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ON THE EQUIVALENCE OF MINTY'S PAINTING  
THEOREM AND TELLEGEN'S THEOREM

by  
H. Narayanan

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ELECTRONICS RESEARCH LABORATORY  
College of Engineering  
University of California, Berkeley  
94720

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H. Narayanan\*

Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences  
and the Electronics Research Laboratory  
University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720

ABSTRACT

We show in this paper that Minty's Painting Theorem and Tellegen's Theorem are equivalent. We also present a generalization of Minty's Theorem to vector spaces over the real field and a new proof of the theorem.

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On leave from the Department of Electrical Engineering, 11T Bombay, 400078 India.

## 1. Introduction

Tellegen's Theorem and Minty's painting Theorem are widely recognized as two of the most basic results in network theory [1], [2]. Since they are both purely topological it is of some interest to explore their relationship to each other. We show in this paper that they are essentially equivalent. It is however rather difficult to give a convincing proof of this fact by simply using one of these results to prove the other, for, in the process, we could also be using other properties of graphs implicitly. We therefore proceed as follows: we state Minty's painting condition for two different graphs and show that if two graphs satisfy this condition their respective coboundary and cycle spaces must be complementary orthogonal. Next we generalize Minty's Painting Conditions to vector spaces over real fields and show that if two spaces  $\nu_1, \nu_2$  are complementary orthogonal they must satisfy Minty's Painting Condition.

## 2. Preliminaries

We deal with finite sets throughout. If  $S$  is a set then  $|S|$  is the cardinality of  $S$ . A *vector*  $f$  on  $S$  over the real field  $\mathbb{R}$  is a function  $f: S \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ . *Addition, scalar multiplication* and *linear combination* are defined as usual for vectors on the same set. A collection of vectors is said to be a *vector space* if it is closed under addition and scalar multiplication. *Rank* of a vector space  $\nu$  is denoted  $r(\nu)$ . *Support* of a vector  $f$  is denoted  $\|f\|$  and is the set of all elements on which  $f$  takes nonzero values. A vector  $f$  is said to be *minimal* in  $\nu$  iff no  $g \in \nu$  such that  $\|g\|$  is properly contained in  $\|f\|$ . If vectors  $f, g$  are on  $S$  then  $\langle f, g \rangle \equiv \sum_{e \in S} f(e)g(e)$ .  $f, g$  are said to be *orthogonal* iff  $\langle f, g \rangle = 0$ . The collection of all vectors orthogonal to every vector in a vector space  $\nu$  on  $S$  forms another vector space. We denote it by  $\nu^*$ .  $\nu, \nu^*$  are said to be complementary orthogonal. Let  $\nu$  be a vector space on  $S$ . Then

$$\nu \cdot T \equiv \{f_T: \text{there exists } f_S \in \nu \text{ such that } f_T = f_S / T\}$$

$$\nu \times T \equiv \{f_T: \text{there exists } f_S \in \nu \text{ such that } f_T = f_S / T \text{ and } f_S(e) = 0, e \in S - T\}$$

We will use the following simple results without proof (See [3]).

**Theorem P1.** Let  $\nu$  be a vector space on  $S$ . Then

$$(a) (\nu^*)^a = \nu$$

$$(b) (\nu) + \tau(\nu^*) = |S|$$

**Theorem P2.** Let  $\nu$  be a vector space  $S$ . Let  $T \subseteq S$ . Then

$$(a) (\nu \cdot T)^* = \nu^* \times T$$

$$(b) (\nu \times T)^* = \nu^* \cdot T$$

We assume familiarity with the usual definitions of directed graphs, circuits, cutsets, forests, coforests, fundamental circuit matrix, fundamental cutset matrix, circuit vector, cutset vector, etc. We denote the fundamental circuit of a forest  $T$  of graph  $G$  with respect to the edge  $e$  outside  $T$  as  $L(G, e, T)$  ( $L$  for 'loop') and the fundamental cutset of a coforest  $\bar{T}$  of graph  $G$  with respect to the edge  $e$  outside  $\bar{T}$  as  $C(G, e, \bar{T})$ . The space of vectors generated by the rows of a fundamental circuit (cutset) matrix of  $G$  is called the space of cycles (coboundaries) of  $G$  and is denoted by  $\nu_{cy}(G)$  ( $\nu_{cob}(G)$ ).

