A Combinatorial Proof of the Cyclic Sieving Phenomenon for Faces of Coxeterhedra

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Based on joint work with S.-P. Eu and Y.-J. Pan

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Definition (Reiner-Stanton-White 2004) The triple (X, X(q), C) exhibits the cyclic sieving phenomenon (CSP) if, for every  $c \in C$ , we have

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**Note.** The case |C| = 2 was first studied by Stembridge and called the "q = -1 phenomenon".

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For example, consider n = 4 and k = 2. We have

$$X = \{12, 13, 14, 23, 24, 34\}$$
  

$$C = \{e, (1, 2, 3, 4), (1, 3)(2, 4), (1, 4, 3, 2)\}.$$

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For c = (1,3)(2,4), we have c(12) = 34, c(13) = 13, c(14) = 23c(34) = 12, c(24) = 24, c(23) = 14

Let  $[n]_q = 1 + q + \dots + q^{n-1}$  and  $[n]_q! = [1]_q[2]_q \cdots [n]_q$ .

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 $\begin{array}{rcl} \omega = 1 & \Rightarrow & {4 \brack 2}_{q=1} = 1 + 1 + 2 + 1 + 1 = 6 \\ \text{Then} & \omega = -1 & \Rightarrow & {4 \brack 2}_{q=-1} = 1 - 1 + 2 - 1 + 1 = 2 \\ \omega = -i & \Rightarrow & {4 \brack 2}_{q=-i} = 1 - i - 2 + i + 1 = 0 \end{array}$ 

#### An instance of CSP

Theorem (Reiner-Stanton-White) The following triple exhibits the CSP

$$\left(\binom{[n]}{k}, \begin{bmatrix}n\\k\end{bmatrix}_q, C\right),$$

where  $C = \langle (1, \ldots, n) \rangle$ .

## An equivalent condition for CSP

If X(q) is expanded as

$$X(q) \equiv a_0 + a_1 q + \dots + a_{n-1} q^{n-1} \pmod{q^n - 1}$$
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In particular,

- $a_0$  is the total number of orbits.
- $a_1$  the number of free orbits (i.e., of size n).
- $a_2 a_1$  is the number of orbits of size  $\frac{n}{2}$ .

#### Permutation polytopes

The *permutohedron*  $\mathsf{PA}_{n-1}$  of dimension n-1 is the the convex hull of all permutations of the vector  $(1, \ldots, n) \in \mathbb{R}^n$ .

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Figure: The permutohedron PA<sub>2</sub>

#### An instance of CSP

- X: vertex set of PA<sub>2</sub>
- $X(q) = [3]_q! \equiv 2q^2 + 2q + 2 \pmod{q^3 1}$
- $C = \mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z}$  acts on X by rotating the coordinates

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- X: edge set of PA<sub>2</sub>
- $X(q) = \begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}_q + \begin{bmatrix} 3 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}_q \equiv 2q^2 + 2q + 2 \pmod{q^3 1}$
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Then (X, X(q), C) exhibits the CSP.

## The permutohedron PA<sub>3</sub>



### The permutohedron PA<sub>3</sub>



- Vertex  $(\sigma^{-1}(1), \ldots, \sigma^{-1}(n)) \in \mathbb{R}^n$  is labeled by  $\sigma \in \mathfrak{S}_n$ .
- Two vertices are adjacent iff the corresponding permutations differ by an adjacent transposition.

Description for faces of  $PA_{n-1}$ 

Theorem (Billera-Sarangarajan 1996)

The face lattice of the permutohedron  $PA_{n-1}$  is isomorphic to the lattice of all ordered partitions of the set  $\{1, \ldots, n\}$ , ordered by refinement.

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Face numbers For  $2 \le k \le n$ , the number of (n - k)-faces in  $\mathsf{PA}_{n-1}$  is given by

 $k! \cdot S_{n,k},$ 

where  $S_{n,k}$  is the Stirling number of the second kind.

The facets of  $PA_{n-1}$ 



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### Face numbers of $PA_{n-1}$

Let  $x_{n,k} = k! S_{n,k}$ . Then  $x_{n,k}$  satisfies the following recurrence relation

$$x_{n,k} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } k = 1\\ \sum_{i=1}^{n-k+1} {n \choose i} x_{(n-i,k-1)} & \text{if } 2 \le k \le n. \end{cases}$$

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For example,

$$x_{n,2} = \binom{n}{1} + \binom{n}{2} + \dots + \binom{n}{n-1},$$
  
$$x_{n,3} = \binom{n}{1} x_{n-1,2} + \binom{n}{2} x_{n-2,2} + \dots + \binom{n}{n-2} x_{2,2}.$$

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Note that  $x_{n,2}$  is number of facets of  $PA_{n-1}$ .

