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# ON THE INVARIANTS OF THE COHOMOLOGY OF COMPLEMENTS OF COXETER ARRANGEMENTS

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*Dedicated to Michel Broué*

**ABSTRACT.** We refine Brieskorn's study of the cohomology of the complement of the reflection arrangement of a finite Coxeter group  $W$ . As a result we complete the verification of a conjecture by Felder and Veselov that gives an explicit basis of the space of  $W$ -invariants in this cohomology ring.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Suppose that  $W$  is a finite Coxeter group with Coxeter generating set  $S$  of size  $|S| = l$ . Let  $V_{\mathbb{R}}$  be an  $l$ -dimensional, real vector space that affords the reflection representation of  $W$ . Let  $V = \mathbb{C} \otimes_{\mathbb{R}} V_{\mathbb{R}}$  be the complexification of  $V_{\mathbb{R}}$  and consider  $W$  as a subgroup of the group  $\mathrm{GL}(V)$  of invertible  $\mathbb{C}$ -linear transformations of  $V$ . Let  $R$  denote the set of reflections in  $W$ . For each  $r \in R$  let  $V^r$  denote the hyperplane of fixed points of  $r$  in  $V$ , and set  $\mathcal{A} = \{V^r \mid r \in R\}$ . Then  $(V, \mathcal{A})$  is the complexification of a Coxeter arrangement.

The group  $W$  acts naturally on the complement  $M_W = V \setminus \bigcup_{r \in R} V^r$  of the hyperplanes in  $\mathcal{A}$ , and hence on the cohomology of  $M_W$  as algebra automorphisms. For  $p \geq 0$  let  $H^p(M_W)$  denote the  $p^{\mathrm{th}}$  de Rham cohomology space of  $M_W$  with complex coefficients and let  $H^*(M_W) = \bigoplus_{p \geq 0} H^p(M_W)$  denote the total cohomology of  $M_W$ . Felder and Veselov [5] have conjectured an explicit construction of  $H^p(M_W)^W$ , the space of  $W$ -invariants in  $H^p(M_W)$ , in terms of so-called special involutions. They have verified their conjecture for all Coxeter groups except those with irreducible components of type  $E_7$ ,  $E_8$ ,  $F_4$ ,  $H_3$ , or  $H_4$ .

In this note we complete the proof of the conjecture of Felder-Veselov by reducing the problem to a computation in  $H^l(M_W)$ , implementing this computation in the computer algebra system GAP3 (for any  $W$ ), and then performing the required calculations (for the remaining exceptional groups); thus verifying that the conjecture is true. In §2 we give more background and state the main result, and in §3 we describe some novel algorithmic aspects of the implementation of the relations for the Orlik-Solomon algebra of  $W$  used to complete the calculations on which the main results rely.

## 2. BACKGROUND AND MAIN RESULTS

In order to state the Felder-Veselov conjecture precisely, we need additional notation.

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**2.1. The Felder-Veselov conjecture.** Let  $\Phi \subseteq V_{\mathbb{R}}$  be a root system for  $W$  as in [7, §1.1] and let  $\{\alpha_s \mid s \in S\}$  be the roots corresponding to elements of  $S$ .

Orlik and Solomon [13] give a combinatorial presentation of the cohomology algebra  $H^*(M_W)$  that is suitable for machine computation. The *Orlik-Solomon algebra of  $W$*  is the  $\mathbb{C}$ -algebra  $A(W)$  with generators  $\{a_r \mid r \in R\}$  and relations

- $a_r a_s = -a_s a_r$  for  $r, s \in R$  and
- whenever  $\{V^{r_1}, \dots, V^{r_p}\}$  is linearly dependent for  $r_1, \dots, r_p \in R$ , we have

$$\sum_{i=1}^p (-1)^i a_{r_1} \cdots \widehat{a_{r_i}} \cdots a_{r_p} = 0,$$

where the notation  $\widehat{a_{r_i}}$  indicates omission of the term  $a_{r_i}$ . The algebra  $A(W)$  is naturally graded with  $A^p(W)$  equal to the span of all  $a_{r_1} \cdots a_{r_p}$  such that  $\text{codim } V^{r_1} \cap \cdots \cap V^{r_p} = p$ . The rule  $(w, a_r) \mapsto a_{wrw^{-1}}$ , for  $w \in W$  and  $r \in R$ , extends to an action of  $W$  on  $A(W)$  as degree-preserving, algebra automorphisms. Orlik and Solomon show that the rule  $a_s \mapsto d\alpha_s^\vee / \alpha_s^\vee$ , where  $s \in S$  and  $\alpha_s^\vee \in V^*$  denotes the extension of the coroot  $\alpha_s^\vee \in V_{\mathbb{R}}^*$ , extends to a  $W$ -equivariant isomorphism of graded  $\mathbb{C}$ -algebras  $A(W) \cong H^*(M_W)$ . See [15] for details. In the following we work with the Orlik-Solomon algebra of  $W$ .

