Some power series involving involutions in Coxeter groups

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SOME POWER SERIES INVOLVING INVOLUTIONS
IN COXETER GROUPS

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ABSTRACT. Let $W$ be a Coxeter group. We show that a certain power series involving a sum over all involutions in $W$ can be expressed in terms of the Poincaré series of $W$. (The case where $W$ is finite has been known earlier.)

INTRODUCTION

0.1. Let $V'$ be an $n$-dimensional vector space over the finite field $F_q$ and let $V = F_q^2 \otimes F_q V'$, an $n$-dimensional vector space over $F_q^2$. Let $F : V \to V$ be the $F_q$-linear isomorphism $\lambda \otimes v \mapsto \lambda^q \otimes v$ where $\lambda \in F_q^2, v \in V'$. Let $F$ be the set of all flags $V_0 = (V_1 \subset V_2 \subset V_n)$ in $V$ where for $i = 1, \ldots, n$, $V_i$ there exists an $i$-dimensional $F_q^2$-subspace of $V_i$; let $F'$ be the analogous set defined in terms of $V', F_q$ instead of $V, F_q^2$. Note that $F$ induces a bijection $\mathcal{F} \to F$,

$$V_i = (V_1 \subset V_2 \subset V_n) \mapsto F(V_0) = (F(V_1)F(V_2)F(V_n)).$$

The standard way to count the number $|\mathcal{F}|$ elements in $\mathcal{F}$ is to fix $V_0^0 \in \mathcal{F}$ and to partition $\mathcal{F}$ into pieces indexed by the symmetric group $S_n$; the piece corresponding to $w \in S_n$ is the set of all $V_0 \in \mathcal{F}$ such that $V_0^0, V_0$ are in relative position (this piece contains exactly $q^{2l(w)}$ elements where $l : S_n \to {\mathbb N}$ is the standard length function). This yields the expression $|\mathcal{F}| = \sum_{w \in S_n} q^{2l(w)}$. Similarly we have $|\mathcal{F}'| = \sum_{w \in S_n} q^{l(w)}$.

Another way to compute $|\mathcal{F}|$ without a choice of $V_0^0$ is to partition $\mathcal{F}$ into pieces indexed by the set $I$ of involutions in $S_n$; the piece corresponding to $z \in I$ is the set of all $V_0 \in \mathcal{F}$ such that $z, F(V_0)$ are in relative position $z$ (this piece contains exactly $|\mathcal{F}|q^{l(z)}(\frac{q-1}{q+1})^{\phi(z)}$ where $\phi(z)$ is the number of $(-1)$-eigenvalues of $z$ in the reflection representation of $S_n$). (If we had taken a $z$ in $S_n - I$ we would have got an empty piece.) This yields the expression $|\mathcal{F}| = |\mathcal{F}'| \sum_{z \in I} q^{l(z)}(\frac{q-1}{q+1})^{\phi(z)}$. We deduce that the sum

$$\sum_{z \in I} q^{l(z)}(\frac{q-1}{q+1})^{\phi(z)}$$

(a kind of weighted Poincaré polynomial based on involutions) is equal to a quotient of two ordinary Poincaré polynomials:

$$\sum_{w \in S_n} q^{2l(w)} / \sum_{w \in S_n} q^{l(w)}.$$

The purpose of this paper is to generalize this equality to the case of Coxeter groups.

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281
0.2. Let \((W, S)\) be a Coxeter group such that the canonical set of generators \(S\) of \(W\) is finite and let \(w \mapsto w^*\) be an involutive automorphism of \(W\) preserving \(S\). Let \(l : W \to \mathbb{N}\) be the usual length function and let \(\leq\) be the standard partial order on \(W\). The Poincaré series of \(W\) is the formal power series \(P(u) = \sum_{w \in W} u^{l(w)} \in \mathbb{Z}[u]\) where \(u\) is an indeterminate. We set \(P_*(u) = \sum_{w \in W_1, w = w^*} u^{l(w)} \in \mathbb{Z}[u]\). Let \(I_* = \{ w \in W ; w^* = w^{-1}\}\). It is easy to show (see for example \([L1]\)) that there is a unique function \(\phi : I_* \to \mathbb{N}\) such that \(\phi(1) = 0\) and such that for any \(w \in I_*\) and any \(s \in S\) with \(sw < w\) we have \(\phi(w) = \phi(sw) + 1\) (if \(sw = ws^*\)) and \(\phi(w) = \phi(sw^*)\) (if \(sw \neq ws^*\)). We set

\[ R(u) = \sum_{z \in I_*} u^{\ell(z)} (u - 1) \phi(z) \in \mathbb{Z}[u]. \]

(The definition of \(R(u)\) appeared in \([L1]\) in the case where \(W\) is finite, but the definition clearly makes sense in the general case.) We say that \(W, *\) has property \(X\) if

\[ R(u) = P(u^2)/P_*(u). \]

In \([L1]\) it was proved (case by case) that \(W, *\) has property \(X\) if \(W\) is finite. In \([MW]\) it is proved that \(W, 1\) has property \(X\) if \(W\) is an affine Weyl group of type \(A\) and the question of the validity of \(X\) for any \(W, *\) is raised. We state the following result.

