Positivity of Chern classes of Schubert cells and varieties

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Abstract

We show that the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class of a Schubert cell in a Grassmannian is represented by a reduced and irreducible subvariety in each degree. This gives an affirmative answer to a positivity conjecture of Aluffi and Mihalcea.

1. Introduction

The classical Schubert varieties in the Grassmannian of $d$-planes in a vector space $E$ are among the most studied singular varieties in algebraic geometry. The subject of this paper is the study of Chern classes of Schubert cells and varieties.

There is a good theory of Chern classes for singular or noncomplete complex algebraic varieties. If $X^\circ$ is a locally closed subset of a complete variety $X$, then the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class of $X^\circ$ is an element in the Chow group $c_{SM}(X^\circ) \in A^\ast(X)$, which agrees with the total homology Chern class of the tangent bundle of $X$ if $X$ is smooth and $X = X^\circ$. The Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class satisfies good functorial properties which, together with the normalization for smooth and complete varieties, uniquely determines it. Basic properties of the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class are recalled in Section 2.1.

If $\underline{\alpha} = (\alpha_1 \geq \alpha_2 \geq \cdots \geq \alpha_d \geq 0)$ is a partition, then there is a corresponding Schubert variety $S(\underline{\alpha})$ in the Grassmannian of $d$-planes in $E$, parametrizing $d$-planes which satisfy incidence conditions with a flag of subspaces determined by $\underline{\alpha}$. See Section 2.2 for our notational conventions. The Schubert variety is a disjoint union of Schubert cells $S(\underline{\alpha}) = \bigsqcup_{\underline{\beta} \leq \underline{\alpha}} S(\underline{\beta})^\circ$, where the union is over all $\underline{\beta} = (\beta_1 \geq \beta_2 \geq \cdots \geq \beta_d \geq 0)$ which satisfy $\beta_i \leq \alpha_i$ for all $i$. Since each Schubert cell $S(\underline{\beta})^\circ$ is isomorphic to an affine space, the Chow group of $S(\underline{\alpha})$ is freely generated by the classes of the closures $[S(\underline{\beta})]$. Therefore we may write $c_{SM}(S(\underline{\alpha})^\circ) = \sum_{\underline{\beta} \leq \underline{\alpha}} \gamma_{\underline{\alpha} \underline{\beta}} [S(\underline{\beta})] \in A_\ast(S(\underline{\alpha}))$ for uniquely determined coefficients $\gamma_{\underline{\alpha} \underline{\beta}} \in \mathbb{Z}$.

Various explicit formulas for these coefficients are obtained in [AM09]. One of the formulas
says that $\gamma_{\alpha, \beta}$ is the sum of the binomial determinants

$$
\gamma_{\alpha, \beta} = \sum_L \det \left[ \left( \beta_j + i - j + l_{i,1} + l_{2,i} + \cdots + l_{i-1,i} - l_{i,i+1} - l_{i,i+2} - \cdots - l_{i,d} \right) \right]_{1 \leq i,j \leq d}
$$

where the sum is over all strictly upper triangular nonnegative integral matrices $L = [l_{p,q}]_{1 \leq p < q \leq d}$ such that

$$
0 \leq l_{p,p+1} + l_{p,p+2} + \cdots + l_{p,d} \leq \alpha_{p+1} \quad \text{for} \quad 1 \leq p < d.
$$

For example, $\gamma_{(3 \geq 2 \geq 1), (2 \geq 0 \geq 0)}$ is the sum of the determinants of the matrices

$$
\begin{pmatrix}
3 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 1 & 0 \\
0 & 1 & 1
\end{pmatrix}, \quad
\begin{pmatrix}
2 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 2 & 1 \\
0 & 1 & 1
\end{pmatrix}, \quad
\begin{pmatrix}
2 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 1 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 1
\end{pmatrix}, \quad
\begin{pmatrix}
1 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 1 & 2 \\
0 & 1 & 1
\end{pmatrix}, \quad
\begin{pmatrix}
1 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 2 & 1 \\
0 & 1 & 1
\end{pmatrix}, \quad
\begin{pmatrix}
1 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 1 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 1
\end{pmatrix}, \quad
\begin{pmatrix}
1 & 0 & 0 \\
0 & 1 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 0
\end{pmatrix}, \quad
\begin{pmatrix}
0 & 1 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 1 \\
0 & 0 & 0
\end{pmatrix}
$$

That is,

$$
\gamma_{(3 \geq 2 \geq 1), (2 \geq 0 \geq 0)} = 3 + 2 + 2 + (-1) + 2 + 0 + 0 + 2 + 0 + 1 + 0 + 0 = 11.
$$

Based on substantial computer calculations, Aluffi and Mihalcea conjectured that all $\gamma_{\alpha, \beta}$ are nonnegative [AM09, Conjecture 1].

**Conjecture 1.** For all $\beta \leq \alpha$, the coefficient $\gamma_{\alpha, \beta}$ is nonnegative.

When $d = 2$, the classical Lindström-Gessel-Viennot lemma shows that $\gamma_{\alpha, \beta}$ is the number of certain nonintersecting lattice paths joining pairs of points in the plane, and hence nonnegative [AM09, Theorem 4.5].

The following is the main result of this paper. Fix a nonnegative integer $k \leq \dim S(\alpha)$, and write $c_{SM}(S(\alpha)^{\circ})_k$ for the $k$-dimensional component of $c_{SM}(S(\alpha)^{\circ})$ in $A_k(S(\alpha))$.

**Theorem 2.** There is a nonempty reduced and irreducible $k$-dimensional subvariety $Z(\alpha)$ of $S(\alpha)$ such that

$$
c_{SM}(S(\alpha)^{\circ})_k = [Z(\alpha)] \in A_k(S(\alpha)).
$$

For details on the subvariety $Z(\alpha)$, see Section 4. The proof of Theorem 2 is based on an explicit description the Chern class of a vector bundle at the level of cycles. This vector bundle lives on a carefully chosen desingularization of $S(\alpha)$, and it is not globally generated in general.

Since any 0-dimensional subvariety is a point, the assertion of Theorem 2 when $k = 0$ is just

$$
\chi(S(\alpha)^{\circ}) = \int_{S(\alpha)} c_{SM}(S(\alpha)^{\circ}) = 1.
$$

In general, homology classes representable by a reduced and irreducible subvariety have significantly stronger properties than those representable by an effective cycle. These stronger properties are sometimes of interest in applications [Huh12a, Huh12b]. Unfortunately, little seems to be known about homology classes of subvarieties of a Grassmannian. For the case of curves and multiples of Schubert varieties, however, see [Bry10, Cos11, CR13, Hon05, Hon07, Per02].

