

# Abelian varieties over finitely generated fields and the conjecture of Geyer and Jarden on torsion

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In this paper we prove the Geyer-Jarden conjecture on the torsion part of the Mordell-Weil group for a large class of abelian varieties defined over finitely generated fields of arbitrary characteristic. The class consists of all abelian varieties with *big monodromy*, i.e., such that the image of Galois representation on  $\ell$ -torsion points, for almost all primes  $\ell$ , contains the full symplectic group.

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## 1 Introduction

Let  $A$  be a polarized abelian variety defined over a finitely generated field  $K$ . Denote by  $\tilde{K}$  (respectively,  $K_{\text{sep}}$ ) the algebraic (resp., separable) closure of  $K$ . It is well known that the Mordell-Weil group  $A(K)$  is a finitely generated  $\mathbb{Z}$ -module. On the other hand  $A(\tilde{K})$  is a divisible group with an infinite torsion part  $A(\tilde{K})_{\text{tor}}$  and  $A(\tilde{K})$  has infinite rank, unless  $K$  is algebraic over a finite field. Hence, it is of fundamental interest to study the structure of the groups  $A(\Omega)$  for infinite algebraic extensions  $\Omega/K$  smaller than  $\tilde{K}$ . For example, Ribet in [18] and Zarhin in [24] considered the question of finiteness of  $A(K_{\text{ab}})_{\text{tor}}$ , where  $K_{\text{ab}}$  is the maximal abelian extension of  $K$ .

We denote by  $G_K := G(K_{\text{sep}}/K)$  the absolute Galois group of  $K$ . For a positive integer  $e$  and for  $\sigma = (\sigma_1, \sigma_2, \dots, \sigma_e)$  in the group  $G_K^e = G_K \times G_K \times \dots \times G_K$ , we denote by  $K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma)$  the subfield in  $K_{\text{sep}}$  fixed by  $\sigma_1, \sigma_2, \dots, \sigma_e$ . There exists a substantial literature on arithmetic properties of the fields  $K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma)$ . In particular, the Mordell-Weil groups  $A(K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma))$  have been already studied, e.g., Larsen formulated a conjecture in [15] on the rank of  $A(K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma))$  (cf. [12], [7] for results supporting the conjecture of Larsen).

In this paper we consider the torsion part of the groups  $A(K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma))$ . In order to recall the conjecture which is mentioned in the title, we agree to say that a property  $\mathcal{A}(\sigma)$  holds for almost all  $\sigma \in G_K^e$ , if  $\mathcal{A}(\sigma)$  holds for all  $\sigma \in G_K^e$ , except for a set of measure zero with respect to the (unique) normalized Haar measure on the compact group  $G_K^e$ . In [5] Geyer and Jarden proposed the following conjecture on the torsion part of  $A(K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma))$ .

**Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden** Let  $K$  be a finitely generated field. Let  $A$  be an abelian variety defined over  $K$ .

- For almost all  $\sigma \in G_K$  there are infinitely many prime numbers  $\ell$  such that the group  $A(K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma))[\ell]$  of  $\ell$ -division points is nonzero.
- Let  $e \geq 2$ . For almost all  $\sigma \in G_K^e$  there are only finitely many prime numbers  $\ell$  such that the group  $A(K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma))[\ell]$  of  $\ell$ -division points is nonzero.

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1 It is known due to the work of Jacobson and Jarden [13] that for all  $e \geq 1$ , almost all  $\sigma \in G_K^e$  and all primes  
 2  $\ell$  the group  $A(K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma))[\ell^\infty]$  is finite. This was formerly part (c) of the conjecture. Moreover the conjecture is  
 3 known for elliptic curves [5]. Part (b) holds true provided  $\text{char}(K) = 0$  (see [13]). In a very recent preprint  
 4 Zywinia proves part (a) in the special case where  $K$  is a number field (cf. [25]), strengthening results of Geyer and  
 5 Jarden [6].

6 As for today, for an abelian variety  $A$  of dimension  $\geq 2$  defined over a finitely generated field of positive  
 7 characteristic, parts (a) and (b) of the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden are open and part (a) is open over a finitely  
 8 generated transcendental extension of  $\mathbb{Q}$ .

9 In this paper we prove the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden for abelian varieties with big monodromy. To for-  
 10 mulate our main result we need some notation. Let  $\ell \neq \text{char}(K)$  be a prime number. We denote by  $\rho_{A[\ell]}: G_K \rightarrow$   
 11  $\text{Aut}(A[\ell])$  the Galois representation attached to the action of  $G_K$  on the  $\ell$ -torsion points of  $A$ . We define  
 12  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[\ell]) := \rho_{A[\ell]}(G_K)$  and call this group *the mod- $\ell$  monodromy group of  $A/K$* . We fix a polarization and  
 13 denote by  $e_\ell: A[\ell] \times A[\ell] \rightarrow \mu_\ell$  the corresponding Weil pairing. Then  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[\ell])$  is a subgroup of the group  
 14 of symplectic similitudes  $\text{GSp}(A[\ell], e_\ell)$  of the Weil pairing. We will say that  $A/K$  has *big monodromy* if there  
 15 exists a constant  $\ell_0$  such that  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[\ell])$  contains the symplectic group  $\text{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell)$ , for every prime number  
 16  $\ell \geq \ell_0$ . Note that the property of having big monodromy does not depend on the choice of the polarization, cf.  
 17 Proposition 3.6 below.

18 The main result of our paper is the following

19 **Main Theorem** [Cf. Thm. 4.1, Thm. 7.1.] *Let  $K$  be a finitely generated field and  $A/K$  an abelian variety*  
 20 *with big monodromy. Then the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden holds true for  $A/K$ .*

21 Surprisingly enough, the most difficult case to prove is Part (a) of the Conjecture for abelian varieties with big  
 22 monodromy, when  $\text{char}(K) > 0$ . The method of our proof relies in this case on the Borel-Cantelli Lemma of  
 23 measure theory and on a delicate counting argument in the group  $\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)$  which was modeled after a construc-  
 24 tion of subsets  $S'(\ell)$  in  $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{F}_\ell)$  in Section 3 of the classical paper [5] of Geyer and Jarden.

25 It is interesting to combine the main theorem with existing computations of monodromy groups for certain  
 26 families of abelian varieties. We offer a result of this type in Corollary 7.2 below, thereby providing the reader  
 27 with many examples of abelian varieties for which the conjecture of Geyer and Jarden is true.  
 28

## 30 2 Notation and background material

31 In this section we fix notation and gather some background material on Galois representations that is important  
 32 for the rest of this paper.

33 If  $K$  is a field, then we denote by  $K_{\text{sep}}$  (resp.  $\tilde{K}$ ) the separable (resp. algebraic) closure of  $K$  and by  $G_K =$   
 34  $G(K_{\text{sep}}/K)$  its absolute Galois group. If  $G$  is a profinite (hence compact) group, then it has a unique normalized  
 35 Haar measure  $\mu_G$ . The expression “assertion  $\mathcal{A}(\sigma)$  holds for almost all  $\sigma \in G$ ” means “assertion  $\mathcal{A}(\sigma)$  holds true  
 36 for all  $\sigma$  outside a zero set with respect to  $\mu_G$ ”. A finitely generated field is by definition a field which is finitely  
 37 generated over its prime field. Let  $X$  be a scheme of finite type over a field  $K$ . For a geometric point  $P \in X(\tilde{K})$   
 38 we denote by  $K(P) \subset \tilde{K}$  the residue field at  $P$ .

39 For  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  coprime to  $\text{char}(K)$ , we let  $A[n]$  be the group of  $n$ -torsion points in  $A(\tilde{K})$  and define  $A[n^\infty] =$   
 40  $\bigcup_{i=1}^\infty A[n^i]$ . For a prime  $\ell \neq \text{char}(K)$  we denote by  $T_\ell(A) = \varprojlim_{i \in \mathbb{N}} A[\ell^i]$  the  $\ell$ -adic Tate module of  $A$ . Then  $A[n],$   
 41  $A[n^\infty]$  and  $T_\ell(A)$  are  $G_K$ -modules in a natural way.

42 If  $M$  is a  $G_K$ -module (for example  $M = \mu_n$  or  $M = A[n]$  where  $A/K$  is an abelian variety), then we shall  
 43 denote the corresponding representation of the Galois group  $G_K$  by

$$44 \rho_M: G_K \longrightarrow \text{Aut}(M)$$

45 and define  $\mathcal{M}_K(M) := \rho_M(G_K)$ . We define  $K(M) := K_{\text{sep}}^{\ker(\rho_M)}$  to be the fixed field in  $K_{\text{sep}}$  of the kernel of  
 46  $\rho_M$ . Then  $K(M)/K$  is a Galois extension and  $G(K(M)/K) \cong \mathcal{M}_K(M)$ . For every algebraic extension  $L/K$   
 47 we define  $\mathcal{M}_L(M) := \rho_M(G_L)$ .

48 Let  $R$  be a commutative ring with 1 (usually  $R = \mathbb{F}_\ell$  or  $R = \mathbb{Z}_\ell$  or  $R = \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$ ) and  $M$  a finitely generated  
 49 free  $R$ -module equipped with an alternating bilinear pairing  $e: M \times M \rightarrow R'$  into a free  $R$ -module  $R'$  of rank 1  
 50

(which is a multiplicatively written  $R$ -module in our setting below). We call such a pairing *perfect* provided the associated map

$$M \longrightarrow \text{Hom}(M, R'), \quad x \longmapsto (y \mapsto e(x, y))$$

is bijective. We denote by

$$\text{Sp}(M, e) = \{f \in \text{Aut}_R(M) \mid \forall x, y \in M : e(f(x), f(y)) = e(x, y)\}$$

the corresponding symplectic group and by

$$\text{GSp}(M, e) = \{f \in \text{Aut}_R(M) \mid \exists \varepsilon \in R^\times : \forall x, y \in M : e(f(x), f(y)) = \varepsilon e(x, y)\}$$

the corresponding group of symplectic similitudes. Assume now that  $e$  is perfect. For  $f \in \text{GSp}(M, e)$  there is then even a unique value  $\varepsilon(f) \in R^\times$  such that  $e(f(x), f(y)) = \varepsilon(f)e(x, y)$  for all  $x, y \in M$  and we call  $\varepsilon(f)$  the *multiplicator* of  $f$ . The map

$$\text{GSp}(M, e) \longrightarrow R^\times, \quad f \longmapsto \varepsilon(f)$$

is a homomorphism (cf. [2, Chap. 9, Paragraph 6, no. 5, p. 99]) which is called the *multiplicator map*.

