

VERMA MODULES AND PREPROJECTIVE ALGEBRAS

CHRISTOF GEISS*, BERNARD LECLERC† AND
JAN SCHRÖER‡

*Dedicated to George Lusztig on the occasion of
his sixtieth birthday*

Abstract. We give a geometric construction of the Verma modules of a symmetric Kac-Moody Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} in terms of constructible functions on the varieties of nilpotent finite-dimensional modules of the corresponding preprojective algebra Λ .

§1. Introduction

Let \mathfrak{g} be the symmetric Kac-Moody Lie algebra associated to a finite unoriented graph Γ without loop. Let \mathfrak{n}_- denote a maximal nilpotent subalgebra of \mathfrak{g} . In [Lu1, §12], Lusztig has given a geometric construction of $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$ in terms of certain Lagrangian varieties. These varieties can be interpreted as module varieties for the preprojective algebra Λ attached to the graph Γ by Gelfand and Ponomarev [GP]. In Lusztig's construction, $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$ gets identified with an algebra $(\mathcal{M}, *)$ of constructible functions on these varieties, where $*$ is a convolution product inspired by Ringel's multiplication for Hall algebras.

Later, Nakajima gave a similar construction of the highest weight irreducible integrable \mathfrak{g} -modules $L(\lambda)$ in terms of some new Lagrangian varieties which differ from Lusztig's ones by the introduction of some extra vector spaces W_k for each vertex k of Γ , and by considering only stable points instead of the whole variety [Na, §10].

Received November 18, 2004.

2000 Mathematics Subject Classification: 14M99, 16G20, 17B35, 17B67.

*C. Geiss acknowledges support from DGAPA grant IN101402-3.

†B. Leclerc is grateful to the GDR 2432 and the GDR 2249 for their support.

‡J. Schröer was supported by a research fellowship from the DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft).

The aim of this paper is to extend Lusztig’s original construction and to endow \mathcal{M} with the structure of a Verma module $M(\lambda)$.

To do this we first give a variant of the geometrical construction of the integrable \mathfrak{g} -modules $L(\lambda)$, using functions on some natural open subvarieties of Lusztig’s varieties instead of functions on Nakajima’s varieties (Theorem 1). These varieties have a simple description in terms of the preprojective algebra Λ and of certain injective Λ -modules q_λ .

Having realized the integrable modules $L(\lambda)$ as quotients of \mathcal{M} , it is possible, using the comultiplication of $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$, to construct geometrically the raising operators $E_i^\lambda \in \text{End}(\mathcal{M})$ which make \mathcal{M} into the Verma module $M(\lambda)$ (Theorem 2). Note that we manage in this way to realize Verma modules with arbitrary highest weight (not necessarily dominant).

Finally, we dualize this setting and give a geometric construction of the dual Verma module $M(\lambda)^*$ in terms of the delta functions $\delta_x \in \mathcal{M}^*$ attached to the finite-dimensional nilpotent Λ -modules x (Theorem 3).

§2. Verma modules

2.1. Let \mathfrak{g} be the symmetric Kac-Moody Lie algebra associated with a finite unoriented graph Γ without loop. The set of vertices of the graph is denoted by I . The (generalized) Cartan matrix of \mathfrak{g} is $A = (a_{ij})_{i,j \in I}$, where $a_{ii} = 2$ and, for $i \neq j$, $-a_{ij}$ is the number of edges between i and j .

2.2. Let $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{n} \oplus \mathfrak{h} \oplus \mathfrak{n}_-$ be a Cartan decomposition of \mathfrak{g} , where \mathfrak{h} is a Cartan subalgebra and $(\mathfrak{n}, \mathfrak{n}_-)$ a pair of opposite maximal nilpotent subalgebras. Let $\mathfrak{b} = \mathfrak{n} \oplus \mathfrak{h}$. The Chevalley generators of \mathfrak{n} (*resp.* \mathfrak{n}_-) are denoted by e_i ($i \in I$) (*resp.* f_i) and we set $h_i = [e_i, f_i]$.

2.3. Let α_i denote the simple root of \mathfrak{g} associated with $i \in I$. Let $(-; -)$ be a symmetric bilinear form on \mathfrak{h}^* such that $(\alpha_i; \alpha_j) = a_{ij}$. The lattice of integral weights in \mathfrak{h}^* is denoted by P , and the sublattice spanned by the simple roots is denoted by Q . We put

$$P_+ = \{\lambda \in P \mid (\lambda; \alpha_i) \geq 0, (i \in I)\}, \quad Q_+ = Q \cap P_+.$$

2.4. Let $\lambda \in P$ and let $M(\lambda)$ be the Verma module with highest weight λ . This is the induced \mathfrak{g} -module defined by $M(\lambda) = U(\mathfrak{g}) \otimes_{U(\mathfrak{b})} \mathbb{C}u_\lambda$, where u_λ is a basis of the one-dimensional representation of \mathfrak{b} given by

$$hu_\lambda = \lambda(h)u_\lambda, \quad nu_\lambda = 0, \quad (h \in \mathfrak{h}, n \in \mathfrak{n}).$$

As a P -graded vector space $M(\lambda) \cong U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$ (up to a degree shift by λ). $M(\lambda)$ has a unique simple quotient denoted by $L(\lambda)$, which is integrable if and only if $\lambda \in P_+$. In this case, the kernel of the \mathfrak{g} -homomorphism $M(\lambda) \rightarrow L(\lambda)$ is the \mathfrak{g} -module $I(\lambda)$ generated by the vectors

$$f_i^{(\lambda; \alpha_i)+1} \otimes u_\lambda, \quad (i \in I).$$

§3. Constructible functions

3.1. Let X be an algebraic variety over \mathbb{C} endowed with its Zariski topology. A map f from X to a vector space V is said to be constructible if its image $f(X)$ is finite, and for each $v \in f(X)$ the preimage $f^{-1}(v)$ is a constructible subset of X .

