

## S-duality action on discrete T-duality invariants

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**ABSTRACT:** In heterotic string theory compactified on  $T^6$ , the T-duality orbits of dyons of charge  $(Q, P)$  are characterized by  $O(6, 22; \mathbb{R})$  invariants  $Q^2$ ,  $P^2$  and  $Q \cdot P$  together with a set of invariants of the discrete T-duality group  $O(6, 22; \mathbb{Z})$ . We study the action of S-duality group on the discrete T-duality invariants and study its consequence for the dyon degeneracy formula. In particular we find that for dyons with torsion  $r$ , the degeneracy formula, expressed as a function of  $Q^2$ ,  $P^2$  and  $Q \cdot P$ , is required to be manifestly invariant under only a subgroup of the S-duality group. This subgroup is isomorphic to  $\Gamma^0(r)$ . Our analysis also shows that for a given torsion  $r$ , all other discrete T-duality invariants are characterized by the elements of the coset  $SL(2, \mathbb{Z})/\Gamma^0(r)$ .

**KEYWORDS:** Black Holes in String Theory, String Duality.

Dyons in heterotic string theory on  $T^6$  are characterized by a pair of charge vectors  $(Q, P)$  each taking value on the Narain lattice  $\Lambda$  [1, 2]. Given two pairs of charge vectors, an interesting question is: under what condition can they be related via a T-duality transformation? This question was answered in [3] where a complete set of T-duality invariants classifying a pair of charge vectors  $(Q, P)$  were constructed. These include the invariants of the continuous T-duality group  $O(6, 22; \mathbb{R})$

$$Q^2, \quad P^2, \quad Q \cdot P, \tag{1}$$

together with a set of invariants of the discrete T-duality group  $O(6, 22; \mathbb{Z})$ . These are defined as follows. We shall assume that the dyon is primitive so that  $(Q, P)$  cannot be written as an integer multiple of  $(Q_0, P_0)$  with  $Q_0, P_0 \in \Lambda$ , but we shall not assume that  $Q$  and  $P$  themselves are primitive. Now consider the intersection of the two dimensional vector space spanned by  $(Q, P)$  with the Narain lattice  $\Lambda$ . The result is a two dimensional lattice  $\Lambda_0$ . Let  $(e_1, e_2)$  be a pair of basis elements whose integer linear combinations generate this lattice. We can always choose  $(e_1, e_2)$  such that in this basis

$$Q = r_1 e_1, \quad P = r_2(u_1 e_1 + r_3 e_2), \quad r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1 \in \mathbb{Z}^+, \\ \gcd(r_1, r_2) = 1, \quad \gcd(u_1, r_3) = 1, \quad 1 \leq u_1 \leq r_3. \tag{2}$$

It was found in [3] that besides  $Q^2, P^2$  and  $Q \cdot P$ , the integers  $r_1, r_2, r_3$  and  $u_1$  are T-duality invariants. Furthermore it was found that this is the complete set of T-duality invariants. Thus a pair of charge vectors  $(Q, P)$  can be transformed into another pair  $(Q', P')$  via a T-duality transformation if and only if all the invariants agree for these two pairs.

Our first goal is to study some aspects of the action of the S-duality transformation

$$Q \rightarrow Q' = aQ + bP, \quad P \rightarrow P' = cQ + dP, \quad a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{Z}, \quad ad - bc = 1, \tag{3}$$

on the invariants  $r_1, r_2, r_3$  and  $u_1$ . Substituting (2) into (3), and expressing the resulting  $(Q', P')$  as  $(r'_1 e'_1, r'_2(u'_1 e'_1 + r'_3 e'_2))$  for some primitive basis  $(e'_1, e'_2)$  of  $\Lambda_0$  we can determine  $(r'_1, r'_2, r'_3, u'_1)$ . Since the resulting expressions are somewhat complicated and not very illuminating we shall not describe them here. Instead we shall focus on some salient features of the transformation laws of  $(r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1)$ . We first note that the torsion  $r(Q, P)$  associated with a pair of charges  $(Q, P)$ , defined as [4, 5]

