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A THEOREM OF FINITENESS FOR MODULES
WHICH ARE FLAT AND PURE OVER THE
BASE SCHEME

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INTRODUCTION

Let S be an affine noetherian scheme, X an S -scheme of finite type, \mathcal{M} a coherent \mathcal{O}_X -module. In this paper we are interested in the structure of \mathcal{M} as an \mathcal{O}_S -module. More precisely, if $f : X \rightarrow S$ denotes the structural morphism, we want to study the \mathcal{O}_S -module $f_*\mathcal{M}$. We will give some conditions under which, in order to show that $f_*\mathcal{M}$ is coherent, it is enough to show a certain "generic coherence" of this module.

This problem was posed to me by Michel Raynaud. Its solution is based upon results obtained by him and L. Gruson (see [1]).

1. Some Notations and Definitions.

The language to be used is that of EGA, and especially that of [1]. However, we state the following:

(1.1) If S is a scheme, s a point of S , we denote by $k(s)$ the residue field at s .

(1.2) If X is an S -scheme, s a point of S , the fibre of X over s (i.e. the $\text{Spec}(k(s))$ -scheme $X \times_S \text{Spec}(k(s))$) will be denoted by $X \otimes k(s)$.

(1.3) Let X be an S -scheme, \mathcal{M} a quasi-coherent \mathcal{O}_X -module. We put

$$\text{Ass}(\mathcal{M}/S) = \bigcup_{s \in S} \text{Ass}_{X \otimes k(s)}(\mathcal{M} \otimes k(s)),$$

where $\text{Ass}_{X \otimes k(s)}(\mathcal{M} \otimes k(s))$ is defined in the usual way (see [2], 1.1).

(1.4) A pointed scheme (S, s) is a couple consisting of a scheme S and a point s of S . A morphism of pointed schemes

$$g : (S', s') \longrightarrow (S, s)$$

is a morphism of schemes $g: S' \rightarrow S$ such that $g(s') = s$.

(1.5) An elementary étale neighbourhood of a pointed scheme (S, s) is an étale morphism of pointed schemes

$$(S', s') \longrightarrow (S, s)$$

which induces an isomorphism of $k(s)$ with $k(s')$.

(1.6) A henselisation of a pointed scheme (S, s) is a morphism of pointed schemes

$$(\tilde{S}, \tilde{s}) \longrightarrow (S, s)$$

where \tilde{S} is the spectrum of a henselisation of the local ring $\mathcal{O}_{S, s}$, \tilde{s} its closed point. We know that (\tilde{S}, \tilde{s}) can be identified with a projective limite of affine elementary étale neighbourhoods of (S, s) . (For a treatment of this subject, see EGA. IV. 18... or [4].)

2. A "Structure Lemma".

We now state as a lemma the following result of Raynaud and Gruson:

LEMMA (2.1): Let A be a noetherian ring, $f : X \rightarrow S = \text{Spec}(A)$ a morphism of finite type. \mathcal{M} a coherent \mathcal{O}_X -module which is flat over A .
Let $x \in X$, $s = f(x)$. There exist an affine elementary étale neighbourhood (Y, y) of (X, x) and an affine elementary étale neighbourhood $(S' = \text{Spec}(A'), s')$ of (S, s) such that

(i) the following diagram of pointed schemes commutes:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} (Y, y) & \longrightarrow & (X, x) \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ (S', s') & \longrightarrow & (S, s) \end{array}$$

(ii) if \mathcal{N} denotes the inverse image of \mathcal{M} on Y , $\Gamma(Y, \mathcal{N})$ is a free A' -module.

Proof: The lemma is an immediate corollary of [1], 3.3.2, taking into account the result of Bass which asserts that "big" projective modules are free ([3], Cor. 4.5).

Thus we know that, if \mathcal{M} is S -flat, \mathcal{M} is, locally for the étale topology on X and on S , free over S .

Now one could ask if this implies that \mathcal{M} can be realized as a sub-module of a free \mathcal{O}_S -module, locally for the étale topology on S . It turns out that a sufficient condition for this to be true, is that \mathcal{M} is "relatively pure", in the sense of Raynaud (1, 3.3.3):

DEFINITION (2.2): Let S be a scheme, X an S -scheme locally of finite type, \mathcal{M} a quasi-coherent \mathcal{O}_X -module of finite type.