**Theorem 0.3.** \(W, *\) has property \(X\).

The proof is given in 1.11. It is based on results in \([LV, L1]\). The most complicated part of the proof is a property stated in Proposition 1.8. In Section 2 we give an alternative proof of this property assuming that \(W\) is a Weyl group. (The same proof applies in the case where \(W\) is the “Weyl group” associated to a Kac-Moody Lie algebra and \(*\) is induced by an involutive automorphism of that Lie algebra.)

1. The polynomials \(X^*_y\)

1.1. Let \(W, S, *, l, I_*\) be as in 0.2. Let \(u\) be an indeterminate.

Let \(A = \mathbb{Z}[u, u^{-1}]\). Let \(\mathfrak{H}\) be the free \(A\)-module with basis \((T_w)_{w \in W}\) with the unique \(A\)-algebra structure with unit \(T_1\) such that

\[ T_w T_{w'} = T_{ww'} \text{ if } l(ww') = l(w) + l(w') \text{ and } \]

\[ (T_s + 1)(T_s - u^2) = 0 \text{ for all } s \in S. \]

(This is an Iwahori-Hecke algebra.) Let \(M\) be the free \(A\)-module with basis \(\{a_w ; w \in I_*\}\}. According to \([LV]\) (when \(W\) is a Weyl group) and \([L1]\) (in the general case) there is a unique \(\mathfrak{H}\)-module structure on \(M\) (extending the \(A\)-module structure) such that for any \(s \in S\) and any \(z \in I_*\), we have

(i) \(T_s a_z = u a_z + (u + 1) a_{sz}\) if \(sz = zs^* > z\);

(ii) \(T_s a_z = (u^2 - u - 1) a_z + (u^2 - u) a_{sz}\) if \(sz = zs^* < z\);

(iii) \(T_s a_z = a_{sz^*}\) if \(sz \neq zs^* > z\);

(iv) \(T_s a_z = (u^2 - 1) a_z + u^2 a_{sz^*}\) if \(sz \neq zs^* < z\).

For any \(m \in M\) we write \(m = \sum_{z \in I_*} (a_z : m) a_z\) where \((a_z : m) \in A\) are zero for all but finitely many \(z\).

**Proposition 1.2.** There is a unique collection of polynomials \(X^*_y \in \mathbb{Z}[u]\) indexed by \((z, y) \in I_* \times W\) such that
(★) $X_z^y = \delta_{z, 1}$ for all $z \in I_*$

and such that for any $s \in S, y \in W$ with $y > ys$ and any $z \in I_*$ we have

(i) $X_y^z = uX_y^zs + (u+1)X_{ys}^{sz}$ if $sz = zs^* > z$;

(ii) $X_y^z = (u^2 - u - 1)X_y^zs + (u^2 - u)X_{ys}^{sz}$ if $sz = zs^* < z$;

(iii) $X_y^z = X_{ys}^{sz^*}$ if $sz \neq zs^* > z$;

(iv) $X_y^z = (u^2 - 1)X_y^zs + u^2X_{ys}^{szs^*}$ if $sz \neq zs^* < z$.

Moreover, we have $X_z^z \in u^{l(z)}Z[u]$ for any $(z, y) \in I_* \times W$.

For $(z, y) \in I_* \times W$ we set $X_y^z = (a_1 : T_ya_z) \in \mathcal{A}$. Then clearly (★) holds. If $s \in S, y \in W$ satisfy $y > ys$, then $T_y = T_ysT_s$; hence applying $T_ys$ to the formulas 1.1(i)–(iv) we see that $X_y^z$ satisfy (i)–(iv) (but they are in $\mathcal{A}$ instead of $Z[u]$). Now from (★) and (i)–(iv) we see by induction on $l(y)$ that $X_y^z$ are uniquely determined and that $X_y^z \in u^{l(z)}Z[u]$ for any $(z, y) \in I_* \times W$. The proposition is proved.

1.3. The $\mathcal{A}$-module $M$ in 1.1 can be viewed as an $\mathcal{A}$-submodule of $\hat{M}$ which consists of all formal $\mathcal{A}$-linear combinations of the elements $\{a_z : z \in I_*\}$. The $\mathcal{A}$-module structure on $M$ extends in an obvious way to an $\mathcal{A}$-module structure on $\hat{M}$. We show that

(a) $T_y(\sum z a_z) = u^{2l(y)} \sum z a_z$ for any $y \in W$.