It is known that the cone of effective cycles in $A_k(S(\alpha)) \otimes \mathbb{Q}$ is a polyhedral cone generated by the classes of $k$-dimensional $S(\beta)$ with $\beta \leq \alpha$ [FMSS95]. Therefore Theorem 2 gives an affirmative answer to Conjecture 1.
Corollary 3. For all $\beta \leq \alpha$, the coefficient $\gamma_{\alpha, \beta}$ is nonnegative.

Corollary 3 was previously known for all $\alpha$ when $d = 2$ [AM09] or $d = 3$ [Mih07], and for all $\beta \leq \alpha$ such that the codimension of $S(\beta)$ in $S(\alpha)$ is at most 4 [Str11].

It also follows from Theorem 2 that the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class of the Schubert variety

$$c_{SM}(S(\alpha)) = \sum_{\beta \leq \alpha} c_{SM}(S(\beta)^\circ)$$

is represented by an effective cycle. This weaker version of positivity was obtained in [Jon10, Theorem 6.5] for a certain infinite class of partitions $\alpha$ using Zelevinsky’s small resolution.

Finding a positive combinatorial formula for $\gamma_{\alpha, \beta}$ remains as a very interesting problem. As mentioned before, $\gamma_{\alpha, \beta}$ is the number of certain nonintersecting lattice paths joining pairs of points in the plane when $d = 2$. A similar positive combinatorial formula is known for $d = 3$ [Mih07, Corollary 3.10]. The reader will find useful discussions and numerical tables of $\gamma_{\alpha, \beta}$ in [AM09, Mih07, Jon07, Jon10, Str11, Web12].

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2. Preliminaries

2.1

We briefly recall the basic properties of the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class. More details can be found in [Alu05, Ken90, Mac74, Sch05].

Let $X$ be a complete complex algebraic variety. The group of constructible functions on $X$ is the free abelian group $C(X)$ generated by functions of the form

$$1_W = \begin{cases} 1, & x \in W; \\ 0, & x \not\in W, \end{cases}$$

where $W$ is a closed subvariety of $X$. If $f : X \to Y$ is a morphism between complete varieties, then the pushforward $f_*$ is defined to be the homomorphism

$$f_* : C(X) \to C(Y), \quad 1_W \mapsto \left( y \mapsto \chi(f^{-1}(y) \cap W) \right)$$

where $\chi$ stands for the topological Euler characteristic. This defines a functor $C$ from the category of complete varieties to the category of abelian groups.

Definition 4. The **Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class** is the unique natural transformation

$$c_{SM} : C \to A_*$$

such that

$$c_{SM}(1_X) = c(T_X) \cap [X] \in A_*(X)$$

if $X$ is a smooth and complete variety with the tangent bundle $T_X$. When $X^\circ$ is a locally closed subset of $X$, we write

$$c_{SM}(X^\circ) := c_{SM}(1_{X^\circ}).$$
The functoriality of $c_{SM}$ says that, for any $f : X \to Y$ as above, we have the commutative diagram

$$
\begin{array}{ccc}
C(X) & \xrightarrow{c_{SM}} & A_*(X) \\
\downarrow{f_*} & & \downarrow{f_*} \\
C(Y) & \xrightarrow{c_{SM}} & A_*(Y)
\end{array}
$$

The uniqueness of $c_{SM}$ follows from the functoriality, the resolution of singularities, and the normalization for smooth and complete varieties. The existence of $c_{SM}$, which was once a conjecture of Deligne and Grothendieck, was proved by MacPherson in [Mac74]. The Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class satisfies the inclusion-exclusion formula

$$
c_{SM}(1_{U_1 \cup U_2}) = c_{SM}(1_{U_1}) + c_{SM}(1_{U_2}) - c_{SM}(1_{U_1 \cap U_2})
$$

and captures the topological Euler characteristic as its degree

$$
\chi(U) = \int c_{SM}(1_U).
$$

Here $U, U_1, U_2$ can be any constructible subset of a complete variety. For a construction of $c_{SM}$ with an emphasis on noncomplete varieties, see [Alu06a, Alu06b].

2.2

We define the Schubert variety $S(\alpha)$ corresponding to a partition $\alpha$ in the Grassmannian of $d$-planes $\text{Gr}_d(E)$. Schubert varieties will only appear at the last section of this paper.

Our notation for Schubert varieties is consistent with that of [AM09]. In the study of homology Chern classes, this ‘homological’ notation has advantages over the more common ‘cohomological’ notation.

Let $E$ be a complex vector space with an ordered basis $e_1, \ldots, e_{n+d}$, and take $F_k$ to be the subspace spanned by the first $k$ vectors in this basis.

**Definition 5.** Let $\underline{\alpha} = (\alpha_1 \geq \alpha_2 \geq \cdots \geq \alpha_d \geq 0)$ be a partition with $n \geq \alpha_1$.

(i) The **Schubert variety** corresponding to $\underline{\alpha}$ is the subvariety

$$
S(\underline{\alpha}) := \{ V \mid \dim(V \cap F_{\alpha_1+\cdots+\alpha_i+i}) \geq i \text{ for } i = 1, \ldots, d \} \subseteq \text{Gr}_d(E).
$$

(ii) The **Schubert cell** corresponding to $\underline{\alpha}$ is the open subset of $S(\underline{\alpha})$

$$
S(\underline{\alpha})^\circ := \{ V \mid \dim(V \cap F_{\alpha_1+\cdots+\alpha_i+i}) = i, \dim(V \cap F_{\alpha_1+\cdots+\alpha_i+i-1}) = i-1 \text{ for } i = 1, \ldots, d \}.
$$

We summarize the main properties of Schubert cells and varieties:

1. Writing $\underline{\beta} \leq \underline{\alpha}$ for the ordering $\beta_i \leq \alpha_i$ for all $i$, we have

$$
S(\underline{\alpha})^\circ = S(\underline{\alpha}) \setminus \bigcup_{\underline{\beta} < \underline{\alpha}} S(\underline{\beta}).
$$

2. The Schubert cell $S(\underline{\alpha})^\circ$ is isomorphic to the affine space $\mathbb{C}^{\alpha_1+\cdots+\alpha_d}$.

3. The Schubert cell $S(\underline{\alpha})^\circ$ is an orbit under the natural action of $B$ on $\text{Gr}_d(E)$.

Here $B$ is the subgroup of the general linear group of $E$ which consists of all invertible upper triangular matrices with respect to the ordered basis $e_1, \ldots, e_{n+d}$. The reader will find details in [AM09, Bri05, Ful97].
3. Chern classes of almost homogeneous varieties

In this section, $B$ is a connected affine algebraic group with the Lie algebra $\mathfrak{b}$.