3.2. By $\chi(A)$ we denote the Euler characteristic of a constructible subset A of X . For a constructible map $f : X \rightarrow V$ one defines

$$\int_{x \in X} f(x) = \sum_{v \in V} \chi(f^{-1}(v))v \in V.$$

More generally, for a constructible subset A of X we write

$$\int_{x \in A} f(x) = \sum_{v \in V} \chi(f^{-1}(v) \cap A)v.$$

§4. Preprojective algebras

4.1. Let Λ be the preprojective algebra associated to the graph Γ (see for example [Ri], [GLS]). This is an associative \mathbb{C} -algebra, which is finite-dimensional if and only if Γ is a graph of type A, D, E . Let s_i denote the simple one-dimensional Λ -module associated with $i \in I$, and let p_i be its projective cover and q_i its injective hull. Again, p_i and q_i are finite-dimensional if and only if Γ is a graph of type A, D, E .

4.2. A finite-dimensional Λ -module x is nilpotent if and only if it has a composition series with all factors of the form s_i ($i \in I$). We will identify the dimension vector of x with an element $\beta \in Q_+$ by setting $\dim(s_i) = \alpha_i$.

4.3. Let q be an injective Λ -module of the form

$$q = \bigoplus_{i \in I} q_i^{\oplus a_i}$$

for some nonnegative integers a_i ($i \in I$).

LEMMA 1. *Let x be a finite-dimensional Λ -module isomorphic to a submodule of q . If $f_1 : x \rightarrow q$ and $f_2 : x \rightarrow q$ are two monomorphisms, then there exists an automorphism $g : q \rightarrow q$ such that $f_2 = gf_1$.*

Proof. Indeed, q is the injective hull of its socle $b = \bigoplus_{i \in I} s_i^{\oplus a_i}$. Let c_j ($j = 1, 2$) be a complement of $f_j(\text{socle}(x))$ in b . Then $c_1 \cong c_2$ and the maps

$$h_j := f_j \oplus \text{id} : x \oplus c_j \longrightarrow q, \quad (j = 1, 2)$$

are injective hulls. The result then follows from the unicity of the injective hull. \square

Hence, up to isomorphism, there is a unique way to embed x into q .

4.4. Let \mathcal{M} be the algebra of constructible functions on the varieties of finite-dimensional nilpotent Λ -modules defined by Lusztig [Lu2] to give a geometric realization of $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$. We recall its definition.

For $\beta = \sum_{i \in I} b_i \alpha_i \in Q_+$, let Λ_β denote the variety of nilpotent Λ -modules with dimension vector β . Recall that Λ_β is endowed with an action of the algebraic group $G_\beta = \prod_{i \in I} GL_{b_i}(\mathbb{C})$, so that two points of Λ_β are isomorphic as Λ -modules if and only if they belong to the same G_β -orbit. Let $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta$ denote the vector space of constructible functions from Λ_β to \mathbb{C} which are constant on G_β -orbits. Let

$$\widetilde{\mathcal{M}} = \bigoplus_{\beta \in Q_+} \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta.$$

One defines a multiplication $*$ on $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}$ as follows. For $f \in \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta$, $g \in \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\gamma$ and $x \in \Lambda_{\beta+\gamma}$, we have

$$(1) \quad (f * g)(x) = \int_U f(x')g(x''),$$

where the integral is over the variety of x -stable subspaces U of x of dimension γ , x'' is the Λ -submodule of x obtained by restriction to U and $x' = x/x''$. In the sequel in order to simplify notation, we will not distinguish between the subspace U and the submodule x'' of x carried by U . Thus we shall rather write

$$(2) \quad (f * g)(x) = \int_{x''} f(x/x'')g(x''),$$

where the integral is over the variety of submodules x'' of x of dimension γ .

For $i \in I$, the variety Λ_{α_i} is reduced to a single point : the simple module s_i . Denote by $\mathbf{1}_i$ the function mapping this point to 1. Let $\mathcal{G}(i, x)$ denote the variety of all submodules y of x such that $x/y \cong s_i$. Then by (2) we have

$$(3) \quad (\mathbf{1}_i * g)(x) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(i, x)} g(y).$$

Let \mathcal{M} denote the subalgebra of $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}$ generated by the functions $\mathbf{1}_i$ ($i \in I$). By Lusztig [Lu2], $(\mathcal{M}, *)$ is isomorphic to $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$ by mapping $\mathbf{1}_i$ to the Chevalley generator f_i .

4.5. In the identification of $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$ with \mathcal{M} , formula (3) represents the left multiplication by f_i . In order to endow \mathcal{M} with the structure of a Verma module we need to introduce the following important definition. For $\nu \in P_+$, let

$$q_\nu = \bigoplus_{i \in I} q_i^{\oplus(\nu; \alpha_i)}.$$

Lusztig has shown [Lu3, §2.1] that Nakajima’s Lagrangian varieties for the geometric realization of $L(\nu)$ are isomorphic to the Grassmann varieties of Λ -submodules of q_ν with a given dimension vector.

Let x be a finite-dimensional nilpotent Λ -module isomorphic to a submodule of the injective module q_ν . Let us fix an embedding $F : x \rightarrow q_\nu$ and identify x with a submodule of q_ν via F .

DEFINITION 1. For $i \in I$ let $\mathcal{G}(x, \nu, i)$ be the variety of submodules y of q_ν containing x and such that y/x is isomorphic to s_i .