### 3. Minty's Painting Theorem Implies Tellegem's Theorem

**Definition 3.1.** Let  $G$  be a directed graph on  $S$ . Let  $S_p, S_q$  be disjoint subsets of  $S$ . We say that a cutset (circuit)  $T$  is *pq-directed* iff  $T \subseteq S_p \cup S_q$  and all the edges of  $T \cap S_q$  are similarly oriented in the cutset (circuit). We say  $T$  *meets*  $e$  iff  $e \in T$ .

We now state Minty's painting condition for graphs (MPCG).

**Definition 3.2: MPCG:** Let  $G_1, G_2$  be directed graphs on  $S$ . We say that the circuits of  $G_1$  and the cutsets of  $G_2$  satisfy MPCG iff *exactly one* of (a), (b) below is true for every partition of  $S$  into sets  $S_r$  ('red'),  $S_b$  ('blue'),  $S_g$  ('green') with  $e^*$  (dark green) belonging to  $S_g$ .

- (a) there exists an  $rg$ -directed circuit in  $G_1$  that meets  $e^*$
- (b) there exists a  $bg$ -directed cutset in  $G_2$  that meets  $e^*$

We now show that if circuits of  $G_1$  and cutsets of  $G_2$  satisfy MPCG then  $\nu_{cob}(G_2), \nu_{cy}(G_1)$  are complementary orthogonal. Note that this is essentially the same as saying that Minty's painting theorem (which states that circuits of  $G_1$  and cutsets of  $G_2$  satisfy MPCG) implies Tellegen's theorem. We need the following simple Lemmas.

**Lemma 3.1.** Let  $G_1, G_2$  be directed graphs on  $S$ . Let circuits of  $G_1$  and cutsets of  $G_2$  satisfy MPCG. Then no coforest of  $G_1$  contains a cutset of  $G_2$  i.e., every coforest of  $G_1$  is contained in some coforest of  $G_2$ .

**Proof.** Let coforest  $\bar{T}_1$  of  $G_1$  contain cutset  $C_2$  of  $G_2$ . Let  $e \in C_2$  choose  $(\bar{T}_1 - e)$  as  $S_b$  (blue), forest  $T_1$  as  $S_r$  (red) and  $\{e\}$  as  $S_g$  (green). Let  $e$  be chosen as  $e^*$ . Let  $L_1 = L(G_1, e, T_1)$ . Observe that the simultaneous existence of  $L_1$  and  $C_2$  constitutes a violation of MPCG for circuits of  $G_1$  and cutsets of  $G_2$ . Hence  $\bar{T}_1$  contains no cutset of  $G_2$ .

**Lemma 3.2.** Let  $G_1, G_2$  be directed graphs on  $S$ . Let circuits of  $G_1$  and cutsets of  $G_2$  satisfy MPCG. Let  $\bar{T}_1, \bar{T}_2$  be coforests of  $G_1, G_2$  respectively such that  $\bar{T}_1 \subseteq \bar{T}_2$ . Then  $\bar{T}_1 = \bar{T}_2$ .

**Proof.** Suppose  $\bar{T}_1 \subseteq \bar{T}_2$  but not equal to it. Let  $e \in \bar{T}_2 - \bar{T}_1$ . Let the correspond-

ing forests of  $G_1, G_2$  be  $T_1, T_2$  respectively. Choose  $\bar{T}_2 - e$  as  $S_b$  ("blue"),  $e$  as  $e^*$  ("dark green") and  $\{e\}$  as  $S_g$  ("green") and  $T_2$  as  $S_r$  ("red"). Since  $e \cup S_r$  contains no circuit of  $G_1$  and  $e \cup S_b$  contains no cutset of  $G_2$  it follows that circuits of  $G_1$  and cutsets of  $G_2$  cannot satisfy MPCG. We conclude that  $\bar{T}_2 - \bar{T}_1 = \varphi$ . Hence  $\bar{T}_1 = \bar{T}_2$ .

