ORDER POLYNOMIALS AND PÓLYA’S ENUMERATION THEOREM

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Abstract. Pólya’s enumeration theorem states that the number of labelings of a finite set up to symmetry is given by a polynomial in the number of labels. We give a new perspective on this theorem by generalizing it to partially ordered sets and order preserving maps. Further we prove a reciprocity statement in terms of strictly order preserving maps generalizing a classical result by Stanley (1970). We apply our results to counting graph colorings up to symmetry.

1. Introduction

Counting objects up to symmetry is a basic problem of enumerative combinatorics. A fundamental result in this context is Pólya’s enumeration theorem which is concerned with counting labelings of a set of objects modulo symmetry. Here a labeling of a set $X$ is defined as a map $f: X \rightarrow Y$ where $Y$ is the set of labels. If $G$ is a group acting on $X$ then $G$ also acts on the set of labelings $Y^X := \{ f: X \rightarrow Y \}$.

Pólya’s enumeration theorem now states:

**Theorem 1.1** (Pólya’s enumeration theorem [3]). Let $G$ be a finite group acting on a finite set $X$ and let $Y$ be a finite set of $n = |Y|$ labels. Then

$$|Y^X/G| = \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} n^{c(g)}$$

where $Y^X/G$ is the collection of orbits of $Y^X$ and $c(g)$ is the number of cycles of $g$ as permutation of $X$.

We give a new perspective on this theorem by generalizing it in terms of partially ordered sets, or posets for short, and order preserving maps. More precisely, we consider a finite poset $P$ and a group $G$ acting on $P$ by automorphisms. Then $G$ acts in a natural way also on the set of all order preserving maps $\text{Hom}(P,[n])$ from $P$ into the $n$-chain $[n] = \{ 1 < \cdots < n \}$. We show that the number of orbits of $\text{Hom}(P,[n])$ is given by a polynomial $\Omega_{P,G}(n)$ which we call the **orbital order polynomial**. Pólya’s enumeration theorem now follows by specializing this result to antichains. Further we give a combinatorial interpretation for $\Omega_{P,G}(-n)$ in terms of orbits of strictly order preserving maps. This naturally generalizes the classical polynomiality and reciprocity theorems for order preserving maps due to Stanley [4].

The results can be applied to graph colorings. We consider a finite group $G$ acting by automorphisms on a finite simple graph $\Gamma = (V,E)$ and the function $\chi_{\Gamma,G}(n)$ counting proper colorings $c: V \rightarrow [n]$ up to group action. Cameron and Kayibi [1] seem to be the first who considered this function which they called the **orbital chromatic polynomial**. Previously, Hanlon [2] treated the case of $G$ being the automorphism group of $\Gamma$. It is easy to see that $\chi_{\Gamma,G}(n)$ indeed agrees with a polynomial for all $n \geq 1$. We further give a representation as a sum of order polynomials.

We also give a combinatorial interpretation for evaluating this polynomial at negative integers in terms of acyclic orientations and compatible colorings. This naturally generalizes Stanley’s reciprocity for graph colorings [5].

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2. Order preserving Pólya-Enumeration

2.1. Groups. Let $G$ be a finite group with identity element $e$ and $X$ be a finite set. A group operation of $G$ on $X$ is a map $\cdot : G \times X \to X$ such that $g \cdot (h \cdot x) = (gh) \cdot x$ and $e \cdot x = x$ for all $g, h \in G$ and $x \in X$. We say that $G$ operates or acts on $X$. For every $g \in G$ we denote by $X^g$ the fixpoints of $g$, i.e., $X^g = \{ x \in X : g \cdot x = x \}$. For an element $x \in X$ we denote by $Gx = \{ g \cdot x : g \in G \}$ the orbit of $x$. The set of all orbits partitions $X$ and is called $X/G$.

Burnside’s lemma (see e.g. [8, Theorem 10.5]) gives a formula for the number of orbits in terms of fixpoints:

**Theorem 2.1** (Burnside’s lemma). Let $G$ be a finite group acting on a finite set $X$. Then

$$|X/G| = \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} |X^g|. $$

For an element $x \in X$ the stabilizer of $x$ is $\text{Stab}(x) = \{ g \in G : g \cdot x = x \}$. The operation can be restricted to any subgroup $H \subseteq G$. For $g \in G$ we denote by $\langle g \rangle = \{ e, g, g^2, \ldots \}$ the cyclic subgroup generated by $g$. The orbit of $x$ under the action of $\langle g \rangle$ is denoted by $[x]_g$ and is called a cycle of $g$. In particular, $c(g) = |X/\langle g \rangle|$ is the number of cycles of $g$. Identifying $g$ with the corresponding permutation on $X$ gives the usual notion of cycles.

