

# Duality in Noncommutative Algebraic Geometry

Lecture Notes <sup>1</sup>

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This is a continuation of my talk “Dualizing Complexes over Noncommutative Rings”. Here is the plan of the lecture:

1. Noncommutative Projective Schemes: Review
2. Grothendieck-Serre Duality for  $\text{Proj } A$
3. Quasi-Coherent Ringed Schemes
4. Dualizing Complexes on Noncommutative Ringed Schemes
5. Differential Quasi-Coherent Ringed Schemes
6. Perverse Coherent Sheaves
7. The Auslander Condition Revisited

Most of the work is joint with James Zhang (UW, Seattle).

## 1. NONCOMMUTATIVE PROJECTIVE SCHEMES: REVIEW

Let  $\mathbb{K}$  be a field and let  $A$  be a noetherian connected graded  $\mathbb{K}$ -algebra. Recall that “connected” means that  $A = \bigoplus_{i \geq 0} A_i$ , with  $A_0 = \mathbb{K}$  and each  $A_i$  a finitely generated  $\mathbb{K}$ -module. Artin and Zhang [AZ] define the *noncommutative projective spectrum*  $\text{Proj } A$  as follows.

Let  $\text{GrMod } A$  be the category of graded left  $A$ -modules. In it there is the subcategory  $\text{Tors } A$  consisting of  $\mathfrak{m}$ -torsion modules with respect to the augmentation ideal  $\mathfrak{m}$  of  $A$ . Consider the quotient abelian category

$$\text{Tails } A := \frac{\text{GrMod } A}{\text{Tors } A},$$

also denoted by  $\text{QGr } A$ , with projection functor  $\pi$ . The “noncommutative space  $\text{Proj } A$ ” is the space such that “the category of quasi-coherent sheaves on  $\text{Proj } A$  is  $\text{Tails } A$ ”. Thus if we write  $X := \text{Proj } A$  then

$$\text{QCoh } X = \text{Tails } A$$

tautologically. The subcategory  $\text{Coh } X$  of “coherent sheaves” is the image under  $\pi$  of the finitely generated modules.

**Remark 1.1.**  $\text{Proj } A$  is not a genuine space. It is only a metaphor, invented for heuristic purposes.

The category  $\text{QCoh } X$  is equipped with a “global sections functor”

$$\Gamma(X, -) := \text{Hom}_{\text{QCoh } X}(\mathcal{O}_X, -) : \text{QCoh } X \rightarrow \text{Mod } \mathbb{K},$$

where  $\mathcal{O}_X$  is the class of the graded module  $A$ . There is also a Serre twist functor: if  $\mathcal{M} \in \text{QCoh } X$  is the class of a graded module  $M$ , then  $\mathcal{M}(1)$  is the class of the shifted module  $M(1)$ .

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Recall Serre's Theorem on projective schemes: if  $X$  is a projective (commutative) scheme over  $\mathbb{K}$  and  $\mathcal{L}$  is an ample invertible sheaf then the commutative graded algebra

$$A := \bigoplus_{i \geq 0} \Gamma(X, \mathcal{L}^i)$$

is noetherian, and  $X \cong \text{Proj } A$ . The noncommutative definition of [AZ] in effect takes Serre's Theorem and turns it around.

## 2. GROTHENDIECK-SERRE DUALITY FOR $\text{Proj } A$

There is a version of Grothendieck-Serre Duality for noncommutative projective schemes. Here we must assume that the algebra  $A$  admits a balanced dualizing complex  $R_A$  (see first lecture). By [YZ1, VdB] this is equivalent to  $A$  satisfying the  $\chi$  condition on both sides, and the functors  $\Gamma_{\mathfrak{m}}, \Gamma_{\mathfrak{m}^{\text{op}}}$  having finite cohomological dimension. Let  $\mathcal{R}_X$  be the class in  $\text{D}(\text{QCoh } X)$  of  $R_A[-1]$ .