$$r(Q, P) = Q_1 P_2 - Q_2 P_1, \tag{4}$$

with  $Q_i, P_i$  being the components of  $Q$  and  $P$  along  $e_i$ , is invariant under the S-duality transformation (3). Furthermore, for the charge vectors  $(Q, P)$  given in (2) we have

$$r(Q, P) = r_1 r_2 r_3. \tag{5}$$

We shall now show that one can always find an S-duality transformation that brings the T-duality invariants  $(r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1)$  to  $(r_1 r_2 r_3, 1, 1, 1)$  together with an appropriate transformation on  $Q^2, P^2$  and  $Q \cdot P$  induced by (3). For this we note that under the S-duality transformation (3),  $(Q, P)$  given in (2) transforms to

$$Q' = \{ar_1 + br_2(u_1 + kr_3)\}e_1 + br_2 r_3(e_2 - ke_1), \\ P' = \{cr_1 + dr_2(u_1 + kr_3)\}e_1 + dr_2 r_3(e_2 - ke_1), \tag{6}$$

where  $k$  is an arbitrary integer. We shall choose

$$k = \prod_i p_i, \tag{7}$$

where  $\{p_i\}$  represent the collection of primes which are factors of  $r_1$  but not of  $u_1$ . Now we know from (2) that  $\gcd(r_1, r_2) = 1$ . On the other hand it follows from a result derived in appendix E of [6] that for the choice of  $k$  given in (7) we have  $\gcd(r_1, u_1 + kr_3) = 1$ . Thus if we choose

$$b = r_1, \quad a = -r_2(u_1 + kr_3), \tag{8}$$

we have  $\gcd(a, b) = 1$  and hence we can always find  $c, d$  satisfying  $ad - bc = 1$ . For this particular choice of  $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$  transformation we have

$$Q' = r_1 r_2 r_3 (e_2 - ke_1), \quad P' = -e_1 + dr_2 r_3 (e_2 - ke_1). \tag{9}$$

We now define

$$e'_1 = (e_2 - ke_1), \quad e'_2 = -e_1 + (dr_2 r_3 - 1)(e_2 - ke_1). \tag{10}$$

Since the matrix relating  $(e'_1, e'_2)$  to  $(e_1, e_2)$  has unit determinant,  $(e'_1, e'_2)$  is a primitive basis of the lattice  $\Lambda_0$ . In this basis  $(Q', P')$  can be expressed as

$$Q' = r_1 r_2 r_3 e'_1, \quad P' = e'_1 + e'_2. \tag{11}$$

Comparing this with (2) we see that for the new charge vector  $(Q', P')$  we have

$$r'_1 = r_1 r_2 r_3, \quad r'_2 = 1, \quad r'_3 = 1, \quad u'_1 = 1. \tag{12}$$

This proves the desired result.

Next we shall study the subgroup of S-duality transformations which takes a configuration with  $(r_1 = r, r_2 = 1, r_3 = 1, u_1 = 1)$  to another configuration with  $(r_1 = r, r_2 = 1, r_3 = 1, u_1 = 1)$ . The initial configuration has

$$Q = re_1, \quad P = e_1 + e_2. \tag{13}$$

An S-duality transformation (3) takes this to

$$Q' = are_1 + b(e_1 + e_2), \quad P' = cre_1 + d(e_1 + e_2). \tag{14}$$

In order that  $Q'$  is  $r$  times a primitive vector, we must demand

$$b = 0 \pmod{r}. \tag{15}$$

Expressing  $b$  as  $b_0 r$  with  $b_0 \in \mathbb{Z}$  we get

$$Q' = re'_1, \quad P' = e'_1 + e'_2, \tag{16}$$

where

$$e'_1 = (a + b_0)e_1 + b_0 e_2, \quad e'_2 = (cr + d - a - b_0)e_1 + (d - b_0)e_2. \tag{17}$$

