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# THE VOLUME OF HYPERBOLIC COXETER POLYTOPES OF EVEN DIMENSION

by G.J. Heckman

## 1. INTRODUCTION.

Let  $H^n$  denote hyperbolic space of dimension  $n$ , and let  $S$  be an index set for a finite collection of open half spaces  $H_s^+$  in  $H^n$  bounded by codimension one hyperplanes  $H_s$ . We assume that for all distinct  $s, t \in S$  either  $H_s \cap H_t$  is not empty and the (interior) dihedral angle of  $H_s^+ \cap H_t^+$  along  $H_s \cap H_t$  has size  $\frac{\pi}{m_{st}}$  for certain integers  $m_{st} = m_{ts} \geq 2$ , or  $H_s \cap H_t$  is empty while  $H_s^+ \cap H_t^+$  is not empty. In the latter case we put  $m_{st} = m_{ts} = \infty$  and we also put  $m_{ss} = 1$ . Under these assumptions the intersection  $C = \bigcap_s H_s^+$  is not empty, and its closure  $D$  is called a hyperbolic Coxeter polytope.

By abuse of notation let  $s \in S$  also denote the reflection of  $H^n$  in the hyperplane  $H_s$ . Now the group  $W$  of motions of  $H^n$  generated by the reflections  $s \in S$  is discrete, and  $D$  is a strict fundamental domain for the action of  $W$  on  $H^n$ . Moreover  $(W, S)$  is a Coxeter group with Coxeter matrix  $M = (m_{st})$ , i.e.  $W$  has a presentation with generators  $s \in S$  and relations  $(st)^{m_{s,t}} = 1$  for  $s, t \in S$ . Let  $\ell(w)$  denote the length of  $w \in W$  with respect to the generating set  $S$ , and let  $P_W(t) \in \mathbb{Z}[[t]]$  be the Poincaré series of  $W$  defined by  $P_W(t) = \sum_w t^{\ell(w)}$ .

**THEOREM:** If  $D$  has finite hyperbolic volume then we have the relation

$$\frac{1}{P_W(1)} = \begin{cases} \frac{(-1)^{\frac{n}{2}} 2 \text{vol}_n(D)}{\text{vol}_n(S^n)} & \text{if } n \text{ is even,} \\ 0 & \text{if } n \text{ is odd.} \end{cases}$$

For  $D$  compact this can be derived from the work by Serre on the cohomology of discrete groups [Se]. Here we obtain the result as a consequence of the differential volume formula of Schläfli. This method was inspired by a recent paper of Kellerhals where  $\text{vol}_{2n}(D)$  was computed in case  $D$  is a (possibly simply or doubly truncated) orthoscheme [Ke1, IH].

The above theorem is essentially just a specialization of the Gauss-Bonnet theorem to the present situation [Ho, Fe, AW, Ch, Sa]. Nevertheless I have found it worthwhile to write these things up in some details in order to emphasize the elementary nature of this approach. For partial results on the computation of  $\text{vol}_n(D)$  for  $n$  odd one is referred to [Ke2, Ke3] and the references mentioned there.

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## 2. THE DIFFERENTIAL VOLUME FORMULA OF SCHLÄFLI AND SOME CONSEQUENCES.

Let  $D$  be a spherical or a hyperbolic simplex of dimension  $n$ . The codimension one faces of  $D$  are labeled  $D_s$  for  $s \in S$  an index set of cardinality  $n+1$ . The faces of  $D$  are of the form  $D_J = \bigcap_{s \in J} D_s$  with  $J$  a proper subset of  $S$ . Clearly  $D_J$  has codimension  $|J|$ . The interior angle of  $D$  along  $D_J$  is denoted by  $D^J$ . Clearly  $D^J$  is a simplicial cone in a euclidean space of dimension  $|J|$ , and it also determines a spherical simplex  $D^J \cap S^{|J|-1}$  of dimension  $|J|-1$ . Note that the simplex  $D$  is determined up to motions by its dihedral angles  $\alpha_J := \text{vol}_1(D^J \cap S^1)$  with  $J \subset S$  and  $|J| = 2$ .

