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POSITIVITY OF EQUIVARIANT GROMOV-WITTEN INVARIANTS

DAVE ANDERSON AND LINDA CHEN

ABSTRACT. We show that the equivariant Gromov-Witten invariants of a projective homogeneous space G/P exhibit Graham-positivity: when expressed as polynomials in the positive roots, they have nonnegative coefficients.

1. Introduction

Let X = G/P be a projective homogeneous variety, for a complex reductive Lie group G and parabolic subgroup P. Fix a maximal torus and Borel subgroup $T \subset B \subseteq P$, and let $\Delta = \{\alpha_1, \ldots, \alpha_n\}$ be the corresponding set of simple roots, making the roots of B positive. Let $W_P \subseteq W$ be the Weyl groups for P and G, respectively. Let B^- be the opposite Borel subgroup. The classes of the Schubert varieties $X(w) = \overline{BwP/P}$ and opposite Schubert varieties $Y(w) = \overline{B^-wP/P}$ give Poincaré dual bases of the equivariant cohomology ring H_T^*X , as w ranges over the set W^P of minimal coset representatives for W/W_P . Write $x(w) = [X(w)]^T$ and $y(w) = [Y(w)]^T$ for these classes.

A positivity property for multiplication in these bases was proved by Graham:

Theorem 1.1 ([G]). Writing

$$y(u) \cdot y(v) = \sum_{w} c_{u,v}^{w} y(w)$$

in H_T^*X , the coefficient $c_{u,v}^w$ lies in $\mathbb{N}[\alpha_1,\ldots,\alpha_n]$.

Following [K], the equivariant Gromov-Witten invariants are defined as follows. Let $\mathbf{d} \in H_2(X, \mathbb{Z})$ be an effective class; taking the basis of Schubert curves $x(s_{\alpha})$, one can identify \mathbf{d} with a tuple of nonnegative integers (d_1, \ldots, d_k) . Let $\overline{M} = \overline{M}_{0,r+1}(X, \mathbf{d})$ denote the Kontsevich moduli space of stable maps. This comes with r+1 evaluation maps $\operatorname{ev}_i : \overline{M} \to X$, as well as the standard map $\pi : \overline{M} \to \operatorname{pt}$.

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Definition 1.2. The equivariant Gromov-Witten invariant associated to classes $\sigma_1, \ldots, \sigma_{r+1}$ is

$$I_{\mathbf{d}}^{T}(\sigma_{1}\cdots\sigma_{r+1}):=\pi_{*}^{T}(\operatorname{ev}_{1}^{*}\sigma_{1}\cdots\operatorname{ev}_{r+1}^{*}\sigma_{r+1})$$

in $H_T^*(\mathrm{pt})$, where π_*^T is the equivariant pushforward $H_T^*\overline{M} \to H_T^*(\mathrm{pt})$.

When r=2, these define equivariant quantum Littlewood-Richardson (EQLR) coefficients:

$$c_{u,v}^{w,\mathbf{d}} = I_{\mathbf{d}}^T(y(u) \cdot y(v) \cdot x(w)).$$

The EQLR coefficients were shown to be Graham-positive, in the sense of Theorem 1.1, by Mihalcea in [M]. Remarkably, they define an associative product in the equivariant (small) quantum cohomology ring QH_T^*X , via

$$y(u) \circ y(v) = \sum_{w,\mathbf{d}} \mathbf{q}^{\mathbf{d}} c_{u,v}^{w,\mathbf{d}} y(w),$$

so Mihalcea's result is a generalization of Graham's to the setting of equivariant quantum Schubert calculus.

In this note, we will show that the multiple-point equivariant Gromov-Witten invariants are Graham-positive:

Theorem 1.3. For any elements $v_1, \ldots, v_r, w \in W^P$, the equivariant Gromov-Witten invariant

$$I_{\mathbf{d}}^{T}(y(v_1)\cdots y(v_r)\cdot x(w))$$

lies in $\mathbb{N}[\alpha_1,\ldots,\alpha_n]$.

