Simplicity of vacuum modules and associated varieties

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SIMPLICITY OF VACUUM MODULES AND ASSOCIATED VARIETIES

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Abstract. — In this note, we prove that the universal affine vertex algebra associated with a simple Lie algebra \( g \) is simple if and only if the associated variety of its unique simple quotient is equal to \( g^* \). We also derive an analogous result for the quantized Drinfeld-Sokolov reduction applied to the universal affine vertex algebra.

Résumé (Simplicité des algèbres vertex affines et variétés associées). — Dans cet article, nous démontrons que l’algèbre vertex affine universelle associée à une algèbre de Lie simple \( g \) est simple si et seulement si la variété associée à son unique quotient simple est égale à \( g^* \). Nous en déduisons un résultat analogue pour la réduction quantique de Drinfeld-Sokolov appliquée à l’algèbre vertex affine universelle.

Contents

1. Introduction ................................................................. 169
2. Universal affine vertex algebras and associated graded vertex Poisson algebras 172
3. Proof of the main result .................................................... 178
4. \( W \)-algebras and proof of Theorem 1.3 ................................ 187
References ..................................................................... 189

1. Introduction

Let \( V \) be a vertex algebra, and let

\[
V \longrightarrow (\text{End} \, V)[[z, z^{-1}]], \quad a \longmapsto a(z) = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} a(n) z^{-n-1},
\]

be the state-field correspondence. The Zhu \( C_2 \)-algebra [Zhu96] of \( V \) is by definition the quotient space \( R_V = V/C_2(V) \), where \( C_2(V) = \text{span}_C \{ a(-2)b \mid a, b \in V \} \), equipped with the Poisson algebra structure given by

\[
\overline{a} \overline{b} = \overline{a(-1)b}, \quad \{ \overline{a}, \overline{b} \} = \overline{a(0)b},
\]

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for $a, b \in V$ with $\pi := a + C_2(V)$. The associated variety $X_V$ of $V$ is the reduced scheme $X_V = \text{Spec}(R_V)$ corresponding to $R_V$. It is a fundamental invariant of $V$ that captures important properties of the vertex algebra $V$ itself (see, for example, [BFM, Zhu96, ABD04, Miy04, Ara12a, Ara15a, Ara15b, AM18a, AM18b, AM17, AK18]). Moreover, the associated variety $X_V$ conjecturally [BR18] coincides with the Higgs branch of a 4D $N = 2$ superconformal field theory $\mathcal{T}$, if $V$ corresponds to a theory $\mathcal{T}$ by the 4D/2D duality discovered in [BLL+15]. Note that the Higgs branch of a 4D $N = 2$ superconformal field theory is a hyperkähler cone, possibly singular.

In the case where $V$ is the universal affine vertex algebra $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ at level $k \in \mathbb{C}$ associated with a complex finite-dimensional simple Lie algebra $\mathfrak{g}$, the variety $X_V$ is just the affine space $\mathfrak{g}^*$ with Kirillov-Kostant Poisson structure. In the case where $V$ is the unique simple graded quotient $L_k(\mathfrak{g})$ of $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$, the variety $X_V$ is a Poisson subscheme of $\mathfrak{g}^*$ which is $G$-invariant and conic, where $G$ is the adjoint group of $\mathfrak{g}$.

Note that if the level $k$ is irrational, then $L_k(\mathfrak{g}) = V^k(\mathfrak{g})$, and hence $X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})} = \mathfrak{g}^*$. More generally, if $L_k(\mathfrak{g}) = V^k(\mathfrak{g})$, that is, $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ is simple, then obviously $X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})} = \mathfrak{g}^*$.

In this article, we prove that the converse is true.

**Theorem 1.1.** — The equality $L_k(\mathfrak{g}) = V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ holds, that is, $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ is simple, if and only if $X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})} = \mathfrak{g}^*$.

It is known by Gorelik and Kac [GK07] that $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ is not simple if and only if

$$r^\vee(k + h^\vee) \in \mathbb{Q}_{\geq 0} \setminus \{1/m \mid m \in \mathbb{Z}_{>1}\},$$

where $h^\vee$ is the dual Coxeter number and $r^\vee$ is the lacing number of $\mathfrak{g}$. Therefore, Theorem 1.1 can be rephrased as

$$X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})} \subseteq \mathfrak{g}^* \iff (1.1) \text{ holds.}$$

Let us mention the cases when the variety $X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})}$ is known for $k$ satisfying (1.1).

First, it is known [Zhu96, DM06] that $X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})} = \{0\}$ if and only if $L_k(\mathfrak{g})$ is integrable, that is, $k$ is a nonnegative integer. Next, it is known that if $L_k(\mathfrak{g})$ is admissible [KW89], or equivalently, if

$$k + h^\vee = \frac{p}{q}, \quad p, q \in \mathbb{Z}_{>1}, \quad (p, q) = 1, \quad p \geq \begin{cases} h^\vee & \text{if } (r^\vee, q) = 1, \\ h & \text{if } (r^\vee, q) \neq 1, \end{cases}$$

where $h$ is the Coxeter number of $\mathfrak{g}$, then $X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})}$ is the closure of some nilpotent orbit in $\mathfrak{g}$ ([Ara15a]). Further, it was observed in [AM18a, AM18b] that there are cases when $L_k(\mathfrak{g})$ is non-admissible and $X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})}$ is the closure of some nilpotent orbit. In fact, it was recently conjectured in physics [XY19] that, in view of the 4D/2D duality, there should be a large list of non-admissible simple affine vertex algebras whose associated varieties are the closures of some nilpotent orbits. Finally, there are also cases [AM17] where $X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})}$ is neither $\mathfrak{g}^*$ nor contained in the nilpotent cone $N(\mathfrak{g})$ of $\mathfrak{g}$.

In general, the problem of determining the variety $X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})}$ is wide open.
Now let us explain the outline of the proof of Theorem 1.1. First, Theorem 1.1 is known for the critical level $k = -h^\vee$ ([FF92, FG04]). Therefore, since $R_{V^k(\mathfrak{g})}$ is a polynomial ring $\mathbb{C}[\mathfrak{g}^*]$, Theorem 1.1 follows from the following fact.

**Theorem 1.2.** — Suppose that the level is non-critical, that is, $k \neq -h^\vee$. The image of any nonzero singular vector $v$ of $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ in the Zhu $C_2$-algebra $R_{V^k(\mathfrak{g})}$ is nonzero.

The symbol $\sigma(w)$ of a singular vector $w$ in $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ is a singular vector in the corresponding vertex Poisson algebra $\text{gr}V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \cong S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \cong \mathbb{C}[J_\infty \mathfrak{g}^*]$, where $J_\infty \mathfrak{g}^*$ is the arc space of $\mathfrak{g}^*$. Theorem 1.2 states that the image of $\sigma(w)$ of a non-trivial singular vector $w$ under the projection

$$(1.3) \quad \mathbb{C}[J_\infty \mathfrak{g}^*] \longrightarrow \mathbb{C}[\mathfrak{g}^*] = R_{V^k(\mathfrak{g})}$$

is nonzero, provided that $k$ is non-critical. Here the projection (1.3) is defined by identifying $\mathbb{C}[\mathfrak{g}^*]$ with the Zhu $C_2$-algebra of the commutative vertex algebra $\mathbb{C}[J_\infty \mathfrak{g}^*]$. Hence, Theorem 1.2 would follow if the image of any nontrivial singular vector in $\mathbb{C}[J_\infty \mathfrak{g}^*]$ under the projection (1.3) is nonzero. However, this is false as there are singular vectors in $\mathbb{C}[J_\infty \mathfrak{g}^*]$ that do not come from singular vectors of $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ and that belong to the kernel of (1.3) (see Section 3.4). Therefore, we do need to make use of the fact that $\sigma(w)$ is the symbol of a singular vector $w$ in $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$. We also note that the statement of Theorem 1.2 is not true if $k$ is critical (see Section 3.4).

For this reason the proof of Theorem 1.2 is divided roughly into two parts. First, we work in the commutative setting to deduce a first important reduction (Lemma 3.1). Next, we use the Sugawara construction – which is available only at non-critical levels – in the non-commutative setting in order to complete the proof.

Now, let us consider the $W$-algebra $W^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)$ associated with a nilpotent element $f$ of $\mathfrak{g}$ at the level $k$ defined by the generalized quantized Drinfeld-Sokolov reduction [FF90, KRW03]:

$$W^k(\mathfrak{g}, f) = H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(V^k(\mathfrak{g})).$$

Here, $H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(M)$ denotes the BRST cohomology of the generalized quantized Drinfeld-Sokolov reduction associated with $f \in \mathfrak{n}(\mathfrak{g})$ with coefficients in a $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$-module $M$.

By the Jacobson-Morosov theorem, $f$ embeds into an $\mathfrak{s}_2$-triple $(e, h, f)$. The Slodowy slice $\mathcal{J}_f$ at $f$ is the affine space $\mathcal{J}_f = f + \mathfrak{g}^e$, where $\mathfrak{g}^e$ is the centralizer of $e$ in $\mathfrak{g}$. It has a natural Poisson structure induced from that of $\mathfrak{g}^*$ (see [GG02]), and we have [DSK06, Ara15a] a natural isomorphism $R_{W^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)} \cong \mathbb{C}[\mathcal{J}_f]$ of Poisson algebras, so that

$$X_{W^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)} = \mathcal{J}_f.$$

The natural surjection $V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \to L_k(\mathfrak{g})$ induces a surjection $W^k(\mathfrak{g}, f) \to H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(L_k(\mathfrak{g}))$ of vertex algebras ([Ara15a]). Hence the variety $X_{H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(L_k(\mathfrak{g}))}$ is a $C^*$-invariant Poisson subvarieties of the Slodowy slice $\mathcal{J}_f$.

