

# Minimal $p$ -divisible groups

Frans Oort

Version 21-V-2004

**Introduction.** A  $p$ -divisible group  $X$  can be seen as a tower of building blocks, each of which is isomorphic to the same finite group scheme  $X[p]$ . Clearly, if  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  are isomorphic then  $X_1[p] \cong X_2[p]$ ; however, conversely  $X_1[p] \cong X_2[p]$  does in general not imply that  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  are isomorphic. Can we give, over an algebraically closed field in characteristic  $p$ , a condition on the  $p$ -kernels which ensures this converse? Here are two known examples of such a condition: consider the case that  $X$  is *ordinary*, or the case that  $X$  is *superspecial* ( $X$  is the  $p$ -divisible group of a product of supersingular elliptic curves); in these cases the  $p$ -kernel uniquely determines  $X$ .

These are special cases of a surprisingly complete and simple answer:

*if  $G$  is “minimal”, then  $X_1[p] \cong G \cong X_2[p]$  implies  $X_1 \cong X_2$ ,*

see (1.2); for a definition of “minimal” see (1.1). This is “necessary and sufficient” in the sense that for any  $G$  that is *not minimal* there exist infinitely many mutually non-isomorphic  $p$ -divisible groups with  $p$ -kernel isomorphic to  $G$ ; see (4.1).

**Remark** (motivation). You might wonder why this is interesting.

**EO** In [7] we have defined a natural *stratification* of the moduli space of polarized abelian varieties in positive characteristic: moduli points are in the same stratum if and only if the corresponding  $p$ -kernels are geometrically isomorphic. Such strata are called EO-strata.

**Fol** In [8] we define in the same moduli spaces a *foliation*: moduli points are in the same leaf if and only if the corresponding  $p$ -divisible groups are geometrically isomorphic; in this way we obtain a foliation of every open Newton polygon stratum.

**Fol**  $\subset$  **EO** The observation  $X \cong Y \Rightarrow X[p] \cong Y[p]$  shows that any leaf in the second sense is contained in precisely one stratum in the first sense; the main result of this paper, “ *$X$  is minimal if and only if  $X[p]$  is minimal*”, shows that *a stratum* (in the first sense) *and a leaf* (in the second sense) *are equal* if we are in the minimal, principally polarized situation.

In this paper we consider  $p$ -divisible groups and finite group schemes over an *algebraically closed* field  $k$  of characteristic  $p$ .

An apology. In (2.5) and in (3.5) we fix notations, used for the proof of (2.2), respectively (3.1); according to the need, the notations in these two different cases are different. We hope this difference in notations in Section 2 versus Section 3 will not cause confusion.

Group schemes considered are supposed to be commutative. We use *covariant* Dieudonné module theory. We write  $W = W_\infty(k)$  for the ring of infinite Witt vectors with coordinates in  $k$ . Finite products in the category of  $W$ -modules are denoted “ $\times$ ” or by “ $\prod$ ”, while finite products in the category of Dieudonné modules are denoted by “ $\oplus$ ”; for finite products of  $p$ -divisible groups we use “ $\times$ ” or “ $\prod$ ”. We write  $F$  and  $V$ , as usual, for “Frobenius” and “Verschiebung” on commutative group schemes; we write  $\mathcal{F} = \mathbb{D}(V)$  and  $\mathcal{V} = \mathbb{D}(F)$ , see [7], 15.3, for the corresponding operations on Dieudonné modules.

**Acknowledgments.** Part of the work for this paper was done while visiting Université de Rennes, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; I thank the Mathematics Departments of these universities for hospitality and stimulating working environment. I thank Bas Edixhoven and Johan de Jong for discussions on ideas necessary for this paper. I thank the referee for helpful, critical remarks.

## 1 Notations and the main result.

### (1.1) Some definitions and notations.

$H_{m,n}$ . We define the  $p$ -divisible group  $H_{m,n}$  over the prime field  $\mathbb{F}_p$  in case  $m$  and  $n$  are coprime non-negative integers, see [2], 5.2. This  $p$ -divisible group  $H_{m,n}$  is of dimension  $m$ , its Serre-dual  $X^t$  is of dimension  $n$ , it is isosimple, and *its endomorphism ring*  $\text{End}(H_{m,n} \otimes \overline{\mathbb{F}_p})$  *is the maximal order in the endomorphism algebra*  $\text{End}^0(H_{m,n} \otimes \overline{\mathbb{F}_p})$  (and these properties characterize this  $p$ -divisible group over  $\overline{\mathbb{F}_p}$ ). We will use the notation  $H_{m,n}$  over any base  $S$  in characteristic  $p$ , i.e. we write  $H_{m,n}$  instead of  $H_{m,n} \times_{\text{Spec}(\mathbb{F}_p)} S$ , if no confusion can occur.

The ring  $\text{End}(H_{m,n} \otimes \mathbb{F}_p) = R'$  is commutative; write  $L$  for the field of fractions of  $R'$ . Consider integers  $x, y$  such that for the coprime positive integers  $m$  and  $n$  we have  $x \cdot m + y \cdot n = 1$ . In  $L$  we define the element  $\pi = \mathcal{F}^y \cdot \mathcal{V}^x \in L$ . Write  $h = m + n$ . Note that  $\pi^h = p$  in  $L$ . Here  $R' \subset L$  is the maximal order, hence  $R'$  integrally closed in  $L$ , and we conclude that  $\pi \in R'$ . This element  $\pi$  will be called the uniformizer in this endomorphism ring. In fact,  $W_\infty(\mathbb{F}_p) = \mathbb{Z}_p$ , and  $R' \cong \mathbb{Z}_p[\pi]$ . In  $L$  we have:

$$m + n =: h, \quad \pi^h = p, \quad \mathcal{F} = \pi^n, \quad \mathcal{V} = \pi^m.$$

For a further description of  $\pi$ , of  $R = \text{End}(H_{m,n} \otimes k)$  and of  $D = \text{End}^0(H_{m,n} \otimes k)$  see [2], 5.4; note that  $\text{End}^0(H_{m,n} \otimes k)$  is non-commutative if  $m > 0$  and  $n > 0$ . Note that  $R$  is a “discrete valuation ring” (terminology sometimes also used for non-commutative rings).

**Newton polygons.** Let  $\beta$  be a Newton polygon. By definition, in the notation used here, this is a lower convex polygon in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  starting at  $(0, 0)$ , ending at  $(h, c)$  and having break points with integral coordinates; it is given by  $h$  slopes in non-decreasing order; every slope  $\lambda$  is a rational number,  $0 \leq \lambda \leq 1$ .

To each ordered pair of nonnegative integers  $(m, n)$  we assign a set of  $m + n = h$  slopes equal to  $n/(m + n)$ ; this Newton polygon ends at  $(h, c = n)$ .