This is a projective variety which, by 4.3, depends only (up to isomorphism) on i, ν and the isoclass of x .

§5. Geometric realization of integrable irreducible \mathfrak{g} -modules

5.1. For $\lambda \in P_+$ and $\beta \in Q_+$, let Λ_β^λ denote the variety of nilpotent Λ -modules of dimension vector β which are isomorphic to a submodule of q_λ . Equivalently Λ_β^λ consists of the nilpotent modules of dimension vector β whose socle contains s_i with multiplicity at most $(\lambda; \alpha_i)$ ($i \in I$). This variety has been considered by Lusztig [Lu4, §1.5]. In particular it is known that Λ_β^λ is an open subset of Λ_β , and that the number of its irreducible components is equal to the dimension of the $(\lambda - \beta)$ -weight space of $L(\lambda)$.

5.2. Define $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta^\lambda$ to be the vector space of constructible functions on Λ_β^λ which are constant on G_β -orbits. Let $\mathcal{M}_\beta^\lambda$ denote the subspace of $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta^\lambda$ obtained by restricting elements of $\mathcal{M}_\beta^\lambda$ to Λ_β^λ . Put $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}^\lambda = \bigoplus_\beta \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta^\lambda$ and $\mathcal{M}^\lambda = \bigoplus_\beta \mathcal{M}_\beta^\lambda$. For $i \in I$ define endomorphisms E_i, F_i, H_i of $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}^\lambda$ as follows:

$$(4) \quad (E_i f)(x) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(x, \lambda, i)} f(y), \quad (f \in \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta^\lambda, x \in \Lambda_{\beta - \alpha_i}^\lambda),$$

$$(5) \quad (F_i f)(x) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(i, x)} f(y), \quad (f \in \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta^\lambda, x \in \Lambda_{\beta + \alpha_i}^\lambda),$$

$$(6) \quad (H_i f)(x) = (\lambda - \beta; \alpha_i) f(x), \quad (f \in \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta^\lambda, x \in \Lambda_\beta^\lambda).$$

THEOREM 1. *The endomorphisms E_i, F_i, H_i of $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}^\lambda$ leave stable the subspace \mathcal{M}^λ . Denote again by E_i, F_i, H_i the induced endomorphisms of \mathcal{M}^λ . Then the assignments $e_i \mapsto E_i, f_i \mapsto F_i, h_i \mapsto H_i$, give a representation of \mathfrak{g} on \mathcal{M}^λ isomorphic to the irreducible representation $L(\lambda)$.*

5.3. The proof of Theorem 1 will involve a series of lemmas.

5.3.1. For $\mathbf{i} = (i_1, \dots, i_r) \in I^r$ and $\mathbf{a} = (a_1, \dots, a_r) \in \mathbb{N}^r$, define the variety $\mathcal{G}(x, \lambda, (\mathbf{i}, \mathbf{a}))$ of flags of Λ -modules

$$\mathfrak{f} = (x = y_0 \subset y_1 \subset \dots \subset y_r \subset q_\lambda)$$

with $y_k/y_{k-1} \cong s_{i_k}^{\oplus a_k}$ ($1 \leq k \leq r$). As in Definition 1, this is a projective variety depending (up to isomorphism) only on (\mathbf{i}, \mathbf{a}) , λ and the isoclass of x and not on the choice of a specific embedding of x into q_λ .

LEMMA 2. *Let $f \in \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta^\lambda$ and $x \in \Lambda_{\beta - a_1 \alpha_{i_1} - \dots - a_r \alpha_{i_r}}^\lambda$. Put $E_i^{(a)} = (1/a!) E_i^a$. We have*

$$(E_{i_r}^{(a_r)} \dots E_{i_1}^{(a_1)} f)(x) = \int_{\mathfrak{f} \in \mathcal{G}(x, \lambda, (\mathbf{i}, \mathbf{a}))} f(y_r).$$

The proof is standard and will be omitted.

5.3.2. By [Lu1, 12.11] the endomorphisms F_i satisfy the Serre relations

$$\sum_{p=0}^{1-a_{ij}} (-1)^p F_j^{(p)} F_i F_j^{(1-a_{ij}-p)} = 0$$

for every $i \neq j$. A similar argument shows that

LEMMA 3. *The endomorphisms E_i satisfy the Serre relations*

$$\sum_{p=0}^{1-a_{ij}} (-1)^p E_j^{(p)} E_i E_j^{(1-a_{ij}-p)} = 0$$

for every $i \neq j$.

Proof. Let $f \in \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta^\lambda$ and $x \in \Lambda_{\beta-\alpha_i-(1-a_{ij})\alpha_j}^\lambda$. By Lemma 2,

$$(E_j^{(p)} E_i E_j^{(1-a_{ij}-p)} f)(x) = \int_{\mathfrak{f}} f(y_3)$$

the integral being taken on the variety of flags

$$\mathfrak{f} = (x \subset y_1 \subset y_2 \subset y_3 \subset q_\lambda)$$

with $y_1/x \cong s_j^{\oplus 1-a_{ij}-p}$, $y_2/y_1 \cong s_i$ and $y_3/y_2 \cong s_j^{\oplus p}$. This integral can be rewritten as

$$\int_{y_3} f(y_3) \chi(\mathcal{F}[y_3; p])$$

where the integral is now over all submodules y_3 of q_λ of dimension β containing x and $\mathcal{F}[y_3; p]$ is the variety of flags \mathfrak{f} as above with fixed last step y_3 . Now, by moding out the submodule x at each step of the flag, we are reduced to the same situation as in [Lu1, 12.11], and the same argument allows to show that

$$\sum_{p=0}^{1-a_{ij}} \chi(\mathcal{F}[y_3; p]) = 0,$$

which proves the Lemma. □

5.3.3. Let $x \in \Lambda_\beta^\lambda$. Let $\varepsilon_i(x)$ denote the multiplicity of s_i in the head of x . Let $\varphi_i(x)$ denote the multiplicity of s_i in the socle of q_λ/x .