**Example 2.2.** Let $G = S_n$ be the symmetric group acting on $[n] = \{1, \ldots, n\}$ in the usual way. Every permutation $\sigma \in S_n$ can be written as product of disjoint cycles in $S_n$ and this representation is unique up to interchanging the order of the cycles in the product. In this case $[x]_{\sigma} = \{ y \in [n] : y$ and $x$ are in the same cycle $\}$ and $c(\sigma)$ is the number of cycles in the unique representation as product of disjoint cycles.

If a set $X$ has additional structure we say that a group $G$ acts by automorphisms on $X$ if the group operation respects the structure, that is, for all $g \in G$ the map $x \mapsto g \cdot x$ is a structure preserving bijection.

Let $P$ be a finite poset. Then a group $G$ acts on $P$ by automorphisms if for all $g \in G$ and for all $p$ and $q$ in $P$ we have $g \cdot p < g \cdot q$ whenever $p < q$.

For a finite simple graph $\Gamma = (V, E)$ an action of a group $G$ on $V$ respects the structure of $\Gamma$ if for all edges $uv \in E$ we have that there is an edge between $g \cdot u$ and $g \cdot v$ for all $g \in G$.

The operation of $G$ on $X$ induces an operation on $Y^X$. This induced operation is defined by $(g \cdot f)(x) = f(g^{-1}x)$ for all $g \in G$, $f \in Y^X$ and $x \in X$.

2.2. Order preserving maps. Let $P$ be a finite poset. A map $\phi : P \to [n]$ is called order preserving if $\phi(p) \leq \phi(q)$ whenever $p < q$ and equality is forbidden for strictly order preserving maps. We denote the set of all order preserving maps by $\text{Hom}(P, [n])$, and the set of strictly order preserving maps by $\text{Hom}^s(P, [n])$. Their cardinalities are given by the order polynomials $\Omega_P(n)$ and $\Omega_P^s(n)$ respectively. The following classical result is due to Stanley [4].

**Theorem 2.3** (Stanley [4]). For a finite poset $P$ the function $\Omega_P(n)$ agrees with a polynomial of degree $|P|$ for all $n \geq 1$, and

$$\Omega_P^s(n) = (-1)^{|P|} \Omega_P(-n).$$

For every finite group $G$ acting on $P$ by automorphisms and for every $g \in G$ we define a partial order on $P_g = P/\langle g \rangle$ by defining $[x]_g < [y]_g$ whenever there are $\tilde{x} \in [x]_g$ and $\tilde{y} \in [y]_g$ such that $\tilde{x} < \tilde{y}$.

This, in fact, yields a poset, the quotient poset (see e.g. [6]).
Theorem 2.5. Let $P$ be a finite poset and $G$ a finite group acting by automorphisms on $P$. Then $P_g$ is a poset with $c(g)$ elements for all $g \in G$.

Proof. First we observe that every cycle $[x]_g$ is an antichain. For that suppose $g^jx < g^kx$ for some $k, l \geq 0$ and consequently $x < g^{k-l}x$. From that we get $x < g^{k-l}x < g^{2(k-l)}x < \cdots < x$ as $g^{k-l}$ has finite order which is a contradiction.

For antisymmetry assume there are $x, x \neq y \in [x]_g$ and $y, y \in [y]_g$ with $x < y$ and $y < x$. Then $y = y'y$ for some $l \geq 0$ and we have $g^l y < x$ which contradicts $[x]_g$ being an antichain.

For transitivity we let $x \in [x]_g$, $y, y \in [y]_g$ and $z \in [z]_g$ with $x < y$ and $y < z$. Then there exists a $k \geq 0$ with $g^k y = y$ and we have $g^k x < g^k y = y < z$.

An order preserving action of $G$ on $P$ induces an action on $\text{Hom}(P, [n])$ and $\text{Hom}^G(P, [n])$ as subsets of $[n]^P$. For $n \geq 1$ we define the orbital order polynomials $\Omega_{P,G}(n) = |\text{Hom}(P, [n])/G|$ and $\Omega_{P,G}^0(n) = |\text{Hom}^G(P, [n])/G|$. The following main theorem states that $\Omega_{P,G}(n)$ and $\Omega_{P,G}^0(n)$ are indeed polynomials for $n \geq 1$, and gives formulas in terms of order polynomials:

**Theorem 2.5.** Let $G$ be a finite group acting by automorphisms on a finite poset $P$. Then

\begin{align*}
(1) \quad \Omega_{P,G}(n) &= \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \Omega_{P_g}(n), \\
(2) \quad \Omega_{P,G}^0(n) &= \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \Omega_{P_g}^0(n)
\end{align*}

for $n \geq 1$. In particular, $\Omega_{P,G}(n)$ and $\Omega_{P,G}^0(n)$ agree with polynomials of degree $|P|$ for $n \geq 1$.

