

# Cohomology and support varieties: two points of view

Julia Pevtsova

MSRI Evans Lecture, April 14, 2008

# Atiyah-Swan conjecture

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D. Quillen, "*The spectrum of an equivariant cohomology ring I, II,*" Ann. Math. 94 (1971)

# Atiyah-Swan conjecture

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$G$  - finite group,  $k = \mathbb{F}_p^{\text{alg}}$ .

**What is the Krull dimension of  $H^*(G, k)$ ?**

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$G$  - finite group,  $k = \mathbb{F}_p^{\text{alg}}$ .

**What is the Krull dimension of  $H^*(G, k)$ ?**

Conjecture (Atiyah, Swan):  $\text{Krull dim } H^*(G, k) = p - \text{rank of } G$

## Definition

$$p - \text{rank} = \max_{E \subset G} \text{rk } E$$

where  $E \simeq \mathbb{Z}/p \times \mathbb{Z}/p \times \cdots \times \mathbb{Z}/p$  runs over all elementary abelian  $p$ -subgroups of  $G$ .

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Back up...

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*The cohomology ring  $H^*(G, k)$  is a graded commutative  $k$ -algebra.*

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## Theorem

*The cohomology ring  $H^*(G, k)$  is a graded commutative  $k$ -algebra.*

$$H^\bullet(G, k) = \begin{cases} H^*(G, k), & \text{if } p = 2, \\ H^{\text{ev}}(G, k) & \text{if } p > 2. \end{cases}$$

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## Theorem (Venkov (1959), Evans (1961))

*The cohomology ring  $H^\bullet(G, k)$  of a finite group  $G$  is a finitely generated  $k$ -algebra.*

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## Theorem (Maschke)

*Let  $M$  be a representation of a finite group  $G$  over  $\mathbb{C}$ . Let  $N \subset M$  be a  $G$ -invariant subspace. Then  $N$  splits off as a direct summand:  $M = N \oplus N'$ ,  $N'$  is  $G$ -invariant subspace.*

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**Corollary.** Every representation over  $\mathbb{C}$  is *completely reducible* - a direct sum of simple modules.

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**Corollary.** Every representation over  $\mathbb{C}$  is *completely reducible* - a direct sum of simple modules.

**Modular representation theory:**  $\text{char } k \mid \#G$ .

Representations are not completely reducible. Lots of non-split extensions (exact sequences of  $G$ -modules).

$$N \hookrightarrow M \twoheadrightarrow M/N$$

# and the structure of $H^*(G, k)$

Cohomology  $H^*(G, k) \longleftrightarrow$  extensions  $[k \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow k]$ .

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Cohomology  $H^*(G, k) \longleftrightarrow$  extensions  $[k \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow k]$ .

- $H^i(G, k) = \text{Ext}_G^i(k, k)$ , additive group for every  $n$ .

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**Remark.** This gives the same cohomology ring as the one defined in Dave Benson's talk two weeks ago (in terms of projective resolutions and cup product).

# Support variety

## Example [Cohomology of elementary abelian $p$ -groups].

- $E = (\mathbb{Z}/p)^{\times r}$ ,  $\text{rk } E = r$

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## Definition (Support variety)

$$|G| = \text{Spec } H^*(G, k),$$

the **support variety** of  $G$  (set of prime ideals with Zariski topology).

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**Example.**  $|E| \simeq \mathbb{A}^r$ ,  $\dim |E| = r$ .

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Roughly:  $|G|$  is "determined" by  $|E| \subset |G|$ , where  $E \subset G$  runs over all elementary abelian  $p$ -subgroups of  $G$ .