LEMMA 4. *Let $i, j \in I$ (not necessarily distinct). Let y be a submodule of q_λ containing x and such that $y/x \cong s_j$. Then*

$$\varphi_i(y) - \varepsilon_i(y) = \varphi_i(x) - \varepsilon_i(x) - a_{ij}.$$

Proof. We have short exact sequences

$$\begin{aligned}
 (7) \quad & 0 \longrightarrow x \longrightarrow q_\lambda \longrightarrow q_\lambda/x \longrightarrow 0, \\
 (8) \quad & 0 \longrightarrow y \longrightarrow q_\lambda \longrightarrow q_\lambda/y \longrightarrow 0, \\
 (9) \quad & 0 \longrightarrow x \longrightarrow y \longrightarrow s_j \longrightarrow 0, \\
 (10) \quad & 0 \longrightarrow s_j \longrightarrow q_\lambda/x \longrightarrow q_\lambda/y \longrightarrow 0.
 \end{aligned}$$

Clearly, $\varepsilon_i(x) = |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(x, s_i)|$, the dimension of $\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(x, s_i)$. Similarly $\varepsilon_i(y) = |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(y, s_i)|$, $\varphi_i(x) = |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/x)|$, $\varphi_i(y) = |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/y)|$. Hence we have to show that

$$\begin{aligned}
 (11) \quad & |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(x, s_i)| - |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(y, s_i)| \\
 & = |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/x)| - |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/y)| - a_{ij}.
 \end{aligned}$$

In our proof, we will use a property of preprojective algebras proved in [CB, §1], namely, for any finite-dimensional Λ -modules m and n there holds

$$(12) \quad |\mathrm{Ext}_\Lambda^1(m, n)| = |\mathrm{Ext}_\Lambda^1(n, m)|.$$

(a) If $i = j$ then $a_{ij} = 2$, $|\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_j, s_i)| = 1$ and $|\mathrm{Ext}_\Lambda^1(s_j, s_i)| = 0$ since Γ has no loops. Applying $\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(-, s_i)$ to (9) we get the exact sequence

$$0 \longrightarrow \mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_j, s_i) \longrightarrow \mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(y, s_i) \longrightarrow \mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(x, s_i) \longrightarrow 0,$$

hence

$$|\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(x, s_i)| - |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(y, s_i)| = -1.$$

Similarly applying $\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, -)$ to (10) we get an exact sequence

$$0 \longrightarrow \mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, s_j) \longrightarrow \mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/x) \longrightarrow \mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/y) \longrightarrow 0,$$

hence

$$|\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/x)| - |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/y)| = 1,$$

and (11) follows.

(b) If $i \neq j$, we have $|\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, s_j)| = 0$ and $|\mathrm{Ext}_\Lambda^1(s_i, s_j)| = |\mathrm{Ext}_\Lambda^1(s_j, s_i)| = -a_{ij}$. Applying $\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, -)$ to (9) we get an exact sequence

$$0 \longrightarrow \mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, x) \longrightarrow \mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, y) \longrightarrow 0,$$

hence

$$(13) \quad |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, x)| - |\mathrm{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, y)| = 0.$$

Moreover, by [Bo, §1.1], $|\text{Ext}_\Lambda^2(s_i, s_j)| = 0$ because there are no relations from i to j in the defining relations of Λ . (Note that the proof of this result in [Bo] only requires that $I \subseteq J^2$ (here we use the notation of [Bo]). One does not need the additional assumption $J^n \subseteq I$ for some n . Compare also the discussion in [BK].)

Since q_λ is injective $|\text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(s_i, q_\lambda)| = 0$, thus applying $\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, -)$ to (7) we get an exact sequence

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &\longrightarrow \text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, x) \longrightarrow \text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda) \longrightarrow \text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/x) \\ &\longrightarrow \text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(s_i, x) \longrightarrow 0, \end{aligned}$$

hence

$$(14) \quad |\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, x)| - |\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda)| + |\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/x)| - |\text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(s_i, x)| = 0.$$

Similarly, applying $\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, -)$ to (8) we get

$$(15) \quad |\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, y)| - |\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda)| + |\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/y)| - |\text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(s_i, y)| = 0.$$

Subtracting (14) from (15) and taking into account (12) and (13) we obtain

$$(16) \quad |\text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(x, s_i)| - |\text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(y, s_i)| = |\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/x)| - |\text{Hom}_\Lambda(s_i, q_\lambda/y)|.$$

Now applying $\text{Hom}_\Lambda(-, s_i)$ to (9) we get the long exact sequence

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &\longrightarrow \text{Hom}_\Lambda(y, s_i) \longrightarrow \text{Hom}_\Lambda(x, s_i) \longrightarrow \text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(s_j, s_i) \\ &\longrightarrow \text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(y, s_i) \longrightarrow \text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(x, s_i) \longrightarrow 0, \end{aligned}$$

hence

$$|\text{Hom}_\Lambda(y, s_i)| - |\text{Hom}_\Lambda(x, s_i)| - a_{ij} - |\text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(y, s_i)| + |\text{Ext}_\Lambda^1(x, s_i)| = 0,$$