**THEOREM (DIFFERENTIAL VOLUME FORMULA OF SCHLÄFLI):** For  $J \subset S$  with  $|J| = 2$  we have

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \alpha_J}(\text{vol}_n(D)) = \frac{\varepsilon}{n-1} \text{vol}_{n-2}(D_J)$$

where  $\varepsilon = 1$  if  $D$  is a spherical simplex and  $\varepsilon = -1$  if  $D$  is a hyperbolic simplex.

In the spherical case this formula was found by Schläfli in 1852 [Sc]. The three dimensional hyperbolic version goes back to Lobachevsky [Co]. A nice and simple proof of this formula (valid in both spherical and hyperbolic case) was given by Kneser [Kn, BH].

**COROLLARY:** Renormalize  $\text{vol}_n(D)$  by putting  $G_n(D) = \frac{\text{vol}_n(D)}{\text{vol}_n(S^n)}$ . For  $J \subset S$  with

$|J| = 2$  we have

$$\frac{\partial G_n(D)}{\partial G_1(D^J \cap S^1)} = \varepsilon G_{n-2}(D_J).$$

*Proof:* This is just a reformulation of the differential volume formula using that  $\text{vol}_n(\mathbb{S}^n) = 2\pi^{\frac{n+1}{2}} \Gamma\left(\frac{n+1}{2}\right)^{-1}$ . QED.

**THEOREM (REDUCTION FORMULA):** With the convention  $G_{-1}(\cdot) = 1$  we have

$$\varepsilon^{\frac{n}{2}}(1 + (-1)^n)G_n(D) = \sum_{\substack{I \subseteq S \\ I \neq S}} (-1)^{|I|} G_{|I|-1}(D^I \cap S^{|I|-1}).$$

*Proof:* By induction on the dimension  $n$  of  $D$ . The case  $n = 1$  is trivial. In case  $n = 2$  and  $D$  is a triangle with angles  $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$  the equality of the left hand side  $\frac{2\varepsilon}{4\pi} \text{vol}_2(D)$  and the right hand side  $(1 - \frac{3}{2} + \frac{1}{2\pi}(\alpha + \beta + \gamma))$  is a familiar formula. Now suppose  $n \geq 3$ . Suppose  $J \subset S$  with  $|J| = 2$ . We will check that the derivatives of both sides with respect to the renormalized dihedral angle  $G_1(D^J \cap S^1)$  of  $D$  along  $D_J$  are equal. This implies that the formula is correct upto an additive constant. Indeed for the left hand side we get

$$\varepsilon^{\frac{n}{2}}(1 + (-1)^n) \frac{\partial G_n(D)}{\partial G_1(D^J \cap S^1)} = \varepsilon^{\frac{n-2}{2}}(1 + (-1)^{n-2})G_{n-2}(D_J),$$

and for the right hand side we get

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{J \subset I \subseteq S} (-1)^{|I|} \frac{\partial G_{|I|-1}(D^I \cap S^{|I|-1})}{\partial G_1(D^J \cap S^1)} &= \\ \sum_{K \subseteq S \setminus J} (-1)^{|K|} G_{|K|-1}((D_J)^K \cap S^{|K|-1}). \end{aligned}$$

Here we have used that for  $J \subset I \subseteq S$  we have  $(D^I)_J = (D_J)^{I \setminus J}$ . Hence we arrive at the reduction formula for the face  $D_J$ . It remains to check the constant. In the spherical case we take  $D$  a simplex with all dihedral angles equal to  $\frac{\pi}{2}$ . Hence  $G_n(D) = 2^{-n-1}$  and the reduction formula reduces in this case to the correct identity  $(1 + (-1)^n)2^{-n-1} = \sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n+1}{k} (-\frac{1}{2})^k$ . This proves the reduction formula for  $D$  a spherical simplex. Taking a shrinking sequence of spherical simplices it follows that the angle sum on the right hand side of the reduction formula vanishes for a euclidean simplex  $D$ . In turn this also shows that the constant matches for  $D$  a hyperbolic simplex. QED.

For spherical simplices the reduction formula is due to Schläfli. Unaware of Schläfli's work the reduction formula was rediscovered by Poincaré with a different and elegant

proof [Po]. The extension from a spherical to a hyperbolic simplex was made by Hopf [Ho].