Let  $n$  be an integer coprime to  $\text{char}(K)$  and  $\ell$  be a prime different from  $\text{char}(K)$ . We define the  $G_K$ -module  $\mathbb{Z}_\ell(1)$  by

$$\mathbb{Z}_\ell(1) = \varprojlim_{j \in \mathbb{N}} \mu_{\ell^j}.$$

Let  $A/K$  be an abelian variety. We denote by  $A^\vee$  the dual abelian variety and let  $e_n : A[n] \times A^\vee[n] \rightarrow \mu_n$  and  $e_{\ell^\infty} : T_\ell A \times T_\ell A^\vee \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_\ell(1)$  be the corresponding Weil pairings (cf. [17, Chap. 16]). Choose a polarization  $\lambda : A \rightarrow A^\vee$ . (This is possible, cf. [3, Example 2.2, p. 8].) Consider the Weil pairings  $e_n^\lambda : A[n] \times A[n] \rightarrow \mu_n$  and  $e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda : T_\ell A \times T_\ell A \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_\ell(1)$  defined by  $e_n^\lambda = e_n \circ (\text{Id} \times \lambda)$  and by  $e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda = e_{\ell^\infty} \circ (\text{Id} \times T_\ell(\lambda))$ . If  $\ell$  does not divide  $\text{deg}(\lambda)$  and if  $n$  is coprime to  $\text{deg}(\lambda)$ , then  $e_n^\lambda$  and  $e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda$  are perfect, alternating,  $G_K$ -equivariant pairings (cf. [17, Chap. 16]). Hence we have representations

$$\rho_{A[n]} : G_K \longrightarrow \text{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda),$$

$$\rho_{T_\ell A} : G_K \longrightarrow \text{GSp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda),$$

and  $\mathcal{M}_L(A[n]) = \rho_{A[n]}(G_L) \subset \text{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$  and  $\mathcal{M}_L(T_\ell A) = \rho_{T_\ell A}(G_L) \subset \text{GSp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda)$  for every algebraic extension  $L/K$ . The representations induce isomorphisms  $G(L(A[n])/L) \cong \mathcal{M}_L(A[n])$  and  $G(L(A[\ell^\infty])/L) \cong \mathcal{M}_L(T_\ell A)$ . Note that  $\mathcal{M}_L(T_\ell A) \rightarrow \mathcal{M}_L(A[\ell^i])$  is surjective (because  $G(L(A[\ell^\infty])/L) \rightarrow G(L(A[\ell^i])/L)$  is surjective) for every integer  $i$ .

We shall say that an abelian variety  $(A, \lambda)$  over a field  $K$  has *big monodromy*, if there is a constant  $\ell_0 > \max(\text{char}(K), \text{deg}(\lambda))$  such that  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[\ell]) \supset \text{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda)$  for every prime number  $\ell \geq \ell_0$ . We will prove in Proposition 3.6 that the property of having big monodromy is independent of the choice of the polarization.

### 3 Properties of abelian varieties with big monodromy

Let  $(A, \lambda)$  be a polarized abelian variety with big monodromy over a finitely generated field  $K$ . Then it holds that  $\text{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda) \subset \mathcal{M}_K(A[\ell])$  for sufficiently large primes  $\ell$ . In this section we determine  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[n])$  completely for every “sufficiently large” integer  $n$ . The main result (cf. Proposition 3.4 below) is due to Serre in the number field case, and the general case requires only a slight adaption of Serre’s line of reasoning. However, as the final outcome is somewhat different in positive characteristic, we do include the details. Proposition 3.4 will be crucial for our results on the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden.

**Remark 3.1** Let  $K$  be a field and  $(A, \lambda)$  a polarized abelian variety over  $K$ . Let  $n$  be an integer coprime to  $\text{deg}(\lambda)$ .

(a) If  $L/K$  is a Galois extension, then  $\mathcal{M}_L(A[n])$  is a normal subgroup of  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[n])$  and the quotient group  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[n])/\mathcal{M}_L(A[n])$  is isomorphic to  $G(K(A[n]) \cap L/K)$ .

(b) Define  $K_n := K(A[n])$  and denote by  $\bar{\rho}_{A[n]} : G(K_n/K) \rightarrow \mathrm{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$  (resp.  $\bar{\rho}_{\mu_n} : G(K(\mu_n)/K) \rightarrow (\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times$ ) the monomorphism induced by  $\rho_{A[n]}$  (resp. by the cyclotomic character  $\rho_{\mu_n}$ ). Recall that  $\varepsilon : \mathrm{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) \rightarrow (\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times$  is the multiplier map.

Then  $K(\mu_n) \subset K_n$ ,  $\mathcal{M}_{K(\mu_n)}(A[n]) \subset \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$  and there is a commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} 1 & \longrightarrow & G(K_n/K(\mu_n)) & \longrightarrow & G(K_n/K) & \longrightarrow & G(K(\mu_n)/K) \longrightarrow 1 \\ & & \downarrow & & \bar{\rho}_{A[n]} \downarrow & & \bar{\rho}_{\mu_n} \downarrow \\ 1 & \longrightarrow & \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) & \longrightarrow & \mathrm{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) & \xrightarrow{\varepsilon} & (\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times \longrightarrow 1 \end{array}$$

with exact rows and injective vertical maps.

(c) If  $\mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) \subset \mathrm{im}(\rho_{A[n]})$ , then the left-hand vertical map is an isomorphism and  $\mathcal{M}_{K(\mu_n)}(A[n]) = \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$ .

**Proof.** Part (a). If  $L/K$  is Galois, then  $G_L$  is normal in  $G_K$ , and hence  $\mathcal{M}_L(A[n]) = \rho_{A[n]}(G_L)$  is normal in  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[n]) = \rho_{A[n]}(G_K)$ . The second isomorphism theorem implies that  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[n])/\mathcal{M}_L(A[n])$  is isomorphic to the group  $G_K/\ker(\rho_{A[n]}) \cdot G_L = \mathrm{Gal}(K(A[n]) \cap L/K)$ .

Part (b). Denote by  $\zeta \in \mu_n$  a primitive  $n$ -th root of unity. Then there exist  $P, Q \in A[n]$  such that  $e_n^\lambda(P, Q) = \zeta$ , because  $e_n^\lambda$  is a perfect pairing. For all  $\sigma \in G_{K_n}$  we have

$$\sigma(\zeta) = \sigma(e_n^\lambda(P, Q)) = e_n^\lambda(\rho_{A[n]}(\sigma)(P), \rho_{A[n]}(\sigma)(Q)) = e_n^\lambda(P, Q) = \zeta$$

by the  $G_K$ -equivariance of the Weil pairing. It follows that  $G_{K_n} \subset G_{K(\mu_n)}$  and  $K(\mu_n) \subset K_n = K(A[n])$ . We have thus established the upper exact sequence. Furthermore, again by the  $G_K$ -equivariance of the Weil pairing, we have

$$e_n^\lambda(\rho_{A[n]}(\sigma)(P), \rho_{A[n]}(\sigma)(Q)) = \sigma(e_n^\lambda(P, Q)) = e_n^\lambda(P, Q)^{\rho_{\mu_n}(\sigma)}$$

for all  $P, Q \in A[n]$  and all  $\sigma \in G_K$ . This implies that the right rectangle in the diagram is commutative and that  $\mathcal{M}_{K(\mu_n)}(A[n]) \subset \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$ . We define the right vertical arrow to be the restriction of  $\bar{\rho}_{A[n]}$  to  $G(K_n/K(\mu_n))$  to the kernel of the upper sequence. Then the left rectangle in the diagram is commutative by construction. Finally the injectivity of the middle arrow implies that the left vertical arrow is injective.

Part (c). Assume that  $\mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) \subset \mathrm{im}(\rho_{A[n]})$  and let  $f \in \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$ . Then there exists  $\sigma \in G(K_n/K)$  such that  $\bar{\rho}_{A[n]}(\sigma) = f$ . Then  $\bar{\rho}_{\mu_n}(\sigma|K(\mu_n)) = \varepsilon(f) = 1$ , hence  $\sigma|K(\mu_n) = \mathrm{Id}$ , because  $\bar{\rho}_{\mu_n}$  is injective. Thus  $\sigma \in G_{K(\mu_n)}$  and the assertion follows from that.  $\square$

**Proposition 3.2** *Let  $K$  be a field and  $(A, \lambda)$  a polarized abelian variety over  $K$  with big monodromy. Let  $L/K$  be an abelian Galois extension with  $L \supset \mu_\infty$ . Then there is a constant  $\ell_0 > \max(\mathrm{char}(K), \deg(\lambda))$  with the following properties.*

(a)  $\mathcal{M}_L(T_\ell A) = \mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda)$  for all primes  $\ell \geq \ell_0$ .

(b) Let  $c$  be the product of all prime numbers  $\leq \ell_0$ . Then  $\mathcal{M}_L(A[n]) = \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$  for every integer  $n$  which is coprime to  $c$ .

**Proof.** Part (a). There is a constant  $\ell_0 > \max(\mathrm{char}(K), \deg(\lambda), 5)$  such that  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[\ell]) \supset \mathrm{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda)$  for all primes  $\ell \geq \ell_0$ , because  $A$  has big monodromy. Let  $\ell \geq \ell_0$  be a prime. Then

$$\mathrm{Gal}(K(A[\ell])/K(\mu_\ell)) \cong \mathcal{M}_{K(\mu_\ell)}(A[\ell]) = \mathrm{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda)$$

by Remark 3.1, part (c).

The group  $\mathrm{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda)$  is perfect, because  $\ell \geq 5$  (cf. [22, Thm. 8.7]). As  $L/K(\mu_\ell)$  is an abelian Galois extension,  $\mathcal{M}_L(A[\ell])$  is a normal subgroup of the perfect group  $\mathcal{M}_{K(\mu_\ell)}(A[\ell])$  and the quotient group

$\mathcal{M}_{K(\mu_\ell)}(A[\ell])/\mathcal{M}_L(A[\ell])$  is isomorphic to a subquotient of  $G(L/K)$  (cf. Remark 3.1, part a), hence abelian. This implies that

$$\mathcal{M}_L(A[\ell]) = \mathcal{M}_{K(\mu_\ell)}(A[\ell]) = \mathrm{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda).$$

Denote by  $p: \mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda) \rightarrow \mathrm{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda)$  the canonical projection. Then  $\mathcal{M}_L(T_\ell A)$  is a closed subgroup of  $\mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda)$  with

$$p(\mathcal{M}_L(T_\ell A)) = \mathcal{M}_L(A[\ell]) = \mathrm{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda).$$

Hence  $\mathcal{M}_L(T_\ell A) = \mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda)$  (cf. [14, Prop. 2.6], [23, Thm. B]).

