# *Pacific Journal of Mathematics*

# THE PROBABILISTIC ZETA FUNCTION OF PSL(2, *q*), OF THE SUZUKI GROUPS  ${}^{2}B_{2}(q)$  AND OF THE REE GROUPS  ${}^{2}G_{2}(q)$

MASSIMILIANO PATASSINI

Volume 240 No. 1 March 2009

# THE PROBABILISTIC ZETA FUNCTION OF PSL(2, *q*), OF THE SUZUKI GROUPS  ${}^{2}B_{2}(q)$  AND OF THE REE GROUPS  ${}^{2}G_{2}(q)$

MASSIMILIANO PATASSINI

We study the Dirichlet polynomial  $P_G(s)$  of the groups  $G = PSL(2, q)$ ,  ${}^{2}B_{2}(q)$ , and  ${}^{2}G_{2}(q)$ . For such *G* we show that if *H* is a group satisfying  $P_H(s) = P_G(s)$ , then *H*/Frat(*H*)  $\cong$  *G*. We also prove that, when *q* is not a prime number,  $P_G(s)$  is irreducible in the ring of Dirichlet polynomials. Finally, we prove that the coset poset of *G* is noncontractible.

## 1. Introduction

Let *G* be a finite group. We define the D[irichlet poly](#page-16-0)nomial associated to *G* by

$$
P_G(s) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{a_n(G)}{n^s}, \quad \text{where} \quad a_n(G) = \sum_{\substack{H \leq G \\ |G: \overline{H}| = n}} \mu_G(H).
$$

Here  $\mu_G : \mathcal{L} \to \mathbb{Z}$  is the Möbius function on the subgroup lattice  $\mathcal{L}$  of *G*, defined inductively by  $\mu_G(G) = 1$ ,  $\mu_G(H) = -\sum_{K > H} \mu_G(K)$ . In [Hall 1936], it was observed that for any  $t \in \mathbb{N}$ , the number  $P_G(t)$  is the probability that *t* randomly chosen elements of *G* generate the group *G*. The multiplicative inverse  $1/P<sub>G</sub>(s)$ is called the probabilistic zeta function of *G* [Boston 1996; Mann 1996].

More generally, let  $k \ge 1$  and let  $p_1, \ldots, p_k$  be prime numbers. We define the Dirichlet polynomial  $P_G^{(p_1,...,p_k)}$  $G^{(p_1,...,p_k)}(s)$  by

$$
P_G^{(p_1,\ldots,p_k)}(s) = \sum_{\substack{(n,p_i)=1\\ \forall i \in \{1,\ldots,k\}}} \frac{a_n(G)}{n^s}.
$$

A problem that arises naturally is to determine which properties of the group *G* are encoded by the polynomial  $P_G(s)$ . It is known that  $P_{G/Frat(G)}(s) = P_G(s)$ (see Lemma 5), so from the Dirichlet polynomial of *G* we can only hope to read off properties of  $G/\text{Frat}(G)$ . Further, it was noted in [Gaschütz 1959] that  $P_G(s)$ does not uniquely determine the isomorphism class of *G*/Frat(*G*).

*MSC2000:* primary 20D30; secondary 20P05, 11M41, 20D06, 20D60, 20E28.

*Keywords:* probabilistic zeta function, simple Lie groups, Suzuki groups, Ree groups, simple linear groups, coset poset.

[Neverthe](#page-16-3)less, certain group theoretic properties are given by the Dirichlet polynomial. For instance, If *G* and *H* are groups such that  $P_G(s) = P_H(s)$  and *G* is soluble (or *p*-soluble, or perfect), then *H* has the same property [Damian and Lucchini 2003; Detomi and Lucchini 2003b]. If *G* is simple and  $P_G(s) = P_H(s)$ , [then](#page-16-3)  $H/\text{Frat}(H)$  is simple [Da[mian an](#page-15-3)[d Lucchini 2007\].](#page-15-2)

<span id="page-2-0"></span>**Conjecture** [\[Damian et al.](#page-16-3) 2004]. *If G is simple and*  $P_G(s) = P_H(s)$ , *then G is isomorphic to*  $H/\text{Frat}(H)$ *.* 

This conjecture remains open, but partial results are known. The conjecture holds when *G* is isomorphic to a simple alternating group [Damian and Lucchini 2004; Damian et al. 2004], to a simple sporadic group [Damian and Lucchini 2006] or to PSL(2, *p*) for *p* prime [Damian et al. 2004]. Similarly:

<span id="page-2-1"></span>Theorem 1 [Damian and Lucchini 2006, Theorem 14]. *If G*<sup>1</sup> *and G*<sup>2</sup> *are simple groups of Lie type with the same characteristic, then*  $P_{G_1}(s) = P_{G_2}(s)$  *if and only if*  $G_1$  *is isomorphic to*  $G_2$ *.* 

In this paper we prove the conjecture when *G* is one of the following groups of Lie type: PSL(2, *q*), the Suzuki groups  ${}^{2}B_{2}(q)$  and the Ree groups  ${}^{2}G_{2}(q)$ . More precisely:

Main Theorem. *Suppose G is of the form*

(1-1)  
\n
$$
\begin{cases}\nG(q, 1) := PSL(2, q) & with \ q = p^f \ge 4, \ p \ prime, \ f > 0, \ or \\
G(q, 2) := {}^2B_2(q) & with \ q = 2^f, \ f > 1 \ odd, \ \ or \\
G(q, 3) := {}^2G_2(q) & with \ q = 3^f, \ f > 1 \ odd.\n\end{cases}
$$

*[If](#page-2-0) H* is a group and  $P_G(s) = P_H(s)$ , then

$$
H/\text{Frat}(H) \cong G.
$$

For  $G = \text{PSL}(2, q)$ , with  $q \leq 9$ , this can be proved directly.

We outline the proof in the complementary case; see Sections 3 and 4 for details. In view of Theorem 1, we need only show that the characteristic *p* of *G* can be recovere[d f](#page-5-0)rom [the](#page-8-0) Dirichlet polynomial  $P_G(s)$ . To do this, we recall from [Damian] and Lucchini 2006, Theorem 3] that *if L is a group of Lie type of characteristic p and*  $X \in \mathrm{Syl}_p(L)$ *, then*  $|P_L^{(p)}|$  $|L^{(p)}(0)| = |X|$ . In particular,  $P_G^{(p)}(0)$  $G_G^{(p)}(s)$  is a power of p. We show that if t is a prime number different from p, then  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(t)}(s)$  is not a power of *t*. Indeed, if *t* does not divid[e the order of](#page-16-4) *G*, then  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G_G^{(t)}(0) = P_G(0) = 0$ . Also, if *t* divides  $|G|$ , then Propositions 8 and 12 show that  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(t)}(0)$  is not a power of *t*. We can now obtain the characteristic of *G* from the polynomial  $P_G(s)$  as the unique prime number *r* such that  $P_G^{(r)}$  $G^{(r)}(0)$  is a power of *r*.

The proof does not use explicit formulas for the Dirichlet polynomials of the groups in question. However, using the results in [Downs 1991], we have computed

explicitly the Dirichlet polynomials for  $PSL(2, q)$  (see Section 7), and this makes it possible to test directly certain properties one might wonder about. For example, we disprove the following conjecture, proposed in [Damian and Lucchini 2006]:

*If G is a finite simple group, then*  $|G| = \text{lcm}\{n : a_n(G) \neq 0\}.$ 

A counterexample is provided by  $G = \text{PSL}(2, p)$  with  $p \equiv \pm 2 \pmod{5}$  and  $p \equiv 1$ (mod 8), for which we have  $\text{lcm}\lbrace n : a_n(G) \neq 0 \rbrace = |G|/2$ , according to the list in Section 7.

