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Adam Boseman and Sebastian Pauli

# On the zeros of $\zeta(s)-c$ 

Adam Boseman and Sebastian Pauli<br>(Communicated by Filip Saidak)

Let $\zeta(s)$ be the Riemann zeta function and $z_{0} \in \mathbb{C} \backslash \mathbb{R}$ a zero of $\zeta(s)$. We investigate the graphs of the implicit functions $z:[0,1) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$, with $z(0)=z_{0}$ given by

$$
\zeta(z(c))-c=0 .
$$

We give zero-free regions for $\zeta(s)-c$ where $c \in[0,1)$.

## 1. Introduction

For $\sigma=\mathfrak{R}(s)>1$, the Riemann zeta function can be written as

$$
\begin{equation*}
\zeta(s)=\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^{s}} \tag{1}
\end{equation*}
$$

By analytic continuation, $\zeta(s)$ may be extended to the whole complex plane, with the exception of the simple pole $s=1$. This analytic continuation is characterized by the functional equation

$$
\begin{equation*}
\zeta(1-s)=2 \Gamma(s) \zeta(s)(2 \pi)^{-s} \cos \frac{s \pi}{2} \tag{2}
\end{equation*}
$$

The existence of a class of zeros of the form $-2 n, n \in \mathbb{N}$, follows directly from the functional equation. These zeros are called trivial. The Riemann hypothesis states that all nontrivial zeros of $\zeta(s)$ are located on the critical line $\sigma=\frac{1}{2}$.

In order to understand the Riemann zeta function better, various mathematicians have investigated the behavior of its derivatives. Speiser [1935] showed that the Riemann hypothesis is equivalent to $\zeta^{\prime}(s)$ having no zeros for $0<\mathfrak{R}(s)<\frac{1}{2}$.

Spira [1965] computed zeros of the first and second derivative of $\zeta(s)$ and noticed that they occur in pairs. Skorokhodov [2003] went further in his computation and noticed that the zeros of derivatives seem to form chains; that is, for each zero $s_{k}$ of $\zeta^{(k)}(s)$ there is a corresponding zero $s_{k+1}$ of $\zeta^{(k+1)}(s)$. For sufficiently large $k$, the existence of these chains is a direct consequence of the following theorem.

[^0]Theorem 1 [Binder, Pauli and Saidak 2013]. Let $u \in \mathbb{R}^{>0}$ be a solution of

$$
1-\frac{1}{e^{u}-1}-\frac{1}{e^{u}}\left(1+\frac{1}{u}\right) \geq 0
$$

Let $M \in \mathbb{N}, M \geq 2$, and $j \in \mathbb{Z}$. Let

$$
q_{M}:=\log \frac{\log M}{\log (M+1)} / \log \frac{M}{M+1} .
$$

If there is $k \in \mathbb{N}$ with

$$
q_{M+1} k+(M+2) u \leq q_{M} k-(M+1) u,
$$

then each rectangle $R_{j} \subset S_{M}^{k}$, consisting of all $s=\sigma+$ it with

$$
q_{M} k-(M+1) u<\sigma<q_{M} k+(M+1) u
$$

and

$$
\frac{2 \pi j}{\log (M+1)-\log M}<t<\frac{2 \pi(j+1)}{\log (M+1)-\log M},
$$

contains exactly one zero of $\zeta^{(k)}(s)$. This zero is simple.
The existence of the chains of zeros of derivatives can be seen as follows. For a given $M \in \mathbb{N}, M \geq 2$ there is $K \in \mathbb{N}$ such that $q_{M+1} k+(M+2) u \leq q_{M} k-(M+1) u$ for all $k \geq K$. By Theorem 1 , for each $k \geq K$ and each $j \in \mathbb{Z}$ there is exactly one zero in a rectangular region given by $M, k$, and $j$. Again by Theorem 1 there exists a unique corresponding zero of $\zeta^{(k+1)}(s)$ in the rectangular region given by $M, k+1$, and $j$, which can be obtained by shifting the first region to the right (and stretching it horizontally). This shows the existence of a chain of zeros of $\zeta^{(K)}(s), \zeta^{(K+1)}(s), \zeta^{(K+2)}(s), \ldots$

Skorokhodov also noticed that the zeros of $\zeta(s)-1$ can be regarded as the first points in these chains, and that there are curves from some zeros of $\zeta(s)$ to these points given by the zeros of $\zeta(s)-c$ for $c \in[0,1)$ (see Figure 1).

