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# An Hopf algebra for counting simple cycles

Pierre-Louis Giscard\*, Paul Rochet<sup>†</sup> and Richard C. Wilson<sup>‡</sup>

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## Abstract

Simple cycles, also known as self-avoiding polygons, are cycles on graphs which are not allowed to visit any vertex more than once. We present an exact formula for enumerating the simple cycles of any length on any directed graph involving a sum over its induced subgraphs. This result stems from an Hopf algebra, which we construct explicitly, and which provides further means of counting simple cycles. Finally, we obtain a more general theorem asserting that any Lie idempotent can be used to enumerate simple cycles.

**Keywords:** Simple cycles; induced subgraph; Hopf algebra; trace monoid.

**MSC:** 05E99, 16T05, 05C30, 05C38

## 1 Introduction

Counting simple cycles, that is cycles on graphs which do not visit any vertex more than once, is a problem of fundamental importance with numerous applications in many branches of mathematics. In view of the existing research, this problem should be divided into two main subquestions. One concerns the enumeration of "short" simple cycles with direct applications in the analysis of real-world networks. The other, more related to enumerative combinatorics (see e.g. [11, 17]), concerns the asymptotic growth of the number of simple cycles of length  $\ell$  on regular lattices as  $\ell$  tends to infinity.

As these two problems have been recognized for a long time, the strategies implemented so far to solve them have been qualitatively different. The practical enumeration of short primes has been tackled via diverse algorithmic and analytic methods, e.g. the inclusion-exclusion principle [2, 3, 15], recursive expressions of the adjacency matrix [16], sieves [1] or immanantal equations [5]. In contrast, the asymptotic growth in the number of long simple cycles on regular lattices has been mostly studied using probability theory [13, 17, 9].

In our view both problems can be treated with the same tools rooted in the algebraic combinatorics of paths [12]. The literature of graph theory contains many different approaches to

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defining paths on graphs as algebraic objects. A particularly promising one comes from the partially commutative monoid formalism introduced in the 1960s by Cartier and Foata [4]. Within this framework a path is seen as a word whose letters are the oriented edges of the graph. In the present study we use this formalism to obtain an exact formula for enumerating the simple cycles of any length via a sum over the induced subgraphs of a graph. We then show that this formula stems from an Hopf algebra, which provides further means of counting such cycles. Finally, these results are themselves subsumed under a more general theorem asserting that any Lie idempotent can be used to enumerate the simple cycles.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. In section 2 we recall the necessary background concerning Cartier and Foata’s formalism as well as recent extensions of it. We proceed in section 3 by proving an exact formula for counting the simple cycles relying on this framework. We then show in section 4 that this formula ultimately stems from an Hopf algebra and conclude with a further generalisation to Lie idempotents in section 5.

## 2 Background

Hikes were introduced in a seminal work by Cartier and Foata<sup>1</sup> as a generalisation of cycles to possibly disconnected objects [4]. Relaxing the connectedness condition, Cartier and Foata showed that hikes admit a simple description as words on the alphabet of graph edges and provide a powerful partially commutative framework for algebraic combinatorics on graphs. Recent developments [10, 12] have shown that hikes are also words on the alphabet of simple cycles of the graph. In this section we recall a few essential results pertaining to hikes.

Let  $G = (V, E)$  be a digraph with finite vertex set  $V = \{v_1, \dots, v_N\}$  and edge set  $E$ , which may contain loops. Let  $W = (\omega_{ij})_{i,j=1,\dots,N}$  represent the weighted adjacency matrix of the graph, built by attributing a formal variable  $\omega_{ij}$  to every pair  $(v_i, v_j) \in V^2$  and setting  $\omega_{ij} = 0$  whenever there is no edge from  $v_i$  to  $v_j$ . In this setting, an edge is identified with a non-zero variable  $\omega_{ij}$ . A walk of length  $\ell$  from  $v_i$  to  $v_j$  on  $G$  is a sequence  $p = \omega_{ii_1}\omega_{i_1i_2} \cdots \omega_{i_{\ell-1}j}$  of  $\ell$  contiguous edges. The walk  $p$  is *open* if  $i \neq j$  and *closed* (a cycle) otherwise. A walk  $p$  is *simple* if it does not cross the same vertex twice, that is, if the indices  $i, i_1, \dots, i_{\ell-1}, j$  are mutually different, with the possible exception  $i = j$  if  $p$  is closed. Self-loops  $\omega_{ii}$  and backtracks  $\omega_{ij}\omega_{ji}$  are simple cycles of lengths 1 and 2 respectively.

### 2.1 Hikes

We briefly recall the definition and main properties of hikes. We refer to [12] for further details. Let  $\mathcal{P}$  denote the set of simple cycles in  $G$ . Hikes are defined as the partially commutative monoid  $\mathcal{H}$  with alphabet  $\mathcal{P}$  and independence relation  $\{(c, c') \in \mathcal{P}^2 : V(c) \cap V(c') = \emptyset\}$ . In less technical terms, a hike is a finite sequence of simple cycles that is invariant by permutation of successive vertex-disjoint cycles.

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<sup>1</sup>In their original paper in french, Cartier and Foata use the term circuit which was later changed to hike to avoid confusion with other objects in graph theory.