A feasible q-polynomial for face numbers Let  $X(n, k; q) \in \mathbb{Z}[q]$  be the polynomial recursively defined by

$$X(n,k;q) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } k = 1\\ \sum_{i=1}^{n-k+1} {n \brack i}_q X(n-i,k-1;q) & \text{if } 2 \le k \le n. \end{cases}$$

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For example, take n = 4 and k = 2,

$$\begin{aligned} X(4,2;q) &= \begin{bmatrix} 4\\1 \end{bmatrix}_q + \begin{bmatrix} 4\\2 \end{bmatrix}_q + \begin{bmatrix} 4\\3 \end{bmatrix}_q \\ &\equiv 4 + 3q + 4q^2 + 3q^3 \pmod{q^4 - 1}. \end{aligned}$$

#### q-Lucas Theorem

#### Theorem (*q*-Lucas Theorem)

Let  $\omega$  be a primitive dth root of unity. If n = ad + b and k = rd + s, where  $0 \le b, s \le q - 1$ , then

$$\begin{bmatrix} n \\ k \end{bmatrix}_{q=\omega} = \binom{a}{r} \begin{bmatrix} b \\ s \end{bmatrix}_{q=\omega}.$$

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If  $d \geq 2$  is a divisor of n, then

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e.g., for n = 4 and d = 2, then  $\omega = -1$  and  $\begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}_{q=-1} = {2 \choose 1}$ .

### The CSP for faces of $PA_{n-1}$

Proposition

For  $d \ge 2$  a divisor of n, let  $\omega$  be a primitive dth root of unity. Then

$$[X(n,k;q)]_{q=\omega} = \begin{cases} x_{(\frac{n}{d},k)} & \text{if } n \ge kd \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$
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For  $d \geq 2$  a divisor of n, let  $C_d$  be the subgroup of order d of C, and let  $X_{n,k,d}$  be the set of (n-k)-faces of  $\mathsf{PA}_{n-1}$  that are invariant under  $C_d$ . Then

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Count the number of k-block ordered partitions of [n] that are invariant under

$$C_d = \langle (1, \frac{n}{d} + 1, \dots, \frac{n}{d}(d-1) + 1) \\ (2, \frac{n}{d} + 2, \dots, \frac{n}{d}(d-1) + 2) \cdots (\frac{n}{d}, \frac{2n}{d}, \dots, n) \rangle.$$

Algebraic Background: Coxeter system (W, S) $W = A_{n-1}$ , the Coxeter group of type A

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 $c = s_1 s_2 \cdots s_{n-1} = (1, 2, \dots, n) \in \mathfrak{S}_n$  generates a cyclic group of order n.

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$$W = \mathfrak{S}_4$$
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, i.e.,  $s_1 = (1, 2)$ ,  $s_2 = (2, 3)$ ,  $s_3 = (3, 4)$ .



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| $J \subseteq S$ | $\{s_2,s_3\}$ | $\{s_1, s_3\}$ | $\{s_1,s_2\}$ |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
|                 | 1234, 1342    | 1234           | 1234, 2314    |
| $W_J$           | 1243, 1423    | 2134           | 1324, 3124    |
|                 | 1324, 1432    | 2143           | 2134, 3214    |
|                 |               | 1243           |               |

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|                 |                | 1243           |                |
|                 | 1.234          | 12.34          | 123.4          |
|                 |                |                |                |

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|                 |                | 1243           |                |
|                 | 1.234          | 12.34          | 123.4          |
|                 | 2.134          | 13.24          | 234.1          |
| $wW_J$          | 3.124          | 14.23          | 134.2          |
| (cosets)        | 4.134          | 23.14          | 124.3          |
|                 |                | 24.13          |                |
|                 |                | 34.12          |                |

#### Coxeterhedron

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The *Coxeterhedron* PW associated to (W, S) is the finite poset of all cosets  $\{wW_J\}_{w \in W, J \subseteq S}$  of all parabolic subgroups of W, ordered by inclusion.

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• The Coxeter element

 $c = s_1 \cdots s_n = (1, 2, \dots, n, -1, -2, \dots, -n)$  generates a cyclic group of order 2n.

#### Notation for signed permutations

Given  $w \in B_n$ , let  $w = w_1 w_2 \cdots w_n$ , where

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For example,

$$B_2$$
 consists of  $\begin{array}{ccc} 12, & \overline{1}2, & 1\overline{2}, & \overline{1}2\\ 21, & \overline{2}1, & 2\overline{1}, & 2\overline{1}, & \overline{2}1 \end{array}$ 

The coxeterhedron  $\mathsf{PB}_2$ 



#### The coxeterhedron $PB_2$



Under the cyclic group action generated by c = (1, 2, -1, -2), there are 2 free vertex-orbits and 2 free edge-orbits.

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• The Coxeter element  $c = s_1 \cdots s_n = (1, 2, \dots, n-1, -1, -2, \dots, -n+1)(n, -n)$  generates a cyclic group of order 2n - 2.