It is enough to prove this in the case where $y = s \in S$. For any $z \in I_*$ we set $s \bullet z = sz$ if $sz = zs^*$ and $s \bullet z = szs^*$ if $sz \neq zs^*$. From the definition for any $z \in I_*$ such that $sz < z$ we have

$$T_s(a_z + a_{sz}) = u^2(a_z + a_{sz});$$

hence

$$T_s(\sum z \in I_* a_z) = \sum z \in I_*; sz < z T_s(a_z + a_{sz}) = \sum z \in I_*; sz < z u^2(a_z + a_{sz}) = u^2 \sum z \in I_* a_z.$$

This completes the proof of (a).

For $\hat{m} \in \hat{M}$ we write $\hat{m} = \sum z \in I_* (a_z : \hat{m})a_z$ where $(a_z : \hat{m}) \in \mathcal{A}$. Applying (a) to (a) we obtain for any $y \in W$:

(b) $\sum z \in I_* X_y^z = u^{2l(y)}$.

Note that in the left-hand side we have $X_z^z = 0$ for all but finitely many $z$. Indeed, if $(z, y) \in I_* \times W$ and $l(z) > 2l(y)$, then $X_y^z = 0$. (This can be seen from Proposition 1.7 or directly from definitions by induction on $l(y)$.)

Proposition 1.4. Let $s \in S, z \in I_*$ be such that $sz < z$ and let $y \in W$. We have:

(i) $(u+1)X_y^z = -uX_y^{zs} + X_{ys}^{sz}$ if $sz = zs^*, ys > y$;

(ii) $(u+1)X_y^z = u^2X_y^{zs} + (u^2 - u - 1)X_y^{sz}$ if $sz = zs^*, ys < y$;

(iii) $X_y^z = X_{ys}^{zs^*}$ if $sz \neq zs^*, ys > y$;

(iv) $X_y^z = u^2X_y^{zs^*} + (u^2 - 1)X_{ys}^{zs^*}$ if $sz \neq zs^*, ys < y$.

From 1.2(i) we obtain $X_{ys}^{zs} = uX_y^{zs} + (u+1)X_y^z$ if $sz = zs^*, ys > y$. Clearly this yields (i). In 1.2(ii) we substitute $X_y^{zs} = \frac{u}{u+1}X_y^{zs} + \frac{1}{u+1}X_y^z \in Q(u)$ (with $ys < y$)
which follows from (i); we obtain
\[
X^z_y = (u^2 - u - 1)(-\frac{u}{u + 1}X^z_{sy} + \frac{1}{u + 1}X^s_zy) + (u^2 - u)X^szy
\]
\[
= \frac{u^2}{u + 1}X^s_{yz} + \frac{u^2 - u - 1}{u + 1}X^s_zy
\]
so that (ii) holds. Now (iii) clearly follows from 1.2(iii). In 1.2(iv) we substitute
\[X^z_{ys} = X^syz\]
which follows from (iii); we obtain (iv). The proposition is proved.

From the proposition we deduce the following result.

**Corollary 1.5.** Let \( z \in I_+ \), \( y \in W \), \( s \in S \). We have:

(i) \( X^z_y + X^z_{ys} = u^2(X^syz^\ast + X^syz) \) if \( sz \neq zs^\ast < z \);

(ii) \( (u + 1)(X^z_y + X^z_{ys}) = (u^2 - u)(X^syz + X^szy) \) if \( sz = zs^\ast < z \).

1.6. For any \( h \in \mathfrak{H} \) we write \( h = \sum_{w \in W} [T_w : h]T_w \) where \([T_w : h] \in \mathcal{A}\) are zero for all but finitely many \( w \).

For \( z' \in I_+ \), \( s \in S \) we show:

(i) \( T_sT_z' = cT_z' + c'T_{sz'} \) where \( c, c' \in \mathbb{Z}[u] \) \{-0\} if \( sz' = z's^\ast \);

(ii) \( T_sT_zT_{sz'} = T_{sz's'} \) if \( sz' \neq z's^\ast > z \);

(iii) \( T_sT_zT_{sz'} = u^4T_{sz's'} + (u^2 - 1)^2T_{z'} + u^2(u^2 - 1)T_{sz'} + u^2(u^2 - 1)T_{sz's'} \) if \( sz' \neq z's^\ast < z' \).

In (i) assume first that \( sz' > z' \). Then \( T_sT_{z'}T_{sz'} = T_sT_{sz's'} = u^2T_{z'} + (u^2 - 1)T_{sz'} \).