In this way a Newton polygon corresponds with a set of ordered pairs; such a set we denote symbolically by  $\sum_i (m_i, n_i)$ ; conversely such a set determines a Newton polygon. Usually we consider only coprime pairs  $(m_i, n_i)$ ; we write  $H(\beta) := \times_i H_{m_i, n_i}$  in case  $\beta = \sum_i (m_i, n_i)$ . A  $p$ -divisible group  $X$  over a field of positive characteristic defines a Newton polygon where  $h$  is the height of  $X$  and  $c$  is the dimension of its Serre-dual  $X^t$ . By the Dieudonné-Manin classification, see [5], Th. 2.1 on page 32, we know: *two  $p$ -divisible groups over an algebraically closed field of positive characteristic are isogenous if and only if their Newton polygons are equal.*

**Definition.** A  $p$ -divisible group  $X$  is called minimal if there exists a Newton polygon  $\beta$  and an isomorphism  $X_k \cong H(\beta)_k$ , where  $k$  is an algebraically field.

Note that in every isogeny class of  $p$ -divisible groups over an algebraically closed field there is precisely one minimal  $p$ -divisible group.

**Truncated  $p$ -divisible groups.** A finite group scheme  $G$  (finite and flat over some base, but in this paper we will soon work over a field) is called a  $\text{BT}_1$ , see [1], page 152, if  $G[F] := \text{Ker}F_G = \text{Im}V_G =: V(G)$  and  $G[V] = F(G)$  (in particular this implies that  $G$  is annihilated by  $p$ ). Such group schemes over a perfect field appear as the  $p$ -kernel of a  $p$ -divisible group, see [1], Prop. 1.7 on page 155. The abbreviation “ $\text{BT}_1$ ” stand for “1-truncated Barsotti-Tate group”; the terms “ $p$ -divisible group” and “Barsotti-Tate group” indicate the same concept.

The Dieudonné module of a  $\text{BT}_1$  over a perfect field  $K$  is called a  $\text{DM}_1$ ; for  $G = X[p]$  we have  $\mathbb{D}(G) = \mathbb{D}(X)/p\mathbb{D}(X)$ . In other terms: such a Dieudonné module  $M_1 = \mathbb{D}(X[p])$  is a finite dimensional vector space over  $K$ , on which  $\mathcal{F}$  and  $\mathcal{V}$  operate (with the usual relations), with the property that  $M_1[\mathcal{V}] = \mathcal{F}(M_1)$  and  $M_1[\mathcal{F}] = \mathcal{V}(M_1)$ .

**Definition.** Let  $G$  be a  $\text{BT}_1$  group scheme; we say that  $G$  is minimal if there exists a Newton polygon  $\beta$  such that  $G_k \cong H(\beta)[p]_k$ . A  $\text{DM}_1$  is called minimal if it is the Dieudonné module of a minimal  $\text{BT}_1$ .

**(1.2) Theorem.** Let  $X$  be a  $p$ -divisible group over an algebraically closed field  $k$  of characteristic  $p$ . Let  $\beta$  be a Newton polygon. Then

$$X[p] \cong H(\beta)[p] \implies X \cong H(\beta).$$

In particular: if  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  are  $p$ -divisible groups over  $k$ , with  $X_1[p] \cong G \cong X_2[p]$ , where  $G$  is minimal, then  $X_1 \cong X_2$ .

**Remark.** We have no a priori condition on the Newton polygon of  $X$ , nor do we a priori assume that  $X_1$  and  $X_2$  have the same Newton polygon.

**Remark.** In general an isomorphism  $\varphi_1 : X[p] \rightarrow H(\beta)[p]$  does not lift to an isomorphism  $\varphi : X \rightarrow H(\beta)$ .

**(1.3)** Here is another way of explaining the result of this paper. Consider the map

$$[p] : \{X \mid \text{a } p\text{-divisible group}\} / \cong_k \longrightarrow \{G \mid \text{a } \text{BT}_1\} / \cong_k, \quad X \mapsto X[p].$$

This map is surjective, e.g. see [1], 1.7; also see [7], 9.10.

- By results of this paper we know: For every Newton polygon  $\beta$  there is an isomorphism class  $X := H(\beta)$  such that the fiber of the map  $[p]$  containing  $X$  consists of one element.
- For every  $X$  not isomorphic to some  $H(\beta)$  the fiber of  $[p]$  containing  $X$  is infinite; see (4.1)

**Convention.** The slope  $\lambda = 0$ , given by the pair  $(1, 0)$ , defines the  $p$ -divisible group  $G_{1,0} = \mathbb{G}_m[p^\infty]$ , and its  $p$ -kernel is  $\mu_p$ . The slope  $\lambda = 1$ , given by the pair  $(0, 1)$ , defines the  $p$ -divisible group  $G_{0,1} = \underline{\mathbb{Q}}_p/\underline{\mathbb{Z}}_p$  and its  $p$ -kernel is  $\underline{\mathbb{Z}}/p\underline{\mathbb{Z}}$ . These  $p$ -divisible groups and their  $p$ -kernels split off naturally over a perfect field, see [6], 2.14. The theorem is obvious for these minimal  $\text{BT}_1$  group schemes over an algebraically closed field. Hence it suffices to prove the theorem in case all group schemes considered are of local-local type, i.e. all slopes considered are strictly between 0 and 1; from now on we make this assumption.

(1.4) We give already one explanation about notation and method of proof. Let  $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}_{>0}$  be coprime. Start with  $H_{m,n}$  over  $\mathbb{F}_p$ . Let  $Q' = \mathbb{D}(H_{m,n} \otimes \mathbb{F}_p)$ . In the terminology of [2], 5.6 and Section 6, a semi-module of  $H_{m,n}$  equals  $[0, \infty) = \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$ . Choose a non-zero element in  $Q'/\pi Q'$ , this is a one-dimensional vector space over  $\mathbb{F}_p$ , and lift this element to  $A_0 \in Q'$ . Write  $A_i = \pi^i A_0$  for every  $i \in \mathbb{Z}_{>0}$ . Note that

$$\pi A_i = A_{i+1}, \quad \mathcal{F}A_i = A_{i+n}, \quad \mathcal{V}A_i = A_{i+m}.$$

Fix an algebraically closed field  $k$ ; we write  $Q = \mathbb{D}(H_{m,n} \otimes k)$ . Clearly  $A_i \in Q' \subset Q$ , and the same relations as given above hold. Note that  $\{A_i \mid i \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}\}$  generate  $Q$  as a  $W$ -module. *The fact that a semi-module of the minimal  $p$ -divisible group  $H_{m,n}$  does not contain “gaps” is the essential (but sometimes hidden) argument in the proofs below.*

The set  $\{A_0, \dots, A_{m+n-1}\}$  is a  $W$ -basis for  $Q$ . If  $m \geq n$  we see that  $\{A_0, \dots, A_{n-1}\}$  is a set of generators for  $Q$  as a Dieudonné module; the structure of this Dieudonné module can be described as follows; for this set of generators we consider another numbering  $\{C_1, \dots, C_n\} = \{A_0, \dots, A_{n-1}\}$  and we define positive integers  $\gamma_i$  by:  $C_1 = A_0$  and  $\mathcal{F}^{\gamma_1} C_1 = \mathcal{V}C_2, \dots, \mathcal{F}^{\gamma_n} C_n = \mathcal{V}C_1$  (note that we assume  $m \geq n$ ), which gives a “cyclic” set of generators for  $Q/pQ$  in the sense of [3]. These notations will be repeated and explained more in detail in (2.5) and (3.5).