Associativity of the equivariant quantum ring QH_T^*X defines (generalized) EQLR coefficients $c_{v_1,\dots,v_r}^{w,\mathbf{d}}$:

$$y(v_1) \circ \cdots \circ y(v_r) = \sum_{w,\mathbf{d}} \mathbf{q}^{\mathbf{d}} c_{v_1,\dots,v_r}^{w,\mathbf{d}} y(w).$$

By induction using the r=2 case of Theorem 1.3, it follows that these EQLR coefficients are also Graham-positive; indeed, the associativity relations are subtraction-free. This gives a new proof of Mihalcea's positivity theorem. For r>2, however, the EQLR coefficients $c_{v_1,\ldots,v_r}^{w,\mathbf{d}}$ are not the same as the equivariant Gromov-Witten invariants in Theorem 1.3.

The proof of Theorem 1.3 is given in §4; the idea is to represent the coefficients of this polynomial as degrees of effective zero-cycles, using a transversality argument (Theorem 4.4). An inspection of Mihalcea's proof of positivity for EQLR coefficients suggests that his method should also work for Gromov-Witten invariants, but we find our geometric interpretation of the coefficients appealing. Moreover, we use the dimension estimates from §4 to derive a Giambelli formula for $QH_T^*(SL_n/P)$ in [AC].

Remark 1.4. As in [G], there is a corresponding positivity theorem with the roles of positive and negative roots interchanged: the Gromov-Witten invariants $I_{\mathbf{d}}^T(x(v_1)\cdots x(v_r)\cdot y(w))$ lie in $\mathbb{N}[-\alpha_1,\ldots,-\alpha_n]$. All the arguments

proceed in exactly the same manner. In fact, it is this version (for r=2) that is treated in [M].

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2. Setup

We assume G is an adjoint group, so that the simple roots $\Delta = \{\alpha_1, \ldots, \alpha_n\}$ form a basis for the character group of T. We fix the basis $-\Delta = \{-\alpha_1, \ldots, -\alpha_n\}$ of negative simple roots, and use it to identify T with $(\mathbb{C}^*)^n$.

2.1. Equivariant cohomology. Let $\mathbb{E}T \to \mathbb{B}T$ be the universal principal T-bundle; that is, $\mathbb{E}T$ is a contractible space with a free right T-action, and $\mathbb{B}T = \mathbb{E}T/T$. By definition, the equivariant cohomology of a T-variety Z is the ordinary (singular) cohomology of the Borel mixing space $\mathbb{E}T \times^T Z$. (This notation means quotient by the relation $(e \cdot t, z) \sim (e, t \cdot z)$.) While $\mathbb{E}T$ is infinite-dimensional, it may be approximated by finite-dimensional smooth varieties. We will set $\mathbb{E} = (\mathbb{C}^m \setminus \{0\})^n$, with $T = (\mathbb{C}^*)^n$ acting by scaling each factor. For fixed k and $m \gg 0$, one has natural isomorphisms

$$H_T^*Z := H^*(\mathbb{E}T \times^T Z) \cong H^*(\mathbb{E} \times^T Z),$$

so any given computation may be done with these approximation spaces.

Note that $\mathbb{B} = \mathbb{E}/T$ is isomorphic to $(\mathbb{P}^{m-1})^n$. For a T-variety Z, we will generally use calligraphic letters to denote the corresponding approximation space: $\mathcal{Z} = \mathbb{E} \times^T Z$, always understanding a suitably large fixed m. This is a fiber bundle over \mathbb{B} , with fiber Z.

For each $j=0,\ldots,m-1$, we fix transverse linear subspaces \mathbb{P}^{m-1-j} and $\widetilde{\mathbb{P}}^{j}$ inside \mathbb{P}^{m-1} , and for each multi-index $J=(j_1,\ldots,j_n)$ with $0\leq j_i\leq m-1$, we set

$$\mathbb{B}_J = \widetilde{\mathbb{P}}^{j_1} \times \cdots \times \widetilde{\mathbb{P}}^{j_n} \qquad \text{and} \qquad \mathbb{B}^J = \mathbb{P}^{m-1-j_1} \times \cdots \times \mathbb{P}^{m-1-j_n}.$$

So dim $\mathbb{B}_J = \operatorname{codim} \mathbb{B}^J = |J| := j_1 + \dots + j_n$. Similarly, write $\mathcal{Z}_J = (\pi^T)^{-1} \mathbb{B}_J$ and $\mathcal{Z}^J = (\pi^T)^{-1} \mathbb{B}^J$, where $\pi^T : \mathcal{Z} \to \mathbb{B}$ is the projection. The notation is chosen to suggest an identification of the pushforward for this fiber bundle with the equivariant pushforward $\pi_*^T : H_T^* Z \to H_T^*(\operatorname{pt})$.