Proof. We only show equation (1) as the argument for equation (2) is analogous. By Theorem 2.1 we have

$$|\text{Hom}(P, [n])| = \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} |\text{Hom}(P, [n])^g|$$

By definition, $\phi \in \text{Hom}(P, [n])$ if and only if $\phi(g^{-1}x) = \phi(x)$ for all $x \in P$. But this is equivalent to $\phi$ being constant on $[x]_g$. Therefore

$$\text{Hom}(P, [n]) \rightarrow \text{Hom}(P, [n])$$

$$\varphi \mapsto ([x]_g \mapsto \varphi(x))$$

is a one-to-one correspondence. Further, observe that $\deg \Omega_{P_g}(n) = c(g) = |P|$ if and only if $g$ acts trivially on $P$, and $c(e) = |P|$. \hfill $\square$

By applying Theorem 2.5 to antichains, we get Pólya’s enumeration theorem in the language of posets:

**Corollary 2.6.** Let $G$ be a finite group acting by automorphisms on a finite antichain $A$, and let $Y = [n]$. Then

$$|Y^A|/G = \sum_{g \in G} n^{c(g)}.$$

Proof. As $A$ is an antichain we have $\text{Hom}(A, [n]) = Y^A$. The result follows by observing that $A_g$ is an antichain with $c(g)$ elements for all $g \in G$ and $\Omega_{A_g}(n) = n^{|A_g|}$. \hfill $\square$

**Example 2.7.** Let $S_k$ be the symmetric group acting on an antichain $A = \{x_1, \ldots, x_k\}$ on $k$ elements by permuting indices, and let $Y = [n]$. Then

$$\{\phi \in Y^A : 1 \leq \phi(x_1) \leq \cdots \leq \phi(x_k) \leq n\}$$
is a set of representatives of $\text{Hom}(A,Y)/S_k$ and therefore $\Omega_{A,S_k}(n) = \Omega_{[k]}(n)$. By Corollary 2.6 we conclude that

$$\binom{n + k - 1}{k} = \frac{1}{k!} \sum_{\sigma \in S_k} n^c(\sigma).$$

### 2.3. Combinatorial reciprocity

Let $G$ be a finite group acting on a finite poset $P$ by automorphisms. As the number of orbits $|\text{Hom}(P,[n])/G|$ agrees with a polynomial by Theorem 2.5 we ponder the question if there is a combinatorial interpretation for evaluating this polynomial at negative integers. For that we have to consider a certain class of order preserving maps. The sign $\text{sgn}(g)$ of an element $g \in G$ is defined as the sign of $g$ as a permutation of $P$ and is equal to $(-1)^{|P|+\text{c}(g)}$. An order preserving map $\phi \in \text{Hom}(P,[n])$ is called \textbf{even} if for all $g \in \text{Stab}(\phi)$ we have $\text{sgn}(g) = 1$. The set of all even order preserving maps is denoted by $\text{Hom}_+(P,[n])$, and we define $\text{Hom}_+^\circ(P,[n]) := \text{Hom}_+(P,[n]) \cap \text{Hom}^\circ(P,[n])$ to be the set of even strictly order preserving maps. One observes that the action of $G$ on $\text{Hom}(P,[n])$ restricts to an action on $\text{Hom}_+(P,[n])$. For these notions the following reciprocities hold:

**Theorem 2.8.** Let $G$ be a finite group acting by automorphisms on a finite poset $P$. Then

\begin{align*}
\Omega_{P,G}(-n) &= (-1)^{|P|} |\text{Hom}_+^\circ(P,[n])/G|, \\
\Omega_{P,G}^\circ(-n) &= (-1)^{|P|} |\text{Hom}_+(P,[n])/G|.
\end{align*}

**Proof.** Again, we only show equation (3) as equation (4) follows by analogous arguments. By equation (1) and Theorem 2.3 we have

$$\Omega_{P,G}(-n) = \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} (-1)^{|P_g|} \Omega_{P_g}^\circ(n).$$

