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# SEMI-INVARIANTS OF QUIVERS AND SATURATION FOR LITTLEWOOD-RICHARDSON COEFFICIENTS

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### 1. Introduction

Let Q be a quiver without oriented cycles. Let  $\alpha$  be a dimension vector for Q. We denote by  $SI(Q, \alpha)$  the ring of semi-invariants of the set of  $\alpha$ -dimensional representations of Q over a fixed algebraically closed field K.

In this paper we prove some results about the set

$$\Sigma(Q, \alpha) = \{ \sigma \mid SI(Q, \alpha)_{\sigma} \neq 0 \}.$$

 $\Sigma(Q,\alpha)$  is defined in the space of all weights by one homogeneous linear equation and by a finite set of homogeneous linear inequalities. In particular the set  $\Sigma(Q,\alpha)$  is saturated, i.e., if  $n\sigma \in \Sigma(Q,\alpha)$ , then also  $\sigma \in \Sigma(Q,\alpha)$ .

These results, when applied to a special quiver  $Q = T_{n,n,n}$  and to a special dimension vector, show that the  $GL_n$ -module  $V_{\lambda}$  appears in  $V_{\mu} \otimes V_{\nu}$  if and only if the partitions  $\lambda$ ,  $\mu$  and  $\nu$  satisfy an explicit set of inequalities. This gives new proofs of the results of Klyachko ([7, 3]) and Knutson and Tao ([8]).

The proof is based on another general result about semi-invariants of quivers (Theorem 1). In the paper [10], Schofield defined a semi-invariant  $c_W$  for each indecomposable representation W of Q. We show that the semi-invariants of this type span each weight space in  $SI(Q, \alpha)$ . This seems to be a fundamental fact, connecting semi-invariants and modules in a direct way. Given this fact, the results on sets of weights follow at once from the results in another paper of Schofield [11].

## 2. The results

A quiver Q is a pair  $Q = (Q_0, Q_1)$  consisting of the set of vertices  $Q_0$  and the set of arrows  $Q_1$ . Each arrow a has its head ha and tail ta, both in  $Q_0$ :

$$ta \xrightarrow{a} ha$$
.

We fix an algebraically closed field K. A representation (or a module) V of Q is a family of finite dimensional vector spaces  $\{V(x) | x \in Q_0\}$  and of linear maps

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 $V(a):V(ta)\to V(ha)$ . The dimension vector of a representation V is the function  $\underline{d}(V):Q_0\to\mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$  defined by  $\underline{d}(V)(x):=\dim V(x)$ . The dimension vectors lie in the space  $\Gamma$  of integer-valued functions on  $Q_0$ . A morphism  $\phi:V\to V'$  of two representations is a collection of linear maps  $\phi(x):V(x)\to V'(x), x\in Q_0$ , such that for each  $a\in Q_1$  we have  $\phi(ha)V(a)=V'(a)\phi(ta)$ . We denote the linear space of morphisms from V to V' by  $\operatorname{Hom}_Q(V,V')$ .

A path p in Q is a sequence of arrows  $p = a_1, \ldots, a_n$  such that  $ha_i = ta_{i+1}$   $(1 \le i \le n-1)$ . We define  $tp = ta_1, hp = ha_n$ . We also have the trivial path e(x) from x to x. If V is a representation and  $p = a_1, \ldots, a_n$ , then we define  $V(p) := V(a_n)V(a_{n-1})\cdots V(a_1)$ . We assume throughout the paper that Q has no oriented cycles, i.e., there are no paths  $p = a_1, \ldots, a_n$  such that  $ta_1 = ha_n$ .

For representations V and W of Q there is a canonical exact sequence ([9])

$$(1) \quad 0 \to \operatorname{Hom}_{Q}(V, W) \xrightarrow{i} \bigoplus_{x \in Q_{0}} \operatorname{Hom}(V(x), W(x))$$

$$\xrightarrow{d_{W}^{V}} \bigoplus_{a \in Q_{1}} \operatorname{Hom}(V(ta), W(ha)) \xrightarrow{p} \operatorname{Ext}_{Q}(V, W) \to 0.$$

The map i is the obvious inclusion, the map  $d_W^V$  is given by

$$\{f(x)\}_{x\in Q_0} \mapsto \{f(ha)V(a) - W(a)f(ta)\}_{a\in Q_1},$$

and the map p constructs an extension of the representations V and W by adding the maps  $V(ta) \to W(ha)$  to the direct sum representation  $V \oplus W$ .

For  $\alpha, \beta \in \Gamma$  we define the Euler inner product

$$\langle \alpha, \beta \rangle = \sum_{x \in Q_0} \alpha(x)\beta(x) - \sum_{a \in Q_1} \alpha(ta)\beta(ha).$$

It follows from (1) that  $\langle \underline{d}(V), \underline{d}(W) \rangle = \dim_K \operatorname{Hom}_Q(V, W) - \dim_K \operatorname{Ext}_Q(V, W)$ . For a dimension vector  $\alpha$  we denote by

$$\operatorname{Rep}(Q, \alpha) := \bigoplus_{a \in Q_1} \operatorname{Hom}(K^{\alpha(ta)}, K^{\alpha(ha)})$$

the vector space of  $\alpha$ -dimensional representations of Q. The group

$$\operatorname{GL}(Q,\alpha) := \prod_{x \in Q_0} \operatorname{GL}(\alpha(x))$$

and its subgroup

$$SL(Q, \alpha) = \prod_{x \in Q_0} SL(\alpha(x))$$

act on  $Rep(Q, \alpha)$  in an obvious way. We are interested in the ring of semi-invariants

$$SI(Q, \alpha) := K[Rep(Q, \alpha)]^{SL(Q, \alpha)}.$$

The ring  $SI(Q, \alpha)$  has a weight space decomposition

$$SI(Q, \alpha) = \bigoplus_{\sigma} SI(Q, \alpha)_{\sigma}$$

where  $\sigma$  runs through the (one-dimensional irreducible) characters of  $GL(Q,\alpha)$  and

$$SI(Q, \alpha)_{\sigma} = \{ f \in K[Rep(Q, \alpha)] \mid q(f) = \sigma(q) f \ \forall q \in GL(Q, \alpha) \}.$$

Suppose that  $\sigma$  lies in the dual space  $\Gamma^* := \text{Hom}(\Gamma, \mathbb{Z})$ . For each dimension vector  $\alpha$  we can associate to  $\sigma$  a character of  $GL(Q,\alpha)$  defined as

$$\prod_{x \in Q_0} d_x^{\sigma(e_x)}$$

where  $d_x$  is the determinant function on  $GL(\alpha(x))$  and  $e_x$  is the dimension vector defined by

$$e_x(y) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } x = y, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

In this way we will identify characters with  $\Gamma^*$ . Sometimes, for convenience, we will write  $\sigma(x)$  instead of  $\sigma(e_x)$  (and treat  $\sigma$  as an element of  $\Gamma$ ).