Fix an arbitrary linear order on  $R$ , say  $R = \{r_1, \dots, r_n\}$ . For any subset  $T = \{r_{i_1}, \dots, r_{i_p}\}$  of  $R$  with  $i_1 < \cdots < i_p$ , define

$$a_T := a_{i_1} \cdots a_{i_p} \in A(W).$$

For an involution  $t \in W$  there is a direct sum decomposition  $V_{\mathbb{R}} \cong V_1 \oplus V_{-1}$ , where  $V_1$  and  $V_{-1}$  are the 1- and  $(-1)$ -eigenspaces of  $t$ , respectively. Define  $\Phi_1 = \Phi \cap V_1$  and  $\Phi_{-1} = \Phi \cap V_{-1}$ . Following [5], we say that  $t$  is *special*, if for any root  $\alpha \in \Phi$  at least one of its projections onto  $V_1$  or  $V_{-1}$  is proportional to a root in  $\Phi_1$  or  $\Phi_{-1}$ , respectively. Clearly, this definition does not depend on the choice of root system for  $W$ .

Suppose  $t$  is a special involution and  $p = \dim V_{-1}$ . Then  $\Phi_{-1}$  is a root system in  $V_{-1}$ . Choose a base of  $\Phi_{-1}$  and let  $S(t) \subseteq R$  be the reflections in  $W$  corresponding to the roots in this base. Then  $a_{S(t)} \in A^p(W)$ . Let

$$\text{Av}: A(W) \rightarrow A(W)^W$$

be the averaging map, where  $A(W)^W$  is the space of  $W$ -invariants of  $A(W)$ . Felder and Veselov [5] make the following conjecture that we state as a theorem.

**Theorem 2.1.** *Let  $W$  be a finite Coxeter group. Then*

- (1) *for any special involution  $t$  of  $W$ , the element  $\text{Av}(a_{S(t)}) \in A(W)^W$  is non-zero, and*
- (2) *any element in  $A(W)^W$  is a linear combination of elements  $\text{Av}(a_{S(t)})$  from (1).*

More precisely, if  $m$  is the number of conjugacy classes of special involutions in  $W$ , then it follows from the theorem (and the observation that, for  $w \in W$ , up to a sign  $\text{Av}(a_{S(wtw^{-1})}) = \text{Av}(a_{S(t)})$ ) that  $\dim A(W)^W \leq m$ . For each irreducible finite Coxeter group  $W$ , Brieskorn [4, Thm. 7] has computed the Betti numbers of the manifold  $M_W/W$  and thus the Poincaré polynomial of  $A(W)^W$ . It turns out that  $\dim A(W)^W = m$  and so the next corollary is an immediate consequence of the theorem.

**Corollary 2.2.** *Suppose  $W$  is a finite Coxeter group and  $\{t_1, \dots, t_m\}$  is a set of representatives of the conjugacy classes of special involutions in  $W$ . Then  $\{\text{Av}(a_{S(t_1)}), \dots, \text{Av}(a_{S(t_m)})\}$  is a basis of  $A(W)^W$ .*

A proof of Theorem 2.1 is given in the next section. Roughly speaking, the proof of (1) consists of reducing the assertion to the case when  $t$  is the longest element in  $W$ . This statement is then checked case-by-case, using GAP3 for the exceptional groups. The assertion in (2) follows from an inspection of the reduction used to prove (1).

**2.2. A reduction.** The reduction of Theorem 2.1(1) to the case of longest words in top degree is based on a decomposition of the representation of  $W$  on  $A^p(W)$  as a sum of induced representations due to Lehrer and Solomon [11].

Each subset  $I$  of  $S$  determines

- a standard parabolic subgroup  $W_I$  of  $W$  generated by  $I$ ,
- subspaces  $V_I = \text{span}\{\alpha_s \mid s \in I\}$  and  $X_I = \bigcap_{s \in I} V^s$  of  $V$  such that  $V \cong V_I \oplus X_I$ , and
- a subspace  $A(W)_I = \text{span}\{a_{r_1} \cdots a_{r_d} \mid V^{r_1} \cap \cdots \cap V^{r_d} = X_I\} \subseteq A^{|I|}(W)$ .

Let  $N_I = N_W(W_I)$  be the normalizer of  $W_I$  in  $W$ . It is easy to see that  $A(W)_I$  is an  $N_I$ -stable subspace of  $A(W)$ .

