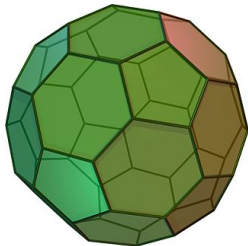


# Defining equations for some nilpotent varieties

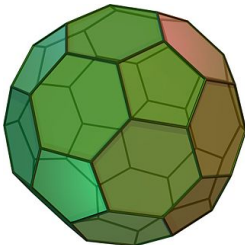
Eric Sommers (UMass Amherst)  
Ben Johnson (Oklahoma State)

**The Mathematical Legacy of Bertram Kostant**  
**MIT**  
**June 1, 2018**

- Kostant's interest in the Buckyball



- Kostant's interest in the Buckyball



- He didn't like the Brooklyn Dodgers

## Giants Top Dodgers and Win Flag on Thomson's Homer, 5-4; World Series to Open Today

### Three-Run Blast In Ninth Climaxes New York Surge

Dramatic Wallop Off Branca Brings Giants First Pennant Since 1927; Braddys Lose Three-Run Lead

By HUGH WARDEN  
Five innings, New York did it. Brooklyn could not catch the lead and the New York Giants did it. They did it today. The city's first pennant since 1927 is again being held by the Giants. In the ninth inning, the new champions hit three runs off the arm of the Brooklyn pitcher in the top of the ninth and won the pennant. The Giants' lead was 5-4 at the time and the three-run blast was the capstone to a game that the Sporting News called "the dramatic triumph of the Brooklyn season."



KEYSTONE ACTION—Going for a head-on-buck off in Brooklyn, shortstop Pie Traynor is tagged. New Yorkians were having the second base as a free play. The Giants won, 5-4, in the National League pennant.

### Reynolds Picked As Yankee Hurler In Series Opener

Giants Expected to Counter With 'Koolie, Although Janssen Given Outside Chance of Starting in Stadium Today

By THE WALL  
New York, Oct. 10.—The New York Yankees, victors of pennants, are expected to start the World Series with a new pitcher, Alvin Dark, who was named today as the new Yankees' pitcher in the first game of the series. The Yankees' manager, Joe Judge, said today that he will probably start the series with the pitcher who has been named as the new Yankees' pitcher.

# “Lie group representations on polynomial rings” (1963)

Kostant's most highly cited paper in Math Reviews

Let  $\mathcal{N}$  be nilpotent cone in  $\mathfrak{g}$ . Kostant showed

- $\mathcal{N}$  is a normal variety
- The defining ideal of  $\mathcal{N}$  is generated by

$$u_1, \dots, u_\ell,$$

a set of basic invariants in  $S\mathfrak{g}^*$ . Assume  $\deg(u_\ell) = h$ .

- As a module for  $G$ , write

$$\mathbb{C}^\bullet[\mathcal{N}] \simeq \bigoplus p_\lambda V_\lambda$$

where  $p_\lambda = q^{m_1^\lambda} + \dots + q^{m_{\ell_\lambda}^\lambda}$ . Then

$$\ell_\lambda = \dim V_\lambda^T.$$

These exponents are called the *generalized exponents* of  $\lambda$ .

## Key fact

Let  $e$  be a principal nilpotent and  $e, h, f$  basis of  $\mathfrak{sl}_2$ -triple.

Form slice

$$\mathfrak{v} := f + \mathfrak{g}^e.$$

The  $\mathbb{C}^*$ -action on  $\mathfrak{v}$  coming from  $h$  and scaling so that that  $f$  is in degree 0.

Then  $\mathfrak{g}^e$  is graded in degrees  $2m_1 + 2, \dots, 2m_\ell + 2$ , where  $m_1, \dots, m_\ell$  are the usual exponents.

Restrict  $u_i$  to  $\mathfrak{v}$ . Then

### Theorem (Kostant)

*$u_i$  has linear term when expressed in the graded basis of  $\mathfrak{g}^e$ .*

*Jacobian matrix of  $u_i$ 's is rank  $\ell$  everywhere on  $\mathfrak{v}$ , including at  $f$ .*

# Explicit list of basic invariants

- Can take a possible list and restrict to a Cartan subalgebra  $\mathfrak{h}$ .  
Look for a point where determinant of Jacobian is nonzero.

