

FINITE GROUPS OF LIE TYPE AND THEIR REPRESENTATIONS – LECTURE II

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- 1 Notions of representation theory
- 2 Representations of (finite) reductive groups
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REPRESENTATIONS: DEFINITIONS

Let G be a group and k a field.

A k -representation of G is a homomorphism $\mathfrak{X} : G \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}(V)$, where V is a k -vector space. (\mathfrak{X} is also called a representation of G on V .)

If $d := \dim_k(V)$ is finite, d is called the degree of \mathfrak{X} .

\mathfrak{X} reducible, if there exists a G -invariant subspace $0 \neq W \neq V$ (i.e. $\mathfrak{X}(g)(w) \in W$ for all $w \in W$ and $g \in G$).

In this case we obtain a sub-representation of G on W and a quotient representation of G on V/W .

Otherwise, \mathfrak{X} is called irreducible.

There is a natural notion of equivalence of k -representations.

COMPOSITION SERIES

Let \mathfrak{X} be a k -representation of G on V with $\dim V < \infty$.

Consider a chain $\{0\} < V_1 < \cdots < V_l = V$ of G -invariant subspaces, such that the representation \mathfrak{X}_i of G on V_i/V_{i-1} is irreducible for all $1 \leq i \leq l$.

Choosing a basis of V through the V_i , we obtain a matrix representation $\tilde{\mathfrak{X}}$ of G , equivalent to \mathfrak{X} , s.t.:

$$\tilde{\mathfrak{X}}(g) = \begin{bmatrix} \mathfrak{X}_1(g) & \star & \cdots & \star \\ 0 & \mathfrak{X}_2(g) & \cdots & \star \\ 0 & 0 & \ddots & \star \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & \mathfrak{X}_l(g) \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{for all } g \in G.$$

The \mathfrak{X}_i (or the V_i/V_{i-1}) are called the **irreducible constituents** (or **composition factors**) of \mathfrak{X} (or of V).

They are unique up to equivalence and ordering.

MODULES AND THE GROUP ALGEBRA

Let $\mathfrak{X} : G \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}(V)$ be a k -representation of G on V .

For $v \in V$ and $g \in G$, write $g.v := \mathfrak{X}(g)(v)$.

This makes V into a left kG -**module**.

Here, kG denotes the group algebra of G over k :

$$kG := \left\{ \sum_{g \in G} a_g g \mid a_g \in k, a_g = 0 \text{ for almost all } g \right\},$$

with multiplication inherited from G .

- \mathfrak{X} is irreducible if and only if V is a **simple** kG -module.
- \mathfrak{X} and $\mathfrak{Y} : G \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}(W)$ are equivalent, if and only if V and W are **isomorphic** as kG -modules.

CLASSIFICATION OF REPRESENTATIONS

Let G now be **finite**.

- 1 There are only finitely many irreducible k -representations of G up to equivalence.
- 2 “Classify” all irreducible representations of all finite simple groups.
- 3 “Most” finite simple groups are groups of Lie type. Find labels for their irreducible representations, find the degrees of these, etc.

THREE CASES

In the following, let $G = \mathbf{G}^F$ be a finite reductive group.

Recall that \mathbf{G} is a connected reductive algebraic group over $\bar{\mathbb{F}}_p$ and that F is a Frobenius morphism of \mathbf{G} .

Let k be algebraically closed with $\text{char}(k) = \ell \geq 0$.

It is natural to distinguish three cases:

- 1 $\ell = p$ (usually $k = \bar{\mathbb{F}}_p$); **defining characteristic**
- 2 $\ell = 0$; **ordinary representations**
- 3 $\ell > 0, \ell \neq p$; **non-defining characteristic**

In this lecture, I will talk about Case 1, and the remaining two lectures are devoted to Cases 2 and 3.

A ROUGH SURVEY

Let $k = \bar{\mathbb{F}}_p$ and let (\mathbf{G}, F) be a finite reductive group over k .

By a k -representation of \mathbf{G} we understand a **rational** hom.

- 1 An irreducible k -representation of \mathbf{G} has finite degree.
- 2 The irreducible k -representations of \mathbf{G} are classified by **dominant weights**, i.e. we have labels for these irreducible k -representations.
- 3 "Every" irreducible k -representation of $G = \mathbf{G}^F$ is the restriction of an irreducible k -representation of \mathbf{G} to G .