3.1
Suppose $B$ acts on an irreducible projective variety $Y$ with an open dense orbit $Y^\circ$. We say that $Y$ is *almost homogeneous* with respect to the action of $B$. For example, $Y$ can be the Schubert variety $S(\alpha)$ of the previous section.

**Definition 6.** A $B$-finite log-resolution of $Y$ is a proper $B$-equivariant map $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ such that

(i) $X$ is smooth and has finitely many $B$-orbits,

(ii) $\pi^{-1}(Y^\circ) \rightarrow Y^\circ$ is an isomorphism, and

(iii) the complement of $\pi^{-1}(Y^\circ)$ in $X$ is a divisor with normal crossings.

The main result of this section is the following sufficient condition for the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class of an almost homogeneous $B$-variety to be effective.

**Theorem 7.** Suppose $Y$ has a $B$-finite log-resolution. Then there are subvarieties $Z_1, \ldots, Z_p$ of $Y$ and nonnegative integers $n_1, \ldots, n_p$ such that

$$c_{SM}(Y^\circ) = \sum_{i=1}^{p} n_i[Z_i] \in A_*(Y).$$

In short, the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class of $Y^\circ$ is represented by an effective cycle on $Y$ if $Y$ has a $B$-finite resolution.

When $Y$ is the Schubert variety $S(\alpha)$, the conclusion of Theorem 7 is much weaker than that of Theorem 2. However, the main construction which leads to the proof of Theorem 7 will be essential in the proof of Theorem 2.

The rest of this section is devoted to the proof of Theorem 7.

3.2
As a preparation, we recall basic results on algebraic groups actions and algebraic vector fields. General references are [MO67] and [Ram64].

Suppose $B$ acts on a smooth and irreducible projective variety $X$. There is an algebraic group homomorphism from $B$ to the connected automorphism group

$$L : B \rightarrow \text{Aut}^\circ(X), \quad b \mapsto (x \mapsto b \cdot x).$$

The differential of $L$ at the identity is the *Lie homomorphism* between the Lie algebras

$$\mathfrak{b} \rightarrow \Gamma(X, T_X).$$

Explicitly, the Lie homomorphism maps $\xi \in \mathfrak{b}$ to the corresponding fundamental vector field

$$x \mapsto \frac{d}{dt} \bigg|_{t=0} \left( \exp(-t\xi) \cdot x \right).$$

If we define the $B$-action on the vector fields on $X$ by

$$\left( x \mapsto v(x) \right) \mapsto \left( x \mapsto d(b \cdot -)v(b^{-1} \cdot x) \right),$$

then we have

$$\left( x \mapsto v(x) \right) \mapsto \left( x \mapsto d(b \cdot -)v(b^{-1} \cdot x) \right),$$

for all $b \in B$.
then the Lie homomorphism is $B$-equivariant with respect to the adjoint action of $B$ on $b$.

Evaluating the Lie homomorphism, we have the homomorphism between the $B$-linearized vector bundles

$$\mathcal{L}_X : b_X \rightarrow T_X,$$

where $b_X$ is the trivial vector bundle on $X$ modeled on $b$.

### 3.3

Let $S$ be an orbit of the $B$-action on $X$, and write $\iota$ for the inclusion $S \rightarrow X$. A choice of a base point $x_0 \in S$ defines the orbit map

$$B \rightarrow S, \quad b \mapsto b \cdot x_0.$$

This identifies $S$ with $B/H$, where $H$ is the isotropy group $B_{x_0}$. The Lie homomorphism

$$b \rightarrow \Gamma(S, T_S)$$

gives the $B$-linearized vector bundle homomorphism

$$\mathcal{L}_S : b_S \rightarrow T_S,$$

and $\mathcal{L}_S$ fits into the commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
b_S & \xrightarrow{\mathcal{L}_S} & T_S \\
\downarrow & & \downarrow \\
T_X |_S & \rightarrow & \iota_* \\
\end{array}
$$

Over the base point $x_0$, $\mathcal{L}_S$ can be identified with the surjective linear map

$$b \rightarrow b/\mathfrak{h},$$

where $\mathfrak{h}$ is the Lie algebra of $H$. Since $S$ is homogeneous, $\mathcal{L}_S$ is surjective over every point of $S$, and $\ker(\mathcal{L}_S)$ is a vector bundle over $S$.

**Definition 8.** The *bundle of isotropy Lie algebras* over $S$ is the locally closed subset

$$\Sigma_S := \mathbb{P}(\ker(\mathcal{L}_S)) \subseteq X \times \mathbb{P}(b).$$

Note that $\Sigma_S$ is a smooth and irreducible closed subset of $S \times \mathbb{P}(b)$. We denote the two projections by

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
S & \xrightarrow{\text{pr}_1, S} & \Sigma_S \\
& \downarrow & \downarrow \\
& \mathbb{P}(b). & \xrightarrow{\text{pr}_2, S}
\end{array}
$$

If we write $b_x$ for the Lie algebra of the isotropy group $B_x$, then

$$\Sigma_S = \left\{ (x, \xi) \mid x \in S \text{ and } \xi \in b_x \right\}.$$

The dimension of $\Sigma_S$ is equal to the dimension of $\mathbb{P}(b)$, independent of the dimension of $S$.

### 3.4

Let $D$ be a simple normal crossings divisor on $X$. The *logarithmic tangent sheaf* of $(X, D)$ is the subsheaf of the tangent sheaf

$$\mathcal{T}_X(-\log D) \subseteq \mathcal{T}_X.$$
consisting of those derivations which preserve the ideal sheaf $\mathcal{O}_X(-D)$. Since $D$ is a divisor with simple normal crossings, the logarithmic tangent sheaf is locally free of rank equal to the dimension of $X$. General references on logarithmic tangent sheaves are [Del70] and [Sai80].

We write $T_X(-\log D)$ for the logarithmic tangent bundle, the vector bundle corresponding to the logarithmic tangent sheaf. The following equality follows from a construction of the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class [Alu06a, Alu06b].

**Theorem 9.** We have

$$c_{SM}(1_{X\setminus D}) = c(T_X(-\log D)) \cap [X] \in A_*(X).$$

For precursors, see [Alu99, GP02] and also Schwartz's construction of the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class [BSS09, Sch65a, Sch65b]. Our goal is to show that $X$ has enough logarithmic vector fields so as to make the right-hand side of Theorem 9 effective when $D$ is $B$-invariant and $X$ has finitely many $B$-orbits.