# Explicit list of basic invariants

- Can take a possible list and restrict to a Cartan subalgebra  $\mathfrak{h}$ . Look for a point where determinant of Jacobian is nonzero.
- Take a possible single basic invariant and restrict to  $\mathfrak{v}$  and see that it has a linear term.

## Theorem

*The invariants*

$$tr((ad X)^2), \dots, tr((ad X)^{d_i}), \dots, tr((ad X)^{30})$$

*is a list of basic invariants for  $E_8$ .*

Can use smaller representations for other types if adjoint representation doesn't work (e.g., if there is an odd fundamental degree).

# Example in MAGMA

Adjoint representation of the slice  $\mathfrak{v}$  for  $F_4$ , using 4 variables:  
 $m[1], m[2], m[3], m[4]$ .

```
> M;
[0 m[1] 0 0 0 0 m[2] -m[2] 0 0 0 0 -m[3] -m[3] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 m[4] 0 0
[22 0 m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 m[2] 0 2*m[2] 0 -m[3] -m[3] -m[3] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 42 0 m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 m[2] 0 2*m[2] 0 0 0 -m[3] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 60 0 2*m[1] m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2*m[2] 0 0 0 -m[3] m[3] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 30 0 0 m[1] m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -2*m[2] 0 0 0 0 0 0 -m[3] m[3]
[0 0 0 16 0 0 0 m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 m[2] m[2] 0 0 0 0 0 0 m[3] -m[3]
[0 0 0 0 42 0 0 0 m[1] m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -m[2] 0 0 2*m[2] 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 0 32 30 0 0 0 m[1] -2*m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 m[2] 0 -2*m[2] 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 22 0 0 0 m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2*m[2] 0 0 -2*m[2] 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 32 42 0 0 0 m[1] m[1] -2*m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2*m[2] -2*m[2]
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -16 0 0 0 m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 m[2] 0 -m[2] 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 32 22 0 0 0 m[1] -2*m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -2*m[
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 30 0 0 0 m[1] 0 -m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -16 42 0 0 0 m[1] m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -m[
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 30 22 0 0 0 m[1] -m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -16 22 0 0 0 m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -16 60 0 0 0 m[1] -2*m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 42 0 0 0 m[1] -m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -16 60 22 0 0 0 m[1] -2*m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -30 0 0 0 m[1] -m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 30 0 0 0 m[1] 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -m[1] 2*m[1] 0 0
[0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 -16 42 0 0 0 0 0 0 -2*m[1] 2*m[1] -m[1]
```

```
<-
[> Trace(M^2);
5616*m[1]
[> Trace(M^6);
506278656*m[1]^3 - 50523782400*m[2]
[> Trace(M^8);
199915822880*m[1]^4 - 54928419840000*m[1]*m[2] - 173283618816000*m[3]
[> Trace((M/6)^12);
1084977308700/59049*m[1]^6 - 9278201548000/729*m[1]^3*m[2] - 23228446472000/243*m[1]^2*m[3] + 1461034225000/9*m[2]^2 - 697250400000*m[4]
```

Linear term in each case.



# Usual exponents

When  $\lambda = \theta$  is the highest root, the generalized exponents are the usual exponents.

Two ways to see this:

- Generalized exponents come from grading of

$$V_{\lambda}^{\mathfrak{g}^e} = \mathfrak{g}^{\mathfrak{g}^e} \subset \mathfrak{g}^e.$$

Have equality since  $\mathfrak{g}^e$  is abelian.

- Fix  $i$ . Then

$$\left\{ \frac{\partial u_i}{\partial x_j} \right\}$$

is a basis of a copy of the adjoint representation in  $S\mathfrak{g}^*$ .

Non-zero on  $\mathcal{N}$ ; in fact, the copies are linearly independent.

So  $\{d_i - 1\}$  are generalized exponents for  $\lambda = \theta$ .

