

1. INTRODUCTION AND THE MAIN RESULTS

Let G be a real reductive group in the Harish-Chandra class, which may be linear or non-linear. Write \mathfrak{g} for the complexified Lie algebra of G and let \mathfrak{h} denote its universal Cartan subalgebra. Let $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$ (a superscript $*$ indicates the dual space). By Harish-Chandra isomorphism, it determines an algebraic character $\chi_\lambda : \mathcal{Z}(\mathfrak{g}) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$. Here $\mathcal{Z}(\mathfrak{g})$ denotes the center of the universal enveloping algebra $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$. Denote by $\text{Irr}(G)$ the set of isomorphism classes of irreducible Casselman-Wallach representations of G , and by $\text{Irr}_\lambda(G)$ its subset consisting of the representations with infinitesimal character χ_λ . The latter set has finite cardinality.

Let $\text{Nil}(\mathfrak{g}^*)$ denote the set of nilpotent elements in \mathfrak{g}^* . It has only finitely many orbits under the coadjoint action of the inner automorphism group $\text{Inn}(\mathfrak{g})$ of \mathfrak{g} . Let \mathbf{S} be an $\text{Inn}(\mathfrak{g})$ -stable Zariski closed subset of $\text{Nil}(\mathfrak{g}^*)$. Put

$$\text{Irr}_{\lambda, \mathbf{S}}(G) := \{ \pi \in \text{Irr}_\lambda(G) \mid \text{AV}_{\mathbb{C}}(\pi) \subset \mathbf{S} \}.$$

Here $\text{AV}_{\mathbb{C}}(\pi)$ denotes the complex associated variety of π , namely the associated variety of the annihilate ideal of π . It is an $\text{Inn}(\mathfrak{g})$ -stable Zariski closed subset of $\text{Nil}(\mathfrak{g}^*)$. An interesting problem of representation theory is to understand the cardinality of the finite set $\text{Irr}_{\lambda, \mathbf{S}}(G)$. The coherent continuation representation is a powerful tool for this problem.

1.1. The coherent continuation representation. Consider the category of Casselman-Wallach representations of G that have generalized infinitesimal character λ and whose complex associated variety is contained in \mathbf{S} . Write $\mathcal{K}_{\lambda, \mathbf{S}}(G)$ for the Grothendieck group with \mathbb{C} -coefficients of this category. Then

$$\sharp(\text{Irr}_{\lambda, \mathbf{S}}(G)) = \dim \mathcal{K}_{\lambda, \mathbf{S}}(G) \quad (\sharp \text{ indicates the cardinality of a set}).$$

We also have that

$$\mathcal{K}_{\mathbf{S}}(G) = \bigoplus_{\mu \in W \setminus \mathfrak{h}^*} \mathcal{K}_{\mu, \mathbf{S}}(G) \quad (W \text{ denotes the Weyl group}),$$

where $\mathcal{K}_{\mathbf{S}}(G)$ is the Grothendieck group, with \mathbb{C} -coefficients, of the category of Casselman-Wallach representations of G whose complex associated variety is contained in \mathbf{S} .

Let $\mathcal{K}(\mathfrak{g})$ be the Grothendieck group with \mathbb{C} -coefficients of the category of finite-dimensional algebraic representations of \mathfrak{g} . Write $\mathcal{R}(\mathfrak{g})$ be the subgroup of $\mathcal{K}(\mathfrak{g})$ generated by finite dimensional \mathfrak{g} -modules occur in the symmetric algebra $S(\mathfrak{g})$. Write $\Delta \subset Q \subset \mathfrak{h}^*$ for the root system and the root lattice of \mathfrak{g} , respectively. It is a commutative \mathbb{C} -algebra under the tensor products and identified with $\mathbb{C}[Q/W]$.

By pulling back through the adjoint representation $G \rightarrow \text{Inn}(\mathfrak{g})$, $\mathcal{R}(\mathfrak{g})$ is naturally identified with a subgroup of $\mathcal{K}(G)$. Then by using the tensor products, $\mathcal{K}_{\mathbf{S}}(G)$ is naturally a $\mathcal{R}(\mathfrak{g})$ -module.

Let $[\lambda] \subset \mathfrak{h}^*$ be a Q -coset, and write $W_{[\lambda]}$ for its stabilizer group in W . Then $W_{[\lambda]}$ equals the Weyl group of the root system

$$\{ \alpha \in \Delta \mid \langle \mu, \alpha^\vee \rangle \in \mathbb{Z} \text{ for all } \mu \in [\lambda] \} \quad (\alpha^\vee \text{ denotes the corresponding coroot}).$$

Definition 1.1. Let \mathcal{K} be a $\mathcal{R}(\mathfrak{g})$ -module equipped with a family $\{\mathcal{K}_\mu\}_{\mu \in \mathfrak{h}^*}$ of subspaces such that $\mathcal{K}_{w \cdot \mu} = \mathcal{K}_\mu$ for all $w \in W_{[\lambda]}$ and $\mu \in \mathfrak{h}^*$. A \mathcal{K} -valued coherent family on $[\lambda]$ is a map

$$\Theta : [\lambda] \rightarrow \mathcal{K}$$

satisfying the following two conditions:

- for all $\mu \in [\lambda]$, $\Theta(\mu) \in \mathcal{K}_\mu$;

- for all finite-dimensional algebraic representations F of $\text{Inn}(\mathfrak{g})$, and all $\mu \in [\lambda]$,

$$F \cdot (\Theta(\mu)) = \sum_{\nu} \Theta(\mu + \nu),$$

where ν runs over all weights of F , counted with multiplicities, and F is obviously identified with an element of $\mathcal{R}(\mathfrak{g})$.