Suppose from now on that $D$ is invariant under the action of $B$. This implies that the Lie homomorphism of Section 3.2 factors through

$$\mathcal{L} : \mathfrak{b} \longrightarrow \Gamma(X, T_X(-\log D)).$$

Evaluating the sections, we have the homomorphism between $B$-linearized vector bundles

$$\mathcal{L}_{X,D} : \mathfrak{b}_X \longrightarrow T_X(-\log D).$$

We denote the induced linear map between the fibers over $x \in X$ by

$$\mathcal{L}_{X,D,x} : \mathfrak{b} \longrightarrow T_{X,x}(-\log D).$$

**Definition 10.** The *variety of critical points* of $(X, D)$ is the closed subset

$$\mathfrak{X} := \{(x, \xi) \mid \mathcal{L}_{X,D,x}(\xi) = 0\} \subseteq X \times \mathbb{P}(\mathfrak{b}).$$

We denote the two projections by

$$\mathfrak{X} \xymatrix{ \ar[d]_{\text{pr}_1} & \ar[d]_{\text{pr}_2} \ar@{..>}[dl]^{X} \ar@{..>}[dr]_{\mathbb{P}(\mathfrak{b})} }$$

The first projection $\text{pr}_1 : \mathfrak{X} \longrightarrow X$ may not be a projective bundle, but the restriction $\text{pr}_1^{-1}(S) \longrightarrow S$ is a projective bundle for each $B$-orbit $S$ in $X$. These projective bundles have different ranks in general.

**Remark 11.** When $\mathcal{L}_{X,D}$ is surjective, the pair $(X, D)$ is said to be *log-homogeneous* under the action of $B$ [Bri07]. In this case, $\mathfrak{X}$ is the projectivization of the vector bundle denoted by $R_X$ in [Bri09, Section 2].

For log-homogeneous varieties, the conclusion of Theorem 7 is a standard fact [Ful98, Example 12.1.7]. However, in our main case of interest, $(X, D)$ is rarely log-homogeneous under $B$. In fact, if $(X, D)$ is log-homogeneous under a *solvable* affine algebraic group $B$, then $X$ should be a toric variety of a maximal torus $T \subseteq B$ [Bri07, Theorem 3.2.1].

We refer to [BJ08, BK05, Kir06, Kir07] for studies of Chern classes of the logarithmic tangent bundle of log-homogeneous varieties.
3.5
Define \( X_0 := X, X_1 := D \), and a sequence of closed subsets
\[
X_0 \supseteq X_1 \supseteq X_2 \supseteq X_3 \supseteq \cdots \quad \text{where} \quad X_{i+1} := \text{Sing}(X_i) \quad \text{for} \quad i \geq 1.
\]
We introduce two decompositions of \( X \) into smooth locally closed subsets, the orbit decomposition \( S_{\text{orb}} \) and the singular decomposition \( S_{\text{sing}} \):
\[
S_{\text{orb}} := \{ S \mid S \text{ is a } B\text{-orbit in } X \},
\]
\[
S_{\text{sing}} := \{ S \mid S \text{ is a connected component of some } X_i \setminus X_{i+1} \}.
\]
Since \( B \) is connected and \( D \) is invariant under the action of \( B \), the orbit decomposition refines the singular decomposition. We write the variety of critical points as a disjoint union by taking inverse images over the \( B \)-orbits in \( X \):
\[
X = \bigsqcup_{S \in S_{\text{orb}}} X_S \quad \text{where} \quad X_S := \text{pr}_1^{-1}(S).
\]
As in Section 3.3, we denote the bundle of isotropy Lie algebras over \( S \) by \( \Sigma_S \).

**Lemma 12.** \( X_S \) is a closed subset of \( \Sigma_S \) for each \( B \)-orbit \( S \) in \( X \).

**Proof.** Let \( S' \) be the unique element of \( S_{\text{sing}} \) containing \( S \). Any section of \( T_X(-\log D) \) preserves the ideal sheaf of \( S' \) and defines a derivation of \( \mathcal{O}_{S'} \). Denote the corresponding vector bundle homomorphism over \( S' \) by
\[
\varphi : T_X(-\log D)|_{S'} \longrightarrow T_{S'}.
\]
Note that the restriction of \( \varphi \) to \( S \) fits into the commutative diagram:
\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
0 & \longrightarrow & 0 \\
\downarrow & & \downarrow \\
\mathcal{L}_S & \longrightarrow & T_S \\
\downarrow & & \downarrow \\
\mathcal{L}_{X,D}|_S & \longrightarrow & T_{X,D}|_S \\
\downarrow & & \downarrow \\
T_X(-\log D)|_S & \longrightarrow & T_{S'}|_S.
\end{array}
\]
Here \( \mathcal{L}_S \) is the vector bundle homomorphism of Section 3.3, \( \mathcal{L}_{X,D}|_S \) is the restriction to \( S \) of the vector bundle homomorphism of Section 3.4, and \( \iota_* \) is the differential of the inclusion \( \iota : S \to S' \). Since \( \iota_* \) is injective, \( \mathcal{L}_{X,D,x}(\xi) = 0 \) implies \( \mathcal{L}_{S,x}(\xi) = 0 \) for any \( x \in S \) and \( \xi \in \mathfrak{b} \).

3.6
**Proof of Theorem 7.** Choose a \( B \)-finite log-resolution \( \pi : X \longrightarrow Y \) and define \( X^\circ := \pi^{-1}(Y^\circ) \). By the functoriality of the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class, we have
\[
\pi_* c_{SM}(X^\circ) = c_{SM}(Y^\circ) \in A_*(Y).
\]
Since any effective cycle push-forwards to an effective cycle, it is enough to prove that \( c_{SM}(X^\circ) \) is represented by an effective cycle on \( X \).

Let \( D \) be the boundary divisor \( X \setminus X^\circ \), and let \( k \) be a nonnegative integer less than \( \dim X \). Our aim is to show that the \( k \)-th Chern class
\[
c_{SM}(X^\circ)_k = c_{\dim X-k}(T_X(-\log D)) \cap [X] \in A_k(X)
\]
is represented by an effective $k$-cycle.

We recall from Section 3.4 the variety of critical points $X$ and the two projections

$$
\begin{array}{ccc}
X & \xymatrix{\ar[r] & } & \mathbb{P}(b) \\
\ar[ru]^{pr_1} & & \\
\ar[rd]_{pr_2} & & \\
& X &
\end{array}
$$

By Lemma 12 we have

$$
X = \bigsqcup_{S \in S_{orb}} X_S \subseteq \bigsqcup_{S \in S_{orb}} \Sigma_S.
$$

Note that each $\Sigma_S$ is irreducible of dimension equal to that of $P(b)$. Since $X$ has finitely many $B$-orbits, this shows that each irreducible component of $X$ has dimension at most $\dim P(b)$.