We observe that $|P_g| = c(g)$ is the number of orbits under the action of $\langle g \rangle$. Therefore equation (5) becomes

$$\Omega_{P,G}(-n) = (-1)^{|P|} \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \text{sgn}(g) |\text{Hom}_+^\circ(P,[n])|^g = (-1)^{|P|} \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{\phi \in \text{Hom}^\circ(P,[n])} \sum_{g \in \text{Stab}(\phi)} \text{sgn}(g).$$

For $\phi \in \text{Hom}^\circ(P,[n])$ and $g_0 \in \text{Stab}(\phi)$ such that $\text{sgn}(g_0) = -1$ there is a bijection

$$\{g \in \text{Stab}(\phi) : \text{sgn}(g) = 1\} \quad \longleftrightarrow \quad \{g \in \text{Stab}(\phi) : \text{sgn}(g) = -1\}$$

$$g \quad \mapsto \quad g_0 g$$

Hence, $\sum_{g \in \text{Stab}(\phi)} \text{sgn}(g) = 0$ whenever $\phi$ is not even. Therefore the right-hand side of equation (5) equals

$$(-1)^{|P|} \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} |\text{Hom}_+^\circ(P,[n])|^g$$

which equals $(-1)^{|P|} |\text{Hom}_+^\circ(P,[n])/G|$ by Theorem 2.1.

In the setting of Pólya’s enumeration theorem the statement simplifies:

**Corollary 2.9.** Let $G$ be a finite group acting on a finite antichain $A$, and let $Y = [n]$. Then

$$\Omega_{A,G}(-n) = (-1)^{|A|} |\text{Hom}_+(A,[n])/G|$$

**Proof.** This follows from the fact that every order preserving map from an antichain is automatically strictly order preserving.

**Example 2.10.** In Example 2.7 we have $\phi \in \text{Hom}_+(A,[n])$ if and only if $\phi$ is injective. Therefore

$$\{\phi \in Y^A : 1 \leq \phi(x_1) < \cdots < \phi(x_k) \leq n\}$$

is a set of representatives for $\text{Hom}_+(A,[n])/S_k$. This is reflected by the fact that $(-1)^k \Omega_{[k]}(-n)$ equals by Theorem 2.3 the number of strictly order preserving maps from $[k]$ to $[n]$. 

\[ \square \]
Proof. By Theorem 2.1 we have i.e. an edge \( \phi \) for all preserving map from \( l \). If let \( c \) be an element of \( n \) preserving map from \( l \). Then for all directed cycles. Every acyclic orientation \( \sigma \) induces a partial order on the vertex set of \( G \) by defining \( v \prec \sigma w \) if there is a directed path from \( v \) to \( w \). For the corresponding poset we write \( \Gamma^\sigma \). \( G \) acts on the set \( \Sigma \) of all acyclic orientations of \( \Gamma \): For an edge \( uv \) we define \((g \cdot \sigma)(uv) = g \cdot \sigma(g^{-1} \cdot uv)\). The next theorem gives us an expression of \( \chi_{\Gamma,G}(n) \) in terms of order polynomials. In particular, \( \chi_{\Gamma,G}(n) \) is a polynomial for all \( n \geq 1 \).

**Theorem 3.1.** Let \( G \) be a group acting on \( \Gamma \). Then \( G \) acts on \( \text{Col}_n(\Gamma) \) and we have

\[
\chi_{\Gamma,G}(n) = \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \omega_{\Gamma^g}(n)
\]

for all \( n \geq 1 \). In particular, \( \chi_{\Gamma,G}(n) \) agrees with a polynomial of degree \(|\Gamma|\) for all \( n \geq 1 \).

**Proof.** By Theorem 2.1 we have

\[
|\text{Col}_n(\Gamma)/G| = \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} |\text{Col}_n(\Gamma)^g|
\]

Let \( \phi \) be an element of \( \text{Col}_n(\Gamma)^g \) and let \( \sigma \) be the acyclic orientation induced by the coloring \( \phi \), i.e. an edge \( e = uv \) is oriented from \( u \) to \( v \) whenever \( \phi(u) < \phi(v) \). Then \( \phi \) is a strictly order preserving map from \( \Gamma^\sigma \) into \( [n] \) and \( \sigma \) is fixed by \( g \), because for every edge \( uv \in E \) we have \( v \prec_\sigma w \) by definition if and only if \( \phi(v) < \phi(w) \), and as \( \phi \) is fixed by \( g \), this implies \( \phi(gv) < \phi(gw) \) which is equivalent to \( gv \prec gw \), i.e. \( \sigma \in \Sigma^g \).