In the notation of Definition ??, let $\text{Coh}_{[\lambda]}(\mathcal{K})$ denote the vector space of all \mathcal{K} -valued coherent families on $[\lambda]$. It is a representation of $W_{[\lambda]}$ under the action

$$(w \cdot \Theta)(\mu) = \Theta(w^{-1} \cdot \mu), \quad \text{for all } w \in W_{[\lambda]}, \mu \in [\lambda].$$

For simplicity in notation, put

$$\text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \mathbf{S}}(G) := \text{Coh}_{[\lambda]}(\mathcal{K}_{\mathbf{S}}(G)).$$

1.2. Counting the irreducible representations with bounded complex associated varieties. Suppose that $\lambda \in [\lambda]$ and denote by W_{λ} the stabilizer of λ in W . Then $W_{\lambda} \subset W_{[\lambda]}$. Write $1_{W_{\lambda}}$ for the trivial representation of W_{λ} .

The following Theorem is due to Vogan. We will provide a proof for the lack of reference.

Theorem 1.2. *The equality*

$$\#(\text{Irr}_{\lambda, \mathbf{S}}(G)) = [1_{W_{\lambda}} : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \mathbf{S}}(G)]$$

holds.

Here and henceforth, $[:]$ indicates the multiplicity of the first (irreducible) representation in the second one. Theorem ?? implies that

$$(1.1) \quad \#(\text{Irr}_{\lambda, \mathbf{S}}(G)) = \sum_{\sigma \in \text{Irr}(W_{[\lambda]})} [1_{W_{\lambda}} : \sigma] \cdot [\sigma : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \mathbf{S}}(G)].$$

Thus it suffices to understand the multiplicity $[\sigma : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \mathbf{S}}(G)]$ for every $\sigma \in \text{Irr}(W_{[\lambda]})$. Let $\sigma \in \text{Irr}(W_{[\lambda]})$. Define the nilpotent orbit

$$\mathcal{O}_{\sigma} := \text{Springer}(j_{W_{[\lambda]}}^W \sigma_0) \subset \text{Nil}(\mathfrak{g}^*) \quad (\text{“Springer” indicates the Springer correspondence}),$$

where σ_0 denote the special irreducible representation of $W_{[\lambda]}$ that lies in the same double cell as σ , and $j_{W_{[\lambda]}}^W \sigma_0$ denotes the j -induction which is an irreducible representation of W .

Proposition 1.3. *Suppose that $\sigma \in \text{Irr}(W_{[\lambda]})$ and $\mathcal{O}_{\sigma} \not\subset \mathbf{S}$. Then*

$$[\sigma : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \mathbf{S}}(G)] = 0.$$

Combining Theorems ?? and ??, we conclude that

$$(1.2) \quad \#(\text{Irr}_{\lambda, \mathbf{S}}(G)) = \sum_{\sigma \in \text{Irr}(W_{[\lambda]}), \mathcal{O}_{\sigma} \subset \mathbf{S}} [1_{W_{\lambda}} : \sigma] \cdot [\sigma : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \mathbf{S}}(G)].$$

Write

$$\text{Coh}_{[\lambda]}(G) := \text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \text{Nil}(\mathfrak{g}^*)}(G),$$

which contains $\text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \mathbf{S}}(G)$ as a subrepresentation. It is obvious that

$$(1.3) \quad [\sigma : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \mathbf{S}}(G)] \leq [\sigma : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda]}(G)].$$

We expect that

$$(1.4) \quad \text{if } \mathcal{O}_{\sigma} \subset \mathbf{S}, \text{ then } [\sigma : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda], \mathbf{S}}(G)] = [\sigma : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda]}(G)].$$

1.3. Counting the irreducible representations annihilated by a maximal primitive ideal. Write I_λ for the maximal ideal of $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$ with infinitesimal character λ . Its associated variety equals the Zariski closure $\overline{\mathcal{O}_\lambda}$ of an $\text{Inn}(\mathfrak{g})$ -orbit $\mathcal{O}_\lambda \subset \text{Nil}(\mathfrak{g}^*)$. Note that an irreducible Casselman-Wallach representation of G lies in $\text{Irr}_{\lambda, \overline{\mathcal{O}_\lambda}}(G)$ if and only if it is annihilated by I_λ .

Let ${}^L\mathcal{C}_\lambda \subset \text{Irr}(W_{[\lambda]})$ be the subset consisting all the irreducible representations that occur in

$$(J_{W_\lambda}^{W_{[\lambda]}} \text{sgn}) \otimes \text{sgn},$$

where $J_{W_\lambda}^{W_{[\lambda]}}$ indicates the J -induction, and sgn denotes the sign character.

Proposition 1.4 ([?BVUni, (5.26), Proposition 5.28]). *The set*

$${}^L\mathcal{C}_\lambda = \{ \sigma \in \text{Irr}(W_{[\lambda]}) \mid \mathcal{O}_\sigma \subset \overline{\mathcal{O}_\lambda}, [1_{W_\lambda} : \sigma] \neq 0 \}.$$

Moreover, the multiplicity $[1_{W_\lambda} : \sigma]$ is one when $\sigma \in {}^L\mathcal{C}_\lambda$.

Combining (??), Proposition ?? and Proposition ??, we obtain the following inequality (and the equality is expected).