**Theorem 3.1.** Let  $G_1, G_2$  be directed graphs on  $S$  such that the circuits of  $G_1$  and the cutsets of  $G_2$  satisfy MPCG. Then

$$(\nu_{cy}(G_1))^* = \nu_{cob}(G_2)$$

**Proof.** By Lemmas 3.1, 3.2 every forest of  $G_1$  is also a forest of  $G_2$ . Let  $T$  be a

of  $G_1$  and  $G_2$ .  $B^1 = \begin{bmatrix} \bar{T} & T_1 \\ u & T \end{bmatrix}$  be a fundamental circuit matrix of  $G_1$  and

let  $Q^2 = \begin{bmatrix} \bar{T} & T \\ Q_{11}^2 & U \end{bmatrix}$  be a fundamental cutset matrix of  $G_2$  with respect to this

forest. We now show that any row of  $B^1$  is orthogonal to any row of  $Q^2$ . Let  $L = L(G_1, e_1, T)$  and let  $C = C(G_2, e_2, \bar{T})$ . Then  $C \cap L$  has precisely two elements, namely  $e_1$  and  $e_2$  with  $e_1 \in T$  and  $e_2 \in \bar{T}$ . Consider the rows  $i_L$  of  $B^1$  and  $v_C$  of  $Q^2$ . Now choose  $\{e_1, e_2\}$  as  $S_g$  (green),  $e_1$  as  $e^*$  (dark green),  $\bar{T} - e_1$  as  $S_b$  (blue) and  $T - e_2$  as  $S_r$  (red). If there is a  $bg$ -directed cutset of  $G_2$  that meets  $e_1$  it can only be  $C$  and if there is an  $rg$ -directed circuit of  $G_1$  that meets  $e_1$  it can only be  $L$  since the fundamental circuit of  $T$  with respect to  $e_2$  in  $G_1$  is unique and the fundamental cutset of  $\bar{T}$  with respect to  $e_1$  in  $G_2$  is unique. By MPCG there exists a  $bg$ -directed cutset of  $G_2$  that meets  $e_1$  or there exists an  $rg$ -directed circuit of  $G_1$  that meets  $e_1$  but *not both*. We therefore conclude that  $i_L(e_1) \cdot v_C(e_1) = -i_L(e_2) \cdot v_C(e_2)$ . Hence  $\langle i_L, v_C \rangle = 0$ . Now  $r(\nu_{cob}(G_2)) + r(\nu_{cy}(G_1)) = |S|$  since number of rows  $B^1$  + number of rows of

$Q^2 = |S|$ . Hence  $(\nu_{cy}(G_1))^* = \nu_{cob}(G_2)$ .

Q.E.D.

#### 4. Tellegen's Theorem Implies Minty's Painting Theorem

In this section we generalize Minty's Painting condition to vector spaces over the real field. We then show that two vector spaces  $\nu_1, \nu_2$  on  $S$  are orthogonal only if they satisfy Minty's Painting condition. It is then easy to see that Tellegen's theorem implies Minty's Painting Theorem.

**Definition 4.1.** Let  $\nu$  be a vector space on  $S$ . Let  $S_p, S_q$  be disjoint subsets of  $S$ . We say that a vector  $f$  in  $\nu$  is  $pq$ -directed iff  $\|f\| \subseteq S_p \cup S_q$  and  $f(e_1), f(e_2)$  have the same sign whenever they are nonzero and  $e_1, e_2 \in S_q$ . We say that  $f$  meets  $e^*$  iff  $f(e^*) \neq 0$ .

**Definition 4.2.** (Minty's painting conditions for vector spaces (WMPCV and MPCV stand for weaker and stronger forms)). Let  $\nu_1, \nu_2$  be vector spaces on  $S$  over  $\mathbb{R}$ .  $(\nu_1, \nu_2)$  satisfy (MPCV) WMPCV iff exactly one of (a), (b) below is true for every partition of  $S$  into sets  $S_r, S_b, S_g$  with  $e^* \in S_g$ .

- (a) There exists a (minimal) vector in  $\nu_1$ , that meets  $e^*$  and is  $rg$ -directed;
- (b) There exists a (minimal) vector in  $\nu_2$  that meets  $e^*$  and is  $bg$ -directed.