(i) Let s be a point of S , (\tilde{S}, \tilde{s}) a henselisation of (S, s) , $\tilde{X} = X \times_S \tilde{S}$, $\tilde{\mathcal{M}} = \mathcal{M} \times_S \tilde{S}$.

We say that \mathcal{M} is pure along $X \otimes k(s)$ if, for all $x \in \text{Ass}(\tilde{\mathcal{M}}/\tilde{S})$, the intersection of the closure of x in \tilde{X} with $\tilde{X} \otimes k(\tilde{s})$ is non-empty.

(ii) \mathcal{M} is said to be S -pure if \mathcal{M} is pure along $X \otimes k(s)$ for all $s \in S$.

Remark (2.3): The condition of (i) is equivalent to the condition that any open set of \tilde{X} containing the closed fibre $\tilde{X} \otimes k(\tilde{s})$, contains also $\text{Ass}(\tilde{\mathcal{M}}/\tilde{S})$.

3. A Theorem of Finiteness.

Under the conditions of (2.1), if \mathcal{M} is also A -pure, we are going to show that, locally for the étale topology on S , $f_*\mathcal{M}$ is a sub-module of a free module. This enables us to prove the following theorem:

THEOREM (3.1): Let A be a noetherian ring, $f : X \rightarrow S = \text{Spec}(A)$ a morphism of finite type, \mathcal{M} a coherent \mathcal{O}_X -module which is A -flat and A -pure.

Suppose that for all $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Ass}(A)$, $\Gamma(X_{\mathfrak{p}}, \mathcal{M}_{\mathfrak{p}})$ is an $A_{\mathfrak{p}}$ -module of finite type.

Then $M = \Gamma(X, \mathcal{M})$ is an A -module of finite type.

Proof: We will first show that for all points s in S , there is an affine elementary étale neighbourhood $(S' = \text{Spec}(A'), s')$ of (S, s) such that if $X' = X \times_S S'$ and $\mathcal{M}' = \mathcal{M} \times_X X'$, then $\Gamma(X', \mathcal{M}')$ is a sub-module of a free A' -module. From this we deduce that $\Gamma(X', \mathcal{M}')$ is in fact an A' -module of finite type, and we conclude the proof by considering a finite covering of S by étale neighbourhoods of the above type.

So let s be a point of S . For each point x_{α} in the fibre of X at s there exists, by (2.1), a commutative diagram of pointed schemes

$$\begin{array}{ccc} (Y_{\alpha}, y_{\alpha}) & \xrightarrow{v_{\alpha}} & (X, x_{\alpha}) \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ (S_{\alpha}, s_{\alpha}) & \longrightarrow & (S, s) \end{array}$$

where (Y_{α}, y_{α}) (resp. (S_{α}, s_{α})) is an affine elementary étale neighbourhood of (X, x_{α}) (resp. (S, s)) and such that the inverse image of \mathcal{M} on Y_{α} is a free $\mathcal{O}_{S_{\alpha}}$ -module. $X \otimes k(s)$ is quasi-compact, so there exists a finite set I such that $X \otimes k(s)$ is contained in the union of the open sets $v_{\alpha}(Y_{\alpha})$, for $\alpha \in I$.

Take an affine elementary étale neighbourhood (S', s') which dominates each of the (S_{α}, s_{α}) for $\alpha \in I$, and put

$$X' = X \times_S S' \quad Y'_{\alpha} = Y_{\alpha} \times_S S' \quad Y' = \coprod_{\alpha \in I} Y'_{\alpha}.$$

We obtain the following commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 & & Y' & \xrightarrow{u} & \\
 & & \searrow u' & & \\
 (*) & & X' & \longrightarrow & X \\
 & & \downarrow & & \downarrow \\
 & & S' & \longrightarrow & S
 \end{array}$$

Observe the following:

(3.2) (S', s') being an elementary étale neighbourhood of (S, s) implies that the fibre $X' \otimes k(s')$ is isomorphic to $X \otimes k(s)$, and so is contained in the image U' - which is open - of Y' in X' .