Now assume that in (i) we have \( sz < z \). Then
\[
T_sT_{z'}T_{sz'} = T_sT_sT_{sz's'}T_{sz'} = T_sT_sT_{z'} = u^2T_{z'} + (u^2 - 1)T_sT_{z'}
\]
\[
= u^2T_{z'} + u^2(u^2 - 1)T_{sz'} + (u^2 - 1)^2T_{z'}.
\]

Now (ii) is obvious. In (iii) we have
\[
T_sT_{z'}T_{sz'} = T_sT_sT_{sz's'}T_{sz'}
\]
\[
= u^4T_{sz's'} + (u^2 - 1)^2T_{z'} + u^2(u^2 - 1)T_{sz'} + u^2(u^2 - 1)T_{sz's'},
\]
as desired.

For \( s \in S \) and \( z, z' \in I_+ \) we show:

(a) If \( (a_z : T_sT_{a_{z'}}) \neq 0 \), then \([T_z : T_sT_{z'}] \neq 0 \).

If \( sz = z's^\ast \), then by Proposition 1.2 we have \( z = z' \) or \( z = sz' \) and (a) follows from (i).

If \( sz' \neq z's^\ast \), then by Proposition 1.2 we have \( z = sz's^\ast \) and (a) follows from (ii).

If \( sz' \neq z's^\ast \), then by Proposition 1.2 we have \( z = z' \) or \( z = z 'sz's^\ast \) and (a) follows from (iii).

This proves (a).

We shall also need a variant of (a). Assume that \( s \neq s' \) in \( S \) are such that \( s' = s^\ast \), \( s, s' \) generate a finite (dihedral) subgroup of \( W \) and \( \sigma \) is the longest element in that subgroup. Then:

(b) If \( z, z' \in I_+ \) and \( (a_z : T_{a_{z'}}) \neq 0 \), then \([T_z : T_{a_{z'}}] \neq 0 \).

(c) \( (a_1 : T_{a_{a_1}}) = u^{l(\sigma)} \).

This can be proved using the results in \([L1]\) which describe the action of \( T_\sigma \) on \( M \).

We have the following result.

**Proposition 1.7.** If \( z \in I_+ \), \( y \in W \) and \( (a_z : T_ya_1) \neq 0 \), then \([T_z : T_yT_{y^{-1}a_1}] \neq 0 \).
We argue by induction on \(l(y)\). If \(y = 1\) the result is obvious. Assume now that \(y \neq 1\). We can find \(s \in S\) such that \(sy < y\). We have

\[
(a_z : T_y a_1) = \sum_{z' \in I^*} (a_z : T_s a_z')(a_{z'} : T_{sy} a_1).
\]

By assumption there exists \(z' \in I^*\) such that \((a_z : T_s a_z') \neq 0\) and \((a_{z'} : T_{sy} a_1) \neq 0\). By 1.6(a) we then have \([T_z : T_s T_z T_s] \neq 0\) and by the induction hypothesis we have \([T_{z'} : T_s T_{y'} T_{y'}] \neq 0\). We have

\[
[T_z : T_y T_{y'} - 1] = \sum_{w \in W} [T_z : T_s T_w T_s][T_w : T_{sy} T_{y'} - 1].
\]

This is a sum of terms in \(N[u-1]\) (the set of polynomials in \(u-1\) with coefficients in \(N\)) and the term corresponding to \(w = z'\) is nonzero; hence the sum is nonzero. The proposition is proved.

**Proposition 1.8.** For any \(y \in W\) we have \(X_y^1 = \delta_{y,y'} u^{l(y)}\).

From \([L2] 10.4(a)\) we have

\[ (a) \quad [T_1 : T_y T_{y'} - 1] = \delta_{y_1,y_1'} u^{2(l(y_1))} \text{ for any } y_1 \in W. \]

We prove the proposition by induction on \(l(y)\). If \(y = 1\) the result is obvious. Assume now that \(y \neq 1\). We can write \(y = \sigma y'\) where \(\sigma, y' \in W\), \(l(y) = l(\sigma) + l(y')\) and the following holds: if \(y \neq y'^*\), then \(\sigma \in S\); if \(y = y'^*\), then there exists \(s, s'\) in \(S\) such that \(s' = s'^*\), \(s, s'\) generate a finite subgroup of \(W\) and \(\sigma\) is the longest element in that subgroup, so that \(\sigma = \sigma'^*\). (We use \([L2] A1(a)\).) By the induction hypothesis we have

\[
T_{y'} a_1 = \delta_{y',y'} u^{l(y')} a_1 + \sum_{z \in I^*} (a_z : T_y a_1) a_z.
\]

