

## MÖBIUS COVARIANCE OF ITERATED DIRAC OPERATORS

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### Abstract

Using Fourier transforms, we give a new proof of certain identities for the fundamental solutions of the iterated Dirac operators  $D^\ell = (\sum_{i=1}^n e_i \partial/\partial x_i)^\ell$ ,  $\ell \in \mathbf{Z}_+$  and  $D^\ell = (\partial/\partial x_0 + \underline{D})^\ell$ . Based on the close relationship between the fundamental solutions and the conformal weights we then give a simple proof of B. Bojarski's results on the conformal covariance of  $\underline{D}^\ell$ . We also prove a new conformal covariance result of  $D$ .

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### 1. Introduction

This paper gives an alternative proof of B. Bojarski's results [1, 2] on Möbius covariance of the iterated Dirac operators  $\underline{D}^\ell = (\sum_{i=1}^n e_i \partial/\partial x_i)^\ell$ ,  $\ell \in \mathbf{Z}_+$ , by recognizing the close relationship between the conformal weights and the fundamental solutions of the operators. We also give a covariance result on the Dirac operator  $D = \partial/\partial x_0 + \underline{D}$ , with some observations concerning non-existence of Möbius covariance of its iterations  $D^\ell$ ,  $\ell > 1$  (see also [11]).

We begin by recalling basic knowledge related to Clifford algebras ([1, 2, 4, 3, 6]). The Clifford algebra  $\mathcal{A}_n$  shall be the associative algebra over the real number system  $\mathbb{R}$  generated by  $n$  elements  $e_1, e_2, \dots, e_n$  subject to the relations  $e_i e_j = -e_j e_i$ ,  $i \neq j$ , and  $e_i^2 = -1$ . Each element  $a \in \mathcal{A}_n$  has a unique representation in the form  $a = \sum a_s e_s$ , where  $a_s \in \mathbb{R}$  and the summation is over all ordered subsets  $s = \{0 < i_1 < \dots < i_\ell\} \subset \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ , and we identify

$e_s$  with  $e_{i_1} \cdots e_{i_r}$ . For the empty set  $\emptyset$ ,  $e_\emptyset$  is interpreted as the real number 1.  $\mathcal{A}_0, \mathcal{A}_1, \mathcal{A}_2$  can be identified with  $\mathbb{R}$ , the complex field  $\mathbb{C}$  and the quaternions, respectively.

$\mathcal{A}_n$  is a vector space of real dimension  $2^n$ . In the literature there are two ways to identify  $\mathbb{R}^n$  with certain linear subspaces of  $\mathcal{A}_n$ . In this paper we identify  $\mathbb{R}^n$  with  $\text{span}\{e_1, \dots, e_n\}$ . For any element  $x = x_0 + x_1e_1 + \dots + x_n e_n$ , we denote  $x = x_0 + \underline{x}$  with  $\underline{x} = x_1e_1 + \dots + x_n e_n \in \mathbb{R}^n$ . Define two operations on the basic elements:  $(e_{i_1} \cdots e_{i_r})^* = e_{i_1} \cdots e_{i_r}$ ,  $(e_{i_1} \cdots e_{i_r})' = (-1)^r (e_{i_1} \cdots e_{i_r})$  etc., and extend them by linearity to two corresponding operations on  $\mathcal{A}_n$ , still denoted by  $*$  and  $'$ . By combining them we define the third operation  $\bar{\cdot}$  by  $\bar{x} = (x^*)'$ ; it is easy to see that  $\bar{\bar{x}} = x$  for  $x = x_0 + \underline{x}$ . The natural inner product between  $a$  and  $b$ , denoted by  $\langle a, b \rangle$ , is the number  $\sum_s a_s b_s$  and the norm of  $a$  associated with this inner product is  $|a| = (\sum_s |a_s|^2)^{\frac{1}{2}}$ . We recall that the Clifford group  $\Gamma_n$  is defined as the multiplicative group of all elements in the Clifford algebra which can be written as products of non-zero vectors in  $\mathbb{R}^n$ . For elements  $a, b$  in  $\Gamma_n \cup \{0\}$ ,  $\bar{a}a = |a|^2$  and  $|ab| = |a| \cdot |b|$  (see [1, 2, 4, 3, 6]).

