

## Superficial defective subschemes of $\mathbb{P}^3$

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**Abstract:** We prove that the zero-dimensional superficial schemes  $Z \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  such that  $\deg(Z) \leq 3m$  and  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(m)) = 0$  are only the expected ones (“superficial” means that the Zariski tangent spaces have dimension  $\leq 2$ ).

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### 1. Introduction

Let  $Z \subset \mathbb{P}^r$  be a zero-dimensional scheme. We say that  $Z$  is *superficial* if it has embedding dimension 2, i.e. if for each  $P \in Z_{red}$  the Zariski tangent space of  $Z$  at  $P$  has dimension  $\leq 2$ . Any zero-dimensional subscheme of  $\mathbb{P}^2$  is superficial. If  $r \geq 3$ , then Bertini’s theorem implies that  $Z$  is superficial if and only if it is contained in a complete intersection surface of very large degree. Let  $Z \subset \mathbb{P}^r$  be a zero-dimensional superficial subscheme. For any  $P \in \mathbb{P}^3$  let  $\ell_P : \mathbb{P}^3 \setminus \{P\} \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^2$  denote the linear projection from  $P$ . Fix a zero-dimensional superficial subscheme  $Z \subset \mathbb{P}^3$ . Let  $G_Z$  be the set of all  $P \in \mathbb{P}^3 \setminus Z_{red}$  such that  $\ell_P|_Z$  induces an embedding of  $Z$  into  $\mathbb{P}^2$ . Since  $Z$  is superficial,  $G_Z$  is a non-empty open subset of  $\mathbb{P}^3$ . We use it and [7] in  $\mathbb{P}^2$  to prove the following result.

**Theorem 1.** *Assume characteristic zero. Fix an integer  $m \geq 4$ . Let  $Z \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  be a zero-dimensional superficial scheme such that  $\deg(Z) \leq 3m$ . If  $\deg(Z) = 3m$ , the assume  $m \geq 19$ . We have  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(m)) > 0$  if and only if there is  $W \subseteq Z$  as in one of the following cases:*

- (a)  $\deg(W) \geq m + 2$  and  $W$  is contained in a line;
- (b)  $\deg(W) \geq 2m + 2$  and  $W$  is contained in a plane conic;
- (c)  $W = Z$ ,  $\deg(W) = 3m$  and  $Z$  is the complete intersection of a plane cubic and a degree  $m$  plane curve.

Without the restriction on the characteristic and for any  $m \geq 2$ , Theorem 1 is true if  $Z$  is reduced (see [4]). Theorem 1 is true even for higher  $\deg(Z)$  if  $Z$  is reduced. There are many technical problems when  $Z$  is not reduced. We overcame some of them for curvilinear schemes in [2]. Theorem 1 extends the case  $r = 3$  of [2], Theorem 1, to the case  $\deg(Z) = 3m$ , but we require two additional assumptions: large  $m$  and characteristic zero. The main technical details in this paper are different from the ones in [1] and [2], although the general framework is similar.

We work over an algebraically closed field  $\mathbb{K}$  with characteristic zero.

## 2. The Proof

Let  $F \subset \mathbb{P}^r$  be a degree  $t$  hypersurface. For each zero-dimensional scheme  $Z \subset \mathbb{P}^r$  let  $\text{Res}_F(Z)$  denote the residual scheme of  $Z$  with respect to  $F$ , i.e. the closed subscheme of  $\mathbb{P}^r$  with  $\mathcal{I}_F : \mathcal{I}_Z$  as its ideal sheaf. For every  $y \in \mathbb{Z}$  we have the following exact sequence of coherent sheaves:

$$0 \rightarrow \mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_F(Z)}(y - t) \rightarrow \mathcal{I}_Z(y) \rightarrow \mathcal{I}_{Z \cap F}(y) \rightarrow 0 \tag{1}$$

We have  $\deg(Z) = \deg(Z \cap F) + \deg(\text{Res}_F(Z))$ .

**Lemma 1.** *Fix integers  $m > t > 0$ , a degree  $F \subset \mathbb{P}^r$  hypersurface and a zero-dimensional scheme  $Z \subset \mathbb{P}^r$  such that  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(m)) > 0$ . Assume one of the following conditions:*

- (a)  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_F(Z)}(m - t)) = 0$ ;
- (b)  $\deg(\text{Res}_F(Z)) \leq m - t + 1$ .

