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## ON THE ITERATES OF THE ENUMERATING FUNCTION OF FINITE ABELIAN GROUPS

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*Abstract.* The function  $a^{(r)}(n)$ , which represents the  $r$ -th iteration of  $a(n)$  (the number of non-isomorphic Abelian groups with  $n$  elements), is studied. Upper bounds for  $a^{(r)}(n)$  are established, as well as the asymptotic formula for sums of  $K(n)$ , where  $K(n) = \min \{r : a^{(r)}(n) = 1\}$ . Connections with analogous problems for the iterations of  $d(n)$  (the number of divisors of  $n$ ) are discussed.

### 1. Introduction

Let  $a(n)$  denote the number of non-isomorphic Abelian (commutative) groups with  $n$  elements. It is well known that (see [5])  $a(n)$  is a multiplicative function of  $n$  ( $a(mn) = a(m)a(n)$  for coprime  $m$  and  $n$ ) such that  $a(p^k) = P(k)$  for every prime  $p$  and integer  $k \geq 1$  (here and later  $p, p_1, p_2, \dots$  denote primes), where  $P(k)$  is the number of unrestricted partitions of  $k$ . Hence  $P(1) = 1, P(2) = 2, P(3) = 3, P(4) = 5$ , and as  $k \rightarrow \infty$

$$P(k) = (1 + o(1)) (4\sqrt{3k})^{-1} \exp\{\pi(2k/3)^{1/2}\},$$

which is a classical formula due to Hardy and Ramanujan (see [13], p. 240). The values of  $a(p^k)$  do not depend on  $p$  but only on  $k$ , so that  $a(n)$  is a „prime-independent“ multiplicative function satisfying  $a(p) = 1$  for every prime  $p$ . One can easily exhibit other integer valued arithmetic functions with similar properties, and one such function is  $S(n)$ , the number of non-isomorphic finite semisimple rings with  $n$  elements (see [10]). Thus in what follows one could easily generalize the problems and results to a suitable class of non-negative, prime independent, integer valued multiplicative functions such that  $f(p) = 1$  for every prime  $p$ . However, in order to keep the exposition clear and simple, we shall deal only with the case  $f(n) = a(n)$ .

From known results on  $a(n)$  we mention

$$\limsup_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\log a(n) \log \log n}{\log n} = \frac{\log 5}{4}, \quad (1.2)$$

which was proved by E. Krätzel [12] ( $\log n = \ln n$  is the natural logarithm of  $n$ ), and

$$\sum_{n \leq x} a(n) = \sum_{m=1}^3 A_m x^{1/m} + R(x), \quad A_m = \prod_{k=1, k \neq m}^{\infty} \zeta(k/m). \quad (1.3)$$

Here  $\zeta$  is the Riemann zeta-function, and  $R(x)$  is the error term in the asymptotic formula (1.3), for which the best published estimate  $R(x) \ll x^{.97/381} \log^{35} x$  is due to G. Kolesnik [11] (here and later  $f(x) \ll g(x)$  and  $f(x) = O(g(x))$  both mean  $|f(x)| \leq Cg(x)$  for  $x \geq x_0$ , and  $C, C_1, C_2, \dots$  are some (unspecified) positive constants). For other recent results on  $a(n)$  the reader is referred to [6], [7], [9] and Ch. 14 of [8]. The aim of this paper is the study of the iterates of  $a(n)$ . For any arithmetic function  $f: N \rightarrow N$ , and any integer  $r \geq 1$  one can define

$$f^{(r)}(n) = \underbrace{f(f(\dots f(n)\dots))}_{r \text{ times}}$$

as the  $r$ -th iterate of  $f$ , so that in this notation  $f^{(1)}(n) = f(n)$ . If  $f(n)$  is multiplicative, then in general already  $f^{(2)}(n)$  is not multiplicative, which makes the study of the iterates of multiplicative functions difficult. If  $r \geq 2$  is fixed, then two among the most natural problems concerning  $f^{(r)}(n)$  are the evaluation of sums of  $f^{(r)}(n)$  and the determination of the maximal order of  $f^{(r)}(n)$ . In the case of  $f(n) = d(n) = \sum_{ab=n} 1$  (the number of divisors of  $n$ ), these

problems were treated by Erdős and Kátai [2], [3]. In [3] it was proved that

$$\sum_{n \leq x} d^{(r)}(n) = (1 + o(1)) A_r x \log_r x \quad (A_r > 0, x \rightarrow \infty) \quad (1.4)$$