**Theorem 2.1.** ([YZ1]) *There is a functorial isomorphism*

$$\text{RHom}_{\text{QCoh } X}(\mathcal{M}, \mathcal{R}_X) \cong \text{R}\Gamma(X, \mathcal{M})^*$$

for  $\mathcal{M} \in \text{D}^{\text{b}}(\text{Coh } X)$ .

In the theorem  $(-)^*$  denotes  $\mathbb{K}$ -linear dual.

This duality has a few generalizations. Let  $X^{\text{op}} := \text{Proj } A^{\text{op}}$  be the opposite noncommutative projective scheme, with projection functor

$$\pi^{\text{op}} : \text{GrMod } A^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \text{QCoh } X^{\text{op}}.$$

Let

$$\underline{\Gamma} : \text{QCoh } X \rightarrow \text{GrMod } A$$

be the functor

$$\underline{\Gamma} \mathcal{M} := \bigoplus_{i \geq 0} \Gamma(X, \mathcal{M}(i)).$$

The next duality result appeared in the paper of Kapustin, Kuznetsov and Orlov (in a slightly weaker form). They used it to define vector bundles on  $\text{Proj } A$ , in the study of noncommutative instantons.

**Theorem 2.2.** ([KKO]) *The functor*

$$\mathcal{M} \mapsto \pi^{\text{op}} \text{RHom}_A^{\text{gr}}(\underline{\Gamma} \mathcal{M}, R_A[-1])$$

is a duality

$$\text{D}_c^{\text{b}}(\text{QCoh } X) \rightarrow \text{D}_c^{\text{b}}(\text{QCoh } X^{\text{op}}).$$

Van den Bergh and de Naeghel [NV] have recently proved yet another version of Serre Duality, this time in the bivariant formulation of Bondal-Kapranov [BK]. Define a functor

$$\mathcal{R}_X \otimes_{\mathcal{O}_X}^{\text{L}} - : \text{D}^-(\text{QCoh } X) \rightarrow \text{D}^-(\text{QCoh } X)$$

by

$$\mathcal{R}_X \otimes_{\mathcal{O}_X}^{\text{L}} \mathcal{M} := \pi(R[-1] \otimes_A^{\text{L}} \underline{\Gamma} \mathcal{M}).$$

Let  $\text{D}_c^{\text{b}}(\text{QCoh } X)_{\text{fpd}}$  be the category of complexes with finite projective dimension (the compact objects in  $\text{D}_c^{\text{b}}(\text{QCoh } X)$ ).

**Theorem 2.3.** ([NV]) *There is a functorial isomorphism*

$$\text{Hom}_{\text{D}(\text{QCoh } X)}(\mathcal{M}, \mathcal{R}_X \otimes_{\mathcal{O}_X}^{\text{L}} \mathcal{P}) \cong \text{Hom}_{\text{D}(\text{QCoh } X)}(\mathcal{P}, \mathcal{M})^*$$

for  $\mathcal{P} \in D_c^b(\mathrm{QCoh} X)_{\mathrm{fpd}}$  and  $\mathcal{M} \in D_c^b(\mathrm{QCoh} X)$ .

This reduces to Theorem 2.1 when  $\mathcal{P} = \mathcal{O}_X$ .

**Definition 2.4.** The noncommutative projective scheme  $X$  is *smooth* if the category  $\mathrm{Coh} X$  has finite global dimension; i.e. there is a number  $d$  such that

$$\mathrm{Ext}_{\mathrm{Coh} X}^i(\mathcal{M}, \mathcal{N}) = 0$$

for all objects  $\mathcal{M}, \mathcal{N} \in \mathrm{Coh} X$  and all  $i > d$ .