Then  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{Z \cap F}(m)) = h^1(F, \mathcal{I}_{Z \cap F}(m)) > 0$ .

*Proof.* Since  $F$  is arithmetically Cohen-Macaulay, for each zero-dimensional scheme  $A \subset F$  we have  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_A(m)) = h^1(F, \mathcal{I}_A(m))$ . First assume

$$h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_F(Z)}(m-t)) = 0.$$

The exact sequence (1) gives  $h^1(F, \mathcal{I}_{Z \cap F}(m)) > 0$ . If  $\deg(\text{Res}_F(Z)) \leq m-t+1$ , then  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_F(Z)}(m-t)) = 0$  (see [3], Lemma 34).  $\square$

**Lemma 2.** *For any superficial  $Z \subset \mathbb{P}^3$ , any integer  $t$  and any  $P \in G_Z$  we have  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(t)) \leq h^1(\mathbb{P}^2, \mathcal{I}_{\ell_P(Z)}(t))$ .*

*Proof.* Since  $P \in G_Z$ , we have  $\deg(\ell_P(Z)) = \deg(Z)$ . We have  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(t)) = h^0(\mathcal{I}_Z(t)) - \binom{m+3}{3} + \deg(Z)$  and  $h^1(\mathbb{P}^2, \mathcal{I}_{\ell_P(Z)}(t)) = h^0(\mathbb{P}^2, \mathcal{I}_{\ell_P(Z)}(t)) - \binom{m+2}{2} + \deg(\ell_P(Z))$ . Identify  $H^0(\mathbb{P}^2, \mathcal{I}_{\ell_P(Z)}(t))$  with the linear subspace of  $H^0(\mathcal{I}_Z(t))$  which parametrizes the cones with vertex containing  $P$ .  $\square$

*Proof of Theorem 1.* The “if” part is easy and well-known (see [1]). Hence we only prove the “only if” part. Assume  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(m)) > 0$ . If  $\deg(Z) \leq 2m+1$ , then use [3], Lemma 34. Hence we may assume  $2m+2 \leq \deg(Z) \leq 3m$ . Taking a smaller subscheme if necessary, we may assume  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_A(m)) = 0$  for all  $A \subsetneq Z$ . Fix any  $P \in G_Z$  and set  $E := \ell_P(Z)$  and  $z := \deg(E)$ . Let  $\tau$  be the maximal integer  $t$  such that  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_E(t)) > 0$ . Lemma 2 gives  $h^1(\mathbb{P}^2, \mathcal{I}_E(m)) > 0$ , i.e.  $\tau \geq m$ . Hence  $\tau \geq 3 - 3 + z/3$ . Hence we may apply the case  $d := z$  and  $s := 3$ , of [7], Corollaire 2. We get that  $E$  is as in one of the following cases:

- (a1) there is  $W' \subseteq E$  with  $\deg(W') \geq m+2$  and  $W'$  contained in a line;
- (a2) there is  $W'' \subseteq E$  with  $\deg(W'') \geq 2m+2$  and  $W''$  is contained in a conic;
- (a3)  $z = 3m$  and  $E$  is the complete intersection of a plane cubic and a degree  $m$  plane curve.

(i) Assume the existence of a line  $D \subset \mathbb{P}^2$  such that  $\deg(D \cap E) \geq m+2$ . Let  $H \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  be the only plane such that  $P \in H$  and  $\ell_P(H \setminus \{P\}) = D$ . Hence  $\deg(\text{Res}_H(Z)) \leq 2m-2$ . First assume  $h^1(H, \mathcal{I}_{Z \cap H}(m)) > 0$ . We may apply [7], Corollaire 2, with respect to the scheme  $Z \cap H$ , the integer  $s = 3$  and  $d := \deg(H \cap Z)$  and see that  $H \cap Z$  is as in (a), (b) or (c) (of course, in case (c) we must have  $\deg(H \cap Z) = 3m$  and hence  $Z \subset H$ ). Now assume  $h^1(H, \mathcal{I}_{Z \cap H}(m)) = 0$ . The exact sequence (1) gives  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_H(Z)}(m-1)) > 0$ . Since  $\deg(\text{Res}_H(Z)) \leq 3m - m - 2 \leq 2(m-1) + 1$ , there is a line  $D' \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  such that  $\deg(D' \cap \text{Res}_H(Z)) \geq m+1$ . We may assume  $\deg(Z \cap D') = m+1$  (otherwise we are in case (a1)). Let  $H'$  be any plane containing  $D'$ . Let  $H + H'$