holds for  $r=4$ , which was shown earlier by I. Kátai to be true for  $r=2,3$  also. An old conjecture of Bellman and Shapiro (see [1]) states that (1.4) holds for any fixed  $r \geq 2$  ( $\log_r x = \log(\log_{r-1} x)$  is the  $r$ -fold iterated logarithm). On the other hand, Erdős and Kátai proved in [2] that for every  $\varepsilon > 0$

$$d^{(r)}(n) \ll \exp\{(\log n)^{1/l_r + \varepsilon}\} \quad (1.5)$$

and that

$$d^{(r)}(n) > \exp\{(\log n)^{1/l_r - \varepsilon}\} \quad (1.6)$$

holds for infinitely many  $n$ , which means that they have essentially determined the maximal order of  $d^{(r)}(n)$ . Here  $l_r$  is the  $r$ -th Fibonacci number:  $l_{-1} = 0, l_0 = 1, l_r = l_{r-1} + l_{r-2}$  for  $r \geq 1$ .

When one considers the above two problems for  $a^{(r)}(n)$ , then it turns out that the situation is in a certain sense opposite to the one for  $d^{(r)}(n)$ ,

where (1.4) is known only for  $r \leq 4$ , but (1.5) (up to „ $\varepsilon$ “) is the best possible. Namely, it was proved by A. Ivić [7] that

$$\sum_{n \leq x} a(a(n)) = \sum_{n \leq x} a^{(2)}(n) = Cx + O(x^{1/2} \log^4 x) \quad (1.7)$$

for a suitable  $C > 0$ , and since trivially  $a^{(r)}(n) \leq a(n)$  the method of [7] obviously gives also

$$\sum_{n \leq x} a^{(r)}(n) = B_r x + O(x^{1/2} \log^4 x) \quad (B_r > 0) \quad (1.8)$$

for any fixed  $r \geq 1$ , which can be compared to (1.4). In particular, (1.8) shows that  $a^{(r)}(n)$  possesses a positive mean value for any fixed  $r \geq 1$ , and the error term (uniform in  $r$ ) in (1.8) is sharp. Thus this problem is satisfactorily resolved, but determining the maximal order of  $a^{(r)}(n)$  turns out to be difficult. The methods of [2] which yield (1.5) seem to be of no avail here, and we are at present unable to determine precisely the maximal order of  $a^{(r)}(n)$ . There is, however, another problem involving  $a^{(r)}(n)$  which is somewhat different from the corresponding problem for  $d^{(r)}(n)$ , and with which we can deal successfully. Since  $a(p) = 1$  and  $d(p) = 2$  for all primes  $p$ , it makes sense to define

$$k(n) = \text{mir. } \{r : d^{(r)}(n) = 2\}$$

and

$$K(n) = \min \{r : a^{(r)}(n) = 1\}.$$

The existence of both  $k(n)$  and  $K(n)$  is easily established, and in [3] it was shown that

$$0 < \limsup_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{k(n)}{\log \log \log n} < \infty. \quad (1.9)$$

It was noted in [3] that the summatory function of  $k(n)$  is very difficult to estimate. On the other hand, we shall establish in Th. 2 a sharp asymptotic formula for the summatory function of  $K(n)$ , which implies that  $K(n)$  has a positive mean value. The upper bound in (1.9) remains true if  $k(n)$  is replaced by  $K(n)$ . This will follow trivially from our upper bound for  $a^{(r)}(n)$  in Th. 1, but we are unable to determine whether the lim sup in question for  $K(n)$  is positive or (which seems to us to be more likely true) is equal to zero. We also think that

$$\limsup_{n \rightarrow \infty} K(n) = \infty, \quad (1.10)$$

but we are unable to prove (1.10) at present.