Hikes form a partially commutative monoid, or trace monoid, when endowed with the concatenation as multiplication and identity element 1 (the empty hike). Throughout the paper, the concatenation of two hikes  $h, h'$  shall be denoted by  $h.h'$  or simply  $hh'$ . If a hike  $h$  can be written as the concatenation  $h = dd'$  for  $d, d' \in \mathcal{H}$ , then we say that  $d$  (resp.  $d'$ ) is a left-divisor (resp. right divisor) of  $h$ . Unless stated otherwise, a divisor  $d$  of  $h$  always refers to a left-divisor and is denoted by  $d|h$ .

The prime elements in  $(\mathcal{H}, .)$  are the simple cycles as they verify the prime property:  $p|hh' \implies p|h$  or  $p|h'$ . For this reason, the simple cycles composing a hike  $h$  are called the prime factors of  $h$ . We emphasize that a prime factor may not be a divisor.

A hike is *self-avoiding* if it does not visit the same vertex twice, i.e. if it is composed of vertex-disjoint simple cycles. Equivalently,  $h$  is self-avoiding if  $|V(h)| = \ell(h)$  where  $V(h)$  denotes the support of  $h$  (the set of vertices it crosses) and  $\ell(h)$  its length. By convention, the empty hike is self-avoiding since it has zero length and empty support.

Hikes were originally introduced as a generalisation of closed walks (or cycles), that is, finite sequences of simple cycles that can be traveled contiguously on the graph. Thus, while closed walks are indeed special cases of hikes, it is somewhat inconvenient that their characterisation rely on the underlying structure of edges, which are purposely overlooked to define hikes in the most simple way. To overcome this problem, the next result gives a new characterisation of closed walks without having to resort to edges.

**Proposition 2.1.** *A non-empty hike  $h$  is a closed walk if, and only if, it has a unique prime right-divisor.*

While the characterisation of closed walks appears to be simple, the proof of this proposition requires some tools from [12] that are recalled below. For this reason we postpone it to the end of the next section.

## 2.2 Formal series on hikes

The hike formalism is perfectly suited to describe the analytic properties of the graph  $G$  via its labeled adjacency matrix  $W$ , defined as  $W_{ij} := \omega_{ij}$  if  $(i, j) \in E$  and  $W_{ij} := 0$  otherwise. In particular, the labeled adjacency matrix  $W$  preserves the partially commutative structure of the hikes [12]. Thanks to this property, formal series on hikes can be represented as functions of this matrix and manipulated via its analytical transformations. We recall below some examples from [8, 12] illustrating these observations.

**Example 2.1.** The trace monoid  $\mathcal{H}$  of hikes forms a partially ordered set, or poset, when the hikes are given an order based on left-divisibility [12]. As casually discussed in [4], the characteristic function of this poset, i.e. the constant function  $\zeta(h) = 1$  for  $h \in \mathcal{H}$ , is generated from the determinant of the inverse of  $(I - W)$ , more precisely

$$\det(I - W)^{-1} = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \zeta(h)h = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} h.$$

The characteristic function is also the zeta function of the reduced incidence algebra of  $\mathcal{H}$  as per the now standard terminology introduced by G. C. Rota [23], which explains the notation. This formula alone highlights the importance of the hike poset  $\mathcal{H}$  and its ability to encapsulate the information on the graph structure via its labels adjacency matrix  $W$ .

**Example 2.2.** The zeta function introduced above was originally obtained from the inverse of the Möbius function. A standard result in trace monoid theory states that the Möbius function of such a monoid is expressed as a series over words composed of different commuting letters, see for instance [8]. For the trace monoid  $\mathcal{H}$ , where hikes commutes if they are vertex-disjoint, the Möbius function is given by

$$\mu(h) = \begin{cases} (-1)^{\Omega(h)} & \text{if } h \text{ is self-avoiding} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}, \quad h \in \mathcal{H}$$

where  $\Omega(h)$  counts, with multiplicity, the number of prime factors of  $h \in \mathcal{H}$ . The Möbius function admits an expression involving the labeled adjacency matrix  $W$ , namely

$$\det(I - W) = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \mu(h)h.$$

This relation has been discussed under many forms in the literature, see e.g. [4, 6, 7, 12]. The immediate consequence on the divisors of a hike arises from writing

$$1 = \det(I - W)^{-1} \cdot \det(I - W) = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \mu(h)h. \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} h = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \left( \sum_{d|h} \mu(d) \right) h. \quad (1)$$

From this we deduce the Möbius inversion formula  $\sum_{d|h} \mu(d) = 0$  whenever  $h \neq 1$ .

**Example 2.3.** The hike von Mangoldt function arises from the trace of  $(I - W)^{-1} - I$ ,

$$\text{Tr}((I - W)^{-1} - I) = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \Lambda(h)h.$$

The diagonal of  $(I - W)^{-1} - I = W + W^2 + \dots$  only involves non-empty walks, for which a contiguous representation can be put in one-to-one correspondence with a starting vertex. Thus,  $\Lambda(h)$  counts the number of contiguous representations of  $h$ , that is the number of ways to write  $h$  as a succession of contiguous edges (in particular  $\Lambda(h) = 0$  if  $h$  is not a walk). Remark that in a graph where all simple cycles are disjoint, the number of contiguous representations of a closed hike is  $\Lambda(h) = \ell(p)$  if  $h = p^k$  for  $p$  a simple cycle and  $k \geq 1$  and  $\Lambda(h) = 0$  otherwise. This highlights the relation with number theory discussed in [12] where the von Mangoldt function, obtained from a log-derivative of the zeta function, draws a parallel between the length of a hike and the logarithm of an integer. An important consequence is the following expression of the length as a product of the von Mangoldt function and the zeta function,

$$\sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \Lambda(h)h. \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} h = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \left( \sum_{d|h} \Lambda(d) \right) h = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \ell(h)h, \quad (2)$$

which recovers after identification  $\sum_{d|h} \Lambda(d) = \ell(h)$ ,  $h \in \mathcal{H}$ .

