REMARKS ON THE PAPER "SKEW PIERI RULES FOR HALL-LITTLEWOOD FUNCTIONS" BY KONVALINKA AND LAUVE

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ABSTRACT. In a recent paper Konvalinka and Lauve proved several skew Pieri rules for Hall–Littlewood polynomials. In this note we show that q-analogues of these rules are encoded in a q-binomial theorem for Macdonald polynomials due to Lascoux and the author.

1. The Konvalinka–Lauve formulas and their q-analogues

We refer the reader to [15] for definitions concerning Hall–Littlewood and Macdonald polynomials.

Let $P_{\lambda/\mu} = P_{\lambda/\mu}(X;t)$ and $Q_{\lambda/\mu} = Q_{\lambda/\mu}(X;t)$ be the skew Hall–Littlewood polynomials, $e_r = P_{(1^r)}$ the *r*th elementary symmetric function, h_r the *r*th complete symmetric function and $q_r = Q_{(r)}$. Then the ordinary Pieri formulas for Hall– Littlewood polynomials are given by [15]

(1.1a)
$$P_{\mu}e_{r} = \sum_{\lambda} \mathrm{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(t)P_{\lambda}$$

(1.1b)
$$P_{\mu}q_{r} = \sum_{\lambda} hs_{\lambda/\mu}(t)P_{\lambda}$$

where the sums on the right are over partitions λ such that $|\lambda| = |\mu| + r$. The Pieri coefficient $vs_{\lambda/\mu}(t)$ is given by [15, p. 215, (3.2)]

(1.2)
$$\operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(t) = \prod_{i\geq 1} \begin{bmatrix} \lambda'_i - \lambda'_{i+1} \\ \lambda'_i - \mu'_i \end{bmatrix}_t,$$

so that $vs_{\lambda/\mu}(t)$ is zero unless $\mu \subseteq \lambda$ with $\lambda - \mu$ a vertical strip. Similarly, $hs_{\lambda/\mu}(t)$ vanishes unless $\mu \subseteq \lambda$ with $\lambda - \mu$ a horizontal strip, in which case [15, p. 218, (3.10)]

(1.3)
$$hs_{\lambda/\mu}(t) = \prod_{\substack{\lambda'_i = \mu'_i + 1\\\lambda'_{i+1} = \mu'_{i+1}}} \left(1 - t^{\lambda'_i - \lambda'_{i+1}} \right)$$

To express the skew Pieri formulas, Konvalinka and Lauve [9] (see also [8]) introduced a third Pieri coefficient

(1.4)
$$\operatorname{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(t) := t^{n(\lambda/\mu)} \prod_{i \ge 1} \begin{bmatrix} \lambda'_i - \mu'_{i+1} \\ \lambda'_i - \mu'_i \end{bmatrix}_t,$$

where $n(\lambda/\mu) := \sum_{i \ge 1} {\lambda'_i - \mu'_i \choose 2}$. Note that $\mathrm{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(t) = 0$ if $\mu \not\subseteq \lambda$.

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It seems Konvalinka and Lauve have been unaware that the above function has appeared in the literature before. Indeed, in exactly the above form and denoted as $g_{\mu}^{\lambda}(t)$, it was used by Kirillov to prove the Pieri rule [7, Lemma 4.1]

(1.5)
$$P_{\mu}h_{r} = \sum_{\lambda} \mathrm{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(t)P_{\lambda}.$$

Moreover, $\operatorname{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(t)$ arose in [20, Equation (4.3)] as a formula for the modified Hall– Littlewood polynomial $Q'_{\lambda/\mu}(1) = Q_{\lambda/\mu}(1, t, t^2, ...)$ —a result first stated in [12, Theorem 3.1], albeit in the not-so-easily-recognisable form

$$Q_{\lambda/\mu}'(1) = \begin{cases} t^{n(\lambda/\mu)} \prod_{i=1}^{l(\mu)} \frac{1 - t^{\lambda'_{\mu_i - i + 1}}}{(t; t)_{\mu'_i - \mu'_{i + 1}}} & \text{for } \mu \subseteq \lambda, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