## 2. Statement of results

Before we formulate our results we note that there are many  $n$  for which  $a(a(n))$  must be fairly large. Namely, let

$$n = (p_1 p_2 \dots p_k)^2,$$

where  $p_j$  is the  $j$ -th prime number. Then,

$$\begin{aligned} a(n) &= P^k(2) = 2^k, \\ a(a(n)) &= P(k) \gg \exp(Ck^{1/2}) \quad (C > 0), \end{aligned} \quad (2.1)$$

which follows from (1.1). But the prime number theorem gives

$$\log n = 2 \sum_{p \leq p_k} \log p = (2 + o(1)) p_k = (2 + o(1)) k \log k \quad (k \rightarrow \infty),$$

hence  $k \gg \log n / \log_2 n$ , and (2.1) implies that

$$a(a(n)) = a^{(2)}(n) \gg \exp(C_1(\log n / \log \log n)^{1/2}) \quad (C_1 > 0) \quad (2.2)$$

holds for infinitely many integers  $n$ . Lower bounds for  $a^{(r)}(n)$  for  $r \geq 3$  are difficult to obtain, since very little is known about the structure of prime factors of  $P(k)$ . The situation with upper bounds for  $a^{(r)}(n)$  is better, and we shall prove

**THEOREM 1.** There is a constant  $B > 0$  such that

$$a^{(2)}(n) = a(a(n)) \ll \exp \left\{ \frac{B(\log n)^{7/8}}{(\log \log n)^{19/16}} \right\}, \quad (2.3)$$

and if  $c_r$  is the constant defined by

$$\log a^{(r)}(n) \ll_r (\log n)^{c_r}, \quad (2.4)$$

then for  $r \geq 3$

$$c_r \leq \frac{1}{2} c_{r-1} + \frac{3}{8} c_{r-2} \quad \left( c_1 = 1, c_2 = \frac{7}{8} \right). \quad (2.5)$$

As in § 1, let  $K(n)$  for a given  $n$  be the smallest  $r$  such that  $a^{(r)}(n) = 1$ . Then we have

**THEOREM 2.** There is a constant  $E > 1$  such that for any given  $\varepsilon > 0$

$$\sum_{n \leq x} K(n) = Ex + O(x^{1/2+\varepsilon}). \quad (2.6)$$

While the asymptotic formula (2.6) is sharp, the bounds for the constants  $c_r$  (defined by (2.4)) can probably be improved. In the proof of Th. 1 we shall use the upper bound

$$\omega(P(n)) \ll \frac{n^{1/2}}{\log n}, \quad (2.7)$$

which is the immediate consequence of (1.1) and  $\omega(n) \ll \log n / \log_2 n$ , where as usual  $\omega(n)$  denotes the number of distinct prime factors of  $n$  (and  $\Omega(n)$

is the number of all prime factors of  $n$ ). Better bounds than (2.7) would lead to better results in Th. 1, and in particular we conjecture that

$$\omega(P(n)) \ll \log^C n \quad (2.8)$$

for some suitable  $C > 0$ , which would give  $c_2 \leq 3/4$  in Th. 1. If true, (2.8) seems unattainable by present methods.

### 3. Upper bound estimates for iterates

In this section we shall prove Th. 1. The crucial element in the proof is the upper bound for  $\omega(a(n))$ , contained in the following

*Lemma 1.*

$$\omega(a(n)) \ll (\log n)^{3/4} (\log \log n)^{-11/8}. \quad (3.1)$$

*Proof.* Let  $n = p_{j_1}^{\alpha_1} \dots p_{j_r}^{\alpha_r}$  ( $r = \omega(n)$ ) be the canonical decomposition of  $n$ .

Then

$$a(n) = P(\alpha_1) \dots P(\alpha_r),$$

and in bounding  $\omega(a(n))$  we can suppose that the  $\alpha_j$ 's are distinct, since  $\omega(m^k) = \omega(m)$ . If  $S \geq 2$  is a parameter which will be determined later, then using (2.7) we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} \omega(a(n)) &= \omega\left(\prod_{\alpha_i \leq S} P(\alpha_i) \prod_{\alpha_i > S} P(\alpha_i)\right) \\ &\leq \sum_{\alpha_i \leq S} \omega(P(\alpha_i)) + \sum_{\alpha_i > S} \omega(P(\alpha_i)) \\ &\ll \frac{S^{1/2}}{\log S} \sum_{\alpha_i \leq S} 1 + \sum_{\alpha_i > S} \frac{\alpha_i^{1/2}}{\log \alpha_i} \\ &\ll \frac{S^{3/2}}{\log S} + \frac{1}{\log S} \left(\sum_{i=1}^r \alpha_i\right)^{1/2} \left(\sum_{\alpha_i > S} 1\right)^{1/2} \\ &\ll \frac{S^{3/2}}{\log S} + \frac{1}{\log S} (\log n)^{1/2} \left(\sum_{\alpha_i > S} 1\right)^{1/2}, \end{aligned}$$