The curves of zeros $s(c)$ of $\zeta(s)-c$ for $c \in[0,1)$ either end at a zero of $\zeta(s)-1$ or go off to the left approaching their asymptote

$$
t=\mathfrak{R}(s)=\frac{(2 m+1) \pi}{\log 2},
$$

for some $m \in \mathbb{Z}$ as $\sigma=\mathfrak{R}(s)$ approaches infinity. If each zero of $\zeta(s)-1$ indeed corresponded to a zero of $\zeta^{\prime}(s), \zeta^{\prime \prime}(s), \zeta^{\prime \prime \prime}(s), \ldots$, then some zeros of $\zeta(s)$ would not correspond to zeros with derivatives, namely those from which the paths of zeros of $\zeta(s)-c$ for $c \in[0,1)$ go off to the right.

This agrees with the formulas for the number of nontrivial zeros of $\zeta(s)$ and $\zeta^{(k)}(s)$. Namely, let $N(T)$ and $N_{k}(T)$ denote the number of such zeros $\rho$ with


Figure 1. Zeros of derivatives of $\zeta^{(k)}(s)$ (denoted by ${ }^{(k)}$ ) and the paths from zeros of $\zeta(s)$ (denoted by $\bullet$ ) to the zeros of $\zeta(s)-1$ (denoted by $\times$ ).
$0 \leq \Im(\rho) \leq T$ of $\zeta(s)$ and $\zeta^{(k)}(s)$, respectively. The classical Riemann-von Mangoldt formula [Landau 1974] states that

$$
\begin{equation*}
N(T)=\frac{T}{2 \pi} \log \frac{T}{2 \pi}-\frac{T}{2 \pi}+O(\log T) \tag{3}
\end{equation*}
$$

and according to Berndt [1970], we have

$$
\begin{equation*}
N_{k}(T)=N(T)-\frac{T \log 2}{2 \pi}+O(\log T) \tag{4}
\end{equation*}
$$

So there are about $(T \log 2) / 2 \pi$ fewer zeros of $\zeta^{(k)}(s)$ with imaginary part less than $T$ than there are of $\zeta(s)$, which is also about the number of paths of zeros of $\zeta(s)-c$ with imaginary part less than $T$ that go off to the right.

The aim of this paper is to describe better the behavior of paths of zeros of $\zeta(s)-c=0$ for $c \in[0,1)$ by finding new zero-free regions for the functions $\zeta(s)-c$. Our results are summarized in Figure 2. Clearly, the zeros of $\zeta(s)-c$ lie on the real lines of $\zeta(s)$, that is, the lines on which $\Im(\zeta(s))=0$. A review of some results about these lines in Section 2 is followed by the derivation of the zero-free


Figure 2. The paths from zeros of $\zeta(s)$ (denoted by $\bullet$ ) to the zeros of $\zeta(s)-1$ (denoted by $\times$ ), the barrier on the left (denoted by $\uparrow$ ), the zeros of $\Im\left(\zeta\left(-\frac{1}{2}+i t\right)\right)$ with $0 \leq t<13.7$ (denoted by $\left.\bullet\right)$, the borders of zero-free regions of $\zeta(s)-c$ for $c \in[0,1)$ (denoted by blue lines), and the zero-free region of $\zeta(s)-1$ on the right in gray.
regions for $\zeta(s)-c$ on the right half-plane (Section 3) and the vertical boundary for the zeros of $\zeta(s)-1$ for $\mathfrak{R}(s)=\frac{1}{2}$ (Section 4$)$.