## 2 A slope filtration

(2.1) We consider a Newton polygon  $\beta$  given by  $r_1(m_1, n_1), \dots, r_t(m_t, n_t)$ ; here  $r_1, \dots, r_t \in \mathbb{Z}_{>0}$ , and every  $(m_j, n_j)$  is an ordered pair of coprime positive integers; we write  $h_j = m_j + n_j$  and we suppose the ordering is chosen in such a way that  $\lambda_1 := n_1/h_1 < \dots < \lambda_t := n_t/h_t$ . Write

$$H := H(\beta) = \prod_{1 \leq j \leq t} (H_{m_j, n_j})^{r_j}; \quad G := H(\beta)[p].$$

The following proposition uses this notation; suppose that  $t > 0$ .

(2.2) **Proposition.** *Suppose  $X$  is a  $p$ -divisible group over an algebraically closed field  $k$ . Suppose that  $X[p] \cong H(\beta)[p]$ . Suppose that  $\lambda_1 = n_1/h_1 \leq 1/2$ . Then there exists a  $p$ -divisible subgroup  $X_1 \subset X$  and isomorphisms*

$$X_1 \cong (H_{m_1, n_1})^{r_1} \quad \text{and} \quad (X/X_1)[p] \cong \prod_{j>1} (H_{m_j, n_j}[p])^{r_j}.$$

(2.3) **Remark.** The condition that  $X[p]$  is *minimal* is essential; e.g. it is easy to give an example of a  $p$ -divisible group  $X$  which is isosimple, such that  $X[p]$  is decomposable; see [9].

(2.4) **Corollary.** *For  $X$  with  $X[p] \cong H(\beta)[p]$ , with  $\beta$  as in (2.1), there exists a filtration by  $p$ -divisible subgroups*

$$X_0 := 0 \subset X_1 \subset \dots \subset X_t = X \quad \text{such that} \quad X_j/X_{j-1} \cong (H_{m_j, n_j})^{r_j}, \quad \text{for } 1 \leq j \leq t.$$

**Proof of the corollary.** Assume by induction that the result has been proved for all  $p$ -divisible groups where  $Y[p] = H(\beta')[p]$  is minimal such that  $\beta'$  has at most  $t - 1$  different slopes; induction starting at  $t - 1 = 0$ , i.e.  $Y = 0$ . If on the one hand the smallest slope of

$X$  is at most  $1/2$ , the proposition gives  $0 \subset X_1 \subset X$ , and using the induction hypothesis on  $Y = X/X_1$  we derive the desired filtration. If on the other hand all slopes of  $X$  are bigger than  $1/2$ , we apply the proposition to the Serre-dual of  $X$ , using the fact that the Serre-dual of  $H_{m,n}$  is  $H_{n,m}$ ; dualizing back we obtain  $0 \subset X_{t-1} \subset X$ , and using the induction hypothesis on  $Y = X_{t-1}$  we derive the desired filtration. Hence we see that the proposition gives the induction step; this proves the corollary.  $\square(2.2) \Rightarrow (2.4)$

**(2.5)** We use notation as in (2.1) and (2.2), and we fix further notation which will be used in the proof of (2.2).

Let  $M = \mathbb{D}(X)$ . We write  $Q_j = \mathbb{D}(H_{m_j, n_j})$ . Hence

$$M/pM \cong \bigoplus_{1 \leq j \leq t} (Q_j/pQ_j)^{r_j}.$$

Using this isomorphism we construct a map

$$v : M \longrightarrow \mathbb{Q}_{\geq 0} \cup \{\infty\}.$$

We use notation as in (1.1) and in (1.4). Let  $\pi_j$  be the uniformizer of  $\text{End}(Q_j)$ . We choose  $A_{i,s}^{(j)} \in Q_j$  with  $i \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$  and  $1 \leq s \leq r_j$  (which generate  $Q_j$ ) such that  $\pi_j \cdot A_{i,s}^{(j)} = A_{i+1,s}^{(j)}$ ,  $\mathcal{F} \cdot A_{i,s}^{(j)} = A_{i+n_j,s}^{(j)}$  and  $\mathcal{V} \cdot A_{i,s}^{(j)} = A_{i+m_j,s}^{(j)}$ . We have  $Q_j/pQ_j = \times_{0 \leq i < h_j} k \cdot (A_{i,s}^{(j)} \bmod pQ_j)$ . We write

$$A_i^{(j)} = (A_{i,s}^{(j)} \mid 1 \leq s \leq r_j) \in (Q_j)^{r_j}$$

for the vector with coordinate  $A_{i,s}^{(j)}$  in the summand on the  $s$ -th place.

For  $B \in M$  we uniquely write

$$B \bmod pM = a = \sum_{j, 0 \leq i < h_j, 1 \leq s \leq r_j} b_{i,s}^{(j)} \cdot (A_{i,s}^{(j)} \bmod pQ_j), \quad b_{i,s}^{(j)} \in k;$$

if moreover  $B \notin pM$  we define

$$v(B) = \min_{j, i, s, b_{i,s}^{(j)} \neq 0} \frac{i}{h_j}.$$

If  $B' \in p^\beta M$  and  $B' \notin p^{\beta+1} M$  we define  $v(B') = \beta + v(p^{-\beta} \cdot B')$ . We write  $v(0) = \infty$ . This ends the construction of  $v : M \longrightarrow \mathbb{Q}_{\geq 0} \cup \{\infty\}$ .

For any  $\rho \in \mathbb{Q}$  we define

$$M_\rho = \{B \mid v(B) \geq \rho\};$$

note that  $pM_\rho \subset M_{\rho+1}$ . Let  $T$  be the least common multiple of  $h_1, \dots, h_t$ . Note that, in fact,  $v : M - \{0\} \rightarrow \frac{1}{T}\mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$ . Note that, by construction,  $v(B) \geq d \in \mathbb{Z}$  if and only if  $p^d$  divides  $B$  in  $M$ . Hence  $\bigcap_{\rho \rightarrow \infty} M_\rho = \{0\}$ .