(3.3) From the definition of purity, it follows that $\mathcal{M}' = \mathcal{M} \times_{X'} X'$ is pure along $X' \otimes k(s')$ if and only if \mathcal{M} is pure along $X \otimes k(s)$.

Let A' denote the ring of the affine scheme S' .

By construction, the A' -module $\Gamma(Y', u'^* \mathcal{M}')$ is free. We want to show that $\Gamma(X', \mathcal{M}')$ is, via the canonical homomorphism, isomorphic to a sub-module of this free module. It is at this point that we use the fact that \mathcal{M}' is pure along $X' \otimes k(s')$.

We now need some lemmas concerning constructability and the property of pureness.

LEMMA (3.4): Let X be an algebraic scheme over a field k , \mathcal{F} a coherent \mathcal{O}_X -module, U an open subscheme of X . Denote by $\mathbf{P}(X, \mathcal{F}, U, k)$ the property that $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{F}) \subset U$. Then \mathbf{P} is a constructible property (EGA, IV, 9.2.1).

Proof: There are two things to be shown:

- i) If k' is an extension of k , then $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{F}) \subset U$ if and only if $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{F} \otimes_k k') \subset U \otimes_k k'$.
- ii) Let S be an integral noetherian scheme with generic point η , $u: X \rightarrow S$ a morphism of finite type, \mathcal{F} a

coherent \mathcal{O}_X -module, U an open set in X .

Denote by E the set of points s in S such that $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{F} \otimes k(s)) \subset U \otimes k(s)$. Then one of the sets E , $S-E$ contains a non-void open set.

By EGA, IV, 4.2.7, the image of $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{F} \otimes_k k')$ in $X \otimes_k k'$ is equal to $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{F})$, so i) holds.

To show ii), we use another result from EGA, namely (EGA, IV, 9.8.3):

Let $\{x_i\}_{i \in I} = \text{Ass}(\mathcal{F} \otimes k(\eta))$ - this is a finite set. For each x_i , denote by Z_i its closure in X . For all $s \in S$ and all $i \in I$, let $\{x_{i,\alpha} \mid \alpha \in J_{s,i}\}$ be the maximal points of $Z_i \otimes k(s)$.

There exists an open neighbourhood V of η in S such that, for all $s \in V$, the $x_{i,\alpha}$ ($i \in I$, $\alpha \in J_{s,i}$) are all distinct and

$$\text{Ass}(\mathcal{F} \otimes k(s)) = \{x_{i,\alpha} \mid i \in I, \alpha \in J_{s,i}\}.$$

Let us distinguish the two cases

- a) $\eta \in E$
- b) $\eta \in S-E$.

Case a): If $\eta \in E$, $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{F} \otimes k(\eta)) \subset U$. Let $i \in I$. $Z_i \otimes k(\eta)$ is irreducible, hence $U \otimes k(\eta) \cap Z_i \otimes k(\eta)$ is a dense open sub-scheme of $Z_i \otimes k(\eta)$. Put

$$F = \{t \in V \mid U \otimes k(t) \cap Z_i \otimes k(t) \text{ is dense in } Z_i \otimes k(t)\}.$$

F is a constructible set (EGA, IV, 9.5.3). Since $\eta \in F$ and S is integral, this implies that F contains a non-void open set (EGA, IV, 9.2.3). Denote this open set by V'_i .

Thus $V' = \bigcap_{i \in I} V'_i$ is an open neighbourhood of η contained in V .

Let $s \in V'$. If $x \in \text{Ass}(\mathcal{F} \otimes k(s))$, there exist $i \in I$ and $\alpha \in J_{s,i}$ such that $x = x_{i,\alpha}$. We know that $U \otimes k(s) \cap Z_i \otimes k(s)$ is dense in $Z_i \otimes k(s)$. Since $x_{i,\alpha}$ is a maximal point of $Z_i \otimes k(s)$, this implies that

$$x = x_{i,\alpha} \in U \otimes k(s) \cap Z_i \otimes k(s),$$

which then proves that V' is an open, non-void sub-set of E .