Conjecturally [KRW03, KW08], the vertex algebra $H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(L_k(\mathfrak{g}))$ coincides the unique simple (graded) quotient $W^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)$ of $W^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)$ provided that $H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(L_k(\mathfrak{g})) \neq 0$. (This conjecture has been verified in many cases [Ara05, Ara07, Ara11, AvE19].)
As a consequence of Theorem 1.1, we obtain the following result.

**Theorem 1.3.** — Let \( f \) be any nilpotent element of \( \mathfrak{g} \). The following assertions are equivalent:

1. \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) is simple,
2. \( \mathcal{W}^k(\mathfrak{g}, f) = H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(L_k(\mathfrak{g})) \),
3. \( X_{H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(L_k(\mathfrak{g}))} = \mathcal{S}_f \).

Note that Theorem 1.3 implies that \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) is simple if \( \mathcal{W}^k(\mathfrak{g}, f) = \mathcal{S}_f \) and \( H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(L_k(\mathfrak{g})) \neq 0 \) since \( \mathcal{X}_{H^0_{\text{DS}, f}(L_k(\mathfrak{g}))} \supset \mathcal{X}_{\mathcal{W}^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)} \).

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. In Section 2 we set up notation in the case of affine vertex algebras that will be the framework of this note. Section 3 is devoted to the proof of Theorem 1.1. In Section 4, we have compiled some known facts on Slodowy slices, \( W \)-algebras and their associated varieties. Theorem 1.3 is proved in this section.

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**2. Universal affine vertex algebras and associated graded vertex Poisson algebras**

Let \( \hat{\mathfrak{g}} \) be the affine Kac-Moody algebra associated with \( \mathfrak{g} \), that is,
\[
\hat{\mathfrak{g}} = \mathfrak{g}[t, t^{-1}] \oplus \mathbb{C}K,
\]
where the commutation relations are given by
\[
[x \otimes t^m, y \otimes t^n] = [x, y] \otimes t^{m+n} + m(x|y)\delta_{m+n,0}K, \quad [K, \hat{\mathfrak{g}}] = 0,
\]
for \( x, y \in \mathfrak{g} \) and \( m, n \in \mathbb{Z} \). Here,
\[
(\parallel) = \frac{1}{2\hbar} \times \text{Killing form of } \mathfrak{g}
\]
is the usual normalized inner product. For \( x \in \mathfrak{g} \) and \( m \in \mathbb{Z} \), we shall write \( x(m) \) for \( x \otimes t^m \).

**2.1. Universal affine vertex algebras.** — For \( k \in \mathbb{C} \), set
\[
V^k(\mathfrak{g}) = U(\hat{\mathfrak{g}}) \otimes U(\mathfrak{g}[t] \oplus \mathbb{C}K) \mathbb{C}_k,
\]
where \( \mathbb{C}_k \) is the one-dimensional representation of \( \mathfrak{g}[t] \oplus \mathbb{C}K \) on which \( K \) acts as multiplication by \( k \) and \( \mathfrak{g} \otimes \mathbb{C}[t] \) acts trivially.

By the Poincaré-Birkhoff-Witt Theorem, the direct sum decomposition, we have
\[
(2.1) \quad V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \cong U(\mathfrak{g} \otimes t^{-1} \mathbb{C}[t^{-1}]) = U(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]).
\]
The space \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) is naturally graded,
\[
V^k(\mathfrak{g}) = \bigoplus_{\Delta \in \mathfrak{g}_{\mathfrak{g}}} V^k(\mathfrak{g})\Delta,
\]

J.E.P. — M., 2021, tome 8
where the grading is defined by
\[
\deg(x^1(-n_1) \cdots x^r(-n_r) 1) = \sum_{i=1}^r n_i, \quad r \geq 0, \ x^{ij} \in \mathfrak{g},
\]
with 1 the image of 1 \otimes 1 in \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \). We have \( V^k(\mathfrak{g})_0 = \mathbb{C}1 \), and we identify \( \mathfrak{g} \) with \( V^k(\mathfrak{g})_1 \) via the linear isomorphism defined by \( x \mapsto x(-1)1 \).

It is well-known that \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) has a unique vertex algebra structure such that 1 is the vacuum vector,
\[
x(z) := Y(x \otimes t^{-1}, z) = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} x(n) z^{-n-1},
\]
and
\[
[T, x(z)] = \partial_x(z)
\]
for \( x \in \mathfrak{g} \), where \( T \) is the translation operator. Here, \( x(n) \) acts on \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) by left multiplication, and so, one can view \( x(n) \) as an endomorphism of \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \). The vertex algebra \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) is called the \textit{universal affine vertex algebra} associated with \( \mathfrak{g} \) at level \( k \) [FZ92, Zhu96, LL04].

The vertex algebra \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) is a vertex operator algebra, provided that \( k + h^\vee \neq 0 \), by the \textit{Sugawara construction}. More specifically, set
\[
S = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{\dim \mathfrak{g}} x_i(-1)x_i(-1)1,
\]
where \( \{x_i : i = 1, \ldots, d\} \) is the dual basis of a basis \( \{x^i : i = 1, \ldots, \dim \mathfrak{g}\} \) of \( \mathfrak{g} \) with respect to the bilinear form \( (\ | \ ) \), with \( d = \dim \mathfrak{g} \). Then for \( k \neq -h^\vee \), the vector \( \omega = S/(k + h^\vee) \) is a conformal vector of \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) with central charge
\[
c(k) = \frac{k \dim \mathfrak{g}}{k + h^\vee}.
\]
Note that, writing \( \omega(z) = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} L_n z^{-n-2} \), we have
\[
L_0 = \frac{1}{2(k + h^\vee)} \left( \sum_{i=1}^{d} x_i(0)x_i(0) + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \sum_{i=1}^{d} (x_i(-n)x_i(n) + x^i(-n)x_i(n)) \right),
\]
\[
L_n = \frac{1}{2(k + h^\vee)} \left( \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \sum_{i=1}^{d} x_i(-m)x_i(m + n) + \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} \sum_{i=1}^{d} x^i(-m + n)x_i(m) \right), \quad \text{if } n \neq 0.
\]

\textbf{Lemma 2.1} ([Kac90]). \quad We have
\[
[L_n, x(m)] = -mx(m + n), \quad \text{for } x \in \mathfrak{g}, \ m, n \in \mathbb{Z},
\]
and \( L_n 1 = 0 \) for \( n \geq -1 \).

We have \( V^k(\mathfrak{g})_{\Delta} = \{ v \in V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \mid L_0 v = \Delta v \} \) and \( T = L_{-1} \) on \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \), provided that \( k + h^\vee \neq 0 \).

Any graded quotient of \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) as \( \mathfrak{g} \)-module has the structure of a quotient vertex algebra. In particular, the unique simple graded quotient \( L_k(\mathfrak{g}) \) is a vertex algebra, and is called the \textit{simple affine vertex algebra associated with} \( \mathfrak{g} \) at level \( k \).
2.2. Associate graded vertex Poisson algebras of affine vertex algebras

It is known by Li [Li05] that any vertex algebra \( V \) admits a canonical filtration \( F^*V \), called the Li filtration of \( V \). For a quotient \( V \) of \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \), \( F^*V \) is described as follows. The subspace \( F^pV \) is spanned by the elements

\[
y_1(-n_1 - 1) \cdots y_r(-n_r - 1)1
\]

with \( y_i \in \mathfrak{g}, n_i \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}, n_1 + \cdots + n_r \geq p \). We have

\[
V = F^0V \supset F^1V \supset \cdots, \quad \bigcap_p F^pV = 0,
\]

\[
T F^pV \subset F^{p+1}V,
\]

\[
a_{(a)}F^qV \subset F^{p+q-n-1}V \quad \text{for} \quad a \in F^pV, \quad n \in \mathbb{Z},
\]

\[
a_{(a)}F^qV \subset F^{p+q-n}V \quad \text{for} \quad a \in F^pV, \quad n \geq 0.
\]

Here we have set \( F^pV = V \) for \( p < 0 \).

Let \( \text{gr}^F V = \bigoplus_p F^pV/F^{p+1}V \) be the associated graded vector space. The space \( \text{gr}^F V \) is a vertex Poisson algebra by

\[
\sigma_p(a)\sigma_q(b) = \sigma_{p+q}(a(–1)b),
\]

\[
T \sigma_p(a) = \sigma_{p+1}(Ta),
\]

\[
\sigma_p(a(\cdot))\sigma_q(b) = \sigma_{p+q-n}(a(\cdot)),
\]

for \( a, b \in V, n \geq 0 \), where \( \sigma_p : F^pV \rightarrow F^pV/F^{p+1}V \) is the principal symbol map.

In particular, \( \text{gr}^F V \) is a \( \mathfrak{g}[t] \)-module by the correspondence

\[
\mathfrak{g}[t] \ni x(n) \mapsto \sigma_0(x) \in \text{End}(\text{gr}^F V)
\]

for \( x \in \mathfrak{g}, n \geq 0 \).