The basic assumption  $X[p] \cong H(\beta)[p]$  of (1.2) is:

$$M/pM = \bigoplus_{1 \leq j \leq t, 1 \leq s \leq r_j} \prod_{0 \leq i < h_j} k \cdot ((A_{i,s}^{(j)} \bmod pQ_j))$$

(we write this isomorphism of Dieudonné modules as an equality). For  $0 \leq i < h_j$  and  $1 \leq s \leq r_j$  we choose  $B_{i,s}^{(j)} \in M$  such that:

$$B_{i,s}^{(j)} \bmod pM = A_{i,s}^{(j)} \bmod pQ_j^{r_j}.$$

Define  $B_{i+\beta \cdot h_j, s}^{(j)} = p^\beta \cdot B_{i,s}^{(j)}$ . By construction we have:  $v(B_{i,s}^{(j)}) = i/h_j$  for all  $i \geq 0$ , all  $j$  and all  $s$ . Note that  $M_\rho$  is generated over  $W = W_\infty(k)$  by all elements  $B_{i,s}^{(j)}$  with  $v(B_{i,s}^{(j)}) \geq \rho$ . As a short-hand we will write

$$B_i^{(j)} \text{ for the vector } (B_{i,s}^{(j)} \mid 1 \leq s \leq r_j) \in M^{r_j}.$$

We write  $P \subset M$  for the sub- $W$ -module generated by all  $B_{i,s}^{(j)}$  with  $j \geq 2$  and  $i < h_j$ ; we write  $N \subset M$  for the sub- $W$ -module generated by all  $B_{i,s}^{(1)}$  with  $i < h_1$ . Note that  $M = N \times P$ , a direct sum of  $W$ -modules. Note that  $M_\rho = (N \cap M_\rho) \times (P \cap M_\rho)$ .

*In the proof the  $W$ -submodule  $P \subset M$  will be fixed; its  $W$ -complement  $N \subset M$  will change eventually if it is not already a Dieudonné submodule.*

We write  $m_1 = m$ ,  $n_1 = n$ ,  $h = h_1 = m+n$ , and  $r = r_1$ . Note that we assumed  $0 < \lambda_1 \leq 1/2$ , hence  $m \geq n > 0$ . For  $i \geq 0$  we define integers  $\delta_i$  by:

$$i \cdot h \leq \delta_i \cdot n < (i+1) \cdot n = ih + n$$

and non-negative integers  $\gamma_i$  such that

$$\delta_0 = 0, \quad \delta_1 = \gamma_1 + 1, \dots, \delta_i = \gamma_1 + 1 + \gamma_2 + 1 + \dots + \gamma_i + 1, \dots;$$

note that  $\delta_n = h = m+n$ ; hence  $\gamma_1 + \dots + \gamma_n = m$ . For  $1 \leq i \leq n$  we write

$$f(i) = \delta_{i-1} \cdot n - (i-1) \cdot h;$$

this means that  $0 \leq f(i) < n$  is the remainder of dividing  $\delta_{i-1}n$  by  $h$ ; note that  $f(1) = 0$ . As  $\gcd(n, h) = 1$  we see that

$$f : \{1, \dots, n\} \rightarrow \{0, \dots, n-1\}$$

is a bijective map. The inverse map  $f'$  is given by:

$$f' : \{0, \dots, n-1\} \rightarrow \{1, \dots, n\}, \quad f'(x) \equiv 1 - \frac{x}{h} \pmod{n}, \quad 1 \leq f'(x) \leq n.$$

In  $(Q_1)^r$  we have the vectors  $A_i^{(1)}$ . We choose  $C'_1 := A_0^{(1)}$  and we choose  $\{C'_1, \dots, C'_n\} = \{A_0^{(1)}, \dots, A_{n-1}^{(1)}\}$  by

$$C'_i := A_{f(i)}^{(1)}, \quad C'_{f'(x)} = A_x^{(1)};$$

this means that:

$$\mathcal{F}^{\gamma_i} C'_i = \mathcal{V} C'_{i+1}, \quad 1 \leq i < n, \quad \mathcal{F}^{\gamma_n} C'_n = \mathcal{V} C'_1, \quad \text{hence} \quad \mathcal{F}^{\delta_i} C'_1 = p^i \cdot C'_{i+1}, \quad 1 \leq i < n;$$

note that  $\mathcal{F}^h C'_1 = p^n \cdot C'_1$ . With these choices we see that

$$\{\mathcal{F}^j C'_i \mid 1 \leq i \leq n, 0 \leq j \leq \gamma_i\} = \{A_\ell^{(1)} \mid 0 \leq \ell < h\}.$$

For later reference we state:

(2.6) Suppose  $Q$  is a nonzero Dieudonné module with an element  $C \in Q$ , such that there exist coprime integers  $n$  and  $n + m = h$  as above such that  $\mathcal{F}^h \cdot C = p^n \cdot C$  and such that  $Q$  as a  $W$ -module is generated by  $\{p^{-\lfloor jn/h \rfloor} \mathcal{F}^j C \mid 0 \leq j < h\}$ , then  $Q \cong \mathbb{D}(H_{m,n})$ . This is proved by explicitly writing out the required isomorphism. Note that  $\mathcal{F}^n$  is injective on  $Q$ , hence  $\mathcal{F}^h \cdot C = p^n \cdot C$  implies  $\mathcal{F}^m \cdot C = \mathcal{V}^n \cdot C$ .

(2.7) Accordingly we choose  $C_{i,s} := B_{f(i),s}^{(1)} \in M$  with  $1 \leq i \leq n$ . Note that

$$\{\mathcal{F}^j C_{i,s} \mid 1 \leq i \leq n, 0 \leq j \leq \gamma_i, 1 \leq s \leq r\} \text{ is a } W\text{-basis for } N,$$

$$\mathcal{F}^{\gamma_i} C_{i,s} - \mathcal{V} C_{i+1,s} \in pM, \quad 1 \leq i < n, \quad \mathcal{F}^{\gamma_n} C_{n,s} - \mathcal{V} C_{1,s} \in pM.$$

We write  $C_i = (C_{i,s} \mid 1 \leq s \leq r)$ . As a reminder, we sum up some of the notation constructed:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} N \subset M & & \bigoplus_j (Q_j)^{r_j} \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ M/pM & = & \bigoplus_j (Q_j/pQ_j)^{r_j}, \\ \\ B_{i,s}^{(j)} \in M & & A_{i,s}^{(j)} \in Q_j \subset (Q_j)^{r_j} \\ C_{i,s} \in N & & C'_{i,s} \in Q_1 \subset (Q_1)^{r_1}. \end{array}$$

(2.8) **Lemma.** Use the notation fixed up to now.

(1) For every  $\rho \in \mathbb{Q}_{\geq 0}$  the map  $p : M_\rho \rightarrow M_{\rho+1}$ , multiplication by  $p$ , is surjective.

(2) For every  $\rho \in \mathbb{Q}_{\geq 0}$  we have  $\mathcal{F}M_\rho \subset M_{\rho+(n/h)}$ .

(3) For every  $i$  and  $s$  we have  $\mathcal{F}B_{i,s}^{(1)} \in M_{(i+n)/h}$ ; for every  $i$  and  $s$  and every  $j > 1$  we have  $\mathcal{F}B_{i,s}^{(j)} \in M_{(i/h_j)+(n/h)+(1/T)}$ .

(4) For every  $1 \leq i \leq n$  we have  $\mathcal{F}^{\delta_i} C_1 - p^i B_{f(i+1)}^{(1)} \in (M_{i+(1/T)})^r$ ; moreover  $\mathcal{F}^{\delta_n} C_1 - p^n C_1 \in (M_{n+(1/T)})^r$ .