Case b): If $\eta \notin E$, there exists $x_i \in \text{Ass}(\mathcal{F} \otimes k(\eta))$ such that $x_i \notin U$. Put

$$G = \{t \in S \mid U \otimes k(t) \cap Z_i \otimes k(t) = \emptyset\};$$

G is a constructible set by EGA, IV, 9.5.3.

As above, one sees that G contains an open neighbourhood of η , which we denote by V' .

Let $s \in V'$. Then $U \otimes k(s) \cap Z_i \otimes k(s) = \emptyset$. Hence $x_i \notin U \otimes k(s)$ for all $\alpha \in J_{s,i}$, consequently V' is a non-void open sub-set of $S-E$. This completes the proof of (3.4).

LEMMA (3.5): Let S be a noetherian scheme, X an S -scheme of finite type, \mathcal{M} a coherent \mathcal{O}_X -module. Let s be a point of S , U an open set in X which contains $X \otimes k(s)$. If \mathcal{M} is pure along $X \otimes k(s)$, then U "contains $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{M}/S)$ over an open neighbourhood of s ", i.e. there exists an open neighbourhood V of s in S such that $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{M} \otimes k(t)) \subset U$ for all $t \in V$.

Proof: Let $E = \{t \in S \mid \text{Ass}(\mathcal{M} \otimes k(t)) \subset U\}$. By (3.4), E is a locally constructible set in S (EGA, IV, 9.2.3); it is even constructible, since S is noetherian.

In order to prove the lemma, we must show that E contains an open neighbourhood of the given point s . Since E is constructible, it will be enough to show that every generisation of s is in E (EGA, O_{III} , 9.2.5).

So let $g : (\tilde{S}, \tilde{s}) \rightarrow (S, s)$ be a henselisation of S at s , and consider the cartesian diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} X \times_{\tilde{S}} \tilde{S} = \tilde{X} & \longrightarrow & X \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ \tilde{S} & \xrightarrow{g} & S \end{array}$$

Let $\tilde{\mathcal{M}} = \mathcal{M} \times_X \tilde{X}$. Since \mathcal{M} is pure along $X \otimes k(s)$, any open set of \tilde{X} containing $\tilde{X} \otimes k(\tilde{s})$, contains $\text{Ass}(\tilde{\mathcal{M}}/\tilde{S})$, cfr. (2.3). Hence $U \times_S \tilde{S}$ contains $\text{Ass}(\tilde{\mathcal{M}}/\tilde{S})$. Since the property \mathbb{P} considered in (3.4) is constructible, it results from this that $g(\tilde{S}) \subset E$ (EGA, IV, 9.2.2(iv)). Now all generisations of s are contained in $g(\tilde{S})$, so the proof of the lemma is completed.

We may now return to the proof of the theorem, that is, to the situation of the diagram (*).

If we consider S' , X' , \mathcal{M}' and the (open) image U' of Y' in X' , it follows from (3.5) that we may assume - except for replacing, if necessary, S' by an open affine neighbourhood of S' - that in the diagram (*) we have

$$\text{Ass}(\mathcal{M}'/S') \subset U' = u'(Y').$$

A fortiori we then have $\text{Ass}(\mathcal{M}') \subset U'$, so that the restriction map

$$\Gamma(X', \mathcal{M}') \longrightarrow \Gamma(U', \mathcal{M}')$$

is injective (EGA, IV, 3.1.8).

The morphism $u': Y' \rightarrow U'$ is faithfully flat, so we also get an injection (EGA, IV, 2.2.8)

$$\Gamma(U', \mathcal{M}') \longrightarrow \Gamma(Y', u'^* \mathcal{M}') = \Gamma(Y', u^* \mathcal{M}).$$

Let A' be the ring of S' . We have now shown that $\Gamma(X', \mathcal{M}')$ can be viewed as a sub-module of the free A' -module $\Gamma(Y', u^* \mathcal{M})$ - this was the first step of the theorem.

Furthermore, A' being flat over A implies that (EGA, III, 1.4.15)

$$\Gamma(X, \mathcal{M}) \otimes_A A' \cong \Gamma(X', \mathcal{M}').$$

Let $M = \Gamma(X, \mathcal{M})$ and $M' = M \otimes_A A'$. We are going to show that the hypothesis of "generic finiteness" made on \mathcal{M} now implies that M' is of finite type over A' .