*F[urther resu](#page-10-0)lts.* We let  $\Re$  denote the ring of Dirichlet polynomials:

$$
\mathcal{R} = \left\{ \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \frac{a_m}{m^s} : a_m \in \mathbb{Z}, m \ge 1, \, \left| \{m : a_m \neq 0\} \right| < \infty \right\}.
$$

We recall that  $\Re$  is a factorial domain [Damian et al. 2004]. Also, if *G* is a finite group,  $P_G(s)$  lies in  $\Re$ . Section 5 is devoted to the study of the irreducibility of  $P_G(s)$  in  $\Re$ . An important role in the factorization of  $P_G(s)$  is played by the normal subgroups of  $G$ [. In fact, if](#page-15-4)  $N$  i[s a normal subgroup of](#page-16-5)  $G$ , we define

$$
P_{G,N}(s) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{a_n(G, N)}{n^s}, \text{ where } a_n(G, N) = \sum_{\substack{|G:H|=n\\H N = G}} \mu_G(H).
$$

Then  $P_G(s) = P_{G/N}(s) P_{G,N}(s)$ ; see [Brown 2000] or [Detomi and Lucchini 2003a]. Now, if *G* is a group and  $P_G(s)$  is irreducible in  $\Re$ , then  $G/Frat(G)$  is simple. But the converse is not true. For example,  $P_{PSL(2,7)}(s)$  is reducible. Moreover, we know fro[m \[Damian et al](#page-2-1). 2004, Lemma 11, Proposition 14 and 15] that  $P_{\text{Alt}_p}(s)$ *is irreducible in*  $\Re$  *for any prime number*  $p \geq 5$ *, and P*<sub>PSL(2,*p*)(*s*) *is reducible in*  $\Re$ </sub> *if and only if p*  $\geq$  5 *and p* =  $2^e$  − 1 (a Mersenne prime) *with e*  $\equiv$  3 (mod 4). (These are the only known examples of finite simple groups whose Dirichlet polynomial [is](#page-15-4) reducible.) We will prove:

Proposition 2. *If G is as in the Main Theorem and is not isomorphic to* PSL(2, *p*) *for*  $p = 2^e - 1$ ,  $e \equiv 3 \pmod{4}$ , *then*  $P_G(s)$  *is irreducible in*  $\Re$ .

In Section 6 we study the topological interpretation of the value  $P_G(-1)$  proposed in [Brown 2000]. Given a finite group *G*, we define the simplicial complex  $\Delta$ , where the simplices of  $\Delta$  are finite chains of the coset poset of *G*. If  $\Delta$  is contractible, its re[duced Eule](#page-12-0)r characteristic  $\tilde{\chi}(\Delta) := \chi(\Delta) - 1$  is zero. Brown showed that the number  $\tilde{\chi}(\Delta)$  is equal to  $-P_G(-1)$ . Hence, if  $P_G(-1) \neq 0$ , the simplicial complex associated to the group  $G$  is not contractible. Brown also proved that  $P_G(-1)$  is nonzero for a soluble group *G* and conjectured that  $P_G(-1)$ is nonzero for every finite group *G*. At the time of this writing, there is no known finite group *G* such that  $P_G(-1) = 0$ . In Section 6 we prove:

**Proposition 3.** *If G is as in the Main Theorem, then*  $P_G(-1) \neq 0$ *.* 

### 2. Some lemmas

**Lemma 4** [Zsigmondy 1892]. Let  $a, n \geq 2$  be integers, and assume it is not the *case that*

 $n = 2, a = 2<sup>s</sup> - 1$  *with*  $s \ge 2$  *or*  $n = 6, a = 2$ .

*[T](#page-16-0)hen there exists a prime divisor q of*  $a^n - 1$  *such that q does not divide*  $a^i - 1$  *for any i satisfying*  $0 < i < n$ . Such a divisor is called a **Zsigmondy prime for**  $\langle a, n \rangle$ .

<span id="page-4-1"></span>[We wil](#page-16-7)l use repeatedly, often without mention, the following results on the Möbius function of the subgroup lattice of G.

**Lemma 5** [Hall [1936\].](#page-4-1) Let G be a finite group and H a subgroup of G. If  $\mu$ <sup>G</sup>(*H*) *does not vanish*, *H is an intersection of maximal subgroups of G.*

Lemma 6 [Hawkes et al. 1989, Theorem 4.5]. *Let G be a finite group and H a* subgroup of G. The index  $|N_G(H): H|$  divides  $\mu_G(H)|G:H|$ .

<span id="page-4-0"></span>If *G* is perfect, that is, if  $G = G'$ , Lemma 6 says that  $\mu_G(H) |G : N_G(H)|$  is divisible by  $|G:H|$ .

Notation. *Throughout the paper*, *p is a prime number*, *f is a positive integer*, *and*  $q := p^f$  $q := p^f$  $q := p^f$  *is at least* 4*.* 

#### 3.  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(t)}(0)$  for the projective linear group  $G = \text{PSL}(2, q)$

In this section, assume  $G = \text{PSL}(2, q)$  and define  $\delta = \text{gcd}(q-1, 2)$ .

**Theorem 7** [Huppert 1967, p. 213]. Let  $q \geq 5$ . If M is a maximal subgroup of PSL(2, *q*), *then M is isomorphic to one of the following groups*:

- (1)  $C_p^f \rtimes C_{(q-1)/\delta};$
- (2)  $D_{2(q-1)/\delta} = N_G(C_{2(q-1)/\delta})$ , *for q*  $\notin \{5, 7, 9, 11\};$
- (3)  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta} = N_G(C_{2(q+1)/\delta})$ , for  $q \notin \{7, 9\};$
- (4) PGL(2,  $q_0$ ), *for*  $q = q_0^2$ ,  $q_0 \neq 2$ ;
- (5) PSL(2,  $q_0$ ), *for*  $q = q_0^r$ ,  $q_0 \neq 2$  *where r is an odd prime*;
- (6)  $A_5$ , for  $p \neq 2$  and  $q = p$  or  $p^2$ . If  $q = p$ , then  $q \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{5}$  and if  $q = p^2$ , *then*  $p \equiv \pm 3 \pmod{5}$ ;
- (7) *A*<sub>4</sub>, *for*  $q = p \equiv \pm 3 \pmod{8}$  *and*  $q \not\equiv \pm 1 \pmod{5}$ ;
- (8) *S*<sub>4</sub>, *for*  $q = p \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{8}$ .

<span id="page-4-2"></span>

<span id="page-5-0"></span>**Proposition 8.** Let t be a prime number dividing the order of G. If  $t \neq p$ , then  $|P_G^{(t)}|$  $G^{(t)}(0)$  *is a power of t if and only if* 

$$
(q, t) \in \{(4, 5), (5, 2), (7, 2), (8, 3), (9, 2), (9, 5)\}.
$$

*If*  $t = p$ , *then*  $P_G^{(t)}(0) = -q$ .

*Proof.* If  $q \leq 11$  or  $q+1$  divides 120, the proposition holds by direct inspection; here are the corresponding values of  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(l)}(0).$ 

$\boldsymbol{q}$	$\overline{2}$ $t =$	3	5	7	11	19	23	29	59
4	-4	6	-5	$\theta$	$\theta$	$\theta$	$\theta$	0	0
5	$-4$	6	$-5$	$\theta$	$\theta$	$\theta$	0	0	$\Omega$
7	8	63	$\boldsymbol{0}$	$-7$	$\theta$	$\Omega$	0	0	$\Omega$
8	$-8$	$-27$	$\theta$	28	$\theta$	$\Omega$	$\theta$	0	
9	16	$-9$	25	$\theta$	$\boldsymbol{0}$		0	0	
11	144	$-21$	165	$\Omega$	$-11$	$\Omega$	0	0	
19	856	171	500	$\theta$	$\boldsymbol{0}$	$-19$	0	0	$\Omega$
23	760	1266	$\overline{0}$	$\boldsymbol{0}$	253	$\theta$	$-23$	0	0
29	3220	204	1625	406	$\theta$	$\Omega$	$\theta$	$-29$	
59	29088	3423	15400	$\boldsymbol{0}$	$\boldsymbol{0}$	0	$\Omega$	1711	-59

For the rest of the proof, assume  $q > 11$  and  $q+1 \nmid 120$ . Let  $\ell$  be a set of representatives of the conjugacy classes of subgroups of *G*. Set

(3-1) 
$$
\mathcal{A}_t = \{K \in \mathcal{C} : (|G:K|, t) = 1, \mu_G(K) \neq 0\}.
$$

By definition,

<span id="page-5-2"></span><span id="page-5-1"></span>
$$
P_G^{(t)}(s) = \sum_{K \in \mathcal{A}_t} \frac{\mu_G(K) |G:N_G(K)|}{|G:K|^s}.
$$

(1) *First consider the case*  $t = p$ *. Let Q be a Sylow p-subgroup of G. Since*  $|Q| = q$ , Theorem 7 yields that *Q* is contained in a maximal subgroup *M* of *G* isomorphic to  $C_p^f \rtimes C_{(q-1)/\delta}$ . Therefore,  $Q \cong C_p^f$  and  $N_G(Q) = M$ . Hence *Q* is contained in a unique maximal subgroup of *G*. Therefore we have

(3-2) 
$$
P_G^{(p)}(s) = 1 - \frac{q+1}{(q+1)^s},
$$

and hence  $P_G^{(p)}$  $G^{(p)}(0) = -q.$ 

(2) *Next consider the case where t divides*  $(q+1)/\delta$ *.* Let  $\mathcal{D}_t$  be the subset of  $\mathcal{A}_t$ consisting of *G* and of the maximal subgroups of *G* isomorphic to  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta}$ . Set  $\mathcal{B}_t = \mathcal{A}_t - \mathcal{D}_t$ . Using the equality  $1 - q(q-1)/2 = (q+1)(2-q)/2$ , we have

$$
P_G^{(t)}(0) = \frac{(q+1)(2-q)}{2} + \sum_{K \in \mathcal{B}_t} \mu_G(K) |G:N_G(K)|.
$$

Now let *K* be in  $\mathcal{B}_t$ . By Theorem 7, *K* is contained in a maximal subgroup *M* isomorphic to one of  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta}$ ,  $A_5$ ,  $A_4$ ,  $S_4$ ,  $PSL(2, q_0)$ ,  $PGL(2, q_0)$  for some  $q_0$ .