(5) If  $u$  is an integer with  $u > Tn$ , and  $\xi_N \in (N \cap M_{u/T})^r$ , there exists

$$\eta_N \in N \cap (M_{(u/T)-n})^r \quad \text{such that} \quad (\mathcal{F}^h - p^n)\eta_N \equiv \xi_N \pmod{(M_{(u+1)/T})^r}.$$

**Proof.** We know that  $M_{\rho+1}$  is generated by the elements  $B_{i,s}^{(j)}$  with  $i/h_j \geq \rho + 1$ ; because  $\rho \geq 0$  such elements satisfy  $i \geq h_j$ . Note that  $p \cdot B_{i-h_j,s}^{(j)} = B_{i,s}^{(j)}$ . This proves the first property.  $\square(1)$

At first we show  $\mathcal{F}M \subset M_{n/h}$ . Note that for all  $1 \leq j \leq t$  and all  $\beta \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$

$$\beta h_j \leq i < \beta h_j + m_j \quad \Rightarrow \quad \mathcal{F}B_i^{(j)} = B_{i+n_j}^{(j)}, \quad (*)$$

and

$$\beta h_j + m_j \leq i < (\beta + 1)h_j \quad \Rightarrow \quad B_i^{(j)} = \mathcal{V}B_{i-m_j}^{(j)} + p^{(\beta+1)}\xi, \quad \xi \in M^{r_j}. \quad (**)$$

from these properties, using  $n/h \leq n_j/h_j$  we conclude:  $\mathcal{F}M \subset M_{n/h}$ .

Further we see: by (\*) we have

$$v(\mathcal{F}B_{i,s}^{(j)}) = v(B_{i+n_j,s}^{(j)}) = (i + n_j)/h_j,$$

and

$$\frac{i+n_j}{h_j} = \frac{i+n}{h} \quad \text{if } j=1; \quad \frac{i+n_j}{h_j} > \frac{i}{h_j} + \frac{n}{h} \quad \text{if } j>1.$$

By (\*\*) it suffices to consider only  $m_j \leq i < h_j$ , and hence  $\mathcal{F}B_{i,s}^{(j)} = pB_{i-m_j,s}^{(j)} + p\mathcal{F}\xi$ ; so we have

$$v(\mathcal{F}B_{i,s}^{(j)}) \geq \min\left(v(pB_{i-m_j,s}^{(j)}), v(p\mathcal{F}\xi_s)\right);$$

for  $j=1$  we have  $v(pB_{i-m_1,s}^{(1)}) = (i+n)/h \geq 1$  and  $v(p\mathcal{F}\xi) \geq 1 + (n/h) > (i/h) + (n/h)$ ; for  $j>1$  we have  $v(pB_{i-m_j,s}^{(j)}) > (i/h_j) + (n/h)$  and  $(i/h_j) + (n/h) < 1 + (n/h) \leq v(p\mathcal{F}\xi_s)$ ; hence  $v(\mathcal{F}B_{i,s}^{(j)}) > (i/h_j) + (n/h)$  if  $j>1$ . This ends the proof of (3). Using (3) we see that (2) follows.  $\square(2)+(3)$

From  $\mathcal{F}^{\gamma_i}C_i = \mathcal{V}C_{i+1} + p\xi_i$  for  $i < n$  and  $\mathcal{F}^{\gamma_n}C_n = \mathcal{V}C_1 + p\xi_n$ , here  $\xi_i \in M^r$  for  $i \leq n$ , we conclude:

$$\mathcal{F}^{\delta_i}C_1 = p^i C_{i+1} + \sum_{1 \leq \ell \leq i} p^\ell \mathcal{F}^{\delta_i - \delta_\ell} \mathcal{F}\xi_\ell, \quad i < n,$$

and the analogous fomula for  $i=n$  (write  $C_{n+1} = C_1$ ). Note that

$$ih \leq \delta_i n \quad \text{and} \quad \delta_\ell n < \ell m + (\ell+1)n = \ell h + n;$$

this shows that

$$\ell h + (\delta_i - \delta_\ell)n + n > ih;$$

using (2) we conclude (4).  $\square(4)$

Note that  $h = h_1$  divides  $T$ . If  $\ell$  is an integer such that  $(\ell-1)/h < u/T < \ell/h$  then  $u < u+1 \leq \ell T/h$ ; in this case we see that  $N \cap M_{u/T} = N \cap M_{(u+1)/T}$ . In this case we choose  $\eta_N = 0$ .

Suppose that  $\ell$  is an integer with  $u/T = \ell/h$ . Then  $N \cap M_{u/T} = N_{\ell/h} \supset N_{(\ell+1)/h} = N \cap M_{(u+1)/T}$ . We consider the image of  $N \cap M_{(\ell/h)-n}$  under  $\mathcal{F}^h - p^n$ . We see, using previous results, that this image is in  $N_{\ell/h} + M_{(u+1)/T}$  (here “+” stands for the span as  $W$ -modules). We obtain a factorization and an isomorphism

$$\mathcal{F}^h - p^n : N \cap M_{(\ell/h)-n} \longrightarrow (N_{\ell/h} + M_{(u+1)/T}) / M_{(u+1)/T} \cong N_{\ell/h} / N_{(\ell+1)/h}.$$

We claim that this map is surjective. The factor space  $N_{\ell/h} / N_{(\ell+1)/h}$  is a vector space over  $k$  spanned by the residue classes of the elements  $B_{\ell,s}^{(1)}$ . For the residue class of  $y_s B_{\ell,s}^{(1)}$  we solve the equation  $x_s^{p^n} - x_s = y_s$  in  $k$ ; lifting these  $x_s$  to  $W$  (denoting the lifts by the same symbol), we see that  $\eta_N := \sum_s x_s B_{\ell-nh,s}^{(1)}$  has the required properties. This proves the claim, and it gives a proof of part (5) of the lemma.  $\square(5),(2.8)$

**(2.9) Lemma** (the induction step). *Let  $u \in \mathbb{Z}$  with  $u \geq nT + 1$ . Suppose  $D_1 \in M^r$  such that  $D_1 \equiv C_1 \pmod{(M_{1/T})^r}$ , and such that  $\xi := \mathcal{F}^h D_1 - p^n D_1 \in (M_{u/T})^r$ . Then there exists  $\eta \in (M_{(u/T)-n})^r$  such that for  $E_1 := D_1 - \eta$  we have  $\mathcal{F}^h E_1 - p^n E_1 \in (M_{(u+1)/T})^r$  and  $E_1 \equiv C_1 \pmod{(M_{1/T})^r}$ .*

**Proof.** We write  $\xi = \xi_N + \xi_P$  according to  $M = N \times P$ . We conclude that  $\xi_N \in (N \cap M_{u/T})^r$  and  $\xi_P \in (P \cap M_{u/T})^r$ . Using (2.8), (5), we construct  $\eta_N \in (N \cap M_{1/T})^r$  such that