The filtration \( F^*V \) is compatible with the grading: \( F^pV = \bigoplus_{\Delta \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}} F^pV_\Delta \), where \( F^pV_\Delta := V_\Delta \cap F^pV \).

Let \( U_*(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \) be the PBW filtration of \( U(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \), that is, \( U_p(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \) is the subspace of \( U(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \) spanned by monomials \( y_1y_2\cdots y_r \) with \( y_i \in \mathfrak{g}, r \leq p \).

Define

\[
G_pV = U_p(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}])1.
\]

Then \( G_\bullet V \) defines an increasing filtration of \( V \). We have

\[
F^pV_\Delta = G_{\Delta-p}G_\Delta,
\]

where \( G_pV_\Delta := G_pV \cap V_\Delta \), see [Ara12, Prop. 2.6.1]. Therefore, the graded space \( \text{gr}^G V = \bigoplus_{p \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}} G_pV/G_{p-1}V \) is isomorphic to \( \text{gr}^F V \). In particular, we have

\[
\text{gr}V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \cong \text{gr}U_*(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \cong S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}] resigns with the one induced from the action of \( \mathfrak{g}[t] \) on \( \mathfrak{g}[t, t^{-1}] \).

More precisely, the element \( x(m) \), for \( x \in \mathfrak{g} \)}
and \( m \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0} \), acts on \( S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \) as follows:
\[
x(m) \cdot 1 = 0,
\]
\[
x(m) \cdot v = \sum_{j=1}^{r} \sum_{n_j > 0} y_1(-n_1) \cdots [x, y_j](m - n_j) \cdots y_r(-n_r),
\]
if \( v = y_1(-n_1) \cdots y_r(-n_r) \) with \( y_i \in \mathfrak{g}, n_1, \ldots, n_r \in \mathbb{Z}_{>0} \).

2.3. Zhu’s \( C_2 \)-algebras and associated varieties of affine vertex algebras

We have [Li05, Lem. 2.9]
\[
F^p V = \text{span}_{\mathbb{C}} \{ a_{(-i)} - 1 \ b \mid a \in V, i \geq 1, b \in F^{p-1} V \}
\]
for all \( p \geq 1 \). In particular,
\[
F^1 V = C_2(V),
\]
where \( C_2(V) = \text{span}_{\mathbb{C}} \{ a_{(-2)} b \mid a, b \in V \} \). Set
\[
R_V = V/C_2(V) = F^0 V/F^1 V \subset \text{gr} F V.
\]
It is known by Zhu [Zhu96] that \( R_V \) is a Poisson algebra. The Poisson algebra structure can be understood as the restriction of the vertex Poisson structure of \( \text{gr} F V \). It is given by
\[
\pi \cdot \overline{b} = a_{(-1)} b, \quad \{ \pi, \overline{b} \} = a_{(0)} b,
\]
for \( a, b \in V \), where \( \pi = a + C_2(V) \).

By definition [Ara12a], the associated variety of \( V \) is the reduced scheme
\[
X_V := \text{Specm}(R_V).
\]
It is easily seen that
\[
F^1 V^k(\mathfrak{g}) = C_2(V^k(\mathfrak{g})) = t^{-2}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]V^k(\mathfrak{g}).
\]
The following map defines an isomorphism of Poisson algebras
\[
\mathbb{C}[\mathfrak{g}^*] \cong S(\mathfrak{g}) \rightarrow R_{V^k(\mathfrak{g})}
\]
\[
\mathfrak{g} \ni x \mapsto x(-1)1 + t^{-2}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]V^k(\mathfrak{g}).
\]
Therefore, \( R_{V^k(\mathfrak{g})} \cong \mathbb{C}[\mathfrak{g}^*] \) and so, \( X_{V^k(\mathfrak{g})} \cong \mathfrak{g}^* \).

More generally, if \( V \) is a quotient of \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) by some ideal \( N \), then we have
(2.6)
\[
R_V \cong \mathbb{C}[\mathfrak{g}^*]/IN
\]
as Poisson algebras, where \( IN \) is the image of \( N \) in \( R_{V^k(\mathfrak{g})} = \mathbb{C}[\mathfrak{g}^*] \). Then \( X_V \) is just the zero locus of \( IN \) in \( \mathfrak{g}^* \). It is a closed \( G \)-invariant conic subset of \( \mathfrak{g}^* \).

Identifying \( \mathfrak{g}^* \) with \( \mathfrak{g} \) through the bilinear form \( ( \cdot | \cdot ) \), one may view \( X_V \) as a subvariety of \( \mathfrak{g} \).
2.4. PBW basis. — Let $\Delta_+ = \{\beta_1, \ldots, \beta_q\}$ be the set of positive roots for $\mathfrak{g}$ with respect to a triangular decomposition $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{n}_- \oplus \mathfrak{h} \oplus \mathfrak{n}_+$, where $q = (d - \ell)/2$ and $\ell = \text{rk}(\mathfrak{g})$.

Form now on, we fix a basis
$$\{u^i, e_{\beta_j}, f_{\beta_j} \mid i = 1, \ldots, \ell, j = 1, \ldots, q\}$$
of $\mathfrak{g}$ such that $\{u^i \mid i = 1, \ldots, \ell\}$ is an orthonormal basis of $\mathfrak{h}$ with respect to $( \mid \mid )$ and $(e_{\beta_i}, f_{\beta_j}) = 1$ for $i = 1, 2, \ldots, q$. In particular, $(e_{\beta_i}, e_{\beta_i}) = (f_{\beta_i}, f_{\beta_i}) = 0$ for $i = 1, \ldots, q$ (see, for example, [Hum72, Prop.8.3]), where $\mathfrak{h}^*$ and $\mathfrak{h}$ are identified through $( \mid \mid )$. One may also assume that $\text{ht}(\beta_i) \leq \text{ht}(\beta_j)$ for $i < j$, where $\text{ht}(\beta_i)$ stands for the height of the positive root $\beta_i$.

We define the structure constants $c_{\alpha, \beta}$ by
$$(e_{\alpha}, e_{\beta}) = c_{\alpha, \beta} e_{\alpha + \beta},$$
provided that $\alpha, \beta$ and $\alpha + \beta$ are in $\Delta$. Our convention is that $e_{-\alpha}$ stands for $f_{\alpha}$ if $\alpha \in \Delta_+$. If $\alpha$, $\beta$ and $\alpha + \beta$ are in $\Delta_+$, then from the equalities,
$$c_{-\alpha, \alpha + \beta} = (f_{\beta}[e_{\alpha}, e_{\alpha + \beta}]) = -(f_{\beta}[e_{\alpha + \beta}, f_{\alpha}]) = -1$$
we get that
$$c_{-\alpha, \alpha + \beta} = -c_{-\alpha, \alpha + \beta}.$$

By (2.1), the above basis of $\mathfrak{g}$ induces a basis of $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ consisted of $\mathbf{1}$ and the elements of the form
$$z = z^{(+)} z^{(-)} z^{(0)} \mathbf{1},$$
with
$$z^{(+)} := e_{\beta_1}(-1)^{a_{1,1}} \cdots e_{\beta_l}(-1)^{a_{l,1}} \cdots e_{\beta_q}(-1)^{a_{q,1}} \cdots e_{\beta_q}(-r_q)^{a_{q,q}},$$
$$z^{(-)} := f_{\beta_1}(-1)^{b_{1,1}} \cdots f_{\beta_l}(-s_1)^{b_{l,1}} \cdots f_{\beta_q}(-1)^{b_{q,1}} \cdots f_{\beta_q}(-s_q)^{b_{q,q}},$$
$$z^{(0)} := u^1(-1)^{c_{1,1}} \cdots u^l(-t_1)^{c_{l,1}} \cdots u^l(-1)^{c_{l,1}} \cdots u^l(-t_\ell)^{c_{l,\ell}},$$
where $r_1, \ldots, r_q, s_1, \ldots, s_q, t_1, \ldots, t_\ell$ are positive integers, and $a_{i,m}, b_{i,m}, c_{i,j}$, for $l = 1, \ldots, q$, $m = 1, \ldots, r_i$, $n = 1, \ldots, s_i$, $i = 1, \ldots, \ell$, $j = 1, \ldots, t_i$ are nonnegative integers such that at least one of them is nonzero.

**Definition 2.2.** — Each element $x$ of $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ is a linear combination of elements in the above PBW basis, each of them will be called a **PBW monomial** of $x$.

**Definition 2.3.** — For a PBW monomial $v$ as in (2.8), we call the integer
$$\text{depth}(v) = \sum_{i=1}^q \left( \sum_{j=1}^{r_i} a_{i,j} (j - 1) + \sum_{j=1}^{s_i} b_{i,j} (j - 1) \right) + \sum_{i=1}^l \sum_{j=1}^{t_i} c_{i,j} (j - 1)$$
the **depth** of $v$. In other words, a PBW monomial $v$ has depth $p$ means that $v \in F^p V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ and $v \notin F^{p+1} V^k(\mathfrak{g})$. By convention, $\text{depth}(\mathbf{1}) = 0$. 