We claim that if  $K$  is the intersection of two distinct maximal subgroups  $M_1$  and *M*<sub>2</sub> isomorphic to  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta}$ , then *K* is contained in a maximal subgroup of *G* not isomorphic to  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta}$ . Indeed, for each divisor  $d > 2$  of  $(q+1)/\delta$ , there exists a unique cyclic su[bgroup](#page-16-8)  $C_d$  of order *d* in  $M_1$ . Hence  $C_d$  is normal, so it is contained in a unique maximal subgroup of  $G$ , i.e.,  $M_1$ . Thus, by the structure of the subgroup lattice of dihedral groups, either  $|M_1 \cap M_2|$  ≤ 2 or  $M_1 \cap M_2$  is a Klein four-group. In the former case,  $M_1 \cap M_2$  is not contained in  $\mathcal{B}_t$ , since the index of  $M_1 \cap M_2$ in *G* is divisible by  $(q+1)/\delta$ . In the latter case, the normalizer in *G* of the Klein four-group *M*1∩*M*<sup>2</sup> is either *A*<sup>4</sup> or *S*<sup>4</sup> [Huppert 1967, 8.16–8.17, Hilfssatz]. Hence  $K = M_1 \cap M_2$  is contained in a maximal subgroup of *G* not isomorphic to  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta}$ .

Suppose that  $q$  is a Mersenne prime greater than or equal to 31. By its definition,  $\mathcal{B}_t$  is empty. Therefore  $P_G^{(2)}$  $G_G^{(2)}(0)$  equals  $(q+1)(2-q)/2$ , which is not a power of 2.

Suppose that *q* is not a Mersenne prime. We claim there exists a prime divisor *z* of  $(q+1)/\delta$ , depending on *t*, such that if *K* lies in  $\mathcal{B}_t$ , then *z* divides  $|G:K|$ . Before proving our claim, we conclude the proof of the proposition in the current case (2). By Lemma 6, the prime *z* divides  $P_G^{(t)}$  $P_G^{(t)}(0)$ . Hence, if  $z \neq t$ , then  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(I)}(0)$ is not a power of *t*. Further, if  $z = t$ , then  $\mathcal{B}_t = \emptyset$  and so  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(t)}(0) = (q+1)(2-q)/2$ is not a power of *t*.

It remains to prove our claim. We consider two subcases.

(a)  $\mathcal{B}_t$  *contains a maximal subgroup of G isomorphic to A<sub>4</sub>, A<sub>5</sub> or S<sub>4</sub>. Then* Theorem 7 implies that  $f$  is either 1 or 2, and  $\mathcal{B}_t$  does not contain any maximal subgroup isomorphic to  $PSL(2, q_0)$ . We define the prime number *z* as follows:

if  $2^4$  divides  $q+1$ , let  $z = 2$ ; otherwise if  $3^2$  divides  $q+1$ , let  $z = 3$ ; otherwise if  $5^2$  divides  $q+1$ , let  $z = 5$ ; otherwise let *z* be a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 2f \rangle$  distinct from 3 and 5.

This is possible. Indeed, if  $2^4 \nmid q+1$ ,  $3^2 \nmid q+1$  and  $5^2 \nmid q+1$ , then  $q+1$  divides  $2^3 \cdot 3 \cdot 5 \cdot m$  for some natural number *m*. Since we are assuming that  $q+1$  does not divide 120, we have  $(m, 120) = 1$ . So there exists a Zsigmondy prime as required.

We claim that, if  $K \in \mathcal{B}_t$ , then *z* divides  $|G:K|$ . This is clear if *K* is contained in maximal subgroup isomorphic to  $A_4$ ,  $A_5$  or  $S_4$ . Now, suppose that  $\mathcal{B}_t$  contains a subgroup *M* isomorphic to PGL(2, *p*),  $q = p^2$ . In this case, *z* is greater than 2. Indeed, if  $z = 2$ , then  $2<sup>4</sup>$  divides  $q+1$ , so  $q$  is not a square, a contradiction. If  $z > 2$ , then *z* is a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 2f \rangle$ , so *z* divides  $|G : M|$ .

(b)  $\mathcal{B}_t$  *does not contain a maximal subgroup of G isomorphic to A<sub>4</sub>, A<sub>5</sub> or S<sub>4</sub>.* Choose *z* as a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 2f \rangle$ . Clearly, *z* divides  $|G : K|$  if  $K \in \mathcal{B}_t$ .

(3) We now turn to the remaining case, namely, *t divides*  $(q-1)/\delta$ . Let  $\mathcal{D}_t$  be the subset of  $A_t$  consisting of *G* and of the maximal subgroups of *G* isomorphic to  $C_p^f \rtimes C_{(p-1)/\delta}$ [. Se](#page-4-1)t  $\mathcal{B}_t = \mathcal{A}_t - \mathcal{D}_t$ . We have

$$
P_G^{(t)}(0) = 1 - (q+1) + \sum_{K \in \mathcal{B}_t} \mu_G(K) |G:N_G(K)| = -q + \sum_{K \in \mathcal{B}_t} \mu_G(K) |G:N_G(K)|.
$$

<span id="page-7-0"></span>By Theorem 7, if  $K \in \mathcal{B}_t$ , then *K* does not contain a Sylow *p*-subgroup *Q* of *G*. [Indeed,](#page-2-1) Q is contained in a unique maximal subgroup isomorphic to  $C_p^f \rtimes C_{(p-1)/\delta}$ . Hence, *p* divides  $|G:K|$ . By Lemma 6, *p* divides  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(t)}(0).$ 

#### 4.  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(U)}(0)$  for the Suzuki and Ree groups

<span id="page-7-2"></span>In this section *f* is odd and greater than 1, *p* is either 2 or 3, and  $G = G(q, p)$  in the notation of the Main Theorem; that is, *G* is either the Suzuki group  ${}^{2}B_{2}(q)$  or the Ree group <sup>2</sup> $G_2(q)$ . The order of *G* is  $q^p(q^p+1)(q-1)$ .

Define  $\alpha_q^{(\pm)} = q \pm \sqrt{pq} + 1$ . Note that  $gcd(\alpha_q^{(\pm)}, \alpha_q^{(-)}) = 1$  and  $\alpha_q^{(\pm)} \alpha_q^{(-)} =$  $\Phi_{2p}(q)$ , where  $\Phi_4(s) = s^2 + 1$  and  $\Phi_6(s) = s^2 - s + 1$ .

**Lemma 9.** *Let*  $p^{\beta}p_1^{\beta_1}$  $p_1^{\beta_1} \cdots p_n^{\beta_n}$  *be a prime factorization of f*, *where p<sub>i</sub>* > *p*,  $\beta_i \ge 1$ *for*  $i \in \{1, \ldots, n\}$ , *and*  $\beta \geq 0$ *. We have* 

$$
\gcd\left(\frac{\Phi_{2p}(q)}{\Phi_{2p}(s_1)},\ldots,\frac{\Phi_{2p}(q)}{\Phi_{2p}(s_n)},\alpha_q^{(\pm)}\right)>1,
$$

*where*  $s_i^{p_i} = q$  *for*  $i \in \{1, ..., n\}$ *.* 

*Proof.* Since *f* is odd,  $\beta = 0$  if  $p = 2$ .