$(\mathcal{F}^h - p^n)\eta_N \equiv \xi_N \pmod{(M_{(u+1)/T})^r}$ . As  $M_{u/T} \subset M_n$  we can choose  $\eta_P := -p^{-n}\xi_P$ ; we have  $\eta_P \in M_{(u/T)-n}^r \subset (M_{1/T})^r$ . With  $\eta := \eta_N + \eta_P$  we see that

$$(\mathcal{F}^h - p^n)\eta \equiv \xi \pmod{(M_{(u+1)/T})^r} \quad \text{and} \quad \eta \in (M_{1/T})^r.$$

Hence  $(\mathcal{F}^h - p^n)(D_1 - \eta) \in (M_{(u+1)/T})^r$  and we see that  $E_1 := D_1 - \eta$  has the required properties. This proves the lemma.  $\square(2.9)$

**(2.10) Proof of (2.2).** (1) *There exists  $E_1 \in M^r$  such that  $(\mathcal{F}^h - p^n)E_1 = 0$  and  $E_1 \equiv C_1 \pmod{(M_{1/T})^r}$ .*

**Proof.** For  $u \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq nT+1}$  we write  $D_1(u) \in M^r$  for a vector such that

$$D_1(u) \equiv C_1 \pmod{(M_{1/T})} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathcal{F}^h D_1(u) - p^n D_1(u) \in (M_{u/T})^r.$$

By (2.8), (4), the vector  $C_1 =: D_1(nT+1)$  satisfies this condition for  $u = nT+1$ . Here we start induction. By repeated application of (2.9) we conclude there exists a sequence

$$\{D_1(u) \mid u \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq nT+1}\} \quad \text{such that} \quad D_1(u) - D_1(u+1) \in (M_{(u/T)-n})^r$$

satisfying the conditions above. As  $\bigcap_{\rho \rightarrow \infty} M_\rho = \{0\}$  this sequence converges. Writing  $E_1 := D_1(\infty)$  we achieve the conclusion.  $\square(1)$

(2) *Choose  $E_1$  as in (1). For every  $j \geq 0$  we have*

$$p^{-\lfloor \frac{jn}{h} \rfloor} \mathcal{F}^j E_1 \in M; \quad \text{define} \quad N' := \prod_{1 \leq j < h} W \cdot p^{-\lfloor \frac{jn}{h} \rfloor} \mathcal{F}^j E_1 \subset M.$$

*This is a Dieudonné submodule and it is a  $W$ -module direct summand of  $M$ . Moreover there is an isomorphism*

$$\mathbb{D}((H_{m,n})^r) \cong N',$$

*the map  $N' \amalg P \rightarrow N' + P$  is an isomorphism of  $W$ -modules, and  $N' + P = M$ . This constructs  $X_1 \subset X$ , with*

$$\mathbb{D}(X_1 \subset X) = (N' \subset M) \quad \text{such that} \quad (X/X_1)[p] \cong \prod_{j>1} (M_{m_j, n_j})^{r_j}.$$

**Proof.** By (2.8), (2), we see that  $\mathcal{F}^j E_1 \in M_{\lfloor jn/h \rfloor}$ , hence the first statement follows. As  $\mathcal{F}^h E_1 = p^n E_1$  it follows that  $N' \subset M$  is a Dieudonné submodule; using (2.6) this shows  $\mathbb{D}((H_{m,n})^r) \cong N'$ .

**Claim.** *The images  $N' \twoheadrightarrow N' \otimes k = N'/pN' \subset M/pM$  and  $P \twoheadrightarrow P/pP \subset M/pM$  inside  $M/pM$  have zero intersection and  $N' \otimes k + P \otimes k = M/pM$ . Here we write  $- \otimes k = - \otimes_W (W/pW)$ .*

For  $y \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$  we write  $g(y) := yn - h \cdot \lfloor \frac{yn}{h} \rfloor$ ; note that, in the notation in (2.5), we have

$$p^{-\lfloor \frac{yn}{h} \rfloor} \mathcal{F}^j C'_1 = A_{g(j)}^{(1)}.$$

Suppose

$$\tau := \sum_{0 \leq j < h} \beta_{j,s} p^{-\lfloor \frac{jn}{h} \rfloor} \mathcal{F}^j \cdot (E_{1,s} \bmod pM) \in (N' \otimes k \cap P \otimes k) \subset M/pM, \quad \beta_j \in k$$

such that  $\tau \neq 0$ . Let  $x, s$  be a pair of indices such that  $\beta := \beta_{x,s} \neq 0$  and for every  $y$  with  $g(y) < g(x)$  we have  $\beta_{y,s} = 0$ . Project inside  $M/pM$  on the factor  $N_s$ . Then

$$\tau_s \equiv \beta \cdot B_{g(x),s}^{(1)} \pmod{M_{\frac{g(x)}{h} + \frac{1}{T}} + P},$$

which is a contradiction with the fact that  $N \cap P = 0$  and with the fact that the residue class of

$$B_{g(x),s}^{(1)} \text{ generates } \left( (M_{\frac{g(x)}{h}} + P) / (M_{\frac{g(x)}{h} + \frac{1}{T}} + P) \right)_s = N_{\frac{g(x)}{h},s} / N_{\frac{g(x)}{h} + \frac{1}{h},s}.$$

We see that  $\tau \neq 0$  leads to a contradiction. This shows that  $N' \otimes k \cap P \otimes k = 0$  and  $N' \otimes k + P \otimes k = M/pM$ . Hence the claim is proved.

As  $(N' \cap P) \otimes k \subset N' \otimes k \cap P \otimes k = 0$  this shows  $(N' \cap P) \otimes k = 0$ . By Nakayama's lemma this implies  $N' \cap P = 0$ . The proof of the remaining statements follows, in particular we see that  $N'$  is a  $W$ -module direct summand of  $M$ . This finishes the proof of **(2)**, and it ends the proof of the proposition.  $\square(2.2)$

### 3 Split extensions and proof of the theorem

In this section we prove a proposition on split extensions. We will see that Theorem (1.2) follows.

**(3.1) Proposition.** *Let  $(m, n)$  and  $(d, e)$  be ordered pairs of pairwise coprime positive integers. Suppose that  $n/(m+n) < e/(d+e)$ . Let*

$$0 \rightarrow Z := H_{m,n} \rightarrow T \rightarrow Y := H_{d,e} \rightarrow 0$$

be an exact sequence of  $p$ -divisible groups such that the induced sequence of the  $p$ -kernels splits:

$$0 \rightarrow Z[p] \xrightarrow{\leftarrow} T[p] \xrightarrow{\leftarrow} Y[p] \rightarrow 0.$$

Then the sequence of  $p$ -divisible groups splits:  $T \cong Z \oplus Y$ .

**(3.2) Remark.** It is easy to give examples of a non-split extension  $T/Z \cong Y$  of  $p$ -divisible groups, with  $Z$  non-minimal or  $Y$  non-minimal, such that the extension  $T[p]/Z[p] \cong Y[p]$  does split.