If  $X$  is smooth then every object of  $D_c^b(\mathrm{QCoh} X)$  has finite projective dimension; and the functor  $\mathcal{R}_X \otimes_{\mathcal{O}_X}^L -$  is an auto-duality of  $D_c^b(\mathrm{QCoh} X)$ . Hence:

**Corollary 2.5.** ([NV]) *If  $X$  is smooth then the functor  $\mathcal{R}_X \otimes_{\mathcal{O}_X}^L -$  is a Serre functor of  $D_c^b(\mathrm{QCoh} X)$ .*

### 3. QUASI-COHERENT RINGED SCHEMES

In this section we look at another kind of noncommutative space. Throughout  $\mathbb{K}$  is a base field.

**Definition 3.1.** ([YZ4]) Suppose  $X$  is a  $\mathbb{K}$ -scheme,  $\mathcal{A}$  is a sheaf of  $\mathbb{K}$ -algebras on  $X$ , and there is ring homomorphism  $\mathcal{O}_X \rightarrow \mathcal{A}$  making  $\mathcal{A}$  into a quasi-coherent  $\mathcal{O}_X$ -module on both sides. We call  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  a *quasi-coherent ringed scheme over  $\mathbb{K}$* .

Such ringed schemes are abundant; some prototypical examples are:

- (1)  $X$  is any  $\mathbb{K}$ -scheme and  $\mathcal{A} = \mathcal{O}_X$ .
- (2)  $X = \mathrm{Spec} \mathbb{K}$  and  $\mathcal{A}$  is any  $\mathbb{K}$ -algebra.
- (3)  $X$  is smooth,  $\mathrm{char} \mathbb{K} = 0$  and  $\mathcal{A} := \mathcal{D}_X$ , the sheaf of differential operators.
- (4)  $X$  is any  $\mathbb{K}$ -scheme and  $\mathcal{A}$  is any quasi-coherent  $\mathcal{O}_X$ -algebra.

Given a ringed scheme  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  its opposite ringed scheme is  $(X, \mathcal{A}^{\mathrm{op}})$ , and the product is a quasi-coherent ringed scheme which we denote by  $(X^2, \mathcal{A}^e)$ . The definition of the product is pretty obvious. See Figure 1.

It is not hard to show uniqueness of  $(X^2, \mathcal{A}^e)$ . Surprisingly existence is not automatic! In [YZ4] we proved that the product exists iff certain Ore conditions are satisfied. (There are counterexamples.)

### 4. DUALIZING COMPLEXES ON NONCOMMUTATIVE RINGED SCHEMES

Let  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  be a noetherian quasi-coherent ringed scheme. By noetherian I mean that  $X$  is noetherian, and for any affine open set  $U$  the ring  $A := \Gamma(U, \mathcal{A})$  is noetherian. Assume the product  $(X^2, \mathcal{A}^e)$  exists and is noetherian too.

Let  $\mathcal{R} \in D_c^b(\mathrm{Mod} \mathcal{A}^e)$  be some complex. We may define a functor

$$D : D_c^b(\mathrm{Mod} \mathcal{A}) \rightarrow D(\mathrm{Mod} \mathcal{A}^{\mathrm{op}})$$