Corollary 1.5. *The inequality*

$$(1.5) \quad \#(\text{Irr}_{\lambda, \overline{\mathcal{O}_\lambda}}(G)) \leq \sum_{\sigma \in {}^L\mathcal{C}_\lambda} [\sigma : \text{Coh}_{[\lambda]}(G)]$$

holds.

1.4. Special unipotent representations of classical groups. We are particularly interested in counting special unipotent representations of real classical groups.

Let \star be one of the 14 symbols

$$A, A^{\mathbb{C}}, A^{\mathbb{H}}, A^*, B, D, B^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}}, C, C^{\mathbb{C}}, D^*, C^*, \tilde{C}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}.$$

Suppose that G is a classical Lie group of type \star , namely G respectively equals one of the following Lie groups:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{GL}_n(\mathbb{R}), \text{GL}_n(\mathbb{C}), \text{GL}_n(\mathbb{H}), \text{U}(p, q), \\ & \text{SO}(p, q) \ (p+q \text{ is odd}), \text{SO}(p, q) \ (p+q \text{ is even}), \\ & \text{SO}_n(\mathbb{C}) \ (n \text{ is odd}), \text{SO}_n(\mathbb{C}) \ (n \text{ is even}), \\ & \text{Sp}_{2n}(\mathbb{R}), \text{Sp}_{2n}(\mathbb{C}), \text{O}^*(2n), \text{Sp}(p, q), \widetilde{\text{Sp}}_{2n}(\mathbb{R}), \text{Sp}_{2n}(\mathbb{C}) \quad (n, p, q \geq 0). \end{aligned}$$

Here $\widetilde{\text{Sp}}_{2n}(\mathbb{R})$ denotes the metaplectic double cover of the symplectic group $\text{Sp}_{2n}(\mathbb{R})$ that does not split unless $n = 0$. As usual, the universal Cartan subalgebra \mathfrak{h} of the complexified Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} of G is respectively identified with

$$\begin{aligned} & \mathbb{C}^n, \mathbb{C}^n \times \mathbb{C}^n, \mathbb{C}^{2n}, \mathbb{C}^{p+q}, \\ & \mathbb{C}^{\frac{p+q-1}{2}}, \mathbb{C}^{\frac{p+q}{2}}, \\ & \mathbb{C}^{\frac{p+q-1}{2}} \times \mathbb{C}^{\frac{p+q-1}{2}}, \mathbb{C}^{\frac{p+q}{2}} \times \mathbb{C}^{\frac{p+q}{2}}, \\ & \mathbb{C}^n, \mathbb{C}^n \times \mathbb{C}^n, \mathbb{C}^n, \mathbb{C}^{p+q}, \mathbb{C}^n, \mathbb{C}^n \times \mathbb{C}^n. \end{aligned}$$

We define the Langlands dual \check{G} of G to be the respective complex group

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{GL}_n(\mathbb{C}), \text{GL}_n(\mathbb{C}), \text{GL}_{2n}(\mathbb{C}), \text{GL}_{p+q}(\mathbb{C}), \\ & \text{Sp}_{p+q-1}(\mathbb{C}) \ (p+q \text{ is odd}), \text{SO}_{p+q}(\mathbb{C}) \ (p+q \text{ is even}), \\ & \text{Sp}_{n-1}(\mathbb{C}) \ (n \text{ is odd}), \text{SO}_n(\mathbb{C}) \ (n \text{ is even}), \\ & \text{SO}_{2n+1}(\mathbb{C}), \text{SO}_{2n+1}(\mathbb{C}), \text{SO}_{2n}(\mathbb{C}), \text{SO}_{2p+2q+1}(\mathbb{C}), \text{Sp}_{2n}(\mathbb{C}) \text{ or } \text{Sp}_{2n}(\mathbb{C}). \end{aligned}$$

Write $n_{\check{G}}$ for the dimension of the standard representation of \check{G} , which respectively equals

$$n, n, 2n, p+q, p+q-1, p+q, n-1, n, 2n+1, 2n+1, 2n, 2p+2q+1, 2n, \text{ or } 2n.$$

For a Young diagram ι , write

$$\mathbf{r}_1(\iota) \geq \mathbf{r}_2(\iota) \geq \mathbf{r}_3(\iota) \geq \cdots$$

for its row lengths, and similarly, write

$$\mathbf{c}_1(\iota) \geq \mathbf{c}_2(\iota) \geq \mathbf{c}_3(\iota) \geq \cdots$$

for its column lengths. Denote by $|\iota| := \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} \mathbf{r}_i(\iota)$ the total size of ι .

We recall the parameterization of the set $\text{Nil}(\check{G})$ of nilpotent \check{G} orbits in $\mathfrak{g} := \text{Lie}(\check{G})$ by Young diagrams. Each nilpotent orbit $\check{\mathcal{O}} \in \text{Nil}(\check{G})$ is identified with a Young diagram, still called $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ by abuse of notation, together with a possible symbol I/II with the following property:

- $|\check{\mathcal{O}}| = n_{\check{G}}$;
- if $\star \in \{D, D^{\mathbb{C}}, D^*, C, C^{\mathbb{C}}, C^*\}$, then all even rows occur in $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ with even multiplicity;
- if $\star \in \{B, \tilde{C}, B^{\mathbb{C}}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}\}$, then all odd rows occur in $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ with even multiplicity.
- if $\star \in \{D, D^{\mathbb{C}}, D^*\}$ and all rows of $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ are even (called a very even orbit), then one attach the symbol “ I ” or “ II ” to $\check{\mathcal{O}}$. We adopt the convention that the orbits with symbol I are those can be induced from the standard parabolic subgroups. [Here, \check{G} is the dual group of G . Since we fixed an abstract Cartan \mathfrak{h} and therefore a Borel subalgebra of G , the corresponding Cartan and Borel are also fixed for \check{G} !]