thus, taking into account (16), we have proved (11). □

LEMMA 5. *With the same notation we have*

$$\varphi_i(x) - \varepsilon_i(x) = (\lambda - \beta; \alpha_i).$$

Proof. We use an induction on the height of β . If $\beta = 0$ then x is the zero module and $\varepsilon_i(x) = 0$. On the other hand $q_\lambda/x = q_\lambda$ and $\varphi_i(x) = (\lambda; \alpha_i)$ by definition of q_λ . Now assume that the lemma holds for $x \in \Lambda_\beta^\lambda$ and let $y \in \Lambda_{\beta+\alpha_j}^\lambda$ be a submodule of q_λ containing x . Using Lemma 4 we get that

$$\varphi_i(y) - \varepsilon_i(y) = (\lambda - \beta; \alpha_i) - a_{ij} = (\lambda - \beta - \alpha_j; \alpha_i),$$

as required, and the lemma follows. □

LEMMA 6. *Let $f \in \widetilde{\mathcal{M}}_\beta^\lambda$. We have*

$$(E_i F_j - F_j E_i)(f) = \delta_{ij}(\lambda - \beta; \alpha_i) f.$$

Proof. Let $x \in \Lambda_{\beta - \alpha_i + \alpha_j}^\lambda$. By definition of E_i and F_j we have

$$(E_i F_j f)(x) = \int_{\mathfrak{p} \in \mathfrak{P}} f(y)$$

where \mathfrak{P} denotes the variety of pairs $\mathfrak{p} = (u, y)$ of submodules of q_λ with $x \subset u$, $y \subset u$, $u/x \cong s_i$ and $u/y \cong s_j$. Similarly,

$$(F_j E_i f)(x) = \int_{\mathfrak{q} \in \mathfrak{Q}} f(y)$$

where \mathfrak{Q} denotes the variety of pairs $\mathfrak{q} = (v, y)$ of submodules of q_λ with $v \subset x$, $v \subset y$, $x/v \cong s_j$ and $y/v \cong s_i$.

Consider a submodule y such that there exists in \mathfrak{P} (*resp.* in \mathfrak{Q}) at least one pair of the form (u, y) (*resp.* (v, y)). Clearly, the subspaces carrying the submodules x and y have the same dimension d and their intersection has dimension at least $d-1$. If this intersection has dimension exactly $d-1$ then there is a unique pair (u, y) (*resp.* (v, y)), namely $(x+y, y)$ (*resp.* $(x \cap y, y)$). This means that

$$\int_{\mathfrak{p} \in \mathfrak{P}; y \neq x} f(y) = \int_{\mathfrak{q} \in \mathfrak{Q}; y \neq x} f(y).$$

In particular, since when $i \neq j$ we cannot have $y = x$, it follows that

$$(E_i F_j - F_j E_i)(f) = 0, \quad (i \neq j).$$

On the other hand if $i = j$ we have

$$((E_i F_i - F_i E_i)(f))(x) = f(x)(\chi(\mathfrak{P}') - \chi(\mathfrak{Q}'))$$

where \mathfrak{P}' is the variety of submodules u of q_λ containing x such that $u/x \cong s_i$, and \mathfrak{Q}' is the variety of submodules v of x such that $x/v \cong s_i$. Clearly we have $\chi(\mathfrak{Q}') = \varepsilon_i(x)$ and $\chi(\mathfrak{P}') = \varphi_i(x)$. The result then follows from Lemma 5. □

5.3.4. The following relations for the endomorphisms E_i, F_i, H_i of $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}^\lambda$ are easily checked

$$[H_i, H_j] = 0, \quad [H_i, E_j] = a_{ij}E_j, \quad [H_i, F_j] = -a_{ij}F_j.$$

The verification is left to the reader. Hence, using Lemmas 3 and 6, we have proved that the assignments $e_i \mapsto E_i, f_i \mapsto F_i, h_i \mapsto H_i$, give a representation of \mathfrak{g} on $\widetilde{\mathcal{M}}^\lambda$.

LEMMA 7. *The endomorphisms E_i, F_i, H_i leave stable the subspace \mathcal{M}^λ .*

Proof. It is obvious for H_i , and it follows from the definition of \mathcal{M}^λ for F_i . It remains to prove that if $f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta^\lambda$ then $E_i f \in \mathcal{M}_{\beta-\alpha_i}^\lambda$. We shall use induction on the height of β . We can assume that f is of the form $F_j g$ for some $g \in \mathcal{M}_{\beta-\alpha_j}^\lambda$. By induction we can also assume that $E_i g \in \mathcal{M}_{\beta-\alpha_i-\alpha_j}^\lambda$. We have

$$E_i f = E_i F_j g = F_j E_i g + \delta_{ij}(\lambda - \beta + \alpha_j; \alpha_i)g,$$

and the right-hand side clearly belongs to $\mathcal{M}_{\beta-\alpha_i}^\lambda$. □

LEMMA 8. *The representation of \mathfrak{g} carried by \mathcal{M}^λ is isomorphic to $L(\lambda)$.*

Proof. For all $f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta$ and all $x \in \Lambda_{\beta+(a_i+1)\alpha_i}^\lambda$ we have $f * \mathbf{1}_i^{*(a_i+1)}(x) = 0$. Indeed, by definition of Λ^λ the socle of x contains s_i with multiplicity at most a_i . Therefore the left ideal of \mathcal{M} generated by the functions $\mathbf{1}_i^{*(a_i+1)}$ is mapped to zero by the linear map $\mathcal{M} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}^\lambda$ sending a function f on Λ_β to its restriction to Λ_β^λ . It follows that for all β the dimension of $\mathcal{M}_\beta^\lambda$ is at most the dimension of the $(\lambda - \beta)$ -weight space of $L(\lambda)$.