Since \(T_y = T_{\sigma} T_{y'}\), it follows (also using (a)) that

\[ (b) \quad T_y a_1 = \delta_{y',y'} u^{l(y')} T_{\sigma} a_1 + \sum_{z \in I^*} (a_z : T_y a_1) T_{\sigma} a_z,
\]

\[
T_y T_{y'} - 1 = \delta_{y',y'} u^{2(l(y'))} T_{\sigma} T_{\sigma'} + \sum_{w \in W; w \neq 1} [T_w : T_y T_{y'} - 1] T_{\sigma} T_w T_{\sigma'}.
\]

Note that by (a) we have

\[
[T_1 : T_{y} T_{\sigma'}] = \delta_{\sigma,\sigma'} u^{2l(\sigma)}.
\]

Hence \(\gamma := [T_1 : \delta_{y',y'} u^{2l(y')} T_{\sigma} T_{\sigma'}]\) is \(\delta_{y',y'} u^{2l(y')} \delta_{\sigma,\sigma'} u^{2l(\sigma)}\), that is \(\delta_{y,y'} u^{2l(y)}\). (If \(y \neq y'^*\) we have \(\gamma = 0\) since we have either \(\delta_{y',y'} = 0\) or \(\delta_{\sigma,\sigma'} = 0\). If \(y = y'^*\), then \(\sigma = \sigma'^*\) hence \(y' = y'^{*}\) and \(\gamma = u^{2l(y')}\).)

Assume that for some \(z \in I_1 \setminus \{1\}\), we have \((a_z : T_y a_1) \neq 0\) and \((a_1 : T_{\sigma} a_z) \neq 0\). Then, by Proposition 1.7 we have \([T_1 : T_y T_{y'}] \neq 0\). Moreover, we have \([T_1 : T_{\sigma} T_{T_{y'}}] \neq 0\). (When \(\sigma \in S\) this follows from 1.6(a). When \(\sigma \notin S\) this follows from 1.6(b).) Thus,

\[
\pi := [T_1 : \sum_{w \in W; w \neq 1} [T_w : T_y T_{y'} - 1] T_{\sigma} T_w T_{\sigma'}]
\]

is a sum of terms in \(N[u-1]\), at least one of which is \(\neq 0\), so that \(\pi \in N[u-1] \setminus \{0\}\). Thus \([T_1 : T_y T_{y'} - 1] = \delta_{y,y'} u^{2l(y)} + \pi\). By (a), \([T_1 : T_y T_{y'} - 1] = \delta_{y,y'} u^{2l(y)}\). Thus, \(\pi = 0\), a contradiction.
This contradiction shows that for any \( z \in I_* - \{1\} \) we have either \((a_z : T_y a_1) = 0\) or \((a_1 : T_y a_z) = 0\). Hence from (b) we deduce that \((a_1 : T_y a_1) = (a_1 : \delta_{y',y^*} u^{l(y')} T_\sigma a_1)\). We have
\[
(a_1 : T_\sigma a_1) = \delta_{\sigma, \sigma^*} u^{l(\sigma)}.
\]
(When \( \sigma \in S \) this follows from 1.1(i)–(iv). When \( \sigma \notin S \) this follows from 1.6(c).)

We deduce
\[
(a_1 : T_y a_1) = \delta_{y', y^*} \delta_{\sigma, \sigma^*} u^{l(y)} = \delta_{y', y^*} \delta_{\sigma, \sigma^*} u^{l(y)}.
\]

It remains to show that
\[
(c) \quad \delta_{y', y^*} \delta_{\sigma, \sigma^*} = \delta_{y, y^*}.
\]

If \( y \neq y^* \), then we have either \( y' \neq y'^* \) or \( \sigma \neq \sigma^* \); hence both sides of (c) are zero.
If \( y = y^* \), then \( \sigma = \sigma^* \) hence \( y' = y'^* \) hence both sides of (c) are 1. Thus (c) holds.
The proposition is proved.

**Proposition 1.9.** We have \( X^z_y \in u^{l(y)} Z[u] \) for any \((z, y) \in I_* \times W\).

This follows by induction on \( l(z) \) using 1.4(i)–(iv); to start the induction, we assume that \( z = 1 \) in which case the result follows from Proposition 1.8.

**1.10.** For any \( z \in I_* \) we set
\[
(b) \quad X^z = \sum_{y \in W} X^z_y \in Z[[u]].
\]

Note that, by Proposition 1.9, the sum in the right-hand side converges in \( Z[[u]] \).

For \( z \in I_* \) we show that
\[
(c) \quad X^z = P_*(u) u^{l(z)} \left( \frac{u - 1}{u + 1} \right)^{\phi(z)}.
\]

We argue by induction on \( l(z) \). If \( z = 1 \) we have, using Proposition 1.8:
\[
X^1 = \sum_{y \in W : y = y^*} u^{l(y)} = P_*(u).
\]

Assume now that \( z \neq 1 \). We can find \( s \in S \) such that \( sz < z \). From Corollary 1.5 we deduce that \( X^z = u^{2X^{szs^*}} \) if \( sz \neq zs^* \) and \((u+1)X^z = (u^2-u)X^{sz} \) if \( sz = zs^* \).