Since the determinant of the matrix relating  $(e'_1, e'_2)$  to  $(e_1, e_2)$  is given by

$$(a + b_0)(d - b_0) - b_0(cr + d - a - b_0) = ad - bc = 1, \quad (18)$$

we conclude that  $(e'_1, e'_2)$  is a primitive basis of  $\Lambda_0$ . Comparison with (2) now shows that  $(Q', P')$  has  $r'_1 = r, r'_2 = r'_3 = u'_1 = 1$  as required. Thus the only condition on the  $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$  matrix  $\begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix}$  for preserving the  $(r_1 = r, r_2 = 1, r_3 = 1, u_1 = 1)$  condition is that it must have  $b = 0 \pmod r$ , i.e. it must be an element of  $\Gamma^0(r)$ .

Using this we can now determine the subgroup of  $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$  that takes a pair of charge vectors  $(Q, P)$  with invariants  $(r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1)$  to another pair of charge vectors with the same invariants. For this we note that any  $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$  transformation matrix  $g_0 = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix}$  with  $a, b$  given in (8) takes the set  $(r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1)$  to the set  $(r_1 r_2 r_3, 1, 1, 1)$ . Since the latter set is preserved by the  $\Gamma^0(r)$  subgroup of  $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$ , the original set must be preserved by the subgroup  $g_0^{-1} \Gamma^0(r) g_0$ . This is isomorphic to the group  $\Gamma^0(r)$ .

To see an example of this consider the case

$$r_1 = r_2 = 1, \quad r_3 = 2, \quad u_1 = 1. \quad (19)$$

In this case the  $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$  transformation  $g_0 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$  takes a configuration given in (19) to a configuration with  $r_1 = 2, r_2 = r_3 = u_1 = 1$ . Thus the  $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$  transformations which take a configuration with  $(r_1 = 1, r_2 = 1, r_3 = 2, u_1 = 1)$  to a configuration with the same discrete invariants will be of the form:

$$\begin{pmatrix} a' & b' \\ c' & d' \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} a & 2b_0 \\ c & d \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} a - c & a - c - d + 2b_0 \\ c & c + d \end{pmatrix}. \quad (20)$$

Since the condition  $ad - 2b_0c = 1$  requires  $a$  and  $d$  to be odd, we have

$$a' + b' \in 2\mathbb{Z} + 1, \quad c' + d' \in 2\mathbb{Z} + 1. \quad (21)$$

Conversely given any  $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$  matrix  $\begin{pmatrix} a' & b' \\ c' & d' \end{pmatrix}$  satisfying (21), it can be written as  $g_0$  conjugate of the  $\Gamma^0(2)$  matrix  $\begin{pmatrix} a' + c' & -a' - c' + b' + d' \\ c' & -c' + d' \end{pmatrix}$ . Thus (21) characterizes the subgroup of S-duality group which preserves the condition (19).

The results derived so far make it clear that for a given torsion  $r$  the discrete T-duality invariants are in one to one correspondence with the elements of the coset  $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})/\Gamma^0(r)$ . The representative element for a given set of invariants  $(r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1)$  is the element  $g_0^{-1} \in \text{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$  that takes a configuration with  $(r_1 r_2 r_3, 1, 1, 1)$  to a configuration with discrete invariants  $(r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1)$ . Multiplying  $g_0^{-1}$  by a  $\Gamma^0(r)$  element from the right does not change the final values  $(r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1)$  of the discrete invariants since a  $\Gamma^0(r)$  transformation does not change the discrete T-duality invariants of the initial configuration.

We shall now examine the consequences of these results for the formula expressing the degeneracy  $d(Q, P)$  — or more precisely an appropriate index measuring the number of bosonic supermultiplets minus the number of fermionic supermultiplets for a given set

of charges<sup>1</sup> – of quarter BPS dyons as a function of  $(Q, P)$ . We note first of all that besides depending on  $(Q, P)$ , the degeneracy can also depend on the asymptotic values of the moduli fields, collectively denoted as  $\phi$ . We expect the dependence on  $\phi$  to be mild, in the sense that the degeneracy formula should be  $\phi$  independent within a given domain bounded by walls of marginal stability. It follows from the analysis of [7, 8] that the decays relevant for the walls of marginal stability are of the form