If  $a \in \Gamma_n$ , then it has a representation  $a = \prod_{j=1}^{M(a)} a_j$ , where  $a_j \in \mathbb{R}^n$ . Generally, such a representation is not unique, and neither is the related integer  $M(a)$ . We let  $m(a)$  be the minimum of  $M(a)$  over all such representations. If  $a \in \mathbb{R} \setminus \{0\}$ , then we set  $m(a) = 0$ . So,  $m(\underline{x}) = 1$ , and for  $a \in \Gamma_n$  it follows that  $aa^* = a^*a = (-1)^{m(a)}|a|^2$ .

By the Möbius group we mean the group of orientation preserving transformations acting in the Euclidean space  $\mathbb{R}^n$ , generated by rigid motions, dilations and inversions ([1, 2, 4, 3, 6]).

According to a theorem of Ahlfors ([1, 2, 4, 3]), all Möbius transforms from  $\mathbb{R}^n \cup \{\infty\}$  to  $\mathbb{R}^n \cup \{\infty\}$  are exactly those of form

$$\varphi(\underline{x}) = (a\underline{x} + b)(c\underline{x} + d)^{-1}$$

where  $a, b, c, d \in \Gamma_n \cup \{0\}$  and

$$ad^* - bc^* \in \mathbb{R} \setminus \{0\}, \quad a^*c, cd^*, d^*b, ba^* \in \mathbb{R}^n.$$

See [2], for example. Furthermore, the identification between the  $\varphi$ 's and the Clifford matrices  $\begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix}$  gives a homomorphism under  $2 \times 2$  block matrix multiplication.

Since we are interested in differentiation of transformations of functions, we can assume without loss of generality that the functions under consideration

*Handwritten notes:*  
 $(e_1, e_2)' = -e_1 e_2$   
 $(e_1, e_2)^* = e_1 e_2$   
 $(e_1, e_2)'' = e_1 e_2$

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are defined in  $\mathbb{R}^n$  or its one-point compactification, with compact supports and  
 having as many orders of differentiability as we need in our argument; the same  
 applies to functions defined in  $\mathbb{R}_1^n = \mathbb{R} \oplus \mathbb{R}^n = \{x = x_0 + \underline{x}; x_0 \in \mathbb{R}, \underline{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n\}$ .

For Clifford number-valued functions defined in  $\mathbb{R}^n$  belonging to the above  
 mentioned nice classes we introduce the following Fourier transform:

$$\hat{f}(\underline{\xi}) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} e^{i(\underline{x}, \underline{\xi})} f(\underline{x}) d\underline{x}.$$

The associated symbol of the Dirac operator  $\underline{D}$  is  $i\underline{\xi}$ ; and, accordingly, those of  
 $\underline{D}^\ell$  and  $\underline{D}^{-\ell}$  are  $(i\underline{\xi})^\ell$  and  $(i\underline{\xi})^{-\ell}$ ,  $\ell \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ , respectively.

For functions defined in  $\mathbb{R}_1^n = \{x_0 + \underline{x} : x_0 \in \mathbb{R}, \underline{x} \in \mathbb{R}^n\}$  we use the  
 following definition

$$\hat{f}(\xi) = \int_{\mathbb{R}_1^n} e^{i(x, \xi)} f(x) dx$$

where  $\xi, x \in \mathbb{R}_1^n$ .

With this definition the associated symbols of the iterated Dirac operator  $D^\ell$   
 and  $D^{-\ell}$ ,  $\ell \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ , where  $D = \partial/\partial x_0 + \underline{D}$ , are  $(i\xi)^\ell$  and  $(i\xi)^{-\ell}$ , respectively.

It would be helpful to mention that Hans Jakobson and Michelle Vergne have  
 established an analogue of Theorem 1 for the group  $SU(2, 2)$  ([10]); and Hans  
 Jakobsen has established related results for other Lie groups ([9]).