Reiner-Ziegler's representation for faces of PW Representing the faces  $wW_J$  of PW by boxed ordered partitions:

| 13.4.256                                    | $\longleftrightarrow$ | $314652W_{\{s_1,s_4,s_5\}}$                                      | in $PA_5$ |
|---|-----------------------|--|-----------|
| $1\overline{3}.4.\overline{2}5\overline{6}$ | $\longleftrightarrow$ | $\overline{3}14\overline{6}5\overline{2}W_{\{s_1,s_4,s_5\}}$     | in $PB_6$ |
| 13.4.256                                    | $\longleftrightarrow$ | $\overline{3}14\overline{6}5\overline{2}W_{\{s_1,s_4,s_5,s_6\}}$ | in $PB_6$ |
| $1\overline{3}.4.\overline{256}$            | $\longleftrightarrow$ | $\overline{3}14\overline{652}W_{\{s_1,s_4,s_5\}}$                | in $PD_6$ |
| 1 <u>3</u> .4. <u>25</u> 6                  | $\longleftrightarrow$ | $\overline{3}14\overline{652}W_{\{s_1,s_4,s_5,s_6\}}$            | in $PD_6$ |
| 13.4.25.6                                   | $\longleftrightarrow$ | $\overline{3}14\overline{652}W_{\{s_1,s_4,s_6\}}$                | in $PD_6$ |

#### Face numbers of PW

For the groups  $W = A_{n-1}$ ,  $B_n$ ,  $D_n$ , the number  $f_W(k)$  of (n-k)-faces of the Coxeterhedron PW is given by

$$f_{A_{n-1}}(k) = x_{n,k},$$

$$f_{B_n}(k) = \sum_{j=0}^{n-k} \binom{n}{j} x_{(n-j,k)} \cdot 2^{n-j},$$

$$f_{D_n}(k) = (2x_{n,k} - n \cdot x_{(n-1,k-1)}) \cdot 2^{n-1}$$

$$+ \sum_{j=2}^{n-k} \binom{n}{j} x_{(n-j,k)} \cdot 2^{n-j},$$

where 
$$x_{n,k} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } k = 1 \\ \sum_{i=1}^{n-k+1} {n \choose i} x_{(n-i,k-1)} & \text{if } 2 \le k \le n. \end{cases}$$

#### q-polynomials for face numbers of PW

For the groups  $W = A_{n-1}$ ,  $B_n$ ,  $D_n$ , the number  $f_W(k)$  of (n-k)-faces of the Coxeterhedron PW is given by

$$\begin{aligned} f_{A_{n-1}}(k;q) &= X(n,k;q), \\ f_{B_n}(k;q) &= \sum_{j=0}^{n-k} {n \brack j}_q X(n-j,k;q) \prod_{i=j+1}^n (1+q^i), \\ f_{D_n}(k;q) &= \left(2X(n,k;q) - {n \brack 1}_q X(n-1,k-1;q)\right) \prod_{i=1}^{n-1} (1+q^i) \\ &+ \sum_{j=2}^{n-k} {n \brack j}_q X(n-j,k;q) \prod_{i=j}^{n-1} (1+q^i). \end{aligned}$$

#### Poincaré polynomials

For a subset  $W' \subseteq W$ , let W'(q) be the *Poincaré polynomial* of W', which is defined by

$$W'(q) := \sum_{w \in W'} q^{\ell(w)},$$

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$$|W| = \prod_{i=1}^{|S|} (e_i + 1), \quad W(q) = \prod_{i=1}^{|S|} [e_i + 1]_q,$$

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| Φ     | $e_1,\ldots,e_n$                 |
|-------|----------------------------------|
| $A_n$ | $1, 2, 3, \ldots, n$             |
| $B_n$ | $1, 3, 5, \ldots, 2n - 1$        |
| $D_n$ | $1, 3, 5, \ldots, 2n - 3, n - 1$ |

### The number of cosets for parabolic subgroups

For any parabolic subgroup  $W_J$  and  $J \subseteq S$ ,

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- $|W^J| = |W|/|W_J|$  and  $W^J(q) = W(q)/W_J(q)$ .

#### The CSP for faces of Coxeterhedron

#### Theorem (Reiner-Stanton-White 2004)

For a Coxeter system (W, S) and  $J \subseteq S$ , let C be a cyclic group generated by a regular element. Let X be the set of cosets  $W/W_J$ , and  $X(q) := W^J(q)$ . Then the triple (X, X(q), C) exhibits the cyclic sieving phenomenon.

## Remarks

We prove a special case of Theorem [RSW] with the following restrictions.

• The cyclic group we considered is generated by a Coxeter element, while Theorem [RSW] holds for the cyclic group generated by a regular element.
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- The CSP that we show is collectively on the set of all cosets ∪<sub>J⊆S,|J|=n-k</sub>W/W<sub>J</sub>, while Theorem [RSW] shows a refinement of such phenomenon that holds individually for each W<sub>J</sub> on the cosets W/W<sub>J</sub>.

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- The cyclic group we considered is generated by a Coxeter element, while Theorem [RSW] holds for the cyclic group generated by a regular element.
- The CSP that we show is collectively on the set of all cosets ∪<sub>J⊆S,|J|=n-k</sub>W/W<sub>J</sub>, while Theorem [RSW] shows a refinement of such phenomenon that holds individually for each W<sub>J</sub> on the cosets W/W<sub>J</sub>.
- The polynomial  $f_W(k;q)$  that we use is exactly the sum of the Poincaré polynomials  $W^J(q)$  for all  $J \subseteq S$  and |J| = n - k, while in Theorem [RSW] a single polynomial  $W^J(q)$  is used.