On the other hand, the function $\mathbf{1}_0$ mapping the zero Λ -module to 1 is a highest weight vector of \mathcal{M}^λ of weight λ . Hence $\mathbf{1}_0 \in \mathcal{M}^\lambda$ generates a quotient of the Verma module $M(\lambda)$, and since $L(\lambda)$ is the smallest quotient of $M(\lambda)$ we must have $\mathcal{M}^\lambda = L(\lambda)$. □

This finishes the proof of Theorem 1.

§6. Geometric realization of Verma modules

6.1. Let $\beta \in Q_+$ and $x \in \Lambda_{\beta-\alpha_i}$. Let $q = \bigoplus_{i \in I} q_i^{\oplus a_i}$ be the injective hull of x . For every $\nu \in P_+$ such that $(\nu; \alpha_i) \geq a_i$ the injective module q_ν contains a submodule isomorphic to x . Hence, for such a weight ν and for any $f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta$, the integral

$$\int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(x, \nu, i)} f(y)$$

is well-defined.

PROPOSITION 1. *Let $\lambda \in P$ and choose $\nu \in P_+$ such that $(\nu; \alpha_i) \geq a_i$ for all $i \in I$. The number*

$$(17) \quad \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(x, \nu, i)} f(y) - (\nu - \lambda; \alpha_i) f(x \oplus s_i)$$

does not depend on the choice of ν . Denote this number by $(E_i^\lambda f)(x)$. Then, the function

$$E_i^\lambda f : x \mapsto (E_i^\lambda f)(x)$$

belongs to $\mathcal{M}_{\beta-\alpha_i}$.

Denote by E_i^λ the endomorphism of \mathcal{M} mapping $f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta$ to $E_i^\lambda f$. Notice that Formula (5), which is nothing but (3), also defines an endomorphism of \mathcal{M} independent of λ which we again denote by F_i . Finally Formula (6) makes sense for any λ , not necessarily dominant, and any $f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta$. This gives an endomorphism of \mathcal{M} that we shall denote by H_i^λ .

THEOREM 2. *The assignments $e_i \mapsto E_i^\lambda$, $f_i \mapsto F_i$, $h_i \mapsto H_i^\lambda$, give a representation of \mathfrak{g} on \mathcal{M} isomorphic to the Verma module $M(\lambda)$.*

The rest of this section is devoted to the proofs of Proposition 1 and Theorem 2.

6.2. Denote by e_i^λ the endomorphism of the Verma module $M(\lambda)$ implementing the action of the Chevalley generator e_i . Let \mathcal{E}_i^λ denote the endomorphism of $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$ obtained by transporting e_i^λ via the natural identification $M(\lambda) \cong U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$. Let Δ be the comultiplication of $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$.

LEMMA 9. *For $\lambda, \mu \in P$ and $u \in U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$ we have*

$$\Delta(\mathcal{E}_i^{\lambda+\mu} u) = (\mathcal{E}_i^\lambda \otimes 1 + 1 \otimes \mathcal{E}_i^\mu) \Delta u.$$

Proof. By linearity it is enough to prove this for u of the form $u = f_{i_1} \cdots f_{i_r}$. A simple calculation in $U(\mathfrak{g})$ shows that

$$\begin{aligned} e_i f_{i_1} \cdots f_{i_r} &= f_{i_1} \cdots f_{i_r} e_i + \sum_{k=1}^r \delta_{ii_k} f_{i_1} \cdots f_{i_{k-1}} h_i f_{i_{k+1}} \cdots f_{i_r} \\ &= f_{i_1} \cdots f_{i_r} e_i + \sum_{k=1}^r \delta_{ii_k} \left(f_{i_1} \cdots f_{i_{k-1}} f_{i_{k+1}} \cdots f_{i_r} h_i \right. \\ &\quad \left. - \left(\sum_{s=k+1}^r a_{ii_s} \right) f_{i_1} \cdots f_{i_{k-1}} f_{i_{k+1}} \cdots f_{i_r} \right). \end{aligned}$$

It follows that, for $\nu \in P$,

$$\mathcal{E}_i^\nu(f_{i_1} \cdots f_{i_r}) = \sum_{k=1}^r \delta_{ii_k} \left((\nu; \alpha_i) - \sum_{s=k+1}^r a_{ii_s} \right) f_{i_1} \cdots f_{i_{k-1}} f_{i_{k+1}} \cdots f_{i_r}.$$

Now, using that Δ is the algebra homomorphism defined by $\Delta(f_i) = f_i \otimes 1 + 1 \otimes f_i$, one can finish the proof of the lemma. Details are omitted. \square

6.3. We endow $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$ with the Q_+ -grading given by $\deg(f_i) = \alpha_i$. Let u be a homogeneous element of $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$. Write $\Delta u = u \otimes 1 + u^{(i)} \otimes f_i + A$, where A is a sum of homogeneous terms of the form $u' \otimes u''$ with $\deg(u'') \neq \alpha_i$. This defines $u^{(i)}$ unambiguously.

LEMMA 10. For $\lambda, \mu \in P$ we have

$$\mathcal{E}_i^{\lambda+\mu} u = \mathcal{E}_i^\lambda u + (\mu; \alpha_i) u^{(i)}.$$

Proof. We calculate in two ways the unique term of the form $E \otimes 1$ in $\Delta(\mathcal{E}_i^{\lambda+\mu} u)$. On the one hand, we have obviously $E \otimes 1 = \mathcal{E}_i^{\lambda+\mu} u \otimes 1$. On the other hand, using Lemma 9, we have

$$E \otimes 1 = \mathcal{E}_i^\lambda u \otimes 1 + (1 \otimes \mathcal{E}_i^\mu)(u^{(i)} \otimes f_i) = \mathcal{E}_i^\lambda u \otimes 1 + (\mu; \alpha_i) u^{(i)} \otimes 1.$$

Therefore,

$$E = \mathcal{E}_i^{\lambda+\mu} u = \mathcal{E}_i^\lambda u + (\mu; \alpha_i) u^{(i)}.$$

\square

6.4. Now let us return to the geometric realization \mathcal{M} of $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$. Let E_i^λ denote the endomorphism of \mathcal{M} obtained by transporting e_i^λ via the identification $M(\lambda) \cong \mathcal{M}$.

