INTEGER VALUED POLYNOMIALS AND LUBIN-TATE FORMAL GROUPS

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ABSTRACT. If R is an integral domain and K is its field of fractions, we let Int(R) stand for the subring of K[x] which maps R into itself. We show that if R is the ring of integers of a p-adic field, then Int(R) is generated, as an R-algebra, by the coefficients of the endomorphisms of any Lubin-Tate group attached to R.

1. Introduction

For an integral domain R, with field of fractions K, we denote by Int(R) the R-subalgebra of K[x] consisting of the polynomials which map R into itself. These polynomials are called R-valued or, sometimes, by abuse of language, integer valued. It is well-known, and easy, that $Int(\mathbb{Z})$ is generated (in fact, linearly spanned) by the binomial coefficients $\binom{x}{n}$. One "explanation" for the fact that these polynomials are integer valued is the following. Consider the multiplicative formal group, as a formal group over \mathbb{Z} . Multiplication by x on the formal group is given by a power series whose coefficients are $\binom{x}{n}$. Since for integral x these coefficients must be integral, the binomial coefficients are integer-valued.

Our main theorem is a generalization of this fact to Lubin-Tate groups over the ring of integers R of a p-adic field K (a finite extension of \mathbb{Q}_p). If $F(t_1, t_2)$ is a Lubin-Tate formal group law over R, then for every $x \in R$ there is a unique power series

(1.1)
$$[x](t) = [x]_F(t) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} c_n(x)t^n$$

such that $F([x](t_1), [x](t_2)) = [x](F(t_1, t_2))$ and $c_1(x) = x$. It turns out that $c_n(x) \in K[x]$ is an integer valued polynomial of degree $\leq n$ and what we show is that they generate Int(R) as an R-algebra:

(1.2)
$$Int(R) = R[c_1, c_2, \dots].$$

In fact, it follows from our proof that $c_1, c_q, c_{q^2,...}$ is a minimal set of generators for Int(R), where q is the cardinality of the residue field of R. For global applications it is nevertheless better to keep all the c_n .

The theory of elliptic curves with complex multiplication and an easy localization argument allow us to apply our result to determine a system of "natural" generators for Int(R) when R is the ring of S-integers in a quadratic imaginary field of class number 1, and S is an explicit small set of primes.

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The ring Int(R) is in general non-noetherian, and has been studied by several authors, beginning with Pólya and Ostrowski in 1919. The case of $Int(\mathbb{Z})$ is of course much older, and must have been known to Euler. For a comprehensive survey, see the book [Ca-Ch1], and the recent paper [Ca-Ch2] by the same authors. We thank the referee for calling our attention to past work, which we now briefly summarize, in order to put our result in a historic perspective.

For R the ring of integers of a number field K, Int(R) is a free R-module, as follows from a general theorem of Bass (see [Za], Section 2). Of special interest are number fields K for which Int(R) admits an R-basis $\{f_n\}$ with $\deg(f_n)=n$. Such a basis is called a regular basis. Pólya [Po] remarked that a regular basis exists if and only if for every $n \geq 0$, the fractional ideal \mathfrak{a}_n of leading coefficients of polynomials of degree $\leq n$ in Int(R) is principal, and proved that if K is quadratic this happens if and only if all the ramified primes in K are principal. In a paper published back-to-back with Pólya's paper, Ostrowski [Os] proved the following more general criterion: Int(R) admits a regular basis if and only if for every rational prime power q, the ideal

$$\prod_{\mathbf{N}\mathfrak{p}=q}\mathfrak{p}$$

(the product extending over all the prime ideals of R of absolute norm q) is principal. The subgroup of the ideal class group of K generated by the classes of these ideals is called the P'olya-Ostrowski group of R, and may be regarded as the obstruction to Int(R) possessing a regular basis. If K/\mathbb{Q} is Galois, it is enough to check Ostrowski's criterion for $q=p^f$ where p is ramified in K. In this case Zantema [Za, Prop. 3.1] found an equivalent formulation of the criterion in terms of $H^1(G,U)$ where $G=Gal(K/\mathbb{Q})$ and $U=R^\times$ is the group of units of K. Number fields of class number 1 evidently admit a regular basis for Int(R), but so do many others, for example all the cyclotomic fields $\mathbb{Q}(e^{2\pi i/m})$.