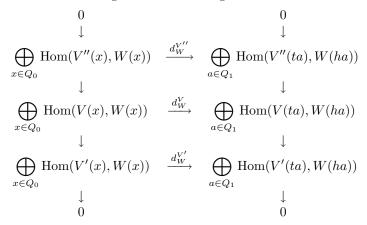
Let us choose the dimension vectors  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  in such way that  $\langle \alpha, \beta \rangle = 0$ . Then for every  $V \in \text{Rep}(Q,\alpha)$  and  $W \in \text{Rep}(Q,\beta)$  the matrix of  $d_W^V$  will be a square matrix. Following [10] we can therefore define the semi-invariant c of the action of  $GL(Q,\alpha) \times GL(Q,\beta)$  on  $Rep(Q,\alpha) \times Rep(Q,\beta)$  by  $c(V,W) := \det d_W^V$ . The value of the determinant depends on the choices of bases, so c is well-defined up to a scalar. Notice that the semi-invariant c vanishes at the point (V, W) if and only if  $\operatorname{Hom}_Q(V,W) \neq 0$  which is equivalent to  $\operatorname{Ext}_Q(V,W) \neq 0$ . For a fixed V the restriction of c to  $\{V\} \times \operatorname{Rep}(Q, \beta)$  defines a semi-invariant  $c^V$  in  $\operatorname{SI}(Q, \beta)$ . Schofield proves ([10, Lemma 1.4]) that the weight of  $c^V$  equals  $\langle \alpha, \cdot \rangle \in \Gamma^*$  which is defined as  $\gamma \mapsto \langle \alpha, \gamma \rangle$ . Similarly, for a fixed W the restriction of c to Rep $(Q, \alpha) \times \{W\}$ defines a semi-invariant  $c_W$  in  $SI(Q,\alpha)$  of weight  $-\langle \cdot,\beta \rangle$  ([10, Lemma 1.4]). If  $V, V' \in \operatorname{Rep}(Q, \alpha)$  and  $V \cong V'$ , then V and V' are in the same  $\operatorname{GL}(Q, \alpha)$ -orbit, and  $c^V$  and  $c^{V'}$  are equal up to a constant scalar. Semi-invariants of the types  $c^V$ and  $c_W$  are well-defined up to a scalar. These semi-invariants have the following properties.

**Lemma 1.** Suppose that V, V', V'' and W, W', W'' are representations of Q such that  $\langle \underline{d}(V), \underline{d}(W) \rangle = 0$ , and that there are exact sequences

$$0 \to V' \to V \to V'' \to 0$$
,  $0 \to W' \to W \to W'' \to 0$ .

- a) If  $\langle \underline{d}(V'), \underline{d}(W) \rangle < 0$ , then  $c^V(W) = 0$ ;
- b) If  $\langle \underline{d}(V'), \underline{d}(W) \rangle = 0$ , then  $c^V(W) = c^{V'}(W)c^{V''}(W)$ ; c) If  $\langle \underline{d}(V), \underline{d}(W') \rangle > 0$ , then  $c^V(W) = 0$ ; d) If  $\langle \underline{d}(V), \underline{d}(W') \rangle = 0$ , then  $c^V(W) = c^V(W')c^V(W'')$ .

*Proof.* Consider the following commutative diagram with exact columns:



If  $\langle \underline{d}(V'),\underline{d}(W)\rangle=0$ , then  $d_W^{V'},d_W^V$  and  $d_W^{V''}$  are all represented by square matrices. It follows that  $c^V(W)=c^{V'}(W)c^{V''}(W)$ . So b) follows and d) goes similarly. If  $\langle \underline{d}(V'),\underline{d}(W)\rangle<0$ , then  $d_W^{V'}$  cannot be surjective, hence  $d_W^V$  is not surjective. Now a) follows and c) goes similarly.

Our main result is that the semi-invariants of type  $c^V$  (resp.  $c_W$ ) span all the weight spaces in the rings  $SI(Q, \alpha)$ .

**Theorem 1.** Let Q be a quiver without oriented cycles and let  $\beta$  be a dimension vector. The ring of semi-invariants  $SI(Q, \beta)$  is a K-linear span of semi-invariants  $c^V$  with  $\langle \underline{d}(V), \beta \rangle = 0$ . The analogous result is true for the semi-invariants  $c_W$ .

After this paper was submitted we learned about the paper [12] where among other things the authors give another proof of Theorem 1 under the assumption that the characteristic of K is zero.

We will prove Theorem 1 in Section 4.

Remark 1. If  $V = V_1 \oplus V_2$  is decomposable, then by Lemma 1 we have  $c^V = 0$  if  $\langle \underline{d}(V_1), \beta \rangle \neq 0$ , and  $c^V = c^{V_1} c^{V_2}$  if  $\langle \underline{d}(V_1), \beta \rangle = 0$ .

The algebra  $\mathrm{SI}(Q,\beta)$  is generated by all  $c^V$  where V is indecomposable. Generators of  $\mathrm{SI}(Q,\beta)$  therefore can be found in the degrees  $\langle \alpha,\cdot \rangle$  such that a general representation of dimension  $\alpha$  is indecomposable. By [5] this is equivalent to  $\alpha$  being a Schur root.

Remark 2. If  $\operatorname{Rep}(Q,\beta)$  has a dense  $\operatorname{GL}(Q,\beta)$ -orbit, then Schofield showed in [10] that the invariants of type  $c^V$  with V indecomposable generate  $\operatorname{SI}(Q,\beta)$  (which is a polynomial ring in this case).

Theorem 1 has the following remarkable consequence.

