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# IMAGES OF ADELIC GALOIS REPRESENTATIONS FOR MODULAR FORMS

DAVID LOEFFLER

ABSTRACT. We show that the image of the adelic Galois representation attached to a non-CM modular form is open in the adelic points of a suitable algebraic subgroup of  $\mathrm{GL}_2$  (defined by F. Momose). We also show a similar result for the adelic Galois representation attached to a finite set of modular forms.

## INTRODUCTION

Let  $E$  be an elliptic curve over  $\mathbf{Q}$ , and  $p$  a prime number. Then the action of the Galois group on the Tate module of  $E$  determines a Galois representation

$$\rho_{E,p} : \mathrm{Gal}(\overline{\mathbf{Q}}/\mathbf{Q}) \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbf{Z}_p).$$

If  $\hat{\mathbf{Z}} = \prod_p \mathbf{Z}_p$  is the profinite completion of  $\mathbf{Z}$  (the integer ring of the ring  $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}$  of finite adeles), then the product of the  $\rho_{E,p}$  defines an adelic Galois representation

$$\rho_E : \mathrm{Gal}(\overline{\mathbf{Q}}/\mathbf{Q}) \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(\hat{\mathbf{Z}}).$$

Suppose  $E$  does not have complex multiplication. Then the images of these representations are described by the following three theorems, all of which are due to Serre:

- (A) [Ser68, §IV.2.2] For all primes  $p$ , the image of  $\rho_{E,p}$  is open in  $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ .
- (B) [Ser72, Theorem 2] For all but finitely many  $p$ , the image of  $\rho_{E,p}$  is the whole of  $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ .
- (C) [Ser72, Theorem 3] The image of the product representation  $\rho_E$  is open in  $\mathrm{GL}_2(\hat{\mathbf{Z}})$ .

Note that (C) implies both (A) and (B), but the converse is not automatic; theorem (C) shows that not only do the  $\rho_{E,p}$  individually have large image, but they are in some sense “independent of each other” up to a finite error.

If one replaces the elliptic curve  $E$  by a modular eigenform  $f$ , then one has  $p$ -adic Galois representations  $\rho_{f,p}$  and an adelic representation  $\rho_f$ , and it is natural to ask whether analogues of theorems (A)–(C) hold in this context. For modular forms of level 1, analogues of all three theorems were obtained by Ribet [Rib75]; but the case of modular forms of higher level is considerably more involved, owing to the presence of so-called “inner twists”.

The appropriate analogues of (A) and (B) for general eigenforms were determined by Momose [Mom81] and Ribet [Rib85] respectively. However, somewhat surprisingly, there does not seem to be a result analogous to (C) in the literature for general modular eigenforms  $f$ . The first aim of this paper is to fill this minor gap, by formulating and proving an analogue of (C) for general eigenforms; see §2, in particular Theorem 2.3.1.

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The second aim of this paper is to extend these results to pairs of modular forms: given two modular forms  $f, g$ , how large is the image of the product representation  $\rho_f \times \rho_g$ ? In §3 we formulate and prove analogues of (A)–(C) for this product representation. This extends earlier partial results due to Ribet [Rib75, §6] (who proves the analogue of (B) for pairs of modular forms of level 1, and sketches an analogue of (A)); and of Lei, Zerbes and the author [LLZ14, §7.2.2] (who prove an analogue of (B) for pairs of modular forms of weight 2).

These results can all be extended to the case of arbitrary finite collections  $(f_1, \dots, f_n)$  of modular forms, but we give the proofs only in the case  $n = 2$  to save notation.

In section 4, we give an application of these results which was the original motivation for our study of images of Galois representations; this is to exhibit certain special elements in the images of the tensor product Galois representations  $\rho_{f,p} \otimes \rho_{g,p}$  whose existence is important in Euler system theory. These results are used in [KLZ15] in order to prove finiteness results for Selmer groups.