What are dominant weights?

Which irreducible representations of \mathbf{G} restrict to irreducible representations of G ?

CHARACTER GROUP AND COCHARACTER GROUP

For the remainder of this lecture, let \mathbf{G} be a connected reductive algebraic group over $k = \bar{\mathbb{F}}_p$ and let \mathbf{T} be a maximal torus of \mathbf{G} . (All of these are conjugate.)

Recall $\mathbf{T} \cong k^* \times k^* \times \cdots \times k^*$. The number r of factors is an invariant of \mathbf{G} , the **rank** of \mathbf{G} .

Put $X := X(\mathbf{T}) := \text{Hom}(\mathbf{T}, k^*)$. Then $X \cong \bigoplus_1^r \text{Hom}(k^*, k^*)$.

Now $\text{Hom}(k^*, k^*) \cong \mathbb{Z}$, so X is a free abelian group of rank r ($\chi \in \text{Hom}(k^*, k^*)$ is of the form $\chi(t) = t^z$ for some $z \in \mathbb{Z}$).

Similarly, $Y := Y(\mathbf{T}) := \text{Hom}(k^*, \mathbf{T})$ is free abelian of rank r .

X and Y are the **character group** and **cocharacter group**, resp.

There is a natural duality $X \times Y \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}$, $(\chi, \gamma) \mapsto \langle \chi, \gamma \rangle$, defined by $\chi \circ \gamma \in \text{Hom}(k^*, k^*) \cong \mathbb{Z}$.

AN EXAMPLE: $GL_n(k)$

Let $\mathbf{G} = GL_n(k)$. Take

$$\mathbf{T} := \{\text{diag}[t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n] \mid t_1, \dots, t_n \in k^*\},$$

the maximal torus of diagonal matrices.

(Thus $GL_n(k)$ has rank n .)

X has basis $\varepsilon_1, \dots, \varepsilon_n$ with

$$\varepsilon_i(\text{diag}[t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n]) = t_i.$$

Y has basis $\varepsilon'_1, \dots, \varepsilon'_n$ with

$$\varepsilon'_i(t) = \text{diag}[1, \dots, 1, t, 1, \dots, 1],$$

where the t is on position i .

Clearly, $\{\varepsilon_i\}$ and $\{\varepsilon'_j\}$ are dual with respect to the pairing $\langle -, - \rangle$.

ROOTS AND COROOTS

Let \mathbf{B} be a Borel subgroup of \mathbf{G} containing \mathbf{T} .

Then $\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{UT}$ with $\mathbf{U} \triangleleft \mathbf{B}$ and $\mathbf{U} \cap \mathbf{T} = \{1\}$. (Recall that \mathbf{G} has a split BN -pair of characteristic p .)

The minimal subgroups of \mathbf{U} normalised by \mathbf{T} are called **root subgroups**.

A root subgroup is isomorphic to $\mathbf{G}_a := (k, +)$. The action of \mathbf{T} on a root subgroup gives rise to a homomorphism $\mathbf{T} \rightarrow \text{Aut}(\mathbf{G}_a)$.

Since $\text{Aut}(\mathbf{G}_a) \cong k^*$, we obtain an element of X . The characters obtained this way are the **positive roots** of \mathbf{G} w.r.t. \mathbf{T} and \mathbf{B} .

The set of positive roots is denoted by Φ^+ , and the set $\Phi := \Phi^+ \cup (-\Phi^+) \subset X$ is the **root system** of \mathbf{G} .

One can also define a set $\Phi^\vee \subset Y$ of **coroots** of \mathbf{G} w.r.t. \mathbf{T} and \mathbf{B} .

THE ROOTS AND THE COROOTS OF $\mathrm{GL}_n(k)$

Let $\mathbf{G} = \mathrm{GL}_n(k)$ and \mathbf{T} be as above. We choose \mathbf{B} as group of upper triangular matrices. Then \mathbf{U} is the subgroup of upper triangular unipotent matrices.

The root subgroups are the groups $\mathbf{U}_{ij} := \{I_n + aI_{ij} \mid a \in k\}$, $1 \leq i < j \leq n$, where I_{ij} denotes the elementary matrix with 1 on position (i, j) and 0 elsewhere.