**COROLLARY:** Suppose  $D$  is a convex hyperbolic polytope with finite volume and of dimension  $n$ . Denote by  $F(D)$  the collection of faces of  $D$ , and for  $F$  a face of  $D$  of codimension  $|F|$  write  $D^F$  for the interior angle (in  $\mathbb{R}^{|F|}$ ) of  $D$  along  $F$ . Then the following reduction formula holds

$$2 \cos\left(\frac{n\pi}{2}\right) G_n(D) = \sum_{F \in F(D)} (-1)^{|F|} G_{|F|-1}(D^F \cap S^{|F|-1}).$$

*Proof:* If  $D$  is unbounded but with finite volume then some vertices of  $D$  lie on the boundary of  $H^n$ . At such a cusp like vertex the size of the interior angle of  $D$  equals zero. Hence by continuity we may assume that  $D$  is bounded. For  $D = \cup D_i$  a simplicial subdivision of  $D$  we get

$$\begin{aligned} 2 \cos\left(\frac{n\pi}{2}\right) G_n(D) &= \sum_i 2 \cos\left(\frac{n\pi}{2}\right) G_n(D_i) \\ &= \sum_i \sum_{\substack{I \subseteq S_i \\ I \neq S_i}} (-1)^{|I|} G_{|I|-1}(D_i^I \cap S^{|I|-1}) \\ &= \sum_F \sum_{(i,I) \sim F} (-1)^{|I|} G_{|I|-1}(D_i^I \cap S^{|I|-1}) \end{aligned}$$

where  $F$  runs over the faces of  $D$ , and we write  $(i, I) \sim F$  if the relative interior of  $D_{i,I}$  is contained in the relative interior of  $F$ . Since for fixed  $(i, I) \sim F$  the interior angles  $D_j^J$  with  $D_{j,J} = D_{i,I}$  make up an interior angle  $D^F \times \mathbb{R}^{|I|-|F|}$  we conclude that

$$\sum_{(i,I) \sim F} (-1)^{|I|} G_{|I|-1}(D_i^I \cap S^{|I|-1}) = (-1)^{|F|} G_{|F|-1}(D^F \cap S^{|F|-1}),$$

because the euler characteristic of the relative interior of  $F$  is equal to  $(-1)^{\dim(F)}$ . QED.

A direct consequence of this corollary is the Gauss-Bonnet formula for hyperbolic space forms originally derived by Hopf along these lines.

**COROLLARY:** For  $\Gamma$  a group acting discretely on  $H^{2n}$  with a smooth compact oriented quotient  $\Gamma \backslash H^{2n}$  the euler characteristic  $\chi(\Gamma \backslash H^{2n})$  of  $\Gamma \backslash H^{2n}$  is given by

$$\chi(\Gamma \backslash H^{2n}) \text{vol}_{2n}(S^{2n}) = (-1)^n 2 \text{vol}_{2n}(\Gamma \backslash H^{2n}).$$

### 3. HYPERBOLIC COXETER GROUPS.

Let  $M = (m_{st})$  be a Coxeter matrix, i.e.  $m_{ss} = 1$  for all  $s \in S$  and  $m_{st} = m_{ts} \in \{2, 3, \dots, \infty\}$  for all  $s, t \in S$ . Let  $G = (g_{st})$  with  $g_{st} = -2 \cos \frac{\pi}{m_{st}}$  if  $m_{st}$  is finite, and if  $m_{st} = \infty$  let  $g_{st} = -2c_{st}$  with  $c_{st} = c_{ts} \geq 1$  an additional parameter. Let  $V$  be a real vector space with basis  $\{\alpha_s; s \in S\}$ , and equip  $V$  with a symmetric bilinear form by  $(\alpha_s, \alpha_t) = g_{st}$ . For  $\alpha \in V$  with  $(\alpha, \alpha) = 2$  let  $r_\alpha \in GL(V)$  be the orthogonal reflection in the hyperplane perpendicular to  $\alpha$ :  $r_\alpha(\lambda) = \lambda - (\lambda, \alpha)\alpha$  for  $\lambda \in V$ . Let  $(W, S)$  be the Coxeter system corresponding to the matrix  $M$ . The homomorphism  $\sigma : W \rightarrow GL(V)$  defined by  $\sigma(s) = r_s$  for  $s \in S$  ( $r_s$  is short for  $r_{\alpha_s}$ ) is the (possibly deformed) geometric representation. The theory as developed for example in [Hu, Chapter 5] for the ordinary (i.e.  $c_{st} = 1$  if  $m_{st} = \infty$ ) geometric representation goes thru verbatim in the present situation.