LEMMA 11. *Let $\lambda \in P_+$, $f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta$ and $x \in \Lambda_{\beta-\alpha_i}^\lambda$. Then*

$$(E_i^\lambda f)(x) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(x, \lambda, i)} f(y).$$

Proof. Let $r_\lambda : \mathcal{M} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}^\lambda$ be the linear map sending $f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta$ to its restriction to Λ_β^λ . By Theorem 1, this is a homomorphism of $U(\mathfrak{n}_-)$ -modules mapping the highest weight vector of $\mathcal{M} \cong M(\lambda)$ to the highest weight vector of $\mathcal{M}^\lambda \cong L(\lambda)$. It follows that r_λ is in fact a homomorphism of $U(\mathfrak{g})$ -modules, hence the restriction of $E_i^\lambda f$ to $\Lambda_{\beta-\alpha_i}^\lambda$ is given by Formula (4) of Section 5. \square

Let again $\lambda \in P$ be arbitrary, and pick $f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta$. It follows from Lemma 10 that for any $\mu \in P$

$$E_i^{\lambda+\mu} f - (\mu; \alpha_i) f^{(i)} = E_i^\lambda f.$$

Let $x \in \Lambda_{\beta-\alpha_i}$. Choose $\nu = \lambda + \mu$ sufficiently dominant so that x is isomorphic to a submodule of q_ν . Then by Lemma 11, we have

$$(E_i^\nu f)(x) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(x, \nu, i)} f(y).$$

On the other hand, by the geometric description of Δ given in [GLS, §6.1], if we write

$$\Delta f = f \otimes 1 + f^{(i)} \otimes \mathbf{1}_i + A$$

where A is a sum of homogeneous terms of the form $f' \otimes f''$ with $\deg(f'') \neq \alpha_i$, we have that $f^{(i)}$ is the function on $\Lambda_{\beta-\alpha_i}$ given by $f^{(i)}(x) = f(x \oplus s_i)$. Hence we obtain that for $x \in \Lambda_{\beta-\alpha_i}$

$$(E_i^\lambda f)(x) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(x, \nu, i)} f(y) - (\nu - \lambda; \alpha_i) f(x \oplus s_i).$$

This proves both Proposition 1 and Theorem 2. \square

6.5. Let $\lambda \in P_+$. We note the following consequence of Lemma 11.

PROPOSITION 2. *Let $\lambda \in P_+$. The linear map $r_\lambda : \mathcal{M} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}^\lambda$ sending $f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta$ to its restriction to Λ_β^λ is the geometric realization of the homomorphism of \mathfrak{g} -modules $M(\lambda) \rightarrow L(\lambda)$.*

§7. Dual Verma modules

7.1. Let S be the anti-automorphism of $U(\mathfrak{g})$ defined by

$$S(e_i) = f_i, \quad S(f_i) = e_i, \quad S(h_i) = h_i, \quad (i \in I).$$

Recall that, given a left $U(\mathfrak{g})$ -module M , the dual module M^* is defined by

$$(u\varphi)(m) = \varphi(S(u)m), \quad (u \in U(\mathfrak{g}), m \in M, \varphi \in M^*).$$

This is also a left module. If M is an infinite-dimensional module with finite-dimensional weight spaces M_ν , we take for M^* the graded dual $M^* = \bigoplus_{\nu \in P} M_\nu^*$.

For $\lambda \in P$ we have $L(\lambda)^* \cong L(\lambda)$, hence the quotient map $M(\lambda) \rightarrow L(\lambda)$ gives by duality an embedding $L(\lambda) \rightarrow M(\lambda)^*$ of $U(\mathfrak{g})$ -modules.

7.2. Let $\mathcal{M}^* = \bigoplus_{\beta \in Q_+} \mathcal{M}_\beta^*$ denote the vector space graded dual of \mathcal{M} . For $x \in \Lambda_\beta$, we denote by δ_x the delta function given by

$$\delta_x(f) = f(x), \quad (f \in \mathcal{M}_\beta).$$

Note that the map $\delta : x \mapsto \delta_x$ is a constructible map from Λ_β to \mathcal{M}_β^* . Indeed the preimage of δ_x is the intersection of the constructible subsets

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{M}_{(i_1, \dots, i_r)} = \{y \in \Lambda_\beta \mid (\mathbf{1}_{i_1} * \dots * \mathbf{1}_{i_r})(y) = (\mathbf{1}_{i_1} * \dots * \mathbf{1}_{i_r})(x)\}, \\ (\alpha_{i_1} + \dots + \alpha_{i_r} = \beta). \end{aligned}$$

7.3. We can now dualize the results of Sections 5 and 6 as follows. For $\lambda \in P$ and $x \in \Lambda_\beta$ put

$$(18) \quad (E_i^*)(\delta_x) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(i, x)} \delta_y,$$

$$(19) \quad (F_i^{\lambda^*})(\delta_x) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(x, \nu, i)} \delta_y - (\nu - \lambda; \alpha_i) \delta_{x \oplus s_i},$$

$$(20) \quad (H_i^{\lambda^*})(\delta_x) = (\lambda - \beta; \alpha_i) \delta_x,$$

where in (19) the weight $\nu \in P_+$ is such that x is isomorphic to a submodule of q_ν . The following theorem then follows immediately from Theorems 1 and 2.