Using the induction hypothesis we see that, if \( sz \neq zs^* \) we have
\[
X^z = P_*(u) u^{l(szs^*) + 2 \left( \frac{u - 1}{u + 1} \right)^{\phi(szs^*)}},
\]

while if \( sz = zs^* \) we have
\[
X^z = P_*(u) u^{l(sz) + 1 \left( \frac{u - 1}{u + 1} \right)^{\phi(sz) + 1}},
\]

the desired result follows.
1.11. We prove Theorem 0.3. The sum $\sum_{(z,y) \in \mathbf{I} \times W} X^z_y$ is convergent in $\mathbb{Z}[[u]]$ since $X^z_y \in u^{\max(l(z),l(y))} \mathbb{Z}[u]$ (see Propositions 1.2 and 1.9). We can compute this sum in two different ways and we get the same result. Thus we have

$$\sum_{z \in \mathbf{I}_s} \left( \sum_{y \in W} X^z_y \right) = \sum_{y \in W} \left( \sum_{z \in \mathbf{I}_s} X^z_y \right).$$

By 1.3(b), the right-hand side is equal to $\sum_{y \in W} u^{2l(y)} = P(u^2)$. By 1.4(c), the left-hand side is equal to

$$\sum_{z \in \mathbf{I}_s} P_u(u)^{l(z)} \left( \frac{u-1}{u+1} \right)^{\phi(z)} = P_u(u)R(u).$$

Thus we have

$$P(u^2) = P_u(u)R(u).$$

Theorem 0.3 is proved.

2. THE CASE OF WEYL GROUPS

2.1. In this section we assume that $W$ is the Weyl group of a connected adjoint simple algebraic group $G$ defined and split over the finite field $\mathbf{F}_p$ with $p$ elements ($p$ is a prime number); we identify $G$ with $G(k)$ where $k$ is an algebraic closure of $\mathbf{F}_p$. Let $F : G \rightarrow G$ be the “Frobenius map”; it is an abstract group isomorphism whose fixed point set is the group of $\mathbf{F}_p$-rational points of $G$. Let $B$ be the variety of Borel subgroups of $G$. The set of $G$-orbits on $B \times B$ (for the simultaneous conjugation action) are naturally indexed by $W$; we denote by $O_w$ the $G$-orbit indexed by $w \in W$. The length function $l : W \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ is such that for any $w \in W$ and any $C \in B$, the algebraic variety $\{B \in B; (C,B) \in O_w\}$ is an affine space over $k$ of dimension $l(w)$. The subset $S$ of $W$ is then given by $\{s \in W; l(w) = 1\}$. If $B \in B$, then $F(B) \in B$; moreover, $B \mapsto F(B)$ is a bijection $F : B \rightarrow B$.

For a finite set $X$ we denote by $|X|$ the cardinal of $X$. If $X \subset X'$ are sets and $f : X' \rightarrow X'$ is a map such that $f(X) \subset X$ we set $X^f = \{x \in X; f(x) = x\}$.

2.2. Let $s \in S$. If $B, B' \in B$ we write $B \sim_s B'$ if $(B, B') \in O_1 \cup O_s$. This is an equivalence relation on $B$. A subgroup $P$ of $G$ is said to be parabolic of type $s$ if it is the union of all $B$ in a fixed equivalence class for $\sim_s$. Let $\mathcal{P}_s$ be the set of parabolic subgroups of type $s$ of $G$. For $P \in \mathcal{P}_s$ we set $B_P = \{B \in B; B \subset P\}$; this is a projective line over $k$.

If $P \in \mathcal{P}_s$ and $B \in B$, then there is a unique element $y = \text{pos}(B, P) \in W$ such that $y < y_s$ and $(B, B') \in O_y \cup O_{ys}$ for any $B' \in B_P$; moreover, we have $(B, B') \in O_y$ for a unique $B' \in B_P$, denoted by $P^B$.