*J.E.P. — M., 2021, tome 8*
For a PBW monomial $v$ as in (2.8), we call degree of $v$ the integer

$$\deg(v) = \frac{q}{k + h}(\sum_{i=1}^{g} \sum_{j=1}^{s_i} a_{i,j} + \sum_{j=1}^{s_i} b_{i,j}) + \sum_{i=1}^{g} \sum_{j=1}^{s_i} e_{i,j},$$

In other words, $v$ has degree $p$ means that $v \in G_p V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ and $v \notin G_{p-1} V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ since the PBW filtration of $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ coincides with the standard filtration $G_* V^k(\mathfrak{g})$. By convention, $\deg(1) = 0$.

Recall that a singular vector of a $\mathfrak{g}[t]$-representation $M$ is a vector $m \in M$ such that $e_{\alpha}(0)m = 0$, for all $\alpha \in \Delta_+$, and $f_{\theta}(1) \cdot m = 0$, where $\theta$ is the highest positive root of $\mathfrak{g}$. From the identity

$$L_{-1} = \frac{1}{k + h}(\sum_{i=1}^{g} \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} u^i(-1-m)u^i(m) + \sum_{\alpha \in \Delta_+} f_{\alpha}(1)m + f_{\alpha}(-1)\sum_{m=0}^{\infty} e_{\alpha}(1)m)$$

we deduce the following easy observation, which will be useful in the proof of the main result.

**Lemma 2.4.** If $w$ is a singular vector of $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$, then

$$L_{-1}w = \frac{1}{k + h}(\sum_{i=1}^{g} u^i(-1)u^i(0) + \sum_{\alpha \in \Delta_+} e_{\alpha}(1)w)w.$$

**2.5. Basis of associated graded vertex Poisson algebras.** Note that $\text{gr} V^k(\mathfrak{g}) = S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}])$ has a basis consisting of 1 and elements of the form (2.8). Similarly to Definition 2.2, we have the following definition.

**Definition 2.5.** Each element $x$ of $S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}])$ is a linear combination of elements in the above basis, each of them will be called a monomial of $x$.

As in the case of $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$, the space $S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}])$ has two natural gradations. The first one is induced from the degree of elements as polynomials. We shall write $\deg(v)$ for the degree of a homogeneous element $v \in S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}])$ with respect to this gradation.

The second one is induced from the Li filtration via the isomorphism $S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \cong \text{gr}^L V^k(\mathfrak{g})$. The degree of a homogeneous element $v \in S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}])$ with respect to the gradation induced by Li filtration will be called the depth of $v$, and will be denoted by $\text{depth}(v)$.

Notice that any element $v$ of the form (2.8) is homogeneous for both gradations. By convention, $\deg(1) = \text{depth}(1) = 0$.

As a consequence of (2.5), we get that

$$\deg(x(m) \cdot v) = \deg(v) \quad \text{and} \quad \text{depth}(x(m) \cdot v) = \text{depth}(v) - m,$$

for $m \geq 0$, $x \in \mathfrak{g}$, and any homogeneous element $v \in S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}])$ with respect to both gradations.
In the sequel, we will also use the following notation, for \( v \) of the form (2.8), viewed either as an element of \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) or of \( S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \):

\[
\deg_0^{(0)}(v) := \sum_{j=1}^{\ell} c_{j,1},
\]

which corresponds to the degree of the element obtained from \( v^{(0)} \) by keeping only the terms of depth 0, that is, the terms \( w^i(-1), \ i = 1, \ldots, \ell \).

Notice that a nonzero depth-homogeneous element of \( S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \) has depth 0 if and only if its image in

\[
R_{V^k(\mathfrak{g})} = V^k(\mathfrak{g})/t^{-2}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]V^k(\mathfrak{g})
\]

is nonzero.

### 3. Proof of the main result

This section is devoted to the proof of Theorem 1.1.

**3.1. Strategy.** — Let \( N_k \) be the maximal graded submodule of \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \), so that \( L_k(\mathfrak{g}) = V^k(\mathfrak{g})/N_k \). Our aim is to show that if \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) is not simple, that is, \( N_k \neq \{0\} \), then \( X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})} \) is strictly contained in \( \mathfrak{g}^* \cong \mathfrak{g} \), that is, the image \( I_k := I_{N_k} \) of \( N_k \) in \( R_{V^k(\mathfrak{g})} = \mathbb{C}[\mathfrak{g}^*] \) is nonzero.

For \( k = -h^\vee \), it follows from [FG04] that \( I_k \) is the defining ideal of the nilpotent cone \( N(\mathfrak{g}) \) of \( \mathfrak{g} \), and so \( X_{L_k(\mathfrak{g})} = N(\mathfrak{g}) \) (see [Ara12b] or Section 3.4 below). Hence, there is no loss of generality in assuming that \( k + h^\vee \neq 0 \).

Henceforth, we suppose that \( k + h^\vee \neq 0 \) and that \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) is not simple, that is, \( N_k \neq \{0\} \). Then there exists at least one non-trivial (that is, nonzero and different from 1) singular vector \( w \) in \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \). Theorem 1.2 states that the image of \( w \) in \( I_k \) is nonzero, and this proves Theorem 1.1. The rest of this section is devoted to the proof of Theorem 1.2.

Let \( w \) be a nontrivial singular vector of \( V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \). One can assume that \( w \in F^pV^k(\mathfrak{g}) \setminus F^{p+1}V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) for some \( p \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0} \).

The image

\[
\overline{w} := \sigma(w)
\]

of this singular vector in \( S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \cong \mathfrak{g}^F V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) is a nontrivial singular vector of \( S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \). Here \( \sigma : V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \to \mathfrak{g}^F V^k(\mathfrak{g}) \) stands for the principal symbol map. It follows from (2.9) that one can assume that \( \overline{w} \) is homogeneous with respect to both gradations on \( S(t^{-1}\mathfrak{g}[t^{-1}]) \). In particular \( \overline{w} \) has depth \( p \). It is enough to show that \( p = 0 \), that is, \( \overline{w} \) has depth zero. Write

\[
w = \sum_{j \in J} \lambda_j w_j,
\]

where \( J \) is a finite index set, \( \lambda_j \) are nonzero scalar for all \( j \in J \), and \( w_j \) are pairwise distinct PBW monomials of the form (2.8). Let \( I \subset J \) be the subset of \( i \in J \) such that
depth $\overline{w}^i = p = \text{depth} \overline{w}$. Since $w \in F^p V^k(g) \times F^{p+1} V^k(g)$, the set $I$ is nonempty. Here, $\overline{w}^i$ stands for the image of $w^i$ in $gr^F V^k(g) \cong S(t^{-1}g[t^{-1}])$.

More specifically, for any $j \in I$, write

$$w^j = (w^j)^{(0)}(w^j)^{(+)}(w^j)^{(-)} 1,$$

with

$$(w^j)^{(+)} := e_{\beta_1}(-1)^{a^{(j)}_1} \cdots e_{\beta_i}(-r^\Delta_i) \cdots e_{\beta_q}(-1)^{a^{(j)}_q} \cdots e_{\beta_q}(-r^\Delta_q) a^{(j)}_{r^\Delta_q},$$

$$(w^j)^{(-)} := f_{\beta_1}(-1)^{b^{(j)}_1} \cdots f_{\beta_i}(-s^\Delta_i) \cdots f_{\beta_q}(-1)^{b^{(j)}_q} \cdots f_{\beta_q}(-s^\Delta_q) b^{(j)}_{s^\Delta_q},$$

$$(w^j)^{(0)} := u^1(-1)^{c^{(j)}_{1,1}} \cdots u^l(-1)^{c^{(j)}_{l,1}} \cdots y^l(-1)^{c^{(j)}_{l,1}} \cdots y^l(-t)^{c^{(j)}_{l,t}},$$

where $r_1, \ldots, r_q, s_1, \ldots, s_q, t_1, \ldots, t_l$ are nonnegative integers, and $a^{(j)}_{l,m}, b^{(j)}_{l,m}, c^{(j)}_{l,m}$, for $l = 1, \ldots, q, m = 1, \ldots, r_l, n = 1, \ldots, s_l, i = 1, \ldots, \ell, p = 1, \ldots, t_l$, are nonnegative integers such that at least one of them is nonzero.

The integers $r_i$'s, for $l = 1, \ldots, q$, are chosen so that at least one of the $w^{(j)}_{l,r_l}$ is nonzero for $j$ running through $J$ if for some $j \in J$, $(w^j)^{(+) \neq} 1$. Otherwise, we just set $(w^j)^{(+) := 1$. Similarly are defined the integers $s_l$'s and $t_m$'s, for $l = 1, \ldots, q$ and $m = 1, \ldots, \ell$. By our assumption, note that for all $i \in I$,

$$\sum_{n=1}^q \left( \sum_{l=1}^{r_n} a^{(i)}_{n,l} + \sum_{l=1}^{s_n} b^{(i)}_{n,l} \right) + \sum_{n=1}^q \sum_{l=1}^{t_n} c^{(i)}_{n,l} = \deg(\overline{w})$$

$$\sum_{n=1}^q \left( \sum_{l=1}^{r_n} a^{(i)}_{n,l}(l - 1) + \sum_{l=1}^{s_n} b^{(i)}_{n,l}(l - 1) \right) + \sum_{n=1}^q \sum_{l=1}^{t_n} c^{(i)}_{n,l}(l - 1) = \text{depth}(\overline{w}) = p.$$

3.2. A technical lemma. — In this paragraph we remain in the commutative setting, and we only deal with $\overline{w} \in S(t^{-1}g[t^{-1}])$ and its monomials $\overline{w}^i$'s, for $i \in I$.