since

$$\sum_{i=1}^r \alpha_i = \Omega(n) \leq \frac{\log n}{\log 2}.$$

To estimate  $R = R(S, n) = \sum_{\alpha_i > S} 1$ , note that from  $n = \prod_{i=1}^r p_{j_i}^{\alpha_i} \geq \prod_{\alpha_i > S} p_{j_i}^{\alpha_i}$

we have ( $p_R$  is the  $R$ -th prime)

$$\log n \geq S \sum_{p \leq p_R} \log p \gg SR \log R.$$

Hence for  $\log^A n \ll S \ll \log^B n$  ( $0 < A < B < 1$ ) we have

$$R = R(S, n) = \sum_{\alpha_i > S} 1 \ll \frac{\log n}{S \log \log n}. \quad (3.2)$$

Therefore we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} \omega(a(n)) &\ll \frac{S^{3/2}}{\log S} + \frac{S^{-1/2} \log n}{\log S (\log \log n)^{1/2}} \\ &\ll (\log n)^{3/4} (\log \log n)^{-11/8} \end{aligned}$$

on taking

$$S = (\log n)^{1/2} (\log \log n)^{-1/4}.$$

This ends the proof of Lemma 1, but we remark that our method can be used to bound  $\omega(f(n))$  for a fairly wide class of prime-independent, integer-valued multiplicative functions. In particular, we obtain

$$\omega(d(n)) \ll \left( \frac{\log n}{\log_2 n \log_3 n} \right)^{1/2}. \quad (3.3)$$

Namely,

$$\begin{aligned} \omega(d(n)) &= \omega \left( \prod_{\alpha_i \leq S} (\alpha_i + 1) \prod_{\alpha_i > S} (\alpha_i + 1) \right) \\ &\leq \omega \left( \prod_{\alpha_i \leq S} (\alpha_i + 1) \right) + \sum_{\alpha_i > S} \omega(\alpha_i + 1) \\ &\ll \sum_{p \leq S+1} 1 + \sum_{\alpha_i > S} \log \alpha_i / \log_2 \alpha_i \ll S / \log S + \sum_{\alpha_i > S} \log_2 n / \log_3 n \\ &\ll \frac{S}{\log S} + \frac{\log n}{S \log_3 n} \ll \left( \frac{\log n}{\log_2 n \log_3 n} \right)^{1/2} \end{aligned}$$

on taking

$$S = \left( \frac{\log n \log_2 n}{\log_3 n} \right)^{1/2},$$

where we used again (3.2). Note that the order of  $d(d(n))$  is closely related to the order of  $\omega(d(n))$ , since trivially

$$d(n) = \sum_{\delta|n} 1 \geq \sum_{\delta|n} \mu^2(\delta) = 2\omega(n),$$

hence  $\omega(n) \ll \log d(n)$ ,  $\omega(d(n)) \ll \log d(d(n))$ , and on the other hand

$$\log d(n) = \sum_{i=1}^r \log(x_i + 1) \ll r \log \log n = \omega(n) \log \log n,$$

which then yields

$$\omega(d(n)) \ll \log d(d(n)) \ll \omega(d(n)) \log \log n. \quad (3.4)$$

We also remark that (3.3) remains valid if  $d(n) = d_2(n)$  is replaced by  $d_k(n)$  ( $k \geq 2$  fixed), which represents the number of ways  $n$  can be written as a product of  $k$  factors. This is a multiplicative function satisfying

$$d_k(p^\alpha) = \frac{(\alpha + 1) \dots (\alpha + k - 1)}{(k - 1)!}.$$

Having at our disposal Lemma 1, it is a fairly simple matter to prove (2.3) and (2.5). Namely, from (1.1) we have by the Cauchy-Schwarz inequality

$$a(n) = P(\alpha_1) \dots P(\alpha_r) < \exp \left\{ C \sum_{i=1}^r \alpha_i^{1/2} \right\} < \exp(C \omega(n) \Omega(n)^{1/2}). \quad (3.5)$$