It is known that for subsets  $I$  and  $J$  of  $S$ , the following are equivalent:

- (1)  $W_I$  and  $W_J$  are conjugate, and
- (2)  $X_I$  is a  $W$ -translate of  $X_J$ .

This motivates the notion of *shapes* of  $W$  that index the Lehrer-Solomon decomposition (2.3) of  $A(W)$  as follows. For  $I, J \subseteq S$ , define  $I \sim J$  if  $J = wIw^{-1}$  for some  $w$  in  $W$ . This defines an equivalence relation on the power set of  $S$ . A *shape* (for  $W$ ) is a  $\sim$ -equivalence class. Let  $\Lambda$  denote the set of shapes and for each  $\lambda \in \Lambda$ , fix once and for all a representative  $I_\lambda \in \lambda$  and set  $l_\lambda = |I_\lambda|$ .

Lehrer and Solomon [11, §2] have shown that the representation of  $W$  on  $A^p(W)$  decomposes as a direct sum of induced representations:

$$(2.3) \quad A^p(W) \cong \bigoplus_{\substack{\lambda \in \Lambda \\ l_\lambda = p}} \text{Ind}_{N_{I_\lambda}}^W A(W)_{I_\lambda}.$$

Notice that for  $I \subseteq S$ ,  $W_I$  is a Coxeter group with Coxeter generating set  $I$ , and that  $V_I$  is the complexification of the reflection representation of  $W_I$ . Thus, we may consider the Orlik-Solomon algebra  $A(W_I)$  of  $W_I$ . Clearly the action of  $W_I$  on  $A(W_I)$  extends to an action of  $N_I$ , and so in particular to a representation of  $N_I$  on the top component  $A^{|I|}(W_I)$ . It follows easily from a standard property of Orlik-Solomon algebras (see [15, §3.1, Cor. 6.28]) that there is an  $N_I$ -equivariant isomorphism  $A(W)_I \cong A^{|I|}(W_I)$ . Therefore, summing over  $p$ , the decomposition (2.3) and Frobenius reciprocity yield

$$(2.4) \quad A(W)^W = A^l(W)^W + \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda \setminus \{S\}} (A(W)_{I_\lambda})^{N_{I_\lambda}} \cong A^l(W)^W \oplus \bigoplus_{\lambda \in \Lambda \setminus \{S\}} A^{l_\lambda}(W_{I_\lambda})^{N_{I_\lambda}}.$$

The decomposition (2.4) reduces the computation of  $A(W)^W$  to that of  $A^l(W)^W$  and  $A^{|I|}(W_I)^{N_I}$ , for  $I$  a proper subset of  $S$ . We show below that the non-zero summands are indexed by the set of conjugacy classes of special involutions, that each non-zero summand is one-dimensional, and that this decomposition is just the decomposition of  $A(W)^W$  into one-dimensional subspaces given by the basis in Corollary 2.2.

**2.3. Top degree invariants.** Consider first the summand  $A^l(W)^W$  in (2.4). Following Richardson [12], we say that a subset  $I \subseteq S$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition if  $W_I$  contains an element that acts as  $-1$  on  $V_I$ . Let  $w_I$  denote the longest element in  $W_I$  with respect to the length function determined by  $S$ . Obviously  $I$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition if and only if each irreducible factor of  $W_I$  does. In addition, it is straightforward to check that, for  $W_I$  irreducible,  $I$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition if and only if  $w_I$  is equal to  $-\text{id}_{V_I}$  (see [12, §1]). It follows that in general,  $I$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition if and only if  $w_I$  is equal to  $-\text{id}_{V_I}$ .

Taking  $I = S$ , it is clear that if  $S$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition, then  $w_S$  is a special involution in  $W$ . Conversely, Felder and Veselov [5] have observed that if  $W$  is irreducible and  $S$  does not satisfy the  $(-1)$ -condition, then  $w_S$  is not a special involution. It is immediate from the definition that an involution  $t \in W$  is special if and only if the components of  $t$  in each irreducible factor of  $W$  are special. It follows that in general,  $S$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition if and only if  $w_S$  is a special involution in  $W$ .

As noted above, Brieskorn has computed the Poincaré polynomials of the graded vector spaces  $A(W)^W$  for all irreducible  $W$ . It follows from this computation that  $\dim A^l(W)^W = 1$  or  $0$  according as to whether or not  $S$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition. It follows that in general,  $S$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition if and only if  $A^l(W)^W \neq 0$ , and if so, then  $A^l(W)^W$  is one-dimensional.

To summarize, the following are equivalent for any finite Coxeter group:

- $A^l(W)^W \neq 0$ .
- The longest element in  $W$  acts as minus the identity in the reflection representation.
- The longest element in  $W$  is a special involution.

