

On local newforms for unramified $U(2, 1)$

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1 Introduction

Local newforms play an important role in the theory of automorphic representations. Roughly speaking, a newform for an irreducible generic representation π of a p -adic group is a vector which attains the L -factor of π via Rankin-Selberg integral. The existence of newforms was known only for $GL(n)$ until the work of Roberts and Schmidt [11] for $GSp(4)$. In this note, we study newform theory for unramified $U(2, 1)$.

This note is a survey of the author's work [6], [7], [9], [8] on newforms for unramified $U(2, 1)$. Let G denote the unramified unitary group in three variables defined over a p -adic field of odd residual characteristic. Newforms for an irreducible generic representation (π, V) of G is defined by using a family of open compact subgroups $\{K_n\}_{n \geq 0}$ of G , which is an analog of paramodular subgroups of $GSp(4)$. For each non-negative integer n , we denote by $V(n)$ the space of K_n -fixed vectors. The smallest integer such that $V(n)$ is not trivial is called the conductor of π . We write N_π for the conductor of π , and call $V(N_\pi)$ the space of newforms for π . An algebraic structure of $V(n)$ was studied in [6] and [9], for example, the multiplicity one theorem for newforms and the dimension formula for $V(n)$, $n \geq N_\pi$.

Our main concern is the relation of newforms and Rankin-Selberg factors. Gelbart and Piatetski-Shapiro in [4] attached a family of Rankin-Selberg integrals to an irreducible generic representation π of G , and defined L and ε -factors for π . In *loc. cit.* they showed that the spherical vector attains the L -factor of π when π is an unramified principal series representation. But there were no results for ramified representations. In this note, we establish a theory of newforms for Gelbart and Piatetski-Shapiro's integral. We see that (i) the newform for an irreducible generic representation π of G attains the L -factor of π (Theorem 4.1) (ii) the conductor of π coincides with the exponent of q^{-s} of the ε -factor, where q denotes the cardinality of the residue field (Theorem 4.3).

We summarize the contents of this paper. In section 2, we recall from [1] the theory of Rankin-Selberg integral introduced by Gelbart, Piatetski-Shapiro and Baruch. In section 3, we define newforms for G and recall their basic properties. In section 4, we show Theorems 4.1 and 4.3 assuming Lemma 4.2, which is proved in section 5.

2 Rankin-Selberg integral

In this section, we recall from [1] the theory of Rankin-Selberg integral for $U(2, 1)$ introduced by Gelbart, Piatetski-Shapiro and Baruch.

2.1 Notation

We use the following notation. Let F be a non-archimedean local field of characteristic zero, \mathfrak{o}_F its ring of integers, and \mathfrak{p}_F the maximal ideal in \mathfrak{o}_F . We fix a uniformizer ϖ_F in F , and denote by $|\cdot|_F$ the absolute value of F normalized so that $|\varpi_F| = q_F^{-1}$, where q_F is the cardinality of the residue field $\mathfrak{o}_F/\mathfrak{p}_F$. Throughout this paper, we assume that the characteristic of $\mathfrak{o}_F/\mathfrak{p}_F$ is different from two.

Let $E = F[\sqrt{\epsilon}]$ be the quadratic unramified extension over F , where $\sqrt{\epsilon}$ is a non-square unit in \mathfrak{o}_F . We denote by \mathfrak{o}_E , \mathfrak{p}_E the analogous objects for E . Then ϖ_F is a uniformizer of E , and the cardinality of $\mathfrak{o}_E/\mathfrak{p}_E$ is equal to q_F^2 . So we abbreviate $\varpi = \varpi_F$ and $q = q_F$. We realize (the group of F -points of) the unramified unitary group in three variables defined over F as

$$G = U(2, 1) = \{g \in \mathrm{GL}_3(E) \mid {}^t \bar{g} J g = J\}.$$

Here we denote by $\bar{}$ the non-trivial element in $\mathrm{Gal}(E/F)$ and

$$J = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Let B be the upper triangular Borel subgroup of G , U its unipotent radical, and T the group of the diagonal elements in G . For a non-trivial additive character ψ_E of E , we also denote by ψ_E the character of U defined by $\psi_E(u) = \psi_E(u_{12})$, for $u = (u_{ij}) \in U$. For an irreducible generic representation (π, V) of G , we write $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ for the Whittaker model of π associated to (U, ψ_E) .

