\text{Min}(C(X))$ is also a dense subspace.

PROOF: It is evident, by Theorems 4.4 and 5.5. \square

Example 5.7. Let X be an almost discrete space with the only non-isolated point p . The zero ideal of $C(X)$ is a fixed-place ideal and $\text{FP-rank}(\{0\}) = |X|$, by Theorem 5.5. Thus, for every cardinal number α there is a fixed-place ideal of fixed-place rank α .

The notion of rank of a point of a topological space was first introduced and studied in [8, 1.7], further in [10] and [11], and generalized in [1]. One can find in [9, 4.1] a basis of this concept as *FMP*-point. The following definition is based on similar definition in [3, 4.3] with a few differences. Actually, the root of this generalized definition may be found in [1].

Definition 5.8. Let X be a topological space and $p \in \beta X$. We call p a *fixed-place point* with respect to X if $O^p(X)$ is a fixed-place ideal and the fixed-place rank of p with respect to X , denoted by $\text{FP-rank}_X(p)$, is defined to be $\text{FP-rank}(O^p(X))$.

In [3, Theorem 4.4], it is shown that there is a point of fixed-place rank η for any given cardinal η . It is easy to see that p is a fixed-place point with respect to X if and only if it is a fixed-place point with respect to βX , for each $p \in \beta X$. Furthermore, if p is a fixed-place point with respect to X , then $\text{FP-rank}_X(p) = \text{FP-rank}_{\beta X}(p)$.

The Proposition 3.1 of [8] states: "Let X be a compact space. A point $p \in X$ has rank $k (< \infty)$ if and only if there is a family of k pairwise disjoint cozero sets with p being in each of their closures, but no larger family of pairwise disjoint cozero sets with this feature." Also, in [10, Theorem 3.1] the same proposition is given for completely regular spaces. Of course, this proposition, with a few differences, was also shown in [2]. In the remainder of this section, we want to generalize this proposition for any $p \in \beta X$ and any cardinal number. To do this, we need some facts.

Suppose that Y is a subspace of X and $\mathbf{F}(X)$ and $\mathbf{F}(Y)$ are the set of all z -filters of X and Y , respectively. Let $\gamma : \mathbf{F}(Y) \rightarrow \mathbf{F}(X)$ be given by

$$\gamma(\mathcal{F}) = \{Z \in Z(X) : Z \cap Y \in \mathcal{F}\}.$$

Then $\psi = Z^{-1}\gamma Z$ is a map from all z -ideals of $C(Y)$ to the set of all z -ideals of $C(X)$. We consider $\Phi : \beta Y \rightarrow \beta X$ as extension of the identity map $Y \rightarrow X$. In the remainder of this section we use the above notation. See [4] for more information about the above maps.

Proposition 5.9. *Let Y be a subspace of X . The subspace*

$$Y' = \{p \in \beta X : \Phi^{-1}(p) \text{ is a singleton}\}$$

is the largest subspace of βX that can be considered homeomorphically as a subspace of βY by Φ .

PROOF: The proof is standard. □

The above proposition leads us to the following definition.

Definition 5.10. Suppose that Y is a subspace of X and $p \in \beta X$. We say p is an F -point with respect to Y if $\Phi^{-1}(p)$ is a singleton and this point is an F -point with respect to Y .

Proposition 5.11. *Let X be a compact space, $p \in X$ and $Y = \text{Coz}(f)$, for some $f \in C(X)$. If $p \in \text{cl}_X Y$, then ψ is a one-to-one correspondence map between $\bigcup_{\Phi(q)=p} \text{Min}(O^q(Y))$ and $\{P \in \text{Min}(O^p(X)) : f \notin P\}$.*

PROOF: It follows from [4, Theorem 4.1 and Theorem 4.2]. □

Lemma 5.12. *Let X be a topological space, $f \in C(X)$ and $p \in \beta X$. A prime ideal P is irredundant with respect to $O^p(X)$ if and only if there is a cozero set Y in X such that p is an F -point with respect to Y and $P = \psi(O^q(Y))$, in which $\Phi(q) = p$.*

PROOF: Suppose that $Y = \text{Coz}(f)$ for some $f \in C(X)$. By Proposition 5.11, there is the one-to-one correspondence ψ between $\bigcup_{\Phi(q)=p} \text{Min}(O^q(Y))$ and $\{P \in \text{Min}(O^p(X)) : f \notin P\}$. Thus

$$\begin{aligned} (O^p : f) &= \left(\bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(O^p(X))} P : f \right) = \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(O^p(X))} (P : f) \\ (5) \quad &= \bigcap_{\substack{P \in \text{Min}(O^p(X)) \\ f \notin P}} P = \bigcap_{\Phi(q)=p} \left(\bigcap_{Q \in \text{Min}(O^q(Y))} \psi(Q) \right). \end{aligned}$$