Notice that for  $I \subseteq S$ , we have  $S(w_I) = I$  and hence  $a_I = a_{S(w_I)}$ . We can now state our main theorem.

**Theorem 2.5.** *Suppose  $W$  is a finite Coxeter group with Coxeter generating set  $S$  of size  $|S| = l$ . The following are equivalent:*

- (1)  $A^l(W)^W \neq 0$ .
- (2) *The longest element in  $W$  is a special involution.*
- (3)  $\text{Av}(a_S) \neq 0$ .

*If these conditions hold, then  $A^l(W)^W$  is one-dimensional with generator  $\text{Av}(a_S)$ .*

*Proof.* The equivalence of (1) and (2) is explained above, and it is clear that if  $\text{Av}(a_S) \neq 0$ , then  $A^l(W)^W \neq 0$ . Thus, it remains to show that if  $w_S$  is a special involution, then  $\text{Av}(a_S) \neq 0$ . It follows from the preceding discussion that without loss of generality we may assume that  $W$  is irreducible. Then  $w_S$  is a special involution if and only if  $W$  is of type  $A_1$ ,  $B_n$ ,  $D_{2n}$ ,  $F_4$ ,  $E_7$ ,  $E_8$ ,  $H_3$ ,  $H_4$ , or  $I_2(2n)$ . Felder and Veselov [5] have established the statement for all types other than  $E_7$ ,  $E_8$ ,  $F_4$ ,  $H_3$ , and  $H_4$ . We have checked these remaining instances by machine computations. The most challenging cases are when  $W$  is of type  $E_7$  and  $E_8$ , requiring sophisticated programming techniques and intricate reductions to deal with the relations in  $A(W)$ . Details regarding the implementation of these computations are given in the next section.  $\square$

The summands in (2.4) not equal  $A^l(W)^W$  are described in the next lemma.

**Lemma 2.6.** *Let  $I \subseteq S$  with  $|I| = p$  and consider  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I}$ .*

- (1) *Suppose  $I$  does not satisfy the  $(-1)$ -condition. Then  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I} = 0$ .*

- (2) Suppose  $I$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition and  $w_I$  is a not special involution in  $W$ . Then  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I} = 0$ .
- (3) Suppose  $I$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition and  $w_I$  is a special involution in  $W$ . Then  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I}$  is one-dimensional and  $\text{Av}(a_I) \neq 0$ .

*Proof.* By Theorem 2.5 we may assume that  $I$  is a proper subset of  $S$ .

If  $I$  does not satisfy the  $(-1)$ -condition, then  $A^p(W_I)^{W_I} = 0$ , by Theorem 2.5, and  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I} \subseteq A^p(W_I)^{W_I}$ , so  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I} = 0$ .

In order to handle the cases when  $I$  does satisfy the  $(-1)$ -condition, we need to recall some facts about the structure of the normalizer  $N_I$  due to Howlett and Pfeiffer-Röhrle. First, Howlett [8] has shown that  $W_I$  has a canonical complement in  $N_I$ , denoted here by  $C_I$ . Second, Pfeiffer and Röhrle [16] have shown, under the assumption that  $I$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition,  $w_I$  is a special involution in  $W$  if and only if  $C_I$  centralizes  $W_I$ .

Now suppose  $I$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition and  $w_I$  is a not special involution in  $W$ . Then  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I} \subseteq A^p(W_I)^{W_I}$ ,  $A^p(W_I)^{W_I}$  is one-dimensional with generator  $\text{Av}_I(a_I)$ , where  $\text{Av}_I : A(W_I) \rightarrow A(W_I)^{W_I}$  denotes the averaging map for  $W_I$ , and  $C_I$  does not centralize  $W_I$ . We may assume that  $W$  is irreducible. Then it follows from the classification of irreducible finite Coxeter groups that  $W_I$  has at most one component not of type  $A$ , and because  $I$  satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition, each component of type  $A$  also satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition and so is of type  $A_1$ . Moreover, the component not of type  $A$  must be of type  $B_k$  ( $k \geq 2$ ),  $D_{2k}$  ( $k \geq 2$ ),  $E_7$ , or  $H_3$ . Considering these possibilities case-by-case using the description of  $C_I$  in [8], it can be checked that in all cases when  $C_I$  does not centralize  $W_I$ , the group  $C_I$  contains an element  $c$  that acts on  $W_I$  as a graph automorphism that transposes two nodes of the Coxeter graph of  $W_I$  and leaves the other nodes fixed.