Since, the situation of orbits marked with I and II are symmetry (see ??), in the following we will not consider the orbits with “ II ” and if $\star \in \{D, D^{\mathbb{C}}, D^*\}$,

a partition is implicitly attached to the symbol “ I ” when necessary.

From now on, let $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ be a Young diagram which is naturally identified with an nilpotent orbit of \check{G} .

We define an element $\lambda_{\check{\mathcal{O}}} := \lambda_{\star, \check{\mathcal{O}}} \in \mathfrak{h}^*$ as in what follows. For every $a \in \mathbb{N}^+$ (the set of positive integers), write

$$\rho(a) := \begin{cases} (\frac{a-1}{2}, \frac{a-3}{2}, \dots, 2, 1), & \text{if } a \text{ is odd;} \\ (\frac{a-1}{2}, \frac{a-3}{2}, \dots, \frac{3}{2}, \frac{1}{2}), & \text{if } a \text{ is even,} \end{cases}$$

and

$$\tilde{\rho}(a) := (\frac{a-1}{2}, \frac{a-3}{2}, \dots, \frac{3-a}{2}, \frac{1-a}{2}).$$

By convention, $\rho(1)$ is the empty sequence. Write $a_1 \geq a_2 \geq \cdots \geq a_s > 0$ ($s \geq 0$) for the nonzero row lengths of $\check{\mathcal{O}}$. Then we define

$$\lambda_{\check{\mathcal{O}}} := \begin{cases} (\tilde{\rho}(a_1), \tilde{\rho}(a_2), \dots, \tilde{\rho}(a_s)), & \text{if } \star \in \{A, A^{\mathbb{H}}, A^*\}; \\ (\tilde{\rho}(a_1), \tilde{\rho}(a_2), \dots, \tilde{\rho}(a_s); \tilde{\rho}(a_1), \tilde{\rho}(a_2), \dots, \tilde{\rho}(a_s)), & \text{if } \star = A^{\mathbb{C}}; \\ (\rho(a_1), \rho(a_2), \dots, \rho(a_s), 0^{l_1}), & \text{if } \star \in \{B, C, D, D^*, C^*, \tilde{C}\}; \\ (\rho(a_1), \rho(a_2), \dots, \rho(a_s), 0^{l_1}; \rho(a_1), \rho(a_2), \dots, \rho(a_s), 0^{l_1}), & \text{if } \star \in \{B^{\mathbb{C}}, C^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}\}. \end{cases}$$

Here

$$l_1 := \left\lfloor \frac{\text{the number of odd rows of the Young diagram of } \check{\mathcal{O}}}{2} \right\rfloor,$$

and 0^{l_1} denotes the sequence of 0's of length l_1 .

Note that $\lambda_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}$ is conjugate to the neutral element in any \mathfrak{sl}_2 triple attached to $\check{\mathcal{O}}$. (put more explanation?)

By using Harish-Chandra isomorphism, we view $\lambda_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}$ as a character $\lambda_{\check{\mathcal{O}}} : \mathcal{Z}(\mathfrak{g}) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$. Write

$$I_{\check{\mathcal{O}}} := I_{\star, \check{\mathcal{O}}}$$

for the maximal ideal of $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$ with infinitesimal character $\lambda_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}$.

Finally, we define the set of the special unipotent representations of G attached to $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ by

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G) &:= \text{Unip}_{\star, \check{\mathcal{O}}}(G) \\ &:= \begin{cases} \{\pi \in \text{Irr}(G) \mid \pi \text{ is genuine and annihilated by } I_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}\}, & \text{if } \star = \tilde{C}; \\ \{\pi \in \text{Irr}(G) \mid \pi \text{ is annihilated by } I_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}\}, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

Here “genuine” means that the representation π of $\widetilde{\text{Sp}}_{2n}(\mathbb{R})$ does not descend to $\text{Sp}_{2n}(\mathbb{R})$. Our ultimate goal is to parametrize the set $\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G)$ and to construct all the representations in this set ([?BMSZ2]). (Define the unipotent packet using the neutral element first?)

Remark 1.6. Suppose $\star = \{D, D^C, D^*\}$. Let \mathcal{A} be an outer automorphism of G , which induces an automorphism on \mathfrak{g} and $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$. Let

$$I'_{\check{\mathcal{O}}} := \mathcal{A}(I_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}).$$

If $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ has only even rows (i.e. $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ is very even), then $I'_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}$ is the maximal primitive ideal attached to the nilpotent orbit $\check{\mathcal{O}}_{II}$. Otherwise $I_{\check{\mathcal{O}}} = I'_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}$.

1.5. The cases of general linear groups and unitary groups. For any Young diagram ι , we introduce the set $\text{Box}(\iota)$ of boxes of ι as the following subset of $\mathbb{N}^+ \times \mathbb{N}^+$:

$$(1.6) \quad \text{Box}(\iota) := \{ (i, j) \in \mathbb{N}^+ \times \mathbb{N}^+ \mid j \leq \mathbf{r}_i(\iota) \}.$$

We also introduce five symbols \bullet, s, r, c and d , and make the following definitions.