**(3.3) Proof of (1.2).** The theorem follows from (2.4) and (3.1).  $\square(1.2)$

**(3.4)** *In order to show (3.1) it suffices to prove (3.1) under the extra condition that  $\frac{1}{2} \leq e/(d+e)$ .*

In fact, if  $n/(m+n) < e/(d+e) < \frac{1}{2}$ , we consider the exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow H_{d,e}^t = H_{e,d} \rightarrow T^t \rightarrow H_{m,n}^t = H_{n,m} \rightarrow 0$$

with  $\frac{1}{2} < d/(e+d) < m/(n+m)$ .  $\square(3.4)$

From now on we assume that  $\frac{1}{2} \leq e/(d+e)$ .

**(3.5)** We fix notation which will be used in the proof of (3.1). We write the Dieudonné modules as:  $\mathbb{D}(Z) = N$ ,  $\mathbb{D}(T) = M$  and  $\mathbb{D}(Y) = Q$ ; we obtain an exact sequence of Dieudonné modules  $M/N = Q$ , which is a split exact sequence of  $W$ -modules, where  $W = W_\infty(k)$ . We write  $m+n = h$  and  $d+e = g$ . We know that  $Q$  is generated by elements  $A_i$ , with  $i \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$  such that  $\pi(A_i) = A_{i+1}$ , where  $\pi \in \text{End}(Q)$  is the uniformizer, and  $\mathcal{V} \cdot A_i = A_{i+d}$ ,  $\mathcal{F} \cdot A_i = A_{i+e}$ ; we know that  $\{A_i \mid 0 \leq i < g = d+e\}$  is a  $W$ -basis for  $Q$ . Because  $\frac{1}{2} \leq e/(d+e)$ , hence  $e \geq d$  we can choose generators for the Dieudonné module  $Q$  in the following way. We choose integers  $\delta_i$  by:

$$i \cdot g \leq \delta_i \cdot d < (i+1) \cdot d + i \cdot e = ig + d$$

and integers  $\gamma_i$  such that:

$$\delta_1 = \gamma_1 + 1, \dots, \delta_i = \gamma_1 + 1 + \gamma_2 + 1 + \dots + \gamma_i + 1;$$

note that  $\delta_d = g = d+e$ . We choose  $C = A_0 = C_1$  and  $\{C_1, \dots, C_d\} = \{A_0, \dots, A_{d-1}\}$  such that:

$$\mathcal{V}^{\gamma_i} C_i = \mathcal{F} C_{i+1}, \quad 1 \leq i < d, \quad \mathcal{V}^{\gamma_d} C_d = \mathcal{F} C_1, \quad \text{hence} \quad \mathcal{V}^{\delta_i} C = p^i \cdot C_{i+1}, \quad 1 \leq i < d;$$

note that  $\mathcal{V}^g C = p^d \cdot C$ . With these choices we see that

$$\{p^{-\lfloor \frac{id}{g} \rfloor} \mathcal{V}^j C \mid 0 \leq j < g\} = \{\mathcal{V}^j C_i \mid 1 \leq i \leq d, \quad 0 \leq j \leq \gamma_i\} = \{A_\ell \mid 0 \leq \ell < g\}.$$

Choose an element  $B = B_1 \in M$  such that

$$M \longrightarrow Q \quad \text{gives} \quad B_1 = B \mapsto (B \bmod N) = C = C_1.$$

Let  $\pi'$  be the uniformizer of  $\text{End}(N)$ . Consider the filtration  $N = N^{(0)} \supset \dots \supset N^{(i)} \supset N^{(i+1)} \supset \dots$  defined by  $(\pi')^i(N^{(0)}) = N^{(i)}$ . Note that  $\mathcal{F}N^{(i)} = N^{(i+n)}$ , and  $\mathcal{V}N^{(i)} = N^{(i+m)}$ , and  $p^i N = N^{(i \cdot h)}$  for  $i \geq 0$ .

**(3.6) Proof of (3.1).**

**(1)** Construction of  $\{B_1, \dots, B_d\}$ . For every choice of  $B = B_1 \in M$  with  $(B \bmod N) = C$ , and every  $1 \leq i < d$  we claim that  $\mathcal{V}^{\delta_i} B$  is divisible by  $p^i$ . Defining  $B_{i+1} := p^{-i} \mathcal{V}^{\delta_i} B$ , we see that  $B_i \bmod N = C_i$  for  $1 \leq i \leq d$ . Moreover we claim:

$$\mathcal{V}^g B - p^d \cdot B \in N^{(dh+1)}.$$

Choose  $B_i'' \in M$  with  $B_i'' \bmod N = C_i$ . Then  $\mathcal{V}^{\gamma_i} B_i'' - \mathcal{F} B_{i+1}'' =: p \cdot \xi_i \in pN$ ; hence  $\mathcal{V}^{\gamma_i+1} B_i'' - p \cdot B_{i+1}'' = p \mathcal{V} \xi_i \in p \mathcal{V} N$ . For  $1 < i \leq d$  we obtain that

$$\mathcal{V}^{\delta_i} B - p^i \cdot B = \sum_{1 \leq j < i} \mathcal{V}^{\delta_i - \delta_j} p^j \mathcal{V} \xi_j, \quad \xi_j \in N.$$

From  $n/(m+n) < e/(d+e)$  we conclude  $g/d > h/m$ ; using  $\delta_i \cdot d \geq ig$  and  $\delta_j d < (j+1)d + je$  we see:

$$i > j \quad \text{implies} \quad \delta_i - \delta_j + 1 > (i-j)(g/d) > (i-j)(h/m);$$

hence

$$(\delta_i - \delta_j)m + j(m+n) + m > ih;$$

This shows

$$\mathcal{V}^{\delta_i - \delta_j} p^j \mathcal{V} \xi_j \in p^i N^{(1)}.$$

As  $\delta_d = g$  we see that  $\mathcal{V}^g B - p^d \cdot B \in p^d N^{(1)} = N^{(dh+1)}$ . □(1)

(2) The induction step. Suppose that for a choice  $B \in M$  with  $(B \bmod N) = C$ , there exists an integer  $s \geq dh + 1$  such that  $\mathcal{V}^g B - p^d \cdot B \in N^{(s)}$ ; then there exists a choice  $B' \in M$  such that  $B' - B \in N^{(s-dh)}$  and

$$\mathcal{V}^g B' - p^d \cdot B' \in N^{(s+1)}.$$

In fact, write  $p^d \cdot B - \mathcal{V}^g B = p^d \cdot \xi$ . Then  $\xi \in N^{(s-dh)}$ . Choose  $B' := B - \xi$ . Then:

$$\mathcal{V}^g B' - p^d \cdot B' = \mathcal{V}^g B - p^d \cdot B - \mathcal{V}^g \xi + p^d \xi = -\mathcal{V}^g \xi \in N^{(gm-dh+s)};$$

note that  $gm - dh > 0$ . □(2)