**Example 2.4.** The hike Liouville function is defined by

$$\lambda(h) = (-1)^{\Omega(h)}, \quad h \in \mathcal{H}.$$

As in the number-theoretic version, the inverse of the Liouville function is the absolute value of the Möbius function (see Proposition 3.10 in [12]). In the graph context, the absolute value of the Möbius function attributes the value 1 to every self-avoiding closed hikes and thus writes as the permanent of  $I + W$ :

$$\text{perm}(I + W) = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}} h = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} |\mu(h)| h = \frac{1}{\sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \lambda(h) h},$$

where  $\mathcal{S}$  denotes the set of self-avoiding hikes. It is somewhat remarkable that the inverse relation between  $\lambda$  and  $|\mu|$ , which holds in the fully commutative poset of the integers, is still verified in this more general partially commutative framework.

We are now in position to prove Proposition 2.1.

*Proof of Proposition 2.1.* A hike  $h$  is a non-empty closed walk if and only if it has a contiguous representation, i.e. if its image  $\Lambda(h)$  through the hike von Mangoldt function is non-zero. From Proposition 3.4 in [12], we know that

$$\Lambda(h) = \sum_{d|h} \ell(d) \mu\left(\frac{h}{d}\right),$$

where  $\mu$  is the hike Möbius function (this result simply follows from the right-multiplication by  $\sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \mu(h) h$  in Eq. (2)). Assume  $h \neq 1$  and let  $p_1, \dots, p_k$  be the different prime right-divisors of  $h$ . Remark that the  $p_j$ 's are vertex-disjoint so that  $s := p_1 \cdots p_k$  is self-avoiding and the self-avoiding right-divisors of  $h$  are the divisors of  $s$ . Write  $h = h's$ , since  $\mu(h/d)$  is zero if  $h/d$  is not self-avoiding, we deduce

$$\Lambda(h) = \sum_{d|h's} \ell(d) \mu\left(\frac{h's}{d}\right) = \sum_{d'|s} \ell(h'd') \mu\left(\frac{s}{d'}\right).$$

By additivity of  $\ell(\cdot)$ , we get

$$\Lambda(h) = \ell(h') \sum_{d'|s} \mu\left(\frac{s}{d'}\right) + \sum_{d'|s} \ell(d') \mu\left(\frac{s}{d'}\right) = \Lambda(s),$$

where the first term vanishes due to the Möbius inversion formula. It remains to notice that  $\Lambda(s) = \ell(s)$  if  $s$  is prime and  $\Lambda(s) = 0$  if  $s$  has more than one prime divisor.  $\square$

### 3 Counting primes via a convolution over induced subgraphs

Let  $\mathcal{G}$  be the set of finite digraphs. For  $G = (V(G), E(G)) \in \mathcal{G}$ , we say that  $H = (V(H), E(H)) \in \mathcal{G}$  is an induced subgraph of  $G$  (which we denote by  $H \prec G$ ) if  $V(H) \subseteq V(G)$  and  $E(H) = E(G) \cap V(H)^2$ . If  $H \prec G$ , then  $G - H$  designates the subgraph of  $G$  induced by  $V(G) \setminus V(H)$ . Let  $(\mathcal{A}, \cdot, +)$  be an algebra, for two functions  $\phi, \psi : \mathcal{G} \rightarrow \mathcal{A}$ , the induced subgraph convolution between  $\phi$  and  $\psi$  is defined by

$$(\phi * \psi)[G] = \sum_{H \prec G} \phi[H] \psi[G - H], \quad G \in \mathcal{G},$$

where the sum runs over all induced subgraphs of  $G$  including the empty graph  $\emptyset$  and  $G$  itself. In this section, we investigate the induced subgraph convolution between function with values in the algebra  $\mathbb{R}\langle \mathcal{H} \rangle$  of formal series on hikes with real coefficients. Examples of such functions arising from usual expressions of the labeled adjacency matrix  $W_H$  of a digraph  $H$  have been discussed in Section 2.2.

**Lemma 3.1.** *For all  $G \in \mathcal{G}$ ,*

$$\sum_{H \prec G} \det(-W_H) \text{perm}(W_{G-H}) = \delta[G] := \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } G = \emptyset \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases}$$

where we use the convention  $\text{perm}(W_\emptyset) = \det(-W_\emptyset) = 1$ .

The function  $\delta$  is the identity function for the induced subgraph convolution  $*$ , in view of  $\phi * \delta = \phi$  for all  $\phi : \mathcal{G} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}\langle \mathcal{H} \rangle$ . Thus, the lemma establishes that the functions  $G \mapsto \text{perm}(W_G)$  and  $G \mapsto \det(-W_G)$  are mutual inverse through  $*$ .