Recall from (2.10) that

$$\deg^{(0)}_{-1}(w^i) = \sum_{j=1}^\ell c^{(i)}_{j,1}$$

for $i \in I$. Set

$$d^{(0)}_{-1}(I) := \max\{\deg^{(0)}_{-1}(w^i) \mid i \in I\},$$

and

$$I^{(0)} := \{i \in I \mid \deg^{(0)}_{-1}(w^i) = d^{(0)}_{-1}(I)\}.$$

If $(w^i)^{(0)} = 1$ for all $i \in I$, we just set $d^{(0)}_{-1}(I) = 0$ and then $I^{(0)} = I$.

Lemma 3.1. — If $i \in I^{(0)}$, then $(\overline{w}^i)^{(-)} = 1$. In other words, for $i \in I^{(0)}$, we have $\overline{w}^i = (\overline{w}^i)^{(0)}(\overline{w}^i)^{(+)} 1$.

Proof. — Suppose the assertion is false. Then for some positive roots $\beta_{j_1}, \ldots, \beta_{j_n} \in \Delta_+$, one can write for any $i \in I^{(0)}$,

$$(\overline{w}^i)^{(-)} = f_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)^{b^{(i)}_{j_1,1}} \cdots f_{\beta_{j_n}}(-s^{j_1}_{j_n}) b^{(i)}_{j_1,1} \cdots f_{\beta_{j_n}}(-1)^{b^{(i)}_{j_n,1}} \cdots f_{\beta_{j_n}}(-s^{j_1}_{j_n}) b^{(i)}_{j_n,1},$$

$J.E.P. - M., 3022, tome 8$
so that for any \( l \in \{1, \ldots, t\} \),
\[
\{ b_{j_l, s_{j_l}}^{(i)} \mid i \in I_{-1}^{(0)} \} \neq \{0\}.
\]
Set
\[
K_{-1}^{(0)} = \{ i \in I_{-1}^{(0)} \mid b_{j_l, s_{j_l}}^{(i)} > 0 \}.
\]
Since \( \varpi \) is a singular vector of \( S(t^{-1}g[t^{-1}]) \) and \( s_{j_l} = 1 \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0} \), we have
\[
e_{\beta_{j_l}}(s_{j_l} - 1) \cdot \varpi = 0.
\]
On the other hand, using the action of \( g[t] \) on \( S(t^{-1}g[t^{-1}]) \) as described by (2.5), we see that
\[
0 = e_{\beta_{j_l}}(s_{j_l} - 1) \cdot \varpi = \sum_{i \in K_{-1}^{(0)}} \lambda_i b_{j_l, s_{j_l}}^{(i)} v^i + v,
\]
where for \( i \in K_{-1}^{(0)} \),
\[
v^i := (\varpi^{(0)})^{(0)} b_{j_l}^{(0)} (-1)^{b_{j_l}^{(0)}} \cdots f_{\beta_{j_l}} (-s_{j_l})^{b_{j_l}^{(0)} - 1} \cdots f_{\beta_{j_l}} (-1)^{b_{j_l}^{(0)}} w^{(0)} \beta_{j_l}^{(0)} (\varpi^{(0)})^{(0)} b_{j_l}^{(0)} \cdots f_{\beta_{j_l}} (-s_{j_l})^{b_{j_l}^{(0)} - 1} (w^i)(^+) \mathbf{1},
\]
and \( v \) is a linear combination of monomials \( x \) such that
\[
\deg_{-1}^{(0)}(x) \leq d_{-1}^{(0)}(I).
\]
Indeed, for \( i \in K_{-1}^{(0)} \), it is clear that
\[
e_{\beta_{j_l}}(s_{j_l} - 1) \cdot w^i = b_{j_l, s_{j_l}}^{(i)} v^i + y^i,
\]
where \( y^i \) is a linear combination of monomials \( y \) such that \( \deg_{-1}^{(0)}(y) \leq d_{-1}^{(0)}(I) \) because \( \text{ht}(\beta_{j_l}) \leq \text{ht}(\beta_{j_l}) \) for all \( l \in \{1, \ldots, t\} \). Next, for \( i \in I_{-1}^{(0)} \setminus K_{-1}^{(0)} \), \( e_{\beta_{j_l}}(s_{j_l} - 1) \cdot \varpi \) is a linear combination of monomials \( z \) such that \( \deg_{-1}^{(0)}(z) \leq d_{-1}^{(0)}(I) \) because \( b_{j_l, s_{j_l}}^{(i)} = 0 \).

Finally, for \( i \in I \setminus I_{-1}^{(0)} \), we have \( \deg_{-1}^{(0)}(\varpi) < d_{-1}^{(0)}(I) \) and, hence, \( e_{\beta_{j_l}}(s_{j_l} - 1) \cdot \varpi \) is a linear combination of monomials \( z \) such that \( \deg_{-1}^{(0)}(z) \leq d_{-1}^{(0)}(I) \) as well.

Now, note that for each \( i \in K_{-1}^{(0)} \),
\[
\deg_{-1}^{(0)}(v^i) = \deg_{-1}^{(0)}(\varpi) + 1 = d_{-1}^{(0)}(I) + 1.
\]
Hence by (3.3) we get a contradiction because all monomials \( v^i \), for \( i \) running through \( K_{-1}^{(0)} \), are linearly independent while \( \lambda_i b_{j_l, s_{j_l}}^{(i)} \neq 0 \), for \( i \in K_{-1}^{(0)} \). This concludes the proof of the lemma. \( \square \)

3.3. Use of Sugawara operators. — Recall that \( w = \sum_{j \in J} \lambda_j w^j \). Let \( J_1 \subseteq J \) be such that for \( i \in J_1 \), \( (w^i)(^+) = 1 \). Then by Lemma 3.1,
\[
\varnothing \neq I_{-1}^{(0)} \subseteq J_1.
\]
So \( J_1 \neq \varnothing \). Set
\[
d_{-1}^{(0)} := d_{-1}^{(0)}(J_1) = \max\{ \deg_{-1}^{(0)}(w^i) \mid i \in J_1 \},
\]
\[\text{J.E.P. - M., 2001, tome 8}\]
and
\[ J_{j-1}^{(0)} := \{ i \in J_1 \mid \deg_{j-1}^{(0)}(w^i) = d_{j-1}^{(0)} \}. \]
Then \( d_{j-1}^{(0)}(I) \leq d_{j-1}^{(0)} \). Set
\[ d^+ := \max\{ \deg(w^i)^{(+)} \mid i \in J_{j-1}^{(0)} \} \]
and let
\[ J^+ = \{ i \in J_{j-1}^{(0)} \mid \deg(w^i)^{(+)} = d^+ \} \subseteq J_{j-1}^{(0)}. \]

Our next aim is to show that for \( i \in J^+ \), \( w^i \) has depth zero, whence \( p = 0 \) since \( p \) is by definition the smallest depth of the \( w^j \)'s, and so the image of \( w \) in \( R_{V^k(g)} = F^0V^k(g)/F^1V^k(g) \) is nonzero.

This will be achieved in this paragraph through the use of the Sugawara construction.

Recall that by Lemma 2.4,
\[ L_{-1}w = \tilde{L}_{-1}w \]
since \( w \) is a singular vector of \( V^k(g) \), where
\[ \tilde{L}_{-1} := \frac{1}{k+h^\vee} \left( \sum_{i=1}^{\ell} u^i(-1)u^i(0) + \sum_{\alpha \in \Delta_+} e_\alpha(-1)f_\alpha(0) \right). \]

**Lemma 3.2.** — Let \( z \) be a PBW monomial of the form (2.8). Then \( \tilde{L}_{-1}z \) is a linear combination of PBW monomials \( x \) satisfying all the following conditions:

- (a) \( \deg(x^{(+)}) \leq \deg(z^{(+)}) + 1 \) and \( \deg(x^{(0)}) \leq \deg(z^{(0)}) + 1 \),
- (b) if \( z^{(-)} \neq 1 \), then \( x^{(-)} \neq 1 \).
- (c) if \( x^{(-)} = z^{(-)} \), then either \( \deg(x^{(0)}) = \deg(z^{(0)}) + 1 \), or \( x^{(0)} = z^{(0)} \),
- (d) if \( \deg(x^{(0)}) = \deg(z^{(0)}) + 1 \), then \( x^{(-)} = z^{(-)} \) and \( \deg(x^{(+)}) \leq \deg(z^{(+)}). \)

**Proof.** — Parts (a)–(c) are easy to see. We only prove (d). Assume that \( \deg(x^{(0)}) = \deg(z^{(0)}) + 1 \). Either \( x \) comes from the term \( \sum_{i=1}^{\ell} u^i(-1)u^i(0)z \), or it comes from a term \( e_\alpha(-1)f_\alpha(0)z \) for some \( \alpha \in \Delta_+ \).

If \( x \) comes from the term \( \sum_{i=1}^{\ell} u^i(-1)u^i(0)z \), then it is obvious that \( x^{(-)} = z^{(-)} \) and \( x^{(+)} = z^{(+)} \).