**Example 3.2.** Let \( k > 2 \). We consider a cycle \( C_k \) on \( k \) vertices \( \{x_i\}_{i \in \mathbb{Z}_k} \). Then its symmetry group is the dihedral group

\[
D_k = \langle r, s \mid r^k = 1, s^2 = 1, sr = r^{-1} \rangle
\]

which acts on \( C_k \) by

\[
\begin{align*}
  r \cdot x_i &= x_{i+1} \\
  s \cdot x_i &= x_{-i}
\end{align*}
\]

Then

\[
\chi_{C_k,D_k}(n) = \frac{1}{2k} \left( \sum_{l=1}^{k} \left| \text{Col}_n(C_k)^{r^l} \right| + \sum_{l=1}^{k} \left| \text{Col}_n(C_k)^{s^{-l}} \right| \right).
\]

Let \( c \in \text{Col}_n(C_k) \). If \( l = 2q \) is even, then \( sr^{2q} \cdot c = c \Leftrightarrow (r^q \cdot c) = s \cdot (r^q \cdot c) \) and therefore

\[
\left| \text{Col}_n(C_k)^{s^{-l}} \right| = \left| \text{Col}_n(C_k)^{s} \right| = \begin{cases} |\text{Col}_n([k/2 + 1])| & \text{if } k \text{ is even}, \\
0 & \text{otherwise}.
\end{cases}
\]

If \( l = 2q + 1 \) is odd, then \( sr^{2q+1} \cdot c = c \Leftrightarrow (r^{q+1} \cdot c) = rs \cdot (r^{q+1} \cdot c) \) and therefore

\[
\left| \text{Col}_n(C_k)^{s^{-l}} \right| = \left| \text{Col}_n(C_k)^{r} \right| = 0
\]
as \( rs \cdot x_0 = x_1 \), and \( x_0 \) and \( x_1 \) are connected by an edge. Further, for all \( 1 \leq l \leq k \) we obtain

\[
\left| \text{Col}_n(C^k)^r \right| = \begin{cases} 
|\text{Col}_n(C^m)| & \text{if } m = \gcd(l, k) \neq 1, \\
0 & \text{otherwise.}
\end{cases}
\]

If \( k > 1 \) is odd, we therefore get

\[
\chi_{C^k, D_k}(n) = \frac{1}{2} \chi_{C^k, Z_k}(n),
\]

with \( Z_k := \mathbb{Z}/k\mathbb{Z} = \langle r \rangle \subset D_k \). If \( k = p > 2 \) is a prime this simplifies even further:

\[
|\text{Col}_n(C^p)/D_p| = \frac{1}{2p} |\text{Col}_n(C^p)|.
\]

This example is reminiscent of counting necklaces with colored beads (see e.g. [8, Chapter 35]).

A pair \((c, \sigma)\) consisting of a coloring \( c: V \to [n] \) and an acyclic orientation \( \sigma: E \to V \) is called **weakly compatible** if for every edge \( e = uv \) we have \( \sigma(uv) = v \) whenever \( c(u) < c(v) \). We define

\[
\Sigma_n(\Gamma) = \{(c, \sigma) \in [n]^V \times \Sigma: \text{weakly compatible}\}
\]

We observe that if \( G \) acts on \( \Gamma \) by automorphisms it also acts on \( \Sigma_n(\Gamma) \) by \( g \cdot (c, \sigma) = (g \cdot c, g \cdot \sigma) \) for all \((c, \sigma) \in \Sigma_n(\Gamma)\) and \( g \in G \). An element \((c, \sigma) \in \Sigma_n(\Gamma)\) is called **even** if for all \( g \in \text{Stab}((c, \sigma)) \) we have \( \text{sgn}(g) = 1 \) as permutation of the vertices. We denote the set of all even elements of \( \Sigma_n(\Gamma) \) by \( \Sigma_n(+)(\Gamma) \). The action of \( G \) restricts to an action on \( \Sigma_n(+)(\Gamma) \). We get the following reciprocity statement:

**Theorem 3.3.** Let \( \Gamma \) be a graph and \( G \) a group acting on \( \Gamma \). Then

\[
\chi_{\Gamma, G}(-n) = (-1)^{|\Gamma|} |\Sigma_n(\Gamma)/G|
\]