Thus the relations of  $A(W)$  yield  $c(a_I) = -a_I$  and so

$$c(\text{Av}_I(a_I)) = \text{Av}_I(c(a_I)) = -\text{Av}_I(a_I),$$

showing that  $\text{Av}_I(a_I)$  is not invariant under  $N_I$ . Consequently,  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I} \neq A^p(W_I)^{W_I}$ , whence  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I} = 0$  as  $\dim A^p(W_I)^{W_I} = 1$ .

Finally, suppose  $I$  does satisfy the  $(-1)$ -condition and  $w_I$  is a special involution in  $W$ . Then  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I} \subseteq A^p(W_I)^{W_I}$ ,  $A^p(W_I)^{W_I}$  is one-dimensional with generator  $\text{Av}_I(a_I)$ , and  $C_I$  centralizes  $W_I$ . Hence, for all  $c \in C_I$ ,  $c(\text{Av}_I(a_I)) = \text{Av}_I(a_I)$  and so  $A^p(W_I)^{N_I} = A^p(W_I)^{W_I} \neq 0$ . To complete the proof, let  $Y \subseteq W$  be a complete set of left  $N_I$ -coset representatives in  $W$ . Then

$$\text{Av}(a_I) = |Y|^{-1} \sum_{y \in Y} y(\text{Av}_I(a_I)) \in \sum_{y \in Y} y(A(W)_I).$$

But now the sum  $\sum_{y \in Y} y(A(W)_I)$  in (2.4) is direct and  $y(\text{Av}_I(a_I)) \in y(A(W)_I)$  for  $y \in Y$ , so  $\text{Av}(a_I) \neq 0$ .  $\square$

**2.4. Proof of Theorem 2.1.** Richardson [12] has shown that  $t \in W$  is an involution if and only if there is a subset  $I \subseteq S$  that satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition such that  $w_I$  is conjugate to  $t$ . Therefore, if  $t$  is a special involution, there is a subset  $I \subseteq S$  that satisfies the  $(-1)$ -condition such that  $t$  is conjugate to  $w_I$ . But then  $w_I$  is a special involution and  $\text{Av}(a_{S(t)}) = \pm \text{Av}(a_I)$ , so it follows from Theorem 2.5 and Lemma 2.6 that  $\text{Av}(a_{S(t)}) \neq 0$ .

Finally, it follows from the decomposition (2.4), Theorem 2.5, and Lemma 2.6, that  $A(W)^W$  is spanned by the elements  $\text{Av}(a_I)$  where  $I$  runs over the subsets of  $S$  that satisfy the  $(-1)$ -condition and for which  $w_I$  is a special involution. More precisely, if  $\Lambda_{-1}$

denotes the set of shapes consisting of subsets that satisfy the  $(-1)$ -property and  $\Lambda_1$  denotes the set of shapes consisting of subsets  $I$  such that  $C_I$  centralizes  $W_I$ , then  $\Lambda_{-1} \cap \Lambda_1$  indexes the set of conjugacy classes of special involutions and  $\{\text{Av}(a_{I_\lambda}) \mid \lambda \in \Lambda_{-1} \cap \Lambda_1\}$  is a basis of  $A(W)^W$ .

### 3. COMPUTATIONAL AND ALGORITHMIC ASPECTS

We have implemented the relations for the Orlik-Solomon algebra  $A(W)$  with the use of the computer algebra system GAP3 [17] and the CHEVIE package [6]. The papers [1], [2], and [3] contain some of the details of this implementation. In this section, we describe some refinements of our earlier techniques that allow us to complete the computations used in the proof of Theorem 2.5.

**3.1. The broken circuit bases of  $A(W)$ .** The broken circuit bases of  $A(W)$  is a computationally efficient basis to use for machine calculations for individual Coxeter groups that is compatible with the decomposition of  $A(W)$  arising from (2.3). For later reference we briefly recall the construction of this basis.

Recall the fixed linear order on  $R = \{r_1, \dots, r_n\}$ . Recall that a subset  $T \subseteq R$  is *independent* if  $\text{codim}(\bigcap_{r \in T} V_{\mathbb{R}}^r) = |T|$  and *dependent* otherwise. A *circuit* is a subset of  $R$  that is minimally linearly dependent. That is, it is linearly dependent, but any proper subset is linearly independent. A *broken circuit* is a subset of  $R$  that is obtained from a circuit by deleting the maximal element with respect to the fixed linear order on  $R$ . Thus, broken circuits are subsets of the form  $\{r_{i_1}, \dots, r_{i_p}\}$  where there is a  $j > i_p$  so that  $\{r_{i_1}, \dots, r_{i_p}, r_j\}$  is a circuit. A subset of  $R$  is  $\chi$ -*independent* if it does not contain a broken circuit.