Let $\Lambda$ be a $(k+1)$-dimensional subspace of $b$. If $\Lambda$ is spanned by $\xi_0, \ldots, \xi_k$, then the $k$-th Chern class of $T_X(-\log D)$ is represented by a cycle supported on the locus

$$
\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) := \{x \in X \mid \mathcal{L}(\xi_0), \ldots, \mathcal{L}(\xi_k) \text{ are linearly dependent at } x\},
$$

where $\mathcal{L} : b \to \Gamma(X, T_X(-\log D))$ is the Lie homomorphism. See [Ful98, Chapter 14]. As a scheme, $\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda)$ is defined by $(k+1)$-minors of the matrices for the vector bundle homomorphism

$$
\Lambda_X \to T_X(-\log D)
$$

obtained by restricting $\mathcal{L}_{X,D}$. Set-theoretically,

$$
\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) = pr_1(\mathbb{P}(\Lambda)).
$$

We recall the following facts on degeneracy loci from [Ful98, Theorem 14.4]:

(i) Each irreducible component of $\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda)$ has dimension at least $k$.

(ii) If all the irreducible components of $\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda)$ have dimension $k$, then the Chern class

$$
c_{\dim X-k}(T_X(-\log D)) \cap [X] \in A_k(X)
$$

is represented by a positive cycle supported on $\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda)$.

Therefore it is enough to show that all the irreducible components of $\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda)$ have dimension at most $k$ for a suitable choice of $\Lambda$.

In fact, all the irreducible components of $pr_2^{-1}(\mathbb{P}(\Lambda))$ have dimension at most $k$ for a sufficiently general choice of $\Lambda$. This is a general fact on maps of the form

$$
\mathcal{X} \to \mathbb{P}^n,
$$

where all the irreducible components of $\mathcal{X}$ has dimension $\leq n$. One may argue by induction on $n$, where in the induction step one chooses a hyperplane of $\mathbb{P}^n$ which does not contain the image of any irreducible component of $\mathcal{X}$.

Since each irreducible component of the degeneracy locus $\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda)$ has dimension at least $k$, the above argument shows that each component of $\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda)$ has dimension exactly $k$ for a sufficiently general $\Lambda$. Each of these components is projected from an irreducible component of $\mathcal{X}$ of maximum possible dimension, namely the dimension of $\mathbb{P}(b)$. For a later use, we record here this refined conclusion of our analysis.

**Corollary 13.** The following hold for a sufficiently general $(k+1)$-dimensional subspace $\Lambda \subseteq b$. 

\[ \square \]
(i) Each irreducible component of $D_k(\Lambda)$ has the expected dimension $k$.

(ii) Each irreducible component of $D_k(\Lambda)$ is the closure of a subvariety of a $B$-orbit $S$ such that $\mathfrak{x}_S = \Sigma_S$.

We express (ii) by saying that the irreducible component of $D_k(\Lambda)$ is generically supported on $S$.

There is at least one orbit with the equality $\mathfrak{x}_S = \Sigma_S$, the open dense orbit $S = X^\circ$. Any irreducible component of $D_k(\Lambda)$ generically supported on $X^\circ$ will be called standard. All the other irreducible components are exceptional.

4. Irreducibility

In this section, we specialize to the case when $B$ is a Borel subgroup of a connected reductive group $G$. We make use of the following consequence of the strengthened assumption:

– the centralizer of a maximal torus in $B$ is the maximal torus.

Since the union of Cartan subgroups of $B$ contains an open dense subset, it follows that

– the set of semisimple elements of $B$ contains an open dense subset of $B$, and

– the set of semisimple elements of $\mathfrak{b}$ contains an open dense subset of $\mathfrak{b}$.

We will use [Bor91] as a general reference. For Cartan subgroups and Cartan subalgebras, see [TY05, Chapter 29].

Let $P$ be a parabolic subgroup of $G$ containing $B$, and let $Y$ be the closure of a $B$-orbit $Y^\circ$ in $G/P$.

4.1

An element $\xi \in \mathfrak{b}$ is said to be regular if its centralizer is a Cartan subalgebra of $\mathfrak{b}$. The set of regular elements is open and dense in $\mathfrak{b}$.

Definition 14. A regular log-resolution of $Y$ is a proper map $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ such that

(i) $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ is a $B$-finite log-resolution of $Y$, and

(ii) the isotropy Lie algebra $\mathfrak{b}_x$ contains a regular element of $\mathfrak{b}$ for each $x \in X$.

Of course, it is enough to require the second condition for any one point from each $B$-orbit of $X$.

The following is the main result of this section. Fix a nonnegative integer $k \leq \dim Y$, and write $c_{SM}(Y^\circ)_k$ for the $k$-dimensional component of $c_{SM}(Y^\circ)$.

Theorem 15. Suppose $Y$ has a regular log-resolution. Then there is a nonempty reduced and irreducible $k$-dimensional subvariety $Z$ of $Y$ such that

$$c_{SM}(1_{Y^\circ})_k = [Z] \in A_k(Y).$$

The subvariety $Z$ can be chosen to be the closure in $Y$ of the locus

$$Z^\circ(\Lambda) = \left\{ y \in Y^\circ \mid \Lambda \cap \mathfrak{b}_y \neq 0 \right\},$$

where $\Lambda$ is a sufficiently general $(k + 1)$-dimensional subspace of $\mathfrak{b}$. 
We will see in Section 5 that the classical Schubert variety $S(\alpha)$ has a regular log-resolution. The rest of this section is devoted to the proof of Theorem 15.

4.2
Let $S$ be a homogeneous $B$-space. Recall from Section 3.3 the bundle of isotropy Lie algebras
\[ \Sigma_S = \{ (x, \xi) \mid \xi \in b_x \} \subseteq S \times \mathbb{P}(b). \]
We choose a base point $x_0$ and identify $S$ with $B/H$, where $H$ is the isotropy group $B_{x_0}$ with the Lie algebra $\mathfrak{h}$. The rank of an affine algebraic group is the dimension of a maximal torus.

**Lemma 16.** If $\text{rank}(B) = \text{rank}(H)$, then
\[ \text{pr}_{2,S} : \Sigma_S \longrightarrow \mathbb{P}(b), \quad (x, \xi) \longmapsto \xi \]
is a dominant morphism.

**Proof.** The set of semisimple elements in $b$ contains an open dense subset of $b$ in our setting. We find a point in $\Sigma_S$ which maps to the class of a given nonzero semisimple element $\xi$ in $\mathbb{P}(b)$.

Since $\xi$ is semisimple, $\xi$ is tangent to a torus [Bor91, Proposition 11.8]. We may assume that this torus $T_1$ is a maximal torus of $B$.