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## 1. SOME PROFINITE GROUP THEORY

### 1.1. Preliminary lemmas.

**Lemma 1.1.1** (Ribet). *Let  $p \geq 5$  be prime, and let  $K_1, \dots, K_t$  be finite unramified extensions of  $\mathbf{Q}_p$ , with rings of integers  $\mathcal{O}_1, \dots, \mathcal{O}_t$  and residue fields  $k_1, \dots, k_t$ . Let  $G$  be a closed subgroup of  $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_1) \times \dots \times \mathrm{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_t)$  which surjects onto  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k_1) \times \dots \times \mathrm{PSL}_2(k_t)$ . Then  $G = \mathrm{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_1) \times \dots \times \mathrm{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_t)$ .*

*Proof.* If we assume that  $G$  surjects onto  $\mathrm{SL}_2(k_1) \times \dots \times \mathrm{SL}_2(k_t)$  this is a special case of Theorem 2.1 of [Rib75]. So it suffices to check that there is no proper subgroup of  $\mathrm{SL}_2(k_1) \times \dots \times \mathrm{SL}_2(k_t)$  surjecting onto  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k_1) \times \dots \times \mathrm{PSL}_2(k_t)$ . But this follows readily by induction from the case  $t = 1$ , which is Lemma IV.3.4.2 of [Ser68].  $\square$

**Lemma 1.1.2** (cf. [Ser68, Lemma IV.3.4.1]). *Let  $K$  be a finite extension of  $\mathbf{Q}_p$  for some prime  $p$ , and let  $Y_1, Y_2$  be closed subgroups of  $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_K)$  such that  $Y_1 \triangleleft Y_2$  and  $Y_2/Y_1$  is a nonabelian finite simple group. Then  $Y_2/Y_1$  is isomorphic to one of the following groups:*

- $\mathrm{PSL}_2(\mathbf{F})$ , where  $\mathbf{F}$  is a finite field of characteristic  $p$  such that  $\#\mathbf{F} \geq 4$ ;
- the alternating group  $A_5$ .

*Proof.* Since the kernel of  $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_K) \rightarrow \mathrm{PGL}_2(k)$  is solvable, where  $k$  is the residue field of  $K$ , we see that any such quotient  $Y_2/Y_1$  is in fact a subquotient of  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k)$ . The result now follows from the determination of the subgroup structure of  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k)$ , which is due to Dickson; cf. [Suz82, Theorem 6.25].  $\square$

**Lemma 1.1.3.** *If  $k$  and  $k'$  are any two finite fields of characteristic  $\geq 5$  and  $\phi : \mathrm{PSL}_2(k) \cong \mathrm{PSL}_2(k')$  is a group isomorphism, then  $\phi$  is conjugate in  $\mathrm{PGL}_2(k')$  to an isomorphism induced by a field isomorphism  $k \cong k'$ .*

*Proof.* Since the groups  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k)$  for finite fields  $k$  of characteristic  $\geq 5$  are non-isomorphic unless  $k \cong k'$ , it suffices to check that every group automorphism of  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k)$  is induced by conjugation in  $\mathrm{PGL}_2(k)$ , which is a standard fact.  $\square$

We also have an “infinitesimal” version of this statement, which we will use later in the paper.

**Lemma 1.1.4.** *If  $K$  and  $K'$  are finite extensions of  $\mathbf{Q}_p$  for some prime  $p$ ,  $B$  and  $B'$  are central simple algebras of degree 2 over  $K$  and  $K'$  respectively, and the Lie algebras  $\mathrm{sl}_1(B)$  and  $\mathrm{sl}_1(B')$  are isomorphic as Lie algebras over  $\mathbf{Q}_p$ , then the isomorphism is induced by a field isomorphism  $K \cong K'$  and an isomorphism of central simple algebras  $B \cong B'$  over  $K$ .*

*Proof.* We may recover  $K$  from  $\mathrm{sl}_1(B)$  as the algebra of  $\mathbf{Q}_p$ -endomorphisms of  $\mathrm{sl}_1(B)$  commuting with the adjoint action of  $\mathrm{sl}_1(B)$ ; thus it suffices to consider the case  $K' = K$ . There are exactly two central simple algebras of degree 2 over any  $p$ -adic field (one unramified and one ramified), and their Lie algebras are non-isomorphic; and every automorphism of either of these is inner (since the corresponding Dynkin diagram  $A_1$  has no automorphisms).  $\square$

**1.2. Subgroups of adèle groups.** Let  $F$  be a finite étale extension of  $\mathbf{Q}$ ; that is,  $F$  is a ring of the form  $\bigoplus_{i=1}^t F_i$ , where  $F_i$  are number fields.