## 2. Real lines

Obviously the solutions of the equations $\zeta(s)-c=0$ where $c \in[0,1)$ are on the level lines with $\Im(\zeta(s))=0$, called real lines. Most of the results described here go back to the work of Speiser and his student Utzinger [Speiser 1935]. Plots of the behavior of the real (and imaginary) lines and some further discussion can be found in [Arias-de-Reyna 2005].

Because the term $1+2^{-s}$ dominates the infinite series $\zeta(s)=\sum_{i=0}^{\infty}\left(1 / n^{s}\right)$ for $\sigma=\Re(s)>3$, the real lines have asymptotes $t=j \pi / \log 2$ for $j \in \mathbb{Z}$. On the real lines with asymptote $t=2 m \pi / \log 2(m \in \mathbb{Z})$ the function $\zeta(s)$ approaches 1 from above, while on the real lines with asymptote $t=(2 m+1) \pi / \log 2(m \in \mathbb{Z})$ the function $\zeta(s)$ approaches 1 from below. The zero-free regions for $\zeta(s)-c=0$
where $c \in[0,1)$ narrow around these asymptotes as $\sigma$ increases - see Lemma 4 and Lemma 3.

As $\zeta(s)$ is a meromorphic function, no two of these real lines can cross where $\zeta^{\prime}(s) \neq 0$. Zero-free regions for $\zeta^{\prime}(s)$ have been found on the left of the critical line for $\Im(s) \neq 0$ and $\Re(s)<0$ [Levinson and Montgomery 1974, Theorem 9] $\left(\Re(s)<\frac{1}{2}\right.$ under the Riemann hypothesis [Speiser 1935]) and on the right of the critical line for $\sigma>2.94$ [Skorokhodov 2003, Theorem 2]. Indeed, the only point where two real lines coming from the right cross is the first real zero of $\zeta^{\prime}(s)$ at $s \approx-2.7172628292$ [Speiser 1935]. Here the lines with asymptotes $t=2 \pi / \log 2$ and $t=-2 \pi / \log 2$ intersect the real axis.

The lines coming from the right continue to the left at least until $\sigma=1.95$ (compare Lemma 5). If one of the lines coming from the right did not cross the strip $-1 \leq \sigma \leq 2$, it would have go up towards infinity. Because no two real lines coming from the right intersect, all following lines would have to do the same. This would contradict the estimate

$$
\Im\left(\int_{2+T i}^{-1+T i} \frac{\zeta^{\prime}(s)}{\zeta(s)} d s\right)=O(\log T)
$$

used in the proof of the Riemann-von Mangoldt formula (3). Thus all real lines coming from the right cross the strip $-1 \leq \sigma \leq 2$ [Speiser 1935].

Hence the zeros of $\zeta(s)-c=0$, where $c \in[0,1)$, are either on the real lines described above or on real lines that enter the critical strip from the left half-plane and then curve back to the left half-plane. The lines coming from the left half-plane are the lines on which $\zeta(s)-1$ is 0 . By Proposition 7, we have $\left|\zeta\left(-\frac{1}{2}+i t\right)\right|>1$ for $t \geq$ 13.7. Furthermore, for $0<t<13.7$, there are only two points where $\mathfrak{R}\left(\zeta\left(-\frac{1}{2}+i t\right)\right)=0$, that is, where the real lines with asymptote $t=2 \pi / \log 2$ and $t=3 \pi / \log 2$ cross the line $\sigma=-\frac{1}{2}$ (see Remark 8 ). It follows that each of these lines coming from the left contains a zero of $\zeta(s)$ and a zero of $\zeta(s)-1$ on the left of $\sigma=-\frac{1}{2}$. It is well-known that the real part of the zeros of $\zeta(s)$ is between 0 and 1 , and equals $\frac{1}{2}$ if one assumes the Riemann hypothesis. An upper bound for the real part zeros of $\zeta(s)-1$ was given by Skorokhodov [2003]; see Lemma 2 below.