Let  $k \le n, 1 \le i_1 < \cdots < i_k \le n$  and  $s_{i_1, ..., i_k} = p^{f/(p_{i_1}...p_{i_k})}$ . Note that

$$
\gcd(\Phi_{2p}(s_{i_1}),\ldots,\Phi_{2p}(s_{i_k}))=\Phi_{2p}(s_{i_1,\ldots,i_k})
$$

and

$$
\Phi_{2p}^{(\pm)}(s_{i_1,\dots,i_k}) = \gcd(\Phi_{2p}(s_{i_1,\dots,i_k}),\alpha_q^{(\pm)}) \in \big\{\alpha_{s_{i_1,\dots,i_k}}^{(+)},\alpha_{s_{i_1,\dots,i_k}}^{(-)}\big\}.
$$

Observe also that  $\frac{s_{i_1,...,i_k}}{p} < \Phi_{2p}^{(\pm)}(s_{i_1,...,i_k}) < p s_{i_1,...,i_k}$ . So we have

$$
\prod_{k=1}^{n} \left( \prod_{1 \le i_1 < \dots < i_k \le n} \Phi_{2p}^{(\pm)}(s_{i_1, \dots, i_k}) \right)^{(-1)^{k+1}} < \prod_{k=1}^{n} \left( \prod_{1 \le i_1 < \dots < i_k \le n} p^{(-1)^{k+1}} s_{i_1, \dots, i_k} \right)^{(-1)^{k+1}}
$$
\n
$$
\le p^{f-1} < \alpha_q^{(\pm)},
$$

<span id="page-7-1"></span>where for the second inequality we use that  $p_i - 1 \geq p$  for all *i* in  $\{1, \ldots, n\}$ . Now the lemma follows from this equality, whose verification is left to the reader:

$$
\gcd\left(\frac{\Phi_{2p}(q)}{\Phi_{2p}(s_1)},\ldots,\frac{\Phi_{2p}(q)}{\Phi_{2p}(s_n)},\alpha_q^{(\pm)}\right)\prod_{k=1}^n\left(\prod_{1\leq i_1<\cdots
$$

**Theorem 10** [Suzuki 1962]. Let  $p = 2$ . Any maximal subgroup of  $G = {}^2B_2(q)$  is *isomorphic to one of the following groups*:

- (1)  $H = Q \rtimes W$ , where Q is a Sylow 2-subgroup of G and W is a cyclic group of *order q*−1;
- <span id="page-8-1"></span>[\(2\)](#page-16-9)  $B_0 = N_G(W)$ , *a dihedral group of order* 2(*q*−1);
- (3)  $B_+ = A_+ \rtimes C_4$ , *where*  $A_+$  *is a cyclic group of order*  $\alpha_q^{(+)} = q +$ √  $\overline{2q} + 1;$
- (4)  $B_-=A_-\rtimes C_4$ , *where*  $A_-\textit{ is a cyclic group of order } a_q^{(-)}=q-1$ √  $\overline{2q} + 1;$
- (5)  ${}^{2}B_{2}(s)$ , *where q = s<sup>r</sup> for some prime number r*.

**Theorem 11** [Kleidman 1988]. Let  $p = 3$ . Any maximal subgroup of  $G = {}^{2}G_{2}(q)$ *is isomorphic to one of the following groups*:

- (1)  $H = Q \rtimes C_{q-1}$ , *where Q is a Sylow 3-subgroup of G*;
- (2)  $B = C_G(i)$ , where *i* is an involution of G. Furthermore,  $B \cong \langle i \rangle \times \text{PSL}(2, q)$ ;
- <span id="page-8-0"></span>(3)  $B_0 = N_G(\langle i, j \rangle)$ , with  $\langle i, j \rangle \cong C_2 \times C_2$ . Moreover,  $B_0 \cong (C_2 \times C_2 \times D_{(q+1)/2}) \rtimes$  $C_3$  *has order* 6(*q*+1); √
- (4)  $B_+ = A_+ \rtimes C_6$ , *where*  $A_+$  *is a cyclic group of order*  $a_q^{(+)} = q + q$  $\frac{3q}{+1}$ ;
- (5)  $B_ = A_ \rtimes C_6$  $B_ = A_ \rtimes C_6$  $B_ = A_ \rtimes C_6$ , *where*  $A_ -$  *is a cyclic group of order*  $\alpha_q^{(-)} = q -$ √  $\frac{3q}{+1}$ ;
- <span id="page-8-2"></span>(6)  ${}^{2}G_{2}(s)$ , *where*  $q = s^{r}$  *for some prime number r.*

**[P](#page-8-1)roposition 12.** Let t be a prime number dividing the order of G. If  $t \neq p$ , then  $|P_G^{(t)}|$  $G_G^{(t)}(0)$  *is not a power of t. If t* = *p*, *then*  $P_G^{(t)}(0) = -q^p$ .

*Proof.* Let  $A_t$  be defined as in  $(3-1)$ . We partition the proof into four cases.

(1) Assume that  $t = p$ . Let Q be a Sylow p-subgroup of G. Since  $|Q| = q^p$ , Theorems 10 and 11 show that *Q* is contained in a unique maximal subgroup isomorphic to *H*. Hence

$$
P_G^{(p)}(0) = \sum_{K \in \mathcal{A}_p} \mu_G(K) |G : N_G(K)| = 1 - (1 + q^p) = -q^p.
$$

(2) Assume that  $t | q+1$  and  $p = 3$ . Let r be a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle 3, f \rangle$ . Note that  $r \neq t$ . Let  $\mathcal{B}_t$  be the subset of  $\mathcal{A}_t$  consisting of the subgroups *K* of *G* such that *r* divides  $|G:K|$ .

By Theorem 11, if  $K \in \mathcal{A}_t - \mathcal{B}_t$  and  $K \neq G$ , every maximal subgroup containing *K* is isomorphic to *B*. We claim that if  $K \in \mathcal{A}_t - \mathcal{B}_t$  and  $K \neq G$ , then *K* is a maximal subgroup isomorphic to *B*. Indeed, assume that *K* is contained in the intersection of  $M_1$  and  $M_2$ , two distinct maximal subgroups of  $G$  isomorphic to  $B$ . Since  $M_1 \cong \text{PSL}(2, q) \times C_2$ , the intersection  $M_1 \cap M_2$  is isomorphic to a subgroup *L* of PSL(2, *q*)  $\times$  *C*<sub>2</sub>. Let  $\pi$ : PSL(2, *q*)  $\times$  *C*<sub>2</sub>  $\rightarrow$  PSL(2, *q*) be the projection on the first factor. If  $\pi(L) = \text{PSL}(2, q)$ , we have  $|M_2: M_1 \cap M_2| = |M_1: M_1 \cap M_2|$ 

 $|PSL(2, q) \times C_2 : L| \leq 2$ ; hence  $M_1 \cap M_2$  is normalized by  $M_1$  and  $M_2$ , a contradiction. If  $\pi(L) < PSL(2, q)$ , then there exists a maximal subgroup *J* of  $PSL(2, q)$ containing  $\pi(L)$ . By Theorem 7, since  $q = 3^f$  and  $f \ge 3$  is odd,  $|PSL(2, q): J|$  is divisible by *r* or *t*. Since  $|L| < 2|J|$ , the index  $|PSL(2, q): J|$  divides  $|G: M_1 \cap M_2|$ . Hence  $|G : M_1 \cap M_2|$  is divisible by *r* or *t*, against the assumption  $K \in \mathcal{A}_t - \mathcal{B}_t$ .

This shows that

$$
P_G^{(t)}(0) = 1 - q^2(q^2 - q + 1) + \sum_{K \in \mathcal{B}_t} \mu_G(K) |G : N_G(K)|
$$
  

$$
\equiv -(q - 1)(q^3 + q + 1) \equiv 0 \pmod{r},
$$

so  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(t)}(0)$  is not a power of *t*.