**Corollary 1** (Reciprocity Property). Let  $\alpha, \beta$  be two dimension vectors for the quiver Q. Assume that  $\langle \alpha, \beta \rangle = 0$ . Then

$$\dim_K \operatorname{SI}(Q,\beta)_{\langle \alpha,\cdot\rangle} = \dim_K \operatorname{SI}(Q,\alpha)_{-\langle \cdot,\beta\rangle}.$$

*Proof.* Let  $V_1, \ldots, V_s$  be the modules of dimension  $\alpha$  such that  $c^{V_1}, \ldots, c^{V_s}$  form a basis of  $\mathrm{SI}(Q,\beta)_{\langle\alpha,\cdot\rangle}$ . These are linearly independent polynomials on  $\mathrm{Rep}(Q,\beta)$  so there exist s representations  $W_1, \ldots, W_s$  in  $\mathrm{Rep}(Q,\beta)$  such that  $\det(c^{V_i}(W_j))_{1 \leq i,j \leq s}$ 

is not zero. But  $c^{V_i}(W_j) = c_{W_j}(V_i)$  and this means that the semi-invariants  $c_{W_1}, \ldots, c_{W_s}$  are linearly independent. This proves that

$$\dim_K \operatorname{SI}(Q,\beta)_{\langle \alpha,\cdot\rangle} \leq \dim_K \operatorname{SI}(Q,\alpha)_{-\langle\cdot,\beta\rangle}.$$

The other inequality is proven in exactly the same way.

In the remainder of this section we investigate the consequences of Theorem 1. First we recall the main results of [11]. They can be summarized as follows.

We say that for two dimension vectors  $\alpha, \beta$  the space  $\operatorname{Hom}_Q(\alpha, \beta)$  (respectively  $\operatorname{Ext}_Q(\alpha, \beta)$ ) vanishes generically if and only if for general representations V, W of dimensions  $\alpha, \beta$  respectively we have  $\operatorname{Hom}_Q(V, W) = 0$  (resp.  $\operatorname{Ext}_Q(V, W) = 0$ ). We also write  $\alpha \hookrightarrow \beta$  if a general representation of dimension  $\beta$  has a subrepresentation of dimension  $\alpha$ .

**Theorem 2** (Schofield). Let  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  be two dimension vectors for the quiver Q.

- a)  $\operatorname{Ext}_{\mathcal{O}}(\alpha,\beta)$  vanishes generically if and only if  $\alpha \hookrightarrow \alpha + \beta$ ,
- b)  $\operatorname{Ext}_Q(\alpha, \beta)$  does not vanish generically if and only if  $\beta' \hookrightarrow \beta$  and  $\langle \alpha, \beta \beta' \rangle < 0$  for some dimension vector  $\beta'$ .

Part a) is proven in Section 3 of [11], and part b) is proven in Section 5.

Remark 3. Suppose that V and W are general modules of dimension  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  respectively, such that  $\langle \alpha, \beta \rangle = 0$ . The condition in b) is equivalent to  $\exists \beta' \beta' \hookrightarrow \beta$  such that  $\langle \alpha, \beta' \rangle > 0$ . If  $c^V(W) = 0$ , then W must have a submodule W' such that  $\langle \alpha, \underline{d}(W') \rangle > 0$ . This means that the converse of Lemma 1.c) is true for general V and W.

**Theorem 3.** Let Q be a quiver without oriented cycles and let  $\beta$  be a dimension vector. The semigroup  $\Sigma(Q,\beta)$  is the set of all  $\sigma \in \Gamma$  such that  $\sigma(\beta) = 0$  and  $\sigma(\beta') \leq 0$  for all  $\beta'$  such that  $\beta' \hookrightarrow \beta$ . Thus this condition is provided by one linear homogeneous equality and finitely many linear homogeneous inequalities. In particular the set  $\Sigma(Q,\beta)$  is saturated in the lattice  $\Gamma$ .

*Proof.* Suppose that  $\sigma \in \Gamma^*$ . We can write  $\sigma = \langle \alpha, \cdot \rangle$  with  $\alpha \in \Gamma$ .

We will first assume that  $\alpha$  is a dimension vector, i.e.,  $\alpha(x) \geq 0$  for all  $x \in Q_0$ . It follows from Theorem 1 that  $\operatorname{SI}(Q,\beta)_{\langle \alpha,\cdot\rangle}$  is non-zero if and only if there exists a representation V of dimension  $\alpha$  such that  $c^V$  is not zero, which is equivalent to  $\sigma(\beta) = \langle \alpha, \beta \rangle = 0$  and  $\operatorname{Ext}_Q(\alpha, \beta)$  vanishing generically. By part b) of Theorem 2,  $\operatorname{Ext}_Q(\alpha, \beta)$  vanishes generically if and only if for all  $\beta'$  such that  $\beta' \hookrightarrow \beta$  we have  $\langle \alpha, \beta - \beta' \rangle \geq 0$ . This means that for all  $\beta'$  such that  $\beta' \hookrightarrow \beta$  we have  $\sigma(\beta') = \langle \alpha, \beta' \rangle \leq 0$ . We conclude that  $\operatorname{SI}(Q, \beta)_{\sigma} \neq 0$  if and only if  $\sigma(\beta) = 0$  and  $\sigma(\beta') \leq 0$  for all  $\beta' \hookrightarrow \beta$ .

If  $\alpha$  is not a dimension vector, then  $\mathrm{SI}(Q,\beta)_{n\sigma}=0$  for all integers n>0. Suppose that  $W\in\mathrm{Rep}(Q,\beta)$ . From [6] it follows that either  $\sigma(\underline{d}(W))\neq 0$  or there exists a submodule W' of W such that  $\sigma(\underline{d}(W'))>0$ . If W is in general position, then we obtain  $\sigma(\beta)\neq 0$  or  $\sigma(\beta')>0$  for some  $\beta'\hookrightarrow\beta$  (see also Remark 5).

Remark 4. Schofield in [11] gives an algorithm allowing one to determine the set of inequalities in Theorem 3 inductively. This algorithm is not very efficient.