Part (b). Consider the map

$$\rho: G_L \rightarrow \prod_{\ell \geq \ell_0} \mathcal{M}_L(T_\ell A) = \prod_{\ell \geq \ell_0} \mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda)$$

induced by the representations  $\rho_{T_\ell A}$  and denote by  $X := \rho(G_L)$  its image. Then  $X$  is a closed subgroup of  $\prod_{\ell \geq \ell_0} \mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda)$ . If  $\mathrm{pr}_\ell$  denotes the  $\ell$ -th projection of the product, then  $\mathrm{pr}_\ell(X) = \mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda)$ . Hence [21, Section 7, Lemme 2] implies that  $X = \prod_{\ell \geq \ell_0} \mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda)$ , i.e. that  $\rho$  is surjective.

Let  $c$  be the product of all prime numbers  $\leq \ell_0$ . Let  $n$  be an integer coprime to  $c$ . Then  $n = \prod_{\ell|n \text{ prime}} \ell^{v_\ell}$  for certain integers  $v_\ell \geq 1$ . The canonical map  $r: \mathcal{M}_L(A[n]) \rightarrow \prod_{\ell|n \text{ prime}} \mathcal{M}_L(A[\ell^{v_\ell}])$  is injective. Consider the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} G_L & \xrightarrow{\rho'} & \prod_{\ell|n} \mathcal{M}_L(T_\ell A) & \xlongequal{\quad} & \prod_{\ell|n} \mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda) \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ \mathcal{M}_L(A[n]) & \xrightarrow{r} & \prod_{\ell|n} \mathcal{M}_L(A[\ell^{v_\ell}]) & \xrightarrow{\quad} & \prod_{\ell|n} \mathrm{Sp}(A[\ell^{v_\ell}], e_{\ell^{v_\ell}}^\lambda). \end{array}$$

The vertical maps are surjective. The horizontal map  $\rho'$  is surjective as well, because  $\rho$  is surjective. This implies, that the lower horizontal map

$$\mathcal{M}_L(A[n]) \rightarrow \prod_{\ell|n} \mathrm{Sp}(A[\ell^{v_\ell}], e_{\ell^{v_\ell}}^\lambda)$$

is in fact bijective. It follows from the Chinese Remainder Theorem that the canonical map

$$\prod_{\ell|n} \mathrm{Sp}(A[\ell^{v_\ell}], e_{\ell^{v_\ell}}^\lambda) \rightarrow \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$$

is bijective as well. Assertion (b) follows from that. □

**Corollary 3.3** *Let  $K$  be a field and  $(A, \lambda)$  a polarized abelian variety over  $K$  with big monodromy. Then there is a constant  $c$  coprime to  $\deg(\lambda)$  and to  $\mathrm{char}(K)$ , if  $\mathrm{char}(K)$  is positive, with the following property:  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[n]) \supset \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$  for every integer  $n$  coprime to  $c$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $L = K_{\mathrm{ab}}$  be the maximal abelian extension. Then there is a constant  $c$  as above, such that  $\mathcal{M}_L(A[n]) = \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$  for every  $n$  coprime to  $c$  by Proposition 3.2. Furthermore  $\mathcal{M}_L(A[n]) \subset \mathcal{M}_K(A[n])$  by Remark 3.1, part (a). □

Let  $K$  be a field and  $(A, \lambda)$  a polarized abelian variety over  $K$  with big monodromy. There is a constant  $c$  (divisible by  $\deg(\lambda)$  and by  $\mathrm{char}(K)$ , if  $\mathrm{char}(K) \neq 0$ ) such that

$$\mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) \subset \mathcal{M}_K(A[n]) \subset \mathrm{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$$

for all  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  coprime to  $c$  (cf. Corollary 3.3). From the diagram in Remark 3.1 one sees that

$$\mathcal{M}_K(A[n]) = \{f \in \mathrm{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) \mid \varepsilon(f) \in \mathrm{im}(\rho_{\mu_n})\}.$$

for all  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  coprime to  $c$ . If  $K$  is finitely generated, then one can determine  $\mathrm{im}(\rho_{\mu_n})$  and  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[n])$  completely.

Assume from now on that  $K$  is finitely generated. Then the image of the cyclotomic character involved above has a well-known explicit description. Denote by  $F$  the algebraic closure of the prime field of  $K$  in  $K$  and define  $q := q(K) := |F| \in \mathbb{N} \cup \{\infty\}$ . Then, after possibly replacing  $c$  by a larger constant, we have

$$\mathrm{im}(\rho_{\mu_n}) = \begin{cases} \langle \bar{q} \rangle, & \mathrm{char}(K) \neq 0, \\ (\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times, & \mathrm{char}(K) = 0, \end{cases}$$

for all  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  coprime to  $c$  (cf. [16, Thm. 2.47(ii)]). Here  $\langle \bar{q} \rangle$  is the subgroup of  $(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times$  generated by the residue class  $\bar{q}$  of  $q$  modulo  $n$ , provided  $q$  is finite. If  $q$  is finite, then we define

$$\mathrm{GSp}^{(q)}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) = \{f \in \mathrm{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) \mid \varepsilon(f) \in \langle \bar{q} \rangle\}.$$

Finally we put  $\mathrm{GSp}^{(\infty)}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) = \mathrm{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$ . We have shown:

**Proposition 3.4** *Let  $K$  be a finitely generated field and  $(A, \lambda)$  a polarized abelian variety over  $K$  with big monodromy. Let  $q = q(K)$ . Then there is a constant  $c$  (divisible by  $\deg(\lambda)$  and by  $\mathrm{char}(K)$ , if  $\mathrm{char}(K) \neq 0$ ) such that  $\mathcal{M}_K(A[n]) = \mathrm{GSp}^{(q)}(A[n], e_n^\lambda)$  for all  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  coprime to  $c$ .*

We shall now prove that the notion of big monodromy does not depend on the choice of the polarization. For this we need the following lemma.

**Lemma 3.5** *Let  $T$  be a finitely generated free  $\mathbb{Z}_\ell$ -module and  $e: T \times T \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_\ell$  a perfect alternating bilinear pairing. Then*

$$\{f \in \mathrm{End}_{\mathbb{Z}_\ell}(T) \mid f \circ g = g \circ f \ \forall g \in \mathrm{Sp}(T, e)\} = \mathbb{Z}_\ell \mathrm{Id}_T.$$

*Proof.* Let  $f \in \mathrm{End}_{\mathbb{Z}_\ell}(T)$  and assume that  $f \circ g = g \circ f$  for all  $g \in \mathrm{Sp}(T, e)$ . Note that for every  $u \in T$  the automorphism  $T_u: v \mapsto v + e(v, u)u$  lies in  $\mathrm{Sp}(T, e)$  (cf. [8, Chap. 3, p. 23]). Then  $f \circ T_u(v) = f(v) + e(v, u)f(u)$  and  $T_u \circ f(v) = f(v) + e(f(v), u)u$ . It follows that

$$e(v, u)f(u) = e(f(v), u)u \quad \text{for all } u, v \in T.$$

Now choose an arbitrary  $\mathbb{Z}_\ell$ -basis  $(u_1, \dots, u_n)$  of  $T$ . For every index  $i$  there is a vector  $v_i$  such that  $e(v_i, u_i) = 1$  and  $e(v_i, u_j) = 0$  for all  $i \neq j$ , because the pairing  $e$  is perfect. It follows that  $f(u_i) = e(f(v_i), u_i)u_i$  for all  $i$ . We put  $\lambda_i := e(f(v_i), u_i)$  such that  $f(u_i) = \lambda_i u_i$ .

For  $i \neq 1$  we have  $e(v_1, u_1 + u_j) = 1$ , hence  $f(u_1 + u_j) = e(f(v_1), u_1 + u_j)(u_1 + u_j)$ . We put  $\lambda_{1,j} := e(f(v_1), u_1 + u_j)$  such that  $f(u_1 + u_j) = \lambda_{1,j}(u_1 + u_j)$ . Then on the one hand  $f(u_1 + u_j) = \lambda_{1,j}u_1 + \lambda_{1,j}u_j$ . On the other hand  $f(u_1 + u_j) = f(u_1) + f(u_j) = \lambda_1 u_1 + \lambda_j u_j$ . This implies  $\lambda_1 = \lambda_{1,j} = \lambda_j$ . Hence  $f = \lambda_1 \mathrm{Id}_T$ .  $\square$

**Proposition 3.6** *Let  $K$  be a field and  $(A, \lambda)$  a polarized non-zero abelian variety over  $K$  with big monodromy.*

(a)  $\mathrm{End}_K(A) = \mathbb{Z}$ .

(b) *For every other polarization  $\lambda': A \rightarrow A^\vee$  there exist  $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$  such that  $a\lambda = b\lambda'$  and  $\mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) = \mathrm{Sp}(A[n], e_n^{\lambda'})$  for all  $n$  coprime to  $ab\mathrm{char}(K)$ .*

*Proof.* Part (a). Fix one large enough prime number  $\ell \neq \mathrm{char}(K)$  such that  $\mathrm{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda) \subset \mathcal{M}_K(A[\ell])$ . This is possible because  $A$  has big monodromy by Proposition 3.2. The canonical morphism

$$i: \mathrm{End}_K(A) \otimes \mathbb{Z}_\ell \longrightarrow \mathrm{End}_{\mathbb{Z}_\ell}(T_\ell(A))$$

1 is injective and  $\text{End}_K(A)$  is a  $\mathbb{Z}$ -algebra which is finitely generated and free as a  $\mathbb{Z}$ -module (cf. [17, Lemma 11.2]).  
 2 The image  $\text{im}(i)$  is contained in

$$3 \quad \text{End}_{\mathbb{Z}_\ell}(T_\ell A)^{G_K} = \{f \in \text{End}_{\mathbb{Z}_\ell}(T_\ell A) \mid f \circ \rho_{T_\ell A}(\sigma) = \rho_{T_\ell A}(\sigma) \circ f \ \forall \sigma \in G_K\}$$

4  
 5 (If  $K$  is finitely generated, then  $\text{im}(i) = \text{End}_{\mathbb{Z}_\ell}(T_\ell A)^{G_K}$  by a famous theorem of Faltings, but we do not make  
 6 use of this deep theorem.) As  $\rho_{T_\ell A}(G_K) \supset \text{Sp}(T_\ell A, e_\ell^\lambda)$ , Lemma 3.5 implies  $\text{End}_{\mathbb{Z}_\ell}(T_\ell A)^{G_K} = \mathbb{Z}_\ell \text{Id}$ . It  
 7 follows that

$$8 \quad \text{rk}_{\mathbb{Z}_\ell}(\text{End}_K(A) \otimes \mathbb{Z}_\ell) = 1.$$

9 Because  $\text{End}_K(A)$  is finitely generated and free, this implies  $\text{rk}_{\mathbb{Z}}(\text{End}_K(A)) = 1$  and  $\text{End}_K(A) = \mathbb{Z}$ .