*Proof of Lemma 3.1.* Recall that  $\mathcal{S}$  is the set of self-avoiding hikes on  $G$  and let  $\mathcal{S}_H$  denote the set of self-avoiding hikes with support  $V(H)$ , for  $H \prec G$ . Both permanent and determinant have simple expressions in terms of self-avoiding hikes.

$$\det(-W_H) = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_H} (-1)^{\Omega(h)} h \quad \text{and} \quad \text{perm}(W_H) = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_H} h,$$

where we recall that  $\Omega(h)$  is the number of simple cycles composing  $s$ . For a self-avoiding hike  $s$ , each divisor  $d$  of  $s$  can be put in one-to-one correspondance with the subgraph induced by its support. Thus,

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{H \prec G} \det(-W_H) \text{perm}(W_{G-H}) &= \sum_{H \prec G} \left( \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_H} (-1)^{\Omega(h)} h \cdot \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_{G-H}} h \right) \\ &= \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_G} \left( \sum_{d|h} (-1)^{\Omega(d)} \right) h. \end{aligned}$$

It remains to notice that for a self-avoiding hike  $h$ ,  $\sum_{d|h} (-1)^{\Omega(d)} = \sum_{d|h} \mu(d) = 1$  if  $h = 1$  and 0 otherwise, by Eq. (1).  $\square$

**Corollary 3.2.** *For all  $G \in \mathcal{G}$ ,*

$$\sum_{H \prec G} \text{perm}(\mathbf{W}_H) \det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W}_{G-H}) = \sum_{H \prec G} \text{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W}_H) \det(-\mathbf{W}_{G-H}) = 1.$$

Seeing these sums as convolutions makes the proof almost trivial.

*Proof.* First observe that, because  $\mathcal{S}$  is the disjoint union of the  $\mathcal{S}_H$  for  $H \prec G$ , one has

$$\sum_{H \prec G} \text{perm}(\mathbf{W}_H) = \sum_{H \prec G} \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_H} h = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}} h = \text{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W}_G).$$

A similar observation can be made for  $\det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W}_G)$ ,

$$\sum_{H \prec G} \det(-\mathbf{W}_H) = \sum_{H \prec G} \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_H} (-1)^{\Omega(h)} h = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}} (-1)^{\Omega(h)} h = \det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W}_G).$$

So, letting  $\phi[H] = \det(-\mathbf{W}_H)$  and  $\psi[H] = \text{perm}(\mathbf{W}_H)$ , the equations of Corollary 3.2 read

$$\psi * (\phi * 1) = 1 \quad \text{and} \quad \phi * (\psi * 1) = 1.$$

The result follows directly from Lemma 3.1, using the distributivity and commutativity of the convolution, e.g.

$$\psi * (\phi * 1) = (\psi * 1) * \phi = (\psi * \phi) * 1 = \delta * 1 = 1.$$

□

We now derive an expression of the formal series of Hamiltonian cycles. In the spirit of [18], we introduce the derivation operator  $D$  defined by

$$D \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} f(h)h = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \ell(h) f(h)h.$$

**Theorem 3.3.** *Let  $\mathcal{P}_G$  denote the set of primes with support  $V(G)$ , that is the set of Hamiltonian cycles on  $G$ . Then*

$$\begin{aligned} D \sum_{p \in \mathcal{P}_G} p &= \sum_{H \prec G} \det(-\mathbf{W}_H) D \text{perm}(\mathbf{W}_{G-H}), \\ &= - \sum_{H \prec G} \text{perm}(\mathbf{W}_H) D \det(\mathbf{W}_{G-H}). \end{aligned}$$

*Proof.* Let  $\pi[G] = \sum_{p \in \mathcal{P}_G} p$ , the first equality of the theorem writes

$$D\pi = \phi * D\psi.$$



Calculating explicitly  $\phi * D\psi$  gives

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{H \prec G} \det(-W_H) D \operatorname{perm}(W_{G-H}) &= \sum_{H \prec G} \left( \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_H} (-1)^{\Omega(h)} h \cdot \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_{G-H}} \ell(h) h \right), \\ &= \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}_G} h \sum_{d|h} (-1)^{\Omega(d)} \ell\left(\frac{h}{d}\right). \end{aligned}$$

The result follows from noting that  $\sum_{d|h} (-1)^{\Omega(d)} \ell(h/d)$  is none other than the hie von Mangoldt function  $\Lambda(s)$  of Eq. (2). Since  $h$  is self-avoiding,  $\Lambda(h)$  is equal to  $\ell(h)$  if  $h$  is connected and 0 otherwise. Thus,

$$(\phi * D\psi)[G] = \sum_{H \prec G} \det(-W_H) D \operatorname{perm}(W_{G-H}) = \sum_{p \in \mathcal{P}_G} \ell(p) p = D \pi[G].$$

For the second equality, simply observe that  $-\psi * D\phi = \phi * D\psi - D(\phi * \psi) = \phi * D\psi - D1 = \phi * D\psi$ .  $\square$

**Remark 3.1.** Because  $\phi$  is the inverse of  $\psi$ , the relation  $D\pi = \phi * D\psi$  suggests an expression of  $\pi$  as a logarithm of  $\psi$ . This is indeed the case. Observe that the  $k$ -times convolution

$$\pi^{*k}[G] := \underbrace{\pi * \dots * \pi}_{k \text{ times}}[G] = \sum_{(H_1, \dots, H_k)} \pi[H_1] \dots \pi[H_k],$$

writes as the sum over all  $k$ -partitions  $H_1, \dots, H_k$  of  $G$  (here, the order is important meaning that there are  $k!$  partitions involving the subgraphs  $H_1, \dots, H_k$ ). Thus, every spanning self-avoiding hike  $h$  is counted exactly once in the exponentiation

$$\exp_*(\pi[G]) = \sum_{k \geq 0} \frac{1}{k!} \pi^{*k}[G] = \psi[G].$$

This aspect originates from an Hopf algebraic structure, which we describe in the next section.