A quaternion algebra over  $F$  is defined in the obvious way: it is simply an  $F$ -algebra  $B$  of the form  $\bigoplus_{i=1}^t B_i$ , where  $B_i$  is a quaternion algebra over  $F_i$  (a central simple  $F_i$ -algebra of degree 2); we allow the case of the split algebra  $M_{2 \times 2}(F_i)$ . There is a natural norm map

$$\mathrm{norm}_{B/F} : B^\times \rightarrow F^\times$$

(which is just the product of the reduced norm maps of the  $B_i$  over  $F_i$ ).

We fix a homomorphism of algebraic groups  $k : \mathbf{G}_m \rightarrow \mathrm{Res}_{F/\mathbf{Q}} \mathbf{G}_m$ ; this just amounts to a choice of integers  $(k_1, \dots, k_t)$  such that  $k(\lambda) = (\lambda^{k_1}, \dots, \lambda^{k_t})$ .

**Definition 1.2.1.** For  $B, F, k$  as above, we let  $G$  and  $G^\circ$  be the algebraic groups over  $\mathbf{Q}$  such that for any  $\mathbf{Q}$ -algebra  $R$  we have

$$G(R) = \{(x, \lambda) \in (B \otimes R)^\times \times R^\times : \mathrm{norm}_{B/F}(x) = \lambda^{1-k}\},$$

and

$$G^\circ(R) = \{x \in (B \otimes R)^\times : \mathrm{norm}_{B/F}(x) = 1\}.$$

Then  $G$  and  $G^\circ$  are linear algebraic groups over  $\mathbf{Q}$ , and  $G^\circ$  is naturally a subgroup of  $G$ . More generally, we may fix a maximal order  $\mathcal{O}_B$  in  $B$  and thus define  $G$  and  $G^\circ$  as group schemes over  $\mathbf{Z}$ . For all but finitely many primes  $p$ , we then have

$$G(\mathbf{Z}_p) = \{(x, \lambda) \in \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_F) \times \mathbf{Z}_p^\times : \det(x) = \lambda^{1-k}\};$$

changing the choice of  $\mathcal{O}_B$  does not change  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  away from finitely many primes  $p$ .

**Theorem 1.2.2.** *Let  $U^\circ$  be a compact closed subgroup of  $G^\circ(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ , where  $\hat{\mathbf{Q}} = \mathbf{Q} \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Z}}$  is the finite adèles of  $\mathbf{Q}$ , such that:*

- for every prime  $p$ , the projection of  $U^\circ$  to  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_p)$  is open in  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_p)$ ;
- for all but finitely many primes  $p$ , the projection of  $U^\circ$  to  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_p)$  is  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ .

*Then  $U^\circ$  is open in  $G^\circ(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ .*

The proof we shall give of this theorem is a relatively straightforward generalization of the case  $F = \mathbf{Q}$ ,  $B = M_{2 \times 2}(\mathbf{Q})$ ,  $k = 2$ , which is the Main Lemma of [Ser68, §IV.3.1].

*Proof.* Let  $S$  be a finite set of primes containing 2, 3, all primes ramified in  $F/\mathbf{Q}$ , all primes at which  $B$  is ramified, and all primes  $p$  such that the projection of  $U^\circ$  to  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_p)$  is not equal to  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ .

For a prime  $p$ , let  $k_p = \prod_{w|p} k_w$  where the product is over primes  $w \mid p$  of  $F$ , and  $k_w$  is the residue field of  $F$  at  $w$ . Then for each  $p \notin S$  we have a natural map

$$U^\circ \rightarrow \mathrm{PSL}_2(k_p)$$

given by projection to the  $p$ -component and the natural quotient map. By the definition of  $S$ , it is surjective. I claim that the restriction of this map to  $U^\circ \cap G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  is also surjective (where we consider  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  as a subgroup of  $G^\circ(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$  in the natural way).

If this is not the case, then the group

$$Q = U^\circ / (U^\circ \cap G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p))$$

must have a quotient isomorphic to a nontrivial quotient of  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k_p)$ , and in particular this group must surject onto the simple group  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k)$  for some finite field  $k$  of characteristic  $p$ . However, the group  $Q$  is exactly the image of  $U^\circ$  in  $\prod_{q \neq p} G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_q)$ . Hence the finite simple group  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k)$  must be a subquotient of an open compact subgroup of  $\prod_{q \neq p} G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_q)$ ; but this is not possible, since  $\prod_{q \neq p} G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_q)$  is a compact subgroup of  $\prod_{q \neq p} \mathrm{GL}_2(L \otimes \mathbf{Q}_q)$  for any étale extension  $L/F$  which splits  $B$ , and thus is conjugate to a closed subgroup of the maximal compact subgroup  $\prod_{q \neq p} \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_L \otimes \mathbf{Z}_q)$ , and we know that this group does not have  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k)$  as a quotient by Lemma 1.1.2. Hence  $U^\circ \cap G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  is a subgroup of  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p) = \mathrm{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_F \otimes \mathbf{Z}_p)$  which surjects onto  $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k_p)$ , and by Lemma 1.1.1, this implies that  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p) \subseteq U^\circ$ .