Let $T_2$ be a maximal torus of $H$. Then $T_2$ is a maximal torus of $B$ because $\text{rank}(B) = \text{rank}(H)$. Since any two maximal tori of $B$ are conjugate, there is an element $b \in B$ such that $T_1 = b T_2 b^{-1}$. We have
\[ \xi \in t_1 = \text{Ad}(b) \cdot t_2 \subseteq \text{Ad}(b) \cdot \mathfrak{h} = b_{\cdot x_0}. \]
Therefore $b \cdot x_0$ gives a point in the fiber of $\xi$. \hfill \square

4.3
**Remark 17.** The results of this subsection are not needed for the proof of Theorem 15 if $Y$ is the classical Schubert variety $S(\alpha)$.

Let $\Lambda$ be a $(k+1)$-dimensional subspace of $b$, and let $\Lambda_r$ be the set of regular elements of $b$ in $\Lambda$. Define
\[ D_k(\Lambda) := \{ x \in S \mid \Lambda \cap b_x \neq 0 \} \quad \text{and} \quad D_k(\Lambda_r) := \{ x \in S \mid \Lambda_r \cap b_x \neq 0 \}. \]
In terms of the diagram
\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\Sigma_S & \overset{\text{pr}_{1,S}}{\xrightarrow{}} & S \\
\downarrow \text{pr}_{2,S} & & \downarrow \text{pr}_{2,S} \\
\mathbb{P}(b) & & \mathbb{P}(b),
\end{array}
\]
we have
\[ D_k(\Lambda) = \text{pr}_{1,S} \left( \text{pr}_{2,S}^{-1} \left( \mathbb{P}(\Lambda) \right) \right) \quad \text{and} \quad D_k(\Lambda_r) = \text{pr}_{1,S} \left( \text{pr}_{2,S}^{-1} \left( \mathbb{P}(\Lambda_r) \right) \right). \]
Since $\dim \Sigma_S = \dim \mathbb{P}(b)$, $D_k(\Lambda)$ is either empty or of pure dimension $k$ for a sufficiently general $\Lambda$.

**Lemma 18.** Suppose $\mathfrak{h}$ contains a regular element of $b$. Then $D_k(\Lambda_r)$ contains an open dense subset of $D_k(\Lambda)$ for a sufficiently general $\Lambda \subseteq b$. 

11
Proof. Note that
\[ \text{pr}_{2,S}(\Sigma_S) = \bigcup_{x \in S} \mathbb{P}(b_x). \]
The closure of this set is an irreducible subvariety of \( \mathbb{P}(b) \), say \( V \). Let \( U \subseteq V \) be the open subset of (the classes of) regular elements in \( V \). This set \( U \) is nonempty by our assumption on \( \mathfrak{h} \), and hence \( U \) is dense in \( V \).

(i) \( \dim V \leq \text{codim}(\Lambda \subseteq \mathfrak{b}) \): In this case, for a sufficiently general \( \Lambda \),
\[ V \cap \mathbb{P}(\Lambda) = U \cap \mathbb{P}(\Lambda). \]
Therefore \( \text{pr}_{2,S}^{-1}(U \cap \mathbb{P}(\Lambda)) = \text{pr}_{2,S}^{-1}(\mathbb{P}(\Lambda)) \).

(ii) \( \dim V > \text{codim}(\Lambda \subseteq \mathfrak{b}) \): In this case, \( \text{pr}_{2,S}^{-1}(\mathbb{P}(\Lambda)) \) is irreducible for a sufficiently general \( \Lambda \) by Bertini’s theorem [Laz04, Theorem 3.3.1]. Therefore \( \text{pr}_{2,S}^{-1}(U \cap \mathbb{P}(\Lambda)) \) is open and dense in \( \text{pr}_{2,S}^{-1}(\mathbb{P}(\Lambda)) \).

In either case, we see that \( D_k(\Lambda_r) \) contains an open dense subset of \( D_k(\Lambda) \). \qed

Let \( p \) be a \( B \)-equivariant morphism between homogeneous \( B \)-spaces
\[ p : S \simeq B/H \rightarrow B/K, \quad H \subseteq K \subseteq B. \]
The following lemma can be found in [Kir07, Lemma 3.1].

Lemma 19. If \( \mathfrak{h} \) contains a regular element of \( \mathfrak{b} \) and \( \text{rank}(H) < \text{rank}(K) \), then
\[ \dim D_k(\Lambda) > \dim p(D_k(\Lambda)) \]
for a sufficiently general \( \Lambda \subseteq \mathfrak{b} \).

Proof. By Lemma 18, \( D_k(\Lambda_r) \) contains an open dense subset \( D^0 \) of \( D_k(\Lambda) \). It is enough to show that
\[ \dim \left( D_k(\Lambda) \cap p^{-1}(p(x)) \right) > 0 \quad \text{for all } x \in D^0. \]
Let \( x \) be a point in \( D^0 \). Since regular elements are semisimple in our setting, there is a nonzero semisimple element \( \xi \) in \( \Lambda \cap b_x \subseteq b_{p(x)} \). Choose a maximal torus \( T \) of \( B_{p(x)} \) tangent to \( \xi \) [Bor91, Proposition 11.8].

The maximal torus \( T \) is contained in the centralizer of \( \xi \) because global and infinitesimal centralizers correspond [Bor91, Section 9.1]. Therefore, for any \( t \in T \),
\[ \xi = \text{Ad}(t) \cdot \xi \in \Lambda \cap b_t \neq 0. \]
This shows that
\[ T \cdot x \subseteq D_k(\Lambda). \]
Since \( T \) is contained in \( B_{p(x)} \), we have
\[ T \cdot x \subseteq D_k(\Lambda) \cap p(p^{-1}(x)). \]
We check that \( T \cdot x \) has a positive dimension. If otherwise, \( T \cdot x = x \) because \( T \cdot x \) is connected. Therefore \( T \subseteq B_x \), and this contradicts the assumption that \( \text{rank}(H) < \text{rank}(K) \). \qed
4.4

We begin the proof of Theorem 15. Choose a regular log-resolution \( \pi : X \rightarrow Y \) and set
\[
X^\circ := \pi^{-1}(Y^\circ), \quad D := X \setminus X^\circ.
\]

By the functoriality, we have
\[
\pi_* c_{SM}(X^\circ) = c_{SM}(Y^\circ) \in A_*(Y).
\]

Let \( \Lambda \subseteq \mathfrak{b} \) be a \((k+1)\)-dimensional subspace, and let \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \) be the degeneracy locus constructed in Section 3.6. The main properties of \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \) are summarized in Corollary 13.