([3\)](#page-8-1) *Assume that t* |*q*−1 *and t*  $\neq$  2. Let  $\mathcal{D}_t$  be the subset of  $\mathcal{A}_t$  consisting of *G* and of the [maximal su](#page-4-1)bgroups of *G* isomorphic to *H*. Set  $\mathcal{B}_t = \mathcal{A}_t - \mathcal{D}_t$ . We have

$$
P_G^{(t)}(0) = 1 - (q^p + 1) + \sum_{K \in \mathcal{B}_t} \mu_G(K) |G:N_G(K)| = -q^p + \sum_{K \in \mathcal{B}_t} \mu_G(K) |G:N_G(K)|.
$$

<span id="page-9-0"></span>[By](#page-7-1) T[heor](#page-8-1)ems 10 and 11, if  $K \in \mathcal{B}_t$ , then *K* does not contain a Sylow *p*-subgroup *Q* of *G*. Indeed, *Q* is contained in a unique maximal subgroup isomorphic to *H*. Hence, *p* divides  $|G:K|$ . By Lemma 6, we obtain that *p* divides  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(l)}(0).$ 

(4) *Finally, assume that t*  $|\Phi_{2p}(q)|$ . Then  $t | \alpha_q^{(\pm)}$  (that is,  $t | \alpha_q^{(+)}$  or  $t | \alpha_q^{(-)}$ ). Let *K* be in  $\mathcal{A}_t$ . By Theorems 10 and 11, if  $K \neq G$ , then *K* is contained in a maximal subgroup isomorphic either to  $B_{\pm}$  or to  $G(s)$ , where  $s^r = q$  for some prime number *r*.

We claim that  $K$  is not contained in the intersection of two distinct maximal subgroups  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  isomorphic to  $B_{\pm}$ . Indeed, for each divisor  $d \neq 1$  of  $\alpha_q^{(\pm)}$ , there exists a unique subgroup *L* of  $M_1$  of order *d*. Hence *L* is normal in  $M_1$ . Therefore  $M_1$  is the unique maximal subgroup of  $G$  containing  $L$ . So  $L$  is not a subgroup of  $M_1 \cap M_2$ . Thus, *d* divides  $|G : M_1 \cap M_2|$ . Thence  $|G : M_1 \cap M_2|$  is divisible by  $\alpha_q^{(\pm)}$ . Since *t* divides  $\alpha_q^{(\pm)}$  and *K* lies in  $A_t$ , we obtain the claim.

Let  $\mathcal{D}_t$  be the subset of  $\mathcal{A}_t$  consisting of *G* and of the maximal subgroups of *G* isomorphic to  $B_{\pm}$ . Set  $\mathcal{B}_t = \mathcal{A}_t - \mathcal{D}_t$ . We have

$$
P_G^{(t)}(0) = 1 - \frac{q^p \alpha_q^{(\mp)} (q^{p-1} - 1)}{2p} + \sum_{K \in \mathcal{B}_t} \mu_G(K) |G:N_G(K)|.
$$

Observe that  $\alpha_q^{(\pm)}$  divides  $1-q^p \alpha_q^{(\mp)} (q^{p-1}-1)/(2p)$ . Moreover, for each  $K \in \mathcal{B}_t$ , there exists a number *s* (where  $s^r = q$  for some prime number *r*) such that *K* is contained in a maximal subgroup *M* isomorphic to  $G(s)$ . Let  $\mathcal{F}_t$  be the subset of the natural numbers consisting of all such *s*:

$$
\mathcal{G}_t = \{ s \in \mathbb{N} : s^r = q, r \text{ prime}, \exists K \in \mathcal{B}_t \text{ such that } K \leq G(s) \}.
$$

Suppose that  $\mathcal{G}_t = \{s_1, \ldots, s_k\}$  for some  $k \geq 1$ . Let  $p^{\beta} p_1^{\beta_1}$  $p_1^{\beta_1} \cdots p_n^{\beta_n}$  be a prime factorization of *f*, where  $p_i > p$ ,  $\beta_i \ge 1$  for  $i \in \{1, ..., n\}$  and  $\beta \ge 0$ . Note that

 $\mathcal{G}_t \subseteq \{ s \in \mathbb{N} : s^{p_i} = q, \text{ for some } i \in \{1, \dots, n\} \}.$ 

Clearly, if  $s \in \mathcal{G}_t$ , then  $s^u = q$  for some prime *u* dividing *f*. Moreover, since *f* is odd, if  $p = 2$ , then  $u \neq 2$ . If  $p = 3$ , then  $s = 3^{f/3}$  does not lie in  $\mathcal{S}_t$ . In fact, if  $K \leq G(s)$ , then  $\Phi_6(q)$  divides  $|G:K|$  and so  $K \notin \mathcal{B}_t$ . By Lemma 9, there exists a prime divisor *r* of

$$
\gcd\bigg(\frac{\Phi_{2p}(q)}{\Phi_{2p}(s_1)},\ldots,\frac{\Phi_{2p}(q)}{\Phi_{2p}(s_k)},\alpha_q^{(\pm)}\bigg).
$$

<span id="page-10-0"></span>Clearly, *r* and *t* are distinct, and *r* divides  $\alpha_q^{(\pm)}$  and  $|G:K|$  for all  $K \in \mathcal{B}_t$ . By [Lemma 6,](#page-16-3) we conclude that *r* divides  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G^{(I)}(0).$ 

<span id="page-10-2"></span><span id="page-10-1"></span>Finally, suppose that  $\mathcal{G}_t = \emptyset$ , i.e.,  $\mathcal{B}_t = \emptyset$ . We leave it to the reader to check that  $P_G^{(t)}$  $G_G^{(t)}(0) = 1 - q^p \alpha_q^{(\mp)} (q^{p-1} - 1)/(2p)$  is not a power of *t*. □

## 5. Irreducibility of the Dirichlet polynomial

**Lemma 13** [Damian et al. 2004, Lemma 3]. *Let*  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ . *Then*  $1 - n/n^s$  *is reducible in*  $\Re$  *[if and only](#page-16-8) if n is a nontrivial power in*  $\mathbb{Z}$ *.* 

**Lemma 14.** Let  $G = PSL(2, q)$  $G = PSL(2, q)$  $G = PSL(2, q)$  with  $f > 1$ . Then  $a_{q(q+1)/2}(G) \neq 0$ .

*Proof.* For  $q < 25$  the result follows by direct inspection. For the remaining cases, note that every subgroup of *G* of order  $2(q-1)/\delta$  is a maximal subgroup isomorphic to *D*<sub>2(*q*−1)/ $\delta$ ; see [Huppert 1967, p. 213].</sub>

**Proposition 15.** Let G be as in the Main Theorem, with  $f > 1$ . Then  $P_G(s)$  is *irred[ucib](#page-8-2)le in the ring [of Dirichlet poly](#page-8-0)nomials* R*.*

*Proof.* Let  $G = G(q, m)$ , with  $m \in \{1, 2, 3\}$ . The proposition's validity when  $m = 1$  and  $q \in \{4, 8, 9\}$  is checked by direct inspection. For the rest of the proof, we exclude these three cases.

Suppose that  $P_G(s) = g(s)h(s)$  for some Dir[ichlet polyn](#page-10-1)omials  $g(s)$  and  $h(s)$ in  $\Re$ . From (3-2) and case (1) in the proof of Pro[position 12](#page-4-2), we obtain

$$
P_G^{(p)}(s) = 1 - \frac{p^{fm} + 1}{(p^{fm} + 1)^s}.
$$

We claim that  $P_G^{(p)}$  $G_G^{(p)}(s)$  is irreducible. We argue by contradiction. By Lemma 13, if  $P_G^{(p)}$  $G_G^{(p)}(s)$  is reducible, then  $p^{fm} + 1$  is a nontrivial power. Hence  $p^{fm} + 1 = b^k$  for some  $k \ge 2$  and  $b \ge 1$ , so there are no Zsigmondy primes for  $\langle b, k \rangle$ . By Lemma 4,  $(b, k)$  is either equal to  $(2<sup>w</sup> - 1, 2)$  for some  $w ∈ ℕ$  or to  $(2, 6)$ . If  $(b, k) = (2<sup>w</sup> - 1, 2)$ , then  $p = 2$ . Hence  $fm = 3$ , so  $(q, m) = (8, 1)$ , against assumption. Finally, if  $(b, k) = (2, 6)$ , then  $p^{fm} + 1 = 2^6$  has no solution. Therefore, without loss of generality, we suppose that  $g^{(p)}(s) = 1 - (p^{fm} + 1)/(p^{fm} + 1)^s$  and  $h^{(p)}(s) = 1$ . Let *t* be a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 2 f m \rangle$ . In particular, for  $(m, f) = (1, 2)$ ,

if  $5^2$  divides  $p^2 + 1$ , let  $t = 5$ ;

otherwise, let *t* be a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 4 \rangle$  different from 5.