### 2. Fundamental solutions of $\underline{D}^\ell$ and $D^\ell$

First we deduce the fundamental solutions of  $\underline{D}^\ell$ . We prefer an approach  
 that will not concentrate on integers  $\ell$  at the beginning. It is consistent with the  
 above if we define  $\underline{D}^{-\alpha}$ ,  $\alpha > 0$ , by

$$\underline{D}^{-\alpha} f(\underline{x}) = c_n \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} e^{-i(\underline{x}, \underline{\xi})} (i\underline{\xi})^{-\alpha} \hat{f}(\underline{\xi}) d\underline{\xi},$$

where  $(i\underline{\xi})^{-\alpha}$  is defined by

$$(i\underline{\xi})^{-\alpha} = |\underline{\xi}|^{-\alpha} \chi_+(\underline{\xi}) + (-|\underline{\xi}|)^{-\alpha} \chi_-(\underline{\xi})$$

and

$$\chi_\pm(\underline{\xi}) = \frac{1}{2} \left( 1 \pm \frac{i\underline{\xi}}{|\underline{\xi}|} \right).$$

$$i\underline{\xi} = |\underline{\xi}| \cdot \frac{1}{2} \left( 1 + \frac{i\underline{\xi}}{|\underline{\xi}|} \right) + (-|\underline{\xi}|) \cdot \frac{1}{2} \left( 1 - i \frac{\underline{\xi}}{|\underline{\xi}|} \right)$$

Thus, if  $\alpha = \ell$  is a positive integer, we have

$$(i\xi)^{-\ell} = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{|\xi|^\ell} & \text{if } \ell \text{ is even;} \\ \frac{i\xi}{|\xi|^{\ell+1}} & \text{if } \ell \text{ is odd.} \end{cases} \tag{2}$$

Therefore

$$\begin{aligned} \underline{D}^{-\alpha} f(\underline{x}) = & \frac{c_n}{2} \left[ \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} e^{-i(\underline{x}, \underline{\xi})} |\xi|^{-\alpha} \hat{f}(\xi) d\xi + \underline{D} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} e^{-i(\underline{x}, \underline{\xi})} |\xi|^{-\alpha-1} \hat{f}(\xi) d\xi \right. \\ & \left. + \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} e^{-i(\underline{x}, \underline{\xi})} (-|\xi|)^{-\alpha} \hat{f}(\xi) d\xi + \underline{D} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} e^{-i(\underline{x}, \underline{\xi})} (-|\xi|)^{-\alpha-1} \hat{f}(\xi) d\xi \right]. \end{aligned}$$

If  $0 < \alpha, \alpha + 1 < n$ , by invoking the following formula (see [14, p. 117] for example) for  $0 < \beta < n$ ,

$$\left( \frac{1}{|\xi|^\beta} \right)^\vee = c_{n,\beta} \frac{1}{|\underline{x}|^{n-\beta}},$$

we conclude

$$\underline{D}^{-\alpha} f(\underline{x}) = K_{n,\alpha} * f(\underline{x})$$

where

$$K_{n,\alpha}(\underline{x}) = c_{n,\alpha} (1 + e^{-i\alpha\pi}) \cdot \frac{1}{|\underline{x}|^{n-\alpha}} + d_{n,\alpha} (1 - e^{-i\alpha\pi}) \underline{D} \left( \frac{1}{|\underline{x}|^{n-\alpha-1}} \right).$$

For general  $\alpha > 0$ , the same criterion gives

$$K_{n,\alpha}(\underline{x}) = c_{n,\alpha} (1 + e^{-i\alpha\pi}) G_{n,\alpha}(\underline{x}) + d_{n,\alpha} (1 - e^{-i\alpha\pi}) \underline{D} G_{n,\alpha+1}(\underline{x}), \tag{3}$$

where  $G_{n,\beta}$  is the fundamental solution of  $|\underline{D}|^\beta$  that is the operator associated with symbol  $|\xi|^\beta$ .