2.2 Zeta integrals

Let $\mathcal{C}_c^\infty(F^2)$ be the space of locally constant, compactly supported functions on F^2 . For an irreducible generic representation (π, V) of G , Gelbart and Piatetski-Shapiro introduced a family of zeta integrals which has the form $Z(s, W, \Phi)$ ($W \in \mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$, $\Phi \in \mathcal{C}_c^\infty(F^2)$) as follows:

We identify the subgroup

$$H = \left\{ \begin{pmatrix} a & 0 & b \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ c & 0 & d \end{pmatrix} \in G \right\}$$

of G with $U(1, 1)$. Since $SU(1, 1)$ is isomorphic to $SL_2(F)$, we can write any element h in H as

$$(2.1) \quad h = \begin{pmatrix} b & 0 \\ 0 & \bar{b}^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \sqrt{\epsilon} & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} h_1 \begin{pmatrix} \sqrt{\epsilon}^{-1} & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix},$$

where $b \in E^\times$ and $h_1 \in SL_2(F)$. For $\Phi \in C_c^\infty(F^2)$ and $h \in H$, we define a function $f(s, h, \Phi)$ on \mathbf{C} by

$$f(s, h, \Phi) = |b|_E^s \int_{F^\times} \Phi((0, r)h_1) |r|_E^s d^\times r$$

by using the decomposition of h in (2.1). We note that the definition of $f(s, h, \Phi)$ is independent of the choices of $b \in E^\times$ and $h_1 \in SL_2(F)$.

Set $B_H = B \cap H$ and $U_H = U \cap H$. Then U_H is the unipotent radical of the Borel subgroup B_H of $H = U(1, 1)$. For $W \in \mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ and $\Phi \in C_c^\infty(F^2)$, we define zeta integral $Z(s, W, \Phi)$ by

$$Z(s, W, \Phi) = \int_{U_H \backslash H} W(h) f(s, h, \Phi) dh.$$

Then $Z(s, W, \Phi)$ absolutely converges to a function in $\mathbf{C}(q^{-2s})$ if $\text{Re}(s)$ is sufficiently large.

2.3 L and ε -factors

We recall the definition of L and ε -factors attached to an irreducible generic representation (π, V) of G . Set

$$I_\pi = \langle Z(s, W, \Phi) \mid W \in \mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E), \Phi \in C_c^\infty(F^2), \psi_E : \text{non-trivial} \rangle.$$

Then I_π is a fractional ideal of $\mathbf{C}[q^{-2s}, q^{2s}]$ which contains 1. Thus, there exists a polynomial $P(X)$ in $\mathbf{C}[X]$ such that $P(0) = 1$ and $I_\pi = (1/P(q^{-2s}))$. We define *the L -factor* $L(s, \pi)$ of π by

$$L(s, \pi) = \frac{1}{P(q^{-2s})}.$$

To define ε -factor of π , we recall the functional equation. Let ψ_F be a non-trivial additive character of F . For $\Phi \in C_c^\infty(F^2)$, we denote by $\hat{\Phi}$ its Fourier transform with respect to ψ_F . Then there exists $\gamma(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) \in \mathbf{C}(q^{-2s})$ which satisfies

$$\gamma(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) Z(s, W, \Phi) = Z(1-s, W, \hat{\Phi}),$$

for all $W \in \mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ and $\Phi \in \mathcal{C}_c^\infty(F^2)$.