All of the above concerns bases of Int(R) as an R-module. The question of finding generators as an R-algebra, addressed by us, seemed to have escaped attention. So did, to the best of our knowledge, the relation with formal groups, although the quantities $w_q(n)$, which play a key role in our proof, show up in various circumstances.

We end our brief historic survey with the remark that there are other aspects of the ring Int(R) which make it an object worth studying. For example, if R is the ring of integers of a number field, Int(R) is a two-dimensional Prüfer domain. There are analogous results of Carlitz in the function-field case. We refer to the paper of Cahen and Chabert for a list of known results and open problems.

2. Integer valued polynomials

2.1. **General facts.** As in the introduction, let R be an integral domain, K its field of fractions, and

$$(2.1) Int(R) = \{ f \in K[x] | f(R) \subset R \}$$

$$(2.2) Int_n(R) = \{ f \in Int(R) | \deg(f) \le n \}$$

(2.3)
$$\mathfrak{a}_n(R) = \{ \text{leading coefficients of } f \in Int_n(R) \}.$$

Clearly Int(R) is an R-subalgebra of K[x], and $\mathfrak{a}_n(R)$ is an R-submodule (a fractional ideal) of K. It is also clear that if R is a principal ideal domain then Int(R)

has a basis $\{f_n\}_{n\geq 0}$ over R such that $\deg(f_n)=n$ (a regular basis) and that f_n is unique up to multiplication by a unit of R and a linear combination of f_0,\ldots,f_{n-1} . In fact, any f_n whose leading coefficient generates $\mathfrak{a}_n(R)$ will do.

We next examine the effect of localization, under the mere assumption that R is a noetherian domain. For any prime \mathfrak{p} of R,

$$(2.4) Int(R)_{\mathfrak{p}} = Int(R_{\mathfrak{p}})$$

(as submodules of K[x], see [Ca-Ch1], Theorem I.2.3). Let \mathcal{M} be the collection of maximal ideals of R. It follows that

(2.5)
$$Int(R) = \bigcap_{\mathfrak{p} \in \mathcal{M}} Int(R_{\mathfrak{p}}).$$

Indeed, let f belong to the right hand side, and let I be the ideal of all $a \in R$ such that $af \in Int(R)$. For every $\mathfrak{p} \in \mathcal{M}$, from the fact that $f \in Int(R_{\mathfrak{p}}) = Int(R)_{\mathfrak{p}}$ we learn that there is an $a \in I$, $a \notin \mathfrak{p}$. Thus I is contained in no maximal ideal, so must contain 1.

We shall also need the following lemma, whose easy proof we leave out.

Lemma 2.1. Let $Q \subset P \subset K[x]$ be two R-submodules and let $\mathfrak{a}_n(Q)$ denote the set of leading coefficients of polynomials of degree n in Q. If $\mathfrak{a}_n(Q) = \mathfrak{a}_n(P)$ for all $n \geq 0$, then Q = P.

2.2. Integer valued polynomials over discrete valuation ring. Assume now that R is a discrete valuation ring, let π be a uniformizer, and v the normalized valuation, so that $v(\pi) = 1$. If the residue field of R is infinite, it is easy to see that Int(R) = R[x]. Assume therefore that the cardinality of $R/\pi R$ is finite, and denote it by q.

Let

(2.6)
$$w_q(n) = \left\lfloor \frac{n}{q} \right\rfloor + \left\lfloor \frac{n}{q^2} \right\rfloor + \left\lfloor \frac{n}{q^3} \right\rfloor + \cdots$$

(see [Ca-Ch2] for the history of these numbers, going back to Legendre and ending with recent work of Bhargava). Below we shall use the fact that

(2.7)
$$w_q(i_1) + \dots + w_q(i_l) \le w_q(i_1 + \dots + i_l),$$

and that the inequality is *strict* if $l \geq 2$, all the $i_j \geq 1$ and $i_1 + \cdots + i_l = q^m$ for some m.