THEOREM 3. (i) *The formulas above define endomorphisms E_i^* , $F_i^{\lambda^*}$, $H_i^{\lambda^*}$ of \mathcal{M}^* , and the assignments $e_i \mapsto E_i^*$, $f_i \mapsto F_i^{\lambda^*}$, $h_i \mapsto H_i^{\lambda^*}$, give a representation of \mathfrak{g} on \mathcal{M}^* isomorphic to the dual Verma module $M(\lambda)^*$.*

(ii) *If $\lambda \in P_+$, the subspace \mathcal{M}^{λ^*} of \mathcal{M}^* spanned by the delta functions δ_x of the finite-dimensional nilpotent submodules x of q_λ carries the irreducible submodule $L(\lambda)$. For such a module x , Formula (19) simplifies as follows*

$$(F_i^{\lambda^*})(\delta_x) = \int_{y \in \mathcal{G}(x, \lambda, i)} \delta_y.$$

EXAMPLE 1. Let \mathfrak{g} be of type A_2 . Take $\lambda = \varpi_1 + \varpi_2$, where ϖ_i is the fundamental weight corresponding to $i \in I$. Thus $L(\lambda)$ is isomorphic to the 8-dimensional adjoint representation of $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{sl}_3$.

A Λ -module x consists of a pair of linear maps $x_{21} : V_1 \rightarrow V_2$ and $x_{12} : V_2 \rightarrow V_1$ such that $x_{12}x_{21} = x_{21}x_{12} = 0$. The injective Λ -module $q = q_\lambda$ has the following form:

$$q = \begin{pmatrix} u_1 & \longrightarrow & u_2 \\ v_1 & \longleftarrow & v_2 \end{pmatrix}$$

This diagram means that (u_1, v_1) is a basis of V_1 , that (u_2, v_2) is a basis of V_2 , and that

$$q_{21}(u_1) = u_2, \quad q_{21}(v_1) = 0, \quad q_{12}(v_2) = v_1, \quad q_{12}(u_2) = 0.$$

Using the same type of notation, we can exhibit the following submodules of q :

$$\begin{aligned} x_1 &= (v_1), & x_2 &= (u_2), & x_3 &= (v_1 \quad u_2), & x_4 &= (u_1 \longrightarrow u_2), \\ x_5 &= (v_1 \longleftarrow v_2), & x_6 &= \begin{pmatrix} u_1 & \longrightarrow & u_2 \\ v_1 & & \end{pmatrix}, & x_7 &= \begin{pmatrix} & & u_2 \\ v_1 & \longleftarrow & v_2 \end{pmatrix}. \end{aligned}$$

This is not an exhaustive list. For example, $x'_4 = ((u_1 + v_1) \longrightarrow u_2)$ is another submodule, isomorphic to x_4 . Denoting by $\mathbf{0}$ the zero submodule, we see that $\delta_{\mathbf{0}}$ is the highest weight vector of $L(\lambda) \subset M(\lambda)^*$. Next, writing for simplicity δ_i instead of δ_{x_i} and F_i instead of F_i^λ , Theorem 3 (ii) gives the following formulas for the action of the F_i 's on $L(\lambda)$.

$$\begin{aligned} F_1\delta_{\mathbf{0}} &= \delta_1, & F_2\delta_{\mathbf{0}} &= \delta_2, & F_1\delta_2 &= \delta_3 + \delta_4, & F_2\delta_1 &= \delta_3 + \delta_5, \\ F_1\delta_3 &= F_1\delta_4 = \delta_6, & F_2\delta_3 &= F_2\delta_5 = \delta_7, \\ F_2\delta_3 &= F_1\delta_6 = \delta_q, & F_1\delta_q &= F_2\delta_q = 0. \end{aligned}$$

Now consider the Λ -module $x = s_1 \oplus s_1$. Since x is not isomorphic to a submodule of q_λ , the vector δ_x does not belong to $L(\lambda)$. Let us calculate $F_i\delta_x$ ($i = 1, 2$) by means of Formula (19). We can take $\nu = 2\varpi_1$. The injective Λ -module q_ν has the following form:

$$q_\nu = \begin{pmatrix} w_1 \longleftarrow w_2 \\ v_1 \longleftarrow v_2 \end{pmatrix}$$

It is easy to see that the variety $\mathcal{G}(x, \nu, 2)$ is isomorphic to a projective line \mathbb{P}_1 , and that all points on this line are isomorphic to

$$y = \begin{pmatrix} w_1 \\ v_1 \longleftarrow v_2 \end{pmatrix}$$

as Λ -modules. Hence,

$$F_2\delta_x = \chi(\mathbb{P}_1)\delta_y - (\nu - \lambda; \alpha_2)\delta_{x \oplus s_2} = 2\delta_y + \delta_{s_1 \oplus s_1 \oplus s_2}.$$

On the other hand, $\mathcal{G}(x, \nu, 1) = \emptyset$, so that

$$F_1\delta_x = -(\nu - \lambda; \alpha_1)\delta_{x \oplus s_1} = -\delta_{s_1 \oplus s_1 \oplus s_1}.$$

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Christof Geiss
Instituto de Matemáticas, UNAM
Ciudad Universitaria
04510 Mexico D.F.
Mexico
`christof@math.unam.mx`

Bernard Leclerc
LMNO, Université de Caen
14032 Caen cedex
France
`leclerc@math.unicaen.fr`

Jan Schröer
Department of Pure Mathematics
University of Leeds
Leeds LS2 9JT
England
`jschroer@maths.leeds.ac.uk`