The formal series of simple cycles (of any length) follows from the convolution of  $\pi$  with the constant 1,

$$\Pi[G] := (\pi * 1)[G] = \sum_{H \prec G} \pi[H] = \sum_{p \in \mathcal{P}} p,$$

Because derivation and convolution with the constant are commuting operators, we recover

$$D \Pi = D(\pi * 1) = D\pi * 1 = (\phi * D\psi) * 1 = \phi * D(\psi * 1) = \phi * D\Psi,$$

where  $\Psi[G] = (\psi * 1)[G] = \sum_{H \prec G} \operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{A}_H) = \operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{A}_G)$ . This gives the following corollary to Theorem 3.3

**Corollary 3.4.** *Let  $\mathcal{P}$  be the set of all primes on  $G$ , then*

$$D \sum_{p \in \mathcal{P}} p = \sum_{H \prec G} \det(-W_H) D \operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + W_{G-H}).$$

## 4 An Hopf algebra structure for the hikes

Since any hike on a graph can be seen as a disjoint ensemble of connected components, it is natural that an algebraic structure should exist describing the generation of arbitrary hikes from connected ones. In particular, when it comes to the self-avoiding hikes, their connected components are their prime factors. Therefore, if this algebraic structure provides a mean of projecting the set of hikes back onto the set of connected hikes, it might send the self-avoiding ones onto the primes. In this section, we establish these heuristic arguments rigorously by showing that a cocommutative Hopf algebra describes the generation of arbitrary hikes from connected ones. This algebra provides several exact formulas for the formal series of connected hikes and of primes, stemming from projectors onto the irreducible elements of the algebra. We also show that the subgraph convolution operation introduced previously is a necessary and unavoidable feature resulting from this algebra.

We denote  $K$  an algebraically closed field of characteristic zero, and  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  is the monoid algebra of  $\mathcal{H}$  over  $K$ , that is essentially the algebra of formal series on hikes. Note that given the isomorphism between such series and linear functions on hikes  $f \in \text{Hom}(\mathcal{H}, K)$ , from now on we shall not distinguish the two and will conveniently write any series  $f \in K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  as  $f = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} f(h)h$ . We designate  $\mathcal{C}$  the ensemble of connected hikes.<sup>2</sup>

We endow  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  with an Hopf algebra structure following Schmitt's construction for general trace monoids [25]. We define the comultiplication  $\Delta : K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle \rightarrow K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle \otimes K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  and counit  $\epsilon : K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle \rightarrow K$  by

$$\epsilon = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } h = 1, \\ 0, & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \quad \text{and} \quad \Delta(h) = \sum_{\substack{d|h \\ V(d) \cap V(h/d) = \emptyset}} d \otimes \frac{h}{d}. \quad (3)$$

In particular, the comultiplication introduced above decomposes any hike into its disjoint divisors.

**Remark 4.1.** The comultiplication introduced above recovers that defined by Schmitt on general trace monoids in [25]. Let  $h = c_1 \cdots c_n$  be a hike with disjoint connected components  $c_1, \dots, c_n$ , and let  $U := \{i_1, \dots, i_k\}$  be a subsequence of  $N := \{1, \dots, n\}$ . The complement of  $U$  in  $N$  is denoted  $\bar{U}$ . For any  $h \in \mathcal{H}$ , let  $h|_U := c_{i_1} \cdots c_{i_k}$ , in particular if  $U$  is empty we set  $h|_{\emptyset} := 1$ . Schmitt then defines the comultiplication by

$$\Delta(h) := \sum_{U \subseteq N} h|_U \otimes h|_{\bar{U}}.$$

Now consider a divisor  $d$  of  $h$  such that  $V(d) \cap V(h/d) = \emptyset$ . Then it must be that  $d = c_{i_1} \cdots c_{i_k} = h|_U$  for some  $U$ , so that Schmitt's definition is seen to be equivalent to Eq. (3). Thanks to this observation we can directly use Schmitt's results, thereby alleviating a number of proofs.

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<sup>2</sup>The notion of connected hike is clear intuitively but a rigorous definition can also be given for it. A hike  $h$  is connected iff for any non-empty divisor  $d$  of  $h$ , we have  $V(d) \cap V(h/d) \neq \emptyset$ .

Equipped with these operations,  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  forms a *cocommutative coalgebra* [25]. Its irreducible elements, i.e. those that fulfill  $\Delta(h) = 1 \otimes h + h \otimes 1$ , are immediately seen from Eq. (3) to be the connected hikes since these have no non-empty disjoint divisors. This further confirms that  $\Delta$  pertains to the generation of arbitrary hikes from connected ones.