It follows that

$$\begin{aligned} a(a(n)) &< \exp(C \omega(a(n)) \Omega(a(n))^{1/2}) \\ &\ll \exp(C_1 \{(\log n)^{3/4} (\log_2 n)^{-11/8} (\log n / \log_2 n)\}^{1/2}) = \\ &= \exp(C_1 (\log n)^{7/8} (\log_2 n)^{-19/16}), \end{aligned}$$

since using (1.2) we have

$$\Omega(a(n)) \leq \frac{\log a(n)}{\log 2} < \frac{\log n}{\log \log n}.$$

To prove (2.5) we use induction (trivially  $c_1 = 1$  and  $c_2 \leq 7/8$  by (2.3)) and (3.5) with  $n$  replaced by  $a^{(r-1)}(n)$ . This gives by Lemma 1, for  $r \geq 3$ ,

$$\begin{aligned} a^{(r)}(n) &= a(a^{(r-1)}(n)) < \exp(C \{\omega(a^{(r-1)}(n)) \Omega(a^{(r-1)}(n))\}^{1/2}) \\ &< \exp(C_1 \{(\log a^{(r-1)}(n))^{3/4} \log a^{(r-1)}(n)\}^{1/2}) \\ &< \exp(C_2 (\log n)^{(3c_{r-2} + 4c_{r-1})/8}), \end{aligned}$$

where  $C_2 > 0$  possibly depends on  $r$ . Hence (2.4) holds with  $c_r$  satisfying (2.5). We could have also obtained (2.4) with certain negative powers of  $\log_2 n$  multiplying  $(\log n)^{c_r}$ , but this did not seem of great importance.

#### 4. Proof of the asymptotic formula for iterates

In this section we shall prove the asymptotic formula (2.6) of Th. 2. The proof will use the following

*Lemma 2.* For  $j \geq 1$  and  $k \geq 2$  we have uniformly

$$\sum_{n \leq x, a^{(j)}(n) = k} 1 = d_{j,k} x + O(x^{1/2} \log^2 x)$$

with suitable constants  $d_{j,k} \geq 0$ . Moreover for some suitable constants  $C_1, C_2, C_3 > 0$

$$d_{j,k} \leq C_1 \exp(-C_2 \log(C_3 2^j k) \log \log(C_3 2^j k)). \quad (4.2)$$

*Proof.* For  $j=1$  (4.1) and (4.2) reduce to a result proved by A. Ivić [7], so that we can suppose  $j \geq 2$ . Note that in the terminology of Ivić-Tenenbaum [9] the function  $f(n) = a^{(j)}(n)$  ( $j \geq 1$  fixed) is an  $s$ -function. This means that  $f(n) = f(s(n))$ , where  $s = s(n)$  is the squarefull part of  $n$  ( $s$  is squarefull if  $p^2 \mid s$  whenever  $p$  is a prime such that  $p \mid s$ ). Hence from [9] we have (4.1) with

$$0 \leq d_{j,k} = 6\pi^{-2} \sum_{s=1, a^{(j)}(s)=k}^{\infty} (s \prod_{p \mid s} (1+1/p))^{-1}, \quad (4.3)$$

where summation is over all squarefull  $s$  (empty sum being understood as zero). Let  $s_1$  be the smallest squarefull  $s$  for which  $a^{(j)}(s) = k$  (if no such  $s_1$  exists, then  $d_{j,k} = 0$ ). Using multiplicativity and the properties of the partition function we have  $a(n) \leq n^{1/2}$  for  $n \geq n_0$ , which combined with (1.2) gives, for  $j \geq 2$ ,

$$k = a^{(j)}(s_1) \leq (a(s_1))^{2^{1-j}} \leq C_0 \exp(C_1 2^{-j} \log s_1 / \log \log s_1),$$

$$s_1 \geq \exp(C_2 \log(2^j k / C_0) \log \log(2^j k / C_0)),$$

and

$$d_{j,k} \leq 6\pi^{-2} \sum_{s \geq s_1} s^{-1} \ll s_1^{-1/2} \leq C_1 \exp(-C_2 \log(C_3 2^j k) \log \log(C_3 2^j k))$$

as asserted. Here we used the fact that the elementary formula

$$\sum_{s \leq x} 1 = \frac{\zeta(3/2)}{\zeta(3)} x^{1/2} + O(x^{1/3})$$

gives by partial summation

$$\sum_{s \geq y} s^{-1} \ll y^{-1/2}.$$

A more careful argument, based on Th. 1, would give

$$d_{j,k} \leq C_1 \exp(-C_2 (\log(k+1))^{C_3^j}) \quad (C_3 = \sqrt{8/7}; C_1, C_2 > 0, k \geq 2, j \geq j_0). \quad (4.4)$$