Remark 5. A module  $W \in \text{Rep}(Q, \beta)$  is called  $\sigma$ -stable if and only if there exist an n > 0 and an  $f \in \text{SI}(Q, \beta)_{n\sigma}$  such that  $f(W) \neq 0$ . King proved in [6] that a module

 $W \in \text{Rep}(Q, \beta)$  is  $\sigma$ -stable if and only if  $\sigma(W') \leq 0$  for all submodules W' of W. Applied to a general representation W of dimension  $\beta$  this gives us the equivalence:

$$\exists n > 0 \ \operatorname{SI}(Q, \beta)_{n\sigma} \neq 0 \Leftrightarrow \sigma(\beta) = 0 \ \text{and} \ \forall \beta' \ \beta' \hookrightarrow \beta \ \text{we have} \ \sigma(\beta') \leq 0.$$

This shows that the saturation of  $\Sigma(Q,\beta)$  is given by linear inequalities but it does not show that  $\Sigma(Q,\beta)$  is saturated.

Remark 6. In Theorem 3, instead of considering all  $\beta'$  with  $\beta' \hookrightarrow \beta$  we only need to consider those  $\beta'$  such that the general representation of dimension  $\beta'$  is indecomposable, which is equivalent to  $\beta'$  being a Schur root. Still, the set of inequalities obtained in this way may not be a minimal set of inequalities as we will see in the next example.

## **Example 1.** Let Q be the quiver

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 & 1 \\
\downarrow \\
4 & \rightarrow & 5 & \leftarrow 2 \\
\uparrow & & & \\
3 & & & \end{array}$$

and let  $\beta$  be the dimension vector

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & 1 \\ 1 & 2 & 1 \\ & 1 \end{array}$$

For a general representation V of Q with dimension vector  $\beta$ , the dimension vectors of indecomposable submodules are:

Let  $\sigma$  be the weight given by  $\sigma(\alpha) = \sum_{i=1}^{5} a_i \alpha(i)$ , in other words

$$\sigma = \begin{array}{ccc}
a_1 \\
a_5 \\
a_3
\end{array} .$$

We investigate when  $SI(Q,\beta)_{\sigma} \neq 0$ . First of all we must have  $\sigma(\beta) = 0$ , so  $a_1 + a_2 + a_3 + a_4 + 2a_5 = 0$ . In particular  $a_1 + a_2 + a_3 + a_4$  must be even. The

indecomposable submodules listed above correspond to the inequalities (using  $a_5 = -(a_1 + a_2 + a_3 + a_4)/2$ ):

(2)

$$a_1 \geq 0, \ a_2 \geq 0, a_3 \geq 0, a_4 \geq 0, \\ a_1 \leq a_2 + a_3 + a_4, \ a_2 \leq a_1 + a_3 + a_4, \ a_3 \leq a_1 + a_2 + a_4, \ a_4 \leq a_1 + a_2 + a_3, \\ a_1 + a_2 + a_3 + a_4 \geq 0.$$

The last inequality is redundant.

In the next section we will see how semi-invariants can be interpreted in terms of tensor products of modules of the general linear group. This particular example shows that for a 2-dimensional vector space U, the tensor product of symmetric powers  $S_{a_1}(U) \otimes S_{a_2}(U) \otimes S_{a_3}(U) \otimes S_{a_4}(U)$  contains a non-trivial  $\mathrm{SL}(U)$ -invariant subspace if and only if  $a_1+a_2+a_3+a_4$  is even and the inequalities (2) hold. In this case, the inequalities are obvious from the Clebsch-Gordan formula.

## 3. Application to Littlewood-Richardson coefficients

Let us apply Theorem 3 in the following special case. Let us define the quiver  $Q = T_{n,n,n}$  as follows:

Let us choose the dimension vector  $\beta(x_i) = \beta(y_i) = \beta(z_i) = i$  for i = 1, ..., n-1,  $\beta(u) = n$ . The following proposition is a direct application of Cauchy's formula and is a standard calculation in representation theory.

**Proposition 1.** The weight space  $SI(T_{n,n,n},\beta)_{\sigma}$  is isomorphic to the space of SL(U)-invariants in the triple tensor product  $S_{\lambda}(U) \otimes S_{\mu}(U) \otimes S_{\nu}(U)$  of Schur functors on U, where U is the vector space of dimension n, and  $\lambda, \mu, \nu$  are partitions whose conjugate partitions are given as follows:

(3) 
$$\lambda' = ((n-1)^{\sigma(x_{n-1})}, (n-2)^{\sigma(x_{n-2})}, \dots, 1^{\sigma(x_1)}), \\ \mu' = ((n-1)^{\sigma(y_{n-1})}, (n-2)^{\sigma(y_{n-2})}, \dots, 1^{\sigma(y_1)}), \\ \nu' = ((n-1)^{\sigma(z_{n-1})}, (n-2)^{\sigma(z_{n-2})}, \dots, 1^{\sigma(z_1)}).$$

Here  $\sigma(q)$  is defined as  $\sigma(e_q)$  where the dimension vector  $e_q$  is given by  $e_q(q) = 1$  and  $e_q(p) = 0$  if  $p \neq q$ .

*Proof.* Let us denote by  $a_i$  (resp.  $b_i, c_i$ ) the arrow in  $T_{n,n,n}$  with  $ta_i = x_i, ha_i = x_{i+1}$  (resp.  $tb_i = y_i, hb_i = y_{i+1}, tc_i = z_i, hc_i = z_{i+1}$ ) for  $1 \le i \le n-1$ . The space  $\text{Rep}(T_{n,n,n},\beta)$  can be identified with

$$\bigoplus_{1 \le i \le n-1} \left( \operatorname{Hom}(V(x_i), V(x_{i+1})) \oplus \operatorname{Hom}(V(y_i), V(y_{i+1})) \oplus \operatorname{Hom}(V(z_i), V(z_{i+1})) \right)$$

where we write  $x_n = y_n = z_n = u$ .

The Cauchy formula [4, §A.1] gives the decomposition of  $K[\text{Rep}(T_{n,n,n},\beta)]$  as a direct sum over the 3(n-1)-tuples of partitions

$$((\alpha^i)_{1 \le i \le n-1}, (\beta^i)_{1 \le i \le n-1}, (\gamma^i)_{1 \le i \le n-1})$$

of the summands

$$\bigotimes_{1 \leq i \leq n-1} \left( S_{\alpha^i} V(x_i) \otimes S_{\alpha^i} V(x_{i+1})^* \otimes S_{\beta^i} V(y_i) \otimes S_{\beta^i} V(y_{i+1})^* \right)$$

$$\otimes S_{\gamma^i}V(z_i)\otimes S_{\gamma^i}V(z_{i+1})^*$$
).