It remains to clarify the multiplicative operation between elements of  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$ , that is the operation that gives it an algebra structure. This is done below:

**Lemma 4.1.**  *$K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  is isomorphic as an algebra to the commutative algebra formed by functions on graphs equipped with the induced subgraph convolution.*

*Proof.* Let  $f, g \in K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$ , then  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  obtains an algebra structure by defining the convolution  $f * g$  as  $f * g := m \circ (f \otimes g) \circ \Delta$ , with  $m$  the ordinary multiplication between hikes [24, 25]. From this definition we obtain an explicit representation of  $f * g$  as

$$(f * g) = (m \circ (f \otimes g) \circ \Delta) = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \sum_{\substack{d|h \\ V(d) \cap V(h/d) = \emptyset}} f(d)g(h/d). \quad (4)$$

To proceed further, consider the one-to-one mapping which to any  $f \in K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  associates a function on graphs  $\hat{f} : \mathcal{G} \rightarrow K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  such that  $\hat{f}[G] := \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}_G} f(h)$ ,  $\mathcal{H}_G$  being the trace monoid of hikes with support  $V(G)$ . Then Eq. (4) indicates that

$$\widehat{(f * g)}[G] = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}_G} \left( \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \sum_{\substack{d|h \\ V(d) \cap V(h/d) = \emptyset}} f(d)g(h/d) \right),$$

while

$$(\hat{f} * \hat{g})[G] = \sum_{H \prec G} \hat{f}[H] \hat{g}[G - H] = \sum_{H \prec G} \left( \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}_H} f(h) \sum_{h' \in \mathcal{H}_{G-H}} g(h') \right).$$

Now since the product of a hike of  $\mathcal{H}_H$  with a hike of  $\mathcal{H}_{G-H}$  is a hike of  $\mathcal{H}_G$ , it follows that

$$(\hat{f} * \hat{g})[G] = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}_G} \left( \sum_{h \in \mathcal{H}} \sum_{\substack{d|h \\ V(d) \cap V(h/d) = \emptyset}} f(d)g(h/d) \right) = \widehat{(f * g)}[G].$$

Thus the bijective mapping  $f \mapsto \hat{f}$  is an algebra homomorphism, which concludes the proof. From now on, we shall not distinguish the induced subgraph convolution and the multiplication between elements of  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$ .  $\square$

Lemma 4.1 establishes that the induced subgraph convolution arises directly from the definition of the comultiplication in Eq. (3). This, in turn, shows that it is an unavoidable feature reflecting the generation of hikes from their disjoint connected components.

We may now invoke the general results of [25] to observe that the algebraic and coalgebraic structures of  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  are compatible, that is  $\Delta$  and  $\epsilon$  are algebra maps and  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  is a bialgebra. These results are subsumed in the following theorem, which in addition to the bialgebra structure, provides an antipode for  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$ , turning it into a Hopf algebra.

**Theorem 4.2.**  *$K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  is a cocommutative Hopf algebra, with comultiplication and counit defined above and antipode  $S$  given  $S(h) := (-1)^{c(h)}h$ , where  $c(h)$  is the number of disjoint connected components of  $h$ .*

*Proof.* As stated earlier, the results of Schmitt ensure that with the definitions of Eq. (3),  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  is a cocommutative bialgebra [25]. It remains to show that  $S(h)$  given above is indeed an antipode, that is the inverse of the identity on  $\mathcal{H}$ . This follows immediately from Proposition 3.3 of [25] and Example 4.2 of [26], on noting that the decomposition of any hike into its disjoint connected components is unique and that disjoint connected components commute, so that  $\tilde{h} := c_n c_{n-1} \cdots c_1 = h$ . Alternatively it is straightforward to verify this explicitly on verifying that  $S * \zeta = \epsilon$ ,  $\zeta$  being the identity on  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$ .  $\square$

The generation of arbitrary hikes from connected ones thus gives rise to an Hopf algebra which, we will see, provides means of doing the opposite, that is to obtain the connected hikes from the set of all hikes. Before we proceed to these results, we show that the same algebraic structure relates the self-avoiding hikes with the primes.

**Corollary 4.3.**  *$K\langle\mathcal{S}\rangle$  is a cocommutative sub-Hopf algebra of  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$ .*

*Proof.*  $K\langle\mathcal{S}\rangle$  inherits a bialgebraic structure from  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$ , in particular since it is clearly stable under induced subgraph convolution. Thus it suffices to verify that it has an antipode and this follows once more from the general results of Schmitt [25], with the antipode being that of  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  restricted to  $K\langle\mathcal{S}\rangle$ . Alternatively, we can verify this result directly on noting that for  $h \in \mathcal{S}$ ,  $c(h) = \Omega(h)$ , so that the antipode of  $K\langle\mathcal{S}\rangle$  is just the Möbius function which, by Corollary 3.2, is the  $*$ -inverse of the identity on  $\mathcal{S}$ , as required.  $\square$

The irreducible elements of  $\mathcal{S}$  are now easy to discern: they are the irreducible elements of  $\mathcal{H}$ —the connected hikes—which are also self-avoiding, that is the primes. This observation in conjunction with Corollary 4.3 above, implies that any projector from the hikes onto the connected hikes will send the self-avoiding hikes onto the primes:

**Theorem 4.4.** *For any coalgebra map  $f \in K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$ , then  $\log_* f : K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle \rightarrow K\langle\mathcal{C}\rangle$ , in particular the  $*$ -logarithm of the identity on  $\mathcal{H}$  is the identity on  $\mathcal{C}$ ,*

$$\log_* \left( \frac{1}{\det(1 - W)} \right) = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{C}} h.$$

