

RINGS WITH RESTRICTED MINIMUM CONDITION

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In what follows, a ring will always mean an *associative ring with unit element*.

Definition. A ring R is said to satisfy the restricted minimum condition (or to be a RM ring, for short), if for each ideal $A \neq (0)$ in R , the ring R/A is right artinian.

In this paper we consider a RM ring, and are furthermore interested in the case where R itself is not right artinian. The concept of a commutative RM ring was introduced by I. S. Cohen [1], who also proved the following results for a commutative ring R : (a) R is RM iff R is noetherian and every proper prime ideal is maximal. (b) R is RM but not artinian iff R is a noetherian integral domain not a field, in which every proper prime ideal is maximal.

Structure of RM rings. In this section we give a necessary and sufficient condition for a ring to be a RM ring. It follows by an argument in [1] that in a ring satisfying the ascending chain condition on two-sided ideals, the zero ideal is a finite product of prime ideals. This is true in particular for RM rings.

LEMMA 1. *Let S be a ring, such that S/M is a simple artinian ring for each maximal ideal M of S . If the zero ideal of S is a finite product of maximal (two-sided) ideals, then either right (left) chain condition implies the other.*

PROOF. Consider the series (*) $S = M_0 \supset M_1 \supset M_1 M_2 \supset \cdots \supset M_1 M_2 \cdots M_{k-1} \supset M_1 M_2 \cdots M_k = (0)$, where M_i , $1 \leq i \leq k$ are maximal ideals. The S -modules $N_i = M_1 \cdots M_{i-1} / M_1 \cdots M_i$ are completely reducible S/M_i modules, and therefore have a composition series in the presence of either chain condition. But $N_i \subset S/M_1 \cdots M_i$ inherits the chain condition that is satisfied by S . Thus the series (*) can be refined to a composition series of the module S .

THEOREM 2. *A ring R is RM if and only if*

- (i) *R is a right restricted noetherian ring.*
- (ii) *For each prime ideal $P \neq (0)$ in R , the ring R/P is a simple artinian ring.*

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PROOF. Suppose R is a RM ring. Then R satisfies (i) by a theorem of Hopkins and Levitzki [2], [6], and (ii) is satisfied since a prime artinian ring is simple. Conversely, let $I \neq (0)$ be an ideal in R , and let $R' = R/I$. If I is not prime then by (i), in R' the zero ideal is a finite product of prime ideals. If P' is any prime ideal in R' , its inverse image P is a prime ideal in R , and $R'/P' \approx R/P$ is simple artinian by (ii). By Lemma 1, it follows from (i) that R' is right artinian.

An ideal A of a ring R will be called *essential* if $A \cap B \neq 0$ for every ideal $B \neq (0)$.

For later use we prove

LEMMA 3. *If a ring R contains an essential ideal A , so that R/A and A/B are right artinian rings for every ideal $B \neq (0)$ of R contained in A , then R is RM.*

PROOF. Let $I \neq (0)$ be any ideal. Then $(I+A)/I \approx A/(I \cap A)$, and $R/(A+I) \approx R/A/(A+I)/A$ are both right artinian. It follows that so is R/I , since $R/(A+I) \approx R/I/(A+I)/I$.

Some properties of RM rings. Let R be a nonprime RM ring. There exists then a finite set of $n > 0$ prime ideals (they are necessarily maximal), so that $(0) = P_1 P_2 \cdots P_n$. We may assume this representation of (0) is not redundant.

THEOREM 4. *A nonprime RM ring R , has only a finite number of prime ideals, $P_1, P_2, \dots, P_n, n \geq 1$ which are also the only maximal ideals of R . Their intersection $A = \bigcap_{i=1}^n P_i$ is nilpotent and is precisely the radical J . It follows that a nonprime RM ring has a nilpotent radical.*

PROOF. Let $P \subset R$ be a prime ideal. Since $(0) = P_1 \cdots P_n \subset P$, it follows that $P_i \subset P$ for some i , and therefore $P = P_i$ by the maximality of P_i . From $A^n = (P_1 \cap \cdots \cap P_n)^n \subset P_1 \cdots P_n = (0)$, we have that A is nilpotent and so $A \subset J$. Since R/P_i is simple and right artinian, $(R/P_i)J = (0)$, so that $J \subset P_i$ for each i and $J \subset A, J = A$.