Recall that an irreducible component of \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \) is said to be standard if it is generically supported on \( X^0 \). All the other irreducible components are exceptional.

Lemma 20. For a sufficiently general \( \Lambda \) and a positive \( k \), there is exactly one standard component of \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \), and this component is generically reduced.

Proof. Over the open subset \( X^\circ \), the logarithmic tangent bundle agrees with the usual tangent bundle. Therefore
\[
X_{X^\circ} = \Sigma_{X^\circ}.
\]

First we show that \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \cap X^0 \) is irreducible. Since \( X^\circ \) has a point fixed by a maximal torus of \( B \), Lemma 16 says that
\[
pr_{\Sigma,X^\circ} : \Sigma_{X^\circ} \longrightarrow \mathbb{P}(\mathfrak{b})
\]
is a dominant morphism. Therefore Bertini’s theorem applies to \( pr_{2,X^\circ} \) and positive dimensional linear subspaces of \( \mathbb{P}(\mathfrak{b}) \) \cite[Theorem 3.3.1]{Laz04}. It follows that
\[
\mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \cap X^\circ = pr_{1,X^\circ} \left( pr_{2,X^\circ}^{-1} \left( \mathbb{P}(\Lambda) \right) \right)
\]
is irreducible for a sufficiently general \( \Lambda \).

Next we show that \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \cap X^0 \) is reduced. The tangent bundle of \( X^\circ \) is generated by global sections from \( \mathfrak{b} \), and hence there is a morphism to the Grassmannian
\[
\Psi : X^\circ \longrightarrow \text{Gr}_d(\mathfrak{b}), \quad x \mapsto \mathfrak{b}_x \quad \text{where} \quad d = \dim B - \dim X.
\]
As a scheme, \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \cap X^0 \) is the pull-back of the Schubert variety in \( \text{Gr}_d(\mathfrak{b}) \) defined by \( \Lambda \). Therefore \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \cap X^0 \) is reduced for a sufficiently general \( \Lambda \) by Kleiman’s transversality theorem \cite[Remark 7]{Kle74}.

In fact, \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \) has no embedded components for a sufficiently general \( \Lambda \) (being a degeneracy locus of the expected dimension \( k \)), but we will not need this. When \( Y \) is the Schubert variety \( S(\alpha) \), the reduced image in \( \text{Gr}_d(\mathfrak{b}) \) of the unique standard component of \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \) will be the subvariety \( Z(\alpha) \) of Theorem 2.

Proof of Theorem 15. When \( k \) is positive, there is exactly one standard component by Lemma 20. Write \( \pi_* \) for the push-forward
\[
\pi_* : A_*(X) \longrightarrow A_*(Y).
\]
Our goal is to show that \( \pi_*[\mathcal{E}] = 0 \) for all exceptional components \( \mathcal{E} \) of \( \mathcal{D}_k(\Lambda) \), for a sufficiently general \( \Lambda \).

For this we consider the case when \( k = 0 \). Recall from Corollary 13 that \( \mathcal{D}_0(\Lambda) \) consists of finite set of points, each contained in a \( B \)-orbit \( S \) such that \( X_S = \Sigma_S \), for a sufficiently general
June Huh

Λ. The number of points in $D_0(\Lambda)$ is equal to
\[ \chi(X^o) = \int_X c_{SM}(X^o) = \sum_S \deg \left( \text{pr}_{2,S} : \Sigma_S \to \mathbb{P}(b) \right) = 1, \]
where the sum is over all orbits such that $X_S = \Sigma_S$. Together with Lemma 16, the formula shows that every such orbit, except one, is of the form
\[ S \simeq B/H, \quad \text{rank}(B) > \text{rank}(H). \]
This one exception should be $X^o$, because $X^o$ contains a point fixed by a maximal torus of $B$.

Return to the case when $k$ is positive. Let $S$ be an orbit with $X_S = \Sigma_S$, and suppose that $S$ is different from $X^o$. Consider the $B$-equivariant map
\[ \pi|_S : S \simeq B/H \to \pi(S), \quad \text{rank}(B) > \text{rank}(H). \]
The image of $S$ contains a point fixed by a maximal torus of $B$, because it is a $B$-orbit in $G/P$. Therefore $\pi(S)$ is of the form
\[ \pi(S) \simeq B/K, \quad \text{rank}(B) = \text{rank}(K). \]
Since $\pi$ is a regular log-resolution, this shows that Lemma 19 applies to $\pi|_S$. The degeneracy locus $D_k(\Lambda)$ of Lemma 19 is precisely the intersection $S \cap D_k(\Lambda)$ in our case because $X_S = \Sigma_S$.

The conclusion is that
\[ \dim E > \dim \pi(E) \]
for any irreducible component $E$ of $D_k(\Lambda)$ generically supported on $S$.

Therefore $\pi_*[E] = 0$ for all exceptional components $E$, for a sufficiently general $\Lambda$. \hfill \square

5. A regular resolution of a classical Schubert variety

In this section, $E$ is a vector space with an ordered basis $e_1, \ldots, e_{n+d}$, $G$ is the general linear group of $E$, and $B$ is the subgroup of $G$ which consists of all invertible upper triangular matrices with respect to the ordered basis of $E$.

5.1
We recall the known resolution of singularities of the classical Schubert variety $S(\alpha)$ which is regular in the sense of Definition 14. Theorem 2 therefore can be deduced from Theorem 15.

Let $\alpha = (\alpha_1 \geq \alpha_2 \geq \cdots \geq \alpha_d \geq 0)$, and let $S(\alpha) \subseteq \text{Gr}_d(E)$ be the Schubert variety defined with respect to the complete flag
\[ F_* = \left( F_0 \subsetneq F_1 \subsetneq \cdots \subsetneq F_{n+d} \right) \quad \text{where} \quad F_k := \text{span}(e_1, \ldots, e_k). \]

**Definition 21.** $\mathcal{V}(\alpha)$ is the subvariety
\[ \mathcal{V}(\alpha) := \left\{ V_1 \subseteq V_2 \subseteq \cdots \subseteq V_d \mid V_i \subseteq F_{\alpha_{d+1-i}+i} \right\} \subseteq \text{Gr}_1(E) \times \text{Gr}_2(E) \times \cdots \times \text{Gr}_d(E). \]
The restriction to $\mathcal{V}(\alpha)$ of the projection to $\text{Gr}_d(E)$ will be written
\[ \pi_\alpha : \mathcal{V}(\alpha) \to S(\alpha). \]
The projection $\pi_\alpha$ maps $\mathcal{V}(\alpha)$ into $S(\alpha)$ because $V_i \subseteq V_d \cap F_{\alpha_{d+1-i}+i}$ for all $i$. 

