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Exact formulas for traces of singular moduli of higher level modular functions

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Abstract

Zagier proved that the traces of singular values of the classical j-invariant are the Fourier coefficients of a weight 3/2 modular form and Duke provided a new proof of the result by establishing an exact formula for the traces using Niebur's work on a certain class of non-holomorphic modular forms. In this short note, by utilizing Niebur's work again, we generalize Duke's result to exact formulas for traces of singular moduli of higher level modular functions.

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1. Introduction and statement of result

The classical *j*-invariant is defined for z in the complex upper half plane \mathbb{H} by

 $j(z) = q^{-1} + 744 + 196884q + \cdots,$

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where $q = e(z) = e^{2\pi i z}$ and J(z) = j(z) - 744 is the normalized Hauptmodul for the group $\Gamma(1) = PSL_2(\mathbb{Z})$. All the modular groups discussed in this paper are subgroups of $\Gamma(1)$. For a positive integer *D* congruent to 0 or 3 modulo 4, we denote by Q_D the set of positive definite integral binary quadratic forms

$$Q(x, y) = [a, b, c] = ax^{2} + bxy + cy^{2}$$

with discriminant $-D = b^2 - 4ac$. The group $\Gamma(1)$ acts on \mathcal{Q}_D by $Q \circ {\binom{\alpha \ \beta}{\gamma \ \delta}} = Q(\alpha x + \beta y, \gamma x + \delta y)$. For each $Q \in \mathcal{Q}_D$, we let

$$z_Q = \frac{-b + i\sqrt{D}}{2a},$$

the corresponding CM point in \mathbb{H} and we write $\Gamma(1)_Q$ for the stabilizer of Q in $\Gamma(1)$. The trace of a singular modulus of discriminant -D is defined as

$$\mathbf{t}_J(D) = \sum_{Q \in \mathcal{Q}_D / \Gamma(1)} \frac{1}{|\Gamma(1)_Q|} J(z_Q).$$

In [9, Theorem 1], Zagier proved that the generating series for the traces of singular moduli

$$g(z) := q^{-1} - 2 - \sum_{\substack{D > 0 \\ D \equiv 0,3 \pmod{4}}} \mathbf{t}_J(D) q^D = q^{-1} - 2 + 248q^3 - 492q^4 + \cdots$$

is a weakly holomorphic modular form (that is, meromorphic with poles only at the cusps) of weight 3/2 on $\Gamma_0(4)$. Recently, Bruinier, Jenkins, and Ono [2] obtained an explicit formula for the Fourier coefficients of g(z) in terms of Kloosterman sums and Duke [4] derived an exact formula for $\mathbf{t}_J(D)$ as follows:

$$\mathbf{t}_{J}(D) = -24H(D) + \sum_{\substack{c>0\\c\equiv 0 \pmod{4}}} S_{D}(c) \sinh\left(\frac{4\pi\sqrt{D}}{c}\right),$$
(1)

where

$$S_D(c) = \sum_{x^2 \equiv -D \pmod{c}} e(2x/c) \text{ and } H(D) = \sum_{Q \in \mathcal{Q}_D/\Gamma(1)} \frac{1}{|\Gamma(1)_Q|}$$

is the Hurwitz class number. Using these two results together, Duke [4] reestablished Zagier's trace formula [9, Theorem 1].

The purpose of this paper is to give a generalization of (1) to traces of singular values of modular functions of any prime level *p*. For prime *p*, let $\Gamma_0^*(p)$ be the group generated by $\Gamma_0(p)$ and the Fricke involution $W_p = \frac{1}{\sqrt{p}} {\binom{p-1}{p}}$. Let $Q_{D,p}$ denote the set of quadratic forms $Q \in Q_D$ such that $a \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$. The group $\Gamma_0^*(p)$ acts on $Q_{D,p}$, where the action for elements of $\Gamma_0(p)$ is defined as above and $Q \circ W_p = [pc, -b, a/p]$. Note that the discriminant -D is congruent to a square modulo 4p. We choose an integer $\beta \pmod{2p}$ with $\beta^2 \equiv -D \pmod{4p}$ and consider the