COROLLARY. *A nil ideal in a nonprime RM ring is nilpotent.*

As a consequence we have

THEOREM 5. *A nonprime ring with zero radical, is RM iff it is right artinian.*

PROOF. Let J be the radical of the RM ring R . Then $J = P_1 \cap \cdots \cap P_n, P_i$ maximal ideals. By the Chinese Remainder Theorem [5, p. 28] we have an epimorphism of R onto the direct sum $\sum_{i=1}^n R/P_i$ of the simple artinian rings R/P_i with kernel $\bigcap_{i=1}^n P_i$. Since $J = (0)$, we have $R \approx \sum_{i=1}^n R/P_i$.

COROLLARY. *A nonprime semiprime ring is RM iff it is right artinian.*

PROOF. Since J is nilpotent, $J = (0)$ in a semiprime ring.

Application to commutative rings. Specializing the results to the commutative case we get a better insight into the structure of a restricted artinian ring R which has zero divisors. Such a ring has only a finite number of prime ideals P_1, P_2, \dots, P_n which are also the only maximal ideals in the ring, and the radical $J(R)$, is equal to their intersection. $R/J(R)$ is then isomorphic to a direct sum of a finite number of fields. In case R has no nilpotent elements, then R itself is such a sum. Conversely, a finite direct sum of fields has trivially the restricted minimum condition. We have

THEOREM 6. *A commutative RM ring R which has nonzero zero divisors, has only a finite number of prime ideals, which are also its only maximal ideals. Moreover, R has no nonzero nilpotent elements if and only if R is isomorphic to a finite direct sum of fields.*

Semiprimary RM rings. A ring R is called semiprimary if its radical J is nilpotent and R/J is semisimple artinian. As noticed above, a nonprime RM ring is semiprimary. We assume in this section that R is semiprimary and discuss the conditions under which it is RM but not right artinian. It turns out that these properties are determined by the structure of J .

LEMMA 7. *Let R be a semiprimary ring with radical J . Then the following conditions are equivalent:*

- (i) R is right artinian.
- (ii) R/J^2 is right artinian.
- (iii) J/J^2 is a finitely generated right R -module.

PROOF. Certainly (i) implies (ii), and (ii) implies (iii) by Hopkins and Levitzki's result [2], [6]. That (iii) implies (i) follows from

LEMMA 8. *Let R be any ring, and I a two-sided ideal in R . If the right R -module I/I^2 is finitely generated, then for each integer $k > 0$, the R -module I^k/I^{k-1} is finitely generated.*

PROOF. Let $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_t, x_i \in I, x_i \notin I^2$ be a set of representatives of the generators $\bar{x}_1, \bar{x}_2, \dots, \bar{x}_t$ of I/I^2 . It is easily shown, since I is an ideal, that the finite set of products $x_i x_j, i, j = 1, \dots, t$ is a set of representatives of generators for I^2/I^3 . Repeating this argument, we prove the lemma by induction.

In case R is semiprimary we have J^k/J^{k+1} completely reducible

right R -module for each k . If furthermore (iii) is assumed, (i) follows since J is nilpotent.

This result was also proved in [7].

THEOREM 9. *Let R be a semiprimary RM ring with radical J . The following are equivalent:*

(i) R is RM but not right artinian.

(ii) $J^2 = (0)$. J is an essential ideal and is indecomposable as a direct sum of two ideals, and is an infinite direct sum of R -isomorphic minimal right ideals. If J contains an ideal B , J/B is a finitely generated R -module.