So we have  $\prod_{p \notin S} G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p) \subseteq U^\circ$ . In order to show that  $U^\circ$  is open in  $G^\circ(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ , it therefore suffices to show that the image of  $U^\circ$  is open in  $\prod_{p \in S} G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_p)$ . However, since  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_p)$  contains a finite-index pro- $p$  subgroup for each  $p \in S$ , and  $S$  is finite, one sees easily by induction on  $\#S$  that any subgroup of  $\prod_{p \in S} G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_p)$  whose projection to  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Q}_p)$  is open for all  $p \in S$  must itself be open.  $\square$

**Theorem 1.2.3.** *Let  $U$  be a compact subgroup of  $G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ , where  $\hat{\mathbf{Q}} = \mathbf{Q} \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Z}}$  is the finite adèles of  $\mathbf{Q}$ , such that:*

- for every prime  $p$ , the projection of  $U$  to  $G(\mathbf{Q}_p)$  is open in  $G(F \otimes \mathbf{Q}_p)$ ;
- for all but finitely many primes  $p$ , the projection of  $U$  to  $G(\mathbf{Q}_p)$  is  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ ;
- the image of  $U$  in  $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}^\times$  is open.

Then  $U$  is open in  $G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ .

*Proof.* Let  $U^\circ = U \cap G^\circ(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ . We claim  $U^\circ$  satisfies the hypotheses of the previous theorem.

Since  $G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})/G^\circ(\hat{\mathbf{Q}}) \cong \hat{\mathbf{Q}}^\times$  is abelian, the group  $U^\circ$  contains the closure of the commutator subgroup of  $U$ . Since  $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_F \otimes \mathbf{Z}_p)$  is the closure of its own commutator subgroup for  $p \geq 5$ , we see that if  $p \geq 5$  and  $U$  surjects onto  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ , then  $U^\circ$  surjects onto  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ .

Let us show that for an arbitrary prime  $p$ , the commutator subgroup of  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  has finite index. It suffices to show the corresponding result for  $\mathrm{SL}_1(\mathcal{O}_B)$  for  $B$  a quaternion algebra (possibly split) over a  $p$ -adic field; and this is equivalent to the statement that the Lie algebra  $\mathfrak{sl}_1(B)$  is a nontrivial simple Lie algebra, which is clear since it becomes isomorphic to  $\mathfrak{sl}_2$  after base extension to any splitting field of  $B$ .

By the previous theorem, we conclude that  $U$  contains an open subgroup of  $G^\circ(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ . But the image of  $U$  in  $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}^\times$  is open by hypothesis, so we conclude that  $U$  is in fact open in  $G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ .  $\square$

*Remark 1.2.4.* We cannot dispense with the hypothesis that the image of  $U$  in  $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}^\times$  is open: there exist proper closed subgroups of  $\hat{\mathbf{Z}}^\times$  whose projection to  $\mathbf{Z}_p^\times$  is open for all  $p$ , but which are not open in  $\hat{\mathbf{Z}}^\times$ , such as the group  $\hat{\mathbf{Z}}^{\times 2}$ . We may even arrange that the projection to  $\mathbf{Z}_p^\times$  is surjective for all  $p$ , as with the group  $\{x : x_p \in \mathbf{Z}_p^{\times 2} \forall p > 2\} \cup \{x : x_p \notin \mathbf{Z}_p^{\times 2} \forall p > 2\}$ .

## 2. LARGE IMAGE RESULTS FOR ONE MODULAR FORM

**2.1. Setup.** Let  $f$  be a normalized cuspidal modular newform of weight  $k \geq 2$ , level  $N$  and character  $\varepsilon$ . We write  $L = \mathbf{Q}(a_n(f) : n \geq 1)$  for the number field generated by the  $q$ -expansion coefficients of  $f$ . Note that  $L$  is totally real if  $\varepsilon = 1$ , and is a CM field if  $\varepsilon \neq 1$ .