Let  $V^*$  be the dual vector space of  $V$  and  $\{\xi_s; s \in S\}$  the basis of  $V^*$  dual to  $\{\alpha_s; s \in S\}$ . Hence  $(\xi_s, \alpha_t) = \delta_{st}$  for all  $s, t \in S$  where  $(\cdot, \cdot)$  also denotes the pairing between  $V^*$  and  $V$ . For  $J \subset S$  we put

$$C_J := \left\{ \sum_s x_s \xi_s; x_s = 0 \text{ if } s \in J, x_s > 0 \text{ if } s \notin J \right\}.$$

Clearly  $C_S = \{0\}$  and  $C := C_\emptyset$  is an open simplicial cone. The closure  $D$  of  $C$  admits a partition  $D = \cup_J C_J$  and  $C_J$  is a face of  $D$  of codimension  $|J|$ . For  $w \in W$  and  $\xi \in V^*$  write  $w(\xi)$  for  $\sigma^*(w)(\xi)$ . The Tits cone

$$U := \bigcup_w w(D)$$

is a convex cone in  $V^*$ . Moreover  $C_I \cap w(C_J)$  is not empty for  $I, J \subset S$  and  $w \in W$  if and only if  $I = J$  and  $w \in W_J$ . Here  $W_J$  is the (parabolic) subgroup of  $W$  generated by  $J$ .

Let  $V'$  be the orthocomplement in  $V^*$  of the kernel  $K$  of the symmetric bilinear form  $(\cdot, \cdot)$  on  $V$ . Clearly  $V/K$  inherits a canonical non-degenerate symmetric bilinear form from  $V$ , and since  $V/K$  and  $V'$  are dual vector spaces this form can be transferred to  $V'$ . By abuse of notation we denote this form again by  $(\cdot, \cdot)$ . For  $J \subset S$  let  $G_J$  denote the submatrix of  $G$  with indices taken from  $J$ .

**PROPOSITION:** Suppose the matrix  $G$  is indecomposable and has smallest eigenvalue  $< 0$ . Let  $J \subset S$  such that  $G_J$  is positive definite. Then there exists a vector  $\xi_J \in C_J \cap V'$  with  $(\xi_J, \xi_J) < 0$ , and  $C_J \cap V'$  is a face of the polyhedral cone  $D \cap V'$  of codimension  $|J|$ .

*Proof.* Let  $J \subset S$  such that  $G_J$  is positive definite. Let  $1_J$  denote the matrix with 1 on the places  $ss$  for  $s \notin J$  and 0 elsewhere. For  $t \in \mathbb{R}$  sufficiently large the matrix  $G + t1_J$  is positive definite, and let  $t_J$  be the infimum of these  $t$ . Clearly  $t_J > 0$  and the matrix  $G + t_J 1_J$  is positive semidefinite with nonzero kernel. By the Perron-Frobenius lemma [Hu, Section 2.6] the kernel is one dimensional and spanned by a vector  $x_J$  with all coordinates  $x_{J,s} > 0$  for  $s \in S$ . Now put

$$\alpha_J := \sum_{s \in S} x_{J,s} \alpha_s \in V, \quad \xi_J := \sum_{s \notin J} x_{J,s} \xi_s \in V^*.$$

Then we have on the one hand (the brackets denote the bilinear form on  $V$ )

$$\begin{aligned} (\alpha_J, \alpha_s) &= 0 \text{ for } s \in J \\ (\alpha_J, \alpha_s) &= -t_J x_{J,s} \text{ for } s \notin J, \end{aligned}$$

and on the other hand (the brackets denote the pairing between  $V^*$  and  $V$ )

$$\begin{aligned} (\xi_J, \alpha_s) &= 0 \text{ for } s \in J \\ (\xi_J, \alpha_s) &= x_{J,s} \text{ for } s \notin J. \end{aligned}$$