$$(Q, P) \rightarrow (\alpha Q + \beta P, \gamma Q + \delta P) + ((1 - \alpha)Q - \beta P, -\gamma Q + (1 - \delta)P), \quad (22)$$

where  $\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta$  are not necessarily integers, but must be such that  $\alpha Q + \beta P$  and  $\gamma Q + \delta P$  belong to the Narain lattice  $\Lambda$ . If we denote by  $m(Q, P; \phi)$  the BPS mass of a dyon of charge  $(Q, P)$  then the wall of marginal stability associated with the set  $(\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta)$  is given by the solution to the equation

$$m(Q, P; \phi) = m(\alpha Q + \beta P, \gamma Q + \delta P; \phi) + m((1 - \alpha)Q - \beta P, -\gamma Q + (1 - \delta)P; \phi). \quad (23)$$

For appropriate choice of  $(\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta)$  this describes a codimension one subspace of the moduli space labelled by  $\phi$ . Since the BPS mass formula is invariant under a T-duality transformation  $Q \rightarrow \Omega Q, P \rightarrow \Omega P, \phi \rightarrow \phi_\Omega$ :

$$m(\Omega Q, \Omega P; \phi_\Omega) = m(Q, P; \phi) \quad \Omega \in O(6, 22; \mathbb{Z}), \quad (24)$$

eq.(23) may be written as

$$\begin{aligned} m(\Omega Q, \Omega P; \phi_\Omega) &= m(\alpha \Omega Q + \beta \Omega P, \gamma \Omega Q + \delta \Omega P; \phi_\Omega) \\ &\quad + m((1 - \alpha)\Omega Q - \beta \Omega P, -\gamma \Omega Q + (1 - \delta)\Omega P; \phi_\Omega). \end{aligned} \quad (25)$$

This is identical to eq.(23) with  $(Q, P, \phi)$  replaced by  $(\Omega Q, \Omega P, \phi_\Omega)$ . This shows that under a T-duality transformation on charges and moduli, the wall of marginal stability associated with the set  $(\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta)$  gets mapped to the wall of marginal stability associated with the same  $(\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta)$ . Thus if we consider a domain bounded by the walls of marginal stability associated with the sets  $(\alpha_i, \beta_i, \gamma_i, \delta_i)$  for  $1 \leq i \leq n$  — collectively denoted by a set of discrete variables  $\vec{c}$  — then under a simultaneous T-duality transformation on the charges and the moduli this domain gets mapped to a domain labelled by the same vector  $\vec{c}$ . The precise shape of the domain of course changes since the locations of the walls in the moduli space depends not only on  $(\alpha_i, \beta_i, \gamma_i, \delta_i)$  for  $1 \leq i \leq n$  but also on the charges  $(Q, P)$  which transform to  $(\Omega Q, \Omega P)$ .

We now use the fact that the dyon degeneracy formula must be invariant under a simultaneous T-duality transformation on the charges and the moduli, and also the fact that the dependence of  $d(Q, P; \phi)$  on the moduli  $\phi$  comes only through the domain in which  $\phi$  lies, i.e. the vector  $\vec{c}$ . Since  $\vec{c}$  remains unchanged under a T-duality transformation, we have

$$d(Q, P; \vec{c}) = d(\Omega Q, \Omega P; \vec{c}), \quad \Omega \in O(6, 22; \mathbb{Z}). \quad (26)$$

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<sup>1</sup>Up to a normalization this is equal to the helicity trace  $B_6 = Tr(-1)^{2h} h^6$  over all states carrying charge quantum numbers  $(Q, P)$ . Here  $h$  denotes the helicity of the state.

This shows that  $d(Q, P; \vec{c})$  must depend only on  $(Q, P)$  via the T-duality invariants:

$$d(Q, P; \vec{c}) = f(Q^2, P^2, Q \cdot P, r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1; \vec{c}), \quad (27)$$

for some function  $f$ .