denote the reducible quadric  $H \cup H'$  if  $H' \neq H$  and the double quadric  $2H$  if  $H = H'$ . Set  $Z'' := Z \cap (H + H')$ . Since  $\deg(Z \cap (H + H')) \geq \deg(Z \cap H) + \deg(D' \cap \text{Res}_H(Z)) \geq 2m + 3$ , we have  $\deg(\text{Res}_{H+H'}(Z)) \leq m - 3 \leq m - 1$  and hence  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_{H+H'}(Z)}(m - 2)) = 0$ . The exact sequence (1) gives  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{Z''}(m)) = 0$ . Hence  $Z'' = Z$ . Taking another general plane  $H'' \subset D'$ , we get  $Z \subset (H + H') \cap (H + H'')$ . This implies that  $Z_{red}$  is contained in  $H$  and that  $Z \cap (\mathbb{P}^3 \setminus D') \subset H$ . Set  $L := D'$ . Fix a plane  $M \supset L$ . We may assume  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{Z \cap M}(m)) = 0$ . Hence (1) gives  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_M(Z)}(m - 1)) > 0$ . As above we get the existence of a line  $R \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  such that  $\deg(R \cap \text{Res}_M(Z)) \geq m + 1$ . Let  $H_1$  be a plane containing  $R$ . Since  $\deg(\text{Res}_{M+R}(Z)) \leq 3m - 2m - 2 \leq m - 1$ , we have  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_{M+R}(Z)}(m - 2)) = 0$ . Lemma 1 gives  $Z \subset M \cup H_1$ .

(i1) In this step we assume  $R \neq L$ . First assume  $R \cap L \neq \emptyset$ . We are in case (b) with respect to the reducible conic  $R \cup L$ . Now assume  $R \cap L = \emptyset$ . There is a smooth quadric surface  $Q$  containing  $R \cup L$ . Since  $\deg(\text{Res}_Q(Z)) \leq 3m - 2m - 2$ , Lemma 1 gives  $Z \subset Q$ . Call (1, 0) the ruling of  $Q$  containing the lines  $R$  and  $L$ . Since  $R \cup L$  is an effective Cartier divisor of  $Q$ , one may define the residual scheme  $\text{Res}_{R \cup L}(Z)$ . Since  $\deg(L \cap Z) = \deg(R \cap Z) = m + 1$ , we have  $h^1(L \cup R, \mathcal{I}_{Z \cap (L \cup R), L \cup R}(m)) = 0$ . Since  $\deg(\text{Res}_{R \cup L}(Z)) \leq 3m - 2m - 2 \leq m - 1$ , we have  $h^1(Q, \mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_{R \cup L}(Z), Q}(m - 2, m)) = 0$ . We have an exact sequence similar to (??). We get  $h^1(Q, \mathcal{I}_{Z, Q}(m)) = 0$ . Hence  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(m)) = 0$ , a contradiction.

(i2) Assume  $R = L$ . Let  $L^{(1)}$  denote the first infinitesimal neighborhood of  $L$  in  $\mathbb{P}^3$ , i.e. the closed subscheme of  $\mathbb{P}^3$  with  $(\mathcal{I}_L)^2$  as its reduction. The scheme  $L^{(1)}$  is a degree 3 locally Cohen-Macaulay scheme of pure dimension 1 with  $L$  as its reduction. In this case we proved that for any two planes  $H_1, H_2 \supset L$   $Z$  is contained in the reducible quadric  $H_1 \cup H_2$ . We get  $Z \subset L^{(1)}$ . Fix a connected component  $A$  of  $Z$  and set  $\{O\} := A_{red}$ . We have  $O \in L$ . Set  $\beta := \deg(L \cap A)$ . For every plane  $M \supset L$  we have  $\text{Res}_M(A) \subseteq A$  and hence  $\deg(\text{Res}_M(A) \cap L) \leq \beta$ . Since  $\text{Res}_M(Z)$  is contained in any plane containing  $L$ , we have  $\text{Res}_M(Z) \subset L$ . Hence  $\deg(\text{Res}_M(A) \cap L) = \deg(\text{Res}_M(A))$  and  $\deg(A) = \beta + \deg(\text{Res}_M(A))$ . Since  $\deg(\text{Res}_M(Z)) = m + 1 = \deg(Z \cap L)$  and  $\deg(\text{Res}_M(A) \cap L) \leq \deg(A \cap L)$  for each connected component  $A$  of  $Z$ , we get  $\deg(Z) = 2m + 2$  and  $\deg(\text{Res}_M(A)) = \beta$ . Since  $\beta > 0$ , we have  $A \cap L \neq A$ . Hence there is a plane  $N \subset L$  such that  $\deg(N \cap A) > \deg(A \cap L)$ . Taking  $N$  instead of  $M$  we get  $\deg(\text{Res}_N(Z)) < m + 1$ . Hence  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_N(Z)}(m - 1)) = 0$ . Hence the exact sequence (1) gives  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{N \cap Z}(m)) > 0$ . Hence  $Z \subset N$ . Hence we are in case (a2) with respect to the double line of  $N$  with  $L$  as its support.