In a more general form pertaining to Macdonald polynomials it also appeared in [18, p. 173, Remark 2] and [19, Proposition 3.2], see (1.8) below. Prior to the abovementioned papers $\mathrm{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(t)$ appeared in the theory of abelian *p*-groups:

$$\operatorname{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(t) = t^{n(\lambda)-n(\mu)} \alpha_{\lambda}(\mu; t^{-1}),$$

where $\alpha_{\lambda}(\mu; p)$ is the number of subgroups of type μ in a finite abelian *p*-group of type λ , [2–4,21].

Theorem 1.1 (Konvalinka–Lauve [9, Theorems 2–4]). For partitions $\nu \subseteq \mu$,

(1.6a)
$$P_{\mu/\nu}e_r = \sum_{\lambda,\eta} (-1)^{|\nu-\eta|} \operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(t) \operatorname{sk}_{\nu/\eta}(t) P_{\lambda/\eta}$$

(1.6b)
$$P_{\mu/\nu}h_r = \sum_{\lambda,\eta} (-1)^{|\nu-\eta|} \operatorname{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(t) \operatorname{vs}_{\nu/\eta}(t) P_{\lambda/\eta}$$

(1.6c)
$$P_{\mu/\nu}q_r = \sum_{\lambda,\eta,\omega} (-1)^{|\nu-\omega|} t^{|\omega-\eta|} \operatorname{hs}_{\lambda/\mu}(t) \operatorname{vs}_{\nu/\omega}(t) \operatorname{sk}_{\omega/\eta}(t) P_{\lambda/\eta}$$

where each of the multiple sums is subject to the restriction $|\lambda| + |\eta| = |\mu| + |\nu| + r$.

For $\nu = 0$ the first and third skew Pieri formulas reduce to (1.1a) and (1.1b) respectively, whereas the second formula simplifies to (1.5) (see also [9, Theorem 1]). Theorem 1.1 for t = 0 gives the skew Pieri rules for Schur functions due to Assaf and McNamara [1] who, more generally, conjectured a skew Littlewood–Richardson rule. The identities (1.6a) and (1.6b) were first conjectured by Konvalinka in [8]. The subsequent proof of the theorem by Konvalinka and Lauve combines Hopf algebraic techniques in the spirit of the proof of the Assaf–McNamara conjecture [10] with intricate manipulations involving t-binomial coefficients.

The aim of this note is to point out that all of the skew Pieri formulas (1.6a)–(1.6c) are implied by a generalised q-binomial theorem for Macdonald polynomials and, consequently, have simple q-analogues.

From here on let $P_{\lambda/\mu} = P_{\lambda/\mu}(X;q,t)$ and $Q_{\lambda/\mu} = Q_{\lambda/\mu}(X;q,t)$ denote skew Macdonald polynomials. Let f be an arbitrary symmetric function. Adopting plethystic or λ -ring notation, see e.g., [5,11], we define f((a-b)/(1-t)) in terms of the power sums with positive index r as

$$p_r\left(\frac{a-b}{1-t}\right) = \frac{a^r - b^r}{1-t^r}.$$

In other words, $p_r((a-b)/(1-t)) = a^r \epsilon_{b/a,t}(p_r)$ with $\epsilon_{u,r}$ Macdonald's evaluation homomorphism [15, p. 338, (6.16)]. Equivalently, in terms of complete symmetric functions,

$$h_r\left(\frac{a-b}{1-t}\right) = [z^r] \, \frac{(bz;t)_{\infty}}{(az;t)_{\infty}}.$$

We now define the following five Pieri coefficients for Macdonald polynomials:

(1.7a)
$$\operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) := \psi'_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) = (-1)^{|\lambda-\mu|} Q_{\lambda/\mu}\left(\frac{q-1}{1-t}\right)$$

(1.7b)
$$hs_{\lambda/\mu}(q;t) := \varphi_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) = Q_{\lambda/\mu}(1)$$