10 Part (b). The polarization  $\lambda: A \rightarrow A^\vee$  is an isogeny. Hence there exists a polarization  $\xi: A^\vee \rightarrow A$  and the  
 11 homomorphism

$$12 \quad j: \text{Hom}_K(A, A^\vee) \longrightarrow \text{End}(A), \quad f \longmapsto \xi \circ f$$

13 is injective. (If  $f \in \ker(j)$ , then  $\xi \circ f = 0$ , hence  $\text{im}(f) \subset \ker(\xi)$ , and this implies  $\text{im}(f) = 0$  because  
 14  $\text{im}(f)$  is connected and  $\ker(f)$  is finite.) Hence  $\text{Hom}_K(A, A^\vee)$  is a free  $\mathbb{Z}$ -module of rank 1. As  $\lambda, \lambda' \in$   
 15  $\text{Hom}_K(A, A^\vee)$ , we see that there are  $a, b \in \mathbb{Z}$  such that  $a\lambda = b\lambda'$ . Now let  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  be coprime to  $ab\text{char}(K)$ .  
 16 Then  $ae_n^\lambda(P, Q) = be_n^{\lambda'}(P, Q)$  for all  $P, Q \in A[n]$ . Because the residue classes of  $a$  and  $b$  lie in  $(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times$ , this  
 17 implies  $\text{Sp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) = \text{Sp}(A[n], e_n^{\lambda'})$ . □

#### 22 4 Proof of the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden, part (b)

23 Let  $(A, \lambda)$  be a polarized abelian variety of dimension  $g$  over a field  $K$ . In this section we will use the notation  
 24  $K_\ell := K(A[\ell])$  and  $G_\ell := G(K_\ell/K)$  for every prime  $\ell \neq \text{char}(K)$ . Our main result in this section is the  
 25 following theorem.

26 **Theorem 4.1** *If  $(A, \lambda)$  has big monodromy, then for all  $e \geq 2$  and almost all  $\sigma \in G_K^e$  (in the sense of the*  
 27 *Haar measure) there are only finitely many primes  $\ell$  such that  $A(K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma))[\ell] \neq 0$ .*

28 The following Lemma 4.2 is due to Oskar Villareal (private communication). We thank him for his kind  
 29 permission to include it into our manuscript. This section in to a large extent inspired by an unpublished note of  
 30 him.

31 **Lemma 4.2** *Assume that  $A$  has big monodromy. Then there is a constant  $\ell_0$  such that  $[K(P) : K]^{-1} \leq [K_\ell :$   
 32  $K]^{-\frac{1}{2g}}$  for all primes  $\ell \geq \ell_0$  and all  $P \in A[\ell] \setminus \{0\}$ , where  $K(P)$  denotes the residue field of the point  $P$ .*

33 **Proof.** By assumption on  $A$ , there is a constant  $\ell_0$  such that  $\text{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda) \subset \mathcal{M}_K(A[\ell])$  for all primes  
 34  $\ell \geq \ell_0$ . Let  $\ell \geq \ell_0$  be a prime and  $P \in A[\ell] \setminus \{0\}$ . Then the  $\mathbb{F}_\ell$ -vector space generated inside  $A[\ell]$  by the  
 35 orbit  $X := \{f(P) \mid f \in \mathcal{M}_K(A[\ell])\}$  is the whole of  $A[\ell]$ , because  $A[\ell]$  is a simple  $\mathbb{F}_\ell[\text{Sp}(A[\ell], e_\ell^\lambda)]$ -module  
 36 (cf. [11, Satz 9.15, p. 221]). Thus we can choose an  $\mathbb{F}_\ell$ -basis  $(P_1, \dots, P_{2g})$  of  $A[\ell]$  with  $P_1 = P$  in such a way  
 37 that each  $P_i \in X$ . Then each  $P_i$  is conjugate to  $P$  under the action of  $G_K$  and  $[K(P) : K] = [K(P_i) : K]$  for all  
 38  $i$ . The field  $K_\ell$  is the composite field  $K_\ell = K(P_1) \dots K(P_{2g})$ . It follows that

$$39 \quad [K_\ell : K] \leq [K(P_1) : K] \dots [K(P_{2g}) : K] = [K(P) : K]^{2g}.$$

40 The desired inequality follows from that. □

41 The following notation will be used in the sequel: For sequences  $(x_n)_n$  and  $(y_n)_n$  of positive real numbers  
 42 we shall write  $x_n \sim y_n$ , provided the sequence  $(\frac{x_n}{y_n})_n$  converges to a positive real number. If  $x_n \sim y_n$  and  
 43  $\sum_{n=1}^\infty x_n < \infty$ , then  $\sum_{n=1}^\infty y_n < \infty$ .

44 The proof of Theorem 4.1 will make heavy use of the following classical fact.

45 **Lemma 4.3** (Borel-Cantelli, [4, 18.3.5].) *Let  $(A_1, A_2, \dots)$  be a sequence of measurable subsets of a profinite*  
 46 *group  $G$ . Let*

$$47 \quad A := \bigcap_{n=1}^\infty \bigcup_{i=n}^\infty A_i = \{x \in G \mid x \text{ belongs to infinitely many } A_i\}.$$

- 1 (a) If  $\sum_{i=1}^{\infty} \mu_G(A_i) < \infty$ , then  $\mu_G(A) = 0$ .  
 2 (b) If  $\sum_{i=1}^{\infty} \mu_G(A_i) = \infty$  and  $(A_i)_{i \in \mathbb{N}}$  is a  $\mu_G$ -independent sequence (i.e. for every finite set  $I \subset \mathbb{N}$  we have  
 3  $\mu_G(\bigcap_{i \in I} A_i) = \prod_{i \in I} \mu_G(A_i)$ ), then  $\mu_G(A) = 1$ .  
 4

5 **Proof of Theorem 4.1.** Assume that  $A/K$  has big monodromy and let  $\ell_0$  be a constant as in the definition  
 6 of the term “big monodromy”. We may assume that  $\ell_0 \geq \text{char}(K)$ . Let  $e \geq 2$  and define  
 7

$$8 \quad X_\ell := \{\sigma \in G_K^e \mid A(K_{\text{sep}}(\sigma))[\ell] \neq 0\}$$

9  
 10 for every prime  $\ell$ . Let  $\mu$  be the normalized Haar measure on  $G_K^e$ . Theorem 4.1 follows from Claim 1 below,  
 11 because Claim 1 together with the Borel-Cantelli Lemma 4.3 implies that  
 12

$$13 \quad \bigcap_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \bigcup_{\ell \geq n \text{ prime}} X_\ell$$

14 has measure zero.  
 15

16 **Claim 1.** The series  $\sum_{\ell \text{ prime}} \mu(X_\ell)$  converges.

17 Let  $\ell \geq \ell_0$  be a prime number. Note that  
 18

$$19 \quad X_\ell = \bigcup_{P \in A[\ell] \setminus \{0\}} \{\sigma \in G_K^e \mid \sigma_i(P) = P \text{ for all } i\} = \bigcup_{P \in A[\ell] \setminus \{0\}} G_{K(P)}^e.$$

20  
 21 Let  $\mathbb{P}(A[\ell]) = (A[\ell] \setminus \{0\})/\mathbb{F}_\ell^\times$  be the projective space of lines in the  $\mathbb{F}_\ell$ -vector space  $A[\ell]$ . It is a projective  
 22 space of dimension  $2g - 1$ . For  $P \in A[\ell] \setminus \{0\}$  we denote by  $\bar{P} := \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times P$  the equivalence class of  $P$  in  $\mathbb{P}(A[\ell])$ .  
 23 For  $\bar{P} \in \mathbb{P}(A[\ell])$  and  $P_1, P_2 \in \bar{P}$  there is an  $a \in \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times$  such that  $P_1 = aP_2$  and  $P_2 = a^{-1}P_1$ , and this implies  
 24  $K(P_1) = K(P_2)$ . It follows that we can write  
 25  
 26

$$27 \quad X_\ell = \bigcup_{\bar{P} \in \mathbb{P}(A[\ell])} G_{K(P)}^e.$$

28 Hence  
 29

$$30 \quad \mu(X_\ell) \leq \sum_{\bar{P} \in \mathbb{P}(A[\ell])} \mu(G_{K(P)}^e) = \sum_{\bar{P} \in \mathbb{P}(A[\ell])} [K(P) : K]^{-e},$$

31 and Lemma 4.2 implies  
 32

$$33 \quad \mu(X_\ell) \leq \sum_{\bar{P} \in \mathbb{P}(A[\ell])} [K_\ell : K]^{-e/2g} = \frac{\ell^{2g} - 1}{\ell - 1} [K_\ell : K]^{-e/2g} = \frac{\ell^{2g} - 1}{\ell - 1} |G_\ell|^{-e/2g}.$$

34 But  $G_\ell$  contains  $\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)$  and  
 35

$$36 \quad s_\ell := |\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)| = \ell^{g^2} \prod_{i=1}^g (\ell^{2i} - 1)$$

37 (cf. [22]). It is thus enough to prove the following  
 38

39 **Claim 2.** The series  $\sum_{\ell \geq \ell_0 \text{ prime}} \frac{\ell^{2g} - 1}{\ell - 1} s_\ell^{-e/2g}$  converges.