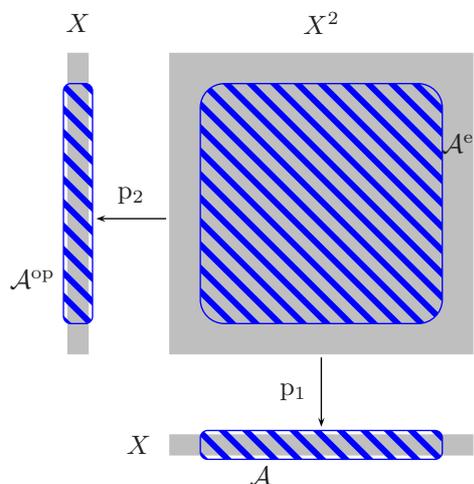
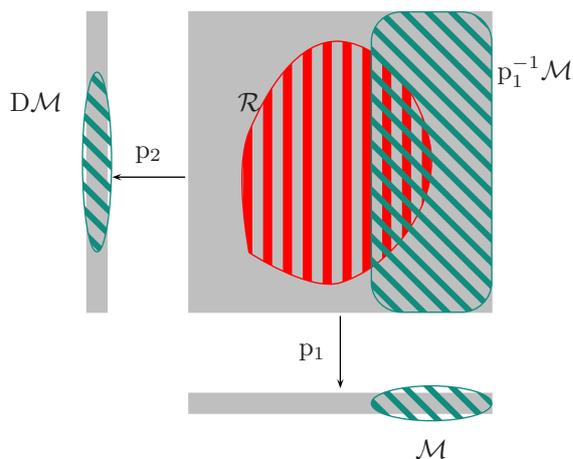
as follows:

$$D\mathcal{M} := \mathrm{Rp}_{2*} \mathrm{RHom}_{p_1^{-1}\mathcal{A}}(p_1^{-1}\mathcal{M}, \mathcal{R}).$$

This is a contravariant Fourier-Mukai transform. See Figure 2.

There is an opposite version of this functor:

$$D^{\mathrm{op}} : D_c^b(\mathrm{Mod} \mathcal{A}^{\mathrm{op}}) \rightarrow D(\mathrm{Mod} \mathcal{A}).$$

FIGURE 1. The product of  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  and  $(X, \mathcal{A}^{op})$ .FIGURE 2. The duality functor  $D$ .

**Definition 4.1.** A complex  $\mathcal{R} \in D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A}^e)$  is called a *dualizing complex* if the adjunction morphisms  $\mathbf{1} \rightarrow D^{op}D$  and  $\mathbf{1} \rightarrow DD^{op}$  are both isomorphisms. (I am suppressing some details.)

The definition I just gave allows for all kinds of exotic dualizing complexes.

**Example 4.2.** Say  $X$  is an elliptic curve and take  $\mathcal{A} := \mathcal{O}_X$ . Then the product is  $(X^2, \mathcal{A}^e) = (X^2, \mathcal{O}_{X^2})$ . It turns out that the Poincaré bundle  $\mathcal{R} \in D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A}^e)$  is a dualizing complex over  $(X, \mathcal{O}_X)$  in the noncommutative sense.

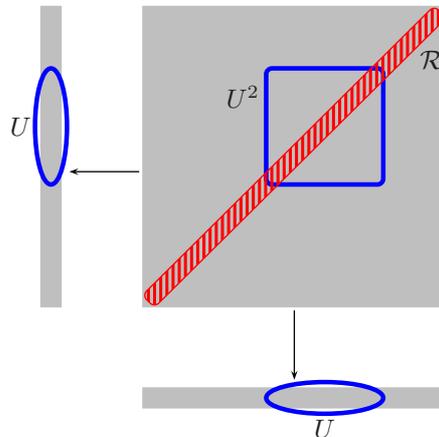


FIGURE 3. A dualizing complex  $\mathcal{R}$  supported on the diagonal.

We are interested in dualizing complexes  $\mathcal{R}$  that behave similarly to Grothendieck's dualizing complex  $\pi^!\mathbb{K}$ . Hence the definition below.

**Definition 4.3.** A *rigid dualizing complex* over  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  is a pair  $(\mathcal{R}, \rho)$ , where:

- (1)  $\mathcal{R} \in D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A}^e)$  is a dualizing complex supported on the diagonal in  $X^2$ .
- (2)  $\rho = \{\rho_U\}$  is a collection of rigidifying isomorphisms. Namely for any affine open set  $U \subset X$ , letting  $A := \Gamma(U, \mathcal{A})$  and

$$R := \text{R}\Gamma(U^2, \mathcal{R}) \in D_c^b(\text{Mod } A^e),$$

the pair  $(R, \rho_U)$  is a rigid dualizing complex over  $A$ .