Hence  $(\alpha_J, \alpha) + (t_J \xi_J, \alpha) = 0$  for all  $\alpha \in V$ . In turn this implies  $\xi_J \in V'$  and  $(\xi_J, \xi_J) = -t_J^{-1}(\alpha_J, \xi_J) = -t_J^{-1} \sum_{s \notin J} x_{J,s}^2 < 0$ . Finally the codimension of  $C_J$  as face of  $D$  and the codimension of  $C_J \cap V'$  as face of  $D \cap V'$  is equal, because the intersection  $C_J \cap V'$  is transversal (immediate by induction on  $|J|$ ). QED.

**REMARK:** Suppose the matrix  $G$  is indecomposable and has smallest eigenvalue  $< 0$ . If  $J \subset S$  such that  $G_J$  is positive semidefinite then it may happen that  $C_J \cap V'$  is empty. However it can be shown that there exist a proper subset  $I$  of  $S$  containing  $J$  and a vector  $\xi_I \in C_I \cap V'$  with  $(\xi_I, \xi_I) \leq 0$ .

**DEFINITION:** The matrix  $G$  is called hyperbolic if  $G$  is indecomposable, and the smallest eigenvalue of  $G$  is  $< 0$ , and all remaining eigenvalues of  $G$  are  $\geq 0$ . The (irreducible) Coxeter group  $(W, S)$  with Coxeter matrix  $M$  is called hyperbolic if there exists a hyperbolic matrix  $G$  compatible with  $M$ .

From now on assume that the matrix  $G$  is hyperbolic. The set  $\{\xi \in V'; (\xi, \xi) < 0\}$  consists of two connected components, and the one containing the point  $\xi_\emptyset$  is denoted by  $V'_-$ .

**PROPOSITION:** The open cone  $V'_-$  is contained in  $U \cap V'$ .

*Proof:* Let  $R = \{w(\alpha_s); w \in W, s \in S\}$  be the (normalized) root system in  $V$ , and let  $R' \subset V'$  be the “restriction” of  $R$  to  $V'$ . It is not hard to show (and for this  $G$  need not be hyperbolic) that  $R'$  is a discrete subset of  $\{\xi \in V'; (\xi, \xi) = 2\}$ . In turn this implies that the reflection hyperplanes  $H_\alpha = \{\xi \in V'; (\xi, \alpha) = 0\}$  for  $\alpha \in R$  are locally finite on  $V'_-$ . Now for  $\xi \in V'$  we have the familiar criterium:  $\xi \in U$  if and only if the segment  $[\xi_\emptyset, \xi]$  intersects only finitely many reflection hyperplanes  $H_\alpha$  for  $\alpha \in R$ . Hence  $V'_-$  is contained in  $U \cap V'$ . QED.

**THEOREM:** The intersection  $C_J \cap V'_-$  is not empty if and only if the matrix  $G_J$  is positive definite, and in that case  $C_J \cap V'_-$  is a face of  $D \cap V'_-$  of codimension  $|J|$ .

*Proof:* The stabilizer of  $\xi \in V'_-$  in the Lorentz group  $O(V') = \{g \in GL(V'); g \text{ preserves } (\cdot, \cdot)\}$  is compact, and hence the stabilizer of  $\xi \in V'_-$  in  $W$  is finite (as the intersection of a compact with a discrete set). Hence if  $C_J \cap V'_-$  is not empty then  $W_J$  is finite, which is equivalent with  $G_J$  being positive definite. The converse and the remaining part of the theorem follows from the first proposition of this section. QED.

Now let  $H = \{\xi \in V'; (\xi, \xi) = -1\}$  be hyperbolic space. The hyperbolic Coxeter polytope  $D \cap H$  is a fundamental domain for the action of the group  $W$  on  $H$ . Moreover each action of an irreducible reflection group on hyperbolic space arises in this way.