Now, by Theorem 2.1, it follows that P is irredundant with respect to $O^p(X)$ if and only if there is $f \in C(X)$ such that $(O^p : f) = P$. By (5),

$$P = \bigcap_{\Phi(q)=p} \left(\bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(O^q(Y))} \psi(Q) \right).$$

Since the $\psi(Q)$'s in the above equality are minimal prime, this is equivalent to saying that $\Phi^{-1}(p)$ is a singleton and p is an F -point with respect to Y and consequently, this is equivalent to saying that $P = \psi(O^q(Y))$ where $\{q\} = \Phi^{-1}\{p\}$. \square

Lemma 5.13. *Let $p \in \beta X$ and $Y_1 = \text{Coz}(f_1)$, $Y_2 = \text{Coz}(f_2)$ for some $f_1, f_2 \in C(X)$. Then $f_1 f_2 \in O^p(X)$ if and only if $p \notin \text{cl}_{\beta X}(Y_1 \cap Y_2)$.*

PROOF: First we note that for each $f \in C^*(X)$

$$\text{cl}_{\beta X} \text{Coz}(f^\beta) = \text{cl}_{\beta X}(\text{Coz}(f^\beta) \cap X) = \text{cl}_{\beta X} \text{Coz}(f).$$

Now, without loss of generality, we assume that $f_1, f_2 \in C^*(X)$. Thus

$$\begin{aligned} p \notin \text{cl}_{\beta X}(Y_1 \cap Y_2) &= \text{cl}_{\beta X}(\text{Coz}(f_1) \cap \text{Coz}(f_2)) \\ &= \text{cl}_{\beta X} \text{Coz}(f_1 f_2) = \text{cl}_{\beta X} \text{Coz}(f_1^\beta f_2^\beta) \\ \Leftrightarrow p \in \text{int}_{\beta X} Z(f_1^\beta f_2^\beta) &= \text{int}_{\beta X} \text{cl}_{\beta X} Z(f_1 f_2) \Leftrightarrow f_1 f_2 \in O^p(X). \end{aligned}$$

\square

Proposition 5.14. *Let X be a topological space, $p \in \beta X$ and $\{Y_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ be a family of cozero sets of X . If*

- (a) p is F -point with respect to Y_α for each $\alpha \in A$,
- (b) $p \notin \text{cl}_{\beta X}(Y_\alpha \cap Y_\beta)$, if $\alpha \neq \beta$,

then $|\mathcal{B}(O^p(X))| \geq |A|$.

PROOF: Let $Y_\alpha = \text{Coz}(f_\alpha)$ for each $\alpha \in A$. By hypothesis, for each $\alpha \in A$ there is a unique $q_\alpha \in \beta Y_\alpha$ such that $\Phi_\alpha(q_\alpha) = p$. If we put $P_\alpha = \psi_\alpha(O^{q_\alpha}(Y_\alpha))$ for every $\alpha \in A$, then by Proposition 5.11, $\{P_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ is a family of irredundant ideals with respect to $O^p(X)$. It is sufficient to show that if $\alpha \neq \beta$, then $P_\alpha \neq P_\beta$. By Lemma 5.13, since $p \notin \text{cl}_{\beta X}(Y_\alpha \cap Y_\beta)$, we have $f_\alpha f_\beta \in O^p(X) \subseteq P_\alpha$. It follows from Proposition 5.11 that $f_\alpha \notin P_\alpha$. Therefore, $f_\beta \in P_\alpha$ and hence $P_\alpha \neq P_\beta$. \square

Lemma 5.15. *Let X be a topological space and $p \in \beta X$ be a fixed-place point. If $\text{FP-rank}_X(p) = \eta$ and ζ is a cardinal such that $\zeta \leq \eta$, then there exist a family $\{Y_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ of distinct cozero sets such that*

- (a) $|A| = \zeta$;
- (b) p is an F -point with respect to Y_α for every $\alpha \in A$;
- (c) $p \notin \text{cl}_{\beta X}(Y_\alpha \cap Y_\beta)$, if $\alpha \neq \beta$.

PROOF: Since $\text{FP-rank}_X(p) = \eta$, Theorem 2.1 shows that there exists a family $\{P_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in B}$ of minimal prime ideals such that $|B| = \eta$, $O^p(X) = \bigcap_{\alpha \in B} P_\alpha$ and this intersection is irredundant. Suppose that $\{P_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ is a subfamily of $\{P_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in B}$ such that $|A| = \zeta$. By Lemma 5.12, for every $\alpha \in A$, there exists a cozero set $Y_\alpha = \text{Coz}(f_\alpha)$ such that p is an F -point with respect to Y_α , for each $\alpha \in A$. If $\alpha \neq \beta$, it is easy to check that either f_α or f_β must be in P_θ , for each $\theta \in B$. Thus $f_\alpha f_\beta \in P_\theta$, for each $\theta \in B$, and therefore $f_\alpha f_\beta \in O^p(X)$. It shows that $p \notin \text{int}_{\beta X}(Y_\alpha \cap Y_\beta)$, by Lemma 5.13. \square

The following is another version of Lemma 5.14.