Accordingly, we conclude that, for  $n$  odd,

$$(1) \quad K_{n,\ell}(\underline{x}) = \begin{cases} c_{n,\ell} \frac{\underline{x}}{|\underline{x}|^{n-\ell+1}}, & \ell \text{ odd;} \\ c_{n,\ell} \frac{1}{|\underline{x}|^{n-\ell}}, & \ell \text{ even,} \end{cases}$$

and for  $n$  even

$$(2) \quad K_{n,\ell}(x) = \begin{cases} c_{n,\ell} \frac{x}{|x|^{n-\ell+1}}, & \ell \text{ odd and } \ell < n; \\ c_{n,\ell} \frac{1}{|x|^{n-\ell}}, & \ell \text{ even and } \ell < n; \\ (c_{n,\ell} \log |x| + d_{n,\ell}) \frac{x}{|x|^{n-\ell+1}}, & \ell \text{ odd and } \ell > n; \\ (c_{n,\ell} \log |x| + d_{n,\ell}) \frac{1}{|x|^{n-\ell}}, & \ell \text{ even and } \ell \geq n. \end{cases}$$

The formulae in (2) can also be derived using other methods. For example, they follow from the results in [12]. Our method by using Fourier transform, however, gives the formulae for  $K_{n,\alpha}$  when  $\alpha$  is not an integer. The formulae and the proof of Theorem 1 indicate the reason why  $\underline{D}_\alpha$  has no conformal invariance when  $\alpha$  is not an integer.

Now we turn to the fundamental solutions of  $D^\ell$ ,  $\ell \in \mathbf{Z}_+$ . In fact, writing  $D_0 = \partial/\partial x_0$ , it follows that  $D^{-\ell} = (D_0 + \underline{D})^{-\ell} = (D_0 - \underline{D})^\ell (D_0^2 - \underline{D}^2)^{-\ell}$ . According to the Fourier transform defined at the end of the introductory section, the symbol of  $(D_0^2 - \underline{D}^2)^{-\ell}$  is  $|\xi|^{-2\ell}$ , while its inverse Fourier transform, for  $0 < 2\ell < n + 1$ , is  $c_{n,\ell}|x|^{-(n+1-2\ell)}$ . This shows that the kernel of the operator  $D^{-\ell}$  is

$$L_{n,\ell}(x) = c_{n,\ell}(D_0 - \underline{D})^\ell \left( \frac{1}{|x|^{n+1-2\ell}} \right), \quad 0 < 2\ell < n + 1.$$

A direct computation then gives

$$(3) \quad L_{n,\ell}(x) = c_{n,\ell} \frac{x_0^{\ell-1} \bar{x}}{|x|^{n+1}}, \quad \ell \in \mathbf{Z}_+.$$

This result is due to Delanghe and Brackx [7] with a different proof.

### 3. Conformal Covariance

We normalize the Möbius transformation defined in the introduction by adding the condition

$$ad^* - bc^* = 1,$$

$\ell$  odd;

$\ell$  even,

$s$  even;

$s$  odd.

$$|\xi|^{-\alpha-1} \hat{f}(\xi) d\xi$$

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} e^{-i(x,\xi)} (-|\xi|)^{-\alpha-1} \hat{f}(\xi) d\xi.$$

formula (see [14, p. 117] for

$\mathbb{R}^n$

$$-e^{-i\alpha\pi} \underline{D} \left( \frac{1}{|x|^{n-\alpha-1}} \right).$$

$$(1 - e^{-i\alpha\pi}) \underline{D} G_{n,\alpha+1}(x),$$

that is the operator associated



and consider the multiplier representation

$$T_\ell(\phi)f(\underline{x}) = J_{\ell,\phi} \cdot f(\phi(\underline{x})),$$

where

$$(4) \quad J_{\ell,\phi}(\underline{x}) = \begin{cases} \frac{(c\underline{x} + d)^*}{|c\underline{x} + d|^{n-\ell+1}}, & \ell \text{ odd;} \\ \frac{1}{|c\underline{x} + d|^{n-\ell}}, & \ell \text{ even,} \end{cases}$$

and  $\ell \in \mathbf{Z}$ .