(1.7c)
$$\operatorname{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) := Q_{\lambda/\mu}\left(\frac{1-q}{1-t}\right)$$

(1.7d)
$$\widehat{\mathrm{sk}}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) := Q_{\lambda/\mu}\left(\frac{1-q/t}{1-t}\right)$$

(1.7e)
$$\operatorname{ks}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) := Q_{\lambda/\mu}(-1)$$

where $\psi'_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t)$ and $\varphi_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t)$ is notation used by Macdonald, and where the -1in $Q_{\lambda/\mu}(-1)$ is a plethystic -1, i.e., applied to the power sum p_r of positive index r it gives the number -1. The Pieri coefficients $v_{S_{\lambda/\mu}}(q,t)$ and $h_{S_{\lambda/\mu}}(q,t)$ have nice factorised forms generalising (1.2) and (1.3), see [16, pp. 336–342]. So does $\widehat{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t)$ [18, p. 173, Remark 2], [19, Proposition 3.2]:

(1.8)
$$\widehat{\mathrm{sk}}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) = \begin{cases} t^{n(\lambda)-n(\mu)} \prod_{i,j=1}^{l(\lambda)} \frac{(qt^{j-i-1};q)_{\lambda_i-\mu_j}(qt^{j-i};q)_{\mu_i-\mu_j}}{(qt^{j-i-1};q)_{\mu_i-\mu_j}(qt^{j-i};q)_{\lambda_i-\mu_j}} & \text{for } \mu \subseteq \lambda, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases}$$

where $(a;q)_k := (a;q)_{\infty}/(aq^k;q)_{\infty}$ for all $k \in \mathbb{Z}$. We leave it to the reader to verify that the above right-hand side for q = 0 reduces to the right-hand side of (1.4). The remaining two Pieri coefficients do not factor into binomials. For example

$$sk_{(2,1)/(1,0)}(q,t) = \frac{1-q-q^2+t+qt-q^2t}{1-q^2t}$$
$$ks_{(2,1)/(1,0)}(q,t) = \frac{(1-t)(1+q-t+qt-t^2-qt^2)}{(1-q)(1-q^2t)}.$$

Of course, $\mathrm{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(0,t) = \mathrm{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(t)$ so it does factorise in the classical limit. This is however not the case for $\mathrm{ks}_{\lambda/\mu}(0,t)$, and

$$ks_{(2,1)/(1,0)}(0,t) = (1-t)(1-t-t^2).$$

Let $g_r = g_r(X;q,t) = Q_{(r)}(X;q,t)$, so that $g_r(X;0,t) = q_r(X;t)$. Then the following q-analogue of Theorem 1.1 holds.

Theorem 1.2. For partitions $\nu \subseteq \mu$,

(1.9a)
$$P_{\mu/\nu}e_r = \sum_{\lambda,\eta} (-1)^{|\nu-\eta|} \operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) \operatorname{sk}_{\nu/\eta}(q,t) P_{\lambda/\eta}$$

(1.9b)
$$P_{\mu/\nu}h_r = \sum_{\lambda,\eta} (-1)^{|\nu-\eta|} \operatorname{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) \operatorname{vs}_{\nu/\eta}(q,t) P_{\lambda/\eta}$$

(1.9c)
$$P_{\mu/\nu}g_r = \sum_{\lambda,\eta} hs_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) ks_{\nu/\eta}(q,t) P_{\lambda/\eta}$$

(1.9d)
$$= \sum_{\lambda,\eta,\omega} (-1)^{|\nu-\omega|} t^{|\omega-\eta|} \operatorname{hs}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) \operatorname{vs}_{\nu/\omega}(q,t) \widehat{\operatorname{sk}}_{\omega/\eta}(q,t) P_{\lambda/\eta},$$

where each of the multiple sums is subject to the restriction $|\lambda| + |\eta| = |\mu| + |\nu| + r$.