By using the above functional equation, we define *the ε -factor* $\varepsilon(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E)$ of π by

$$\varepsilon(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) = \gamma(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) \frac{L(s, \pi)}{L(1-s, \tilde{\pi})},$$

where $\tilde{\pi}$ is the contragredient representation of π . By [7], we obtain $L(s, \tilde{\pi}) = L(s, \pi)$, and hence

$$(2.2) \quad \varepsilon(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) = \gamma(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) \frac{L(s, \pi)}{L(1-s, \pi)}.$$

Thus, we can show the following proposition by the standard argument:

Proposition 2.3. *The ε -factor $\varepsilon(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E)$ is a monomial in q^{-2s} of the form*

$$\varepsilon(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) = \pm q^{-2n(s-1/2)},$$

with some $n \in \mathbf{Z}$.

3 Newforms

In this section, we introduce a family of open compact subgroups of G , and define the notion of newforms for irreducible generic representations of G . We summarize the basic properties of newforms for G , which are an analog of those for $\mathrm{GL}(n)$ and $\mathrm{GSp}(4)$.

3.1 Newforms

Newforms for G are defined by the following open compact subgroups $\{K_n\}_{n \geq 0}$ of G . For each non-negative integer n , we define an open compact subgroup K_n of G by

$$K_n = \left(\begin{array}{ccc} \mathfrak{o}_E & \mathfrak{o}_E & \mathfrak{p}_E^{-n} \\ \mathfrak{p}_E^n & 1 + \mathfrak{p}_E^n & \mathfrak{o}_E \\ \mathfrak{p}_E^n & \mathfrak{p}_E^n & \mathfrak{o}_E \end{array} \right) \cap G.$$

Remark 3.1. The definition of K_n is inspired by the paramodular subgroups of $\mathrm{GSp}(4)$, which is used in [11]. We also note that the group $\left(\begin{array}{ccc} \mathfrak{o}_E & \mathfrak{o}_E & \mathfrak{p}_E^{-n} \\ \mathfrak{p}_E^n & 1 + \mathfrak{p}_E^n & \mathfrak{o}_E \\ \mathfrak{p}_E^n & \mathfrak{p}_E^n & \mathfrak{o}_E \end{array} \right)^\times$ is a conjugate of the subgroup of $\mathrm{GL}_3(E)$ which is used to define newforms for $\mathrm{GL}_3(E)$ in [5].

For an irreducible generic representation (π, V) of G , we set

$$V(n) = \{v \in V \mid \pi(k)v = v, k \in K_n\}, n \geq 0.$$

Then it follows from [9] that there exists a non-negative integer n such that $V(n)$ is not zero.

Definition 3.2. We define *the conductor of π* by

$$N_\pi = \min\{n \geq 0 \mid V(n) \neq \{0\}\}.$$

We call $V(N_\pi)$ the space of *newforms* for π and $V(n)$ that of *oldforms*, for $n > N_\pi$.

3.2 Basic properties of newforms

We recall some basic properties of newforms from [6] and [9]. Firstly, the growth of dimensions of oldforms for generic representations π is independent of π , as in the cases of $GL(n)$ and $GSp(4)$ (see [2], [10], [11]). The following dimension formula for oldforms holds:

Proposition 3.3 ([6], [9]). *Let (π, V) be an irreducible generic representation of G . For $n \geq N_\pi$, we have*

$$\dim V(n) = \left\lfloor \frac{n - N_\pi}{2} \right\rfloor + 1.$$

In particular, $V(N_\pi)$ and $V(N_\pi + 1)$ are one-dimensional.