Let us denote  $H = \prod_{1 \leq i \leq n-1} \left( \operatorname{SL}(V(x_i)) \times \operatorname{SL}(V(y_i)) \times \operatorname{SL}(V(z_i)) \right)$ . Then it follows from the Littlewood-Richardson Rule [4, §A.1] that the summand corresponding to the 3(n-1)-tuple

$$((\alpha^i)_{1 \le i \le n-1}, (\beta^i)_{1 \le i \le n-1}, (\gamma^i)_{1 \le i \le n-1})$$

contains an *H*-invariant if and only if we have for each i,  $1 \le i \le n-1$ ,

$$(\alpha^{i})' = ((i)^{\sigma(x_{i})}, (i-1)^{\sigma(x_{i-1})}, \dots, 1^{\sigma(x_{1})}),$$
  

$$(\beta^{i})' = ((i)^{\sigma(y_{i})}, (i-1)^{\sigma(y_{i-1})}, \dots, 1^{\sigma(y_{1})}),$$
  

$$(\gamma^{i})' = ((i)^{\sigma(z_{i})}, (i-1)^{\sigma(z_{i-1})}, \dots, 1^{\sigma(z_{1})})$$

for some non-negative numbers  $\sigma(x_i)$ ,  $\sigma(y_i)$ ,  $\sigma(z_i)$ . Moreover, if these conditions are satisfied, then the space of H-invariants is isomorphic to

$$S_{\alpha^{n-1}}V(u)^* \otimes S_{\beta^{n-1}}V(u)^* \otimes S_{\gamma^{n-1}}V(u)^*.$$

Therefore the space of  $SL(T_{n,n,n},\beta)$ -semi-invariants can be identified with the space of SL(V(u))-invariants in the above triple tensor product.

**Corollary 2.** The set of triples of partitions  $(\lambda, \mu, \nu)$  such that the space of SL(U)-invariants in  $S_{\lambda}(U) \otimes S_{\mu}(U) \otimes S_{\nu}(U)$  is non-zero, in the space of triples of weights is given by a finite set of linear homogeneous inequalities in the parts of  $\lambda, \mu, \nu$  and the condition that  $|\lambda| + |\mu| + |\nu|$  is divisible by  $n := \dim U$ .

*Proof.* Let  $\sigma \in \Gamma$  be given by (3) and let  $\sigma(\beta) = 0$ . All components of  $\sigma$  are integers only if  $|\lambda| + |\mu| + |\nu|$  is divisible by n, because

$$0 = \sigma(\beta) = n\sigma(u) + \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} i (\sigma(x_i) + \sigma(y_i) + \sigma(z_i)) = n\sigma(u) + |\lambda| + |\mu| + |\nu|.$$

By Theorem 3 and Proposition 1, those  $(\lambda, \mu, \nu)$  for which  $SI(T_{n,n,n}, \beta)_{\sigma} \neq 0$  are given by  $\sigma(\beta) = 0$  and a finite set of homogeneous linear inequalities in  $\sigma(x_i), \sigma(y_i), \sigma(z_i), 1 \leq i \leq n-1$ . These inequalities can be written as inequalities in the parts of  $\lambda$ ,  $\mu$  and  $\nu$ .

# 4. The proof of Theorem 1

We define [x, y] to be the vector space with the basis formed by paths from x to y. We assumed that Q has no oriented cycles, so the spaces [x, y] are finite dimensional.

The indecomposable projective representations are in a bijection with  $Q_0$ . The indecomposable projective corresponding to x is defined by

$$P_x(y) = [x, y], \quad P_x(a) = a \circ \cdot : [x, ta] \to [x, ha],$$

where  $P_x(a)$  is given by the composition  $p \mapsto a \circ p$ . We have  $\operatorname{Hom}_Q(P_x, V) = V(x)$ . In particular  $\operatorname{Hom}_Q(P_x, P_y) = [y, x]$ .

We choose a numbering  $Q_0 = \{x_1, \ldots, x_n\}$  of vertices of Q such that for every  $\alpha \in Q_1$  with  $t\alpha = x_i, h\alpha = x_j$ , we have i < j. Let  $b_{i,j}$  be the number of arrows  $\alpha \in Q_1$  with  $t\alpha = x_i, h\alpha = x_j$ . Let  $p_{i,j} = \dim[x_i, x_j]$  be the number of paths p in Q such that  $tp = x_i, hp = x_j$ .

The relations between the  $\alpha(x_i)$  and  $\sigma(x_i)$  are as follows:

(4) 
$$\sigma(x_j) = \alpha(x_j) - \sum_{i < j} b_{i,j} \alpha(x_i),$$

(5) 
$$\alpha(x_j) = \sigma(x_j) + \sum_{i < j} p_{i,j} \sigma(x_i).$$

We define the m-arrow quiver  $\Theta_m$  as a quiver with two vertices  $x_+$  and  $x_-$ , and m arrows  $a_1, \ldots, a_m$  with  $ta_i = x_-$ ,  $ha_i = x_+$  for  $i = 1, \ldots, m$ . We define the weight  $\tau$  given by  $\tau(x_+) = 1$ ,  $\tau(x_-) = -1$ . The dimension vector  $\theta(n)$  is defined by  $\theta(n)(x_+) = \theta(n)(x_-) = n$ .

The idea of the proof of Theorem 1 is to reduce the calculation to the weight space  $SI(\Theta_m, \theta(n))_{\tau}$ . The method comes from Classical Invariant Theory with a slight adjustment to accommodate the definition of semi-invariants  $c^V$ .

Proof of Theorem 1. Let us fix Q,  $\beta$  and a weight  $\sigma$ . We proceed in three steps. In the first step, we reduce the theorem to the case that Q is a quiver with exactly one source  $x_-$  and one sink  $x_+$ , and  $\sigma(x_-) = 1$ ,  $\sigma(x_+) = -1$  and  $\sigma$  is zero on all other vertices. In the second step we reduce to the case that there are no vertices x with  $\sigma(x) = 0$ . The only case left is the quiver  $\Theta_m$  with weight  $\tau$ . In Step 3 we will prove the theorem in this case.