40 But  $s_\ell \sim \ell^{g^2 + 2 + 4 + \dots + 2g} = \ell^{2g^2 + g}$  and  $\frac{\ell^{2g} - 1}{\ell - 1} \sim \ell^{2g-1}$ , hence  
 41  
 42

$$43 \quad \frac{\ell^{2g} - 1}{\ell - 1} s_\ell^{-e/2g} \sim \ell^{2g-1} \ell^{-e(g + \frac{1}{2})} = \ell^{(2-e)g - (1 + \frac{e}{2})} \leq \ell^{-2},$$

44 because  $e \geq 2$ . Claim 2 follows from that. □  
 45



### 5 Special sets of symplectic matrices over $\mathbb{F}_\ell$

This section contains a construction of certain special sets of symplectic matrices (cf. Theorem 5 below) that will play a crucial role in the proof of part (a) of the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden.

Let  $R$  be a commutative ring (usually  $R = \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$  or  $R = \mathbb{Z}_\ell$  in our applications). For  $g \geq 2$  we consider the free  $R$ -module  $R^{2g}$  and denote by  $(e_1, \dots, e_{2g})$  the standard basis of  $R^{2g}$ . We shall always identify a matrix  $A \in \text{GL}_{2g}(R)$  with the corresponding automorphism  $x \mapsto Ax$  of  $R^{2g}$ . Let

$$J_g = \begin{pmatrix} J_1 & & & \\ & J_1 & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & J_1 \end{pmatrix} \in \text{GL}_{2g}(R) \quad \text{where} \quad J_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Then there is a perfect alternating bilinear pairing  $e: R^{2g} \times R^{2g} \rightarrow R$  defined by  $e(x, y) := x^t J_g y$ . This pairing  $e$  is called the canonical symplectic pairing. Note that  $e(e_i, e_{i+1}) = 1 = -e(e_{i+1}, e_i)$  and  $e(e_i, e_j) = 0$  for all odd  $i$  and all  $j \neq i + 1$ . We define  $\text{Sp}_{2g}(R) = \text{Sp}(R^{2g}, e)$  and  $\text{GSp}_{2g}(R) = \text{GSp}(R^{2g}, e)$  (cf. Section 1). Recall from Section 2 that there is a homomorphism  $\varepsilon: \text{GSp}_{2g}(R) \rightarrow R^\times$ , called the multiplier map, such that  $e(Ax, Ay) = \varepsilon(A)e(x, y)$  for all  $x, y \in R^{2g}$  and all  $A \in \text{GSp}_{2g}(R)$ . For  $\lambda \in R^\times$  we define

$$\text{GSp}_{2g}(R)[\lambda] := \{A \in \text{GSp}_{2g}(R) \mid \varepsilon(A) = \lambda\}.$$

Now consider the special case  $R = \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$ . If  $q$  is a prime power coprime to  $n$ , then we denote by  $\bar{q}$  its residue class in  $(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times$  and by  $\text{ord}_n(q) = |\langle \bar{q} \rangle|$  the order of  $\bar{q}$  as element of the group  $(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times$ . Recall from Section 3 that

$$\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}) = \{A \in \text{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}) \mid \varepsilon(A) \in \langle \bar{q} \rangle\}$$

and  $\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(\infty)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}) = \text{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$ .

For the rest of this section we specialize to the case  $R = \mathbb{F}_\ell$  and put  $V := \mathbb{F}_\ell^{2g}$ . For  $u \in V$  and  $\beta \in \mathbb{F}_\ell$  consider the automorphism

$$T_u[\beta]: v \mapsto v + \beta e(v, u)u$$

of  $V$ . Then  $T_u[\beta]$  is a transvection contained in  $\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)$  and furthermore the map

$$(\mathbb{F}_\ell, +) \longrightarrow \text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell), \quad \beta \mapsto T_u[\beta]$$

is a homomorphism.

We begin with two elementary lemmas that will be essential for Definition 5.3.

**Lemma 5.1** *Let  $\ell$  be a prime number. For each  $\lambda \in \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times$ , the matrices of  $\text{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$  that fix the vector  $e_1$  are of the form*

$$\left( \begin{array}{c|cc|cccc} 1 & d & b_1 & b_2 & \dots & \\ \hline 0 & \lambda & 0 & 0 & \dots & \\ \hline 0 & d_1 & & & & \\ \vdots & \vdots & & & & \\ \vdots & \vdots & & & & \end{array} \right) \quad (5.1)$$

with  $B = (b_{ij})_{i,j=1,\dots,2g-2} \in \text{GSp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$ ,  $d, d_1, \dots, d_{2g-2} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell$  and

$$b_k = \frac{1}{\lambda} \left( \sum_{j=1}^{g-1} (d_{2j-1} b_{2j,k} - d_{2j} b_{2j-1,k}) \right) \in \mathbb{F}_\ell \quad \text{for each } k = 1, \dots, 2g - 2. \quad (5.2)$$

1 **Proof.** Let  $A \in \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$  be such that  $Ae_1 = e_1$ . Let us write the matrix of  $A$  with respect to the  
 2 symplectic basis  $\{e_1, e_2, \dots, e_{2g-1}, e_{2g}\}$ . For each  $k = 3, \dots, 2g$  we have  $e(e_1, e_k) = 0$ , so  $e(e_1, Ae_k) = 0$ .  
 3 Therefore we can write the matrix  $A$  as

$$4 \quad A = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & d & b_1 & b_2 & \dots \\ 0 & d' & 0 & 0 & \dots \\ 0 & d_1 & & & \\ \vdots & \vdots & & & \\ \vdots & \vdots & & & B \end{pmatrix}$$

11 where in the second row we get all entries zero save the  $(2, 2)$ -th. Moreover, since  $e(e_1, e_2) = 1$ , we get that  
 12  $e(e_1, Ae_2) = e(Ae_1, Ae_2) = \lambda e(e_1, e_2) = \lambda$ , that is to say,  $d' = \lambda$ . Furthermore, we have that  $e(e_2, e_k) = 0$  for  
 13 all  $k = 3, \dots, 2g$ , hence  $e(Ae_2, Ae_k) = 0$ . This gives rise to the Equations (5.2). Denote by  $e'$  the canon-  
 14 ical symplectic pairing on  $\mathbb{F}_\ell^{2g-2}$  and by  $(e'_1, \dots, e'_{2g-2})$  the standard basis of  $\mathbb{F}_\ell^{2g-2}$ . Then  $e(Ae_i, Ae_j) =$   
 15  $e'(Be'_{i-2}, Be'_{j-2})$  for  $i, j \geq 3$ . Hence the fact that  $A \in \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$  implies that  $B \in \mathrm{GSp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$ .  
 16 This proves that the conditions in the lemma are necessary.

17 We prove that they are also sufficient. Let  $A$  be a matrix satisfying conditions (1) and (2) of the lemma. Then  
 18  $Ae_1 = e_1$  because the first column of  $A$  is  $e_1$ . Furthermore  $e(Ae_1, Ae_2) = \lambda = \lambda e(e_1, e_2)$  and  $e(Ae_1, Ae_k) =$   
 19  $0 = \lambda e(Ae_1, Ae_k)$  for all  $k \geq 3$ . For  $k \geq 3$  we have

$$21 \quad e(Ae_2, Ae_k) = -\lambda b_k + \left( \sum_{j=1}^{g-1} (d_{2j-1} b_{2j,k} - d_{2j} b_{2j-1,k}) \right) = 0 = \lambda e(e_2, e_k)$$

24 because of the Equations (5.2). Finally

$$26 \quad e(Ae_i, Ae_j) = e'(Be'_{i-2}, Be'_{j-2}) = \lambda e'(e'_{i-2}, e'_{j-2}) = \lambda e(e_i, e_j)$$

27 for all  $3 \leq i < j$ , because  $B \in \mathrm{GSp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$ . Altogether we see that  $e(Ae_i, Ae_k) = \lambda e(e_i, e_j)$  for all  $i < j$   
 28 and this suffices to imply  $A \in \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$ .  $\square$

30 **Lemma 5.2** *The set of matrices in  $\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$  that do not have the eigenvalue 1 has cardinality greater  
 31 than  $\beta(\ell, g) |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|$ , where*

$$33 \quad \beta(\ell, g) = \ell^{2g-1} (\ell^{2g} - 1) \frac{\ell - 2}{\ell - 1}.$$

35 **Proof.** The set of matrices  $A \in \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$  that fix the vector  $e_1$  consists of matrices of the form (5.1),  
 36 where  $B$  belongs to  $\mathrm{GSp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$ ,  $d, d_1, \dots, d_{2g-2} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell$  and  $b_1, \dots, b_{2g-2}$  are given by the formula (5.2) of  
 37 Lemma 5.1. Therefore the cardinality of the set of such matrices is exactly

$$39 \quad \ell^{2g-1} |\mathrm{GSp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]| = \ell^{2g-1} |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|.$$

40 On the other hand, the symplectic group acts transitively on the set of cyclic subgroups of  $V$  (cf. [11, p. 221,  
 41 Satz 9.15(a)]). Therefore if a matrix fixes any nonzero vector, it can be conjugated to one of the above. Hence,  
 42 to obtain an upper bound for the number of matrices with eigenvalue 1 one has to multiply the previous number  
 43 by the number of cyclic groups of  $V$ , namely  $\frac{\ell^{2g}-1}{\ell-1}$ . Therefore the set of matrices in  $\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$  that have the  
 44 eigenvalue 1 has cardinality less than  $\ell^{2g-1} \frac{\ell^{2g}-1}{\ell-1} |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|$ . Hence the number of matrices in  $\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$   
 45 that do not have the eigenvalue 1 is greater than  $|\mathrm{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)| - \ell^{2g-1} \frac{\ell^{2g}-1}{\ell-1} |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|$ .

47 Now apply the well known identity (see for instance the proof of [11, p. 220, Satz 13(b)])

$$49 \quad |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)| = (\ell^{2g} - 1) \ell^{2g-1} |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|. \quad (5.3)$$

50 We thus see that the set of matrices in  $\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$  that do not have the eigenvalue 1 has cardinality greater  
 51 than  $\beta(\ell, g) |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|$ .  $\square$

53 For  $\alpha = (\alpha_3, \dots, \alpha_{2g}) \in \mathbb{F}_\ell^{2g-2}$  we put  $u_\alpha := e_2 + \alpha_3 e_3 + \dots + \alpha_{2g} e_{2g}$ .