# Applications to intersections

- $\mathcal{N} \cap \mathfrak{h} = \{0\}$ . Functions at 0 are

$$S\mathfrak{h}^*/(\text{positive invariants}) \simeq H^*(G/B).$$

Starting point to look at  $\overline{\mathcal{O}} \cap \mathfrak{h}$ .

We obtain cohomology of Springer fiber for dual orbit in type A.

Kraft, De Concini-Procesi, Tanisaki, Carrell

- $\mathcal{N} \cap S_{f'}$  for smaller nilpotent, where

$$S_{f'} = f' + \mathfrak{g}^{e'}$$

Also can do this by replacing  $\mathcal{N}$  by smaller nilpotent orbit  $\mathcal{O}$ :

$$\overline{\mathcal{O}} \cap S_{f'}.$$

Brieskorn, Slodowy, Kraft-Procesi, Fu-Juteau-Levy-S.

Let  $f'$  be in the subregular orbit. Take slice to  $f'$ :

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This has dimension  $\ell + 2$ .

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This has dimension  $\ell + 2$ .

Then  $u_1, \dots, u_{\ell-1}$  have (linearly independent) linear terms on  $S_{f'}$ .

While  $u_\ell$  of highest degree, the Coxeter number, is exactly the defining equation in the remaining three dimensions of an ADE-singularity.

Carried out by Slodowy

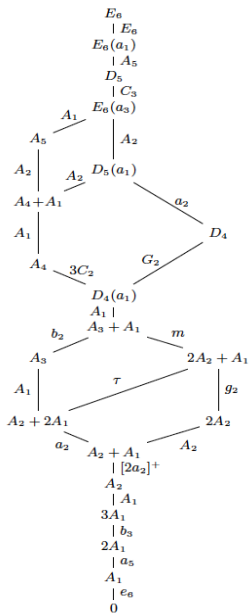
# Example in $E_6$

```
> invs;
[
  1008*m[8],
  -11232000*m[5] + 1140480*m[7]*m[8],
  -161740800*m[4] + 11404800*m[6]*m[8] + 58934304*m[7]^2 + 9232128*m[8]^3,
  9754214400*m[2] - 54809395200*m[4]*m[8] - 31788288000*m[5]*m[7] + 12814848000*m[6]^2 + 3328819200*m[6]*m[8]^2 + 16539780896*m[7]^2*m[8] +
  1134185472*m[8]^4,
  2633637888000*m[1] - 921773268800*m[4]*m[7] - 3997486808000*m[5]*m[6] - 709619097600*m[5]*m[8]^2 - 58002739200*m[6]*m[7]*m[8] -
  98868507136*m[7]^3 + 69352464384*m[7]*m[8]^3,
  15643889854720000*m[1]*m[7] + 10429206836480000*m[2]*m[6] + 9193151987712000*m[2]*m[8]^2 - 9291474468864000*m[3]^2 +
  9291474468864000*m[3]*m[4] + 3217983012864000*m[4]^2 - 346851901440000*m[4]*m[6]*m[8] - 2522401623244800*m[4]*m[7]^2 -
  2526273051033600*m[4]*m[8]^3 + 114803619840000000*m[5]^2*m[8] + 8846201548800000*m[5]*m[6]*m[7] - 5211499087872000*m[5]*m[7]*m[8]^2 -
  239446056960000*m[6]^3 + 1232736620544000*m[6]^2*m[8]^2 + 3163447001088000*m[6]*m[7]^2*m[8] + 127622814105600*m[6]*m[8]^4 +
  637742808248832*m[7]^4 + 713154399141888*m[7]^2*m[8]^3 + 20115886620672*m[8]^6
]

[>
[> GroebnerBasis(IAdjNil);
[
  m[1] - 1037/6400*m[7]^3,
  m[2] + 103/784*m[6]^2,
  m[3]^2 - 583/1600*m[3]*m[7]^2 + 6655/38416*m[6]^3 - 92323/320000*m[7]^4,
  m[4] - 583/1600*m[7]^2,
  m[5],
  m[8]
]
[> Evaluate(x[3], [m[1], m[2], m[3]+583/3200*m[7]^2, m[4],m[5],m[6],m[7],m[8]]);
m[3]^2 + 6655/38416*m[6]^3 - 131769/409600*m[7]^4
]>
```

The latter is the equation for the  $E_6$  singularity in  $\mathbb{C}^3$ :  $x^2 + y^3 + z^4 = 0$ .