2. The q-binomial theorem for Macdonald Polynomials

In [14, Equation (2.11)] Lascoux and the author proved the following q-binomial theorem for Macdonald polynomials:

(2.1)
$$\sum_{\lambda} Q_{\lambda/\nu} \left(\frac{a-b}{1-t} \right) P_{\lambda/\mu}(X) = \left(\prod_{x \in X} \frac{(bx;q)_{\infty}}{(ax;q)_{\infty}} \right) \sum_{\lambda} Q_{\mu/\lambda} \left(\frac{a-b}{1-t} \right) P_{\nu/\lambda}(X).$$

For $\mu = \nu = 0$ and $(a, b) \mapsto (1, a)$ this is the well-known Kaneko–Macdonald *q*-binomial theorem [6, 16]

(2.2)
$$\sum_{\lambda} t^{n(\lambda)} \frac{(a)_{\lambda}}{c'_{\lambda}} P_{\lambda}(X) = \prod_{x \in X} \frac{(ax;q)_{\infty}}{(x;q)_{\infty}}$$

where we have used that [15, p. 338, (6.17)]

$$Q_{\lambda}\left(\frac{1-a}{1-t}\right) = t^{n(\lambda)}\frac{(a)_{\lambda}}{c'_{\lambda}}.$$

Here $(a)_{\lambda} = (a; q, t)_{\lambda} := \prod_{i \ge 1} (at^{1-i}; q)_{\lambda_i}$ and $c'_{\lambda} = c'_{\lambda}(q, t)$ is the generalised hook polynomial $c'_{\lambda} = \prod_{s \in \lambda} (1 - q^{a(s)+1}t^{l(s)})$ with a(s) and l(s) the arm-length and leg-length of the square $s \in \lambda$.

To show that (2.1) encodes the skew Pieri formulas (1.9a)–(1.9d) we first consider the $\mu = 0$ case

(2.3)
$$\sum_{\lambda} Q_{\lambda/\nu} \left(\frac{a-b}{1-t}\right) P_{\lambda}(X) = P_{\nu}(X) \prod_{x \in X} \frac{(bx;q)_{\infty}}{(ax;q)_{\infty}}$$

If we multiply this by $Q_{\nu/\mu}((b-a)/(1-t))$ and sum over ν using (2.3) with $(\lambda, \nu, a, b) \mapsto (\nu, \mu, b, a)$ we obtain

$$\sum_{\lambda,\nu} Q_{\lambda/\nu} \left(\frac{a-b}{1-t}\right) Q_{\nu/\mu} \left(\frac{b-a}{1-t}\right) P_{\lambda}(X) = P_{\mu}(X).$$

This implies the orthogonality relation (implicit in [17] and given in its more general nonsymmetric form in [13, Equation (6.5)])

(2.4)
$$\sum_{\nu} Q_{\lambda/\nu} \left(\frac{a-b}{1-t}\right) Q_{\nu/\mu} \left(\frac{b-a}{1-t}\right) = \delta_{\lambda\mu}.$$

Thanks to (2.4), identity (2.1) is equivalent to

$$\sum_{\lambda,\eta} Q_{\nu/\eta} \left(\frac{a-b}{1-t}\right) Q_{\lambda/\mu} \left(\frac{b-a}{1-t}\right) P_{\lambda/\eta}(X) = P_{\mu/\nu}(X) \prod_{x \in X} \frac{(ax;q)_{\infty}}{(bx;q)_{\infty}}$$

There are now three special cases to consider. First, if b = aq then

$$P_{\mu/\nu}(X)\prod_{x\in X}(1-ax) = \sum_{\lambda,\eta} a^{|\lambda-\mu|+|\nu-\eta|} Q_{\lambda/\mu}\Big(\frac{q-1}{1-t}\Big) Q_{\nu/\eta}\Big(\frac{1-q}{1-t}\Big) P_{\lambda/\eta}(X).$$