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$$E \subset G$$

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$$E \subset G \\ \rightsquigarrow H^\bullet(G, k) \rightarrow H^\bullet(E, k)$$

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$$E \subset G$$

$$\begin{aligned} \rightsquigarrow H^\bullet(G, k) &\rightarrow H^\bullet(E, k) \\ &\rightsquigarrow \text{res}_{G,E} : |E| \rightarrow |G| \end{aligned}$$

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$$\text{res}_{G,E} |E| \simeq |E|/W_E, \text{ where } W_E = N_G(E)/E$$

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Theorem (Quillen (weak form))

$$|G| = \bigcup_{E \subset G} \text{res}_{G,E} |E|$$

# Consequences

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## Theorem (Quillen (weak form))

$$|G| = \bigcup_{E \subset G} \text{res}_{G,E} |E|$$

## Corollary (Atiyah-Swan conjecture)

$$\text{Krull dim } H^\bullet(G, k) = \dim \text{Spec } H^\bullet(G, k) = \dim |G| = \\ \max_{E \subset G} \dim |E| = \max_{E \subset G} \dim \mathbb{A}^{\text{rk } E} = \max_{E \subset G} \text{rk } E$$

# Consequences

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## Corollary

*Irreducible components of  $|G| \leftrightarrow$  conjugacy classes of maximal elementary abelian subgroups*

# Example: $D_8$

$$D_8 = \langle \sigma, \tau \mid \sigma^4 = \tau^2 = 1, \tau\sigma\tau = \sigma^{-1} \rangle$$

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# Example: $D_8$

$$D_8 = \langle \sigma, \tau \mid \sigma^4 = \tau^2 = 1, \tau\sigma\tau = \sigma^{-1} \rangle$$

$$\langle \tau, \sigma^2\tau \rangle = (\mathbb{Z}/2)^2$$

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$\mathbb{A}^2$

$\mathbb{A}^2$

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Can check the answer because ...

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Can check the answer because ...

$$H^*(D_8, k) = k[x_1, x_2, z]/(x_1x_2)$$

# Varieties for modules

Alperin – Evens, Carlson, Avrunin – Scott.

A  $G$ -module  $M \longrightarrow$  a subvariety  $|G|_M \subset |G|$ .

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A  $G$ -module  $M \longrightarrow$  a subvariety  $|G|_M \subset |G|$ .

- $\text{Ext}_G^*(M, M)$  is a ring (operations as for  $\text{Ext}_G^*(k, k)$ ).

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- $\mathcal{I}_M = \text{Ker}\{H^\bullet(G, k) \rightarrow \text{Ext}_G^*(M, M)\}$

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## Definition

The support variety of a  $G$ -module  $M$

$$|G|_M = Z(\mathcal{I}_M) \subset |G|,$$

where  $Z(\mathcal{I}_M) = \langle \wp \mid \mathcal{I}_M \subset \wp \rangle$

# Properties

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- $|G|_{M \oplus N} = |G|_M \cup |G|_N$ .
- If  $0 \rightarrow M_1 \rightarrow M_2 \rightarrow M_3 \rightarrow 0$  is a short exact sequence, then  $|G|_{M_i} \subset |G|_{M_{i+1}} \cup |G|_{M_{i+2}}$ .
- $|G|_{\Omega M} = |G|_M$ .
- (Tensor product property)  $|G|_{M \otimes N} = |G|_M \cap |G|_N$
- (Restriction) Let  $H \subset G$ ,  $M$  - a  $G$ -module. Then  $\text{res}_{G,H}(|H|_M) = |G|_M$ .
- $\dim |G|_M = \text{complexity of } M$  (= rate of growth of the minimal projective resolution).
- $|G|_{L_\zeta} = \langle \zeta \rangle$  - a hypersurface in  $|G|$  defined by  $\zeta = 0$ ,  $\zeta \in H^\bullet(G, k)$ .