It is convenient to identify  $R = \{r_1, \dots, r_n\}$  with the set  $\{1, \dots, n\}$  and to identify ordered subsets of  $R$  with words in the alphabet  $\{1, \dots, n\}$ . If  $T = i_1 \cdots i_p$  is such a word, then adjectives applied to  $\{r_{i_1}, \dots, r_{i_p}\}$  are also applied to  $T$ . For example,  $T = i_1 \cdots i_p$  is *independent* if the subset  $\{r_{i_1}, \dots, r_{i_p}\}$  of  $R$  is independent.

Write  $a_i$  instead of  $a_{r_i}$  for the corresponding algebra generator of  $A(W)$ . Given a word  $T = i_1 \cdots i_p$  of positive integers less than or equal  $n$ , define an element,  $a_T$ , in  $A^p(W)$  by  $a_T = a_{i_1} \cdots a_{i_p}$  (in analogy with the definition of  $a_T$  for a *subset*  $T$  of  $R$  in Section 2). Let  $\mathcal{B}$  denote the set of all  $\chi$ -independent words  $i_1 \cdots i_p$  such that  $i_1 < \cdots < i_p$ . It is shown in [15, §3.1] that  $\{a_T \mid T \in \mathcal{B}\}$  is a basis of  $A(W)$ , called there a *broken circuit basis*. A broken circuit basis is a common basis for the subspaces  $A(W)^p$  and  $A(W)_I$  of  $A(W)$  and is compatible with the isomorphisms  $A(W)_I \cong A^{|I|}(W_I)$  for  $I \subseteq S$ .

When working in GAP3 it is more convenient to let groups act on the right. Thus, in this section we consider the right action of  $W$  on  $A(W)$  that satisfies  $a_T.w = a_{T.w}$ , where if  $T = i_1 \cdots i_p$ , then  $T.w = j_1 \cdots j_p$ , where  $w^{-1}r_{i_1}w = r_{j_1}, \dots, w^{-1}r_{i_p}w = r_{j_p}$ . Let  $|T.w| = j'_1 \cdots j'_p$  be a rearrangement of  $T.w$  in increasing order and let  $\epsilon(T, w)$  be the sign of a permutation that is needed to sort the word  $T.w$  in increasing order. Then  $a_T.w = a_{T.w} = \epsilon(T, w)a_{|T.w|}$ .

For  $a \in A(W)$ , let us denote by  $\bar{a}$  the coordinate vector of  $a$  with respect to the broken circuit basis  $\{a_T \mid T \in \mathcal{B}\}$  of  $A(W)$ , i.e., an explicit list of coefficients  $\beta_T \in \mathbb{C}$  such that  $a = \sum_T \beta_T a_T$ . In the application, most coefficients  $\beta_T$  are zero and the list can be stored as a sparse list consisting of the non-zero coefficients only.

The proof of Theorem 2.5 boils down to computing

$$\omega = a_S. \sum_{w \in W} w = \sum_{w \in W} a_S.w.$$

The task of checking whether  $\omega \neq 0$  reduces to

- (1) computing the image  $a_S.w$  of  $a_S$  under each group element  $w \in W$ ,
- (2) expressing each image  $a_S.w$  as  $\overline{a_S.w}$  in terms of the broken circuit basis,
- (3) computing  $\overline{\omega} = \sum_{w \in W} \overline{a_S.w}$ .

While this looks straightforward (and in the case of small groups  $W$  it is straightforward), it can be challenging for higher rank Coxeter groups of exceptional type, i.e., for  $E_7$  and  $E_8$ . The difficulties arise from

- the order of  $W$  and hence the number of images  $a_S.w$  that need to be determined,
- the need to explicitly express an element  $a_T$  for arbitrary subsets  $T$  of  $R$  as a linear combination  $\overline{a_T}$  of the broken circuit basis,
- the need to efficiently represent the  $|W|$  elements of the broken circuit basis of  $A(W)$ .

We address all these points in turn in the following subsections.

**3.2. Decomposing  $W$ .** In all cases, it turns out that the element  $\omega$  has tiny support in the broken circuit basis of  $A(W)$  relative to the size of  $W$ . In contrast, this need not be the case for intermediate results, and the time it takes to compute  $\overline{\omega}$  depends subtly on the order in which various steps are taken. We chose to separate the calculation as follows.