- (3) The collection  $\rho$  satisfies a compatibility condition for inclusions of affine open sets.

See Figure 3 for an illustration.

**Example 4.4.** Consider a separated finite type  $\mathbb{K}$ -scheme  $X$  with structural morphism  $\pi : X \rightarrow \text{Spec } \mathbb{K}$ . If one looks carefully at the variance properties of the dualizing complex  $\mathcal{R} := \pi^!\mathbb{K}$  that are worked out in [RD], one sees that this is in fact a rigid dualizing over  $(X, \mathcal{O}_X)$ .

## 5. DIFFERENTIAL QUASI-COHERENT RINGED SCHEMES

All quasi-coherent ringed schemes  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  that “occur naturally” are of the following kind.

**Definition 5.1.** A *differential quasi-coherent ringed scheme of finite type over  $\mathbb{K}$*  is a quasi-coherent ringed scheme  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  such that:

- (1)  $X$  is a finite type  $\mathbb{K}$ -scheme.
- (2) There is an exhaustive nonnegative filtration  $G = \{G_i \mathcal{A}\}_{i \in \mathbb{Z}}$  on the sheaf of rings  $\mathcal{A}$  such that  $\text{gr}^G \mathcal{A}$  is a coherent module over its center  $Z(\text{gr}^G \mathcal{A})$ , and  $Z(\text{gr}^G \mathcal{A})$  is a quasi-coherent  $\mathcal{O}_X$ -algebra of finite type.

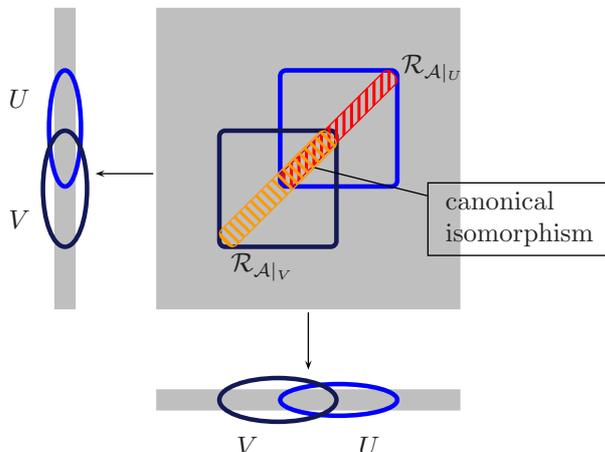


FIGURE 4. Gluing data for a rigid complex

**Example 5.2.** If  $X$  is smooth in characteristic 0 and  $\mathcal{A} = \mathcal{D}_X$  is the ring of differential operators, then we can take  $G$  to be the order filtration on  $\mathcal{A}$ .

**Example 5.3.** If  $\mathcal{A}$  is a coherent  $\mathcal{O}_X$ -algebra (e.g. an Azumaya algebra) then we can take  $G$  to be the trivial filtration.

Let  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  be a separated differential quasi-coherent ringed scheme of finite type over  $\mathbb{K}$ . The fact that  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  is differential implies that the product  $(X^2, \mathcal{A}^e)$  exists. It is not hard to show that the product itself is a differential quasi-coherent ringed scheme of finite type.

For any affine open set  $U \subset X$  the ring  $A := \Gamma(U, \mathcal{A})$  is a differential  $\mathbb{K}$ -algebra of finite type. As explained in the first lecture, Van den Bergh's existence criterion implies that  $A$  has a rigid dualizing complex  $R_A$ . Furthermore, we proved in [YZ3] that  $R_A$  is supported on the diagonal in  $U^2$ .

The fact that  $R_A$  is supported on the diagonal implies that it sheafifies to a complex  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{A}|_U} \in \mathbf{D}(\mathbf{Mod} \mathcal{A}^e|_{U^2})$ , which is a dualizing complex over the affine ringed scheme  $(U, \mathcal{A}|_U)$ .