The positive root α_{ij} determined by \mathbf{U}_{ij} equals $\varepsilon_i - \varepsilon_j$.

Indeed, if $\mathbf{t} = \mathrm{diag}[t_1, \dots, t_n]$, then $\mathbf{t}(I_n + aI_{ij})\mathbf{t}^{-1} = I_n + t_i t_j^{-1} a I_{ij}$.
On the other hand, $(\varepsilon_i - \varepsilon_j)(\mathbf{t}) = t_i t_j^{-1}$.

We have $\Phi = \{\alpha_{ij} \mid \alpha_{ij} = \varepsilon_i - \varepsilon_j, 1 \leq i \neq j \leq n\}$ and $\Phi^\vee = \{\alpha_{ij}^\vee \mid \alpha_{ij}^\vee = \varepsilon'_i - \varepsilon'_j, 1 \leq i \neq j \leq n\}$.

Note that $\mathbb{Z}\Phi$ and $\mathbb{Z}\Phi^\vee$ have rank $n - 1$.

THE ROOT DATUM

The quadruple (X, Φ, Y, Φ^\vee) satisfies:

- 1 X and Y are free abelian groups of the same rank and there is a duality $X \times Y \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}$, $(\chi, \gamma) \mapsto \langle \chi, \gamma \rangle$.
- 2 Φ and Φ^\vee are finite subsets of X and of Y , respectively, and there is a bijection $\Phi \rightarrow \Phi^\vee$, $\alpha \mapsto \alpha^\vee$.
- 3 For $\alpha \in \Phi$ we have $\langle \alpha, \alpha^\vee \rangle = 2$. Denote by s_α the “reflection” of X defined by

$$s_\alpha(\chi) = \chi - \langle \chi, \alpha^\vee \rangle \alpha,$$

and let s_α^\vee be its adjoint ($s_\alpha^\vee(\gamma) = \gamma - \langle \alpha, \gamma \rangle \alpha^\vee$).

Then $s_\alpha(\Phi) = \Phi$ and $s_\alpha^\vee(\Phi^\vee) = \Phi^\vee$.

A quadruple (X, Φ, Y, Φ^\vee) as above is called a **root datum**.

\mathbf{G} is determined by its root datum up to isomorphism.

THE WEYL GROUP

The Weyl group $W = N_{\mathbf{G}}(\mathbf{T})/\mathbf{T}$ acts on X and we have

$$W \cong \langle s_{\alpha} \mid \alpha \in \Phi \rangle \leq \text{Aut}(X).$$

Suppose that \mathbf{G} is semisimple. Then $\text{rank } X = \text{rank } \mathbb{Z}\Phi$.

In this case Φ is a root system in $V := X \otimes_{\mathbb{Z}} \mathbb{R}$ and W is its Weyl group (where V is equipped with an inner product $(-, -)$ satisfying $\langle \beta, \alpha^{\vee} \rangle = 2(\beta, \alpha)/(\alpha, \alpha)$ for all $\alpha, \beta \in \Phi$).

W is a Coxeter group with Coxeter generators $\{s_{\alpha} \mid \alpha \in \Pi\}$, where $\Pi \subset \Phi^{+}$ is a base of Φ (which is uniquely determined by this property).

WEIGHT SPACES

Let M be a finite-dimensional $k\mathbf{G}$ -module.

For $\lambda \in X = X(\mathbf{T}) = \text{Hom}(\mathbf{T}, k^*)$ put

$$M_\lambda := \{v \in M \mid tv = \lambda(t)v \text{ for all } t \in \mathbf{T}\}.$$

If $M_\lambda \neq \{0\}$, then λ is called a **weight** of M and M_λ is the corresponding **weight space**. (Thus M_λ is a simultaneous eigenspace for all $t \in \mathbf{T}$.)

Crucial Fact:

$$M = \bigoplus_{\lambda \in X} M_\lambda,$$

i.e. M is a direct sum of its weight spaces.

This follows from the fact that the elements of \mathbf{T} act as commuting semisimple linear operators on M .