## 3. Zero-free regions for $\zeta(s)-c$ on the right

A right bound $\sigma=3$ for the zeros of $\zeta(s)-1$ can easily be obtained with the triangle inequality and an estimate for $\zeta(\sigma)-1 / 2^{\sigma}-1$. Skorokhodov was able to get a better bound by applying the triangle inequality to a real-valued function that only considers terms of the zeta function with $n$ odd.

Lemma 2 [Skorokhodov 2003]. The function $\zeta(s)$ is distinct from unity at $\sigma \in\left(\sigma_{0}, \infty\right)$, where

$$
\sigma_{0}=1.940101683745 \ldots
$$

is the zero of the function

$$
f(\sigma)=1+2^{-\sigma}-\left(1-2^{-\sigma}\right) \zeta(\sigma), \quad \sigma>1 .
$$

For $c \in[0,1)$ we find zero-free regions of $\zeta(s)-c$ that depend on $t$. We obtain them by considering the real and imaginary parts of $\zeta(s)-c$ separately.
Lemma 3. If $c \in[0,1)$ and $|\sin (t \log 2)| \geq 2^{\sigma} \zeta(\sigma)-2^{\sigma}-1$, then $\zeta(\sigma+i t)-c \neq 0$. Proof. We consider the imaginary part of $\zeta(s)-c$ and obtain

$$
\begin{align*}
|\Im(\zeta(s)-c)| & \geq\left|\frac{1}{2^{\sigma}} \sin (t \log 2)\right|-\left|\sum_{n=3}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^{\sigma}}\right| \\
& =\left|\frac{1}{2^{\sigma}} \sin (t \log 2)\right|-\left|\zeta(\sigma)-1-\frac{1}{2^{\sigma}}\right|, \tag{5}
\end{align*}
$$

which is greater than 0 when

$$
|\sin (t \log 2)| \geq 2^{\sigma} \zeta(\sigma)-2^{\sigma}-1 .
$$

Lemma 4. If $c \in[0,1)$ and $\cos (t \log 2) \geq 2^{\sigma} \zeta(\sigma)-2^{\sigma}-1$, then $\zeta(\sigma+i t)-c \neq 0$. Proof. For the real part of $\zeta(s)-c$ we obtain

$$
\begin{aligned}
\Re(\zeta(s)-c) & =1-c+\frac{1}{2^{\sigma}} \cos (t \log 2)+\cdots \\
& \geq \frac{1}{2^{\sigma}} \cos (t \log 2)-\left(\zeta(\sigma)-1-\frac{1}{2^{\sigma}}\right) \quad \text { assuming } c=1,
\end{aligned}
$$

which is greater than 0 when

$$
\cos (t \log 2) \geq 2^{\sigma} \zeta(\sigma)-2^{\sigma}-1
$$

These regions can be extended a bit if we restrict ourselves to certain values of $t$.
Lemma 5. If $c \in[0,1), m \in \mathbb{Z}$, and $t$ is fixed at $2 \pi m / \log 2$, then $\mathfrak{R}(\zeta(s)-c) \neq 0$ for $\sigma \geq 1.95$.
Proof. $\Re(\zeta(s)-c)=1-c+\left(1 / 2^{\sigma}\right) \cos (t \log 2)+\left(1 / 3^{\sigma}\right) \cos (t \log 3)+\cdots$ When $t$ is fixed and $t \log 2=2 \pi m$, we get

$$
\begin{aligned}
\Re(\zeta(s)-c) & \geq 1-c+\sum_{\nu=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{\left(2^{\nu}\right)^{\sigma}}-\left(\sum_{n=2}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^{\sigma}}-\sum_{\nu=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{\left(2^{\nu}\right)^{\sigma}}\right) \\
& =2 \sum_{\nu=1}^{\infty}\left(\frac{1}{2^{\sigma}}\right)^{\nu}-\zeta(\sigma)=\frac{2}{1-1 / 2^{\sigma}}-\zeta(\sigma)
\end{aligned}
$$

which is greater than 1 for $\sigma \geq 1.95$.