To see why this is possible, note that a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 2 f m \rangle$  exists since, by assumption,  $2fm > 2$  and  $fm \neq 3$ . If  $(m, f) = (1, 2)$ , i.e.,  $(q, m) = (p^2, 1)$ , then, by assumption, *p* is odd. So  $p^2 + 1 = 2a$  for some odd number *a*. Suppose that  $5^2 \nmid p^2 + 1$ . Since we are assuming that  $(q, m) \notin \{(4, 1), (9, 1)\}$ , we conclude that  $p^2 + 1$  does not divide 10. Hence there exists a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 4 \rangle$ different from 5.

For a prime number *r*, let  $v_r : \mathbb{Q} \to \mathbb{Z} \cup \{\infty\}$  be the *r*-adic valuation map. For a Dirichlet polynomial  $f(s) \in \mathcal{R}$ , define the integers  $a_n(f)$ ,  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ , by the condition

$$
f(s) = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \frac{a_n(f)}{n^s}.
$$

Then  $\max\{v_r(l): a_l(g) \neq 0\} + \max\{v_r(l): a_l(h) \neq 0\} = \max\{v_r(l): a_l(G) \neq 0\}.$ 

We claim that  $h^{(t)}(s) = h(s)$ . Indeed, since  $a_{p^{f^m}+1}(g) \neq 0$  and  $v_t(p^{f^m}+1) =$  $v_t(|G|)$ , we get

$$
\max\{v_t(l): a_l(g) \neq 0\} = \max\{v_t(l): a_l(G) \neq 0\}.
$$

So, if  $a_l(h) \neq 0$ , then *t* does not divide *l*. In particular,  $h^{(t)}(s) = h(s)$ , as claimed. It f[ollows that](#page-5-0)

(5-1) 
$$
P_G^{(t)}(s) = g^{(t)}(s)h(s).
$$

Finally we show that  $h(s) = 1$ .

*Projective linear groups* (*m* = 1)*.* Let *r* be an odd prime divisor of *q*−1 (recall that  $q \neq 9$  and *q* is not a prime). Proposition 8, case (2), yields  $P_G^{(t,r)}$  $G^{(t,r)}(s) = 1$ . Now (5-1) yields  $h^{(r)}(s) = 1$ . So  $P_G^{(r)}$  $G_G^{(r)}(s)$  is equal to  $g^{(r)}(s)$ . By Lemma 14,  $a_{q(q+1)/2}(G) \neq 0$ . Hence, since *r* [does no](#page-8-0)t div[ide](#page-9-0)  $q(q+1)/2$ , we get  $a_{q(q+1)/2}(g(s)) \neq 0$ . It follows that

$$
\max\{v_p(l) : a_l(g) \neq 0\} = \max\{v_p(l) : a_l(G) \neq 0\}.
$$

Thus  $h(s) = h^{(p)}(s) = 1$ .

*Suzuki and Ree groups* ( $m = 2, 3$ ). In these cases, *t* clearly divides  $\alpha_q^{(\pm)}$ . Let *r* be a prime divisor of  $\alpha_q^{(\mp)}$ . By Proposition 12, case (4), we have  $P_G^{(t,r)}$  $G^{(t,r)}(s) = 1$ . By  $(5-1)$ , we get  $h^{(r)}(s) = 1$ . Now  $a_{p^{f^m+1}}(g(s)) \neq 0$  yields

$$
\max\{v_r(l): a_l(g) \neq 0\} = \max\{v_r(l): a_l(G) \neq 0\}.
$$

<span id="page-12-0"></span>Hence  $h(s) = h^{(r)}(s) = 1$ .

# 6.  $P_G(-1)$  does not vanish

**Proposition 16.** *Let*  $G = G(q, m)$  *be as in the Main Theorem. Then*  $P_G(-1) \neq 0$ *. Proof. Projective linear groups* ( $m = 1$ ). For  $q \le 11$  or  $q = 49$ , the proposition holds by direct inspection. Assume that *q* is greater than 11 and that  $q \neq 49$ .

Assume  $f = 1$ . By Proposition 8, case (1), we get

$$
P_G(s) = 1 - \frac{p+1}{(p+1)^s} + \sum_{p|k} \frac{a_k(G)}{k^s}.
$$

By Lemma 6, if *p* divides *k*, then  $p^2$  divides  $a_k(G)$ *k*. Hence

$$
P_G(-1) = 1 - (p+1)^2 + \sum_{p|k} a_k(G)k \equiv -2p \pmod{p^2}.
$$

Assume  $f \ge 2$ . Let *t* be a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 2f \rangle$ . In particular, for  $f = 2$ ,

if  $5^3$  divides  $p^2 + 1$ , let  $t = 5$ ;

otherwise, let *t* [be a Zsigmon](#page-5-0)dy p[rime](#page-5-2) for  $\langle p, 4 \rangle$  distinct from 5.

To see why this is possible, note that a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 2f \rangle$  exists since  $q \neq 8$  and  $f \geq 2$ . If  $f = 2$ , then, by assumption, *p* is odd. So  $p^2 + 1 = 2a$  for some odd number *a*. Suppose that  $5^3 \nmid p^2 + 1$ . Since  $q \notin \{4, 9, 49\}$  by assumption,  $p^2 + 1$ does not divide 50. Hence there exists a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 4 \rangle$  distinct from 5.

We observe that  $t \neq 3$ . As in the proof of Proposition 8, case (2), we obtain:

(a) 
$$
P_G(s) = 1 - \frac{q(q-1)/2}{[q(q-1)/2]^s} + \sum_{t|k} \frac{a_k(G)}{k^s}.
$$

- (b) If *M* is a maximal subgroup of *G*, the index  $|G:M|$  is divisible by *t* if and only if *M* is not isomorphic to  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta}$ . In particular, if *M* is not isomorphic to  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta}$ , we have  $v_t(|G:M|) > v_t(|G|)/2$ , where as before  $v_t : \mathbb{Q} \to \mathbb{Z} \cup \{\infty\}$ is the *t*-adic valuation map.
- (c) If  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  are distinct maximal subgroups isomorphic to  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta}$ , then  $|G : M_1 ∩ M_2|$  is divisible by  $|G|/2$  or  $M_1 ∩ M_2$  is contained in a maximal subgroup not isomorphic to  $D_{2(q+1)/\delta}$ .

We claim that

$$
P_G(-1) = -\frac{(q+1)(q-2)(q^2-q+2)}{4} + \sum_{t|k} ka_k(G) \neq 0 \pmod{t^{v_t(|G|)+1}}.
$$

In fact,

$$
v_t\left(\frac{(q+1)(q-2)(q^2-q+2)}{4}\right) = v_t(q+1) = v_t(|G|).
$$

Moreover, suppose that  $a_k(G) \neq 0$  and that *t* divides *k*, for some  $k > 1$ . Then  $v_t(k) > 0$  $v_t(|G|)/2$ . Indeed, by (b) and (c), the number k is divisible by  $|G|/2$  or k divides [the](#page-7-1) ind[ex o](#page-8-1)f a maximal subgroup *M* such that *t* divides  $|G:M|$  and  $v_t(|G:M|)$  $v_t(|G|)/2$ . Finally, by Lemma 6, we have  $ka_k(G) \equiv 0 \pmod{t^{v_t(|G|)+1}}$ .

*Suzuki and Ree groups* ( $m = 2, 3$ ). Let *t* be a Zsigmondy prime for  $\langle p, 2pf \rangle$ . In particular, if  $(p, f) = (2, 7)$ , choose  $t = 113$ . Clearly  $t | \alpha_q^{(\pm)}$ .

We claim that if *K* is a subgroup of *G* and *t* divides  $|G:K|$ , then  $v_t(|G:K|)$  =  $v_t(|G|)$  $v_t(|G|)$ . By Theorem 10 and 11, every maximal subgroup of *G* has this property. [Moreover, if](#page-8-0) *M* is a maximal subgroup of *G* such that *t* does not divide  $|G : M|$ , then *M* is isomorphic to  $B_{\pm}$ . Finally, the index of the intersection of two distinct maximal subgroups isomorphic to  $B_{\pm}$  is a multiple of  $\alpha_q^{(\pm)}$ ; see the proof of Proposition 12, case (4).

Now, using Lemma 6, we get that if *t* divides *k*, then  $t^{2v_t(|G|)}$  divides  $ka_k(G)$ . Again by case (4) in Proposition 12, we have

$$
P_G(-1) = 1 - \left(\frac{q^p a_q^{(\mp)} (q^{p-1} - 1)}{2p}\right)^2 + \sum_{t|k} k a_k(G),
$$

so 
$$
P_G(-1) \equiv 1 - \left(\frac{q^p \alpha_q^{(\mp)}(q^{p-1}-1)}{2p}\right)^2 \pmod{t^{2v_t(|G|)}}
$$
. Finally  
\n
$$
v_t \left(1 - \left(\frac{q^p \alpha_q^{(\mp)}(q^{p-1}-1)}{2p}\right)^2\right) = v_t(\alpha_q^{(\pm)}) = v_t(|G|).
$$
\nHence  $P_G(-1) \neq 0$ .