DOMINANT WEIGHTS AND SIMPLE MODULES

The elements of the set

$$X^+ := \{\lambda \in X \mid 0 \leq \langle \lambda, \alpha^\vee \rangle \text{ for all } \alpha \in \Phi^+\} \subset X$$

are called **dominant weights** of \mathbf{T} (w.r.t. Φ^+).

Order X^+ by $\mu \leq \lambda$ if and only if $\lambda - \mu \in \mathbb{N}\Phi^+$.

THEOREM (CHEVALLEY, LATE 1950S)

- 1 For each $\lambda \in X^+$ there is a simple $k\mathbf{G}$ -module $L(\lambda)$.
- 2 $\dim L(\lambda)_\lambda = 1$. If μ is a weight of $L(\lambda)$, then $\mu \leq \lambda$.
(Thus λ is called *the highest weight* of $L(\lambda)$.)
- 3 If M is a simple $k\mathbf{G}$ -module, then $M \cong L(\lambda)$ for some $\lambda \in X^+$.

$\dim L(\lambda)$ is not known in general.

NATURAL AND ADJOINT REPRESENTATIONS OF $\mathrm{GL}_n(k)$

Let $\mathbf{G} = \mathrm{GL}_n(k)$.

EXAMPLE

- 1 Let $M := k^n$ be the natural module of $k\mathbf{G}$.

The weights of M are the ε_i , $1 \leq i \leq n$.

The highest of these is ε_1 (recall that $\varepsilon_i - \varepsilon_j \in \Phi^+$ for $i < j$).

Thus $M = L(\varepsilon_1)$.

- 2 Let $M := \{x \in k^{n \times n} \mid \mathrm{tr}(x) = 0\}$. Then M is a simple $k\mathbf{G}$ -module by conjugation (the *adjoint* module).

The weights of M are the roots α_{ij} and 0.

The highest one of these is $\alpha_{1n} = \varepsilon_1 - \varepsilon_n$.

Thus $M = L(\varepsilon_1 - \varepsilon_n)$.

STEINBERG'S TENSOR PRODUCT THEOREM

For $q = p^m$, put

$$X_q^+ := \{\lambda \in X \mid 0 \leq \langle \lambda, \alpha^\vee \rangle < q \text{ for all } \alpha \in \Pi\} \subset X^+.$$

Let F denote the standard Frobenius morphism $(a_{ij}) \mapsto (a_{ij}^p)$.

If M is a $k\mathbf{G}$ -module, we put $M^{[i]} := M$, with **twisted action**
 $g.v := F^i(g).v$, $g \in G$, $v \in M$.

THEOREM (STEINBERG'S TENSOR PRODUCT THEOREM, 1963)

For $\lambda \in X_q^+$ write $\lambda = \sum_{i=0}^{m-1} p^i \lambda_i$ with $\lambda_i \in X_p^+$.

Then $L(\lambda) = L(\lambda_0) \otimes_k L(\lambda_1)^{[1]} \otimes_k \cdots \otimes_k L(\lambda_{m-1})^{[m-1]}$.

THEOREM (STEINBERG, 1963)

If $\lambda \in X_q^+$, then the restriction of $L(\lambda)$ to $G = \mathbf{G}^{F^m}$ is simple.

If \mathbf{G} is simply connected, i.e. $Y = \mathbb{Z}\Phi^\vee$, then every simple $k\mathbf{G}$ -module arises this way.

THE IRREDUCIBLE REPRESENTATIONS OF $SL_2(k)$ (BRAUER-NESBITT, 1941)

Let $\mathbf{G} = SL_2(k)$.

Then G acts as group of k -algebra automorphisms on the polynomial ring $k[x_1, x_2]$ in two variables, the action being defined by:

$$\begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x_1 \\ x_2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} ax_1 + bx_2 \\ cx_1 + dx_2 \end{bmatrix}.$$

For $d = 0, 1, \dots$ let M_d denote the set of homogeneous polynomials in $k[x_1, x_2]$ of degree d . Then M_d is \mathbf{G} -invariant, hence a $k\mathbf{G}$ -module, and $\dim M_d = d + 1$.

Moreover, M_d is a simple $k\mathbf{G}$ -module, in fact $M_d = L(d\varepsilon_1)$.