PROOF. (ii) implies (i) with the use of Lemma 3. We assume (i) and prove (ii). If $J^2 \neq (0)$ then R is RM iff R is right artinian by the lemma, and so $J^2 = (0)$. Certainly $J \neq (0)$, and is completely reducible as a R/J module, therefore also as a R -module. We can split the set of minimal summands of J into m R -isomorphism classes. The sum of minimal right ideals in each class is an ideal contained in J , and $J = A_1 \oplus \cdots \oplus A_m$. Suppose $m > 1$ and assume A_1 is an infinite direct sum of minimal right ideals. Then A_1 will contain an infinite descending chain (C) of right ideals of R . But then R will not be RM, because R/A_m say, will contain an infinite descending chain of right ideals corresponding to the chain (C) . On the other hand if A_1, \dots, A_m are all finite direct sums, then the series $R \supset J = A_1 \oplus \cdots \oplus A_m \supset A_2 \oplus \cdots \oplus A_m \supset \cdots \supset A_m \supset (0)$ can be refined to a composition series of the right module R , and R will be right artinian. If R is to be RM but not right artinian then $m = 1$. If J is decomposable as a direct sum of two ideals, then by the same argument as above we can show that R is RM iff it is right artinian. If J is not minimal and contains an ideal B , then there exists a right ideal D , so that $J = B \oplus D$. D is completely reducible and by the argument above must be a finite direct sum of minimal ideals. Finally, let $C \neq 0$ be an ideal in R with $J \cap C = (0)$. Then $R/C \supset (J+C)/C \approx J$ is not artinian, in contradiction with (i). This proves that J is essential. (Remark: By the same method one can show that under condition (i), any nonzero ideal is essential, and is not artinian as an R -module.)

Prime rings. Applying Theorem 2 we get a condition under which a prime ring will be RM but not right artinian.

THEOREM 10. *Let R be a nonsimple prime ring. Then R will be RM but not right artinian iff R is right restricted noetherian and for each prime ideal $P \neq (0)$, R/P is a simple artinian ring.*

For a prime ring R with nonzero socle, we have

THEOREM 11. *Let R be a prime ring containing a minimal right ideal, the following are equivalent:*

- (i) R is RM but not right artinian.
- (ii) The socle S is an infinite direct sum of minimal right ideals, and R/S is right artinian.

PROOF. A prime ring R with a minimal right ideal is right primitive. By [4, p. 75], its socle S is a simple ring which is contained in every nonzero ideal of R , and is therefore a minimal ideal.

Assume (i). Then R/S is right artinian. But if S should be a finite direct sum of minimal right ideals, this would force R to be right artinian, and we have (ii). Conversely, the first condition of (ii) guarantees that R is not artinian, while the second condition implies that each proper homomorphic image is. For let A be an ideal in R , $A \neq (0)$. Then $S \subset A$ and $R/A \approx (R/S)/(A/S)$ is an homomorphic image of a right artinian ring.

Right-sided RA rings. In this section we consider nonartinian right-sided RM rings, i.e. R is not right artinian, but R/I is a right artinian module for every right ideal $(0) \neq I$ of R (RRM rings).

LEMMA 12. *Let R be a ring with no right zero divisors and satisfying the ascending chain condition on principal left ideals, then R has the RRM property on principal right ideals.*

PROOF. Jacobson [3] proves a similar result on (right and left) principal ideal domains. His method can be used to prove this lemma.

THEOREM 13. *A RRM ring is a right Ore domain.*

PROOF. Let $a \neq 0$ be an element of R . Consider the epimorphism $\phi: R \rightarrow aR$ given by $\phi(x) = ax$ for all $x \in R$. The kernel K of ϕ is exactly the right annihilator of the element a and is a right ideal of R . We have $R/K \approx aR$.

Suppose $K \neq (0)$, then aR is right artinian and therefore by assumption $aR \neq R$. Since $aR \neq (0)$, R/aR is also right artinian, and so is R , which is a contradiction. Therefore $K = (0)$, and R is an integral domain.

Suppose there exist two nonzero proper right ideals I and K such that $I \cap K = (0)$. Then $(I+K)/K \approx I$ is right artinian, and by the above argument R is right artinian, which is a contradiction. R is therefore an Ore domain.

Lemma 12 and Theorem 13 imply

COROLLARY. *A (right and left) principal ideal ring R is RRA if and only if it is a domain.*

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