The following theorem is the main result of [1, 2].

**THEOREM 1.** For  $\ell \in \mathbf{Z}_+$ , the iterated Dirac operator  $\underline{D}^\ell$  intertwines the representations  $T_\ell, T_{-\ell}$  of the Möbius transformation group, that is, for  $c \neq 0$

$$(5) \quad \underline{D}^\ell (T_\ell f) = \begin{cases} (-1)^{m(c)+1} T_{-\ell} (\underline{D}^\ell f), & \ell \text{ odd;} \\ T_{-\ell} (\underline{D}^\ell f), & \ell \text{ even,} \end{cases}$$

and, if  $c = 0$ , then it must be the case that  $d \neq 0$ , and the factor  $(-1)^{m(c)+1}$  in the last formula should be replaced by  $(-1)^{m(d)}$ .

**REMARK.** Note that the constant factors for  $\ell$  odd in the theorem seem to be missing in [6].

The following proof of the theorem based on the close relationship between  $K_{n,\ell}$ , the fundamental solutions of  $\underline{D}^\ell$ , and the conformal weights  $J_{\ell,\phi}$ . Note that it is thus akin to a known proof of 'Bol's lemma' (cf. [8]).

**PROOF.** We only give the proof for the case  $c \neq 0$ . The proof for  $c = 0$  is omitted, since it is similar, and even simpler. We are going to show

$$(5') \quad T_\ell f = \begin{cases} (-1)^{m(c)+1} \underline{D}^{-\ell} T_{-\ell} (\underline{D}^\ell f), & \ell \text{ odd;} \\ \underline{D}^{-\ell} T_{-\ell} (\underline{D}^\ell f), & \ell \text{ even.} \end{cases}$$

First, let us assume that  $n$  is odd or that  $\ell < n$  and  $n$  is even. Denote by  $\psi$  the inverse of  $\phi$ . If  $\underline{y} = \phi(\underline{x}) = (a\underline{x} + b)(c\underline{x} + d)^{-1} \in \mathbb{R}^n$ , then  $\underline{y}(c\underline{x} + d) = a\underline{x} + b$  and so,  $\underline{x} = \psi(\underline{y}) = (\underline{y}c - a)^{-1}(-\underline{y}d + b)$ . Let  $\underline{z} = \underline{z}(\underline{y}) = \underline{y}c - a$ ,  $A = b - ac^{-1}d$ , it follows that

$$(6) \quad \underline{x} = \underline{z}^{-1}A - c^{-1}d.$$

[6] [7]

On the other hand, since  $\underline{x} = \underline{x}^*$ ,  $\underline{y} = \underline{y}^*$ , (6) is equivalent to

$$(6') \quad \underline{x} = A^* z^{*-1} - d^* c^{*-1}.$$

It can be observed, from the properties of Möbius transformation and formula (6), that  $c \neq 0$  implies  $A \neq 0$ . We have

$$\begin{aligned} & D^{-\ell} (T_{-\ell} (D^\ell f)) (\psi(\underline{x})) \\ &= c_{n,\ell} \int K_{n,\ell}(\psi(\underline{x}) - \underline{y}) \cdot J_{-\ell,\phi}(\underline{y}) (D^\ell f) (\phi(\underline{y})) d\underline{y} \\ &= c_{n,\ell} \int K_{n,\ell}(\psi(\underline{x}) - \psi(\underline{y})) \cdot J_{-\ell,\phi}(\psi(\underline{y})) (D^\ell f) (\underline{y}) \left| \frac{d\psi(\underline{y})}{d\underline{y}} \right| d\underline{y}, \end{aligned}$$

where  $|d\psi(\underline{y})/d\underline{y}|$  is the Jacobian. Noticing that  $\underline{x} = \psi(\underline{y})$  is also a Möbius transformation, by using formula (2.4) of [2] and the condition  $ad^* - bc^* = 1$ , we see that the Jacobian equals  $|z(\underline{y})|^{-2n}$ . In view of the identities (2), (4) and