Let $A \rightarrow \prod_{f \in \text{Ass} A} A_f = B$ be the canonical homomorphism, which is injective. By hypothesis,

$$\prod_{f \in \text{Ass} A} \Gamma(X_f, \mathcal{M}_f) = \prod_{f \in \text{Ass} A} M_f = M \otimes_A B$$

is a B -module of finite type.

$A \rightarrow A'$ being flat implies that the homomorphism $A' \rightarrow B' = B \otimes_A A'$ is injective.

$M' \otimes_{A'} B'$ is a B' -module of finite type, and M' is a sub-module of a free A' -module.

The fact that M' is of finite type over A' is a consequence of the following lemma:

LEMMA (3.6): Let R be a noetherian ring, $\varphi : R \rightarrow R'$ an injective ring homomorphism, P a sub-module of a free R -module. If $P \otimes_R R'$ is an R' -module of finite type, then P is of finite type over R .

Proof: We have a commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} P & \xrightarrow{j} & R^{(J)} \\ P \downarrow & & \downarrow \varphi^{(J)} \\ P \otimes_R R' & \xrightarrow{j'} & R'^{(J)} \end{array}$$

where p is the canonical homomorphism and $j' = j \otimes_R R'$. Since $P \otimes_R R'$ is of finite type over R' , there exists a finite subset I of J such that

$$j'(P \otimes_R R') \subset R'^{(I)}.$$

This implies also that

$$\varphi^{(J)}(j(P)) \subset R'^{(I)}.$$

$R \rightarrow R'$ is injective, so

$$\varphi^{(J)^{-1}}(\varphi^{(J)}(j(P))) = j(P) \subset \varphi^{(J)^{-1}}(R'^{(I)}) = R^{(I)}.$$

Hence P is a sub-module of an R -module of finite type. so it is itself of finite type over R .

End of the proof of (3.1):

By taking a finite covering of $S = \text{Spec}(A)$ by affine elementary étale neighbourhoods $S' = \text{Spec}(A')$ such that $M \otimes_A A' = \Gamma(X, \mathcal{M}) \otimes_A A'$ is of finite type over A' , we conclude - by faithfully flat descent - that M is an A -module of finite type. Q.E.D.

4. Applications.

Firstly, we will give some propositions concerning the purity concept, in order to illuminate this concept (cfr. [1], 3.3.4).

PROPOSITION (4.1): Let $f : X \rightarrow S$ be a morphism locally of finite type.

If f is universally closed - à fortiori if f is proper - then every quasi-coherent \mathcal{O}_X -module \mathcal{M} of finite type is S -pure.

Proof: Let $s \in S$, (\tilde{S}, \tilde{s}) a henselisation of (S, s) , $\tilde{\mathcal{M}} = \mathcal{M} \times_S \tilde{S}$. x a point of $\text{Ass}(\tilde{\mathcal{M}}/\tilde{S})$. If $\{\bar{x}\}$ denotes the closure of x in $X \times_S \tilde{S}$, the image of $\{\bar{x}\}$ in \tilde{S} is closed, hence \tilde{S} is contained in this image.

PROPOSITION (4.2): Let $f : X \rightarrow S$ be a morphism locally of finite type.

If f is flat with geometrically integral fibres (EGA, IV, 4.6.2), then X is S -pure (i.e. \mathcal{O}_X is S -pure).

Proof: Let $s \in S$, (\tilde{S}, \tilde{s}) a henselisation of (S, s) , $\tilde{X} = X \times_S \tilde{S}$.
 Suppose that there exist a point t in \tilde{S} and $x \in \text{Ass}(\tilde{X} \otimes k(t))$
 such that

$$\overline{\{x\}} \cap \tilde{X} \otimes k(\tilde{s}) = \emptyset.$$

Since $\tilde{X} \otimes k(t)$ is integral. $\tilde{X} \otimes k(t) \subset \overline{\{x\}}$.

Let $U = \tilde{X} - \overline{\{x\}}$; this is an open set containing $\tilde{X} \otimes k(\tilde{s})$.
 $\tilde{f} = f \times_S \tilde{S} : \tilde{X} \rightarrow \tilde{S}$ being flat and of finite type, is open,
 so that $\tilde{f}(U)$ is open in \tilde{S} , and contains \tilde{s} .