2.3. Let $s,s' \in S$ and let $P \in \mathcal{P}_s, P' \in \mathcal{P}_{s'}$. There is a unique element $y = \text{pos}(P, P') \in W$ such that $y < s y, y < s' y$ and $(B, B') \in O_y \cup O_{sy} \cup O_{ys'} \cup O_{ysy}$ for any $B \in B_P, B' \in B_{P'}$. Assuming in addition that $s y = y s'$, the map $B_P \rightarrow B_{P'}$ given by $B \mapsto P^B$ is an isomorphism of projective lines with inverse $B' \mapsto P^{B'}$. 
2.4. We shall fix \( C \in \mathcal{B}^F \). We assume that \(*\) has the following property: we can find an involutive automorphism of algebraic groups \( \iota : G \to G \) such that:

\( \iota(C) = C; \)

if \((B, B') \in \mathcal{O}_w\), then \((\iota(B), \iota(B')) \in \mathcal{O}_{w^*}.\)

Note that \( \iota \) defines an involution \( \mathcal{B} \to \mathcal{B} \) of algebraic varieties (denoted again by \( \iota \)). It commutes with \( F : \mathcal{B} \to \mathcal{B} \).

2.5. For \((z, y) \in I_s \times W\) we set

\[ X^z_y = \{ B \in \mathcal{B}^{F^2}; (B, F(\iota(B))) \in \mathcal{O}_z, (C, B) \in \mathcal{O}_y \}. \]

This is a finite set.

**Proposition 2.6.** Let \((z, y) \in I_s \times W, s \in S\). Assume that \(sz < z\). We have

(i) \( (p + 1)|\lambda^z_y| = -p|\lambda^{sz}_y| + |\lambda^{zs}_y|\) if \(sz = zs^*, y < ys\);

(ii) \( (p + 1)|\lambda^z_y| = p^2|\lambda^{sz}_y| + (p^2 - p - 1)|\lambda^{ys}_y|\) if \(sz = sz*, y > ys\);

(iii) \( |\lambda^z_y| = |\lambda^{ysz}_y|\) if \(sz \neq zs^*, y < ys\);

(iv) \( |\lambda^z_y| = p^2|\lambda^{ysz}_y| + (p^2 - 1)|\lambda^{sxsz}_y|\) if \(sz \neq zs^*, y > ys\).

In the setup of (iii), (iv) we have \( l(z) = l(s) + l(sz^*) + l(s^*)\); hence for any \(B \in X^z_y\) we have \((B, \beta_B) \in \mathcal{O}_s, (\beta_B, \beta_B', \iota(B)) \in \mathcal{O}_{sz^*}, (\beta_B, F(\iota(B))) \in \mathcal{O}_s\), uniquely defined \(\beta_B, \beta_B'\) in \(\mathcal{B}\). It follows that \((B, F(\iota(\beta_B'))) \in \mathcal{O}_s, \mathcal{O}(\iota(\beta_B'), \beta_B, F(\iota(\beta_B'))) \in \mathcal{O}_{sz^*}, (\beta_B, \beta_B') = \iota(\beta_B'), B) \in \mathcal{O}_s\), and from the uniqueness we see that \(\beta_B' = F(\iota(\beta_B')), \beta_B = F(\iota(\beta_B'))\); hence \(F^2(\beta_B) = \beta_B\).

Assume that we are in the setup of (iii). We have a bijection \(X^z_y \to X^{ysz*}_{z}\) given by \(B \mapsto \beta_B\). Hence (iii) holds.

Assume that we are in the setup of (iv). We have a map \(X^z_y \to X^{ysz*}_{z} \cup X^{sz*}_{z}\) given by \(B \mapsto \beta_B\). Its fibre over a point in \(X^{sz*}_{z}\) has cardinal \(p^2 - 1\) while its fibre over a point in \(X^{sz*}_{z}\) has cardinal \(p^2\). We deduce that (iv) holds.

In the rest of the proof we assume that \(sz = zs^*\). We set \(y' = y\) if \(y < ys\) and \(y' = ys\) if \(y > ys\). Let

\[ Y = \{ P \in \mathcal{P}_s, F^2(P) = P, \text{pos}(P, F(\iota(P))) = sz, \text{pos}(C, P) = y' \}. \]

For \(P \in Y\) we have \(P^C \in \mathcal{B}_P, (F(P))^C = F(P^C) \in \mathcal{B}_P\).

We define a map \(X^z_{y'} \cup X^{sz*}_{y'} \cup X^{ysz}_{y'}, \cup X^{sxsz}_{y'} \to Y\) by \(B \mapsto P\) where \(B \subset P \in \mathcal{P}_s\).

The fibre of this map over \(P \in Y\) is \(\{ \beta \in \mathcal{B}^{F^2}; B \subset P \}\), hence it has cardinal \(p^2 + 1\).

We define a bijection \(X^z_{y'} \cup X^{sz*}_{y'} \to Y\) by \(B \mapsto P\) where \(B \subset P \in \mathcal{P}_s\).