## 4. Zero-free barrier for $\zeta(s)-c$ on the left

On the left, instead of finding a zero-free region, we find a horizontal line where $|\zeta(s)|>1$. The line $\sigma=-\frac{1}{2}$ fulfills this condition with the exception of one point.

First we find a lower bound for the absolute value of $\zeta(s)$ where $\sigma=\frac{3}{2}$.
Lemma 6. $\left|\zeta\left(\frac{3}{2}+i t\right)\right|>0.46$ for all $t \in \mathbb{R}$.
Proof. To get a lower bound for $|\zeta(s)|$, we use the Euler product. Let $P$ be the set of the first million prime numbers, and consider the expression $\prod_{p \in P}\left|1-p^{-s}\right||\zeta(s)|$. We have

$$
\begin{aligned}
\prod_{p \in P}\left|1-p^{-s}\right||\zeta(s)| & =\left|1+\sum_{\substack{p \nmid n \\
p \in P}} \frac{1}{n^{s}}\right| \geq\left|1-\left|\sum_{\substack{p \nmid n \\
p \in P}} \frac{1}{n^{s}}\right|\right| \\
& \geq 1-\sum_{\substack{p \nmid n \\
p \in P}} \frac{1}{n^{\sigma}}=2-\prod_{p \in P}\left(1-p^{-\sigma}\right) \zeta(\sigma) .
\end{aligned}
$$

We also have from the triangle inequality that $\left|1-p^{-s}\right| \leq 1+p^{-\sigma}$, and thus

$$
|\zeta(s)| \geq \frac{2-\prod_{p \in P}\left(1-p^{-\sigma}\right) \zeta(\sigma)}{\prod_{p \in P}\left(1+p^{-\sigma}\right)} \geq 0.46 \quad \text { for } \sigma=\frac{3}{2} .
$$

So we get $|\zeta(s)| \geq \delta>0$ for $\sigma=\frac{3}{2}$ and $\delta=0.46$.
Now we can use $\delta$ and the functional equation to obtain a barrier for the zeros of $\zeta(s)-c$ on the left.

Proposition 7. $\left|\zeta\left(-\frac{1}{2}+i t\right)\right|>1$ for $t \geq 13.7$.
Proof. By the functional equation,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\zeta(1-s) & =2^{1-s} \pi^{-s} \sin \left(\frac{\pi}{2}(1-s)\right) \Gamma(s) \zeta(s) \\
& =2^{1-s} \pi^{-s} \cos \frac{s \pi}{2} \Gamma(s) \zeta(s) .
\end{aligned}
$$

Taking the absolute value of both sides gives

$$
|\zeta(1-s)|=2^{1-\sigma} \pi^{-\sigma}\left|\cos \frac{s \pi}{2}\right||\Gamma(s)||\zeta(s)| .
$$

But

$$
\begin{aligned}
\left|\cos \frac{s \pi}{2}\right| & =\frac{1}{2}\left|e^{-\pi(\sigma i-t) / 2}+e^{\pi(t-\sigma i) / 2}\right| \\
& =\frac{1}{2}\left|e^{-t \pi / 2}(\cos \sigma+i \sin \sigma)+e^{t \pi / 2}(\cos \sigma-i \sin \sigma)\right| \\
& =\frac{1}{2}\left|\cos \sigma\left(e^{t \pi / 2}+e^{-t \pi / 2}\right)+i \sin \sigma\left(e^{-t \pi / 2}-e^{t \pi / 2}\right)\right| \\
& =\frac{1}{2}\left(\cos ^{2} \sigma\left(e^{\pi t}+e^{-\pi t}+2\right)+\sin ^{2} \sigma\left(e^{\pi t}+e^{-\pi t}-2\right)\right)^{\frac{1}{2}} \\
& =\frac{1}{2}\left(e^{\pi t}+e^{-\pi t}+2\left(\cos ^{2} \sigma-\sin ^{2} \sigma\right)\right)^{\frac{1}{2}}
\end{aligned}
$$