**CONCLUSION:** The Coxeter polytope  $D \cap H$  is compact if and only if  $C_J \cap V'$  is empty for all  $J \subsetneq S$  with  $G_J$  not positive definite. Also  $D \cap H$  has finite hyperbolic volume if and only if  $C_J \cap V'$  is empty for all  $J \subsetneq S$  with  $G_J$  indefinite.

In some examples it can be cumbersome to check the above conditions. The results of this section are essentially due to Vinberg, and we refer to the nice survey paper [Vi] for a discussion of examples.

#### 4. PROOF OF THE THEOREM.

Let  $(W, S)$  be an arbitrary Coxeter group, and write  $P_W(t) = \sum_w t^{\ell(w)}$  for the Poincaré series of  $(W, S)$ . The following formula due to Steinberg [St] gives an effective way of computing  $P_W(t)$  by induction on  $|S|$ .



**PROPOSITION:** The Poincaré series  $P_W(t)$  is a rational function of  $t$  satisfying

$$\frac{1}{P_W(t^{-1})} = \sum_{J \subset S, W_J \text{ finite}} (-1)^{|J|} \frac{1}{P_{W_J}(t)}.$$

*Proof:* For  $X \subset W$  write  $P_X(t) = \sum_{w \in X} t^{\ell(w)}$ . If for  $J \subset S$  we write  $W^J := \{w \in W; \ell(ws) > \ell(w) \forall s \in J\}$  for the minimal length representatives for the left cosets of  $W_J$  then  $P_W(t) = P_{W_J}(t)P_{W^J}(t)$ . For  $J \subset S$  with  $W_J$  finite let  $N(J)$  be the length of the longest element  $w_0(J)$  in  $W_J$ . If  $J(w) := \{s \in S; \ell(ws) < \ell(w)\}$  for  $w \in W$  then  $w \in W^J w_0(J)$  for some  $J \subset S$  with  $W_J$  finite precisely when  $J \subset J(w)$ . We claim that

$$\sum_{J \subset S, W_J \text{ finite}} (-1)^{|J|} P_{W^J w_0(J)}(t) = 1.$$

Indeed the contribution of  $w \in W$  to the sum on the left hand side equals  $\sum_{J \subset J(w)} (-1)^{|J|}$ , which equals 0 unless  $J(w)$  is empty. But  $J(w)$  is empty precisely when  $w = 1$  and the contribution becomes 1. Now we have

$$P_{W^J w_0(J)}(t) = t^{N(J)} P_{W^J}(t) = t^{N(J)} \frac{P_W(t)}{P_{W_J}(t)} = \frac{P_W(t)}{P_{W_J}(t^{-1})},$$

and the desired formula

$$\sum_{J \subset S, W_J \text{ finite}} (-1)^{|J|} \frac{1}{P_{W_J}(t^{-1})} = \frac{1}{P_W(t)}$$

follows. QED.

The theorem of the introduction follows by applying the reduction formula of Section 2 to the Coxeter polytope with finite hyperbolic volume. Combining the theorem of Vinberg of Section 3 with the above formula of Steinberg (evaluated at  $t = 1$ ) indeed proves the desired formula.

## 5. FINAL REMARKS.

Suppose  $G$  is a discrete cocompact group of isometries of hyperbolic space  $H^n$ . Fix a generic point  $x \in H^n$  with trivial stabilizer in  $G$ , and put

$$D = \{y \in H^n; d(y, x) \leq d(y, gx) \forall g \in G\}$$

with  $d$  the hyperbolic distance. The compact convex polytope  $D$  is a fundamental domain for the action of  $G$  on  $H^n$ , and the set

$$S = \{g \in G; g(D) \cap D \text{ has codimension one}\}$$

is a finite set of generators for  $G$ . Let  $\ell = \ell_S$  denote the length function on  $G$  with respect to  $S$ . It was shown by Cannon that the growth series

$$P_{G,S}(t) = \sum_{g \in G} t^{\ell(g)}$$

is the power series around  $t = 0$  of a rational function in  $t$  [Ca]. Now it is a natural question whether the theorem from the introduction remains valid in the present situation. Although this seems to be quite often the case, there are counterexamples for dimension  $n = 2$  [Pa, FP]. We refer to the latter paper for a further discussion of this problem.

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