We define a map \(X^{sz*}_{y'} \cup X^{sxsz}_{y'} \to Y\) by \(B \mapsto P\) where \(B \subset P \in \mathcal{P}_s\). The fibre of this map over \(P \in Y\) is \(\{ \beta \in \mathcal{B}^{F^2}; \beta \subset P, (\beta, F(\beta)) \in \mathcal{O}_z \}\) which can be viewed as a set of \(\mathbb{F}_p\)-rational points of the projective line \(\mathcal{B}_P\) with Frobenius map \(\beta \mapsto F(\beta)\), hence it has cardinal \(p + 1\).

We see that:

\( |\lambda^z_{y'}| + |\lambda^{sz*}_{y'}| + |\lambda^{ysz}_{y'}| + |\lambda^{sxsz}_{y'}| = (p^2 + 1)|Y|, \)

\( |\lambda^z_{y'}| + |\lambda^{sz*}_{y'}| = |Y|, \)

\( |\lambda^z_{y'}| + |\lambda^{ysz}_{y'}| = (p + 1)|Y|. \)

Thus we have:

\( |\lambda^z_{y'}| + |\lambda^{sz*}_{y'}| + |\lambda^{ysz}_{y'}| + |\lambda^{sxsz}_{y'}| = (p^2 + 1)(|\lambda^z_{y'}| + |\lambda^{sz*}_{y'}|), \)

\( |\lambda^z_{y'}| + |\lambda^{sz*}_{y'}| = (p + 1)(|\lambda^z_{y'}| + |\lambda^{sz*}_{y'}|). \)

This implies that (i), (ii) hold.
Proposition 2.7. Let \((z, y) \in I_s \times W, s \in S\). Assume that \(ys < y\). We have

(i) \(X_y^z = pX_{ys}^z + (p + 1)X_{ys}^z\) if \(sz = zs^* > z\);
(ii) \(X_y^z = (p^2 - p - 1)X_{ys}^z + (p^2 - p)X_{ys}^z\) if \(sz = zs^* < z\);
(iii) \(X_y^z = X_{ys}^{zs^*}\) if \(sz \neq zs^* > z\);
(iv) \(X_y^z = (p^2 - 1)X_{ys}^z + p^2X_{ys}^{zs^*}\) if \(sz \neq zs^* < z\).

The proposition is deduced from Proposition 2.6 in the same way as Proposition 1.4 was deduced from 1.2 (or rather in reverse).

Proposition 2.8. For any \(z \in I_s\), we have \(|X_y^z| = \delta_{z,1}\).

We have

\[X_y^z = \{B \in B^{F^2}; (B, F(\iota(B))) \in O_z, C = B\}\]

Since \(C = F(\iota(C))\) we have \((C, F(\iota(C))) \in O_1\); hence \(X_y^z\) is a single point \(C\) if \(z = 1\) and is empty if \(z \neq 1\). The proposition is proved.

Proposition 2.9. For any \(y \in W\) we have \(|X_y^1| = \delta_{y,y^*}p^l(y)\).

We have

\[X_y^1 = \{B \in B^{F^2}; B = F(\iota(B)), (C, B) \in O_y\} = \{B \in B; B = F(\iota(B)), (C, B) \in O_y\}\]

If \(B \in X_y^1\), then \((F(\iota(C)), F(\iota(B))) \in O_{y^*}\), hence \((C, B) \in O_{y^*}\) so that \(y = y^*\). Thus, if \(X_y^1 \neq \emptyset\), then \(y = y^*\). Assume now that \(y = y^*\). Consider the \(l(y)\)-dimensional affine space \(\{B \in B; (C, B) \in O_y\}\) over \(k\). Since \(y = y^*\), this affine space is stable under \(B \mapsto F(\iota(B))\) which is the Frobenius map for an \(F_p\)-rational structure whose fixed point set is exactly \(X_y^1\). It follows that \(|X_y^1| = p^l(y)\). The proposition is proved.

Proposition 2.10. For any \((z, y) \in I_s \times W\) we have \(|X_y^z| \mid_{u=p} = X_{y}^{z}\).

By Propositions 1.2 and 2.8, the two sides of the equality in the proposition satisfy the same inductive formulas; they also satisfy the same initial conditions \(|X_f^z| = X_f^z \mid_{u=p} = \delta_{z,1}\) (see 2.8 and 1.2). Hence they are equal. The proposition is proved.

Proposition 2.11. For any \(y \in W\) we have \(X_y^1 = \delta_{y,y^*}u^l(y)\).

Combining Propositions 2.9 and 2.10 we see that \(X_y^1 \mid_{u=p} = \delta_{y,y^*}u^l(y) \mid_{u=p}\). Since two polynomials in \(u\) which take equal values at any prime number are equal, we deduce that \(X_y^1 = \delta_{y,y^*}u^l(y)\). The proposition is proved.

Note that this proof gives an alternative approach to Proposition 1.8 in our case.

References