## 7. Dirichlet polynomials of  $PSL(2, q)$ , with  $q = p^f$

We list here the Dirichlet polynomial  $P(s) := P_{PSL(2,q)}(s)$  for all values of q. We adopt the following conventions:  $\mu$  is the usual Möbius function on positive integers;  $r_h = \frac{1}{2}$  $\frac{1}{2}(p^h+1); v_h = \frac{1}{2}$  $\frac{1}{2}(p^h - 1); r = r_f; v = v_f; \text{ and } \alpha = 1 \text{ if } f = 2^k \text{ for }$ some  $k > 1$ ,  $\alpha = 0$  otherwise.

• For  $q = 5$ ,

$$
P(s) = 1 - \frac{5}{5^s} - \frac{6}{6^s} - \frac{10}{10^s} + \frac{20}{20^s} + \frac{60}{30^s} - \frac{60}{60^s}.
$$
\n• For  $q = 7$ ,  
\n
$$
P(s) = 1 - \frac{14}{7^s} - \frac{8}{8^s} + \frac{21}{21^s} + \frac{28}{28^s} + \frac{56}{56^s} - \frac{84}{84^s}.
$$
\n• For  $q = 9$ ,  
\n12, 10, 30, 60, 36, 45, 240, 90, 240, 900, 77

 $P(s) = 1 - \frac{12}{6s}$  $\frac{12}{6^s} - \frac{10}{10^s} - \frac{30}{15^s} + \frac{60}{30^s} + \frac{36}{36^s} + \frac{45}{45^s} + \frac{240}{60^s} + \frac{90}{90^s} - \frac{240}{120^s} - \frac{900}{180^s} + \frac{720}{360^s}$  $\frac{120}{360^s}$ . • For  $q = 11$ ,

$$
P(s) = 1 - \frac{22}{11^s} - \frac{12}{12^s} + \frac{66}{66^s} + \frac{220}{110^s} + \frac{132}{132^s} + \frac{165}{165^s} - \frac{220}{220^s} - \frac{990}{330^s} + \frac{660}{660^s}.
$$

• For  $q = p$ ,  $p \equiv \pm 2 \pmod{5}$ ,  $p \equiv \pm 3 \pmod{8}$ ,

$$
P(s) = 1 - \frac{pv}{(pv)^s} - \frac{pr}{(pr)^s} - \frac{2r}{(2r)^s} + \frac{2pr}{(2pr)^s} - \frac{prv/6}{(prv/6)^s} + \frac{prv/2}{(prv/2)^s} + \frac{2prv/3}{(2prv/3)^s} + \frac{prv}{(prv)^s} - \frac{2prv}{(2prv)^s}.
$$

• For  $q = p$ ,  $p \equiv \pm 2 \pmod{5}$ ,  $p \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{8}$ ,

$$
P(s) = 1 - \frac{pv}{(pv)^s} - \frac{pr}{(pr)^s} - \frac{2r}{(2r)^s} + \frac{2pr}{(2pr)^s} - \frac{prv/6}{(prv/12)^s} + \frac{prv/2}{(prv/4)^s} + \frac{2prv/3}{(prv/3)^s} - \frac{prv}{(prv)^s}.
$$

• For  $q = p$ ,  $p \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{5}$ ,  $p \equiv \pm 3 \pmod{8}$ ,

$$
P(s) = 1 - \frac{pv}{(pv)^s} - \frac{pr}{(pr)^s} - \frac{2r}{(2r)^s} + \frac{2pr}{(2pr)^s} - \frac{prv/15}{(prv/30)^s} + \frac{prv/6}{(prv/6)^s} + \frac{2prv/5}{(prv/5)^s} + \frac{2prv/3}{(prv/3)^s} + \frac{prv/2}{(prv/2)^s} - \frac{2prv/3}{(2prv/3)^s} - \frac{3prv}{(prv)^s} + \frac{2prv}{(2prv)^s}.
$$

• For  $q = p$ ,  $p \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{5}$ ,  $p \equiv \pm 1 \pmod{8}$ ,

$$
P(s) = 1 - \frac{pv}{(pv)^s} - \frac{pr}{(pr)^s} - \frac{2r}{(2r)^s} + \frac{2pr}{(2pr)^s} - \frac{prv/15}{(prv/30)^s} - \frac{prv/6}{(prv/12)^s} + \frac{prv/3}{(prv/6)^s} + \frac{2prv/5}{(prv/5)^s} + \frac{prv/2}{(prv/4)^s} + \frac{4prv/3}{(prv/3)^s} - \frac{4prv/3}{(2prv/3)^s} - \frac{5prv}{(prv)^s} + \frac{4prv}{(2prv)^s}.
$$

• For  $q = 2^f, f > 1$ ,

$$
P(s) = \sum_{\substack{h|f\\h>1}} \mu\left(\frac{f}{h}\right) \left(\frac{2^{f-h}rv/(r_h v_h)}{[2^{f-h}rv/(r_h v_h)]^s} - \frac{2^{f-h+1}rv/v_h}{[2^{f-h+1}rv/v_h]^s} - \frac{2^frv/v_h}{[2^frv/v_h]^s} - \frac{2^frv/v_h}{[2^frv/v_h]^s} + \frac{2^{f+1}rv/r_h}{[2^{f+1}rv/r_h]^s} + \mu(f) \left(-\frac{2^{f+2}rv}{[2^{f+1}rv]^s} + \frac{2^{f+2}rv}{[2^{f+2}rv]^s}\right).
$$

• For  $q = p^f$ ,  $p \in \{3, 5\}$ ,  $f > 1$  odd,

$$
P(s) = \sum_{h|f \atop h>1} \mu(f/h) \left( \frac{p^{f-h}rv/(r_h v_h)}{[p^{f-h}rv/(r_h v_h)]^s} - \frac{2p^{f-h}rv/v_h}{[2p^{f-h}rv/v_h]^s} - \frac{p^frv/v_h}{[p^frv/v_h]^s} \right) - \frac{p^frv/r_h}{[p^frv/r_h]^s} + \frac{2p^frv/v_h}{[2p^frv/v_h]^s} \right) + \mu(f) \left( -\frac{p^{f-1}2rv}{[2p^{f-1}rv]^s} + \delta_{p,3} \left( \frac{3^frv/6}{[3^frv/6]^s} - \frac{3^frv/2}{[3^frv/2]^s} - \frac{3^frv}{[3^frv]^s} + \frac{2 \cdot 3^frv}{[2 \cdot 3^frv]^s} \right) + \delta_{p,5} \left( \frac{5^frv/30}{[5^frv/30]^s} - \frac{5^frv/2}{[5^frv/2]^s} - \frac{5^frv/3}{[5^frv/3]^s} + \frac{5^frv}{[5^frv]^s} \right)
$$

• For  $q = p^f$ ,  $p \ge 3$ ,  $f \ge 4$  even or  $p \equiv \pm 1$ , 0 (mod 5),  $f = 2$ 

$$
P(s) = \sum_{\substack{h|f\\f/h \text{ odd}}} \mu(f/h) \left( \frac{p^{f-h}rv/(r_h v_h)}{[p^{f-h}rv/(r_h v_h)]^s} - \frac{2p^{f-h}rv/v_h}{[2p^{f-h}rv/v_h]^s} \right) - \frac{p^frv/v_h}{[p^frv/v_h]^s} - \frac{p^frv/r_h}{[p^frv/r_h]^s} + \frac{2p^frv/v_h}{[2p^frv/v_h]^s} \right) + \sum_{\substack{h|f\\f/h \text{ even}}} \mu(f/h) \left( \frac{p^{f-h}rv/(r_h v_h)}{[p^{f-h}rv/(2r_h v_h)]^s} - \frac{p^{f-h}2rv/v_h}{[p^{f-h}rv/v_h]^s} - \frac{p^frv/v_h}{[p^frv/(2v_h)]^s} \right) - \frac{p^frv/r_h}{[p^frv/(2r_h)]^s} + \frac{2p^frv/v_h}{[p^frv/v_h]^s} \right) + \alpha \left( -\frac{p^frv}{[p^frv/2]^s} + \frac{p^frv}{[p^frv]^s} \right)
$$