(ii) Assume the existence of a conic  $C \subset \mathbb{P}^2$  such that  $\deg(C \cap E) \geq 2m + 2$ . Let  $T \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  be the quadric cone with vertex containing  $P$  and with  $\ell_P(T \setminus \{P\}) = C$ . Set  $Z' := Z \cap T$ . We have  $\deg(Z') = \deg(E \cap C) \geq 2m + 2$ . Hence  $\deg(\text{Res}_T(Z)) \leq 3m - 2m - 2 \leq m - 1$ . Lemma 1 gives  $Z' = Z$ , i.e.  $Z \subset T$ . First assume that  $C$  is a double line, say  $C = 2L$ . In this case  $T$  is a double plane. Set  $H := T_{red}$ . If  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{Z \cap H}(m)) > 0$ , then  $Z = Z \cap H$  and we may again apply [7], Corollaire 2, with  $s = 3$ . Now assume  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{Z \cap H}(m)) = 0$ . The exact sequence (1) gives  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_H(Z)}(m)) > 0$ . Since  $\deg(\text{Res}_H(Z)) \leq 2m - 1$ , we get the existence of a line  $L \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  such that  $\deg(R \cap \text{Res}_H(Z)) \geq m + 1$ . Obviously  $\ell_P(L) = D$ . We have  $\deg(L \cap Z) \geq m + 1$ . Excluding case (a1) we may assume  $\deg(Z \cap L) = m + 1$ . We are in the case killed in step (i2).

The same proof works if  $C$  is a reduced, but reducible conic (see the case  $R \cap L \neq \emptyset$  of step (i1)).

Now assume that  $C$  is a smooth conic. Hence  $Z$  is contained in an irreducible quadric cone  $U_P$  with vertex  $P \in G_Z$ . Assume for the moment that this is true for a general  $(Q, O) \in G_Z \times G_Z$ . In particular we assume  $O \neq Q$ ,  $O \notin U_Q$  and  $Q \notin U_O$ . Hence  $U_Q \cap U_O$  is a degree 4 curve (not necessarily irreducible) containing no line. Hence either  $U_Q \cap U_O$  is an irreducible complete intersection or  $U_Q \cap U_O$  is the union of two smooth plane conics or it is a double structure on a smooth plane conic. We have  $Z \subset U_Q \cap U_O$ .

First assume that  $U_Q \cap U_O$  is an integral degree 4 curve. Since  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{U_Q \cap U_O}(m)) = 0$ , we have  $h^1(U_Q \cap U_O, \mathcal{I}_{Z, U_Q \cap U_O}(m)) = h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(m)) > 0$ . Since  $p_a(U_Q \cap U_O) = 1$  by the adjunction formula and  $\deg(\mathcal{O}_{U_Q \cup U_O}(m)) - \deg(Z) = 4m - \deg(Z) \geq 2p_a(U_Q \cap U_O) - 1$ , we have  $h^1(U_Q \cap U_O, \mathcal{I}_{Z, U_Q \cap U_O}(m)) = 0$ .

Now assume that  $U_Q \cap U_O$  is the union of two smooth plane conics or it is a double structure on a smooth plane conic. In this case there is a plane  $M$  such that  $\deg(Z \cap M) \geq \deg(Z)/2$ . If  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{Z \cap M}(m)) > 0$ , then  $Z = Z \cap M$  and we conclude by [7], Corollaire 2, with  $s = 3$ . If  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{Z \cap M}(m)) = 0$ , then we first get  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_M(Z)}(m - 1)) > 0$  and then the existence of a line  $D'$  such that  $\deg(D' \cap \text{Res}_M(Z)) \geq m + 1$ . Since  $\ell_P(D')$  is a line and  $C$  is a smooth conic, we have  $\deg(\ell_P(D') \cap C) \leq 2$ . Since  $\ell_P(Z \cap D') \subset C$  and  $m + 1 > 2$ , we get a contradiction. If for a general  $Q \in G_Z$  we are not in case (ii) with  $C$  irreducible, then we conclude by step (i) or by the proof of the Claim in the next step.