Lemma 5.16. *Let $p \in \beta X$ be a fixed-place point and $\{Y_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ be a family of cozero sets of X . If*

- (a) $p \in \text{cl}_{\beta X} Y_\alpha$ for each $\alpha \in A$,
- (b) $p \notin \text{cl}_{\beta X} (Y_\alpha \cap Y_\beta)$ for $\alpha \neq \beta$,

then $\text{FP-rank}_X(p) \geq |A|$.

PROOF: For each $\alpha \in A$, set $Y_\alpha = \text{Coz}(f_\alpha)$ with $f_\alpha \in C^*(X)$. Define

$$\mathcal{Q}_\alpha = \{Q \in \text{Min}(O^q(Y_\alpha)) : \Phi_\alpha(q) = p\}.$$

We claim that $\psi_\alpha(\mathcal{Q}_\alpha) \cap \psi_\beta(\mathcal{Q}_\beta) = \emptyset$, for each $\alpha \neq \beta$. Let $\psi_\alpha(Q) \in \psi_\alpha(\mathcal{Q}_\alpha)$, then $f_\alpha \notin \psi_\alpha(Q)$. Since $p \notin \text{cl}_{\beta X} (Y_\alpha \cap Y_\beta)$, by Lemma 5.13, obviously $f_\alpha f_\beta \in O^p(X)$. Thus $f_\beta \in \psi_\alpha(Q)$, this implies that $\psi_\alpha(Q) \notin \psi_\beta(\mathcal{Q}_\beta)$. To complete the proof, it is sufficient to show that $\mathcal{B}(O^p(X)) \cap \psi_\alpha(\mathcal{Q}_\alpha) \neq \emptyset$ for each $\alpha \in A$. We know that $f_\alpha \notin \psi_\alpha(Q)$, for each $Q \in \mathcal{Q}_\alpha$ and $f_\alpha \in \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(O^p(X)) \setminus \psi_\alpha(\mathcal{Q}_\alpha)} P$. Thus

$$\begin{aligned} f_\alpha &\in \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(O^p(X)) \setminus \psi_\alpha(\mathcal{Q}_\alpha)} P \setminus O^p(X) \\ \Rightarrow O^p(X) &\neq \bigcap_{P \in \text{Min}(O^p(X)) \setminus \psi_\alpha(\mathcal{Q}_\alpha)} P. \end{aligned}$$

This implies that $\psi(\mathcal{Q}_\alpha)$ is irredundant with respect to $O^p(X)$. Since $O^p(X)$ is fixed-place, $\mathcal{B}(O^p(X)) \cap \psi_\alpha(\mathcal{Q}_\alpha) \neq \emptyset$. \square

Now, we are ready to state the main theorem of this section.

Theorem 5.17. *Let $p \in \beta X$ be a fixed-place point. Then $\text{FP-rank}_X(p) = \eta$ if and only if there exists a family $\{Y_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ of cozero sets of X such that*

- (a) $|A| = \eta$;
- (b) $p \in \text{cl}_{\beta X} Y_\alpha$, for each $\alpha \in A$;
- (c) $p \notin \text{cl}_{\beta X} (Y_\alpha \cap Y_\beta)$, if $\alpha \neq \beta$;
- (d) η is the greatest cardinal with above properties.

In this case, p is an F -point with respect to Y_α for each $\alpha \in A$.

PROOF: \Rightarrow) By Lemma 5.15, there is a family $\{Y_\alpha\}_{\alpha \in A}$ of cozero sets of X with properties (a)–(c), and by Lemma 5.16, it follows that η is the greatest cardinal with properties (a)–(c).

\Leftarrow) Lemma 5.16 shows that $\text{FP-rank}_X(p) \geq \eta$. Since η is the greatest cardinal with properties (a)–(c), by Lemma 5.15, $\text{FP-rank}_X(p) = \eta$.

According to Lemma 5.12, p is an F -point with respect to Y_α , for each $\alpha \in A$. \square

It is clear to see that if $f \in O^p(X)$, then there exists $g \notin M^p(X)$ such that $fg = 0$. Using this fact, we may obtain the following result.

Corollary 5.18. *A point $p \in \beta X$ has finite fixed-place rank n if and only if there is a collection of n pairwise disjoint cozero sets $\{Y_i\}_{i=1}^n$ such that p is in the closure of each Y_i , and there is no larger such collection. In this case, p is an F -point with respect to Y_i , for each $i = 1, \dots, n$.*

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(Received July 13, 2012, revised October 20, 2012)