• For 
$$
q = p^2
$$
,  $p > 5$ ,  $p \equiv \pm 2 \pmod{5}$ ,

$$
P(s) = 1 - \frac{2r}{(2r)^s} - \frac{p^2r}{(p^2r)^s} - \frac{p^2v}{(p^2v)^s} + \frac{2p^2r}{(2p^2r)^s} - \frac{2pr}{(pr)^s} + \frac{4prr_1}{(2prr_1)^s} + \frac{2p^2rr_1}{(p^2rr_1)^s} + \frac{2p^2rv_1}{(p^2rv_1)^s} - \frac{4p^2rr_1}{(2p^2rr_1)^s} - \frac{p^2rv}{(p^2rv/2)^s} - \frac{3p^2rv}{(p^2rv)^s} - \frac{p^2rv/15}{(p^2rv/30)^s} + \frac{p^2rv/3}{(p^2rv/6)^s} + \frac{2p^2rv/5}{(p^2rv/5)^s} + \frac{2p^2rv/3}{(p^2rv/3)^s} - \frac{4p^2rv/3}{(2p^2rv)^3} + \frac{4p^2rv}{(2p^2rv)^s}.
$$

<span id="page-15-0"></span>• For 
$$
q = p^f
$$
,  $p > 5$ ,  $f > 1$  odd,

$$
P(s) = \sum_{h|f} \mu(f/h) \left( \frac{p^{f-h}rv/(r_h v_h)}{[p^{f-h}rv/(r_h v_h)]^s} - \frac{2p^{f-h}rv/v_h}{[2p^{f-h}rv/v_h]^s} - \frac{p^frv/v_h}{[p^frv/v_h]^s} - \frac{p^frv/r_h}{[p^frv/v_h]^s} + \frac{2p^frv/v_h}{[2p^frv/v_h]^s} \right).
$$

## [References](http://dx.doi.org/10.1006/jabr.1999.8221)

- <span id="page-15-4"></span>[Boston 1996] N. Boston, "A probabilistic generalization of the Riemann zeta function", pp. 155– 162 in *Analytic number theory: proceedings of a conference in honor of Heini Halberstam* (Allerton [Park, IL, 1995](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet-getitem?mr=2005c:20036)[\), vol. 1, edited b](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/MATH-item?1070.20025)y B. C. Berndt et al., Progr. Math. 138, Birkhäuser, Boston, 1996. MR 97e:11106 Zbl 0853.11075
- <span id="page-15-2"></span>[\[Brown 2000\]](http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0017089504002010) K. S. Brown, "The [coset poset and pro](http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0017089504002010)[babilistic zeta func](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet-getitem?mr=2005f:20113)tion of a finite group", *J. Algebra* 225:2 (2000), 989–1012. MR 2000k:20082 Zbl 0973.20016
- <span id="page-15-3"></span>[Damian and Lucchini 2003] E. Damian and A. Lucchini, "The Dirichlet polynomial of a finite group and the subgroups of prime power ind[ex", pp. 209–221 i](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet-getitem?mr=2008b:20017)n *Advances in group theory 2002*, Aracne, Rome, 2003. MR 2005c:20036 [Zbl 1070.20025](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jalgebra.2007.02.055)
- <span id="page-15-1"></span>[Damian and Lucchini 2004] [E. Damian a](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet-getitem?mr=2008k:20041)[nd A. Lucchini,](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/MATH-item?1127.20052) "Recognizing the alternating groups from their probabilistic zeta function", *Glasg. Math. J.* 46:3 (2004), 595–599. MR 2005f:20113 Zbl 1071.20060
- [Damian and Lucchini 2006] E. Damian and A. Lucchini, "On the Dirichlet polynomial of finite groups of Lie type", *Rend. Sem. Mat. Univ. Padova* 115 (2006), 51–69. MR 2008b:20017
- [Damian and Lucchini 2007] E. Damian and A. Lucchini, "The probabilistic zeta function of finite simple groups", *J. Algebra* 313:2 (2007), 957–971. MR 2008k:20041 Zbl 1127.20052
- <span id="page-16-5"></span><span id="page-16-3"></span><span id="page-16-2"></span>[Damian et al. 2004] E. Damian[, A. Lucchini, and F. Morini, "Some prop](http://dx.doi.org/10.1112/S0024609303002297)erties of the probabilistic [zet](http://dx.doi.org/10.1112/S0024609303002297)a function on finite simple groups", *Pacific J. Math.* 215[:1 \(2004\),](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet-getitem?mr=2005a:20101) 3–14. MR 2005b:20042 Zbl 1113.20063
- <span id="page-16-4"></span>[\[Detomi and Lucchini 2003a\]](http://dx.doi.org/10.1112/jlms/s2-43.1.61) E. Detomi and A. Lucchini, "Crowns and factorization of the prob[abilistic ze](http://dx.doi.org/10.1112/jlms/s2-43.1.61)ta function of a finite group", *J. Algebra* 265[:2 \(2003\), 651](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet-getitem?mr=92d:20071)–668. MR 2004e:20119 Zbl 1072.20031
- <span id="page-16-1"></span>[Detomi and Lucchini 2003b] E. Detomi and A. Lucchini, "Recognizing soluble groups from their [probabilistic z](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet-getitem?mr=21:6393)[eta functions",](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/MATH-item?0093.25002) *Bull. London Math. Soc.* 35:5 (2003), 659–664. MR 2005a:20101 Zbl 1045.20054
- <span id="page-16-7"></span><span id="page-16-0"></span>[\[Downs 1](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/JFM-item?62.0082.02)991] M. Downs, "The Möbius function of  $PSL<sub>2</sub>(q)$ , with application to the maximal normal subgroups of the modular group", *J. London Math. Soc.* (2) 43:1 (1991), 61–75. MR 92d:20071 Zbl 0743.20016
- <span id="page-16-8"></span>[Gaschütz 1959] W. Gaschütz, "[Die Eulersche Fu](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet-getitem?mr=90k:20046)[nktion endlicher](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/MATH-item?0708.20005) auflösbarer Gruppen", *Illinois J. [M](http://www.ams.org/mathscinet-getitem?mr=37:302)ath.* 3 [\(1959\), 46](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/MATH-item?0217.07201)9–476. MR 21 #6393 Zbl 0093.25002
- <span id="page-16-9"></span>[Hall 1936] [P. Hall, "The Eulerian Functions of a group",](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0021-8693(88)90239-6) *Quart. J. Math.* 7 (1936), 134–151. Zbl 0014.10402 [JFM 62.0082.02](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0021-8693(88)90239-6)
- [\[Hawke](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/MATH-item?0651.20020)s et al. 1989] T. Hawkes, I. M. Isaacs, and M. Özaydin, "On the Möbius function of a finite group", *Rocky Mountain J. Math.* 19:4 (1989), 1003–1034. MR 90k:20046 Zbl 0708.20005
- [\[Huppe](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/MATH-item?0852.20019)rt 1967] B. Huppert, *Endliche Gruppen*, vol. I, Grundlehren der Math. Wiss. 134, Springer, Berlin, 1967. MR 37 #302 [Zbl 0217.072](http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1970423)01
- <span id="page-16-6"></span>[\[Kleidman 1988](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/MATH-item?0106.24702)] P. B. Kleidman, "The maximal subgroups of the Chevalley groups  $G_2(q)$  with *q* odd, t[he Ree groups](http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF01692444)  ${}^{2}G_{2}(q)$ , and their automorphism groups", *J. Algebra* 117:1 (1988), 30–71. [MR 89j:20055](http://www.emis.de/cgi-bin/MATH-item?24.0176.02) Zbl 0651.20020
- [Mann 1996] A. Mann, "Positively finitely generated groups", *Forum Math.* 8:4 (1996), 429–459. MR 97j:20029 Zbl 0852.20019
- [Suzuki 1962] M. Suzuki, "On a class of doubly transitive groups", *Ann. of Math.* (2) 75 (1962), 105–145. MR 25 #112 Zbl 0106.24702
- [Zsigmondy 1892] K. Zsigmondy, "Zur Theorie der Potenzreste", *Monatsh. Math. Phys.* 3:1 (1892), 265–284. MR 1546236 Zbl 24.0176.02

Received February 26, 2008. Revised July 31, 2008.

MASSIMILIANO PATASSINI UNIVERSITÀ DI PADOVA DIPARTIMENTO DI MATEMATICA PURA ED APPLICATA VIA TRIESTE, 63 PADOVA, 35121 ITALY mpatassi@math.unipd.it