**Definition 2.1.1.**

- (1) For  $p$  prime, we write

$$\rho_{f,p} : G_{\mathbf{Q}} \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(L \otimes \mathbf{Q}_p)$$

for the unique (up to isomorphism) representation satisfying  $\mathrm{Tr} \rho_f(\sigma_\ell^{-1}) = a_\ell(f)$  for all  $\ell \nmid Np$ , where  $\sigma_\ell$  is the arithmetic Frobenius.

- (2) We write

$$\rho_f : G_{\mathbf{Q}} \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(L \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Q}})$$

for the product representation  $\prod_p \rho_{f,p}$ , where  $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}$  is the ring of finite adeles of  $\mathbf{Q}$ .

The condition (1) only determines  $\rho_{f,p}$  up to conjugacy, and we can (and do) assume that its image is contained in  $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_L \otimes \mathbf{Z}_p)$ , where  $\mathcal{O}_L$  is the ring of integers of  $L$ . Thus  $\rho_f$  takes values in  $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_L \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Z}})$ , where  $\hat{\mathbf{Z}} = \prod_p \mathbf{Z}_p$  is the profinite completion of  $\mathbf{Z}$ .

*Remark 2.1.2.* Our normalizations are such that if  $f$  has weight 2,  $\rho_{f,p}$  is the representation appearing in the étale cohomology of  $X_1(N)$  with trivial coefficients. Some authors use an alternative convention that  $\mathrm{Tr} \rho_f(\sigma_\ell) = a_\ell(f)$ , which gives the representation appearing in the Tate module of the Jacobian  $J_1(N)$ ; this is exactly the dual of the representation we study, so the difference between the two is unimportant when considering the image.

**2.2. The theorems of Momose, Ribet, and Papier.** For  $\chi$  a Dirichlet character, we let  $f \otimes \chi$  denote the unique newform such that  $a_\ell(f \otimes \chi) = \chi(\ell)a_\ell(f)$  for all but finitely many primes  $\ell$ .

**Definition 2.2.1** ([Rib85, §3]). An *inner twist* of  $f$  is a pair  $(\gamma, \chi)$ , where  $\gamma : L \hookrightarrow \mathbf{C}$  is an embedding and  $\chi$  is a Dirichlet character, such that the conjugate newform  $f^\gamma$  is equal to the twist  $f \otimes \chi$ .

Note that we always have  $\bar{f} = f \otimes \varepsilon^{-1}$ , so any newform of non-trivial character has at least one nontrivial inner twist.

Lemma 1.5 of [Mom81] shows that if  $(\gamma, \chi)$  is an inner twist of  $f$ , then  $\chi$  takes values in  $L^\times$  and  $\gamma(L) = L$ . Thus the inner twists  $(\gamma, \chi)$  of  $f$  form a group  $\Gamma$  with the group law

$$(\gamma, \chi) \cdot (\sigma, \mu) = (\gamma \cdot \sigma, \chi^\sigma \cdot \mu).$$

Moreover, for any  $(\gamma, \chi) \in \Gamma$ , the conductor of  $\chi$  divides  $N$  if  $N$  is odd, and divides  $4N$  if  $N$  is even.

It is well known that if there exists a nontrivial  $\chi$  such that  $f \otimes \chi = f$ , then  $f$  must be of CM type and  $\chi$  must be the quadratic Dirichlet character attached to the corresponding imaginary quadratic field.

We now assume (until further notice) that  $f$  is not of CM type. Thus, for any inner twist  $(\gamma, \chi) \in \Gamma$ , the Dirichlet character  $\chi$  is uniquely determined by  $f$  and  $\gamma$ , and we write it as  $\chi_\gamma$ . The map  $(\gamma, \chi) \mapsto \gamma$  identifies  $\Gamma$  with an abelian subgroup of  $\text{Aut}(L/\mathbf{Q})$ ; we write  $F$  for the subfield of  $L$  fixed by  $\Gamma$ . The extension  $L/F$  is Galois, with Galois group  $\Gamma$  [Mom81, Proposition 1.7].