Definition 1.7. A painting on a Young diagram ι is a map

$$\mathcal{P} : \text{Box}(\iota) \rightarrow \{\bullet, s, r, c, d\}$$

with the following properties:

- $\mathcal{P}^{-1}(S)$ is the set of boxes of a Young diagram when $S = \{\bullet\}, \{\bullet, s\}, \{\bullet, s, r\}$ or $\{\bullet, s, r, c\}$;
- when $S = \{s\}$ or $\{r\}$, every row of ι has at most one box in $\mathcal{P}^{-1}(S)$;
- when $S = \{c\}$ or $\{d\}$, every column of ι has at most one box in $\mathcal{P}^{-1}(S)$.

Definition 1.8. Suppose that $\star \in \{A, A^{\mathbb{H}}, A^*\}$. A painting \mathcal{P} on a Young diagram ι has type \star if

- the image of \mathcal{P} is contained in

$$\begin{cases} \{\bullet, c, d\}, & \text{if } \star = A; \\ \{\bullet\}, & \text{if } \star = A^{\mathbb{H}}; \\ \{\bullet, s, r\}, & \text{if } \star = A^*, \end{cases}$$

- if $\star = A$ or $A^{\mathbb{H}}$, then $\mathcal{P}^{-1}(\bullet)$ has even number of boxes in every column of ι ,
- if $\star = A^*$, then $\mathcal{P}^{-1}(\bullet)$ has even number of boxes in every row of ι .

To reconcile with the Barbasch-Vogan duality, we write $\text{PP}_{\star}(\iota^t)$ for the set of paintings on ι that has type \star where ι^t is the transpose of ι .

The special unipotent representations of the general linear groups are well-understood. In particular, we have the following result on the counting.

Theorem 1.9. *The equality*

$$\sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G)) = \begin{cases} \sharp(\text{PP}_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}})), & \text{if } \star \in \{A, A^{\mathbb{H}}\}; \\ 1, & \text{if } \star = A^{\mathbb{C}} \end{cases}$$

holds.

Remark 1.10. If $\star = A$, then

$$\sharp(\text{PP}_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}})) = \prod_{i \in \mathbb{N}^+} (1 + \text{the number of rows of length } i \text{ in } \check{\mathcal{O}})$$

If $\star = A^{\mathbb{H}}$, then

$$\sharp(\text{PP}_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}})) = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if all row lengths of } \check{\mathcal{O}} \text{ are even;} \\ 0, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Suppose that ι is a Young diagram and \mathcal{P} is a painting on ι that has type A^* . Let

$$\text{AC}_{\mathcal{P}} : \text{Box}(\iota) \rightarrow \{+, -\}$$

to be the map such that

- the symbols $+$ and $-$ occur alternatively in each row of ι ;
- for all $1 \leq i \leq \mathbf{c}_1(\iota)$,

$$\text{AC}_{\mathcal{P}}(i, \mathbf{r}_i(\iota)) := \begin{cases} +, & \text{if } \mathcal{P}(i, \mathbf{r}_i(\iota)) = r; \\ -, & \text{if } \mathcal{P}(i, \mathbf{r}_i(\iota)) \in \{\bullet, s\}. \end{cases}$$

Define the signature of \mathcal{P} to be the pair

$$\begin{aligned} (p_{\mathcal{P}}, q_{\mathcal{P}}) &:= (\sharp(\mathcal{P}^{-1}(r)) + \tfrac{1}{2}\sharp(\mathcal{P}^{-1}(\bullet)), \sharp(\mathcal{P}^{-1}(s)) + \tfrac{1}{2}\sharp(\mathcal{P}^{-1}(\bullet))) \\ &= (\sharp(\text{AC}_{\mathcal{P}}^{-1}(+)), \sharp(\text{AC}_{\mathcal{P}}^{-1}(-))). \end{aligned}$$

[The first equation is the true definition of signature. The second one is an easy consequence of the definition of $\text{AC}_{\mathcal{P}}$.]

Example 1.11. *Suppose that*

$$\check{\mathcal{O}} = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline & & & & \\ \hline & & & & \\ \hline & & & & \\ \hline & & & & \\ \hline & & & & \\ \hline & & & & \\ \hline \end{array} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathcal{P} = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline \bullet & \bullet & \bullet & \bullet & r \\ \hline \bullet & \bullet & & & \\ \hline s & r & & & \\ \hline s & & & & \\ \hline r & & & & \\ \hline \end{array} \in \text{PP}_{A^*}(\check{\mathcal{O}}).$$

Then

$$\text{AC}_{\mathcal{P}} = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline + & - & + & - & + \\ \hline + & - & & & \\ \hline - & + & & & \\ \hline - & & & & \\ \hline + & & & & \\ \hline \end{array} \quad \text{and} \quad (p_{\mathcal{P}}, q_{\mathcal{P}}) = (6, 5).$$

Given two Young diagrams ι and j , write $\iota \sqcup^r j$ for the Young diagram whose multiset of nonzero row lengths equals the union of those of ι and j .

For unitary groups, we have the following result.

Theorem 1.12. Assume that $\star = A^*$ so that $G = \mathrm{U}(p, q)$. If there is a decomposition

$$\check{O} = \check{O}_g \sqcup^r \check{O}'_b \sqcup^r \check{O}'_b$$

such that all nonzero row lengths of \check{O}_g have the same parity as $p + q$, and all nonzero row lengths of \check{O}'_b have different parity as $p + q$, then

$$\sharp(\mathrm{Unip}_{\check{O}}(G)) = \sharp\{ \mathcal{P} \in \mathrm{PP}_\star(\check{O}_g) \mid (p_{\mathcal{P}} + |\check{O}'_b|, q_{\mathcal{P}} + |\check{O}'_b|) = (p, q) \}$$

If there is no such decomposition, then $\sharp(\mathrm{Unip}_{\check{O}}(G)) = 0$.