14
We note that $\pi_\alpha$ is the resolution used in [KL74] to obtain the determinantal formula for the classes of Schubert schemes. This resolution was also used in [AM09] to compute the Chern-Schwartz-MacPherson class of $S(\alpha)^\circ$. All the properties of $\pi_\alpha$ we need can be found in [AM09, Section 2]. However, one simple but important point for us was not emphasized in the non-embedded description of $V(\alpha)$ in [AM09] as a tower of projective bundles: $V(\alpha)$ is a subvariety of the partial flag variety

$$\text{Fl}_{1, \ldots, d}(E) \subseteq \text{Gr}_1(E) \times \text{Gr}_2(E) \times \cdots \times \text{Gr}_d(E),$$

and $V(\alpha)$ is invariant under the diagonal action of $B$. It follows that

(i) $V(\alpha)$ has finitely many $B$-orbits, and
(ii) every $B$-orbit of $V(\alpha)$ contains a point fixed by a maximal torus of $B$.

The above properties imply that $\pi_\alpha$ is a regular log-resolution of $S(\alpha)$ in the sense of Definition 14.

**Remark 22.** We note that the Bott-Samelson variety of [Dem74, Han73] will not have finitely many $B$-orbits in general. It would be interesting to know which Schubert varieties in flag varieties (do not) admit a regular or $B$-finite log-resolution.

### 5.2

For the sake of completeness, we give an argument here that $\pi_\alpha$ is a regular log-resolution of singularities of $S(\alpha)$.

**Proposition 23.** $\pi_\alpha$ is a regular log-resolution of $S(\alpha)$. That is,

(i) $\pi_\alpha$ is proper and $B$-equivariant,
(ii) $\pi_\alpha^{-1}(S(\alpha)^\circ) \to S(\alpha)^\circ$ is an isomorphism,
(iii) $V(\alpha)$ is smooth and has finitely many $B$-orbits,
(iv) the complement of $\pi_\alpha^{-1}(S(\alpha)^\circ)$ in $V(\alpha)$ is a divisor with normal crossings, and
(v) the isotropy Lie algebra $b_x$ contains a regular element of $b$ for each $x \in V(\alpha)$.

**Proof.** We start by justifying (ii). Note that $\pi_\alpha$ has a section over the Schubert cell

$$s_\alpha : S(\alpha)^\circ \to \pi_\alpha^{-1}(S(\alpha)^\circ), \quad V \mapsto V \cap \left( F_{\alpha_d+1} \subseteq F_{\alpha_{d-1}+2} \subseteq \cdots \subseteq F_{\alpha_1+d} \right).$$

The statement

$$s_\alpha \circ \pi_\alpha^{-1}(S(\alpha)^\circ) = \text{id}$$

is equivalent to the assertion that

$$V_i = V_d \cap F_{\alpha_{d+1-i}+i}$$

for all $i$ and for all $V_\bullet \in V(\alpha)$ with $V_d \in S(\alpha)$. This is clear because $V_i$ is contained in the right-hand side and the dimensions of both sides are the same. Therefore

$$\pi_\alpha^{-1}(S(\alpha)^\circ) \to S(\alpha)^\circ$$

is an isomorphism, proving (ii).

We prove (iii) by induction on the number of entries of $\alpha$. Define

$\bar{\alpha} := (\alpha_2 \geq \alpha_3 \geq \cdots \geq \alpha_d \geq 0)$
and consider the corresponding subvariety

\[ \mathbb{V}(\tilde{\alpha}) \subseteq \text{Gr}_1(E) \times \text{Gr}_2(E) \times \cdots \times \text{Gr}_{d-1}(E). \]

Restricting the projection map which forgets the last coordinate, we have

\[ \text{pr}_d : \mathbb{V}(\alpha) \longrightarrow \mathbb{V}(\tilde{\alpha}). \]

Let \( \mathcal{F}_* \) be the flag of trivial vector bundles over \( \mathbb{V}(\tilde{\alpha}) \) modeled on the flag of subspaces \( F_* \). Then we may identify \( \text{pr}_d \) with the projective bundle

\[ \mathbb{P}(\mathcal{F}_{\alpha_1+d}/\mathcal{V}_{d-1}) \longrightarrow \mathbb{V}(\tilde{\alpha}), \]

where \( \mathcal{V}_{d-1} \) is the pull-back of the tautological bundle from the projection \( \mathbb{V}(\tilde{\alpha}) \longrightarrow \text{Gr}_{d-1}(E) \).

This shows by induction that \( \mathbb{V}(\alpha) \) is smooth. The fact that \( \mathbb{V}(\alpha) \) has finitely many \( B \)-orbits is implied by the Bruhat decomposition of \( G \).

(iv) can also be proved by the same induction. Let \( \tilde{\alpha} \) be as above, and set

\[ D_{\text{old}} := \mathbb{V}(\tilde{\alpha}) \setminus \pi_{\tilde{\alpha}}^{-1}(S(\tilde{\alpha})^\circ). \]

We may suppose that \( D_{\text{old}} \) is a divisor in \( \mathbb{V}(\tilde{\alpha}) \) with normal crossings. The key observation is that

\[ \mathbb{V}(\alpha) \setminus \pi_{\tilde{\alpha}}^{-1}(S(\tilde{\alpha})^\circ) = \text{pr}_d^{-1}(D_{\text{old}}) \cup D_{\text{new}}, \]

where \( D_{\text{new}} \) is the smooth and irreducible divisor

\[ D_{\text{new}} := \mathbb{P}(\mathcal{F}_{\alpha_1+d-1}/\mathcal{V}_{d-1}) \subseteq \mathbb{P}(\mathcal{F}_{\alpha_1+d}/\mathcal{V}_{d-1}) = \mathbb{V}(\tilde{\alpha}). \]

The assertion that \( \text{pr}_d^{-1}(D_{\text{old}}) \cup D_{\text{new}} \) has normal crossings can be checked locally. Covering \( \mathbb{V}(\alpha) \) with open subsets of the form \( \text{pr}_d^{-1}(U) \), where \( U \) is an open subset of \( \mathbb{V}(\tilde{\alpha}) \) over which the vector bundle \( \mathcal{V}_{d-1} \) is trivial, the assertion becomes clear.

(v) is a consequence of the fact that each \( B \)-orbit of \( \mathbb{V}(\alpha) \) contains a point fixed by a maximal torus of \( B \). It follows that every point of \( \mathbb{V}(\alpha) \) is fixed by a maximal torus of \( B \). Therefore all the isotropy Lie algebras contain a Cartan subalgebra of \( \mathfrak{b} \), whose general member is a regular element of \( \mathfrak{b} \).

\[ \square \]

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