set $\mathcal{Q}_{D,p,\beta} = \{[a, b, c] \in \mathcal{Q}_{D,p} | b \equiv \beta \pmod{2p}\}$ on which $\Gamma_0(p)$ acts. For a modular function f for $\Gamma_0^*(p)$, we define the class number $H_p(D)$ (resp. $H_p^*(D)$) and the trace $\mathbf{t}_f(D)$ (resp. $\mathbf{t}_f^*(D)$) by

$$H_{p}(D) = \sum_{Q \in \mathcal{Q}_{D,p,\beta}/\Gamma_{0}(p)} \frac{1}{|\Gamma_{0}(p)_{Q}|}; \quad \mathbf{t}_{f}(D) = \sum_{Q \in \mathcal{Q}_{D,p,\beta}/\Gamma_{0}(p)} \frac{1}{|\Gamma_{0}(p)_{Q}|} f(z_{Q}),$$
$$H_{p}^{*}(D) = \sum_{Q \in \mathcal{Q}_{D,p}/\Gamma_{0}^{*}(p)} \frac{1}{|\Gamma_{0}^{*}(p)_{Q}|}; \quad \mathbf{t}_{f}^{*}(D) = \sum_{Q \in \mathcal{Q}_{D,p}/\Gamma_{0}^{*}(p)} \frac{1}{|\Gamma_{0}^{*}(p)_{Q}|} f(z_{Q}).$$

Here $\Gamma_0(p)_Q$ and $\Gamma_0^*(p)_Q$ are the stabilizers of Q in $\Gamma_0(p)$ and $\Gamma_0^*(p)$, respectively. It is easy to see that

$$H_p^*(D) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2} H_p(D), & \text{if } \beta \equiv 0 \text{ or } p \pmod{2p}, \\ H_p(D), & \text{otherwise;} \end{cases}$$
(2)

and

$$\mathbf{t}_{f}^{*}(D) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2}\mathbf{t}_{f}(D), & \text{if } \beta \equiv 0 \text{ or } p \pmod{2p}, \\ \mathbf{t}_{f}(D), & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$
(3)

The modularity for the traces $\mathbf{t}_f(D)$ was established by one of the authors in [6,7] in the case when $\Gamma_0^*(p)$ is of genus zero. If f is the Hauptmodul for such $\Gamma_0^*(p)$ and if we define $\mathbf{t}_f(-1) = -1$, $\mathbf{t}_f(0) = 2$ and $\mathbf{t}_f(D) = 0$ for D < -1, then the series $\sum_{n,r} \mathbf{t}_f(4pn - r^2)q^n\zeta^r$, where $\zeta = e(w)$ for a complex number w, is a weak Jacobi form of weight 2 and index p. Meanwhile, using the theta correspondence, Bruinier and Funke [1] generalized Zagier's trace formula to traces of CM values of modular functions of arbitrary level. In particular, they showed that if p is an odd prime and $f = \sum a(n)q^n$ is a modular function for $\Gamma_0^*(p)$ with a(0) = 0, then

$$\sum_{\substack{D>0\\-D\equiv\square\pmod{4p}}} \mathbf{t}_f^*(D)q^D + \sum_{n\geqslant 1} (\sigma(n) + p\sigma(n/p))a(-n) - \sum_{m\geqslant 1} \sum_{n\geqslant 1} ma(-mn)q^{-m^2} \quad (4)$$

is a weakly holomorphic modular form of weight 3/2 and level 4p.

Remark. In the forthcoming paper [3], the authors generalize this result on modularity of traces by Bruinier and Funke to any weakly holomorphic modular functions with arbitrary level, including a composite level. We establish that the generating function for traces of singular moduli of a weakly holomorphic modular function, whether its constant term is zero or not, plus certain linear combination of class numbers is a weakly holomorphic modular form of weight 3/2.