1.6. Orthogonal and symplectic groups: reduction to good parity. Now we assume that

$$\star \in \left\{ B, D, B^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}}, C, C^{\mathbb{C}}, D^*, C^*, \tilde{C}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}} \right\}.$$

Then there is a unique decomposition

$$\check{O} = \check{O}_g \sqcup^r \check{O}'_b \sqcup^r \check{O}'_b$$

such that \check{O}_g has \star -good parity in the sense that all its nonzero row lengths are

$$\begin{cases} \text{even,} & \text{if } \star \in \{ B, B^{\mathbb{C}}, \tilde{C}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}} \}; \\ \text{odd,} & \text{if } \star \in \{ C, D, C^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}}, D^*, C^* \}, \end{cases}$$

and \check{O}'_b has \star -bad parity in the sense that all its nonzero row lengths are

$$\begin{cases} \text{odd,} & \text{if } \star \in \{ B, B^{\mathbb{C}}, \tilde{C}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}} \}; \\ \text{even,} & \text{if } \star \in \{ C, D, C^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}}, D^*, C^* \}. \end{cases}$$

For simplicity, put

$$l := |\check{O}'_b|,$$

and

$$G'_b := \begin{cases} \mathrm{GL}_{|\check{O}'_b|}(\mathbb{R}) & \text{when } \star \in \{ B, C, \tilde{C}, D \}, \\ \mathrm{GL}_{|\check{O}'_b|}(\mathbb{C}) & \text{when } \star \in \{ B^{\mathbb{C}}, C^{\mathbb{C}}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}} \}, \\ \mathrm{GL}_{\frac{1}{2}|\check{O}'_b|}(\mathbb{H}) & \text{when } \star \in \{ C^*, D^* \}. \end{cases}$$

Note that G has a subgroup isomorphic to G'_b if and only if

$$\begin{cases} p, q \geq l & \text{when } G = \mathrm{SO}(p, q), \\ p, q \geq 2l & \text{when } G = \mathrm{Sp}(p, q), \\ \text{no conditions} & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

In such cases, G has a Levi subgroup isomorphic to $G'_b \times G_g$ where

$$G_g := \begin{cases} \mathrm{SO}(p - l, q - l) & \text{when } \star \in \{ B, D \}, \\ \mathrm{SO}_{n-2l}(\mathbb{C}) & \text{when } \star \in \{ B^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}} \}, \\ \mathrm{O}^*(2n - 2l) & \text{when } \star = D^*, \\ \mathrm{Sp}_{2n-2l}(\mathbb{R}) & \text{when } \star = C, \\ \widetilde{\mathrm{Sp}}_{2n-2l}(\mathbb{R}) & \text{when } \star = \tilde{C}, \\ \mathrm{Sp}_{2n-2l}(\mathbb{C}) & \text{when } \star \in \{ C^{\mathbb{C}}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}} \}, \\ \mathrm{Sp}(p - \frac{1}{2}l, q - \frac{1}{2}l) & \text{when } \star = C^*. \end{cases}$$

Theorem 1.13. *Retain the notation above. When G has a subgroup isomorphic to G'_b , there is a bijection*

$$(1.7) \quad \begin{array}{ccc} \mathfrak{I}: \text{Unip}_{G'}(\check{\mathcal{O}}'_b) \times \text{Unip}_{G_g}(\check{\mathcal{O}}_g) & \longrightarrow & \text{Unip}_G(\check{\mathcal{O}}) \\ (\pi', \pi_0) & \mapsto & \pi' \rtimes \pi_0. \end{array}$$

Otherwise,

$$\text{Unip}_G(\check{\mathcal{O}}) = \emptyset.$$

Combine the result for general linear groups, we list the consequence of the above theorem as the follows:

(a) Assume that $\star \in \{B, D\}$ so that $G = \text{SO}(p, q)$. Then

$$\sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G)) = \begin{cases} \sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}_g}(G_l)) \times \sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}_b}(\text{GL}_l(\mathbb{R}))), & \text{if } p, q \geq l; \\ 0, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

(b) Assume that $\star = C^*$ so that $G = \text{Sp}(p, q)$. Then

$$\sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G)) = \begin{cases} \sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}_g}(G_l)), & \text{if } p, q \geq \frac{l}{2}; \\ 0, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

(c) Assume that $\star \in \{C, \tilde{C}\}$ so that $G = \text{Sp}_{2n}(\mathbb{R})$ or $\widetilde{\text{Sp}}_{2n}(\mathbb{R})$. Then

$$\sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G)) = \sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}_g}(G_l)) \times \sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}_b}(\text{GL}_l(\mathbb{R}))).$$

(d) Assume that $\star \in \{B^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}}, C^{\mathbb{C}}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}, D^*\}$. Then

$$\sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G)) = \sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}_g}(G_l)).$$

1.7. Orthogonal and symplectic groups: the case of good parity. Now we further assume that $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ has \star -good parity, namely $\check{\mathcal{O}} = \check{\mathcal{O}}_g$. By Theorem ??, the counting problem in general is reduced to this case.