**Definition 5.3** For each  $\lambda \in \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times$  choose once and for all a subset  $\mathcal{B}_\lambda$  of matrices  $B \in \text{GSp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[\lambda]$  which do not have the eigenvalue 1, with

$$|\mathcal{B}_\lambda| = \beta(\ell, g - 1) |\text{Sp}_{2g-4}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|$$

(which can be done by Lemma 5.2). Define

$$\begin{aligned} S_\lambda(\ell)_0 &:= \{A \text{ of the shape (5.1) in Lemma 5.1 such that:} \\ &\quad B \in \mathcal{B}_\lambda, \\ &\quad d_1, \dots, d_{2g-2} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell, \\ &\quad d \in \mathbb{F}_\ell \setminus \{- (b_1, \dots, b_{2g-2})(\text{Id} - B)^{-1} (d_1, \dots, d_{2g-2})^t\} \\ &\quad \text{and such that (2) is satisfied}\}, \\ S_\lambda(\ell) &:= \{T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]^{-1} \cdot A \cdot T_{u_\alpha}[\beta] : \alpha_3, \dots, \alpha_{2g}, \beta \in \mathbb{F}_\ell, A \in S_\lambda(\ell)_0\}. \end{aligned}$$

Let  $q$  be a power of a prime  $p \neq \ell$ . Define

$$S^{(q)}(\ell) := \bigcup_{i=1}^{\text{ord}_\ell q} S_{q^i}(\ell).$$

Define also

$$S^{(\infty)}(\ell) = \bigcup_{\lambda \in \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times} S_\lambda(\ell).$$

**Remark 5.4** The sets  $S^{(q)}(\ell)$  and  $S^{(\infty)}(\ell)$  are not empty. Note moreover that each of the matrices in  $S^{(q)}(\ell)$  and  $S^{(\infty)}(\ell)$  fixes an element of  $V$ .

*Proof.* Let  $\lambda \in \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times$ . The set  $S_\lambda(\ell)_0$  is non-empty, because  $\mathcal{B}_\lambda \neq \emptyset$ , and every  $A \in S_\lambda(\ell)_0$  satisfies  $Ae_1 = e_1$ . Furthermore  $S_\lambda(\ell)_0 \subset S_\lambda(\ell)$  as  $T_v[0] = \text{Id}$  for all  $v \in V$ . In particular  $S_\lambda(\ell)$  is non-empty. Each matrix in  $S_\lambda(\ell)$  is conjugate to a matrix in  $S_\lambda(\ell)_0$  and hence fixes an element of  $V$ . The assertion follows from that.  $\square$

## 6 Special sets of symplectic matrices over $\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$

This section is devoted to the proof of the following result.

**Theorem 6.1** *The following properties hold:*

(1) *Let  $q$  be a power of a prime number or  $q = \infty$ . Then*

$$\sum_\ell \frac{|S^{(q)}(\ell)|}{|\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} = \infty.$$

*In the first case  $\ell$  runs through all prime numbers coprime to  $q$  and in the second case through all prime numbers.*

(2) *Let  $q$  be a power of a prime number  $p$  or  $q = \infty$ . Let  $\ell_1, \dots, \ell_r$  be distinct prime numbers. If  $q \neq \infty$  assume that the  $\ell_i$ 's are different from  $p$ . Let  $n = \ell_1 \dots \ell_r$ . Then*

$$\frac{|S^{(q)}(n)|}{|\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})|} = \prod_{j=1}^r \frac{|S^{(q)}(\ell_j)|}{|\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{F}_{\ell_j})|}$$

*where  $S^{(q)}(n) \subset \text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$  is the set of matrices that belong to  $S^{(q)}(\ell_j)$  modulo  $\ell_j$ , for all  $j = 1, \dots, r$ .*

1 First we will prove part (1) of Theorem 6.1. We need a series of lemmata.

2 We can compute the cardinality of  $S_\lambda(\ell)_0$  explicitly.

3 **Lemma 6.2** *It holds that*

$$4 |S_\lambda(\ell)_0| = \ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1)\beta(\ell, g-1)|\mathrm{Sp}_{2g-4}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|.$$

7 **Proof.** In the definition of the set  $S_\lambda(\ell)_0$  there are  $|\mathcal{B}_\lambda| = \beta(\ell, g-1)|\mathrm{Sp}_{2g-4}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|$  possible choices of  $B$ ,  
 8  $\ell^{2g-2}$  possible choices of  $d_1, \dots, d_{2g-2} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell$  and  $\ell-1$  possible choices of  $d$ .  $\square$

11 **Lemma 6.3** *Let  $A \in S_\lambda(\ell)_0$  and  $x \in V$ . Then  $Ax = x$  if and only if  $x \in \mathbb{F}_\ell e_1$ .*

13 **Proof.** We have  $Ae_1 = e_1$  because the first column of  $A$  is  $e_1$ . Suppose  $Ax = x$ . It suffices to show that  
 14  $x \in \mathbb{F}_\ell e_1$ . Consider the system of equations  $A(x_1, \dots, x_{2g})^t = (x_1, \dots, x_{2g})^t$  over  $\mathbb{F}_\ell$ . Assume first that we  
 15 have a solution with  $x_2 = 0$ . Then the last  $2g-2$  equations boil down to

$$16 B(x_3, \dots, x_{2g})^t = (x_3, \dots, x_{2g})^t.$$

19 But since  $B$  does not have the eigenvalue 1, it follows that  $x_3 = \dots = x_{2g} = 0$ , hence  $x$  belongs to the subspace  
 20  $\mathbb{F}_\ell e_1$  of  $V$  generated by  $e_1$ .

21 Assume now that we have a solution  $(x_1, \dots, x_{2g})^t$  with  $x_2 \neq 0$ . Since 1 is not an eigenvalue of  $B$ , the matrix  
 22  $\mathrm{Id} - B$  is invertible, and we can write the last  $2g-2$  equations as

$$24 (x_3/x_2, \dots, x_{2g}/x_2)^t = (\mathrm{Id} - B)^{-1}(d_1, \dots, d_{2g-2})^t.$$

26 On the other hand, the first equation reads

$$28 d = -(b_1, \dots, b_{2g-2})(x_3/x_2, \dots, x_{2g}/x_2)^t.$$

30 Hence

$$32 d = -(b_1, \dots, b_{2g-2})(\mathrm{Id} - B)^{-1}(d_1, \dots, d_{2g-2})^t.$$

34 But we have precisely asked that  $d$  does not satisfy such an equation, cf. Definition 5.3.  $\square$

36 **Lemma 6.4** *Let  $\alpha_3, \dots, \alpha_{2g}, \tilde{\alpha}_3, \dots, \tilde{\alpha}_{2g} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell$  and  $\beta, \tilde{\beta} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell$ . Assume that  $T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]^{-1}(e_1) = \lambda e_1$  for  
 37 some  $\lambda \in \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times$ . Then  $T_{u_\alpha}[\beta] = T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]$  and  $\beta = \tilde{\beta}$ . Furthermore, if  $\beta \neq 0$ , then  $u_\alpha = u_{\tilde{\alpha}}$ .*

40 **Proof.** We have

$$42 T_{u_\alpha}[\beta](v) = v + \beta e(v, e_2 + \alpha_3 e_3 + \dots + \alpha_{2g} e_{2g})(e_2 + \alpha_3 e_3 + \dots + \alpha_{2g} e_{2g})$$

44 In particular,

$$46 T_{u_\alpha}[\beta](e_1) = e_1 + \beta e_2 + \beta \alpha_3 e_3 + \dots + \beta \alpha_{2g} e_{2g},$$

$$47 T_{u_\alpha}[\beta](e_2) = e_2,$$

$$49 T_{u_\alpha}[\beta](e_k) = e_k + \beta \alpha_{k+1} e_2 + \beta \alpha_{k+1} \sum_{j=3}^{2g} \alpha_j e_j \quad \text{for } k \geq 3, \quad k \text{ odd},$$

$$52 T_{u_\alpha}[\beta](e_k) = e_k - \beta \alpha_{k-1} e_2 - \beta \alpha_{k-1} \sum_{j=3}^{2g} \alpha_j e_j \quad \text{for } k \geq 3, \quad k \text{ even}.$$

Hence

$$\begin{aligned}
 T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]^{-1}(e_1) &= T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]\left(e_1 - \tilde{\beta}e_2 - \tilde{\beta}\sum_{k=3}^{2g}\tilde{\alpha}_k e_k\right) \\
 &= e_1 + \beta e_2 + \beta\alpha_3 e_3 + \cdots + \beta\alpha_{2g} e_{2g} \\
 &\quad - \tilde{\beta}e_2 \\
 &\quad - \tilde{\beta}\sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ odd}}}^{2g}\tilde{\alpha}_k\left(e_k + \beta\alpha_{k+1}e_2 + \beta\alpha_{k+1}\sum_{j=3}^{2g}\alpha_j e_j\right) \\
 &\quad - \tilde{\beta}\sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ even}}}^{2g}\tilde{\alpha}_k\left(e_k - \beta\alpha_{k-1}e_2 - \beta\alpha_{k-1}\sum_{j=3}^{2g}\alpha_j e_j\right) \\
 &= e_1 + \beta e_2 + \beta\alpha_3 e_3 + \cdots + \beta\alpha_{2g} e_{2g} \\
 &\quad - \tilde{\beta}e_2 \\
 &\quad - \tilde{\beta}\sum_{j=3}^{2g}\tilde{\alpha}_j e_j \\
 &\quad - \tilde{\beta}\beta\left(\sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ odd}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k+1}\tilde{\alpha}_k - \sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ even}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k-1}\tilde{\alpha}_k\right)e_2 \\
 &\quad - \tilde{\beta}\beta\sum_{j=3}^{2g}\alpha_j\left(\sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ odd}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k+1}\tilde{\alpha}_k - \sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ even}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k-1}\tilde{\alpha}_k\right)e_j.
 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, if  $T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]^{-1}(e_1)$  is a multiple of  $e_1$ , it is necessarily equal to  $e_1$  and moreover we have that the coefficients of the other  $e_k$  vanish, so we get the following system of equations: the equation corresponding to  $e_2$

$$\beta - \tilde{\beta} - \tilde{\beta}\beta\left(\sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ odd}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k+1}\tilde{\alpha}_k - \sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ even}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k-1}\tilde{\alpha}_k\right) = 0, \tag{6.1}$$

and, for each  $j = 3, \dots, 2g$ , the equation corresponding to  $e_j$

$$\beta\alpha_j - \tilde{\beta}\tilde{\alpha}_j - \tilde{\beta}\beta\alpha_j\left(\sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ odd}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k+1}\tilde{\alpha}_k - \sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ even}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k-1}\tilde{\alpha}_k\right) = 0. \tag{6.2}$$

If  $\beta = 0$ , then  $T_{u_\alpha}[\beta] = \text{Id}$  and  $T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]^{-1}(e_1) = T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[-\tilde{\beta}](e_1) = e_1 - \tilde{\beta}e_2 - \tilde{\beta}\tilde{\alpha}_3 e_3 - \cdots - \tilde{\beta}\tilde{\alpha}_{2g} e_{2g}$ , and since this must be equal to  $\lambda e_1$ , we conclude that  $\tilde{\beta} = 0$ , and  $T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}] = \text{Id}$ . Similarly if  $\tilde{\beta} = 0$ , then  $\beta = 0$  and  $T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}] = \text{Id} = T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]$ .