**Step 1.** Construct a quiver  $Q(\sigma)$  as follows:

$$Q(\sigma)_0 = Q_0 \cup x_- \cup x_+,$$
  
$$Q(\sigma)_1 = Q_1 \cup Q_- \cup Q_+$$

where  $Q_{-}$  consists of the set of arrows from  $x_{-}$  to  $x_i$ , with  $\sigma(x_i)$  arrows going to the vertex  $x_i$  for which  $\sigma(x_i) > 0$  and no arrows going to other vertices. The set  $Q_{+}$  consists of the set of arrows from  $x_i$  to  $x_{+}$ , with  $-\sigma(x_i)$  arrows going from the vertex  $x_i$  for which  $\sigma(x_i) < 0$  and no arrows going from other vertices to  $x_{+}$ .

## **Example 2.** Let Q be the quiver



Let  $\sigma = (1, 1, -2)$ . Then the quiver  $Q(\sigma)$  is

We will write  $\overline{Q} = Q(\sigma)$ . Define the weight  $\overline{\sigma}$  of  $\overline{Q}$  by  $\overline{\sigma}(x_{-}) = 1$ ,  $\overline{\sigma}(x_{i}) =$  $0, \overline{\sigma}(x_+) = -1.$  The dimension vector  $\overline{\beta} = \beta(\sigma)$  is defined by  $\overline{\beta}(x_i) = \beta(x_i)$ ,  $\overline{\beta}(x_-) = \sum_{\{i \mid \sigma(x_i) > 0\}} \sigma(x_i) \beta(x_i), \ \overline{\beta}(x_+) = \sum_{\{i \mid \sigma(x_i) < 0\}} -\sigma(x_i) \beta(x_i).$  Suppose that  $W \in \operatorname{Rep}(\overline{Q}, \overline{\beta})$ . The matrices of all maps W(a) with  $a \in Q_-$  form a square matrix. Let  $D^-(W)$  be the determinant of this block matrix. Let  $D^+(W)$  be the determinant of all W(a) with  $a \in Q_+$ . Then the correspondence  $c \to D^-cD^+$  gives the isomorphism of weight spaces  $SI(Q,\beta)_{\sigma} \to SI(\overline{Q},\overline{\beta})_{\overline{\sigma}}$ .

Let  $\overline{\alpha}$  be the dimension vector of  $\overline{Q}$  such that  $\overline{\sigma} = \langle \overline{\alpha}, \cdot \rangle$ . Let  $\overline{V}$  be a representation of  $\overline{Q}$  with dimension vector  $\overline{\alpha}$  and let  $c^{\overline{V}}$  be the corresponding non-zero semi-invariant on  $SI(\overline{Q}, \overline{\beta})$ .

**Proposition 2.** The factor c in the decomposition  $c^{\overline{V}} = D^-cD^+$  is of the form  $c^V$ for some  $V \in \text{Rep}(Q, \alpha)$ .

*Proof.* Notice that the weight of  $D^-$  is equal to  $\langle \gamma_-, \cdot \rangle$  where

$$\gamma_{-}(x_{-}) = 1, \quad \gamma_{-}(x_{j}) = \gamma_{-}(x_{+}) = 0.$$

Similarly, by (5), the weight of  $D^+$  equals  $\langle \gamma_+, \cdot \rangle$  where

$$\gamma_{+}(x_{-}) = 0, \quad \gamma_{+}(x_{j}) = -\sum_{\substack{i \leq j \\ \sigma(x_{i}) < 0}} p_{i,j}\sigma(x_{i}),$$

$$\gamma_{+}(x_{+}) = -1 + \sum_{\substack{j \\ \sigma(x_{i}) < 0}} \sum_{\substack{i \le j \\ \sigma(x_{i}) < 0}} p_{i,j}\sigma(x_{i})\sigma(x_{j}).$$

It is easy to see that  $\langle \gamma_-, \overline{\beta} \rangle = \langle \gamma_+, \overline{\beta} \rangle = 0$ . Let  $\overline{V} \in \text{Rep}(\overline{Q}, \overline{\alpha})$ . Then  $\overline{V}$  has an obvious submodule  $\overline{V}_1 = \overline{V} \mid_{\overline{Q}_0 \setminus \{x_-\}}$ . We have an exact sequence

$$0 \to \overline{V}_1 \to \overline{V} \to \overline{V}_2 \to 0$$

with the dimension of  $\overline{V}_2$  equal to  $\gamma_-$ .

Let M be the module defined by the exact sequence

$$0 \to P_{x_+} \xrightarrow{i} \bigoplus_{b,hb=x_+} P_{tb} \to M \to 0,$$

where the morphism i from  $P_{x_+}$  to a copy  $P_{tb}$  maps the trivial path  $e(x_+)$  to the path b. The dimension vector of M is  $\gamma_+$ , and  $c^M$  is the determinant  $D^+$ . Consider the map

$$\sum_{\substack{b \\ hb=x_+}} \overline{V}_1(b) : \bigoplus_{b,hb=x_+} \overline{V}_1(tb) \to \overline{V}_1(x_+).$$

The dimension of the kernel is at least 1. Let  $(s_b)_{b,hb=x_+}$  with  $s_b \in \overline{V}_1(tb)$  be a non-trivial element in the kernel. We can now define a map  $\bigoplus_{b,hb=x_{+}} P_{tb} \to \overline{V}_{1}$ by sending the generator  $e(tb) \in P_{tb}(tb)$  to  $s_b$  for all b. Because  $(s_b)_{b,hb=x_+}$  lies in the kernel, this actually defines a morphism  $M \to \overline{V}_1$ . Let  $\overline{V}_3$  be the image of this

Now  $\overline{V}_3$  is a submodule of  $\overline{V}_1$  and  $c^{\overline{V}_1} \neq 0$ . By Lemma 1 a) we have  $\langle \underline{d}(\overline{V}_3), \overline{\beta} \rangle \geq 0$ . We also have  $c^M = D^+ \neq 0$ . If we apply Lemma 1 a) to the kernel N of

 $M \to \overline{V}_3$ , then we get  $\langle \underline{d}(N), \overline{\beta} \rangle = \langle \gamma_+, -\underline{d}(\overline{V}_3) \rangle = -\langle \underline{d}(\overline{V}_3), \overline{\beta} \rangle \geq 0$ . We conclude that  $\langle \underline{d}(\overline{V}_3), \overline{\beta} \rangle = 0$ . By Lemma 1 b)  $c^{\overline{V}_3}$  divides the semi-invariant  $c^M = D^+$ . Because  $D^+$  is an irreducible semi-invariant we must have  $c^{\overline{V}_3} = D^+$ ,  $\gamma_+ = \dim \overline{V}_3$  and  $\overline{V}_3$  is isomorphic to M.