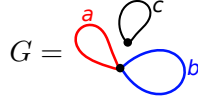
For any coalgebra map  $f \in K\langle\mathcal{S}\rangle$ , then  $\log_* f : K\langle\mathcal{S}\rangle \rightarrow K\langle\mathcal{P}\rangle$ , in particular the  $*$ -logarithm of the identity on  $\mathcal{S}$  is the identity on  $\mathcal{P}$ ,

$$\log_*(\text{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W})) = -\log_*(\det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W})) = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{P}} h.$$

*Proof.* We rely on the results of Schmitt [26] concerning cocommutative Hopf algebras, more precisely Theorem 9.4, 9.5, Corollary 9.6 and Example 9.2. Accordingly, the image of the  $*$ -logarithm of any coalgebra map  $f \in \text{Hom}(H, H)$  of a cocommutative Hopf algebra  $H$  is in the sub-monoid of irreducible elements of  $H$ ,  $\text{Irr}(H)$ . In particular the  $*$ -logarithm of the identity on  $H$  is the identity on  $\text{Irr}(H)$ . In the present context,  $H = K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  and  $\text{Irr}(K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle) = K\langle\mathcal{C}\rangle$ . In addition, the identity element of  $K\langle\mathcal{H}\rangle$  is the zeta function of  $\mathcal{H}$ , i.e.  $1/\det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W})$ , which gives the first result.

The same reasoning for  $K\langle\mathcal{S}\rangle$  provides the second result since the irreducible elements are now the primes, hence  $\text{Irr}(K\langle\mathcal{S}\rangle) = K\langle\mathcal{P}\rangle$ , and the identity on  $\mathcal{S}$  is  $\text{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W})$ . Finally, the last equality follows from the observation that  $\det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W})$  is the antipode of  $K\langle\mathcal{S}\rangle$ , i.e. the  $*$ -inverse of the permanent. This is shown in the proof of Corollary 4.3 and also directly in Corollary 3.2  $\square$

**Example 4.1** (Simple cycles from the logarithm of the determinant). Let us illustrate how the logarithm with respect to induced subgraph convolution distillates the simple cycles from a determinant or a permanent. Consider the following graph with three simple cycles  $a$ ,  $b$  and  $c$  of arbitrary lengths:



for which  $\det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W}) = 1 - a - b - c + ac + bc$ . Expanding the logarithm of this determinant as a series and focusing on the first and second orders to begin with, we have

$$-\log_*(\det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W})) = -(-a - b - c + ac + bc) + \frac{1}{2}(-a - b - c + ac + bc)^{*2} - \dots \quad (5)$$

Since  $V(a) \cap V(c) = V(b) \cap V(c) = \emptyset$  and  $V(a) \cap V(b) \neq \emptyset$ , terms such as  $a * a$ ,  $a * b$  and  $b * ac$  all vanish and only  $a * c$  and  $b * c$  are non-zero. Thus, expanding the second order leaves  $ac + ca + bc + cb$ . For the same reasons all higher orders of the logarithm are exactly zero. In addition, since  $a$  and  $c$  and  $b$  and  $c$  are vertex-disjoint, they commute, and the second order further simplifies to  $2ac + 2bc$ . Thanks to these observations, Eq. (5) becomes

$$\begin{aligned} -\log_*(\det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W})) &= a + b + c - ac - bc + \frac{1}{2}(2ac + 2bc), \\ &= a + b + c, \end{aligned}$$

which is indeed the formal series of the primes on  $G$ .

Admittedly, a  $*$ -logarithm is not very convenient to implement. Instead, we turn to its derivative for more practical results

**Corollary 4.5.** *Let  $G$  be a non-empty graph, and  $\Pi := \sum_{p \in \mathcal{P}} p$  be the characteristic series of the primes. Then*

$$D\Pi = D \operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W}) * \det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W}) = -\operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W}) * D \det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W}).$$

*Proof.* Derivating the expression for  $\Pi$  given in Theorem 4.4 yields

$$D\Pi = D \operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W}) * \operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W})^{-*1}, \quad (6a)$$

$$= -D \det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W}) * \det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W})^{-*1}. \quad (6b)$$

In Eq. (6a),  $\operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W})^{-*1}$  designates the  $*$ -inverse of  $\operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W})$  and similarly in Eq. (6b). Since the permanent is the identity on  $\mathcal{S}$ , its  $*$ -inverse must thus be the antipode on  $\mathcal{S}$ , i.e.  $\operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + \mathbf{W})^{-*1} = \det(\mathbf{I} - \mathbf{W})$ .  $\square$

**Remark 4.2** (Practical considerations). In practice, prime counting is achieved upon replacing all labeled adjacency matrices with ordinary adjacency matrices  $\mathbf{W} \mapsto z\mathbf{A}$ , with  $z$  a formal variable. In this situation, formal series on hikes become ordinary generating functions and the derivative operator  $D$  is implemented as a derivative with respect to  $z$ . Then, because of the commutativity of the induced subgraph convolution, Corollary 4.5 yields the following variant formulas for the derivative of the ordinary generating function of the primes  $\Pi(z) := \sum_{p \in \mathcal{P}} z^{\ell(p)}$ ,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d\Pi(z)}{dz} &= \sum_{H \prec G} \frac{d}{dz} \operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + z\mathbf{A}_H) \det(-z\mathbf{A}_{G-H}) = \sum_{H \prec G} \frac{d}{dz} \operatorname{perm}(z\mathbf{A}_H) \det(\mathbf{I} - z\mathbf{A}_{G-H}), \\ \frac{d\Pi(z)}{dz} &= - \sum_{H \prec G} \operatorname{perm}(\mathbf{I} + z\mathbf{A}_H) \frac{d}{dz} \det(-z\mathbf{A}_{G-H}) = - \sum_{H \prec G} \operatorname{perm}(z\mathbf{A}_H) \frac{d}{dz} \det(\mathbf{I} - z\mathbf{A}_{G-H}). \end{aligned}$$

## 5 Simple cycles from Lie idempotents

The celebrated Milnor-Moore theorem [19] provides an explicit relation between connected graded cocommutative Hopf algebras and Lie algebras. In this section we exploit this relation to assert the existence of many more formulas for counting simple cycles on graphs. We illustrate this with two examples.