Let $\mathcal{O}_i(-1)$ be the tautological bundle on the *i*th factor of $\mathbb{B} = (\mathbb{P}^{m-1})^n$. The choice of basis $-\Delta$ for the character group of T yields an equality $\alpha_i = c_1(\mathcal{O}_i(1))$. If $\alpha = a_1\alpha_1 + \cdots + a_n\alpha_n$ is a root, we will sometimes write $\mathcal{O}(\alpha) = \mathcal{O}_1(a_1) \otimes \cdots \otimes \mathcal{O}_n(a_n)$ for the corresponding line bundle, so $c_1(\mathcal{O}(\alpha)) = \alpha$. Note that $\mathcal{O}(\alpha)$ is globally generated if and only if α is a positive root.

From the definitions, we have

$$[\mathbb{B}^J] = \alpha^J := \alpha_1^{j_1} \cdots \alpha_n^{j_n}$$

in $H^*\mathbb{B}$. As a consequence, suppose $c = \sum_J c_J \alpha^J$ is an element of $H^*\mathbb{B} = H_T^*(\mathrm{pt})$, with $c_J \in \mathbb{Z}$. Using Poincaré duality on \mathbb{B} , we have $c_J = \pi_*^{\mathbb{B}}(c \cdot [\mathbb{B}_J])$, where $\pi^{\mathbb{B}}$ is the map $\mathbb{B} \to \mathrm{pt}$.

When $c = \pi_*^T(\sigma)$ comes from a class $\sigma \in H_T^*Z = H^*Z$ for a complete T-variety Z, we have

$$(*) c_J = \pi_*^{\mathcal{Z}}(\sigma \cdot [\mathcal{Z}_J]),$$

using the projection formula and the fact that $(\pi^T)^*[\mathbb{B}_J] = [\mathcal{Z}_J]$. (The latter holds since $\pi^T : \mathcal{Z} \to \mathbb{B}$ is flat; for a more general argument in the case where Z is Cohen-Macaulay, see [FPr, Lemma, p. 108].)

2.2. **Stable maps.** We briefly summarize some basic facts about the space of stable maps; proofs and details may be found in [FPa]. As always, X = G/P. The (coarse) moduli space $\overline{M} = \overline{M}_{0,r+1}(X,\mathbf{d})$ parametrizes data (f,C,p_1,\ldots,p_{r+1}) , where C is a connected nodal curve of genus 0, and $f:C\to X$ is a map with $f_*[C]=\mathbf{d}$ in $H_2(X,\mathbb{Z})$. (Stability means that any irreducible component of C which is collapsed by f has at least three "special" points, i.e., marked points p_i or nodes.)

The space of stable maps is an irreducible projective variety of dimension

$$\dim \overline{M} = \dim X + \langle c_1(TX), \mathbf{d} \rangle + r - 2,$$

and has quotient singularities, and therefore rational singularities; in particular, it is Cohen-Macaulay. The locus parametrizing maps with irreducible domain is a dense open subset $M = M_{0,r+1}(X, \mathbf{d}) \subseteq \overline{M}$, and the complement is a divisor $\partial \overline{M} = \overline{M} \setminus M$.

There are natural evaluation maps $\operatorname{ev}_i:\overline{M}\to X$, defined by sending a stable map (f,C,p_1,\ldots,p_{r+1}) to $f(p_i)$. The group G acts on \overline{M} by $g\cdot (f,C,\{p_i\})=(g\cdot f,C,\{p_i\})$, and the evaluation maps are equivariant for the actions of G on \overline{M} and X. Considering the induced action of $T\subset G$, we obtain maps $\operatorname{ev}_i^T:\overline{M}\to\mathcal{X}$ on Borel mixing spaces, which commute with the projections to \mathbb{B} .

Remark 2.1. The significance of \overline{M} being Cohen-Macaulay is that the usual apparatus of intersection theory applies; see especially Lemma 4.2 below. In fact, the corresponding moduli stack is smooth, so one could argue directly using intersection theory on stacks.