Because of the uniqueness of rigid dualizing complexes we obtain canonical isomorphisms

$$\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{A}|_U}|_{U^2 \cap V^2} \cong \mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{A}|_V}|_{U^2 \cap V^2}$$

in  $\mathbf{D}(\mathbf{Mod} \mathcal{A}^e|_{U^2 \cap V^2})$  for any two affine open sets  $U$  and  $V$ . See Figure 4

We would like to glue the affine dualizing complexes  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{A}|_U}$  into a global complex  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{A}} \in \mathbf{D}(\mathbf{Mod} \mathcal{A}^e)$ . But here we encounter a genuine problem: *usually objects in derived categories cannot be glued!*

Grothendieck's solution in the commutative case, in [RD], was to use Cousin complexes. However, as explained in [YZ2], this solution seldom applies in the noncommutative context.

The main discovery in [YZ4] is that *perverse coherent sheaves can be used instead of Cousin complexes to glue dualizing complexes.*

## 6. PERVERSE COHERENT SHEAVES

T-structures and perverse sheaves were introduced by Beilinson, Bernstein and Deligne [BBD] around 1980. This was in the context of intersection cohomology on singular spaces. For such a space  $X$  they were interested in t-structures on subcategories of  $D(\text{Mod } \mathbb{K}_X)$ , where  $\mathbb{K}_X$  is a constant sheaf of rings on  $X$ .

Perverse coherent sheaves came into the scene only very recently, independently in the work of Bezrukavnikov (after Deligne) [Bz], Bridgeland [Br], Kashiwara [Ka] and our paper [YZ4].

Let me recall what is a t-structure on a triangulated category  $D$ . It consists of the datum of two full subcategories  $D^{\leq 0}$  and  $D^{\geq 0}$  satisfying the axioms below, where  $D^{\leq n} := D^{\leq 0}[-n]$  and  $D^{\geq n} := D^{\geq 0}[-n]$ .

- (i)  $D^{\leq -1} \subset D^{\leq 0}$  and  $D^{\geq 1} \subset D^{\geq 0}$ .
- (ii)  $\text{Hom}_D(M, N) = 0$  for  $M \in D^{\leq 0}$  and  $N \in D^{\geq 1}$ .
- (iii) For any  $M \in D$  there is a distinguished triangle

$$M' \rightarrow M \rightarrow M'' \rightarrow M'[1]$$

in  $D$  with  $M' \in D^{\leq 0}$  and  $M'' \in D^{\geq 1}$ .

When these conditions are satisfied one defines the *heart of  $D$*  to be the full subcategory  $D^0 := D^{\leq 0} \cap D^{\geq 0}$ . This is an abelian category.

Given a noetherian ringed scheme  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  the derived category  $D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A})$  has the *standard t-structure*, in which

$$\begin{aligned} D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A})^{\leq 0} &:= \{\mathcal{M} \in D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A}) \mid H^i \mathcal{M} = 0 \text{ for all } i > 0\}, \\ D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A})^{\geq 0} &:= \{\mathcal{M} \in D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A}) \mid H^i \mathcal{M} = 0 \text{ for all } i < 0\}. \end{aligned}$$

The heart  $D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A})^0$  is equivalent to the category  $\text{Coh } \mathcal{A}$  of coherent sheaves.

Other t-structures will be referred to as *perverse t-structures*.

Here is an observation. Suppose the ring  $A$  has a rigid dualizing complex  $R_A$ . Then the duality  $D := \text{RHom}_A(-, R_A)$  gives rise to a perverse t-structure

$$\begin{aligned} {}^p D_f^b(\text{Mod } A)^{\leq 0} &:= \{M \mid H^i DM = 0 \text{ for all } i < 0\}, \\ {}^p D_f^b(\text{Mod } A)^{\geq 0} &:= \{M \mid H^i DM = 0 \text{ for all } i > 0\}. \end{aligned}$$

We call it the *rigid perverse t-structure*. The heart is denoted by  ${}^p D_f^b(\text{Mod } A)^0$ .