The standard parabolic subgroup  $W_J$  has a distinguished set  $D$  of left coset representatives, consisting of the unique elements of minimal length in their coset. As each element  $w \in W$  has a decomposition  $w = x \cdot w'$  for uniquely determined elements  $x \in D$ ,  $w' \in W_J$ , in the group algebra of  $W$  we can write

$$\sum_{w \in W} w = \left( \sum_{x \in D} x \right) \cdot \left( \sum_{w' \in W_J} w' \right).$$

In fact, there are parabolic subgroups

$$\{1\} = W_0 < W_1 < \dots < W_l = W,$$

such that  $W_{j-1}$  is a maximal standard parabolic subgroup of  $W_j$ , and  $W_j = D_j W_{j-1}$  for the distinguished set  $D_j$  of left coset representatives of  $W_{j-1}$  in  $W_j$ , for  $j = 1, \dots, l$ . Thus each element  $w \in W$  can be written as

$$w = x_l \cdots x_2 \cdot x_1,$$

for uniquely determined elements  $x_j \in D_j$ ,  $j = 1, \dots, l$ . Hence, in the group algebra of  $W$ ,

$$\sum_{w \in W} w = \left( \sum_{x_l \in D_l} x_l \right) \cdots \left( \sum_{x_2 \in D_2} x_2 \right) \cdot \left( \sum_{x_1 \in D_1} x_1 \right),$$

and we can compute

$$\omega = \left( \left( \cdots \left( a_S \cdot \sum_{x_l \in D_l} x_l \right) \cdots \right) \cdot \sum_{x_2 \in D_2} x_2 \right) \cdot \sum_{x_1 \in D_1} x_1.$$

In this way, instead of  $\prod |D_j| = |W|$ , only  $\sum |D_j|$  images of algebra elements under group elements need to be computed and converted into the basis.

In practice, we use the chain of parabolics induced by the labelling of generators  $S = \{s_1, \dots, s_l\}$  in CHEVIE, with  $W_j = \langle s_1, \dots, s_j \rangle$ ,  $j = 1, \dots, l$ . In the case of  $E_8$  with Coxeter diagram

$$\begin{array}{cccccccc} & & & 2 & & & & \\ & & & | & & & & \\ 1 & - & 3 & - & 4 & - & 5 & - & 6 & - & 7 & - & 8 \end{array},$$

this reduces the number of image calculations from a formidable  $|W| = 696,729,600$  to a mere  $\sum |D_j| = 356$ . However, the algebra elements now are linear combinations of words, rather than just words.

Set  $q_j = a_S \cdot \sum_{x_l \in D_l} x_l \cdots \sum_{x_j \in D_j} x_j$ , for  $j = 1, \dots, l$ . Then  $\omega = q_1$ . Now  $\bar{\omega}$  is computed in  $l$  steps, for  $j$  from  $l$  down to 1, as follows. Assuming that  $\overline{q_{j+1}}$  is known, one obtains

$$\overline{q_j} = \overline{\overline{q_{j+1}} \cdot \sum_{x \in D_j} x} = \sum_{x \in D_j} \overline{\overline{q_{j+1}} \cdot x}.$$

Here, if  $\overline{q_{j+1}} = \sum_T \beta_T a_T$ , then

$$\overline{\overline{q_{j+1}} \cdot x} = \sum_T \beta_T \overline{a_T \cdot x} = \sum_T \beta_T \epsilon(T, x) \overline{a_{|T.x|}}.$$

Initially, this requires us to compute  $\overline{a_S}$ . For this, it turns out to be convenient to choose an order on  $R$  that makes  $a_S$  a basis element, or at least close to one.

**3.3. Rewrite Rules.** In order to express arbitrary elements of  $A(W)$  in terms of the broken circuit basis, we need to be able to express an element  $a_T$ , for an arbitrary word  $T = i_1 \cdots i_p$  with  $i_1 < \cdots < i_p$ , in terms of the broken circuit basis, i.e., to compute the coefficients of  $\overline{a_T}$ . First we note that the broken circuit basis has the following useful *Schreier property*: if  $T = i_1 \cdots i_p$  is in  $\mathcal{B}$ , then  $T'$  is in  $\mathcal{B}$  for any *prefix*  $T' = i_1 \dots i_k$  of  $T$  ( $k \leq p$ ). Thus, if  $T$  is a strictly increasing word and  $T'$  is a proper prefix of  $T$  such that  $a_{T'}$  is not a basis element, then neither is  $a_T$ . Using the relations in  $A(W)$ , we compute  $\overline{a_T}$  as follows.