3. A GROUP ACTION

In [A] and [AGM], a large group action on the mixing space \mathcal{X} was constructed; we describe it here. The idea is to mix the transitive action of $(PGL_m)^n$ on \mathbb{B} with a "fiberwise" action by Borel groups. Let T act on G by conjugation, and let $\mathcal{G} = \mathbb{E} \times^T G$ be the corresponding group scheme over \mathbb{B} . Because T acts by conjugation, the evident action $(\mathbb{E} \times G) \times_{\mathbb{E}} (\mathbb{E} \times X) \to \mathbb{E} \times X$ descends to an action $\mathcal{G} \times_{\mathbb{B}} \mathcal{X} \to \mathcal{X}$.

Let $U \subset B \subset G$ be the unipotent radical of B, and let $\mathcal{U} \subset \mathcal{B} \subset \mathcal{G}$ be the corresponding group bundles over \mathbb{B} . As a variety, \mathcal{U} is isomorphic to the

vector bundle $\bigoplus_{\alpha \in R^+} \mathcal{O}(\alpha)$ on \mathbb{B} , where the sum is over the positive roots. Now consider the group of sections $\Gamma_0 = \operatorname{Hom}_{\mathbb{B}}(\mathbb{B}, \mathcal{U})$; this is a connected algebraic group over \mathbb{C} . As observed in §2.1, each $\mathcal{O}(\alpha)$ is globally generated. It follows that for each $x \in \mathbb{B}$, the map $\Gamma_0 \to \mathcal{U}_x$ given by evaluating sections at x is surjective, and therefore we have:

Lemma 3.1 ([AGM, Lemma 6.3]). Let Γ be the **mixing group** $\Gamma_0 \rtimes (PGL_m)^n$, where $(PGL_m)^n$ acts on Γ_0 via its action on \mathbb{B} . Then Γ is a connected linear algebraic group acting on \mathcal{X} , with (finitely many) orbits whose closures are the Schubert bundles $\mathcal{X}(w)$.

Similarly, the group $\Gamma^{(r)} = \Gamma_0^r \rtimes (PGL_m)^n$ acts on the r-fold fiber product $\mathcal{X} \times_{\mathbb{B}} \cdots \times_{\mathbb{B}} \mathcal{X}$, with orbit closures $\mathcal{X}(w_1) \times_{\mathbb{B}} \cdots \times_{\mathbb{B}} \mathcal{X}(w_r)$.

4. Transverality

A map $f: Y \to X$ is said to be **dimensionally transverse** to a subvariety $W \subseteq X$ if $\operatorname{codim}_Y(f^{-1}W) = \operatorname{codim}_X(W)$. We will need the following version of Kleiman's transversality theorem; see [Kl] and [S]. As a matter of notation, if a group Γ acts on X, we write $\gamma f: \gamma Y \to X$ for the composition $Y \xrightarrow{f} X \xrightarrow{\gamma} X$, i.e., the translation of f by the action of $\gamma \in \Gamma$.

Proposition 4.1. Let Γ be a group acting on a smooth variety X, and suppose $f: Y \to X$ is dimensionally transverse to the orbits of Γ . Assume Y is Cohen-Macaulay. Let $g: Z \to X$ be any map. Then for a general element $\gamma \in \Gamma$, the fiber product $V_{\gamma} = \gamma Y \times_X Z$ has dimension equal to $\dim Y + \dim Z - \dim X$.

The essential point in the proof is that the hypotheses imply the map $\Gamma \times Y \to X$ is flat.

We will also use the following lemma:

Lemma 4.2 ([FPr, Lemma, p. 108]). Let $f: Z \to X$ be a morphism from a pure-dimensional Cohen-Macaulay scheme Z to a nonsingular variety X, and let $W \subseteq X$ be a closed Cohen-Macaulay subscheme of pure codimension d. Let $V = f^{-1}W$, and assume $\operatorname{codim}_Z(V) = d$. Then V is Cohen-Macaulay, and $f^*[W] = [V]$.