Let us write  $H$  for the open subgroup of  $G_{\mathbf{Q}}$  which is the intersection of the kernels of the Dirichlet characters  $\chi_\gamma$  for  $\gamma \in \Gamma$ , interpreted as characters of  $G_{\mathbf{Q}}$  in the usual way. Then for all  $\sigma \in H$  we have  $\text{Tr } \rho_f(\sigma) \in F \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Q}}$ .

**Theorem 2.2.2** (Momose, Ribet, Ghaté–Gonzalez–Jimenez–Quer). *There exists a central simple algebra  $B$  of degree 2 over  $F$ , unramified outside  $2N \text{disc}(L/\mathbf{Q})_\infty$ , and an embedding  $B \hookrightarrow M_{2 \times 2}(L)$ , with the following property: we have*

$$\rho_f(H) \subseteq B(F \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Q}})^\times \subseteq \text{GL}_2(L \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Q}}).$$

Moreover, for all but finitely many primes  $p$  we have  $B \otimes \mathbf{Q}_p = M_{2 \times 2}(F \otimes \mathbf{Q}_p)$ , and we may conjugate  $\rho_{f,p}$  such that

$$(\dagger) \quad \rho_{f,p}(H) = \{x \in \text{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_F \otimes \mathbf{Z}_p) : \det x \in \mathbf{Z}_p^{\times(k-1)}\}.$$

*Proof.* This result is mostly proved in [Rib85], building on earlier results of Momose [Mom81]; the only statement not covered there is the explicit bound on the set of primes at which  $B$  may ramify, which is Corollary 4.7 of [GGJQ05].  $\square$

We will need later in the paper the following refinement:

**Corollary 2.2.3** (Papier). *Let  $p$  be such that  $B$  and  $L$  are unramified above  $p$ , and  $\rho_{f,p}(H)$  is the whole group  $(\dagger)$ ; and let  $\sigma \in G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$ . Then the image of the coset  $\sigma \cdot (H \cap G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})})$  under  $\rho_{f,p}$  is the set*

$$\begin{pmatrix} \alpha & 0 \\ 0 & \varepsilon(\sigma)\alpha^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \text{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_F \otimes \mathbf{Z}_p),$$

for any  $\alpha \in (\mathcal{O}_L \otimes \mathbf{Z}_p)^\times$  such that  $\gamma(\alpha) = \chi_\gamma(\sigma)\alpha$  for all  $\gamma$  in  $\text{Gal}(L/F)$ .

*Proof.* See [Rib85, Theorem 4.1]. (Strictly speaking, Ribet in fact only shows that there is  $\alpha \in L^\times$  with this property, and excludes any primes  $p$  such that  $\alpha$  is not a  $p$ -adic unit. However, since we have assumed  $L/F$  is unramified above  $p$ , we can always re-scale  $\alpha$  to be a  $p$ -adic unit.)  $\square$

**2.3. Adelic open image for  $\text{GL}_2$ .** Since the determinant of  $\rho_f|_H$  is  $\chi^{1-k}$ , where  $\chi : G_{\mathbf{Q}} \rightarrow \hat{\mathbf{Z}}^\times$  is the adelic cyclotomic character, we can extend  $\rho_f$  to a homomorphism  $\tilde{\rho}_f : H \rightarrow G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ , where  $G$  is the algebraic group of Definition 1.2.1 (for the specific choices of  $B$ ,  $F$  and  $k$  as in this section). This homomorphism is characterized by the requirement that its projection to  $\text{GL}_2(L \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Q}})$  is  $\rho_f$ , and its projection to  $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}^\times$  is the cyclotomic character.

Applying Theorem 1.2.3 to  $\tilde{\rho}_f(H)$ , we obtain the first new result of this paper:

**Theorem 2.3.1.** *The image of  $H$  under  $\tilde{\rho}_f$  is an open subgroup of  $G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ .*

*Remark 2.3.2.* One can show exactly the same result with modular forms replaced by Hilbert modular forms for a totally real field  $E$ , since the Momose–Ribet theorem has been generalized to this context by Nekovář [Nek12, Theorem B.4.10]. We have stated the result only for elliptic modular forms in order to save notation.