Proposition 2.2. We have

$$\mathfrak{a}_n(R) = \pi^{-w_q(n)} R.$$

Proof. See [Ca-Ch2], Proposition 1.3, or [Za], Lemma 2.2.

3. Relation with Lubin Tate formal groups

Let K be a finite extension of \mathbb{Q}_p with ring of integers R. As before let π be a uniformizer, and denote by q the cardinality of $\kappa = R/\pi R$. Let F be a Lubin-Tate formal group law over R associated with the uniformizer π [L-T]. As in the introduction, to every $x \in R$ we can associate a unique endomorphism [x] of F of the form

$$[x](t) = xt + c_2(x)t^2 + c_3(x)t^3 + \dots \in R[[t]].$$

Using the logarithm of the formal group F it is easy to see that $c_n(x) \in K[x]$ is a polynomial of degree $\leq n$. Since it is R-valued, $c_n \in Int(R)$.

In particular

$$[\pi](t) = \pi t + a_2 t^2 + \dots + a_q t^q + \dots$$

lifts the Frobenius endomorphism: it satisfies $a_i \equiv 0 mod\pi$ for $i \neq q$, and $a_q \equiv 1 mod\pi$. Let $u = a_q$.

Theorem 3.1. We have

$$(3.3) R[c_1, c_2, \dots] = Int(R).$$

Moreover, $\{c_{q^m} | m \geq 0\}$ is a minimal set of generators of Int(R) as an R-algebra.

Proof. Let $Q = R[c_1, c_q, c_{q^2}, \dots]$. From the lemma and the proposition we deduce that in order to prove that Q = Int(R) it is enough to show that

$$\pi^{-w_q(n)}R \subset \mathfrak{a}_n(Q)$$

for every n > 0.

If we expand $n = b_m q^m + b_{m-1} q^{m-1} + \cdots + b_1 q + b_0$ with $0 \le b_i < q$, we see that

$$(3.5) w_q(n) = b_m w_q(q^m) + b_{m-1} w_q(q^{m-1}) + \dots + b_1 w_q(q)$$

where $w_q(q^m) = (q^m - 1)/(q - 1)$ $(m \ge 1)$. Let λ_n be the coefficient of x^n in $c_n(x)$. Then the coefficient of x^n in $c_{q^m}^{b_m} c_{q^{m-1}}^{b_{m-1}} \dots c_q^{b_1} c_1^{b_0}$ (which is a polynomial of degree n in Q) is

$$\lambda_{q^m}^{b_m} \lambda_{q^{m-1}}^{b_{m-1}} \dots \lambda_q^{b_1} \lambda_1^{b_0}.$$

It follows that it is enough to prove that

$$(3.7) v(\lambda_{q^m}) = -w_q(q^m)$$

for every $m \ge 0$. Since $\lambda_1 = 1$, this holds for m = 0.

From $[\pi x](t) = [\pi]([x](t))$ we derive the basic identity (3.8)

$$\sum c_n(\pi x)t^n = \pi \left(\sum c_n(x)t^n\right) + a_2 \left(\sum c_n(x)t^n\right)^2 + \dots + u \left(\sum c_n(x)t^n\right)^q + \dots$$

Comparing coefficients of $x^q t^q$ we get

(3.9)
$$\lambda_{q}(\pi^{q} - \pi) = a_{2}(2\lambda_{1}\lambda_{q-1} + \cdots) + a_{3}(\cdots) + \cdots + u.$$

In this last equation, $v(LHS) = v(\lambda_q) + 1$. On the right hand side, each term is of the form $a_l \lambda_{i_1} \lambda_{i_2} \dots \lambda_{i_l}$ where $l \geq 2$ and $i_1 + i_2 + \dots + i_l = q$. Since $v(\lambda_{i_j}) \geq 0$, and $v(a_l) \geq 1$, unless l = q and $a_q = u$, we deduce that v(RHS) = v(u) = 0. Hence $v(\lambda_q) = -1$, as we wanted to show.