$$\begin{aligned} \psi(\underline{x}) - \psi(\underline{y}) &= (z^{-1}(\underline{x}) - z^{-1}(\underline{y}))A, \\ z^{-1}(\underline{x}) - z^{-1}(\underline{y}) &= -z^{-1}(\underline{x})(z(\underline{x}) - z(\underline{y}))z^{-1}(\underline{y}), \\ z(\underline{x}) - z(\underline{y}) &= (\underline{x} - \underline{y})c \end{aligned}$$

and

$$J_{-\ell,\phi}(\psi(\underline{y})) = \begin{cases} \frac{A^*}{|A|^{n+\ell+1}} \frac{z^{*-1}(\underline{y})}{|z^{-1}(\underline{y})|^{n+\ell+1}} \frac{c^*}{|c|^{n+\ell+1}}, & \ell \text{ odd;} \\ \frac{1}{|A|^{n+\ell}} \frac{1}{|z^{-1}(\underline{y})|^{n+\ell}} \frac{1}{|c|^{n+\ell}}, & \ell \text{ even,} \end{cases}$$

for  $\ell$  odd, the above equals

$$\begin{aligned} & -c_{n,\ell} \frac{z^{-1}(\underline{x})}{|z^{-1}(\underline{x})|^{n-\ell+1}} \int \frac{(\underline{x} - \underline{y})}{|\underline{x} - \underline{y}|^{n-\ell+1}} \frac{c}{|c|^{n-\ell+1}} \frac{z^{-1}(\underline{y})}{|z^{-1}(\underline{y})|^{n-\ell+1}} \frac{A}{|A|^{n-\ell+1}} \\ & \quad \cdot \frac{A^*}{|A^*|^{n+\ell+1}} \frac{z^{-1*}(\underline{y})}{|z^{-1}(\underline{y})|^{n+\ell+1}} \frac{c^*}{|c|^{n+\ell+1}} (D^\ell f) (\underline{y}) \frac{1}{|z(\underline{y})|^{2n}} d\underline{y} \\ &= c_{n,\ell} \frac{1}{|A|^{2n}} \frac{(-1)^{m(c)}}{|c|^{2n}} \frac{z^{-1}(\underline{x})}{|z^{-1}(\underline{x})|^{n-\ell+1}} \int \frac{(\underline{x} - \underline{y})}{|\underline{x} - \underline{y}|^{n-\ell+1}} (D^\ell f) (\underline{y}) d\underline{y} \\ &= \frac{1}{|A|^{2n}} \frac{(-1)^{m(c)}}{|c|^{2n}} \frac{z^{-1}(\underline{x})}{|z^{-1}(\underline{x})|^{n-\ell+1}} \int K_{n,\ell}(\underline{x} - \underline{y}) (D^\ell f) (\underline{y}) d\underline{y} \\ &= \frac{1}{|A|^{2n}} \frac{(-1)^{m(c)}}{|c|^{2n}} \frac{z^{-1}(\underline{x})}{|z^{-1}(\underline{x})|^{n-\ell+1}} f(\underline{x}), \end{aligned}$$

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[6]  $\phi(\underline{x})$ ,

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[1, 2].  
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Let  $z = z(\underline{y}) = \underline{y}c - a$ ,  $A =$

$d$ .







[8] [9]

Let  $z^{-1}A = \underline{x} + c^{-1}d$  of the fundamental that  $(\underline{x} + d^*c^{*-1}) = \frac{1}{c}f(\phi(\underline{x}))$ .