(iii) Assume that  $z = 3m$  and that  $E$  is the complete intersection of a cubic plane curve  $J$  and a degree  $m$  plane curve. We get  $\deg(Z) = 3m$ . To prove that we are in case (a3) it is sufficient to find a plane  $H \supset Z$  and then apply [7], Corollaire 2, with  $s = 3$ . Let  $H \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  be any plane such that  $\alpha := \deg(H \cap Z)$

is maximal. If  $\alpha = 3m$ , then we are done. Now assume  $\alpha < 3m$ .

**Claim.** *If  $\alpha \geq m$ , then we are in one of the cases (a1), (a2), (a3) and hence the lemma is true in this case.*

*Proof of the Claim.* If  $h^1(H, \mathcal{I}_{Z \cap H}(m)) > 0$ , then  $Z \subset H$  and hence we may apply [7], Corollaire 2, with  $s = 3$ . Now assume  $h^1(H, \mathcal{I}_{Z \cap H}(m)) = 0$ . By (1) we have  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_H(Z)}(m - 1)) > 0$ . Since  $\deg(\text{Res}_H(Z)) \leq 3m - m < 3(m - 1)$ . Hence either there is a line  $D \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  such that  $\deg(D \cap \text{Res}_H(Z)) \geq m + 1$  or there is a conic  $D'$  such that  $\deg(D' \cap \text{Res}_H(Z)) \geq 2m$ . The latter case gives  $\alpha \geq 2m$  and hence  $z \geq \alpha + 2m > 3m$ , a contradiction. Since  $\deg(D \cap Z) \geq m + 1$  and  $P \in G_Z$ , we have  $P \notin D$ . Hence  $\ell_P(D \cap Z)$  is a degree  $m + 1$  collinear subscheme of  $J$ . Hence  $\ell_P(Z)$  is not a complete intersection of  $J$  and a degree  $m$  plane curve, a contradiction.

By the Claim we may assume  $\alpha < m$ . If  $J' \subset J$  is a line, then  $\deg(\ell_P(Z) \cap J') = m$ , because  $\ell_P(Z)$  is a complete intersection. Taking the plane through  $P$  with  $J'$  as its image we get  $\alpha \geq m$ , a contradiction. Hence  $J$  is an integral curve.

Let  $Y_P \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  be the cubic cone with vertex  $P$  such that  $\ell_P(Y_P \setminus \{P\}) = J$ . Since  $J$  is reduced and irreducible,  $Y_P$  is reduced and irreducible. Since  $P \in G_Z$  and  $\ell_P(Z) \subset E$ , we have  $Z \subset Y \setminus \{P\}$ . Since  $E$  is a complete intersection of  $J$  and a degree  $m$  surface, we get  $\deg(H \cap Z) \leq m$  for each plane  $H \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  and  $\deg(T \cap Z) \leq 2m$  for each quadric cone  $T$ . Hence  $Z$  is in case (a3) for all  $P \in G_Z$ . Fix  $Q \in G_Z$  such that  $P \neq Q$ . We get a cubic cone  $Y_Q \supset Z$ . As above we may assume that  $Y_Q$  is irreducible. Hence the only lines of  $Y_P$  or  $Y_Q$  are the one through its vertex. For a general  $Q \in G_Z$  we may assume  $Q \notin Y_P$ . Hence  $Y_P \cap Y_Q$  is a degree 9 complete intersection and no irreducible component of  $(Y_P \cap Y_Q)_{red}$  is a line. Since  $J_Q$  is irreducible, we get that each irreducible component of  $(Y_P \cap Y_Q)_{red}$  has degree  $\{3, 6, 9\}$ .