- (1) Find the minimal  $k$  such that  $i_1 \cdots i_k$  contains a broken circuit. If no such  $k$  exists, then  $a_T$  is a basis element of  $A(W)$  (by definition).
- (2) Otherwise, find the maximal index  $u$  such that  $i_1 \cdots i_k u$  is a circuit (such  $u$  exists, is larger than  $i_k$ , and can easily be identified by computing the rank of the corresponding matrix of root vectors).
- (3) If  $u$  occurs in  $T$ , then  $a_T = 0$ . Otherwise, using the relations in  $A(W)$ ,

$$i_1 i_2 \cdots i_k = \sum_j (-1)^{k-j} (i_1 \cdots \hat{i}_j \cdots i_k) u$$

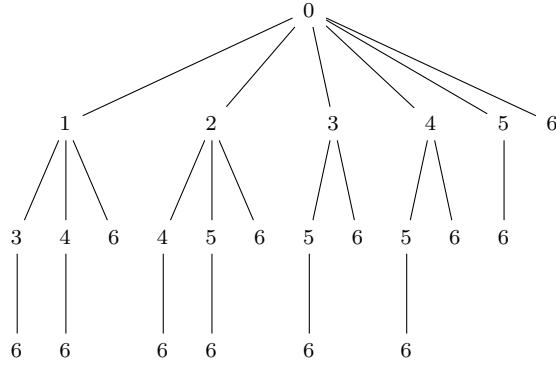
and we can compute  $\overline{a_T}$  recursively as

$$\overline{a_T} = \sum_j (-1)^{k-j} \overline{(i_1 \cdots \hat{i}_j \cdots i_k) u (i_{k+1} \cdots i_p)}.$$

This process must terminate since (in the lexicographic order of words in  $\{1, \dots, n\}$ ) all of the replacement terms on the right hand side are strictly bigger than the original word  $T$ .

**3.4. Constructing and Managing a Basis.** The above procedure for expressing an element of  $A(W)$  in the broken circuit basis depends on an efficient procedure for distinguishing words of  $\mathcal{B}$  from other words. The definition of a broken circuit basis is not particularly well suited for this purpose: testing whether a subword of a word  $T$  is in  $\mathcal{B}$  in isolation is not straightforward, and the cost of testing all subwords of  $T$  is exponential. This task can be carried out more efficiently in the presence of some pre-computed data. If, for example, a complete list of words in  $\mathcal{B}$  is known, then deciding whether an arbitrary increasing word  $T$  is in  $\mathcal{B}$  or not is a simple lookup operation. However, as  $|\mathcal{B}| = |W|$ , such a list is expensive to compute and to store for larger groups.

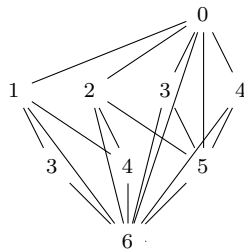


FIGURE 2.  $\Upsilon_{\mathcal{B}}$ : Words in  $\mathcal{B}$ 

To decide whether the node with word  $i_1 \cdots i_k$  in the tree at stage  $m - 1$  can be extended by a node labelled  $m$ , we use the following observation: Suppose  $i_1 \cdots i_k$  is a word in  $\mathcal{B}$  with  $i_k < m$ . Then the word  $i_1 \cdots i_k m$  contains (we don't claim it is) a broken circuit if and only if there is an index  $u > m$  such that the word  $i_1 \cdots i_k m u$  is dependent. Indeed, since  $i_1 \cdots i_k$  does not contain a broken circuit, if  $i_1 \cdots i_k m$  contains a broken circuit, then this broken circuit must contain  $m$ .

In the example in Figure 2, many subtrees appear repeatedly in the tree  $\Upsilon_{\mathcal{B}}$  and carry redundant information. This suggests storing the information in the form of a smaller directed acyclic graph with the property that each rooted path in this smaller graph corresponds to a node in the original tree with the same rooted path.

Such a graph  $\Gamma$  is constructed from  $\Upsilon_{\mathcal{B}}$  by starting with the leftmost maximal path in  $\Upsilon_{\mathcal{B}}$ , then adjoining the other maximal paths (say from left to right), then adjoining any missing paths of length  $l - 1$ , then adjoining any missing paths of length  $l - 2$ , and so on. Continuing the example of  $W$  of type  $A_3$ , the graph  $\Gamma$  has 9 nodes (as opposed to 24 in the original tree) and is given in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3. The graph  $\Gamma$  for  $W$  of type  $A_3$ 

Finally, the rooted paths in  $\Gamma$  can be enumerated by a recursive depth first traversal. Thus, the graph  $\Gamma$  can be alternately be constructed in the same fashion as  $\Upsilon_{\mathcal{B}}$ , by successively adding the nodes with label  $1, 2, \dots, n$ , and carefully tracking of the prefixes represented by nodes with the same label.

Naturally, the graph  $\Gamma$  depends on the chosen total order on  $R$ . In the case of  $E_8$ , with the order of roots and reflections as produced by CHEVIE, the graph  $\Gamma$  has 1, 207, 608 nodes and 15, 552, 964 edges, representing the  $|W| = 696, 729, 600$  basis elements.

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