Thus $SL_2(p)$ has exactly the simple modules M_0, \dots, M_{p-1} of dimensions $1, \dots, p$.

WEYL MODULES

From now on assume that \mathbf{G} is simply connected, i.e. $Y = \mathbb{Z}\Phi^\vee$.

For each $\lambda \in X^+$, there is a distinguished finite-dimensional $k\mathbf{G}$ -module $V(\lambda)$. The $V(\lambda)$ s are called **Weyl modules**.

Construction of $V(\lambda)$ through **reduction modulo p** .

Recall that \mathbf{G} is obtained as group of automorphisms of \mathfrak{g}_k , where \mathfrak{g} is a semisimple Lie algebra over \mathbb{C} .

For $\lambda \in X^+$, let $V(\lambda)_{\mathbb{C}}$ be a simple \mathfrak{g} -module. This has a suitable \mathbb{Z} -form $V(\lambda)_{\mathbb{Z}}$. Then $V(\lambda) := k \otimes_{\mathbb{Z}} V(\lambda)_{\mathbb{Z}}$ can be equipped with the structure of a $k\mathbf{G}$ -module.

FORMAL CHARACTERS

Let M be a finite-dimensional $k\mathbf{G}$ -module. Recall that

$$M = \bigoplus_{\lambda \in X} M_{\lambda}.$$

Clearly, $\dim M$ can be recovered by the vector $(\dim M_{\lambda})_{\lambda \in X}$.

It is convenient to view this as an element of $\mathbb{Z}X$.

Introduce a \mathbb{Z} -basis e^{λ} , $\lambda \in X$, of $\mathbb{Z}X$ with $e^{\lambda} e^{\mu} = e^{\lambda+\mu}$.

DEFINITION

The *formal character* of M is the element

$$\text{ch } M := \sum_{\lambda \in X} \dim M_{\lambda} e^{\lambda}$$

of $\mathbb{Z}X$.

CHARACTERS OF WEYL MODULES

The characters of the Weyl modules $V(\lambda)$ can be computed from **Weyl's character formula**. In particular, $\dim V(\lambda)$ is known.

Put $a_{\lambda,\mu} := [V(\lambda) : L(\mu)] :=$ multiplicity of $L(\mu)$ as a composition factor of $V(\lambda)$.

FACT

$a_{\lambda,\lambda} = 1$, and if $a_{\lambda,\mu} \neq 0$, then $\mu \leq \lambda$.

We obviously have

$$\text{ch } V(\lambda) = \text{ch } L(\lambda) + \sum_{\mu < \lambda} a_{\lambda,\mu} \text{ch } L(\mu).$$

Once the $a_{\lambda,\mu}$ are known, $\text{ch } L(\lambda)$ and thus $\dim L(\lambda)$ can be computed recursively from $\text{ch } V(\mu)$ with $\mu \leq \lambda$ (there are only finitely many such μ).

COXETER GROUPS

Let $M = (m_{ij})_{1 \leq i, j \leq r}$ be a symmetric matrix with $m_{ij} \in \mathbb{Z} \cup \{\infty\}$ satisfying $m_{ii} = 1$ and $m_{ij} > 1$ for $i \neq j$.

The group

$$W := W(M) := \langle s_1, \dots, s_r \mid (s_i s_j)^{m_{ij}} = 1 (i \neq j), s_i^2 = 1 \rangle_{\text{group}},$$

is called the **Coxeter group** of M , the elements s_1, \dots, s_r are the **Coxeter generators** of W .

The relations $(s_i s_j)^{m_{ij}} = 1$ ($i \neq j$) are called the **braid relations**.

In view of $s_i^2 = 1$, they can be written as $s_i s_j s_i \cdots = s_j s_i s_j \cdots$

The matrix M is usually encoded in a **Coxeter diagram**, e.g.



with number of edges between nodes $i \neq j$ equal to $m_{ij} - 2$.

THE IWAHORI-HECKE ALGEBRA

Let W be a Coxeter group w.r.t. the matrix $M = (m_{ij})$.

Let A be a commutative ring and $v \in A$. The algebra

$$\mathcal{H}_{A,v}(W) := \langle T_{s_1}, \dots, T_{s_r} \mid T_{s_i}^2 = v1 + (v-1)T_{s_i}, \text{ braid rel's} \rangle_{A\text{-alg.}}$$

is called the **Iwahori-Hecke algebra** of W over A with **parameter** v .