$-c^{*-1} + ac^{-1}d$  ately gives (5'). The s time we should use (4), respectively. We proceeding as above

$$\begin{aligned}
 I_4 &= -c_{n,\ell} \sum_{k+j=\ell-n} h_{kj}(\underline{x} - ac^{-1})^k \int (\log |\underline{y} - ac^{-1}| + \log |c|) (\underline{y} - ac^{-1})^j (D^\ell f)(\underline{y}) d\underline{y} \\
 &= -c_{n,\ell} \sum_{k+j=\ell-n} h_{kj}(\underline{x} - ac^{-1})^k \int (\log |\underline{y} - ac^{-1}|) (\underline{y} - ac^{-1})^j (D^\ell f)(\underline{y}) d\underline{y} \\
 &= -c_{n,\ell} \sum_{k+j=\ell-n, j < \ell-n} h_{kj}(\underline{x} - ac^{-1})^k \int \log |\underline{y} - ac^{-1}| (\underline{y} - ac^{-1})^j (D^\ell f)(\underline{y}) d\underline{y} \\
 &\quad - h_{0,\ell-n} \int c_{n,\ell} \log |\underline{y} - ac^{-1}| (\underline{y} - ac^{-1})^{\ell-n} (D^\ell f)(\underline{y}) d\underline{y} \\
 &= \pm h_{0,\ell-n} \int c_{n,\ell} (\log |\underline{y} - ac^{-1}| + d_{n,\ell}) \frac{(\underline{y} - ac^{-1})}{|\underline{y} - ac^{-1}|^{n-\ell+1}} (D^\ell f)(\underline{y}) d\underline{y} \\
 &= \pm h_{0,\ell-n} f(ac^{-1}) \\
 &= 0,
 \end{aligned}$$

where the last step used the convention that function  $f \circ \phi$  has compact support.

In fact,  $f(ac^{-1}) = f \circ \phi \circ \psi(ac^{-1}) = f \circ \phi(\infty) = 0$ .

So, we still have, as in the previous case

$$\underline{D}^{-\ell} (T_{-\ell}(\underline{D}^\ell f))(\psi(\underline{x})) = \frac{1}{|A|^{2n}} \frac{(-1)^{m(c)}}{|c|^{2n}} \frac{z^{-1}(\underline{x})}{|z^{-1}(\underline{x})|^{n-\ell+1}} f(\underline{x}).$$

Replacing  $\underline{x}$  by  $\phi(\underline{x})$  and proceeding as before, we obtain the desired formula in (5') for the case  $\ell$  odd when  $\ell \geq n$  and  $n$  is even.

The case  $\ell$  even can be treated similarly, and hence the theorem is proved.

Now we turn to the operator  $D^\ell$ , and ask if we have similar conformal covariance for these operators. The answer is *yes* for  $\ell = 1$ ; and *no* for  $\ell > 1$  (see remark below). First, notice that if we change  $\mathbb{R}^n$  to  $\mathbb{R}_1^n$  in the definition of Möbius transformations and the identification relationship between them and the certain Clifford matrices described in the introduction, then all the conclusions still hold. In fact, it then becomes L. Ahlfors's original result (see [1, 2, 4, 3]). Now denote by  $\varphi$  a Möbius transformation from  $\mathbb{R}_1^n \cup \{\infty\}$  into  $\mathbb{R}_1^n \cup \{\infty\}$  and let  $g$  be the fixed function from  $\mathbb{R}_1^n \cup \{\infty\}$  into  $\mathbb{R}_1^n \cup \{\infty\}$  defined by

$$g(x) = \frac{x^*}{|x|^{n+1}},$$

where  $x = x_0 + \underline{x}$ . Define the representations

$$\begin{aligned}
 S_1(\varphi)f(x) &= L_{n,1}((cx + d)^*) f(\varphi(x)), \\
 S_{-1}(\varphi)f(x) &= g(cx + d) f(\varphi(x)).
 \end{aligned}$$

$h_{kj}(\underline{x} - ac^{-1})^k (\underline{y} - ac^{-1})^j$ ,  
 $(-y)/|x - y|^{n-\ell+1} =$   
 $\underline{x}$   
 s. To conclude we only

The following result holds.