**2.4. The CM case.** For completeness, we briefly describe the image of  $\tilde{\rho}_f$  in the CM case.

Let us now suppose  $f$  is of weight  $k \geq 2$  and is of CM type, associated to some Hecke character

$$\psi : \hat{K}^\times \rightarrow \tilde{L}^\times$$

for some imaginary quadratic field  $K$  and Grössencharacter  $\psi$  of infinity-type  $(1 - k, 0)$ , with  $\psi$  taking values in some extension  $\tilde{L}$  of  $L$ . The relation between  $f$  and  $\psi$  is given by

$$a_p(f) = \psi(\varpi_p) + \psi(\varpi_{p'})$$

whenever  $p$  is a rational prime, not dividing the level of  $f$ , which splits in  $K$  as  $\mathfrak{p}\mathfrak{p}'$ . Here  $\varpi_p \in \hat{K}^\times$  is a uniformizer at  $\mathfrak{p}$ .

Let us write  $\hat{\psi}$  for the homomorphism  $K^\times \backslash \hat{K}^\times \rightarrow (\hat{K} \otimes_K \tilde{L})^\times$  defined by

$$\hat{\psi}(x) = x^{1-k}\psi(x).$$

If we identify  $K^\times \backslash \hat{K}^\times$  with  $G_K^{\text{ab}}$  via the Artin map<sup>1</sup>, then the adelic Galois representation  $\rho_g$  is given by  $\text{Ind}_{G_K}^{G_{\mathbf{Q}}}(\hat{\psi})$ .

Note that there is a finite-index subgroup  $U \subseteq \hat{\mathcal{O}}_K^\times$  contained in the kernel of  $\psi$ ; thus the image of  $\hat{\psi}$  contains a finite-index subgroup of the group  $\{x^{1-k} : x \in \hat{\mathcal{O}}_K^\times\}$ . In particular, for almost all primes  $p$  the image of  $G_K$  under  $\rho_{g,p}$  contains the group

$$\left\{ \begin{pmatrix} x^{1-k} & 0 \\ 0 & \bar{x}^{1-k} \end{pmatrix} : x \in (\mathcal{O}_K \otimes \mathbf{Z}_p)^\times \right\}.$$

### 3. JOINT LARGE IMAGE

**3.1. Preliminaries.** Now let  $f, g$  be two newforms of weights  $k_f, k_g \geq 2$ , levels  $N_f, N_g$  and characters  $\varepsilon_f$  and  $\varepsilon_g$ , respectively. We assume neither  $f$  nor  $g$  is of CM type, and we write  $L_f, L_g$  for their coefficient fields. We will need the following lemma:

**Lemma 3.1.1.** *Suppose there exist embeddings  $L_f, L_g \hookrightarrow \mathbf{C}$  such that we have*

$$\frac{a_\ell(f)^2}{\ell^{k_f-1}\varepsilon_f(\ell)} = \frac{a_\ell(g)^2}{\ell^{k_g-1}\varepsilon_g(\ell)}$$

for a set of primes  $\ell$  of positive upper density. Then there is a Dirichlet character  $\chi$  such that  $g = f \otimes \chi$ .

*Proof.* This is a special case of Theorem A of [Ram00]. □

**Remark 3.1.2.** Recall that the *upper density* of a set of primes  $S$  is defined by

$$\text{UD}(S) = \limsup_{X \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\#\{\ell \in S : \ell \leq X\}}{\#\{\ell : \ell \leq X\}}.$$

We will need below the easily-verified fact that if  $S_1, \dots, S_n$  are sets of primes, then

$$\text{UD}(S_1 \cup \dots \cup S_n) \leq \text{UD}(S_1) + \dots + \text{UD}(S_n),$$

so if  $S_1 \cup \dots \cup S_n$  has positive upper density, then at least one of the sets  $S_i$  has positive upper density.

---

<sup>1</sup>Normalized in the French manner, so geometric Frobenius elements correspond to uniformizers.



We can obviously apply the theory of the previous section to each of  $f$  and  $g$ , and we use the subscripts  $f, g$  to refer to the corresponding objects for each form; so we have number fields  $F_f, F_g$ , quaternion algebras  $B_f, B_g$ , and algebraic groups  $G_f, G_g$ .