**Proof.** By Theorem 3.1 and Theorem 2.3 and \( \text{sgn}(g) = (-1)^{|\Gamma|+c(g)} \) we have

\[
\chi_{\Gamma, G}(-n) = (-1)^{|\Gamma|} \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \text{sgn}(g) \sum_{\sigma \in \Sigma^g} \Omega_{\Gamma^\sigma}(n).
\]

As in the proof of Theorem 2.5 we see \( \Omega_{\Gamma^\sigma}(n) = |\text{Hom}(\Gamma^\sigma, [n])^g| \), and we observe

\[
(6) \quad |\Sigma_n(\Gamma)^g| = \sum_{\sigma \in \Sigma^g} |\text{Hom}(\Gamma^\sigma, [n])^g|.
\]

Now we argue the same way as in the proof of Theorem 2.8: By equation (6) we get

\[
(7) \quad \chi_{\Gamma, G}(-n) = (-1)^{|\Gamma|} \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \text{sgn} g |\Sigma_n(\Gamma)^g| = (-1)^{|\Gamma|} \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{(c, \sigma) \in \Sigma_n(\Gamma)} \sum_{g \in \text{Stab}((c, \sigma))} \text{sgn}(g).
\]

For \((c, \sigma) \in \Sigma_n(\Gamma)\) and \( g_0 \in \text{Stab}((c, \sigma)) \) such that \( \text{sgn} g_0 = -1 \) as permutation of the vertices there is a bijection

\[
\{g \in \text{Stab}((c, \sigma)) \colon \text{sgn}(g) = 1\} \quad \longrightarrow \quad \{g \in \text{Stab}((c, \sigma)) \colon \text{sgn}(g) = -1\}
\]

\[
\quad g \quad \mapsto \quad g_0 g.
\]

Hence, \( \sum_{g \in \text{Stab}((c, \sigma))} \text{sgn}(g) = 0 \) whenever \((c, \sigma)\) is not even. Therefore the right hand side of equation (7) equals

\[
(-1)^{|\Gamma|} \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} |\Sigma_n(\Gamma)^g|
\]

which by Theorem 2.1 equals \((-1)^{|\Gamma|} |\Sigma_n(+)(\Gamma)/G| \). □

An easy interpretation can be given in the case of \( G = \mathbb{Z}_2 \):
Corollary 3.4. Let $\Gamma$ be a graph and let $\mathbb{Z}_2 = \{e, \tau\}$ act on $\Gamma$ by automorphisms such that $\text{sgn} \tau = -1$. Then
\[
\chi_{\Gamma, \mathbb{Z}_2}(-1) = (-1)^{|\Gamma|} \frac{|\Sigma_+|}{2}
\]
where $\Sigma_+ = \Sigma_{1,+}(\Gamma)$ is the set of even acyclic orientations of $\Gamma$.

For $G$ acting trivially on $\Gamma$ we recover a well-known theorem by Stanley:

Corollary 3.5 ([5, Thm. 1.2]). Let $\Gamma$ be a graph and $\chi_\Gamma$ its chromatic polynomial. Then $|\chi_\Gamma(-n)|$ equals the number of weakly compatible pairs $(c, \sigma)$ consisting of a $n$-coloring $c$ and an acyclic orientation $\sigma$ of $\Gamma$. In particular, $|\chi_\Gamma(-1)|$ is the number of acyclic orientations of $\Gamma$.

Similarly as in Theorem 2.8 there is a twin reciprocity in the case of graph colorings. We say that a $n$-coloring $c$ of $\Gamma$ is even if for all $g \in \text{Stab}(c)$ we have $\text{sgn} g = 1$ and define $\text{Col}_{n,+}(\Gamma)$ as the set of all proper $n$-colorings of $\Gamma$. Then the action of $G$ on $\text{Col}_{n}(\Gamma)$ restricts to an action on $\text{Col}_{n,+}(\Gamma)$. We further define $\chi^{+}_{\Gamma,G}(n) = |\text{Col}_{n,+}(\Gamma)/G|$ as the function counting the number of orbits of even proper $n$-colorings for $n \geq 1$. By similar arguments as in Theorem 3.1 and Theorem 3.3 we then have the following:

Proposition 3.6. Let $\Gamma$ be a graph and $G$ a group acting on $\Gamma$ by automorphisms. Then $\chi^{+}_{\Gamma,G}(n)$ agrees with a polynomial of degree $|\Gamma|$ for $n \geq 1$ and we have
\[
\chi^{+}_{\Gamma,G}(-n) = (-1)^{|\Gamma|} |\Sigma_n(\Gamma)/G|.
\]

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