Now resume the previous notation, so X = G/P and $\overline{M} = \overline{M}_{0,r+1}(X, \mathbf{d})$. Since each evaluation map $\operatorname{ev}_i : \overline{M} \to X$ is G-equivariant, it is flat. If $W \subseteq X$ is any Cohen-Macaulay subscheme of codimension d, it follows that $\operatorname{ev}_i^{-1}W \subseteq \overline{M}$ has the same properties, and similarly, $(\operatorname{ev}_i^T)^{-1}W \subseteq \overline{M}$. In particular, the subscheme

$$\mathcal{Z} = (\operatorname{ev}_{r+1}^T)^{-1}(\mathcal{X}(w)) \subseteq \overline{\mathcal{M}}$$

is Cohen-Macaulay of codimension dim $X-\ell(w)$, and we have $[\mathcal{Z}] = (\operatorname{ev}_{r+1}^T)^*(x(w))$ by Lemma 4.2. Similarly, we have

$$[\mathcal{Z}_J] = (\operatorname{ev}_{r+1}^T)^*(x(w)) \cdot [\overline{\mathcal{M}}_J]$$

Consider the map $\operatorname{ev} = \operatorname{ev}_1 \times \cdots \times \operatorname{ev}_r : \overline{M} \to X^r$ and the corresponding map on mixing spaces $\operatorname{ev}^T : \overline{M} \to \mathcal{X}^r$. Let $\mathcal{Y} = \mathcal{Y}(v_1) \times_{\mathbb{B}} \times \cdots \times_{\mathbb{B}} \mathcal{Y}(v_r)$, and let f be the inclusion of \mathcal{Y} in the r-fold fiber product \mathcal{X}^r .

Lemma 4.3. Let $\gamma = (\gamma_1, \dots, \gamma_r)$ be a general element in $\Gamma^{(r)}$.

(a) The intersection

$$V_{\gamma} = (\operatorname{ev}_{1}^{T})^{-1}(\gamma_{1}\mathcal{Y}(v_{1})) \cap \cdots \cap (\operatorname{ev}_{r}^{T})^{-1}(\gamma_{r}\mathcal{Y}(v_{r})) \cap \mathcal{Z}_{J}$$
$$= \gamma \mathcal{Y} \times_{\mathcal{X}^{r}} \mathcal{Z}_{J}$$

is Cohen-Macaulay and pure-dimensional, of dimension $\dim \overline{M} + |J| - \dim X + \ell(w) - \ell(v_1) - \dots - \ell(v_r)$. (In the fiber product, \mathcal{Z}_J maps to \mathcal{X}^r by the restriction of ev^T .)

(b) Similarly, the intersection

$$\partial V_{\gamma} = (\operatorname{ev}_{1}^{T})^{-1}(\gamma_{1}\mathcal{Y}(v_{1})) \cap \cdots \cap (\operatorname{ev}_{r}^{T})^{-1}(\gamma_{r}\mathcal{Y}(v_{r})) \cap \mathcal{Z}_{J} \cap \partial \overline{\mathcal{M}}$$
$$= \gamma \mathcal{Y} \times_{\mathcal{X}^{r}} (\mathcal{Z}_{J} \cap \partial \overline{\mathcal{M}})$$

has pure dimension dim $\overline{M} + |J| - \dim X + \ell(w) - \ell(v_1) - \dots - \ell(v_r) - 1$.

In particular, when $\dim \overline{M} + |J| - \dim X + \ell(w) - \ell(v_1) - \dots - \ell(v_r) = 0$, the intersection V_{γ} consists of finitely many points contained in \mathcal{M} .

Proof. Note that \mathcal{Z}_J is Cohen-Macaulay (since \mathcal{Z} is), of dimension dim \overline{M} + $|J| - \dim X + \ell(w)$. Each opposite Schubert bundle $\mathcal{Y}(v)$ intersects each Γ -orbit closure $\mathcal{X}(w)$ properly, so the map $f: \mathcal{Y} \hookrightarrow \mathcal{X}^r$ is dimensionally transverse to the $\Gamma^{(r)}$ -orbits. The first statement follows by an application of Proposition 4.1.

The second statement is proved similarly; note that the divisor $\partial \overline{M}$ is Cohen-Macaulay and G-invariant, and the same argument as before shows that $\mathcal{Z}_J \cap \partial \overline{\mathcal{M}}$ is a Cohen-Macaulay divisor in \mathcal{Z}_J .

We can now prove Theorem 1.3. In fact, it follows immediately from (*), together with a more precise statement.