(iii1) In this step we assume that  $Y_P \cap Y_Q$  is an integral curve. Since  $Y_Q \cap Y_P$  is a complete intersection, we have  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{Y_Q \cap Y_P}(m)) = 0$ . Hence  $h^1(Y_Q \cap Y_O, \mathcal{I}_{Z, Y_Q \cap Y_P}(m)) = h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(m)) > 0$ . We have  $\omega_{Y_Q \cap Y_P} \cong \mathcal{O}_{Y_Q \cap Y_P}(2)$  (adjunction formula). Since  $\deg(\mathcal{O}_{Y_Q \cap Y_P}(m)) - \deg(\omega_{Y_Q \cap Y_P}) = 9(m - 2) > \deg(Z)$ , we have  $h^1(Y_Q \cap Y_P, \mathcal{I}_{Z, Y_Q \cap Y_P}(m)) = 0$ , a contradiction.

(iii2) By step (iii1) we may assume that  $Y_O \cap Y_Q$  is not integral for a general  $(O, Q) \in G_Z \times G_Z$ . Since  $\deg(Y_O \cap Y_Q) = 9$  and each irreducible component of  $(Y_P \cap Y_Q)_{red}$  has degree  $\{3, 6, 9\}$ , there is an irreducible component  $F$  of  $(Y_P \cap Y_Q)_{red}$  with  $\deg(F) = 3$ .

First assume that  $F$  is degenerate. Hence  $F$  is a plane section both of  $Y_P$  and of  $Y_Q$ . We have  $P \notin F$ ,  $Q \notin F$  and  $Y_P$  and  $Y_Q$  are projectively

equivalent. The scheme  $Y_P \cap Y_Q$  is a multiplicity 3 structure supported by  $F$ . Hence  $\deg(F \cap Z) \geq m$ . The Claim shows that the lemma is true in this case.

From now on we assume that  $F$  is non-degenerate. Hence  $F$  is a rational normal curve. Take  $I \in G_Z$  such that  $Y_O \cap Y_I$  and  $Y_Q \cap Y_I$  are not integral. If  $Y_O \cap Y_Q \cap Y_I$  is a zero-dimensional scheme, then it has degree  $3^3$ . Since  $Z \subseteq Y_O \cap Y_Q \cap Y_I$  we have  $\deg(Z) \leq 3^3$ . Indeed, by the postulation of complete intersection curves we may be more precise and get  $3m = \deg(Z) < 3^3$ . Hence  $m \leq 8$ . Now assume that  $Y_O \cap Y_Q \cap Y_I$  contains a reduced curve  $G$ . First assume  $\deg(G) = 6$  (for a general  $(P, Q, O) \in G_Z^3$ ). We saw that  $G$  is linked by the surfaces  $Y_P$  and  $Y_O$  to a rational normal curve  $F_1$ . A rational normal curve is arithmetically Cohen-Macaulay. Since  $G$  is linked to a rational normal curve,  $F_1$ , by  $Y_O$  and  $Y_Q$ ,  $G$  is arithmetically Cohen-Macaulay and  $p_a(G) = 3$  (see [5], Exercise 21.23, [8]). The Hilbert function of  $G$  is uniquely determined by the one of  $F_1$  and the degrees of  $Y_P$  and  $Y_O$  (see [8]). We get  $h^0(\mathcal{I}_G(3)) = 4$ . We found a non-empty open subset of a 3-dimensional projective space parametrizing cubic cones with as vertex a general point of  $\mathbb{P}^3$ . Since  $\text{char}(\mathbb{K}) = 0$ , Bertini's theorem gives a contradiction. Now assume  $\deg(G) = 3$ . We saw that we may assume that  $G$  is a rational normal curve. Let  $T \subset \mathbb{P}^3$  be a smooth quadric surface containing  $G$ . Let  $G_2$  be the degree 6 curves linked to  $G$  by  $Y_P$  and  $Y_Q$ . Since  $Z \subset Y_P \cap Y_Q \cap Y_O$ , we have  $\deg(Z \cap G_2) \leq 18$ . If  $m \geq 19$ , we get  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{\text{Res}_T(G)}(m-2)) = 0$ . Hence  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_{Z \cap T}(m)) > 0$  by (1). Hence  $Z \subset T$ . Since  $\mathcal{I}_G(2)$  is spanned and  $Z \subset T$  for every  $T \in |\mathcal{I}_G(2)|$ , we get  $Z \subset G$ . Since  $G \cong \mathbb{P}^1$  and  $\deg(\mathcal{I}_{Z,G}(m)) = 0$ , we have  $h^1(G, \mathcal{I}_{Z,G}(m)) = 0$ . Since  $G$  is arithmetically Cohen-Macaulay, we get  $h^1(\mathcal{I}_Z(m)) = 0$ , a contradiction.  $\square$

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