The cocommutative Hopf algebra  $K\langle \mathcal{H} \rangle$  introduced earlier is both graded, with gradation  $c(h)$ , and connected since  $c(h) = 0 \iff h = 1$  so that  $K\langle \mathcal{H} |_{c(h)=0} \rangle$  is just  $K$  itself as required [20]. Hence, we can use the theorem of Milnor and Moore to obtain that  $K\langle \mathcal{H} \rangle$  is isomorphic to the universal enveloping algebra of the graded Lie algebra formed by the series on connected hikes on the graph, i.e.  $K\langle \mathcal{H} \rangle \simeq U(K\langle \mathcal{C} \rangle)$  which, for simplicity, we shall write

$$\mathcal{H} \simeq U(\mathcal{C}).$$

By the same arguments, we also have

$$\mathcal{S} \simeq U(\mathcal{P}).$$

These results provide new tools to pass from  $\mathcal{H}$  to the free Lie algebra formed by  $\mathcal{C}$  and from  $\mathcal{S}$  to  $\mathcal{P}$ : the Lie idempotents.

Lie idempotents are symmetrizers projecting the tensor algebra  $T(A)$  of a Lie algebra  $A$  onto the free Lie algebra. Now recall that the universal enveloping algebra of the Lie algebra  $A$  is  $U(A) = T(A)/I$ , with  $I$  the two-sided ideal generated by elements of the form  $a \otimes b - b \otimes a - [a, b]$ . In particular, if  $A$  is free, then a Lie idempotent project  $U(A)$  onto  $A$  itself. Since both  $\mathcal{C}$  and  $\mathcal{P}$  are free, this reasoning leads to:

**Theorem 5.1.** *Let  $\iota$  be a Lie idempotent. Then*

$$\begin{aligned}\iota : K\langle \mathcal{H} \rangle &\longrightarrow K\langle \mathcal{C} \rangle, \\ K\langle \mathcal{S} \rangle &\longrightarrow K\langle \mathcal{P} \rangle.\end{aligned}$$

We now give two examples of Lie idempotents to illustrate this result.

**Example 5.1** (Eulerian idempotent). Let  $A$  be a cocommutative connected graded  $K$ -bialgebra with product  $\star$  and let  $\text{id}_A$  be the identity map on  $A$ . Then the endomorphism  $\epsilon : \log_\star(\text{id}_A)$  projects  $A$  onto the  $K$ -submodule of primitive elements and is called the Eulerian idempotent of  $A$  [14]. Theorem 4.4 thus appears to state the Eulerian idempotents on  $\mathcal{H}$  and  $\mathcal{S}$ .

**Example 5.2** (Dynkin idempotent). Let  $K$  a commutative  $\mathbb{Q}$ -algebra and  $A$  be a cocommutative connected graded  $K$ -Hopf algebra with product  $\star$ . Let  $S$  be antipode of  $A$  and for any  $a \in A$  define  $E(a) := \text{deg}(a)a$ , with  $\text{deg}(a)$  the grade of  $a$ . Then the endomorphism of  $A$  denoted  $\mathfrak{d} := S \star E$  projects  $A$  onto the  $K$ -submodule of primitive elements and is called the Dynkin idempotent of  $A$  [28, 22, 14]. In the context of the self-avoiding hikes,  $\text{deg}(h) = c(h) = \Omega(h) = \omega(h)$ , with  $\omega$  the number of distinct prime factors of  $h$ . Thus the Dynkin idempotent on  $\mathcal{S}$  reads<sup>3</sup>

$$\Pi = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}} (-1)^{\Omega(h)} h \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}} \omega(h) h.$$

In fact, this result is recovered from a straightforward argument in the reduced incidence algebra of  $\mathcal{S}$ . Indeed, a direct multiplication of  $\Pi$  with the zeta function of  $\mathcal{S}$  (i.e. the identity on  $\mathcal{S}$ ) gives

$$\Pi \zeta_{\mathcal{S}} = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}} \left( \sum_{p \in \mathcal{P}, p|h} 1 \right) h = \sum_{h \in \mathcal{S}} \omega(h) h,$$

and the Dynkin idempotent follows after a Möbius inversion of the above relation.

Many more Lie idempotents have been discovered and can be found in the relevant literature, see e.g. [21, 22, 27, 14] and references therein. By Theorem 5.1, each one of them provides a formula for counting the primes, that is the simple cycles, on arbitrary weighted directed graphs.

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<sup>3</sup>A similar, though less interesting, relation holds on  $\mathcal{H}$  with both  $\Omega(h)$  and  $\omega(h)$  replaced by  $c(h)$ . It yields the identity on  $\mathcal{C}$ .

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