As $\Gamma(z+1)=z \Gamma(z)$ for $z \in \mathbb{C}$ and as

$$
\left|\Gamma\left(\frac{1}{2}+i t\right)\right|=\sqrt{\pi \operatorname{sech}(\pi t)}=\sqrt{\frac{2 \pi}{e^{\pi t}+e^{-\pi t}}}
$$

for $t \in \mathbb{R}$, we get

$$
\left|\Gamma\left(\frac{3}{2}+i t\right)\right|=\left|\left(\frac{1}{2}+i t\right) \Gamma\left(\frac{1}{2}+i t\right)\right|=\sqrt{\frac{1}{4}+t^{2}} \cdot \sqrt{\pi} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{2}{e^{\pi t}+e^{-\pi t}}}
$$

For $\sigma=\frac{3}{2}$ we obtain

$$
\left|\zeta\left(-\frac{1}{2}+i t\right)\right| \geq 2^{-0.5} \pi^{-1} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}\left(1+\frac{4 \cos ^{2}\left(\frac{3}{2}\right)-2}{e^{\pi t}+e^{-\pi t}}\right) \cdot \sqrt{\frac{1}{4}+t^{2}} \cdot \delta
$$

where the right-hand side is obviously increasing in $t$. With $\delta>0.46$, this gives $\left|\zeta\left(\frac{1}{2}+i t\right)\right|>1$ for $t \geq 13.7$ by Lemma 6.

Remark 8. The zeros of $\Im\left(\zeta\left(-\frac{1}{2}+i t\right)\right)$ with $0 \leq t<13.7$ are $t_{0}=0, t_{1} \approx 2.93$, and $t_{2} \approx 9.92$, where

$$
\zeta\left(-\frac{1}{2}+i t_{0}\right) \approx-0.21, \quad \zeta\left(-\frac{1}{2}+i t_{1}\right) \approx 0.35, \quad \zeta\left(-\frac{1}{2}+i t_{2}\right) \approx 2.03
$$

So the only hole in the barrier is $-\frac{1}{2}+i t_{1}$. This is where the real line with asymptote $\pi / \log 2$ crosses the line $\sigma=-\frac{1}{2}$.

## 5. Outlook

In our work, we investigated the behavior of the graphs of the continuous functions $s:[0,1) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ defined by the equation $\zeta(s(c))-c=0$ and an initial point $s(0)$ (a zero of the zeta function). If $s(1)$ exists, such a graph connects a zero of $\zeta(s)$ to a zero of $\zeta(s)-1$. The latter zeros are the first points on the conjectured chains of zeros of derivatives.

A similar approach could also be used to investigate the conjectured chains of zeros of the derivatives of $\zeta(s)$. For each zero $s_{0}$ of

$$
\zeta(s)-1=\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n^{s}},
$$

one would consider the implicit function $s:[0, \infty) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ given by

$$
\zeta^{(k)}(s(k))=(-1)^{k} \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{\log ^{k} n}{n^{s(k)}}=0,
$$

with $s(0)=s_{0}$. This function $s(k)$ should yield the correspondence of zeros of $\zeta^{(k)}(s)$ and $\zeta^{(k+1)}(s)$ for $k \in \mathbb{Z}, k \geq 0$ for two zeros which would be connected by $\{s(x) \mid k \leq x \leq k+1\}$.

Together, the two implicit functions could give more detailed insight into the distribution of the zeros of $\zeta(s)$ by relating it to the distribution of higher derivatives (see Theorem 1). Furthermore it will be interesting to see how the conjectured chains of zeros of the derivatives of $\zeta(s)$ fit in with the universality of $\zeta(s)$ found by Voronin [1975].

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