Equating coefficients of $(-a)^r$ and using definition (1.7) yields (1.9a). Next, if a = bq

$$P_{\mu/\nu}(X) \prod_{x \in X} \frac{1}{1 - bx} = \sum_{\lambda, \eta} b^{|\lambda - \mu| + |\nu - \eta|} Q_{\lambda/\mu} \Big(\frac{1 - q}{1 - t} \Big) Q_{\nu/\eta} \Big(\frac{q - 1}{1 - t} \Big) P_{\lambda/\eta}(X).$$

Equating coefficients of b^r and again using (1.7) yields (1.9b). Finally, if a = bt

$$P_{\mu/\nu}(X)\prod_{x\in X}\frac{(btx;q)_{\infty}}{(bx;q)_{\infty}} = \sum_{\lambda,\eta} b^{|\lambda-\mu|+|\nu-\eta|}Q_{\lambda/\mu}(1)Q_{\nu/\eta}(-1)P_{\lambda/\eta}(X),$$

Equating coefficients of b^r and using (1.7) gives (1.9c). To show that (1.9c) and (1.9d) are equivalent, we recall Rains' *q*-Pfaff–Saalschütz summation for Macdonald polynomials [17, Corollary 4.9]:

(2.5)
$$\sum_{\nu} \frac{(a)_{\nu}}{(c)_{\nu}} Q_{\lambda/\nu} \left(\frac{a-b}{1-t}\right) Q_{\nu/\mu} \left(\frac{b-c}{1-t}\right) = \frac{(a)_{\mu}(b)_{\lambda}}{(b)_{\mu}(c)_{\lambda}} Q_{\lambda/\mu} \left(\frac{a-c}{1-t}\right)$$

which for c = a is (2.4). Setting b = a/q and c = a/t and using (1.7) yields

$$\mathrm{ks}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) = (t/q)^{|\lambda-\mu|} \frac{(a/q)_{\mu}(a/t)_{\lambda}}{(a)_{\mu}(a/q)_{\lambda}} \sum_{\nu} (-1)^{|\lambda-\nu|} \frac{(a)_{\nu}}{(a/t)_{\nu}} \, \mathrm{vs}_{\lambda/\nu}(q,t) \, \widehat{\mathrm{sk}}_{\nu/\mu}(q,t).$$

Taking the $a \to \infty$ limit this further simplifies to

$$\mathrm{ks}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) = \sum_{\nu} (-1)^{|\lambda-\nu|} t^{|\nu-\mu|} \, \mathrm{vs}_{\lambda/\nu}(q,t) \, \widehat{\mathrm{sk}}_{\nu/\mu}(q,t),$$

which proves the equality between (1.9c) and (1.9d).

To conclude let us mention that all other identities of [9] admit simple q-analogues. For example, if we take (2.5) and specialise b = a/q and c = at then

$$\sum_{\mu} \frac{(a)_{\mu}}{(at)_{\mu}} (-1)^{|\lambda-\mu|} \operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) Q_{\mu/\nu} \left(\frac{1-qt}{1-t}\right) = \frac{(a)_{\nu}(a/q)_{\lambda}}{(a/q)_{\nu}(at)_{\lambda}} q^{|\lambda-\nu|} \operatorname{hs}_{\lambda/\nu}(q,t).$$

Letting $a \to \infty$ this reduces to

$$\sum_{\mu} (-t)^{|\lambda-\mu|} \operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) Q_{\mu/\nu} \left(\frac{1-qt}{1-t}\right) = \operatorname{hs}_{\lambda/\nu}(q,t).$$

For q = 0 this is [9, Lemma 5]

$$\sum_{\mu} (-t)^{|\lambda-\mu|} \operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(t) \operatorname{sk}_{\mu/\nu}(t) = \operatorname{hs}_{\lambda/\nu}(t).$$

Similarly, according to [13, Equation (6.23)]

(2.6)
$$\sum_{\nu} t^{n(\nu)} \frac{(a)_{\nu}}{c'_{\nu}} f^{\lambda}_{\mu\nu}(q,t) = Q_{\lambda/\mu} \left(\frac{1-a}{1-t}\right).$$