We will now prove that $v(\lambda_{q^m}) = -w_q(q^m)$ by induction on m, the cases m = 0 and 1 having been proved above. Suppose that $v(\lambda_{q^{m-1}}) = -w_q(q^{m-1})$. Note also:

- For each $n, v(\lambda_n) \ge -w_q(n)$ (because $\lambda_n \in \mathfrak{a}_n(R)$).
- If $i_1 + i_2 + \cdots + i_l = q^m$ then $w_q(i_1) + \cdots + w_q(i_l) < w_q(q^m)$ (we assume here that the $i_i \ge 1$ and $i \ge 2$).

Comparing the coefficients of $x^{q^m}t^{q^m}$ in the basic identity, as we did when m was 1, yields

$$\lambda_{q^{m}}(\pi^{q^{m}} - \pi) = a_{2}(\sum_{i_{1}+i_{2}=q^{m}} \lambda_{i_{1}}\lambda_{i_{2}}) + a_{3}(\sum_{i_{1}+i_{2}+i_{3}=q^{m}} \lambda_{i_{1}}\lambda_{i_{2}}\lambda_{i_{3}}) + \cdots$$

$$+u(\sum_{i_{1}+\dots+i_{q}=q^{m}} \lambda_{i_{1}}\lambda_{i_{2}}\dots\lambda_{i_{q}}) + a_{q+1}(\dots) + \cdots$$
(3.10)

The valuation of the left hand side, $v(LHS) = v(\lambda_{q^m}) + 1$. The right hand side is a sum of terms of the form $a_l \lambda_{i_1} \lambda_{i_2} \dots \lambda_{i_l}$ where $l \geq 2$ and $i_1 + \dots + i_l = q^m$. We shall show that the term $u \lambda_{q^{m-1}}^q$ has strictly smaller valuation than any other term, so

(3.11)
$$v(RHS) = v(u\lambda_{q^{m-1}}^{q}) = -qw_{q}(q^{m-1})$$

by the induction hypothesis, and $v(\lambda_{q^m}) = -1 - qw_q(q^{m-1}) = -w_q(q^m)$.

To conclude the proof we examine a term of the form $a_l \lambda_{i_1} \lambda_{i_2} \dots \lambda_{i_l}$, other than $u \lambda_{a^{m-1}}^q$, distinguishing two cases. If $l \neq q$

$$(3.12) \ v(a_l \lambda_{i_1} \lambda_{i_2} \dots \lambda_{i_l}) \ge 1 - w_q(i_1) - \dots - w_q(i_l) > 1 - w_q(q^m) = -q w_q(q^{m-1}).$$

If l = q but not all the i_j are equal to q^{m-1} , then without loss of generality $i_1 < q^{m-1}$. We shall show shortly that in this case

$$(3.13) w_{q}(i_{1}) + \dots + w_{q}(i_{q}) < qw_{q}(q^{m-1})$$

so that once again

$$(3.14) v(u\lambda_{i_1}\lambda_{i_2}\dots\lambda_{i_q}) \ge -w_q(i_1) - \dots - w_q(i_q) > -qw_q(q^{m-1}).$$

Assume therefore that $i_1 + \dots + i_q = q^m$ and $i_1 < q^{m-1}$. This implies $\left\lfloor \frac{i_1}{q^{m-1}} \right\rfloor = 0$. By definition

(3.15)
$$w_q(i_j) = \left| \frac{i_j}{q} \right| + \left| \frac{i_j}{q^2} \right| + \dots + \left| \frac{i_j}{q^{m-1}} \right|.$$