Secondly, newforms for G are test vectors for the Whittaker functional. We say that a function W in $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ is a newform if W is fixed by K_{N_π} . The following proposition is important to the application to the theory of zeta integral:

Proposition 3.4 ([6]). *Suppose that the conductor of ψ_E is \mathfrak{o}_E . Then for all nonzero newforms W in $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$, we have*

$$W(1) \neq 0.$$

3.3 Zeta integral of newforms

We apply newforms for G to the theory of zeta integral. We suppose that the conductor of ψ_E is \mathfrak{o}_E . One of the nice properties of the subgroups $\{K_n\}_{n \geq 0}$ is that $K_{n,H} = K_n \cap H$ is

a maximal compact subgroup of H for all n . Set $T_H = T \cap H$. Then we have an Iwasawa decomposition $H = U_H T_H K_{n,H}$, for any n . There exists an isomorphism

$$t : E^\times \simeq T_H; a \mapsto \begin{pmatrix} a & & \\ & 1 & \\ & & \bar{a}^{-1} \end{pmatrix}$$

For $W \in \mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ and $\Phi \in \mathcal{C}_c^\infty(F^2)$, we obtain

$$Z(s, W, \Phi) = \int_{E^\times} \int_{K_{n,H}} W(t(a)k) f(s, k, \Phi) |a|_E^{s-1} dk d^\times a.$$

For $n \geq 0$, we denote by Φ_n the characteristic function of $\mathfrak{p}_F^n \oplus \mathfrak{o}_F$. If W a newform in $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$, then we have

$$(3.5) \quad Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi}) = \text{vol}(K_{n,H}) Z(s, W) L_E(s, 1).$$

Here $L_E(s, 1) = 1/(1 - q^{-2s})$ is the L -factor of the trivial representation of E^\times and

$$(3.6) \quad Z(s, W) = \int_{E^\times} W(t(a)) |a|_E^{s-1} d^\times a.$$

We note that Proposition 3.4 implies that the integral $Z(s, W)$ does not vanish for any non-zero newforms in $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$.

If ψ_F has conductor \mathfrak{o}_F , then we have $\hat{\Phi}_{N_\pi} = q^{-N_\pi} \text{ch}_{\mathfrak{o}_F \oplus \mathfrak{p}_F^{-N_\pi}}$, and hence

$$(3.7) \quad Z(1-s, W, \hat{\Phi}_{N_\pi}) = q^{-2N_\pi(s-1/2)} Z(1-s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi})$$

by (3.5).

4 Main results

In this section, we show our two main theorems, which describe L and ε -factors of irreducible generic representations of G in terms of newforms and conductors.

4.1 L -factors and newforms

We show that zeta integrals of newforms attain L -factors. We normalize Haar measures on E^\times and $K_{n,H}$ so that the volumes of \mathfrak{o}_E^\times and of $K_{n,H}$ are one respectively. Then the following holds:

Theorem 4.1 ([8]). *Suppose that ψ_E has conductor \mathfrak{o}_E . Let π be an irreducible generic representation of G and W the newform in $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ such that $W(1) = 1$. Then we have*

$$Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi}) = L(s, \pi).$$

Theorem 4.1 is reduced to the following lemma:

Lemma 4.2. *With the notation as above, we have*

$$Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi})/L(s, \pi) = 1 \text{ or } 1/L_E(s, 1).$$

We postpone the proof of Lemma 4.2 to the next section.

Proof of Theorem 4.1. We further assume that ψ_F has conductor \mathfrak{o}_F . Suppose that $Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi})/L(s, \pi) = 1/L_E(s, 1)$. Then by (2.2), we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} \varepsilon(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) &= \gamma(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) \frac{L(s, \pi)}{L(1-s, \pi)} \\ &= \frac{Z(1-s, W, \hat{\Phi}_{N_\pi})}{Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi})} \frac{L(s, \pi)}{L(1-s, \pi)} \\ &= q^{-2N_\pi(s-1/2)} \frac{L_E(s, 1)}{L_E(1-s, 1)}. \end{aligned}$$

The last equality follows from (3.7). This contradicts Proposition 2.3 which implies that $\varepsilon(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E)$ is monomial. Thus we get $Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi}) = L(s, \pi)$, as required. \square

4.2 ε -factors and conductors

We show that the exponent of q^{-2s} of the ε -factor of an irreducible generic representation π of G coincides with the conductor of π . Applying the argument in the proof of Theorem 4.1, we obtain the following:

Theorem 4.3 ([8]). *Suppose that ψ_E and ψ_F have conductors \mathfrak{o}_E and \mathfrak{o}_F respectively. For any irreducible generic representation π of G , we have*

$$\varepsilon(s, \pi, \psi_F, \psi_E) = q^{-2N_\pi(s-1/2)}.$$

5 Proof of Lemma 4.2

In this section, we explain how to prove Lemma 4.2.