Assume that \( x \) comes from \( e_\alpha(-1)f_\alpha(0)z \) for some \( \alpha \in \Delta_+ \). We have
\[ e_\alpha(-1)f_\alpha(0)z = e_\alpha(-1)[f_\alpha(0), z^{(-)}]z^{(0)}1 + e_\alpha(-1)z^{(+)}[f_\alpha(0), z^{(0)}]1 \]
\[ \quad \quad \quad + e_\alpha(-1)z^{(+)}z^{(-)}[f_\alpha(0), z^{(0)}]1. \]

Clearly, any PBW monomials \( x \) from
\[ e_\alpha(-1)z^{(+)}[f_\alpha(0), z^{(-)}]z^{(0)}1 \]
\[ \text{or} \quad e_\alpha(-1)z^{(+)}z^{(-)}[f_\alpha(0), z^{(0)}]1 \]
satisfies that \( \deg(x^{(0)}) \leq \deg(z^{(0)}) \). Then it is enough to consider PBW monomials in
\[ e_\alpha(-1)[f_\alpha(0), z^{(+)}]z^{(-)}z^{(0)}1. \]

The only possibility for a PBW monomial \( x \) in \( e_\alpha(-1)[f_\alpha(0), z^{(+)}]z^{(-)}z^{(0)}1 \) to satisfy \( \deg(x^{(0)}) = \deg(z^{(0)}) + 1 \) is that it comes from a term \( [f_\alpha(0), e_\alpha(-n)] = -\alpha(-n) \) for
some $n \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$, where $e_\alpha(-n)$ is a term in $z^{(+)}$. But then, for PBW monomials $x$ in $e_\alpha(-1)[f_\alpha(0), z^{(+)}]z^{(0)}1$ such that $\deg(x^{(0)}) = \deg(z^{(0)}) + 1$, we have $x^{(-)} = z^{(-)}$ and $\deg(x^{(+)}) \leq \deg(z^{(+)})$. \hfill $\square$

We now consider the action of $\tilde{L}_{-1}$ on particular PBW monomials.

**Lemma 3.3.** Let $z$ be a PBW monomial of the form (2.8) such that $z^{(-)} = 1$ and $\text{depth}(z^{(+)}) = 0$, that is, either $z^{(+)} = 1$, or for some $j_1, \ldots, j_t \in \{1, \ldots, q\}$ (with possible repetitions),

$$z = e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)e_{\beta_{j_2}}(-1)\cdots e_{\beta_{j_t}}(-1)z^{(0)}1.$$ 

Then $\tilde{L}_{-1}z$ is a linear combination of PBW monomials $y$ satisfying one of the following conditions:

1. $y^{(-)} = 1$, $\text{depth}(y^{(+)}) \geq 1$, $\deg(y^{(+)}) \leq \deg(z^{(+)})$, $y^{(0)} = z^{(0)}$, $\text{deg}(y^{(+)}) = \text{deg}(z^{(+)}) - 1$, and $\text{deg}(y^{(+)}) > \text{deg}(z^{(+)})$,
2. $y^{(-)} = 1$, $\text{depth}(y^{(+)}) = 0$, $\deg(y^{(+)}) \leq \deg(z^{(+)}) - 1$, and $\text{deg}(y^{(+)}) = \text{deg}(z^{(+)}) + 1$,
3. $y^{(-)} = 1$, $\text{depth}(y^{(+)}) \geq 1$, $\deg(y^{(+)}) \leq \deg(z^{(+)}) - 1$, and $\deg_{-1}(y) = \deg_{-1}(z) + 1$,
4. $y^{(-)} \neq 1$.

**Proof.** First, we have

$$\sum_{i=1}^\ell u^t(-1)u^t(0)z = \sum_{i=1}^\ell e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)\cdots \left[ \sum_{i=1}^\ell u^t(-1)u^t(0), e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1) \right] \cdots e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)z^{(0)}1,$$

and

$$\sum_{i=1}^\ell u^t(-1)u^t(0), e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1) = \sum_{i=1}^\ell \left( u^t(-1)[u^t(0), e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)] + [u^t(-1), e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)]u^t(0) \right)$$

$$= \beta_{j_1}(-1)e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1) + e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-2)\beta_{j_1}(0).$$

So

$$(3.4) \sum_{i=1}^\ell u^t(-1)u^t(0)z$$

$$= \sum_{i=1}^\ell e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)\cdots \left( \beta_{j_1}(-1) + e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-2)\beta_{j_1}(0) \right) \cdots e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)z^{(0)}1.$$ 

Second, we have

$$\sum_{\alpha \in \Delta_+} e_\alpha(-1)f_\alpha(0)z = \sum_{\alpha \in \Delta_+} \sum_{r=1}^\ell e_\alpha(-1)e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)\cdots [f_\alpha(0), e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)] \cdots e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)z^{(0)}1$$

$$+ \sum_{\alpha \in \Delta_+} e_\alpha(-1)e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)e_{\beta_{j_2}}(-1)\cdots e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)[f_\alpha(0), z^{(0)}]1.$$ 

It is clear that any PBW monomial $y$ in

$$\sum_{\alpha \in \Delta_+} e_\alpha(-1)e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)e_{\beta_{j_2}}(-1)\cdots e_{\beta_{j_1}}(-1)[f_\alpha(0), z^{(0)}]1$$

satisfies

$$(3.5) y^{(-)} \neq 1.$$
We now consider
\[ u_r := \sum_{\alpha \in \Delta_r} c(1) e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r} f_{\alpha(0)} e_{\beta_1} \cdots e_{\beta_r} z^{(0)} 1, \text{ for } 1 \leq r \leq t. \]

- If \( \beta_r = \alpha + \beta \) for some \( \alpha, \beta \in \Delta_+ \), then there is a partial sum of two terms in \( u_r \):
\[
-c_{-\alpha, \alpha+\beta} c(1) e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r} z^{(0)} 1
- c_{-\beta_r, \alpha+\beta} c(1) e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r} z^{(0)} 1.
\]

Rewriting the above sum to a linear combination of PBW monomials, and noticing that
\[
c_{-\alpha, \alpha+\beta} c(1) e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r} z^{(0)} 1
+ c_{-\beta_r, \alpha+\beta} c(1) e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r} z^{(0)} 1.
\]

due to (2.7), we deduce that it is a linear combination of PBW monomials \( y \) such that
\[
y(-) = z^{(-)} = 1, \quad y(0) = z^{(0)}, \quad \text{depth}(y^{(+)}) \geq 1, \quad \deg(y^{(+)}) \leq \deg(z^{(+)}) \]
where \( c_{-\alpha, \alpha+\beta}, c_{-\beta_r, \alpha+\beta}, c_{\alpha, \beta} \in \mathbb{R}^* \).

- If \( \alpha - \beta_r \in \Delta_+ \) for some \( \alpha \in \Delta_+ \), then there is a term in \( u_r \):
\[
c_{-\alpha, \beta_r} c(1) e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r-1} f_{\alpha-\beta_r} e_{\beta_r} e_{\beta_r+1} \cdots e_{\beta_t} z^{(0)} 1.
\]

It is easy to see that (3.7) is a linear combination of PBW monomials \( y \) such that \( y \) satisfies one of the following:
\[
y(-) = 1, \quad \text{depth}(y^{(+)}) \geq 1, \quad \deg(y^{(+)}) \leq \deg(z^{(+)}) \]
\[
y(0) = z^{(0)}, \quad \deg(y^{(+)}) \leq \deg(z^{(+)}) - 1, \quad \deg(y^{(0)}) > \deg(z^{(0)}), \quad \deg_{-1}^{(0)}(y) = \deg_{-1}^{(0)}(z),
\]
\[
y(-) \neq 1.
\]

Notice also that with \( \alpha = \beta_r \), there is a term in \( u_r \):
\[-e_{\beta_r} e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r-1} e_{\beta_r+1} (1) \cdots e_{\beta_t} z^{(0)} 1.
\]

Together with (3.4), we see that
\[
\sum_{i=1}^{t} u_i(1) u_i^{(0)} z + \sum_{r=1}^{t} e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r} f_{\beta_r(0)} e_{\beta_1} \cdots e_{\beta_r} z^{(0)} 1
\]
\[=
\sum_{r=1}^{t} e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r} f_{\beta_r(0)} e_{\beta_1} \cdots e_{\beta_r} z^{(0)} 1
- \sum_{r=1}^{t} e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r-1} e_{\beta_r} e_{\beta_r+1} (1) \cdots e_{\beta_t} z^{(0)} 1
- \sum_{r=1}^{t} e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r-1} e_{\beta_r} e_{\beta_r+1} (1) \cdots e_{\beta_t} z^{(0)} 1
- \sum_{r=1}^{t} e_{\beta_1} e_{\beta_2} \cdots e_{\beta_r-1} e_{\beta_r} e_{\beta_r+1} (1) \cdots e_{\beta_t} z^{(0)} 1.
\]
is a linear combination of PBW monomials $y$ satisfying one of the following:

(3.11) \[ y^{(-)} = 1, \text{ depth}(y^{(+)}) \geq 1, \text{deg}(y^{(+)}) \leq \text{deg}(z^{(+)}) \]

(3.12) \[ y^{(-)} = 1, \text{ depth}(y^{(+)} - 1) = \text{deg}(y^{(+)}) \leq \text{deg}(z^{(+)}) - 1, \]