Theorem 4.4. Write $I_{\mathbf{d}}^T(y(v_1)\cdots y(v_r)\cdot x(w)) = \sum c_J\alpha^J$ in $H_T^*(\mathrm{pt})$. Then, with notation as in Lemma 4.3, we have

$$c_J = \deg(V_\gamma)$$

when dim $\overline{M} + |J| - \dim X + \ell(w) - \ell(v_1) - \cdots - \ell(v_r) = 0$, and $c_J = 0$ otherwise.

In particular, since V_{γ} is an effective cycle, c_J is a nonnegative integer.

Proof. Using (*) from §2.1, we have

$$c_J = \pi_*^{\overline{\mathcal{M}}}((\operatorname{ev}_1^T)^* y(v_1) \cdots (\operatorname{ev}_r^T)^* y(v_r) \cdot (\operatorname{ev}_{r+1}^T)^* x(w) \cdot [\overline{\mathcal{M}}_J]).$$

The claim is that $(\operatorname{ev}_1^T)^* y(v_1) \cdots (\operatorname{ev}_r^T)^* y(v_r) \cdot (\operatorname{ev}_{r+1}^T)^* x(w) \cdot [\overline{\mathcal{M}}_J] = [V_{\gamma}]$ in $H^* \overline{\mathcal{M}}$.

First observe that $(\operatorname{ev}_1^T)^*y(v_1)\cdots(\operatorname{ev}_r^T)^*y(v_r)=(\operatorname{ev}^T)^*(y(v_1)\times\cdots\times y(v_r))$. Since $\Gamma^{(r)}$ is connected, we have $[\gamma\mathcal{Y}]=[\mathcal{Y}]=y(v_1)\times\cdots\times y(r)$ in $H^*(\mathcal{X}^r)=H_T^*(X^r)$. By the same argument as in the paragraph after Lemma 4.2, we have $[(\operatorname{ev}^T)^{-1}(\gamma\mathcal{Y})]=(\operatorname{ev}^T)^*(y(v_1)\times\cdots\times y(v_r))$.

By (†), we have $[\mathcal{Z}_J] = (\operatorname{ev}_{r+1}^T)^* x(w) \cdot [\overline{\mathcal{M}}_J]$. Since $(\operatorname{ev}^T)^{-1}(\gamma \mathcal{Y})$ and \mathcal{Z}_J intersect properly in V_{γ} by Lemma 4.3, we have $[(\operatorname{ev}^T)^{-1}(\gamma \mathcal{Y})] \cdot [\mathcal{Z}_J] = [V_{\gamma}]$, as desired.

Remark 4.5. Let $\overline{M}_{0,r+1}$ be the moduli space of stable curves with r+1 marked points; this is a nonsingular projective variety of dimension r-2. Since T acts trivially on this space, the corresponding mixing space is $\overline{\mathcal{M}}_{0,r+1} = \mathbb{B} \times \overline{M}_{0,r+1}$. The forgetful map $\varphi: \overline{M} \to \overline{M}_{0,r+1}$ induces a map $\overline{\mathcal{M}} \to \overline{\mathcal{M}}_{0,r+1}$. Let $\widetilde{\varphi}: \overline{\mathcal{M}} \to \overline{M}_{0,r+1}$ be the composition with the second projection, and for $x \in \overline{M}_{0,r+1}$, write $\overline{\mathcal{M}}(x) = \widetilde{\varphi}^{-1}(x)$. Using the notation of Lemma 4.3, the same arguments used in the proof of the lemma also establish the following dimension counts:

- (a) Let $V_{\gamma}(x) = V_{\gamma} \cap \overline{\mathcal{M}}(x)$. Then $V_{\gamma}(x)$ is Cohen-Macaulay, of pure dimension dim $\overline{M} + |J| (\dim X \ell(w)) \ell(v_1) \cdots \ell(v_r) (r-2)$.
- (b) Let $\partial V_{\gamma}(x) = \partial V_{\gamma} \cap \overline{\mathcal{M}}(x)$. Then $\partial V_{\gamma}(x)$ is Cohen-Macaulay, of pure dimension dim $\overline{M} + |J| (\dim X \ell(w)) \ell(v_1) \dots \ell(v_r) (r-2) 1$.

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