But \tilde{S} is local with closed point \tilde{s} - consequently we must
 have $\tilde{f}(U) = \tilde{S}$, and we have thus reached a contradiction.

PROPOSITION (4.3): Let $f : X \rightarrow S$ be a separated and quasi-
 finite (EGA, II, 6.2.3) morphism of finite
 presentation.

Then X is S -pure if and only if f is
 finite.

Proof: If f is finite, f is universally closed; so X is
 S -pure by (4.1).

Suppose then that f is separated, quasi-finite and of finite
 presentation, and that X is S -pure. It is enough to show
 that for every point s in S , there is an open affine neigh-
 bourhood U of s such that $f|_U$ is a finite morphism.

We may thus assume that S is affine - let $S = \text{Spec}(A)$. By
 one of the versions of Zariskis Main Theorem (EGA, IV, 8.12.6),
 there exists a commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 X & \xrightarrow{j} & \text{Spec}(B) \\
 f \downarrow & & \swarrow \\
 \text{Spec}(A) & &
 \end{array}$$

(**)

where j is an open embedding, and B is a finite A -algebra.
 Let $\mathfrak{p} \in \text{Spec}(A)$, and let $(\tilde{A}_{\mathfrak{p}}, \tilde{\mathfrak{p}})$ be a henselisation of
 (A, \mathfrak{p}) . By base change $A \rightarrow \tilde{A}_{\mathfrak{p}}$, we obtain from (**), if

we put $\tilde{X} = X \otimes_A \tilde{A}_f$ and $\tilde{B} = B \otimes_A \tilde{A}_f$,

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \tilde{X} & \longrightarrow & \text{Spec}(\tilde{B}) \\ \tilde{f} \downarrow & & \swarrow \\ \text{Spec}(\tilde{A}_f) & & \end{array}$$

Now \tilde{B} is finite over \tilde{A}_f which is local, henselian - so \tilde{B} "splits into its local components", i.e. $\tilde{B} = \prod_{i=1}^n \tilde{B}_{\eta_i}$ where $\{\eta_i\}_i$ are the maximal ideals of the semi-local ring \tilde{B} .

The fibres of \tilde{f} are finite, hence the hypothesis that X is S -pure implies the following:

Let $x \in \tilde{X}$, and denote by $\overline{\{x\}}$ its closure in \tilde{X} . Then

$$(\S) \quad \overline{\{x\}} \cap \tilde{X} \otimes k(\tilde{f}) \neq \emptyset.$$

Denote by i the integer such that $x \in \text{Spec}(\tilde{B}_{\eta_i})$. By (\S) the closed point η_i of this local component is contained in $\tilde{X} \cap \text{Spec}(\tilde{B}_{\eta_i})$. But this latter set is open in $\text{Spec}(\tilde{B}_{\eta_i})$, hence $\tilde{X} \cap \text{Spec}(\tilde{B}_{\eta_i}) = \text{Spec}(\tilde{B}_{\eta_i})$.

It follows that \tilde{X} is equal to $\bigsqcup_{j \in J} \text{Spec}(\tilde{B}_{\eta_j})$, where $J \subseteq \{1, \dots, n\}$. so \tilde{X} is finite over \tilde{A}_f .

Since $A_f \rightarrow \tilde{A}_f$ is faithfully flat, we conclude that $X \otimes_A A_f$ is finite over A_f (EGA, IV, 2.7.1). Then there exists a $g \in A - \mathfrak{f}$ such that $X \otimes_A A_g$ is finite over A_g (EGA, IV, 8.10.5). We have thus proved what we wanted to do.

(4.2) implies that the theorem (3.1) can be applied to the following situation:

COROLLARY (4.4): Let A be a noetherian integral domain, K its fraction field, $f : X \rightarrow S = \text{Spec}(A)$ a flat morphism of finite type, with geometrically integral fibres. Suppose that $X \otimes_A K$ is a proper K -scheme. Then $\Gamma(X, \mathcal{O}_X)$ is an A -module of finite type.

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