Therefore, recalling that $\sum \lfloor x_i \rfloor \leq \lfloor \sum x_i \rfloor$,

$$w_{q}(i_{1}) + \dots + w_{q}(i_{q}) = \sum_{j=1}^{q} \left\lfloor \frac{i_{j}}{q} \right\rfloor + \sum_{j=1}^{q} \left\lfloor \frac{i_{j}}{q^{2}} \right\rfloor + \dots + \sum_{j=1}^{q} \left\lfloor \frac{i_{j}}{q^{m-2}} \right\rfloor + \sum_{j=2}^{q} \left\lfloor \frac{i_{j}}{q^{m-1}} \right\rfloor$$

$$\leq \left\lfloor \frac{q^{m}}{q} \right\rfloor + \left\lfloor \frac{q^{m}}{q^{2}} \right\rfloor + \dots + \left\lfloor \frac{q^{m}}{q^{m-2}} \right\rfloor + \left\lfloor \frac{q^{m} - i_{1}}{q^{m-1}} \right\rfloor$$

$$< q^{m-1} + q^{m-2} + \dots + q^{2} + q = qw_{q}(q^{m-1}).$$
(3.16)

This concludes the proof that Q = Int(R). It remains to see that no c_{q^m} can be eliminated from the set of generators of Q. Suppose $b_i \geq 0$ and

(3.17)
$$q^m = b_{m-1}q^{m-1} + b_{m-2}q^{m-2} + \dots + b_1q + b_0.$$

The leading coefficient of $c_{q^{m-1}}^{b_{m-1}} \dots c_q^{b_1} c_1^{b_0}$ has valuation

$$(3.18) -b_{m-1}w_q(q^{m-1}) - \dots - b_1w_q(q) > -w_q(q^m),$$

so we need c_{q^m} to guarantee that $\mathfrak{a}_{q^m}(Q) = \pi^{-w_q(q^m)}R$.

4. Global applications

4.1. Applications to elliptic curves with complex multiplication. Let K be a quadratic imaginary field of class number 1. Let \mathcal{O}_K be its ring of integers, and E/K an elliptic curve with complex multiplication by the ring \mathcal{O}_K . Pick a Weierstrass equation for E defined over K,

$$(4.1) Y^2 + a_1 XY + a_3 Y = X^3 + a_2 X^2 + a_4 X + a_6.$$

Let t = -X/Y be the local parameter at the origin as defined in [Si, chapter IV] and

$$[x]_{\widehat{E}}(t) = xt + c_2(x)t^2 + c_3(x)t^3 + \cdots \quad (x \in \mathcal{O}_K)$$

the power series giving the multiplication by x in the formal group. Then $c_n(x) \in K[x]$ is of degree $\leq n$. Let S be a finite set of primes such that if $\mathfrak{p} \notin S$ the chosen Weierstrass model is integral and has good reduction at \mathfrak{p} . Let $R = \mathcal{O}_{K,S}$ be the ring of S-integers in K. At a prime $\mathfrak{p} \notin S$ the formal group of E is Lubin-Tate, and $c_n(x) \in R_{\mathfrak{p}} = \mathcal{O}_{K,\mathfrak{p}}$. Our main theorem yields

(4.3)
$$Int(R_{\mathfrak{p}}) = R_{\mathfrak{p}}[c_1, c_2, c_3, ...].$$

From $Int(R) = \bigcap_{\mathfrak{p} \notin S} Int(R_{\mathfrak{p}})$ we deduce:

Corollary 4.1. Under the conditions mentioned above, Int(R) is generated over R by the $c_n(x)$.

In fact it is enough to take c_n for n's which are powers of cardinalities of residue fields of R.