Assume now that  $\beta \neq 0, \tilde{\beta} \neq 0$ . From Equation (6.1) we obtain that

$$\left(\sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ odd}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k+1}\tilde{\alpha}_k - \sum_{\substack{k=3 \\ k \text{ even}}}^{2g}\alpha_{k-1}\tilde{\alpha}_k\right) = \frac{\beta - \tilde{\beta}}{\beta\tilde{\beta}};$$

substituting this in Equation (6.2) we get that  $\alpha_j = \tilde{\alpha}_j$ , and once we have this for all  $j = 3, \dots, 2g$ , it follows from Equation (6.1) that  $\beta = \tilde{\beta}$ .  $\square$

**Lemma 6.5** Let  $A, \tilde{A} \in S_\ell(\lambda)_0$ . Assume that there exist  $\alpha_3, \dots, \alpha_{2g}, \tilde{\alpha}_3, \dots, \tilde{\alpha}_{2g} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell$  and  $\beta, \tilde{\beta} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell$  such that  $T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]^{-1} \cdot A \cdot T_{u_\alpha}[\beta] = T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]^{-1} \cdot \tilde{A} \cdot T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]$ . Then  $A = \tilde{A}$  and  $\beta = \tilde{\beta}$ . If  $\beta \neq 0$ , then  $\alpha_i = \tilde{\alpha}_i$  for all  $i \geq 3$ .

**Proof.** Since  $\tilde{A} = T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]^{-1} \cdot A \cdot T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]^{-1}$  fixes  $e_1$ , we see that  $A$  fixes  $T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]^{-1}e_1$ . Lemma 6.3 implies  $T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]T_{u_{\tilde{\alpha}}}[\tilde{\beta}]^{-1}e_1 = \lambda e_1$  for some  $\lambda \in \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times$ . The assertion follows from that by Lemma 6.4.  $\square$

Next we can compute the cardinality of  $S_\lambda(\ell)$  in terms of  $|S_\lambda(\ell)_0|$ .

**Lemma 6.6**  $|S_\lambda(\ell)| = (\ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1) + 1)|S_\lambda(\ell)_0|$ .

**Proof.** For  $A \in S_\lambda(\ell)_0$  we define

$$C_A = \{T_{u_\alpha}[\beta]AT_{u_\alpha}[\beta]^{-1} : \alpha_3, \dots, \alpha_{2g}, \beta \in \mathbb{F}_\ell\}.$$

Lemma 6.5 implies that  $|C_A| = \ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1) + 1$  and that  $C_A \cap C_{A'} = \emptyset$  for  $A \neq A'$  in  $S_\lambda(\ell)_0$ . Furthermore  $S_\lambda(\ell) = \bigcup_{A \in S_\lambda(\ell)_0} C_A$ , cf. Definition 5.3. Thus  $|S_\lambda(\ell)| = (\ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1) + 1)|S_\lambda(\ell)_0|$ .  $\square$

**Lemma 6.7**

(1) Let  $q$  be a power of a prime number  $p$ , and let  $n$  be a squarefree natural number such that  $p \nmid n$ . The cardinality of  $\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$  equals  $\text{ord}_n(q) \cdot \prod_{\ell|n} |\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|$ .

(2) Let  $q = \infty$ , and let  $n$  be a squarefree natural number. The cardinality of  $\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$  equals  $\prod_{\ell|n} (\ell-1) |\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|$ .

**Proof.** By the Chinese Remainder Theorem  $|\text{Sp}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})| = \prod_{\ell|n} |\text{Sp}(\mathbb{Z}/\ell\mathbb{Z})|$ . Furthermore the multiplier map  $\varepsilon: \text{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}) \rightarrow (\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times$  is an epimorphism with kernel  $\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$ . Thus

$$|\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(\infty)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})| = |\text{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})| = |\text{Sp}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})| |(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times|.$$

Furthermore  $|(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times| = \prod_{\ell|n} (\ell-1)$ . Hence (2) holds true.

Now let  $q$  be a prime power which is coprime to  $n$ . It follows from the definitions that  $\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}) = \varepsilon^{-1}(\langle \bar{q} \rangle)$ . Thus

$$|\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})| = |\langle \bar{q} \rangle| |\ker(\varepsilon)| = |\langle \bar{q} \rangle| |\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})|.$$

This implies (1) because  $\text{ord}_n(q) = |\langle \bar{q} \rangle|$ .  $\square$

**Proof of Theorem 6.1(1).** Let  $q$  be a power of a prime  $p$  or  $q = \infty$ , and let  $\ell$  be a prime. In the first case, let us also assume  $\ell \neq p$ . In the first case define  $G = \langle \bar{q} \rangle \subset \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times$ ; then  $|G| = \text{ord}_\ell(q)$ . In the second case define  $|G| = \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times$ ; then  $|G| = (\ell-1)$ . In both cases  $|\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)| = |G| |\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|$  by Lemma 6.7. Furthermore

$$|\text{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)| = (\ell^{2g} - 1)\ell^{2g-1} |\text{Sp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)| = (\ell^{2g} - 1)\ell^{2g-1} (\ell^{2g-2} - 1)\ell^{2g-3} |\text{Sp}_{2g-4}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|.$$

(cf. the identity (3) in the proof of Lemma 5.2). Thus

$$|\text{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)| = |G| (\ell^{2g} - 1)\ell^{2g-1} (\ell^{2g-2} - 1)\ell^{2g-3} |\text{Sp}_{2g-4}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)| \quad (1).$$

Furthermore  $S^{(q)}(\ell) = \bigcup_{\lambda \in G} S_\lambda(\ell)$  and hence

$$|S^{(q)}(\ell)| = |G| |S_\lambda(\ell)| = |G| (\ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1) + 1) |S_\lambda(\ell)_0|$$

by Lemma 6.6. Recall from Lemma 6.2 that

$$|S_\lambda(\ell)_0| = \ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1)\beta(\ell, g-1) |\text{Sp}_{2g-4}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|.$$

It follows that

$$|S^{(q)}(\ell)| = |G|(\ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1)+1)\ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1)\beta(\ell, g-1)|\mathrm{Sp}_{2g-4}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)| \quad (2)$$

Dividing Equation (1) by Equation (2) we obtain

$$\frac{|S^{(q)}(\ell)|}{|\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} = \frac{(\ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1)+1)\ell^{2g-2}(\ell-1)\beta(\ell, g-1)}{(\ell^{2g}-1)\ell^{2g-1}(\ell^{2g-2}-1)\ell^{2g-3}} \sim \frac{1}{\ell},$$

and the sum  $\sum_{\ell \neq p \text{ prime}} \frac{1}{\ell}$  diverges. □

For the rest of the section,  $q$  will be a power of a prime  $p$ .

For each squarefree  $n$  not divisible by  $p$  and each  $i = 1, \dots, \mathrm{ord}_n(q)$ , define the set  $S_{q^i}(n) := \{A \in S^{(q)}(n) \mid \varepsilon(A) = q^i \text{ modulo } n\}$ .

**Lemma 6.8** *Let  $q$  be a power of a prime number  $p$ . Let  $\ell_1, \dots, \ell_r$  be distinct primes which are different from  $p$ , and consider  $n = \ell_1 \cdots \ell_r$ . Let  $i \in \{1, \dots, \mathrm{ord}_n(q)\}$ . Then there is a bijection*

$$S_{q^i}(n) \simeq S_{q^i}(\ell_1) \times \cdots \times S_{q^i}(\ell_r).$$

**Proof.** Consider the canonical projection

$$\begin{aligned} \pi : S_{q^i}(n) &\longrightarrow S_{q^i}(\ell_1) \times \cdots \times S_{q^i}(\ell_r) \\ A &\longmapsto (A \pmod{\ell_1}, \dots, A \pmod{\ell_r}). \end{aligned}$$

This is clearly an injective map. Now we want to prove surjectivity. For each  $j$ , take some matrix  $B_j \in S_{q^i}(\ell_j)$ .

By the Chinese Remainder Theorem, there exists  $A \in \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$  such that  $A$  projects onto  $B_j$  for each  $j$ . Note that in particular  $A \in S^{(q)}(n)$ . Since  $\varepsilon(A)$  is congruent to  $\varepsilon(B_j) = q^i$  modulo  $\ell_j$  for all  $j$ , we get that  $\varepsilon(A) = q^i$  modulo  $n$ . Therefore  $A \in S_{q^i}(n)$ . □

**Proof of Theorem 6.1(2).**

*Case  $q \neq \infty$ :* On the one hand, since the cardinality of  $|S_{q^i}(\ell)|$  does not depend on  $i$  (cf. Lemmas 6.6 and 6.2), we obtain

$$\prod_{\ell|n} \frac{|S^{(q)}(\ell)|}{|\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} = \prod_{\ell|n} \frac{\mathrm{ord}_\ell(q)|S_q(\ell)|}{\mathrm{ord}_\ell(q)|\mathrm{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} = \prod_{\ell|n} \frac{|S_q(\ell)|}{|\mathrm{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} \quad (1).$$

On the other hand, taking into account again that  $|S_{q^i}(\ell)|$  is independent of  $i$ , Lemma 6.7, and that  $|S_{q^i}(n)| = \prod_{\ell|n} |S_{q^i}(\ell)|$  by Lemma 6.8, we get

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{|S^{(q)}(n)|}{|\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})|} &= \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{\mathrm{ord}_n(q)} |S_{q^i}(n)|}{\mathrm{ord}_n(q) \prod_{\ell|n} |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{\mathrm{ord}_n(q)} \left( \prod_{\ell|n} |S_{q^i}(\ell)| \right)}{\mathrm{ord}_n(q) \prod_{\ell|n} |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} \\ &= \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{\mathrm{ord}_n(q)} \left( \prod_{\ell|n} |S_q(\ell)| \right)}{\mathrm{ord}_n(q) \prod_{\ell|n} |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} = \frac{\mathrm{ord}_n(q) \left( \prod_{\ell|n} |S_q(\ell)| \right)}{\mathrm{ord}_n(q) \prod_{\ell|n} |\mathrm{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} \\ &= \prod_{\ell|n} \frac{|S_q(\ell)|}{|\mathrm{Sp}_{2g}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)|} \quad (2). \end{aligned}$$

Our assertion follows comparing the right-hand sides of (1) and (2).