Then the lemma follows from (3.5), (3.6), (3.8)–(3.12).

\[ \square \]

**Lemma 3.4.** — Let $z$ be a PBW monomial of the form (2.8) such that \( z^{(-)} = 1 \). Then

\[ \tilde{L} - 1 z = cz^{(+)}(\gamma - \sum_{j=1}^{q} a_{j,1} \beta_j)(-1)z^{(0)} + y^1, \]

where $c$ is a nonzero constant, \( \gamma = \sum_{j=1}^{q} \sum_{s=1}^{r_{j,1}} a_{j,s} \beta_j \), and \( y^1 \) is a linear combination of PBW monomials $y$ such that

\[ \text{deg}_{-1}(y) = \text{deg}_{-1}(z) + 1, \text{deg}(y^{(+)}) \leq \text{deg}(z^{(+)}) - 1, \]

or

\[ \text{deg}_{-1}(y) \leq \text{deg}_{-1}(z). \]

**Proof.** — Since the proof is similar to that of Lemma 3.3, we left the verification to the reader.

\[ \square \]

**Lemma 3.5.** — For \( i \in J^+ \), we have that \( \text{depth}((w^i)^{(+)})) = 0 \).

**Proof.** — First we have

\[ w = \sum_{j \in J^+} \lambda_j w^j + \sum_{j \in J_{1\setminus J}^+} \lambda_j w^j + \sum_{j \in J_1 \setminus J_1^+} \lambda_j w^j + \sum_{j \in J_1 \setminus J_1^+} \lambda_j w^j. \]

Then by Lemma 3.2(b) and Lemma 3.4, we have

\[ (k + h^\vee)\tilde{L} - 1 w = \sum_{i \in J^+} (w^i)^{(+)} \left( \gamma_i - \sum_{j=1}^{q} a_{j,1} \beta_j \right)(-1)(w^i)^{(0)} \]

\[ + \sum_{i \in J_1 \setminus J^+} (w^i)^{(+)} \left( \gamma_i - \sum_{j=1}^{q} a_{j,1} \beta_j \right)(-1)(w^i)^{(0)} + y^1, \]

where $\gamma_i = \sum_{j=1}^{r} \sum_{s=1}^{s_{j,1}} a_{i,s} \beta_j$, for $i \in J_1$, and \( y^1 \) is a linear combination of PBW monomials $y$ satisfying one of the following conditions:

\[ \text{deg}_{-1}(y) = d_{-1}^{(0)} + 1, \text{deg}(y^{(+)}) \leq d^+ - 1, \]

\[ \text{deg}_{-1}(y) \leq d_{-1}^{(0)}, \]

\[ y^{(-)} \neq 1. \]

On the other hand, by Lemma 2.4

\[ L - 1 w = \tilde{L} - 1 w. \]
By Lemma 2.1, there is no PBW monomial $y$ in $L_{-1}w$ such that $\deg(y^{(+)}) = d^+$, $y^{(-)} = 1$, and $\deg_{-1}(y) = d_{-1} + 1$. Then we deduce that

$$\sum_{i \in J^+} (w^i)^{(+) \gamma} \sum_{j=1}^{q} (-1)(a_{j,1}^{(i)})^0(w^i)^{(0)} = 0,$$

which means that $(\gamma_i - \sum_{j=1}^{q} a_{j,1}^{(i)}) \beta_j = 0$, for $i \in J^+$, that is, depth($w^{(+)}) = 0$. □

As explained at the beginning of §3.3, Theorem 1.1 will be a consequence of the following lemma.

**Lemma 3.6.** — For each $i \in J^+$, we have depth($w^i) = 0$.

**Proof.** — By definition, for $i \in J^+$, $(w^i)^{(0)} = 1$. Moreover, by Lemma 3.5, depth($w^{(+)}) = 0$. Hence it suffices to prove that for $i \in J^+$,

$$(w^i)^{(0)} = w^1(-1)^{c_{1,m}^{(i)}} \cdots w^{\ell}(-1)^{c_{\ell,m}^{(i)}}.$$

Suppose the contrary. Then there exists $i \in J^+$ such that

$$w^i = e_{\beta_1}(-1)^{c_{1,m}^{(i)}} \cdots e_{\beta_{\ell}}(-1)^{c_{\ell,m}^{(i)}} w^1(-1)^{c_{1,m}^{(i)}} \cdots w^{\ell}(-1)^{c_{\ell,m}^{(i)}}$$

with at least one of the $m_j$’s, for $j = 1, \ldots, \ell$, strictly greater than 1 and $c_{1,m_j}^{(i)} \neq 0$ for such a $j$. Without loss of generality, one may assume that $1 \in J^+$, that

$$m_1 = \max\{m_j | j = 1, \ldots, \ell\} \quad \text{and} \quad 0 \neq c_{1,m_1}^{(i)} \geq c_{1,m_1}^{(i)}$$

for $i \in J^+$.

Writing $L_{-1}w$ as

$$L_{-1}w = \sum_{i \in J^+} L_{-1}w^i + \sum_{i \in J_1 \setminus J_{-1}} L_{-1}w^i + \sum_{i \in J_{-1}} L_{-1}w^i,$$

we see by Lemma 2.1 that

$$L_{-1}w = \lambda_1 m_1 c_{1,m_1}^{(i)} w^1 + \sum_{i \in J^+, i \neq 1} \lambda_i m_1 c_{1,m_1}^{(i)} w^i + v + v', \quad \text{where for } i \in J^+, v^i \text{ is the PBW monomial defined by:}$$

$$\begin{align*}
(v^i)^{(-)} &= (w^i)^{(-)} = 1, \\
(v^i)^{(+)} &= (w^i)^{(+)} = e_{\beta_1}(-1)^{c_{1,m_1}^{(i)}} \cdots e_{\beta_{\ell}}(-1)^{c_{\ell,m_1}^{(i)}}, \\
(v^i)^{(0)} &= u^1(-1)^{c_{1,m}^{(i)}} \cdots u^{\ell}(-m_1)^{c_{\ell,m}^{(i)}} \cdots u^{\ell}(-1)^{c_{\ell,m}^{(i)}},
\end{align*}$$

and so, by definition of $J^+ \subset J^{(0)}$, $J_{-1}$

$$\begin{align*}
\deg_{-1}(v^i) &= d_{-1}, \\
v \text{ is a linear combination of PBW monomials } x \text{ such that}
\end{align*}$$

$$x^{(0)} = u^1(-1)^{c_{1,m}^{(i)}} \cdots u^{l}(-n_1^{(x)})^{c_{1,m}^{(x)}} \cdots u^{\ell}(-1)^{c_{\ell,m}^{(i)}} \cdots u^{\ell}(-n_{\ell}^{(x)})^{c_{\ell,m}^{(x)}}$$
and either $n_i^{(x)} \leq m_i$, or $\deg(x^{i+}) \leq d^+ - 1$, or $\deg_{-1}^{(0)}(x) \leq d_{-1}^{(0)} - 1$.

and $v'$ is a linear combination of PBW monomials $x$ such that $x^{(-)} \neq 1$. Note that the assumption that $m_i \geq 2$ makes sure that (3.17) holds, and that $\depth(v') = \depth(v) + 1$ for all $i \in J^+$.

On the other hand, by Lemma 2.4,

$$L_{-1} w = \tilde{L}_{-1} w,$$

since $w$ is a singular vector of $V^k(q)$. Hence $v^1$ must be a PBW monomial of $\tilde{L}_{-1} w$. Our strategy to obtain the expected contradiction is to show that there is no PBW monomial $v^1$ in $\tilde{L}_{-1} w$ for each $i \in J$.

Assume that $i \in J^+$, and suppose that $v^1$ is a PBW monomial in $\tilde{L}_{-1} w$. First of all, $\deg((v^1)^{(+)}) = d^+$ because $i \in J^+$. Moreover, by the definition of $J_1$ and Lemma 3.5, we have $(w^i)^{(-)} = 1$ and $\depth((w^i)^{(+)}) = 0$. Hence by Lemma 3.3(2),

$$\deg((v^1)^{(+)}) < \deg((w^i)^{(+)}) = d^+$$

because $(v^1)^{(-)} = 1$ and $\depth((v^1)^{(+)}) = 0$ by (3.14) and (3.15). But $d^+ = \deg((v^1)^{(+)})$ by (3.15), whence a contradiction.

Assume that $i \in J^0 \setminus J^+$. By the definition of $J^0$ and (3.15),

$$\deg((w^i)^{(+)}) < d^+ = \deg((v^1)^{(+)}).$$

Suppose that $v^1$ is a PBW monomial in $\tilde{L}_{-1} w$. Then

$$(w^i)^{(-)} = 1 = (v^1)^{(-)}$$

by Lemma 3.1 since $i \in J^{(0)}_{-1}$. The last equality follows from (3.14). Then by Lemma 3.2(c), either $\deg((v^1)^{(0)}) = \deg((w^i)^{(0)}) + 1$, or $(v^1)^{(0)} = (w^i)^{(0)}$. But it is impossible that $\deg((w^i)^{(0)}) = \deg((w^i)^{(0)}) + 1$, by (d) of Lemma 3.2 because $\deg((v^1)^{(+)}) > \deg((w^i)^{(+)})$. Therefore,

$$(v^1)^{(0)} = (w^i)^{(0)}.$$
because \((v^1)^(-) = 1\) by (3.14). Remember that
\[
(v^1)^{(+)} = e_{\beta_1}(-1)^{a_i^{(1)}} \cdots e_{\beta_\ell}(-1)^{a_{i\ell}},
\]
Computing \(\tilde{L}_{-1}w^i\), we deduce that
\[
(w^i)^{(+)} = e_{\beta_1}(-1)^{a_i^{(i)}} \cdots e_{\beta_\ell}(-1)^{a_{i\ell}}.
\]
Since \(v^(-) = 1\) and \(\text{deg}_{-1}(v^1) = \text{deg}_{-1}(w^i) + 1\), it results from Lemma 3.3(3) that
\(\text{depth}(v^{(+)}) \geq 1\), which contradicts (3.22).