Example. Let E be the elliptic curve given, in Weierstrass form, by $Y^2 = X^3 - X$. This model has complex multiplication by $\mathbb{Z}[i]$ and good reduction everywhere away from 2. We may therefore apply the corollary to the ring $\mathbb{Z}[i, \frac{1}{2}]$. By a simple computation we find that the polynomials $c_n(x)$ vanish for $n \neq 1 \mod 4$. The first few non-vanishing polynomials are

$$\begin{aligned} c_1(x) &= x \\ c_5(x) &= \frac{2}{5}(x^5 - x) \\ c_9(x) &= \frac{2}{15}x^9 - \frac{4}{5}x^5 + \frac{2}{3}x \\ c_{13}(x) &= \frac{44}{975}x^{13} - \frac{12}{25}x^9 + \frac{148}{75}x^5 - \frac{20}{13}x \\ c_{17}(x) &= \frac{39422}{27625}x^{17} - \frac{88}{375}x^{13} + \frac{196}{125}x^9 - \frac{26648}{4875}x^5 + \frac{46}{17}x \end{aligned}$$

Note that the next in line, $c_{21}(x)$, is redundant, according to the remark following the corollary.

4.2. Formal globalization. As pointed out by the referee, the use of complex multiplication, as much as it points to a relation between our problem and geometry, is not essential. We only need to know a one-dimensional formal group over R, admitting R as endomorphisms, all of whose localizations are Lubin-Tate formal groups. This can be done much more generally with little effort.

Let K be any number field, and S a finite set of primes such that $R = \mathcal{O}_{K,S}$ is of class number 1 (S may be empty). For any prime $\mathfrak{p} \notin S$ let $\pi_{\mathfrak{p}} \in R$ be a generator

of $\mathfrak{p}R$. Consider the formal Dirichlet series

$$L(s) = \prod_{\mathfrak{p} \notin S} \left(1 - \pi_{\mathfrak{p}}^{-1} \mathbb{N} \mathfrak{p}^{-s}\right)^{-1}$$

$$= \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} a_n n^{-s}.$$
(4.4)

Clearly $a_1 = 1$ and $a_n \in K$. For every $\mathfrak{p} \notin S$, the Dirichlet series $\left(1 - \pi_{\mathfrak{p}}^{-1} \mathbb{N} \mathfrak{p}^{-s}\right) L(s)$ has \mathfrak{p} -integral coefficients. Consider the formal power series

$$f(X) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} a_n X^n$$

and the group law

(4.6)
$$F(X,Y) = f^{-1}(f(X) + f(Y))$$

for which f is a logarithm. A priori F is defined over K, but we claim that it is in fact defined over R. For every $\mathfrak{p} \notin S$

$$(4.7) f(X) - \pi_{\mathfrak{p}}^{-1} f(X^{\mathbb{N}\mathfrak{p}}) \in \mathcal{O}_{K,\mathfrak{p}}[[X]].$$

To see this, we must show that, if $\mathbb{N}\mathfrak{p}=q$, $a_n-\pi_{\mathfrak{p}}^{-1}a_{n/q}\in\mathcal{O}_{K,\mathfrak{p}}$ (if q does not divide n, we understand $a_{n/q}=0$). But this is guaranteed by the fact that $\left(1-\pi_{\mathfrak{p}}^{-1}\mathbb{N}\mathfrak{p}^{-s}\right)L(s)$ has \mathfrak{p} -integral coefficients. The functional equation lemma [Haz, I.2.2] implies now that F has coefficients in $\mathcal{O}_{K,\mathfrak{p}}$, and that so does the endomorphism

$$[x]_F(t) = f^{-1}(xf(t))$$

for every $x \in \mathcal{O}_{K,\mathfrak{p}}$. Furthermore, by [Haz, I.8.3.6] F is a Lubin-Tate formal group law associated with the prime $\pi_{\mathfrak{p}}$.

It follows that F, as well as the endomorphisms $[x]_F$, for $x \in R$, are defined over R, and therefore that the Taylor coefficients $c_n(x)$ in $[x]_F$ belong to Int(R). Moreover, by our main theorem, they generate $Int(R_{\mathfrak{p}})$ at each maximal ideal \mathfrak{p} , so we may deduce as before that they generate Int(R) globally.

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 $\label{thm:lemma$

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