# Singularities in $E_6$



# Find equations for other orbits

- Weyman for  $GL_n(\mathbb{C})$ .

$$\mathcal{O} = \mathcal{O}_\lambda$$

$\lambda = (\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots)$  partition of  $n$

Let  $k_i = \lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + \dots + \lambda_i - i + 1$

Equations come from subspace of  $k_i \times k_i$ -minors isomorphic to representation of highest weight  $\varpi_i + \varpi_{n-i}$ , plus the basic invariants.

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- Hook  $\lambda = (a, 1, \dots, 1)$ .

Minimal generators: all  $a \times a$  minors. Rank conditions plus basic invariants up to degree  $a$ .



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- Almost rectangular:  $\lambda = (a, a, \dots, a, b)$ .

Minimal generators: Just need a copy of the adjoint in degree  $a$  and basic invariants up to degree  $a$ .

Take entries  $X^a$  where  $X = (x_{ij})$  is a generic matrix for a copy of the adjoint rep.

- Let  $\phi$  be the dominant short root.
- The highest generalized exponent for  $V_\phi$  occurs in  $\text{ht}(\phi)$  degree, the dual Coxeter number. This is true for any representation  $V_\lambda$ .
- The ideal for the subregular nilpotent variety is given by a copy of

$V_\phi$  in this top degree

together with

$$u_1, \dots, u_{\ell-1}.$$

- These are minimal generators.

# Main result

- Let  $\Omega$  be a set of orthogonal, short, simple roots. Let  $s = |\Omega|$ .  
Let  $\mathfrak{n}_\Omega$  be nilradical of the parabolic subalgebra attached to  $\Omega$ .
- Let  $\mathcal{O}_\Omega$  be the Richardson orbit in  $\mathfrak{n}_\Omega$ .  
These orbits were considered by Broer in Kostant 65th volume.  
For  $s = 1$ , we get the subregular orbit. For  $s = 0$ , we get principal nilpotent orbit.
- Let  $r$  be dimension of zero weight space of  $V_\phi$ , which is the number of short simple roots, and order the generalized exponents for  $V_\phi$  by  $m_1^\phi \leq \dots \leq m_r^\phi$ .

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## Theorem (Johnson, S-)

*The ideal for  $\overline{\mathcal{O}}_\Omega$  is minimally generated by:*

- *a copy of  $V_\phi$  in either degree  $m_{r-s+1}^\phi$  or  $m_{\lfloor \frac{r}{2} \rfloor}^\phi$ .*
- *(sometimes) a copy of  $V_\phi$  is degree  $m_{r-s+2}^\phi$ .*
- *$r - s$  of the basic invariants*

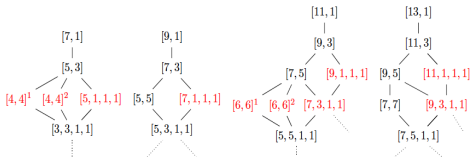
# Main result

Theorem (Johnson, S-, arXiv:1706.04820)

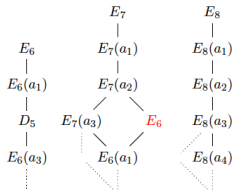
The ideal for  $\overline{\mathcal{O}}_\Omega$  is minimally generated by:

- a copy of  $V_\phi$  in either degree  $m_{r-s+1}^\phi$  or  $m_{\lfloor \frac{r}{2} \rfloor}^\phi$ .
- (sometimes) a copy of  $V_\phi$  is degree  $m_{r-s+2}^\phi$ .
- $r - s$  of the basic invariants