We will obtain in the next section, the following exact formula for $\mathbf{t}_{f}^{*}(D)$ which is a generalization of (1). **Theorem 1.** Suppose f is a modular function for $\Gamma_0^*(p)$ with principal part $\sum_{m=1}^N a_m e(-mz)$ at $i\infty$, and define for any positive integers m and c,

$$S_D(m,c) = \sum_{x^2 \equiv -D \pmod{c}} e(2mx/c).$$

Then

$$\mathbf{t}_{f}^{*}(D) = \sum_{m=1}^{N} a_{m} \left[c_{m} H_{p}^{*}(D) + \sum_{\substack{c \ge 0 \ (\text{mod } 4p)}} S_{D}(m, c) \sinh\left(\frac{4\pi m \sqrt{D}}{c}\right) \right].$$

where

$$c_m = -24\left(\frac{-p^{\alpha+1}}{p+1}\sigma(m/p^{\alpha}) + \sigma(m)\right) \quad \text{with } p^{\alpha} \| m.$$

As an example, consider

$$f = \left(\frac{\eta(z)}{\eta(37z)}\right)^2 - 2 + 37 \left(\frac{\eta(37z)}{\eta(z)}\right)^2,$$

where $\eta(z)$ is the Dedekind eta function defined by $\eta(z) = q^{\frac{1}{24}} \prod_{n=1}^{\infty} (1-q^n)$. Then f is a modular function for $\Gamma_0^*(37)$ which is of genus 1 and has a Fourier expansion of the form $q^{-3} - 2q^{-2} - q^{-1} + 0 + O(q)$. Since the representatives for $Q_{148,37,0}/\Gamma_0(37)$ are given by [37, 0, 1] and [74, -74, 19], we find from equations (2), (3), and Theorem 1 that

$$24 \cdot \frac{3}{38} + \sum_{\substack{c \equiv 0 \pmod{148}}} \left[S_D(3,c) \sinh\left(\frac{12\pi\sqrt{D}}{c}\right) - 2S_D(2,c) \sinh\left(\frac{8\pi\sqrt{D}}{c}\right) - S_D(1,c) \sinh\left(\frac{4\pi\sqrt{D}}{c}\right) \right] = \frac{1}{2} \left(f\left(\frac{\sqrt{37}i}{37}\right) + f\left(\frac{37+\sqrt{37}i}{74}\right) \right),$$

where the latter is known to be -2.

2. Proof of Theorem 1

Throughout this section, Γ denotes $\Gamma_0^*(p)$. For a positive integer *m* we consider Niebur's Poincaré series [8]

$$\mathcal{F}_m(z,s) = \sum_{M \in \Gamma_\infty \setminus \Gamma} e(-m \operatorname{Re} Mz) (\operatorname{Im} Mz)^{1/2} I_{s-1/2} (2\pi m \operatorname{Im} Mz),$$
(5)

where $I_{s-1/2}$ is the modified Bessel function of the first kind. Then $\mathcal{F}_m(z, s)$ converges absolutely for Re s > 1 and satisfies

$$\mathcal{F}_m(Mz,s) = \mathcal{F}_m(z,s) \text{ for } M \in \Gamma \text{ and } \Delta \mathcal{F}_m(z,s) = s(1-s)\mathcal{F}_m(z,s),$$
 (6)

where \triangle is the hyperbolic Laplacian $\triangle = -y^2(\partial_x^2 + \partial_y^2)$ for z = x + iy. Niebur showed that $\mathcal{F}_m(z, s)$ has an analytic continuation to s = 1 [8, Theorem 5] and that $\mathcal{F}_m(z, s)$ has the following Fourier expansion [8, Theorem 1]; for Res > 1,

$$\mathcal{F}_m(z,s) = e(-mx)y^{1/2}I_{s-1/2}(2\pi my) + \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} b_n(y,s;-m)e(nx), \tag{7}$$

where $b_n(y, s; -m) \to 0$ $(n \neq 0)$ exponentially as $y \to i\infty$. Hence the pole of $\mathcal{F}_m(z, 1)$ at $i\infty$ may occur only in $e(-mx)y^{1/2}I_{1/2}(2\pi my)$, which is equal to

$$\frac{1}{\pi y^{1/2} m^{1/2}} \sinh(2\pi m y) y^{1/2} e(-mx) = \frac{1}{2\pi m^{1/2}} \Big(e(-mz) - e(-m\bar{z}) \Big).$$
(8)