**Theorem 4.1.** Let  $\nu$  be a vector space on  $S$  over  $\mathbb{R}$ . Then  $(\nu, \nu^*)$  satisfy WMPCV.

**Proof.** We first show that both (a) and (b) of WMPCV cannot hold simultaneously. Suppose  $i \in \nu$  and satisfies (a) and  $v \in \nu^*$  and satisfies (b). Then clearly  $i(e) \cdot v(e) \neq 0$  only if  $e \in S_g$ . It follows that if  $i(e) \cdot v(e)$  is not equal to zero it always has the same sign. Hence  $\langle i, v \rangle \neq 0$  since  $i(e^*), v(e^*)$  are nonzero. But this contradicts the fact that  $i, v$  belong to  $\nu, \nu^*$  respectively. We conclude that (a), (b) of WMPCV cannot be simultaneously satisfied.



We will now show that at least one of (a), (b) must be true. This is obviously so if  $|S| = 1$ . Suppose this is so for  $|S| = n-1$ . Let  $|S| = n$ . Let  $S$  be partitioned into  $S_r, S_b, S_g$  and  $e^* \in S_g$ . We now consider a number of cases.

**Case 1.**  $S_b \neq \varnothing$ .

Let  $e \in S_b$ . Consider  $\nu \cdot (S-e)$ . By the inductive assumption WMPCV holds for  $(\nu \times (S-e), (\nu \times (S-e))^*)$  with respect to the partition  $(S_r, S_b - e, S_g)$  and the element  $e^*$ , i.e., there exists a  $bg$ -directed vector  $\mathbf{v}$  that meets  $e^*$  in  $\nu^* \cdot (S-e)$ . Or there exists an  $rg$ -directed vector  $\mathbf{i}$  that meets  $e^*$  in  $\nu \times (S-e)$ , since by Theorem P2,  $(\nu \times (S-e))^* = \nu^* \cdot (S-e)$ . Since  $e \in S_b$  it follows that there must exist a  $bg$ -directed vector, that meets  $e^*$ , in  $\nu^*$  or an  $rg$ -directed vector, that meets  $e^*$ , in  $\nu$ .

**Case 2.**  $S_b \cup (S_g - e^*) = \varnothing$ .

We have,  $r(\nu^* \times e^*) + r(\nu \cdot e^*) = 1$  by Theorem P1. It follows that we have either a vector  $\mathbf{v}$  in  $\nu^*$  with  $\|\mathbf{v}\| = e^*$  or we have an  $rg$ -directed vector in  $\nu$ . Thus the theorem holds.

**Case 3.**  $S_b = \varnothing, S_g - e^* \neq \varnothing$ .

Let  $e \in S_g - e^*$ . By the inductive assumption the theorem holds for  $(\nu \times (S-e), \nu^* \cdot (S-e))$  and  $(\nu \cdot (S-e), \nu^* \times (S-e))$ , with respect to the partition  $(S_r, S_b, S_g - e)$  and the element  $e^*$ . Suppose there exists a  $bg$ -directed vector  $\mathbf{v}$  that meets  $e^*$  in  $\nu^* \times (S-e)$  or an  $rg$ -directed vector  $\mathbf{i}$  that meets  $e^*$  in  $\nu \times (S-e)$ . Clearly these vectors can be extended to appropriate vectors which take zero value on  $e$ , meet  $e^*$ , and are  $bg$ -directed in  $\nu^*$  or  $rg$ -directed in  $\nu$  as the case may be. So the theorem holds in this case. Let us therefore assume the  $\nu^* \times (S-e)$  does not have vectors that meet  $e^*$  and are  $bg$ -directed and  $\nu \times (S-e)$  does not have vectors that meet  $e^*$  and are  $rg$ -directed. By the inductive assumption it follows that  $\nu \cdot (S-e)$  has an