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- Group algebra  $kG$   
**basis** as  $k$ -vector space:  $\{e_g\}_{g \in G}$   
**multiplication:**  $e_g \cdot e_h = e_{gh}$

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(has a coproduct:  $kG \rightarrow kG \otimes kG$ ,  $e_g \mapsto e_g \otimes e_g$ )

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- Representations of  $G \xrightarrow{\sim} kG$ -modules
- Cohomology of  $G \xrightarrow{\sim}$  cohomology of  $kG$

# Other structures

Other algebraic structures that correspond to fin. dim-l Hopf algebras (and have theories of support varieties)

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- Lie algebras in char  $p$

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Other algebraic structures that correspond to fin. dim-l Hopf algebras (and have theories of support varieties)

- Lie algebras in char  $p$
- Finite group schemes (e.g., infinitesimal subgroups of algebraic groups, such as  $GL_n$ )

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- Lie algebras in char  $p$
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# Other structures

Other algebraic structures that correspond to fin. dim-l Hopf algebras (and have theories of support varieties)

- Lie algebras in char  $p$
- Finite group schemes (e.g., infinitesimal subgroups of algebraic groups, such as  $GL_n$ )
- Small quantum groups
- Lie superalgebras (actually, no Hopf algebra here )

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# Other structures

Other algebraic structures that correspond to fin. dim-1 Hopf algebras (and have theories of support varieties)

- Lie algebras in char  $p$
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- Lie superalgebras (actually, no Hopf algebra here)

## Theorem (Friedlander-Suslin, (1997))

*Let  $A$  be a finite-dimensional co-commutative Hopf algebra over a field  $k$  of positive characteristic. Then the cohomology algebra  $H^\bullet(A, k)$  is finitely generated.*

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# $p$ -Lie algebras

Let  $G$  be an algebraic group defined over  $k$ ,  $\mathfrak{g} = \text{Lie}(G)$ .

$$\mathfrak{g} \leftrightarrow u(\mathfrak{g}),$$

the *restricted enveloping algebra* of  $\mathfrak{g}$ .

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Assume  $p = \text{char } k$  is “big enough” ( $p > h$ ).

**Theorem (Friedlander-Parshall, Andersen-Jantzen (1983-84))**

$$|\mathfrak{g}| = \mathcal{N}(\mathfrak{g}),$$

where  $\mathcal{N}(\mathfrak{g})$  is the *nullcone* of  $\mathfrak{g}$ , the variety of all nilpotent elements of  $\mathfrak{g}$ .

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Very different from finite groups! In particular,  $\mathcal{N}$  is irreducible.

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Very different from finite groups! In particular,  $\mathcal{N}$  is irreducible. Support varieties for modules  $\leftrightarrow$  theory of nilpotent orbits.

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# Representation theory of the cyclic group $\mathbb{Z}/p$

Representation theory of a finite group is usually “wild” - we cannot classify indecomposable modules.

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Exception:  $\mathbb{Z}/p = \langle \sigma \rangle$ .

$$k\mathbb{Z}/p = \frac{k[\sigma]}{(\sigma^p - 1)} = \frac{k[\sigma]}{(\sigma - 1)^p} = \frac{k[t]}{t^p},$$

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*Complete description* of representation theory:

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Free  $k[t]/t^p$ -module  $= \bigoplus_a k[t]/t^p \longleftrightarrow$  Jordan type  $a[p]$ .

# Cyclic Shifted Subgroups

$E = (\mathbb{Z}/p)^{\times r}$ . Choose generators  $g_1, \dots, g_r$ . Let  $t_1 = g_1 - 1, \dots, t_r = g_r - 1$ .

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Let  $\underline{\alpha} = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_r) \in \mathbb{A}^r$ . A shifted cyclic subgroup  $\langle \underline{\alpha} \rangle$  of  $E$  corresponding to  $\underline{\alpha}$  is a cyclic subgroup of  $kE$  generated by a  $p$ -unipotent element  $\alpha_1 t_1 + \dots + \alpha_r t_r + 1$ .

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$V_E =$  variety of cyclic shifted subgroups.

There is a natural isomorphism  $V_E \simeq |E|$ .

# Rank variety

## Definition (Carlson)

$$V_E(M) = \{ \underline{\alpha} = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_r) \in \mathbb{A}^r \mid \langle \alpha_1 t_1 + \dots + \alpha_r t_r + 1 \rangle$$

does not act freely on  $M$  \}

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Cyclic shifted subgroup is NOT a subgroup of  $E$ . It is a subgroup of  $kE$ .