We pass now to the proof of Th. 2. We shall use only the weak bound  $K(n) \leq \log n$  ( $n \geq n_0$ ), although  $K(n) \ll \log_3 n$  follows easily from Th. 1. We can write

$$\sum_{n \leq x} K(n) = \sum_{1 \leq k \leq \log x} \left( \sum_{n \leq x, K(n) = k} 1 \right). \quad (4.5)$$

If  $K(n)=1$ , this means that  $n$  is squarefree. Hence

$$\sum_{n \leq x, K(n)=1} 1 = \sum_{n \leq x} \mu^2(n) = 6\pi^{-2}x + O(x^{1/2}).$$

Since  $a(n)=1$  is equivalent to  $n$  being squarefree, this means that if  $K(n)=k$  ( $k \geq 2$ ), then we must have  $a^{(k-1)}(n)=r$ ,  $r$  squarefree and  $r > 1$ . Hence for  $k \geq 2$  Lemma 2 gives

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{n \leq x, K(n)=k} 1 &= \sum_{\substack{n \leq x, a^{(k-1)}(n)=r, \\ 1 < r = \text{squarefree}}} 1 \\ &= \sum_{2 \leq r \leq x^\varepsilon} \mu^2(r) (d_{k-1,r} x + O(x^{1/2} \log^2 x)) \\ &= \left( \sum_{r=2}^{\infty} \mu^2(r) d_{k-1,r} \right) x + O(x^{1/2+\varepsilon}), \end{aligned}$$

with the error term uniform in  $k$  for any fixed  $\varepsilon > 0$ . Thus we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{2 \leq k \leq \log x} \sum_{n \leq x, K(n)=k} 1 &= x \sum_{2 \leq k \leq \log x} \sum_{r=2}^{\infty} \mu^2(r) d_{k-1,r} + O(x^{1/2+\varepsilon}) \\ &= x \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} \sum_{r=2}^{\infty} \mu^2(r) d_{k-1,r} + O(x^{1/2+\varepsilon}) + O\left(x \sum_{k > \log x} \sum_{r=2}^{\infty} \mu^2(r) d_{k-1,r}\right). \end{aligned}$$

Using (4.2) it is seen that the last double sum is majorized by

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k > \log x} \sum_{r=2}^{\infty} \exp(-C_2 \log(C_4 2^k r) \log \log(C_4 2^k r)) \\ \ll \exp(-C_5 2^{\log x}) \sum_{r=2}^{\infty} \exp(-C_2 \log r \log \log(C_4 r)) \ll x^{-A} \end{aligned}$$

for any fixed  $A > 0$ . Inserting the preceding estimates in (4.5) we obtain Th. 2 with

$$E = 6\pi^{-2} + \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} \sum_{r=2}^{\infty} \mu^2(r) d_{k-1,r}.$$

Trivially  $E > 1$ , since  $K(n)=1$  for squarefree  $n$  (which have density  $6\pi^{-2}$ ) and  $K(n) \geq 2$  for other  $n$ .

We conclude by making two remarks. If  $0 \leq F(n) \ll \exp(Cn)$ , then our arguments would give an asymptotic formula analogous to (2.6) for the sum of  $F(K(n))$ . The second remark concerns the constant  $B_r$  in the asymptotic formula (1.8). It is easy to see that  $\lim_{r \rightarrow \infty} B_r = 1$ , but it is also possible to show that  $B_r$  converges very quickly to 1. Namely we have

$$x^{-1} \sum_{n \leq x} a^{(r)}(n) = x^{-1} \sum_{k \leq x^\varepsilon} \sum_{n \leq x, a^{(r)}(n)=k} k,$$

hence using (4.1), (4.2) and letting  $x \rightarrow \infty$  we obtain

$$B_r = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} k d_{r,k}.$$

Similarly from

$$x^{-1} \sum_{n \leq x} 1 = x^{-1} \sum_{k \leq x} \sum_{n \leq x, a^{(r)}(n)=k} 1$$

we obtain

$$1 = \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} d_{r,k}.$$

Using then (4.4) we obtain

$$0 \leq B_r - 1 = \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} (k-1) d_{r,k} \ll \exp \{ -C_2 (\log 3)^{C^r} \} \quad (4.6)$$

for  $r \geq r_0$  and some  $C > 1$ ,  $C_2 > 0$ . Presumably a lower bound for  $B_r - 1$  analogous to (4.6) also holds for infinitely many  $r$ , but this does not seem easy to show. Perhaps even  $B_r = 1$  for  $r \geq r_1$  might be true; this would follow from (1.10).

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