(3) For any integer  $r \geq d + 1$ , and  $w \geq rh$  there exists  $B = B_1$  as in (3.5) such that  $\mathcal{V}^g B - p^d B \in N^{(w)} = p^r \cdot N^{(w-rh)}$ . This gives a homomorphism  $\varphi_{r-d}$

$$M/p^{r-d}M \longleftarrow Q/p^{r-d}Q \quad \text{extending} \quad M/pM \longleftarrow Q/pQ.$$

The induction step (2) proves the first statement, induction starting at  $w = (d+1)h > dh + 1$ . Having chosen  $B_1$ , using (1) we construct  $B_{i+1} := p^{-i} \mathcal{V}^{\delta_i} B_1$  for  $1 \leq i < d$ . In that case on the one hand  $\mathcal{V}^{\delta_i} B_i - \mathcal{F}B_1 = p \cdot \xi_d$ , on the other hand  $\mathcal{V}^g B - p^d B \in N^{(w)} \subset p^r N$ . Hence  $p^d \mathcal{V} \xi_d \in p^r N$ ; hence  $p \xi_d \in p^{r-d} N$ . This shows that the residue classes of  $B_1, \dots, B_d$  in  $M/p^{r-d}M$  generate a Dieudonné module isomorphic to  $Q/p^{r-d}Q$  which moreover by (3.5) extends the given isomorphism induced by the splitting. □(3)

By [8], 1.6 we see that for some large  $r$  the existence of  $M/p^{r-d}M \longleftarrow Q/p^{r-d}Q$  as in (3) shows that its restriction  $M/pM \longleftarrow Q/pQ$  lifts to a homomorphism  $\varphi$  of Dieudonné modules  $M \longleftarrow Q$ ; in that case  $\varphi_1$  is injective. Hence  $\varphi$  splits the extension  $M/N \cong Q$ . Taking into account (3.4) this proves the proposition. □(3.1)

**Remark.** Instead of the last step of the proof above, we could construct an infinite sequence  $\{B(u) \mid u \in \mathbb{Z}_{(d+1)h}\}$  such that  $\mathcal{V}^g B(u) - p^d B \in N^{(u)}$  and  $B(u+1) - B(u) \in N^{(u-dh)}$  for all  $u \geq (d+1)h$ . This sequence converges and its limit  $B(\infty)$  can be used to define the required section.

## 4 Some comments

(4.1) **Remark.** For any  $G$ , a  $\text{BT}_1$  over  $k$ , which is *not minimal* there exist infinitely many mutually non-isomorphic  $p$ -divisible groups  $X$  over  $k$  such that  $X[p] \cong G$ . Details will appear in a later publication, see [9].

(4.2) **Remark.** Suppose that  $G$  is a *minimal*  $\text{BT}_1$ ; we can recover the Newton polygon  $\beta$  with the property  $H(\beta)[p] \cong G$  from  $G$ . This follows from the theorem, but there are also other ways to prove this fact.

(4.3) For  $\text{BT}_1$  group schemes we can define a Newton polygon; let  $G$  be a  $\text{BT}_1$  group scheme over  $k$ , and let  $G = \times_i G_i$  be a decomposition into indecomposable ones, see [3]. Let  $G_i$  be of rank  $p^{h_i}$ , and let  $n_i$  be the dimension of the tangent space of  $G_i^D$ ; here  $G_i^D$  stands for the Cartier dual of  $G_i$ ; define  $\mathcal{N}'(G_i)$  as the isoclinic polygon consisting of  $h_i$  slopes equal to  $n_i/h_i$ ; arranging the slopes in non-decreasing order, we have defined  $\mathcal{N}'(G)$ . For a  $p$ -divisible

group  $X$  we compare  $\mathcal{N}(X)$  and  $\mathcal{N}'(X[p])$ . These polygons have the same endpoints. If  $X$  is minimal, equivalently  $X[p]$  is minimal, then  $\mathcal{N}(X) = \mathcal{N}'(X[p])$ . Besides this I do not see rules describing the relation between  $\mathcal{N}(X)$  and  $\mathcal{N}'(X[p])$ . For Newton polygons  $\beta$  and  $\gamma$  with the same endpoints we write  $\beta \prec \gamma$  if every point of  $\beta$  is on or below  $\gamma$ . Note:

- There exists a  $p$ -divisible group  $X$  such that  $\mathcal{N}(X) \not\preceq \mathcal{N}'(X[p])$ ; indeed, choose  $X$  isosimple, hence  $\mathcal{N}(X)$  isoclinic, such that  $X[p]$  is decomposable.
- There exists a  $p$ -divisible group  $X$  such that  $\mathcal{N}(X) \not\preceq \mathcal{N}'(X[p])$ ; indeed, choose  $X$  such that  $\mathcal{N}(X)$  is not isoclinic, hence  $X$  not isosimple, all slopes strictly between 0 and 1 and  $a(X) = 1$ ; then  $X[p]$  is indecomposable, hence  $\mathcal{N}'(X[p])$  is isoclinic.

Here we use  $a(X) := \dim_k \text{Hom}(\alpha_p, X)$ . It could be useful to have better insight in the relation between various properties of  $X$  and  $X[p]$ .

## References

- [1] L. Illusie – *Déformations de groupes de Barsotti-Tate*. Exp.VI in: Séminaire sur les pinceaux arithmétiques: la conjecture de Mordell (L. Szpiro), Astérisque 127, Soc. Math. France 1985.
- [2] A. J. de Jong & F. Oort – *Purity of the stratification by Newton polygons*. Journ. Amer. Math. Soc. **13** (2000), 209 - 241.
- [3] H. Kraft – *Kommutative algebraische  $p$ -Gruppen (mit Anwendungen auf  $p$ -divisible Gruppen und abelsche Varietäten)*. Sonderforsch. Bereich Bonn, September 1975. Ms. 86 pp.
- [4] H. Kraft and F. Oort – *Group schemes annihilated by  $p$* . [In preparation]
- [5] Yu. I. Manin – *The theory of commutative formal groups over fields of finite characteristic*. Usp. Math. **18** (1963), 3-90; Russ. Math. Surveys **18** (1963), 1-80.
- [6] F. Oort – *Commutative group schemes*. Lect. Notes Math. 15, Springer - Verlag 1966.
- [7] F. Oort – *A stratification of a moduli space of polarized abelian varieties*. In: *Moduli of abelian varieties*. (Ed. C. Faber, G. van der Geer, F. Oort). Progress Math. 195, Birkhäuser Verlag 2001; pp. 345 - 416.
- [8] F. Oort – *Foliations in moduli spaces of abelian varieties*. Journ. Amer. Math. Soc. **17** (2004), 267-296.
- [9] F. Oort – *Simple  $p$ -kernels of  $p$ -divisible groups*. [To appear in Advances in Mathematics.]

Frans Oort

Mathematisch Instituut

Budapestlaan 6

NL - 3584 CD TA Utrecht

The Netherlands

email: oort@math.uu.nl

Postbus 80010

NL - 3508 TA Utrecht

The Netherlands