Definition 1.14. *A \star -pair is a pair $(i, i+1)$ of consecutive positive integers such that*

$$\begin{cases} i \text{ is odd,} & \text{if } \star \in \{C, \tilde{C}, C^*, C^{\mathbb{C}}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}\}; \\ i \text{ is even,} & \text{if } \star \in \{B, D, D^*, B^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}}\}. \end{cases}$$

A \star -pair $(i, i+1)$ is said to be

- *vacant in $\check{\mathcal{O}}$, if $\mathbf{r}_i(\check{\mathcal{O}}) = \mathbf{r}_{i+1}(\check{\mathcal{O}}) = 0$;*
- *balanced in $\check{\mathcal{O}}$, if $\mathbf{r}_i(\check{\mathcal{O}}) = \mathbf{r}_{i+1}(\check{\mathcal{O}}) > 0$;*
- *tailed in $\check{\mathcal{O}}$, if $\mathbf{r}_i(\check{\mathcal{O}}) - \mathbf{r}_{i+1}(\check{\mathcal{O}})$ is positive and odd;*
- *primitive in $\check{\mathcal{O}}$, if $\mathbf{r}_i(\check{\mathcal{O}}) - \mathbf{r}_{i+1}(\check{\mathcal{O}})$ is positive and even.*

Denote $\mathfrak{P}_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}})$ the set of all \star -pairs that are primitive in $\check{\mathcal{O}}$.

We remark that, the set $\mathfrak{P}_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}})$ is the same as that in [?So, Section 5] (used to describe Lusztig's canonical quotient) when $\star \neq \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}$.

Theorem 1.15 (Barbasch-Vogan, Barbasch). *Assume that $\star \in \{B^{\mathbb{C}}, D^{\mathbb{C}}, C^{\mathbb{C}}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}\}$. Then*

$$\sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G)) = 2^{\sharp(\mathfrak{P}_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}}))}.$$

[Here is a tricky point: When $\star = \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}$, the Lusztig canonical quotient of $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ is a quotient by $\wp \sim \wp^c$ of $\mathbb{F}_2[\mathfrak{P}_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}})]$. However, the counting should still be correct!]

We attach to $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ a pair of Young diagrams

$$(\iota_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}, J_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}) := (\iota_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}}), J_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}})),$$

as follows.

The case when $\star = \{B, B^{\mathbb{C}}\}$. In this case,

$$\mathbf{c}_1(j_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}) = \frac{\mathbf{r}_1(\check{\mathcal{O}})}{2},$$

and for all $i \geq 1$,

$$(\mathbf{c}_i(\iota_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}), \mathbf{c}_{i+1}(j_{\check{\mathcal{O}}})) = \left(\frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i}(\check{\mathcal{O}})}{2}, \frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i+1}(\check{\mathcal{O}})}{2} \right).$$

The case when $\star \in \{\tilde{C}, \tilde{C}^{\mathbb{C}}\}$. In this case, for all $i \geq 1$,

$$(\mathbf{c}_i(\iota_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}), \mathbf{c}_i(j_{\check{\mathcal{O}}})) = \left(\frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i-1}(\check{\mathcal{O}})}{2}, \frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i}(\check{\mathcal{O}})}{2} \right).$$

The case when $\star \in \{C, C^*, C^{\mathbb{C}}\}$. In this case, for all $i \geq 1$,

$$(\mathbf{c}_i(j_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}), \mathbf{c}_i(\iota_{\check{\mathcal{O}}})) = \begin{cases} (0, 0), & \text{if } (2i-1, 2i) \text{ is vacant in } \check{\mathcal{O}}; \\ \left(\frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i-1}(\check{\mathcal{O}})-1}{2}, 0 \right), & \text{if } (2i-1, 2i) \text{ is tailed in } \check{\mathcal{O}}; \\ \left(\frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i-1}(\check{\mathcal{O}})-1}{2}, \frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i}(\check{\mathcal{O}})+1}{2} \right), & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

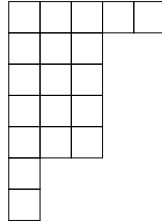
The case when $\star \in \{D, D^*, D^{\mathbb{C}}\}$. In this case,

$$\mathbf{c}_1(\iota_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}) = \begin{cases} 0, & \text{if } \mathbf{r}_1(\check{\mathcal{O}}) = 0; \\ \frac{\mathbf{r}_1(\check{\mathcal{O}})+1}{2}, & \text{if } \mathbf{r}_1(\check{\mathcal{O}}) > 0, \end{cases}$$

and for all $i \geq 1$,

$$(\mathbf{c}_i(j_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}), \mathbf{c}_{i+1}(\iota_{\check{\mathcal{O}}})) = \begin{cases} (0, 0), & \text{if } (2i, 2i+1) \text{ is vacant in } \check{\mathcal{O}}; \\ \left(\frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i}(\check{\mathcal{O}})-1}{2}, 0 \right), & \text{if } (2i, 2i+1) \text{ is tailed in } \check{\mathcal{O}}; \\ \left(\frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i}(\check{\mathcal{O}})-1}{2}, \frac{\mathbf{r}_{2i+1}(\check{\mathcal{O}})+1}{2} \right), & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Example 1.16. Suppose that $\star = C$, and $\check{\mathcal{O}}$ is the following Young diagram which has \star -good parity.



Then

$$\mathfrak{P}_{\star}(\check{\mathcal{O}}) = \{(1, 2), (5, 6)\}$$

and

$$(\iota_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}, j_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}) = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline \square & \square & \square \\ \hline \square & \square & \square \\ \hline \end{array} \times \begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline \square & \square & \square \\ \hline \square & \square & \square \\ \hline \end{array}.$$

Here and henceforth, when no confusion is possible, we write $\alpha \times \beta$ for a pair (α, β) . We will also write $\alpha \times \beta \times \gamma$ for a triple (α, β, γ) .