THEOREM 2.

$$(7) \quad D(S_1 f) = S_{-1}(Df).$$

PROOF. By using the fundamental solution obtained in Section 1, formula (3), and the same notation and relations established in the proof of Theorem 1, with  $\underline{x}$  and  $\underline{y}$  are replaced by  $x$  and  $y$ , respectively, we have

$$\begin{aligned} & D^{-1}(S_{-1}(Df))(\psi(x)) \\ &= \int L_{n,1}(\psi(x) - \psi(y)) g(cz^{-1}(y)A)(Df)(y) \frac{1}{|z(y)|^{2(n+1)}} dy \\ &= c_{n,1} \frac{-\overline{z^{-1}(x)}}{|z^{-1}(x)|^{n+1}} \\ &\quad \times \int \frac{(x-y)cz^{-1}(y)A}{|x-y|^{n+1}|c|^{n+1}|z^{-1}(y)|^{n+1}|A|^{n+1}} \frac{A^*(z^{-1}(y))^*c^*}{|A|^{n+3}|z^{-1}(y)|^{n+3}|c|^{n+3}} \frac{1}{|z(y)|^{2(n+1)}} dy \\ &= \frac{-1}{|Ac^*|^{2n+2}} \frac{-\overline{z^{-1}(x)}}{|z^{-1}(x)|^{n+1}} \int L_{n,1}(x-y)(Df)(y) dy \\ &= \frac{-1}{|Ac^*|^{2n+2}} \frac{-\overline{z^{-1}(x)}}{|z^{-1}(x)|^{n+1}} f(x). \end{aligned}$$

Replacing  $x$  by  $\phi(x)$  and using  $Ac^* = -1$ , we obtain (7).

The above proof is not applicable when  $\ell > 1$ . (For a different proof of Theorem 2, see [11].) It is caused by the presence of a positive power of the single component  $x_0$ , as indicated by formula (3).

REMARK. Now we indicate why a result such as Theorem 2 cannot be true for  $\ell > 1$ . Rather than continuing the rather tedious computation in [11]—in principle this is always possible—we supply the following argument which was suggested to us by Professor John Ryan (personal communication). Consider the Clifford algebra  $\mathcal{A}_{n+1}$  with  $n+1$  generators  $e_1, \dots, e_{n+1}$  and let  $\mathcal{A}_{n+1}^+$  be the subalgebra of even elements of  $\mathcal{A}_{n+1}$ . Then there is an isomorphism  $\rho: \mathcal{A}_n \rightarrow \mathcal{A}_{n+1}^+$  such that  $e_j \mapsto e_{n+1}^{-1}e_j = -e_{n+1}e_j$  ( $j = 1, \dots, n$ ). (This can be seen by observing that  $\mathcal{A}_{n+1}^+$  is generated by the elements  $e_{n+1}^{-1}e_j$  ( $j = 1, \dots, n$ ), which again follows from the relation

$$e_{n+1}^{-1}x \cdot e_{n+1}^{-1}y = xy \quad (x, y \in \mathcal{A}_n).$$

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Consider now the equation

$$Df = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_0} + \sum_{j=1}^n e_j \frac{\partial f}{\partial x_j}.$$

Applying the isomorphism  $\rho$  we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} (Df)^\rho &= \left( \frac{\partial}{\partial x_0} + \sum_{j=1}^n e_{n+1}^{-1} e_j \frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \right) f^\rho \\ &= e_{n+1}^{-1} \left( e_{n+1} \frac{\partial}{\partial x_0} + \sum_{j=1}^n e_j \frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \right) f^\rho \\ &= e_{n+1}^{-1} \underline{D} f^\rho. \end{aligned}$$

In condensed form, we may write this as

$$\rho D = e_{n+1}^{-1} \underline{D} \rho.$$

This gives us a possibility of deriving Theorem 2 from Bojarski's Theorem 1 (the case  $\ell = 1$ ). The point is that such a relation cannot be true if  $\ell > 1$  and so the argument breaks down. For iterating gives

$$\rho D^\ell = (e_{n+1}^{-1} \underline{D})^\ell \rho.$$

That, is  $\rho$  intertwines  $D^\ell$  and  $(e_{n+1}^{-1} \underline{D})^\ell$ , not  $D^\ell$  and  $\underline{D}^\ell$ .

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