5.1 Evaluation of L -factors

We shall evaluate $L(s, \pi)$, for each irreducible generic representation (π, V) of G . The L -factor $L(s, \pi)$ is defined as the greatest common divisor of the zeta integrals $Z(s, W, \Phi)$. For $W \in \mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ and $\Phi \in C_c^\infty(F^2)$, there exist $W_i \in \mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ and $\Phi_i \in C_c^\infty(F^2)$ ($1 \leq i \leq m$) such that

$$Z(s, W, \Phi) = \sum_{i=1}^m Z(s, W_i) f(s, 1, \Phi_i).$$

By the theory of zeta integral for $GL(1)$, we have

$$f(s, 1, \Phi_i) \in L_E(s, 1) \mathbf{C}[q^{-2s}, q^{2s}].$$

Recall that we defined

$$Z(s, W) = \int_{E^\times} W(t(a)) |a|_E^{s-1} d^\times a,$$

for $W \in \mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$. To estimate $Z(s, W)$, we can apply the theory of Kirillov model for $GL(2)$.

An irreducible generic representation of G is supercuspidal, or else a subrepresentation of a parabolically induced representation from B . The Levi component T of B is isomorphic to $E^\times \times U(1)$. For a quasi-character μ_1 of E^\times and a character μ_2 of $U(1)$, we denote by $\text{Ind}_B^G \mu_1 \otimes \mu_2$ the corresponding parabolically induced representation. According to the classification of representations of G , we have the following evaluation of the shape of L -factors:

Proposition 5.1. *Let π be an irreducible generic representation of G .*

- (i) *If π is supercuspidal, then $L(s, \pi)$ divides $L_E(s, 1)$.*
- (ii) *If π is a proper submodule of $\text{Ind}_B^G \mu_1 \otimes \mu_2$, then $L(s, \pi)$ divides $L_E(s, \mu_1) L_E(s, 1)$.*
- (iii) *If $\pi = \text{Ind}_B^G \mu_1 \otimes \mu_2$, then $L(s, \pi)$ divides $L_E(s, \mu_1) L_E(s, \bar{\mu}_1^{-1}) L_E(s, 1)$.*

5.2 Calculation of zeta integral of newforms

Let W be the newform in $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ such that $W(1) = 1$. We shall compute $Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi})$. Suppose that π has conductor zero. Then $\pi = \text{Ind}_B^G(\mu_1 \otimes 1)$, for some unramified quasi-character μ_1 of E^\times . In this case, newforms in $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ are just spherical Whittaker functions. In [4], Gelbart and Piatetski-Shapiro showed that

$$Z(s, W, \Phi_0) = L_E(s, \mu_1) L_E(s, \bar{\mu}_1^{-1}) L_E(s, 1)$$

by using Casselman-Shalika's formula for spherical Whittaker functions in [3]. We therefore obtain $Z(s, W, \Phi_0) = L(s, \pi)$ because of Proposition 5.1.

From now on, we assume that N_π is positive. By (3.5), we have

$$Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi}) = Z(s, W)L_E(s, 1),$$

and hence it is enough to compute $Z(s, W)$. One can easily observe that

$$(5.2) \quad Z(s, W) = \int_{E^\times} W(t(a))|a|_E^{s-1}d^\times a = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} W(t(\varpi^i))q^{2i(1-s)}.$$

So we shall give a recursion formula for $W(t(\varpi^i))$, $i \geq 0$, in terms of two "Hecke eigenvalues" λ and ν .