Let us now study the effect of S-duality transformation on this formula. Typically an S-duality transformation will act on the charges and hence on all the T-duality invariants and also on the vector  $\vec{c}$  labelling the domain bounded by the walls of marginal stability [9, 5, 10]. Indeed, as is clear from the condition (23), under an S-duality transformation of the form (3), the wall associated with the parameters  $\begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \beta \\ \gamma & \delta \end{pmatrix}$  gets mapped to the wall associated with

$$\begin{pmatrix} \alpha' & \beta' \\ \gamma' & \delta' \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \beta \\ \gamma & \delta \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix}^{-1}. \quad (28)$$

Thus S-duality invariance of the degeneracy formula now gives

$$f(Q^2, P^2, Q \cdot P, r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1; \vec{c}) = f(Q'^2, P'^2, Q' \cdot P', r'_1, r'_2, r'_3, u'_1; \vec{c}'), \quad (29)$$

where  $\vec{c}'$  stands for the collection of the sets  $\{\alpha'_i, \beta'_i, \gamma'_i, \delta'_i\}$  computed according to (28). We now use the result that there exists a special class of S-duality transformations under which

$$(r'_1, r'_2, r'_3, u'_1) = (r_1 r_2 r_3, 1, 1, 1). \quad (30)$$

Using this S-duality transformation we get

$$f(Q^2, P^2, Q \cdot P, r_1, r_2, r_3, u_1; \vec{c}) = f(Q'^2, P'^2, Q' \cdot P', r_1 r_2 r_3, 1, 1, 1; \vec{c}'). \quad (31)$$

Thus the complete information about the spectrum of quarter BPS dyons is contained in the set of functions

$$g(Q^2, P^2, Q \cdot P, r; \vec{c}) \equiv f(Q^2, P^2, Q \cdot P, r, 1, 1, 1; \vec{c}). \quad (32)$$

We shall focus our attention on this function during the rest of our analysis. Using the fact that  $\Gamma^0(r)$  transformations leave the set  $(r_1 = r, r_2 = 1, r_3 = 1, u_1 = 1)$  fixed, we see that

$$g(Q^2, P^2, Q \cdot P, r; \vec{c}) = g(Q'^2, P'^2, Q' \cdot P', r; \vec{c}') \quad \text{for} \quad \begin{pmatrix} Q' \\ P' \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} Q \\ P \end{pmatrix}, \quad \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix} \in \Gamma^0(r). \quad (33)$$

In other words, the function  $g(Q^2, P^2, Q \cdot P, r; \vec{c})$  is expected to have manifest invariance under the  $\Gamma^0(r)$  subgroup of S-duality transformations.

So far our discussion has been independent of any specific formula for the function  $g(Q^2, P^2, Q \cdot P, r; \vec{c})$ . For  $r = 1$  dyons an explicit formula for the function  $g$  has been found in a wide class of  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  supersymmetric theories [5, 9–25]. In all the known examples the function  $g$  is obtained as a contour integral of the inverse of an appropriate modular form of a subgroup of  $\text{Sp}(2, \mathbb{Z})$ . In particular for heterotic string theory on  $T^6$  the modular form is the well known Igusa cusp form of weight 10 of the full  $\text{Sp}(2, \mathbb{Z})$  group, with the S-duality

group  $SL(2, \mathbb{Z})$  embedded in  $Sp(2, \mathbb{Z})$  in a specific manner. Furthermore the dependence on the domain labelled by  $\vec{c}$  is encoded fully in the choice of the integration contour and not in the integrand. If a similar formula exists for  $g(Q^2, P^2, Q \cdot P, r; \vec{c})$  for  $r > 1$ , then our analysis would suggest that the integrand should involve a modular form of a subgroup of  $Sp(2, \mathbb{Z})$  that contains  $\Gamma^0(r)$  in the same way that the full  $Sp(2, \mathbb{Z})$  contains  $SL(2, \mathbb{Z})$ . It remains to be seen if this constraint together with other physical constraints reviewed in [25] can fix the form of the integrand.

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