$rg$ -directed vector  $i'$  that meets  $e^*$  and  $\nu^*(S-e)$  has a  $bg$ -directed vector  $v'$  that meets  $e^*$ . Let us without loss of generality assume that  $i'(e^*), v'(e^*)$  are positive. Now there exists vectors  $v'_s, i'_s$  belonging respectively to  $\nu^*, \nu$  such that  $v' = v'_s / (S-e)$  and  $i' = i'_s / (S-e)$ . We have  $\langle v'_s, i'_s \rangle = 0$ . But this means  $v'_s(e) \cdot i'_s(e) = -\langle v', i' \rangle$ . The right side is negative since  $v'$  is  $bg$ -directed and  $i'$  is  $rg$ -directed and  $v'(e^*), i'(e^*)$  are positive. Hence  $v'_s(e), i'_s(e)$  have opposite signs. Hence  $v'_s$  is  $bg$ -directed and meets  $e^*$  or  $i'_s$  is  $rg$ -directed and meets  $e^*$ . Thus the theorem holds for  $\nu, \nu^*$ .

Lemma 4.1 is needed for the proof of Theorem 4.2.

**Lemma 4.1.** Let  $\nu$  be a vector space on  $S$  over  $\mathbb{R}$ . Let  $v \in \nu$  and let  $e \in \|v\|$ . If  $v$  is not minimal there exists a vector  $v'$  such that  $e \notin \|v'\|$  and  $\|v'\| \subseteq \|v\|$ .

**Proof.** There exists a minimal vector  $v''$  such that  $\|v''\| \subseteq \|v\|$ . If  $e \notin v''$ , we are done. Otherwise consider minimal  $v - \left( \frac{v(e)}{v''(e)} \right) \cdot v''$ . This vector satisfies the required conditions.

**Theorem 4.2.** Let  $\nu$  be a vector space on  $S$ . Let  $S_p, S_q$  be disjoint subsets of  $S$ . Let  $e \in S_q$ . Let  $v$  be a  $pq$ -directed vector of  $\nu$  that meets  $e$ . Then there exists a minimal vector in  $\nu$ , that meets  $e$ , is  $pq$ -directed, and has its support contained in the support of  $v$ .

**Proof.** The theorem clearly holds when the cardinality of  $\|v\| = 1$ . Assume it holds when  $\|v\| < n$ . Let  $\|v\| = n$ . If  $v$  is minimal there is nothing to prove. If  $v$  is not minimal we know by Lemma 4.1 that there exists a vector  $v'$  that does not meet  $e$  and satisfies  $\|v'\| \subseteq \|v\|$ . Let  $x \in \|v'\|$  be such that

$\frac{|v(x)|}{|v'(x)|} = \min \frac{|v(y)|}{|v'(y)|}$ . Consider the vector  $\left[ v - \left( \frac{v(x)}{v'(x)} \right) v' \right]$ . This is

$pq$ -directed, meets  $e$  and has cardinality less than  $n$ . It therefore contains a

minimal vector belonging to  $\nu$  that is  $pq$ -directed and meets  $e$ .

Theorems 4.1 and 4.2 imply

**Theorem 4.3.**  $(\nu, \nu^*)$  satisfy MPCV.

We state the following simple result from graph theory without proof.

**Lemma 4.3.** Let  $G$  be a directed graph. If  $f$  is a minimal coboundary (cycle) of  $G$  there exists a cutset (circuit)  $T$  of  $G$  such that the cutset (circuit) vector  $f_T$  corresponding to  $T$  satisfies  $f = \lambda f_T$  for some scalar  $\lambda$ .

**Remark.** Although we have generalized Minty's Theorem to vector spaces over the real field it must be pointed out that the result is useful primarily when all nonzero entries of a minimal vector can be taken to be of the same magnitude. This happens only where the vector space is generated by a unimodular matrix. For such vector spaces essentially every property of graphs, that is provable by Minty's Theorem, would be true.

Tellegen's Theorem, Theorem 4.3 and Lemma 4.3 imply

**Theorem 4.4.** (Minty's Painting Theorem for Graphs). The circuits of a directed graph  $G$  and the cutsets of  $G$  satisfy MPCG.

### Conclusion

We have shown in this paper that Tellegen's Theorem and Minty's Painting Theorem for graphs are equivalent. We have in the process generalized Minty's Painting Theorem to vector spaces over the real field and also have given a new proof for it.

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