We have an exact sequence

$$0 \to \overline{V}_3 \to \overline{V}_1 \to \overline{V}_4 \to 0.$$

Now it is clear by the multiplicative property that  $c^{\overline{V}} = c^{\overline{V}_2} c^{\overline{V}_4} c^{\overline{V}_3}$  with the first factor being proportional to  $D^-$  and the last one to  $D^+$ . Let us also define a submodule  $\overline{V}_5 = \overline{V}_4 \mid_{\{x_+\}}$ , so we have an exact sequence

$$0 \to \overline{V}_5 \to \overline{V}_4 \to \overline{V}_6 \to 0.$$

Note that  $\overline{V}_6$  has support within Q. The restriction of  $\overline{V}_6$  to Q will be denoted by V. We will prove that the restriction of  $c^{\hat{V}}$  to  $\text{Rep}(Q,\beta)$  is  $c^V$ .

Extend  $W \in \text{Rep}(Q, \beta)$  to the module  $\overline{W}$  of dimension  $\overline{\beta}$  by putting  $\overline{W}(x_{-}) = \bigoplus_{a,ta=x_{-}} W(ha)$ ,  $\overline{W}(x_{+}) = \bigoplus_{b,hb=x_{+}} W(tb)$ , with the maps  $\overline{W}(a)$  and  $\overline{W}(b)$  being the components of the identity map. Define the canonical submodule  $\overline{W}_{1} = \overline{W}|_{\{x_{+}\}}$ . We have an exact sequence

$$0 \to \overline{W}_1 \to \overline{W} \to \overline{W}_2 \to 0.$$

Define the submodule  $\overline{W}_3 = \overline{W}_2 \mid_{\widehat{O} \setminus \{x_-\}}$  of  $\overline{W}_2$ . Now we have an exact sequence

$$0 \to \overline{W}_3 \to \overline{W}_2 \to \overline{W}_4 \to 0.$$

The representation  $\overline{W}_3$  has support within Q and its restriction to Q is just W. We now have

$$c^{\overline{V}}(\overline{W}) = c^{\overline{V}_4}(\overline{W}) = c^{\overline{V}_4}(\overline{W}_1)c^{\overline{V}_4}(\overline{W}_3)c^{\overline{V}_4}(\overline{W}_4) = c^{\overline{V}_4}(\overline{W}_3)$$

because  $c^{\overline{V}_4}(\overline{W}_1)$  and  $c^{\overline{V}_4}(\overline{W}_4)$  are constant. Moreover,

$$c^{\overline{V}_4}(\overline{W}_3) = c^{\overline{V}_5}(\overline{W}_3)c^{\overline{V}_6}(\overline{W}_3) = c^{\overline{V}_6}(\overline{W}_3) = c^V(W)$$

because  $c^{\overline{V}_5}(\overline{W}_4)$  is constant. This concludes the proof of the proposition.

**Step 2.** Let Q,  $\beta$ ,  $\sigma$  be as above. Let  $x \in Q_0$  be a vertex such that  $\sigma(x) = 0$ . Let  $a_1, \ldots, a_s$  be the arrows in  $Q_1$  with  $ha_k = x$   $(k = 1, \ldots, s)$  and let  $b_1, \ldots, b_t$  be the arrows in  $Q_1$  with  $tb_l = x$   $(l = 1, \ldots, t)$ . Let  $\overline{Q}$  be the quiver such that  $\overline{Q}_0 = Q_0 \setminus \{x\}$  and  $\overline{Q}_1 = (Q_1 \setminus \{a_1, \ldots, a_s, b_1, \ldots, b_t\}) \cup \{ba_{k,l}\}_{1 \le k \le s, 1 \le l \le t}$ , where  $t(ba_{k,l}) = ta_k, h(ba_{k,l}) = hb_l$ . Let  $\overline{\beta}$ ,  $\overline{\sigma}$  be the restrictions of  $\beta$ ,  $\sigma$  to  $Q_0 \setminus \{x\}$ .

The Fundamental Theorem of Invariant Theory (see [2] for a characteristic free version) says that every semi-invariant from  $\mathrm{SI}(Q,\beta)_{\sigma}$  can be obtained from the semi-invariants from  $\mathrm{SI}(\overline{Q},\overline{\beta})_{\overline{\sigma}}$  by substituting the actual compositions  $b_la_k$  for the arrows of type  $ba_{k,l}$ . Assuming Theorem 1 for  $\mathrm{SI}(\overline{Q},\overline{\beta})_{\overline{\sigma}}$  to be true, we need to show that every semi-invariant  $c^{\overline{V}}$  from  $\mathrm{SI}(\overline{Q},\overline{\beta})_{\overline{\sigma}}$  pulls back to a semi-invariant of type  $c^V$ . For a given representation  $\overline{V}$  of  $\overline{Q}$  of dimension  $\overline{\alpha}$  we define the representation  $V = \mathrm{ind} \ \overline{V}$  as follows. We notice that the condition  $\sigma(x) = 0$  means that we expect  $\mathrm{dim} \ V(x) = \sum_{k=1}^s \mathrm{dim} \ V(ta_k)$ .

This means we put

$$V(y) = \begin{cases} \overline{V}(y) & \text{if } y \neq x, \\ \bigoplus_{k=1}^{s} \overline{V}(ta_k) & \text{if } y = x. \end{cases}$$

We define the linear maps V(a) as follows:

$$V(a) = \begin{cases} \overline{V}(a) & \text{if } a \neq a_k, b_l, \\ i(a_k) & \text{if } a = a_k, \\ \sum_{k=1}^s \overline{V}(ba_{k,l}) & \text{if } b = b_l, \end{cases}$$

where  $i(a_k): V(ta_k) \to \bigoplus_{k=1}^s V(ta_k)$  is the injection on the k-th summand.