Braid rel's: $T_{s_i} T_{s_j} T_{s_i} \cdots = T_{s_j} T_{s_i} T_{s_j} \cdots$ (m_{ij} factors on each side)

FACT

$\mathcal{H}_{A,v}(W)$ is a free A -algebra with A -basis T_w , $w \in W$.

Note that $\mathcal{H}_{A,1}(W) \cong AW$, so that $\mathcal{H}_{A,v}(W)$ is a deformation of AW , the group algebra of W over A .

KAZHDAN-LUSZTIG POLYNOMIALS

Let W be a Coxeter group as above and let \leq denote the **Bruhat order** on W .

Let v be an indeterminate, put $A := \mathbb{Z}[v, v^{-1}]$ and $u := v^2$.

There is an involution ι on $\mathcal{H}_{A,u}(W)$ determined by $\iota(v) = v^{-1}$ and $\iota(T_w) = (T_{w^{-1}})^{-1}$ for all $w \in W$.

THEOREM (KAZHDAN-LUSZTIG, 1979)

There is a unique basis C'_w , $w \in W$ of $\mathcal{H}_{A,u}(W)$ such that

- ① $\iota(C'_w) = C'_w$ for all $w \in W$;
- ② $C'_w = v^{-\ell(w)} \sum_{y \leq w} P_{y,w} T_w$ with $P_{w,w} = 1$, $P_{y,w} \in \mathbb{Z}[u]$, $\deg P_{y,w} \leq (\ell(w) - \ell(y) - 1)/2$ for all $y < w \in W$.

The $P_{y,w} \in \mathbb{Z}[u]$, $y \leq w \in W$, are called the **Kazhdan-Lusztig polynomials** of W .

THE AFFINE WEYL GROUP

Recall that the Weyl group W acts on X as a group of linear transformations.

Let $\rho := \frac{1}{2} \sum_{\alpha \in \Phi^+} \alpha$, and define the **dot**-action of W as follows:

$$w.\lambda := w(\lambda + \rho) - \rho, \quad \lambda \in X, w \in W.$$

Define

$$W_\rho = \langle s_{\alpha,z} \mid \alpha \in \Phi^+, z \in \mathbb{Z} \rangle.$$

Here, $s_{\alpha,z}(\lambda) = s_\alpha.\lambda + zp\alpha$ is an affine reflection of X .

W_ρ is a Coxeter group, called the **affine Weyl group**.

Each W_ρ -orbit on X contains a unique element in $\bar{C} := \{\lambda \in X \mid 0 \leq \langle \lambda + \rho, \alpha^\vee \rangle \leq \rho \text{ for all } \alpha \in \Phi^+\}$.

LUSZTIG'S CONJECTURE

Let $\lambda_0 \in X$ with $0 < \langle \lambda_0 + \rho, \alpha^\vee \rangle < p$ for all $\alpha \in \Phi^+$ (such a λ_0 only exists if $p \geq h := h(W)$). Fix $w \in W_p$ such that $w.\lambda_0 \in X_p^+$.

THEOREM (ANDERSEN, JANTZEN, EARLY 80s)

$\text{ch } L(w.\lambda_0) = \sum_{w'} b_{w,w'} \text{ch } V(w'.\lambda_0)$, with $w' \in W_p$ such that $w'.\lambda_0 \leq w.\lambda_0$ and $w'.\lambda_0 \in X^+$. The $b_{w,w'}$ are independent of λ_0 .

For $p \geq h$, the computation of $\text{ch } L(\lambda)$ for any $\lambda \in X^+$ can be reduced to one of these cases.

CONJECTURE (LUSZTIG'S CONJECTURE, 1980)

$b_{w,w'} = (-1)^{\ell(w)+\ell(w')} P_{w_0 w', w_0 w}(1)$, in particular, the $b_{w,w'}$ are also independent of p . (w_0 : longest element in $W \leq W_p$.)

THEOREM (ANDERSEN-JANTZEN-SOERTEL, 1994)

Lusztig's conjecture is true provided $p \gg 0$.

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Thank you for your listening!