We introduce two more symbols B^+ and B^- , and make the following definition.

Definition 1.17. A painted bipartition is a triple $\tau = (\iota, \mathcal{P}) \times (j, \mathcal{Q}) \times \alpha$, where (ι, \mathcal{P}) and (j, \mathcal{Q}) are painted Young diagrams, and $\alpha \in \{B^+, B^-, C, D, \tilde{C}, C^*, D^*\}$, subject to the following conditions:

- $\mathcal{P}^{-1}(\bullet) = \mathcal{Q}^{-1}(\bullet)$;

- the image of \mathcal{P} is contained in

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{ll} \{\bullet, c\}, & \text{if } \alpha = B^+ \text{ or } B^-; \\ \{\bullet, r, c, d\}, & \text{if } \alpha = C; \\ \{\bullet, s, r, c, d\}, & \text{if } \alpha = D; \\ \{\bullet, s, c\}, & \text{if } \alpha = \tilde{C}; \\ \{\bullet\}, & \text{if } \alpha = C^*; \\ \{\bullet, s\}, & \text{if } \alpha = D^*, \end{array} \right.$$

- the image of \mathcal{Q} is contained in

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{ll} \{\bullet, s, r, d\}, & \text{if } \alpha = B^+ \text{ or } B^-; \\ \{\bullet, s\}, & \text{if } \alpha = C; \\ \{\bullet\}, & \text{if } \alpha = D; \\ \{\bullet, r, d\}, & \text{if } \alpha = \tilde{C}; \\ \{\bullet, s, r\}, & \text{if } \alpha = C^*; \\ \{\bullet, r\}, & \text{if } \alpha = D^*. \end{array} \right.$$

For any painted bipartition τ as in Definition ??, we write

$$\iota_\tau := \iota, \mathcal{P}_\tau := \mathcal{P}, j_\tau := j, \mathcal{Q}_\tau := \mathcal{Q}, \alpha_\tau := \alpha,$$

and

$$\star_\tau := \begin{cases} B, & \text{if } \alpha = B^+ \text{ or } B^-; \\ \alpha, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

We further define a pair (p_τ, q_τ) of natural numbers given by the following recipe.

- If $\star_\tau \in \{B, D, C^*\}$, (p_τ, q_τ) is given by counting the various symbols appearing in (ι, \mathcal{P}) , (j, \mathcal{Q}) and $\{\alpha\}$:

$$(1.8) \quad \begin{cases} p_\tau := (\#\bullet) + 2(\#r) + (\#c) + (\#d) + (\#B^+); \\ q_\tau := (\#\bullet) + 2(\#s) + (\#c) + (\#d) + (\#B^-). \end{cases}$$

Here

$$\#\bullet := \#(\mathcal{P}^{-1}(\bullet)) + \#(\mathcal{Q}^{-1}(\bullet)) \quad (\# \text{ indicates the cardinality of a finite set}),$$

and the other terms are similarly defined.

- If $\star_\tau \in \{C, \tilde{C}, D^*\}$, $p_\tau := q_\tau := |\tau|$.

We also define a classical group

$$(1.9) \quad G_\tau := \begin{cases} \text{SO}(p_\tau, q_\tau), & \text{if } \star_\tau = B \text{ or } D; \\ \text{Sp}_{2|\tau|}(\mathbb{R}), & \text{if } \star_\tau = C; \\ \widetilde{\text{Sp}}_{2|\tau|}(\mathbb{R}), & \text{if } \star_\tau = \tilde{C}; \\ \text{Sp}(\frac{p_\tau}{2}, \frac{q_\tau}{2}), & \text{if } \star_\tau = C^*; \\ \text{O}^*(2|\tau|), & \text{if } \star_\tau = D^*. \end{cases}$$

Define

$$\begin{aligned} \text{PBP}_\star(\check{\mathcal{O}}) &:= \{ \tau \text{ is a painted bipartition} \mid \star_\tau = \star, \text{ and } (\iota_\tau, j_\tau) = (\iota_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}, j_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}) \}, \quad \text{and} \\ \text{PBP}_G(\check{\mathcal{O}}) &:= \{ \tau \in \text{PBP}_\star(\check{\mathcal{O}}) \mid G_\tau = G \}. \end{aligned}$$

Example 1.18. Suppose that $\star = B$ and

$$\check{\mathcal{O}} = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline & & & & & \\ \hline & & & & & \\ \hline & & & & & \\ \hline & & & & & \\ \hline & & & & & \\ \hline & & & & & \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Then

$$\tau := \begin{array}{|c|c|} \hline \bullet & \bullet \\ \hline \bullet & \\ \hline c & \\ \hline \end{array} \times \begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline \bullet & \bullet & d \\ \hline \bullet & & \\ \hline d & & \\ \hline \end{array} \times B^+ \in \text{PBP}_\star(\check{\mathcal{O}}),$$

and

$$G_\tau = \text{SO}(10, 9).$$

Theorem 1.19. Assume that $\star \in \{B, C, D, \tilde{C}, C^*, D^*\}$. Then

$$\sharp(\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G)) \leq 2^{\sharp(\mathfrak{P}_\star(\check{\mathcal{O}}))} \cdot \sharp\text{PBP}_G(\check{\mathcal{O}}).$$

In [BMSZ2], we will construct sufficiently many representations in $\text{Unip}_{\check{\mathcal{O}}}(G)$, and show that the equality holds in ??.