*Case  $q = \infty$ :* By the Chinese Remainder Theorem, there is a canonical isomorphism

$$c: \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(\infty)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}) \cong \prod_{i=1}^r \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(\infty)}(\mathbb{Z}/\ell_i\mathbb{Z})$$

and

$$S^{(\infty)}(n) = c^{-1}(S^{(\infty)}(\ell_1) \times \cdots \times S^{(\infty)}(\ell_r))$$

by the definition of  $S^{(\infty)}(n)$ . It follows that

$$\frac{|S^{(\infty)}(n)|}{|\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(\infty)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})|} = \prod_{i=1}^r \frac{|S^{(\infty)}(\ell_i)|}{|\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(\infty)}(\mathbb{Z}/\ell_i\mathbb{Z})|} \quad \square$$

**Remark 6.9** In the definition of the set  $S_{q^i}(\ell)_0$  (cf. Definition 5.3), we choose a subset  $\mathcal{B}_{q^i}$  of matrices in  $\mathrm{GSp}_{2g-2}(\mathbb{F}_\ell)[q^i]$  without the eigenvalue 1, which is large enough to ensure that part (1) of Theorem 6.1 holds. For a concrete value of  $g$ , one can choose such set more explicitly. For instance, when  $g = 2$ , instead of  $\mathcal{B}_{q^i}$  one can consider the set

$$\mathcal{B}_{q^i}' := \left\{ \begin{pmatrix} b_{1,1} & b_{1,2} \\ b_{2,1} & b_{2,2} \end{pmatrix} : b_{1,1} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell, b_{2,2} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell \setminus \{1 - b_{1,1} + q^i\}, b_{1,2} \in \mathbb{F}_\ell^\times, b_{2,1} = b_{1,2}^{-1}(b_{1,1}b_{2,2} - q^i) \right\}$$

of  $\ell(\ell - 1)^2$  matrices, which can also be used to prove the second part of Theorem 6.1 in the case of the group  $\mathrm{GSp}_4(\mathbb{F}_\ell)$ .

## 7 Proof of the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden, part (a)

**Theorem 7.1** *Let  $(A, \lambda)$  be a polarized abelian variety over a finitely generated field  $K$ . Assume that  $A/K$  has big monodromy. Then for almost all  $\sigma \in G_K$  there are infinitely many prime numbers  $\ell$  such that  $A(K_{\mathrm{sep}}(\sigma))[\ell] \neq 0$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $p := \mathrm{char}(K)$ . Let  $G = G_K$  and  $g := \dim(A)$ . Denote by  $e_{\ell^\infty}^{\mathrm{can}}$  (resp.  $e_n^{\mathrm{can}}$ ) the canonical symplectic pairing on  $T_\ell(A)$  (resp.  $A[n]$ ), cf. the beginning of Section 5. Recall from Section 2 that we have furthermore the Weil pairing  $e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda$  (resp.  $e_n^\lambda$ ) on  $T_\ell(A)$  (resp. on  $A[n]$ ). We fix once and for all for every prime number  $\ell \neq p$ ,  $\ell > \deg(\lambda)$  a symplectic basis of  $(T_\ell(A), e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda)$  (cf. [2, Chap. 9, paragraph 5, no. 1, Thm. 1, p. 79]). This defines an isometry  $(T_\ell(A), e_{\ell^\infty}^\lambda) \cong (\mathbb{Z}_\ell, e_{\ell^\infty}^{\mathrm{can}})$ , from which we obtain an isometry  $(A[\ell^i], e_{\ell^i}^\lambda) \cong (A[\ell^i], e_{\ell^i}^{\mathrm{can}})$  for every  $i$ . Finally, by the Chinese remainder theorem, we obtain an isometry  $(A[n], e_n^\lambda) \cong ((\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^{2g}, e_n^{\mathrm{can}})$  for every  $n$  which is coprime to  $p$  and to  $\deg(\lambda)$ . We get an isomorphism  $\mathrm{GSp}(A[n], e_n^\lambda) \cong \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$  for every such  $n$ , and we consider the representations

$$\rho_n : G_K \longrightarrow \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$$

attached to  $A/K$  after these choices. If  $m$  is a divisor of  $n$ , then we denote by  $r_{n,m} : \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}) \rightarrow \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}(\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z})$  the corresponding canonical map, such that  $r_{n,m} \circ \rho_n = \rho_m$ .

Let  $q := q(K)$  be the cardinality of the algebraic closure of the prime field of  $K$  in  $K$ . Thus  $q = \infty$  if  $p = 0$  and  $q$  is a power of  $p$  otherwise. As  $A$  has big monodromy, we find by Proposition 3.4 an integer  $c$  (divisible by  $\deg(\lambda)$  and by  $p$ , if  $p \neq 0$ ) such that  $\mathrm{im}(\rho_n) = \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$ , for every  $n$  coprime to  $c$ .

For every prime number  $\ell > c$ , we define

$$X_\ell := \{\sigma \in G_K \mid A(K_{\mathrm{sep}}(\sigma))[\ell] \neq 0\}.$$

Thus, it suffices to prove that  $\bigcap_{m>c} \bigcup_{\ell \geq n \text{ prime}} X_\ell$  has measure 1. Let  $S^{(q)}(n) \subset \mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})$  be the special sets of symplectic matrices defined in Section 4. By Remark 5.4  $\rho_\ell^{-1}(S^{(q)}(\ell)) \subset X_\ell$  for every prime number  $\ell > c$ . Thus it suffices to prove that  $\bigcap_{m>c} \bigcup_{\ell \geq n \text{ prime}} \rho_\ell^{-1}(S^{(q)}(\ell))$  has measure 1. By the basic properties of the Haar measure,  $\mu_G(\rho_n^{-1}(S^{(q)}(n))) = \frac{|S^{(q)}(n)|}{|\mathrm{GSp}_{2g}^{(q)}(\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})|}$  for all integers  $n$  coprime to  $c$ . Hence part (1) of Theorem 6.1 implies that  $\sum_{\ell > c \text{ prime}} \mu_G(\rho_\ell^{-1}(S^{(q)}(\ell))) = \infty$ .



Furthermore, if  $\ell_1, \dots, \ell_r > c$  are distinct prime numbers and  $n = \ell_1 \dots \ell_r$ , then

$$\bigcap_{i=1}^r \rho_{\ell_i}^{-1}(S^{(q)}(\ell_i)) = \rho_n^{-1}(S^{(q)}(n))$$

and part (2) of Theorem 6.1 implies

$$\mu_G \left( \bigcap_{i=1}^r \rho_{\ell_i}^{-1}(S^{(q)}(\ell_i)) \right) = \prod_{i=1}^r \mu_G(\rho_{\ell_i}^{-1}(S^{(q)}(\ell_i))).$$

Hence  $(\rho_{\ell}^{-1}(S^{(q)}(\ell)))_{\ell > c}$  is a  $\mu_G$ -independent sequence of subsets of  $G$ . It follows from Lemma 4.3 that  $\bigcap_{n > c} \bigcup_{\ell \geq n, \text{ prime}} \rho_{\ell}^{-1}(S^{(q)}(\ell))$  has measure 1, as desired.  $\square$

We now combine the main theorems 4.1 and 7.1 of this paper with existing computations of monodromy groups. We will obtain many examples of abelian varieties for which the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden can be shown. Certainly, the most prominent monodromy computation is the classical theorem of Serre (cf. [19], [20] for the number field case; the generalization to finitely generated fields of characteristic zero is well-known): *If  $A$  is an abelian variety over a finitely generated field  $K$  of characteristic zero with  $\text{End}(A) = \mathbb{Z}$  and  $\dim(A) = 2, 6$  or odd, then  $A/K$  has big monodromy.* Here  $\text{End}(A) = \text{End}_{\bar{K}}(A_{\bar{K}})$  stands for the absolute endomorphism ring of  $A$ .

Furthermore we focus our attention at abelian varieties with  $\text{End}(A) = \mathbb{Z}$ , which have been recently considered by Chris Hall in his open image theorem [10]. We will say that an abelian variety  $A$  over a finitely generated field  $K$  is of Hall type, if  $\text{End}(A) = \mathbb{Z}$  and  $K$  has a discrete valuation  $v$  such that the connected component of the special fibre of the Néron model  $\mathcal{A} \rightarrow \text{Spec}(\mathcal{O}_v)$  of  $A$  over the discrete valuation ring  $\mathcal{O}_v$  of  $v$  is an extension of an abelian variety by a 1-dimensional torus. The following result, gives examples of abelian varieties with big monodromy in all dimensions (and including the case  $\text{char}(K) > 0$ ): *If  $A$  is an abelian variety of Hall type over a finitely generated infinite field  $K$ , then  $A/K$  has big monodromy.* In the special case where  $K$  is a global field this has recently been proved by Hall (cf. [9], [10]). The generalization to an arbitrary finitely generated ground field  $K$  is carried out in our paper [1] using methods of group theory, finiteness properties of the fundamental group of schemes and Galois theory of large field extensions. In combination with the main theorem we obtain the following

**Corollary 7.2** *Let  $A$  be an abelian variety over a finitely generated infinite field  $K$ . Assume that either condition (i) or (ii) is satisfied.*

- (i)  $A$  is of Hall type.
- (ii)  $\text{char}(K) = 0$ ,  $\text{End}(A) = \mathbb{Z}$  and  $\dim(A) = 2, 6$  or odd.

*Then the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden holds true for  $A/K$ .*

We thus obtain over every finitely generated infinite field and for every dimension families of abelian varieties for which the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden holds true. In the case when  $\text{char}(K) > 0$  the corollary offers the first evidence for the Conjecture of Geyer and Jarden on torsion going beyond the case of elliptic curves.

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