# $\pi$ -points

Cyclic shifted subgroup  $\langle \underline{\alpha} \rangle = \langle \alpha_1 t_1 + \dots + \alpha_r t_r + 1 \rangle$  of  $E$  determines a map of algebras

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A  $\pi$ -point  $\alpha$  of a finite group  $G$  is a map of algebras

$$\begin{array}{ccc} k[t]/t^p & \overset{\alpha}{\dashrightarrow} & kG \\ & \searrow & \nearrow \\ & kA & \end{array}$$

which factors through some abelian  $p$ -subgroup  $A \subset G$ .

The map  $kA \rightarrow kG$  is induced by a subgroup, the other two are just maps of algebras.

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Equivalence relation on  $\pi$ -points

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Solely in terms of local  
properties of representations

# $\Pi$ -space

## Definition ( $\Pi$ -space)

$$\Pi(G) = \frac{\langle \pi\text{-points } \alpha : k[t]/t^p \rightarrow kG \rangle}{\sim}$$

This is a topological space.

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## Definition

Let  $M$  be a  $G$ -module.

$$\Pi(G)_M = \langle [\alpha] : k[t]/t^P \rightarrow kG : \alpha^* M \text{ is not free} \rangle$$

$\alpha^* M$  is a  $k[t]/t^P$ -module where  $t$  acts via  $\alpha(t) \in kG$ .

$M$  - finite dimensional  $\mapsto \Pi(G)_M$  are precisely the closed sets of  $\Pi(G)$ .

Carlson's conjecture holds for  $\Pi$ -spaces:

### Theorem (Friedlander-P.)

$$\Pi(G) \simeq \text{Proj } |G|$$

$$\underbrace{\Pi(G)_M}_{\text{local prop}} \simeq \underbrace{\text{Proj } |G|_M}_{\text{cohomology}}$$

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### Theorem (Detection of projectivity)

$M$  is projective  $\Leftrightarrow \Pi(G)_M = \emptyset \Leftrightarrow M$  is free when  
restricted to any subalgebra  $k[t]/t^P \rightarrow kG$ .

Carlson's conjecture holds for  $\Pi$ -spaces:

### Theorem (Friedlander-P.)

$$\begin{aligned} \Pi(G) &\simeq \text{Proj } |G| \\ \underbrace{\Pi(G)_M}_{\text{local prop}} &\simeq \underbrace{\text{Proj } |G|_M}_{\text{cohomology}} \end{aligned}$$

### Theorem (Detection of projectivity)

$M$  is projective  $\Leftrightarrow \Pi(G)_M = \emptyset \Leftrightarrow M$  is free when  
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- Projectivity can be detected locally on  $\pi$ -points.
- Can replace  $kG$  by any finite dimensional co-commutative Hopf algebra

# Modules of Constant Jordan type

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- $M$  is projective  $\Leftrightarrow$  at every  $\pi$ -point  $\alpha : k[t]/t^p \rightarrow kG$  the Jordan type of  $M$  is  $a[p]$ .

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## Definition

$M$  is a module of *constant Jordan type* if the Jordan type of  $M$  at every  $\pi$ -point  $\alpha : k[t]/t^p \rightarrow kG$  is the same (the operator  $\alpha(t)$  on  $M$  has the same Jordan canonical form for all  $\alpha$ ).

A very interesting and elusive class of modules!

# Realizability

- If  $M$  is of constant Jordan type, then  $M$  is determined by this unique type.

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**Conjecture.** [Carlson-Friedlander-P.] Let  $p > 3$ ,  $\dim |G| > 1$ . The type  $[2] + n[p]$  does not occur.

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**Theorem (D. Benson, March 2008)**

*Let  $G$  be a finite group,  $\dim |G| > 1$ . There does not exist a  $G$ -module of constant Jordan type  $[a] + \mathbf{n}[p]$  for  $2 \leq a \leq p-2$ .*