We normalize $\mathcal{F}_m(z, 1)$ by multiplying with $2\pi m^{1/2}$, so that the coefficient of e(-mz) is normalized. Now we need to compute the constant term in $(2\pi m^{1/2})\mathcal{F}_m(z, 1)$.

Lemma 2. Let $\mathcal{F}_m(z,s)$ be the Poincaré series defined in (5). Then the constant term in $(2\pi m^{1/2})\mathcal{F}_m(z,1)$ is given by

$$24\left(\frac{-p^{\alpha+1}}{1+p}\sigma(m/p^{\alpha})+\sigma(m)\right)=:-c_m.$$
(9)

Proof. It follows from [8, Theorem 1] that $b_0(y, s, -m) = a_m(s)y^{1-s}/(2s-1)$. Here

$$a_m(s) = 2\pi^s m^{s-1/2} \phi_m(s) / \Gamma(s)$$
 and $\phi_m(s) = \sum_{c>0} S(m,0;c) c^{-2s}$, (10)

where S(m, n; c) is the general Kloosterman sum $\sum_{0 \leq d < |c|} e((ma + nd)/c)$ for $\binom{a *}{c d} \in \Gamma$. Note that if $M = \binom{a \ b}{c \ d} \in \Gamma = \Gamma_0^*(p)$, then $M \in \Gamma_0(p)$ or M is of the form $\binom{\sqrt{px} \ y/\sqrt{p}}{\sqrt{pz} \ \sqrt{pw}}$ with $x, y, z, w \in \mathbb{Z}$. In the former case, c is a multiple of p and in the latter case, $c = \sqrt{pz}$ with $p \nmid z$. For $n \in \mathbb{Z}^+$, let $u_m(n)$ denote the sum of *m*th powers of primitive *n*th roots of unity. We observe that

$$S(m, 0; c) = \begin{cases} u_m(c), & \text{if } p \mid c, \\ u_m(z), & \text{if } c = \sqrt{pz} \text{ with } p \nmid z. \end{cases}$$

If we define

$$u_m^*(n) = \begin{cases} u_m(n), & \text{if } p \mid n, \\ p^{-s}u_m(n), & \text{if } p \nmid n, \end{cases}$$

then

$$p^{s}\phi_{m}(s)\zeta(2s) = p^{s}\sum_{c>0} S(m,0;c)c^{-2s}\sum_{c'\in\mathbb{Z}^{+}} c'^{-2s}$$
$$= \sum_{c\in\mathbb{Z}^{+}} \left(p^{s}u_{m}^{*}(c)\right)c^{-2s}\sum_{c'\in\mathbb{Z}^{+}} c'^{-2s} = \sum_{k\in\mathbb{Z}^{+}} \left(\sum_{c\mid k} p^{s}u_{m}^{*}(c)\right)k^{-2s}.$$
 (11)

Note that if $p \nmid k$, then

$$\sum_{c|k} p^{s} u_{m}^{*}(c) = \sum_{c|k} u_{m}(c) = \begin{cases} k, & \text{if } k \mid m, \\ 0, & \text{if } k \nmid m \end{cases}$$
(12)

and if $k = p^l k'$ with $l \ge 1$ and $p \nmid k'$, then

$$\sum_{c|k} p^{s} u_{m}^{*}(c) = \sum_{d|k'} p^{s} u_{m}^{*}(d) + \sum_{\substack{c|k\\p|c}} p^{s} u_{m}^{*}(c) = \sum_{d|k'} u_{m}(d) + \sum_{\substack{c|k\\p|c}} p^{s} u_{m}(c).$$
(13)