FIGURE 1. The studied nilpotent varieties with second family in red



(a) In types  $D_4$ ,  $D_5$ ,  $D_6$ , and  $D_7$



(b) In types  $E_6$ ,  $E_7$ , and  $E_8$

- Pick a basis  $\{x_i\}$  of  $\mathfrak{g}$  and a dual basis  $\{y_i\}$  with respect to the Killing form  $(\cdot, \cdot)$ .
- Let  $p$  and  $q$  be two homogeneous invariants of degree  $a + 1$  and  $b + 1$ , respectively. Then

$$p \circ q := \sum_i \frac{\partial p}{\partial x_i} \frac{\partial q}{\partial y_i}$$

is again an invariant.

Homogeneous of degree  $a + b$ .

- Saito's flat basis, first considered in a paper by Saito, Yano, Sekiguchi: unique basis (up to scalars) with  $u_i \circ u_j \in \mathbb{C}[u_1, \dots, u_{\ell-1}] + cu_\ell$ , where  $c$  is a constant.
- De Concini, Papi, Procesi:  
 $u_i \circ u_j$  a generator of the invariants when  $u_i \circ u_j$  is the degree of some  $u_k$ .  
A weaker statement is true in type  $D_{2k}$ .

# Containment of ideals

- Consider the copy of the adjoint representation  $V_{u_i}$  determined by  $u_i$  by taking derivatives.
- Take its ideal  $(V_{u_i})$  in  $\mathbb{C}[\mathcal{N}]$ .

## Theorem (Johnson, S-)

*The following are equivalent:*

- *Containment:  $V_{u_j} \subset (V_{u_i})$*
- *There exists an invariant  $p$  such that  $p \circ u_i = u_j$  modulo expressions in lower degree invariants.*

Hence, by DPP result, containment question, outside of  $D_{2k}$ , is equivalent to  $(m_j + 1) - m_i$  is an exponent. This helps us find minimal generators.

For example, in  $E_7$ , adjoint rep in degree 13 is not in the ideal generated by copy in degree 11, but it is in ideal generated by copy in degree 9, since 3 is not an exponent, but 5 is.

Next we search for a set of generators. Let  $P = P_\Omega$ . Consider the Springer type map:

$$G \times^P \mathfrak{n}_\Omega \rightarrow \overline{\mathcal{O}}_\Omega$$

If this is a resolution,

$$\mathbb{C}[\mathcal{O}_\Omega] = \mathbb{C}[G \times^P \mathfrak{n}_\Omega] = H^0(G/P, S^\bullet \mathfrak{n}_\Omega^*)$$

For  $\Omega = \emptyset$ ,  $\mathcal{O}_\Omega$  is regular nilpotent orbit.

$$\mathbb{C}[\mathcal{N}] = \mathbb{C}[\mathcal{O}_{reg}] = \mathbb{C}[G \times^B \mathfrak{n}] = H^0(G/B, S^\bullet \mathfrak{n}^*)$$

Paper by R. Brylinski (Twisted Ideals paper):

- thinking about ideals in  $\mathbb{C}[\mathcal{N}]$  coming from cohomology
- subregular ideal



# Twisted ideals

## Higher vanishing

$H^i(G/B, S^\bullet \mathfrak{n}^* \otimes \mathbb{C}_\mu) = 0$  for  $i > 0$  when

- $\mu = 0$  (Borho-Kraft, Hesselink)
- $\mu$  dominant (Broer)
- $\mu$  slightly not dominant (Broer)

To compute the occurrences of  $V_\lambda$  in  $H^0$ , compute Euler characteristic  $\sum (-1)^i H^i$ , and thus replace  $S^\bullet \mathfrak{u}^*$  by a sum of one-dimensional representations and then use Bott-Borel-Weil:

## Bott-Borel-Weil

$H^i(G/B, \mathbb{C}_\lambda) = 0$  except if  $w \cdot \lambda$  is dominant and  $i = \ell(w)$ , in which case it is  $V_{w \cdot \lambda}$ . Here,  $w \in W$ , the Weyl group, is unique.