Then it is easy to check directly from the definition of semi-invariants  $c^V$  that if the representation  $\overline{W} = \operatorname{res} W$  of dimension  $\overline{\beta}$  is a restriction of a representation W of Q of dimension  $\beta$ , then  $c^{\overline{V}}(\overline{W}) = c^V(W)$ .

Notice that the functor ind  $\overline{V}$  is the left adjoint of the obvious restriction functor res:  $\operatorname{Rep}(Q) \to \operatorname{Rep}(\overline{Q})$ , i.e., we have the natural isomorphisms

$$\operatorname{Hom}_Q(\operatorname{ind} \overline{V}, W) = \operatorname{Hom}_{\overline{Q}}(\overline{V}, \operatorname{res} W)$$

which explains why  $c^{\overline{V}}(\overline{W})$  and  $c^{V}(W)$  vanish simultaneously.

**Step 3.** It remains to deal directly with the weight space  $SI(\Theta_m, \theta(n))_{\tau}$ . Writing the representation W of dimension  $\theta(n)$  as an m-tuple of linear maps,

$$W(a_1), \ldots, W(a_m): W_- \to W_+,$$

we can introduce the additional action of the group  $\operatorname{GL}(m)$  acting on this space by taking linear combinations of the linear maps  $W(a_1),\ldots,W(a_m)$ . Using the Cauchy formula (in its characteristic free version, say from [1]) we see that the space  $\operatorname{SI}(\Theta_m,\theta(n))_{\tau}$  of semi-invariants can be identified with  $\bigwedge^n W_- \otimes \bigwedge^n W_+^* \otimes D_n(K^m)$ . Here  $D_n$  denotes the n-th divided power. Since the divided power  $D_n(K^m)$  is generated as a  $\operatorname{GL}(m)$ -module by its highest weight vector (which corresponds to the semi-invariant det  $W(a_1)$ ) and the set of semi-invariants of the form  $c^V$  is preserved by the action of  $\operatorname{GL}(m)$ , it is enough to express  $\det W(a_1)$  as the semi-invariant of the form  $c^V$ . Notice that  $\tau = \langle \alpha, \cdot \rangle$  for the dimension vector  $\alpha = (1, m-1)$ . Taking the module V to be the m-tuple of linear maps  $V(a_1),\ldots,V(a_m): K \to K^{m-1}$  where  $V(a_1)=0$  and  $V(a_i)$  is the embedding sending 1 to the i-1'st basis vector, for  $i=2,\ldots,m$ , we check directly that  $c^V=\det W(a_1)$ . This concludes the proof of Theorem 1.

We now will give another description for semi-invariants  $\mathrm{SI}(Q,\beta)_{\sigma}$ . Let  $\overline{Q}=Q(\sigma), \overline{\beta}$  and  $\overline{\sigma}$  be as in Step 1 of the proof of Theorem 1. We know that  $\mathrm{SI}(Q,\beta)_{\sigma}\cong \mathrm{SI}(\overline{Q},\overline{\beta})_{\overline{\sigma}}$ . Let  $\overline{\alpha}$  be a dimension vector of  $\overline{Q}$  such that  $\langle \overline{\alpha},\cdot \rangle=\overline{\sigma}$ . Now  $\mathrm{SI}(\overline{Q},\overline{\beta})_{\overline{\sigma}}$  is generated by semi-invariants  $c^{\overline{V}}$  with  $\underline{d}(\overline{V})=\overline{\alpha}$ . In fact we only need to take those  $c^{\overline{V}}$  where  $\overline{V}$  lies in a Zariski dense set of  $\mathrm{Rep}(\overline{Q},\overline{\alpha})$ . A general representation  $\overline{V}$  of dimension  $\overline{\alpha}$  has the following projective resolution:

$$0 \to P_{x_+} \xrightarrow{d_V} P_{x_-} \to \overline{V} \to 0$$

with  $d_V \in \operatorname{Hom}_Q(P_{x_+}, P_{x_-}) = [x_-, x_+]$ . So  $d_V$  can be seen as some linear combination  $\sum_{i=1}^r \lambda_i p_i$  where  $p_1, \ldots, p_r$  are all paths from  $x_+$  to  $x_-$ . For any  $\overline{W} \in \operatorname{Rep}(\overline{Q}, \overline{\beta})$  we have the following exact sequence:

$$0 \to \operatorname{Hom}_{\overline{Q}}(\overline{V}, \overline{W}) \to \operatorname{Hom}_{\overline{Q}}(P_{x_{+}}, \overline{W}) \xrightarrow{\tilde{d}_{\overline{V}}} \operatorname{Hom}_{\overline{Q}}(P_{x_{-}}, \overline{W}) \to \operatorname{Ext}_{\overline{Q}}(\overline{V}, \overline{W}) \to 0.$$

It is easy to see that  $\det(\tilde{d}_{\overline{V}}) = c^{\overline{V}}(\overline{W}) = c^{V}(W)$ .

We have that

$$\begin{array}{c} \operatorname{Hom}_{\overline{Q}}(P_{x_{+}},\overline{W}) \cong \overline{W}_{x_{+}} = \bigoplus_{\sigma(x_{i})>0} W(x_{i})^{\sigma(x_{i})}, \\ \operatorname{Hom}_{\overline{Q}}(P_{x_{-}},\overline{W}) \cong \overline{W}_{x_{-}} = \bigoplus_{\sigma(x_{i})<0} W(x_{i})^{\sigma(x_{i})}, \\ \tilde{d}_{\overline{V}} = \sum_{i} \lambda_{i} \overline{V}(p_{i}). \end{array}$$

Let F be a function from the set of paths from  $x_+$  to  $x_-$  to the set of non-negative integers. For each such F we can define the semi-invariant  $I_F$  as the coefficient of  $\lambda_1^{F(p_1)}\lambda_2^{F(p_2)}\dots\lambda_r^{F(p_r)}$  in  $\det(\tilde{d}_{\overline{V}})$ .

Corollary 3. The space of semi-invariants  $SI(Q, \beta)_{\sigma}$  is spanned by semi-invariants of the form  $I_F$ .

A necessary condition for  $I_F$  to be non-zero is

$$\sum_{i} F(p_i) = \sum_{\sigma(x_i) > 0} \sigma(x_i) \beta(x_i) = \sum_{\sigma(x_i) < 0} -\sigma(x_i) \beta(x_i).$$

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