By adding $(p^s - 1) \sum_{d|k'} u_m(d)$ on both sides of (13), we obtain

$$(p^{s}-1)\sum_{d|k'}u_{m}(d) + \sum_{c|k}p^{s}u_{m}^{*}(c) = \sum_{c|k}p^{s}u_{m}(c).$$

Since

$$\sum_{d|k'} u_m(d) = \begin{cases} k', & \text{if } k' \mid m, \\ 0, & \text{if } k' \nmid m \end{cases} \text{ and } \sum_{c|k} p^s u_m(c) = \begin{cases} p^s k, & \text{if } k \mid m, \\ 0, & \text{if } k \nmid m, \end{cases}$$

we find that

$$\sum_{c|k} p^{s} u_{m}^{*}(c) = \begin{cases} p^{s} k + (1 - p^{s})k', & \text{if } k \mid m, \\ (1 - p^{s})k', & \text{if } k \nmid m \text{ and } k' \mid m, \\ 0, & \text{if } k \nmid m \text{ and } k' \nmid m. \end{cases}$$
(14)

Writing $m = p^{\alpha}m'$ with $p \nmid m'$, we can deduce from (12) and (14) that

$$\sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}_{+}} \left(\sum_{c|k} p^{s} u_{m}^{*}(c) \right) k^{-2s} = \sum_{k'|m'} k' k'^{-2s} + \sum_{l=1}^{\infty} \sum_{k'|m'} (1 - p^{s}) k' (p^{l}k')^{-2s} + \sum_{l=1}^{\alpha} \sum_{k'|m'} p^{s} (p^{l}k') (p^{l}k')^{-2s} = \sigma_{1-2s}(m') + (1 - p^{s}) \sigma_{1-2s}(m') \sum_{l=1}^{\infty} (p^{-2s})^{l} + p^{s} \sum_{1 \leq l \leq \alpha} \sum_{k'|m'} (p^{l}k')^{1-2s} = \sigma_{1-2s}(m') \left[1 + (1 - p^{s}) \frac{p^{-2s}}{1 - p^{-2s}} \right] + p^{s} (\sigma_{1-2s}(m) - \sigma_{1-2s}(m')) = \frac{-p^{2s}}{1 + p^{s}} \sigma_{1-2s}(m/p^{\alpha}) + p^{s} \sigma_{1-2s}(m).$$
(15)

Recall that the constant term in $(2\pi m^{1/2})\mathcal{F}_m(z, 1)$ is

$$\lim_{s \to 1} 2\pi m^{1/2} b_0(y, s, -m) = \lim_{s \to 1} 2\pi m^{1/2} a_m(s) y^{1-s} / (2s-1).$$

By the definition of $a_m(s)$ in (10), it is equal to

$$\lim_{s \to 1} 2\pi m^{1/2} (2\pi^s m^{s-1/2} \phi_m(s) / \Gamma(s)) y^{1-s} / (2s-1).$$

It follows from (11) and (15) that this limit goes to

$$\frac{4\pi^2 m}{p\zeta(2)} \left(\frac{-p^2}{1+p} \sigma_{-1} \left(m/p^{\alpha} \right) + p \sigma_{-1}(m) \right).$$

Thus simple calculations lead us to have the constant term of $(2\pi m^{1/2})\mathcal{F}_m(z, 1)$ in (9). \Box