Conclude:  $H^0(G/B, S^\bullet \mathfrak{u}^* \otimes \mathbb{C}_\mu)$  is computable in terms of Lusztig's  $q$ -analog of Kostant weight multiplicity.

# Twisted Ideals

- Hence, multiplicity of  $V_\lambda$  in  $H^0(G/B, S^\bullet \mathfrak{u}^* \otimes \mathbb{C}_\mu)$  is the dimension of the  $\mu$ -weight space in  $V_\lambda$ .
- The graded version is an affine Kazhdan-Lusztig polynomial (Lusztig).
- If  $\mu = 0$ , get a formula for generalized exponents and also get another way of seeing that their number is dimension of the zero weight space of  $V_\lambda$ .

## Broer

For  $\mu$  dominant:

$$H^0(G/B, S^\bullet \mathfrak{u}^* \otimes \mathbb{C}_\mu)$$

will identify with an ideal in

$$\mathbb{C}[\mathcal{N}]$$

and the unique copy of  $V_\mu$  in lowest degree generates the ideal.

# Sketch proof in $A_3$ with $s = 2$

Let  $\Omega = \{\alpha_1, \alpha_3\}$ . Consider parabolic and nilradical for subregular:  $\mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_3}$ .  
Take Koszul resolution:

$$0 \rightarrow S^{n-1} \mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_3}^* \otimes \mathbb{C}_{\alpha_1} \rightarrow S^n \mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_3}^* \rightarrow S^n \mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_1, \alpha_3}^* \rightarrow 0.$$

Take cohomology over  $G/B$ :

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &\rightarrow H^0(S^{n-1} \mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_3}^* \otimes \mathbb{C}_{\alpha_1}) \rightarrow H^0(S^n \mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_3}^*) \\ &\rightarrow H^0(S^n \mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_1, \alpha_3}^*) \rightarrow H^1(S^{n-1} \mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_3}^* \otimes \mathbb{C}_{\alpha_1}) \rightarrow \dots \end{aligned}$$

Key facts are that  $H^1$  vanishes and  
 $H^0(S^{n-1} \mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_3}^* \otimes \mathbb{C}_{\alpha_1}) \simeq H^0(S^{n-2} \mathfrak{n}_{\alpha_2}^* \otimes \mathbb{C}_{\phi})$ .

This is a generalization of Broer's result for  $\mathfrak{n}$  when weights are slightly not dominant (see next slide).

Hence, the ideal of the orbit is cut out by a copy of  $V_{\phi}$  in degree 2 in the closure of the subregular orbit. General case uses this kind of induction.

## Type $A_l$ cohomological theorem

Let  $\mathfrak{n}_m$  be the nilradical for the maximal parabolic in type  $A_l$  with simple root  $\alpha_m$  not in the Levi subalgebra.

### Theorem (S-)

Let  $r$  be in the range  $-|l+1-2m|-1 \leq r \leq 0$ . Then there is a  $G$ -module isomorphism :

$$H^i(\mathcal{S}^n \mathfrak{n}_m^* \otimes r\varpi_m) \simeq H^i(\mathcal{S}^{n+rm} \mathfrak{n}_{l+1-m}^* \otimes -r\varpi_{l+1-m})$$

for all  $i, n \geq 0$ .

This is always an isomorphism for  $H^0$  when  $r < 0$ .

### Type $A_2$

$$H^i(\mathcal{S}^n \mathfrak{n}_1^* \otimes -\varpi_1) \simeq H^i(\mathcal{S}^{n-1} \mathfrak{n}_2^* \otimes \varpi_2)$$

Can use this  $A_2$  result in any bigger Lie algebra. In  $A_3$  it says  $H^i(\mathcal{S}^n \mathfrak{n}_3^* \otimes \alpha_1) \simeq H^i(\mathcal{S}^{n-1} \mathfrak{n}_2^* \otimes (\alpha_1 + \alpha_2 + \alpha_3))$  since  $\alpha_1$  has inner product  $-1$  with  $\alpha_2$  and  $0$  with  $\alpha_3$ . This was the key fact on the previous slide.