We abbreviate $N = N_\pi$. Let us define the eigenvalue λ . We define a level raising operator $\theta' : V(N) \rightarrow V(N+1)$ by

$$\theta'v = \int_{K_{N+1}} \pi(k)vdk, \quad v \in V(N),$$

and a level lowering operator $\delta : V(N+1) \rightarrow V(N)$ by

$$\delta w = \int_{K_N} \pi(k)wdk, \quad w \in V(N+1).$$

Since $\dim V(N) = 1$, there exists $\lambda \in \mathbf{C}$ such that

$$\lambda v = \delta\theta'v,$$

for all $v \in V(N)$.

Next, we define the eigenvalue ν . Put

$$\zeta = \begin{pmatrix} \varpi & & \\ & 1 & \\ & & \varpi^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \in G.$$

We define the Hecke operator T on $V(N+1)$ by

$$Tv = \int_{K_{N+1}\zeta K_{N+1}} \pi(k)vdk, \quad v \in V(N+1).$$

Because $\dim V(N+1) = 1$, there exists ν in \mathbf{C} such that

$$Tv = \nu v,$$

for all $v \in V(N+1)$.

With the notation as above, we obtain the following recursion formula for $W(t(\varpi^i))$, $i \geq 0$.

Proposition 5.3. *Let (π, V) be an irreducible generic representation of G whose conductor N_π is positive. For any newform W in $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$, we have*

$$\begin{aligned}(\nu + q^2 - \lambda)c_i + q(\nu + q^2 - q^3)c_{i+1} &= q^5 c_{i+2}, \quad i \geq 0, \\ (\nu - q^3)c_0 &= q^4 c_1,\end{aligned}$$

where $c_i = W(t(\varpi^i))$, $i \geq 0$.

By (5.2) and Proposition 5.3, we can describe the zeta integral of newforms in terms of λ and ν :

Proposition 5.4. *Let (π, V) be an irreducible generic representation of G whose conductor N_π is positive and W its newform in $\mathcal{W}(\pi, \psi_E)$ such that $W(1) = 1$. Then we have*

$$Z(s, W) = \frac{1 - q^{-2s}}{1 - \frac{\nu + q^2 - q^3}{q^2} q^{-2s} - \frac{\nu + q^2 - \lambda}{q} q^{-4s}}.$$

In particular,

$$Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi}) = \frac{1}{1 - \frac{\nu + q^2 - q^3}{q^2} q^{-2s} - \frac{\nu + q^2 - \lambda}{q} q^{-4s}}.$$

5.3 Proof of Lemma 4.2

We have seen that Lemma 4.2 holds for the unramified principal series representations.

Let π be an irreducible generic representation of G . We assume that N_π is positive. Proof of Lemma 4.2 is done by comparing Propositions 5.1 and 5.4. Suppose that π is supercuspidal or a subrepresentation of $\text{Ind}_B^G \mu_1 \otimes \mu_2$, for some ramified quasi-character μ_1 of E^\times . Then it follows from Proposition 5.1 that $L(s, \pi) = 1$ or $L_E(s, 1)$. By definition, we have $Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi})/L(s, \pi) \in \mathbf{C}[q^{-2s}, q^{2s}]$. So we get

$$Z(s, W, \Phi_{N_\pi})/L(s, \pi) = 1 \text{ or } 1/L_E(s, 1),$$

by Proposition 5.4.

Suppose that π is a subrepresentation of $\text{Ind}_B^G \mu_1 \otimes \mu_2$, for unramified μ_1 . Then we can regard newforms for π as functions in $\text{Ind}_B^G \mu_1 \otimes \mu_2$. Due to [6], non-zero newforms f in π satisfy $f(1) \neq 0$. By using this property of newforms, we can compute the eigenvalues ν and λ explicitly, and Lemma 4.2 follows.

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