Now we define

$$\mathcal{F}_m^*(z,s) = \left(2\pi m^{1/2}\right) \mathcal{F}_m(z,s) + c_m.$$

Then by (6), (7), (8), and Lemma 2, $\mathcal{F}_m^*(z, 1)$ is a Γ -invariant harmonic function and $\mathcal{F}_m^*(z, 1) - e(-mz)$ has a zero at $i\infty$. Hence it follows from [8, Theorem 6] that

$$f(z) = \sum_{m=1}^{N} a_m \mathcal{F}_m^*(z, 1)$$

for any modular function f for $\Gamma_0^*(p)$ with principal part $\sum_{m=1}^N a_m e(-mz)$ at $i\infty$. Hence

$$\mathbf{t}_{f}^{*}(D) = \sum_{m=1}^{N} a_{m} \left(\sum_{Q \in \mathcal{Q}_{D,p}/\Gamma} \frac{1}{|\Gamma_{Q}|} \mathcal{F}_{m}^{*}(z_{Q}, 1) \right).$$
(16)

In order to complete the proof of Theorem 1, it suffices to determine the value $\sum_{Q \in Q_{D,p}/\Gamma} \frac{1}{|\Gamma_Q|} \times \mathcal{F}_m^*(z_Q, 1).$

Lemma 3. Let $\mathcal{F}_m^*(z,s) = (2\pi m^{1/2})\mathcal{F}_m(z,s) + c_m$, where $\mathcal{F}_m(z,s)$ and c_m are defined in (5) and (9), respectively. Then the trace of CM values of \mathcal{F}_m^* is given by

$$\sum_{\mathcal{Q}\in\mathcal{Q}_{D,p}/\Gamma}\frac{1}{|\Gamma_{\mathcal{Q}}|}\mathcal{F}_m^*(z_{\mathcal{Q}},1) = c_m H_p^*(D) + \sum_{\substack{c>0\\c\equiv 0\pmod{4p}}} S_D(m,c)\sinh\bigg(\frac{4\pi m\sqrt{D}}{c}\bigg).$$

Proof. We first compute for Re s > 1,

$$\sum_{Q\in\mathcal{Q}_{D,p}/\Gamma}\frac{1}{|\Gamma_{Q}|}\mathcal{F}_{m}^{*}(z_{Q},s) = c_{m}H_{p}^{*}(D) + 2\pi\sqrt{m}\sum_{Q\in\mathcal{Q}_{D,p}/\Gamma}\frac{1}{|\Gamma_{Q}|}\mathcal{F}_{m}(z_{Q},s).$$
(17)

By the Poincaré series expansion of $\mathcal{F}_m(z_Q, s)$ in (5),

$$\sum_{Q\in\mathcal{Q}_{D,p}/\Gamma}\frac{\mathcal{F}_m(z_Q,s)}{|\Gamma_Q|} = \sum_{Q\in\mathcal{Q}_{D,p}/\Gamma_\infty} e(-m\operatorname{Re} z_Q)(\operatorname{Im} z_Q)^{1/2} I_{s-1/2}(2\pi m\operatorname{Im} z_Q).$$
(18)

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The series on the right-hand side of (18) is equal to

$$\sum_{[ap,b,c]\in Q_{D,p}/\Gamma_{\infty}} e\left(\frac{2mb}{4pa}\right) \left(\frac{2\sqrt{D}}{4pa}\right)^{1/2} I_{s-1/2}\left(2\pi m \frac{2\sqrt{D}}{4pa}\right)$$
$$= \sum_{a=1}^{\infty} \sum_{\substack{x \pmod{2ap} \\ x^2 \equiv -D \pmod{4ap}}} e\left(\frac{2mx}{4pa}\right) \left(\frac{2\sqrt{D}}{4pa}\right)^{1/2} I_{s-1/2}\left(2\pi m \frac{2\sqrt{D}}{4pa}\right)$$
$$= \sum_{\substack{c>0 \pmod{4ap} \\ c \equiv 0 \pmod{4p}}} \frac{1}{2} S_D(m,c) \left(\frac{2\sqrt{D}}{c}\right)^{1/2} I_{s-1/2}\left(2\pi m \frac{2\sqrt{D}}{c}\right),$$

which converges uniformly for $s \in [1, 2]$ as explained in [5]. This combined with (17) completes the proof of Lemma 3. \Box

Theorem 1 now follows from (16) and Lemma 3.

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