Finally, if \(j \in J \setminus J_1\), then by Lemma 3.2(b), any PBW monomial \(y\) in \(\tilde{L}_{-1}w^j\) satisfies that \(\gamma(v^{(-)} \neq 1\). So \(v^1\) cannot be a PBW monomial in \(\tilde{L}_{-1}w^j\).
This concludes the proof of the lemma.

As already explained, Lemma 3.6 implies that \(w\) has zero depth and so its image in \(R_{V^{x_k}(a)}\) is nonzero, achieving the proof of Theorem 1.1.

3.4. Remarks. — The statement of Theorem 1.2 is not true at the critical level. Also, it is not true that the depth of a depth-homogeneous singular vector of \(S(g[t^{-1}]t^{-1})\) is always zero. Indeed, the \(g[t]\)-module \(S(g[t^{-1}]t^{-1})\) can be naturally identified with \(C[J_\infty g^*]\), where \(J_\infty X\) is the arc space of \(X\), and so \(S(g[t^{-1}]t^{-1})g[t] \cong C[J_\infty g^*]^{J_\infty G}\). It is known [RT92, BD, EF04] that
\[
C[J_\infty g^*]^{J_\infty G} \cong C[J_\infty (g^* // G)].
\]
This means that the invariant ring is a polynomial ring with infinitely many variables \(\partial^j p_i, i = \ldots, \ell, j \geq 0\), where \(p_1, \ldots, p_\ell\) is a set of homogeneous generators of \(S(g)\) considered as elements of \(S(g[t^{-1}]t^{-1})\) via the embedding \(S(g) \hookrightarrow S(g[t^{-1}]t^{-1})\), \(g \ni x \mapsto x(-1)\). We have \(\text{depth}(\partial^j p_i) = j\) although each \(\partial^j p_i\) is a singular vector of \(S(g[t^{-1}]t^{-1])\).

For \(k = -h^*\), the maximal submodule \(N_k\) of \(V^k(g)\) is generated by Feigin-Frenkel center ([FG04]). Hence [FF92, Fre05], \(\text{gr} N_k\) is exactly the argumentation ideal of \(S(g[t^{-1}]t^{-1})g[t]\). Therefore, the above argument shows that the statement of Theorem 1.2 is false at the critical level.

4. \(W\)-algebras and proof of Theorem 1.3

Let \(f\) be a nilpotent element of \(g\). By the Jacobson-Morosov theorem, it embeds into an \(\mathfrak{sl}_2\)-triple \((e, h, f)\) of \(g\). Recall that the Slodowy slice \(\mathscr{S}_f\) is the affine space \(f + g^v\), where \(g^v\) is the centralizer of \(e\) in \(g\). It has a natural Poisson structure induced from that of \(g^*\) ([GG02]).

The embedding \(\text{span}_C\{e, h, f\} \cong \mathfrak{sl}_2 \hookrightarrow g\) exponentiates to a homomorphism \(\text{SL}_2 \rightarrow G\). By restriction to the one-dimensional torus consisting of diagonal matrices, we obtain a one-parameter subgroup \(\rho: C^* \rightarrow G\). For \(t \in C^*\) and \(x \in g\), set
\[
\tilde{\rho}(t)x := t^2 \rho(t)(x).
\]
We have $\tilde{\rho}(t)f = f$, and the $C^*$-action of $\tilde{\rho}$ stabilizes $\mathcal{S}_f$. Moreover, it is contracting to $f$ on $\mathcal{S}_f$, that is, for all $x \in \mathfrak{g}^e$,

$$\lim_{t \to 0} \tilde{\rho}(t)(f + x) = f.$$ 

The following proposition is well-known. Since its proof is short, we give below the argument for the convenience of the reader.

**Proposition 4.1** ([Slo80, Pre02, CM16]). — The morphism

$$\theta_f : G \times \mathcal{S}_f \longrightarrow \mathfrak{g}, \quad (g, x) \mapsto g \cdot x$$

is smooth onto a dense open subset of $\mathfrak{g}^*$. 

**Proof.** — Since $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{g}^e + [f, \mathfrak{g}]$, the map $\theta_f$ is a submersion at $(1_G, f)$. Therefore, $\theta_f$ is a submersion at all points of $G \times (f + \mathfrak{g}^e)$ because it is $G$-equivariant for the left multiplication in $G$, and

$$\lim_{t \to \infty} \rho(t) \cdot x = f$$

for all $x$ in $f + \mathfrak{g}^e$. So, by [Har77, Ch.III, Prop.10.4], the map $\theta_f$ is a smooth morphism onto a dense open subset of $\mathfrak{g}$, containing $G \cdot f$. \hfill $\Box$

As in the introduction, let $\mathcal{W}_k^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)$ be the affine $\mathcal{W}$-algebra associated with a nilpotent element $f$ of $\mathfrak{g}$ defined by the generalized quantized Drinfeld-Sokolov reduction:

$$\mathcal{W}_k^k(\mathfrak{g}, f) = H^0_{DS,f}(V^k(\mathfrak{g})).$$

Here, $H^i_{DS,f}(M)$ denotes the BRST cohomology of the generalized quantized Drinfeld-Sokolov reduction associated with $f \in N(\mathfrak{g})$ with coefficients in a $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$-module $M$. Recall that we have [DSK06, Ara15a] a natural isomorphism $R_{\mathcal{W}_k^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)} \cong \mathbb{C}[[\mathcal{S}_f]]$ of Poisson algebras, so that

$$X_{\mathcal{W}_k^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)} = \mathcal{S}_f.$$ 

We write $\mathcal{W}_k(\mathfrak{g}, f)$ for the unique simple (graded) quotient of $\mathcal{W}_k^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)$. Then $X_{\mathcal{W}_k(\mathfrak{g}, f)}$ is a $C^*$-invariant Poisson subvariety of the Slodowy slice $\mathcal{S}_f$.

Let $\mathcal{O}_k$ be the category $\mathcal{O}$ of $\hat{\mathfrak{g}}$ at level $k$. We have a functor

$$\mathcal{O}_k \longrightarrow \mathcal{W}_k^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)\text{-Mod}, \quad M \mapsto H^0_{DS,f}(M),$$

where $\mathcal{W}_k^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)$-Mod denotes the category of $\mathcal{W}_k^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)$-modules.

The full subcategory of $\mathcal{O}_k$ consisting of objects $M$ on which $\mathfrak{g}$ acts locally finitely will be denoted by $\text{KL}_k$. Note that both $V^k(\mathfrak{g})$ and $L_k(\mathfrak{g})$ are objects of $\text{KL}_k$.

**Theorem 4.2** ([Ara15a])

1. $H^i_{DS,f}(M) = 0$ for all $i \neq 0$, $M \in \text{KL}_k$. In particular, the functor

$$\text{KL}_k \longrightarrow \mathcal{W}_k^k(\mathfrak{g}, f)\text{-Mod}, \quad M \mapsto H^0_{DS,f}(M),$$

is exact.
(2) For any quotient $V$ of $V^k(g)$, 
$$X_{DS,f}^0(V) = X_V \cap \mathcal{J}_f.$$ 
In particular $H^0_{DS,f}(V) \neq 0$ if and only if $G \cdot f \subset X_V$.

By Theorem 4.2(1), $H^0_{DS,f}(L_k(g))$ is a quotient vertex algebra of $\mathcal{W}^k(g,f)$ if it is nonzero. Conjecturally [KRW03, KW08], we have 
$$\mathcal{W}_k(g,f) \cong H^0_{DS,f}(L_k(g))$$ 
provided that $H^0_{DS,f}(L_k(g)) \neq 0$.

(This conjecture has been verified in many cases [Ara05, Ara07, Ara11, AvE19].)

Proof of Theorem 1.3. — The directions (1) $\Rightarrow$ (2) and (2) $\Rightarrow$ (3) are obvious. Let us show that (3) implies (1). So suppose that $X_{DS,f}(L_k(g)) = \mathcal{J}_f$. By Theorem 1.1, it is enough to show that $X_{L_k(g)} = g^*$. Assume the contrary. Then $X_{L_k(g)}$ is contained in a proper $G$-invariant closed subset of $g$. On the other hand, by Theorem 4.2 and our hypothesis, we have 
$$\mathcal{J}_f = X_{DS,f}(L_k(g)) = X_{L_k(g)} \cap \mathcal{J}_f.$$ 
Hence, $\mathcal{J}_f$ must be contained in a proper $G$-invariant closed subset of $g$. But this contradicts Proposition 4.1. The proof of the theorem is completed. \hfill $\square$

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