For a = q = 0 this is [7, Corollary 4.2], [9, Corollary 6]

$$\sum_{\nu} t^{n(\nu)} f^{\lambda}_{\mu\nu}(t) = \mathrm{sk}_{\lambda/\mu}(t)$$

Finally, to obtain a $q\mbox{-analogue}$ of [9, Theorem 7] we have to work a little harder. First note that

(2.7)
$$P_{\nu}(X)e_{m}(X)\sum_{r=0}^{\infty}h_{r}(X) = \sum_{\mu}\operatorname{sk}_{\mu/\nu}(q,t)P_{\mu}(X)e_{m}(X)$$
$$= \sum_{\mu}\sum_{\substack{\lambda \\ |\lambda-\mu|=m}}\operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t)\operatorname{sk}_{\mu/\nu}(q,t)P_{\lambda}(X).$$

To compute this in a different way, observe that if we set a = q in (2.2) then

$$\sum_{\lambda} t^{n(\lambda)} \frac{(q)_{\lambda}}{c'_{\lambda}} P_{\lambda}(X) = \prod_{x \in X} \frac{1}{1-x} = \sum_{r=0}^{\infty} h_r(X)$$

Using this as well as $e_m = P_{(1^m)}$ we get

$$P_{\nu}(X)e_{m}(X)\sum_{r=0}^{\infty}h_{r}(X)=\sum_{\eta}t^{n(\eta)}\frac{(q)_{\eta}}{c_{\eta}'}P_{\nu}(X)P_{\eta}(X)P_{(1^{m})}(X).$$

By a double use of $P_{\mu}P_{\nu} = f^{\lambda}_{\mu\nu}P_{\lambda}$ this leads to

$$P_{\nu}(X)e_{m}(X)\sum_{r=0}^{\infty}h_{r}(X) = \sum_{\eta}t^{n(\eta)}\frac{(q)_{\eta}}{c'_{\eta}}P_{\nu}(X)P_{\eta}(X)P_{(1^{m})}(X)$$
$$= \sum_{\mu,\eta}t^{n(\eta)}\frac{(q)_{\eta}}{c'_{\eta}}f^{\mu}_{\eta,(1^{m})}(q,t)P_{\mu}(X)P_{\nu}(X)$$
$$= \sum_{\lambda,\mu,\eta}t^{n(\eta)}\frac{(q)_{\eta}}{c'_{\eta}}f^{\mu}_{\eta,(1^{m})}(q,t)f^{\lambda}_{\mu\nu}(q,t)P_{\lambda}(X)$$
$$= \sum_{\lambda,\mu}\mathrm{sk}_{\mu/(1^{m})}(q,t)f^{\lambda}_{\mu\nu}(q,t)P_{\lambda}(X),$$
$$(2.8)$$

where the final equality follows from the a = q case of (2.6). Equating coefficients of $P_{\lambda}(X)$ in (2.7) and (2.8) yields

$$\sum_{\substack{\mu\\|\lambda-\mu|=m}} \operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(q,t) \operatorname{sk}_{\mu/\nu}(q,t) = \sum_{\mu} \operatorname{sk}_{\mu/(1^m)}(q,t) f_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda}(q,t)$$

By (1.4),

$$\mathrm{sk}_{\lambda/(1^m)}(0,t) = \mathrm{sk}_{\lambda/(1^m)}(t) = t^{n(\lambda/(1^m))} \begin{bmatrix} \lambda_1' \\ m \end{bmatrix}_t = t^{n(\lambda) - \binom{m}{2}} \begin{bmatrix} \lambda_1' \\ m \end{bmatrix}_{t^{-1}},$$

so that for q = 0 we obtain [9, Theorem 7]

$$\sum_{\substack{\mu\\|\lambda-\mu|=m}} \operatorname{vs}_{\lambda/\mu}(t) \operatorname{sk}_{\mu/\nu}(t) = \sum_{\mu} t^{n(\lambda) - \binom{m}{2}} f^{\lambda}_{\mu\nu}(t) \begin{bmatrix} \lambda'_1\\ m \end{bmatrix}_{t^{-1}}.$$

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