**Theorem 6.1.** ([YZ4]) *Let  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  be a separated differential noetherian quasi-coherent ringed  $\mathbb{K}$ -scheme of finite type. Define*

$${}^p D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A})^* := \{\mathcal{M} \in D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A}) \mid \text{R}\Gamma(U, \mathcal{M}) \in {}^p D_f^b(\text{Mod } \Gamma(U, \mathcal{A}))^* \text{ for all affine open sets } U\}.$$

Then:

- (1) The pair

$$({}^p D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A})^{\leq 0}, {}^p D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A})^{\geq 0})$$

is a t-structure on  $D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A})$ .

- (2) The assignment  $V \mapsto {}^p D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A}|_V)^0$ , for  $V \subset X$  open, is a stack of abelian categories on  $X$ .

The last piece in the puzzle is the fact that the affine dualizing complexes  $\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{A}|_U}$  are perverse bimodules, namely they lie in  ${}^p D_f^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A}^e|_{U^2})^0$ . Therefore the gluing

data (arising from uniqueness of rigid dualizing complexes) becomes effective. We thus obtain:

**Theorem 6.2.** ([YZ4]) *Let  $(X, \mathcal{A})$  be a separated differential quasi-coherent ringed  $\mathbb{K}$ -scheme of finite type. Then there exists a rigid dualizing complex  $(\mathcal{R}_{\mathcal{A}}, \rho)$  over  $\mathcal{A}$ . It is unique up to a unique isomorphism in  $D_c^b(\text{Mod } \mathcal{A}^e)$ .*

## 7. THE AUSLANDER CONDITION REVISITED

Let  $A$  be a differential algebra of finite type over  $\mathbb{K}$ . In the first lecture I stated that the rigid dualizing complex  $R_A$  of  $A$  satisfies the Auslander condition.

**Definition 7.1.** The canonical dimension  $\text{Cdim } M$  of an  $A$ -module  $M$  is defined by

$$\text{Cdim } M := -\inf \{q \mid \text{Ext}_A^q(M, R_A) \neq 0\} \in \mathbb{Z} \cup \{-\infty\}$$

for a finitely generated  $A$ -module  $M$ , and by

$$\text{Cdim } M := \sup \{\text{Cdim } M' \mid M' \subset M \text{ is finitely generated}\}$$

in general.

The Auslander condition implies that  $\text{Cdim}$  is a “nice” dimension function.

Here is an alternative characterization of the rigid perverse t-structure on  $D_f^b(\text{Mod } A)$ , which resembles the original definition in [BBD]. For a module  $M$  and any integer  $i$  define  $\Gamma_{M_i} M$  to be the biggest submodule of  $M$  with  $\text{Cdim} \leq i$ . This is a functor  $\Gamma_{M_i} : \text{Mod } A \rightarrow \text{Mod } A$ , and we denote by  $H_{M_i}^j$  its  $j$ th right derived functor. Thus  $H_{M_i}^j M$  is the “ $i$ -th cohomology of  $M$  with supports in  $M_i$ ”.

**Theorem 7.2.** ([YZ3]) *Let  $A$  be a differential  $\mathbb{K}$ -algebra of finite type and  $M \in D_f^b(\text{Mod } A)$ .*

- (1)  $M \in {}^p D_f^b(\text{Mod } A)^{\leq 0}$  iff  $\text{Cdim } H^j M < i$  for all integers  $i, j$  such that  $j > -i$ .
- (2)  $M \in {}^p D_f^b(\text{Mod } A)^{\geq 0}$  iff  $H_{M_i}^j M = 0$  for all integers  $i, j$  such that  $j < -i$ .

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