We may unify these as follows: we let  $F = F_f \times F_g$ , which is an étale extension of  $\mathbf{Q}$ , and  $B = B_f \times B_g$ , which is a quaternion algebra over  $F$ ; and the group  $G^\circ$  of norm 1 elements of  $G$  is just  $G_f^\circ \times G_g^\circ$ . We let

$$k : \mathbf{G}_m \rightarrow \text{Res}_{F/\mathbf{Q}} \mathbf{G}_m = \text{Res}_{F_f/\mathbf{Q}} \mathbf{G}_m \times \text{Res}_{F_g/\mathbf{Q}} \mathbf{G}_m$$

be the character sending  $\lambda$  to  $(\lambda^{k_f}, \lambda^{k_g})$ . Then Definition 1.2.1 gives us an algebraic group

$$\begin{aligned} G &= \{(x, \lambda) \in B^\times \times \mathbf{G}_m : \text{norm}(x) = \lambda^{1-k}\} \\ &= \{(x_f, x_g, \lambda) \in B_f^\times \times B_g^\times \times \mathbf{G}_m : \text{norm}(x_f) = \lambda^{1-k_f}, \text{norm}(x_g) = \lambda^{1-k_g}\}. \end{aligned}$$

This is, of course, just the fibre product of  $G_f$  and  $G_g$  over  $\mathbf{G}_m$ . Letting  $H = H_f \cap H_g$ , we have a representation

$$\tilde{\rho}_{f,g} : G_{\mathbf{Q}} \rightarrow G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}}),$$

and in particular

$$\tilde{\rho}_{f,g,p} : G_{\mathbf{Q}} \rightarrow G(\mathbf{Q}_p)$$

for all primes  $p$ .

### 3.2. Big image for almost all $p$ .

**Proposition 3.2.1.** *Let  $p \geq 5$  be a prime unramified in  $B$ , and let  $U$  be a subgroup of  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  which surjects onto  $G_f(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  and  $G_g(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ . Then either  $U = G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ , or (after possibly conjugating  $U$ ) there are primes  $v \mid p$  of  $\mathcal{O}_{F_f}$ ,  $w \mid p$  of  $\mathcal{O}_{F_g}$  and an isomorphism*

$$\mathcal{O}_{F_f,v} \cong \mathcal{O}_{F_g,w},$$

such that for all  $(x, y, \lambda) \in U$  we have  $(y \bmod w) = \pm \lambda^{(k_f - k_g)/2} (x \bmod v)$ .

*Proof.* This is visibly a generalization of Proposition 7.2.8 of [LLZ14], and we follow essentially the same argument. (We have changed notation from  $H$  to  $U$  to avoid confusion with the Galois group  $H$  above.)

Let  $U^\circ = U \cap G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ . By the same commutator argument as before,  $U^\circ$  is a subgroup of  $G^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p) = G_f^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p) \times G_g^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  which surjects onto either factor.

By Goursat's Lemma, there are closed normal subgroups  $N_f \triangleleft G_f^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  and  $N_g \triangleleft G_g^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  such that  $U^\circ$  is the graph of an isomorphism  $\phi : G_f^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)/N_f \cong G_g^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)/N_g$ .

The maximal normal closed subgroups of  $G_f^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  are precisely the kernels of the quotient maps to  $\text{PSL}_2(k_v)$  for each prime  $v \mid p$  of  $F_f$ , and every automorphism of  $\text{PSL}_2(k_v)$  is the composite of a field automorphism of  $k_v$  and conjugation by an element of  $\text{PGL}_2(k_v)$ . Hence, after possibly replacing  $U$  by a conjugate of  $U$  in  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ , we may find primes  $v \mid p$  of  $F_f$  and  $w \mid p$  of  $F_g$ , and an isomorphism  $\mathcal{O}_{F_f,v} \cong \mathcal{O}_{F_g,w}$ , such that  $U^\circ$  is contained in a conjugate of the group

$$\{(x, y) \in G_f^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p) \times G_g^\circ(\mathbf{Z}_p) : x \bmod v = \pm y \bmod w\}.$$

For a general element  $(x, y, \lambda) \in U_p$ , let  $t = (x \bmod v)^{-1} (y \bmod w) \in \text{GL}_2(\mathbf{F})$ , and let  $[t]$  denote its image in  $\text{GL}_2(\mathbf{F})/\{\pm 1\}$ . For any element  $(u, v) \in U^\circ$ , we have the same commutator identity as in [LLZ14, Proposition 7.2.8],

$$[u^{-1}tu] = [u^{-1}x^{-1}yu] = [x^{-1}][(xux^{-1})^{-1}(yvy^{-1})][y][v^{-1}u] = [x^{-1}y] = [t],$$

since  $(xux^{-1}, yvy^{-1}) \in U^\circ$ . This shows that  $[t]$  commutes with every element of  $\text{PSL}_2(\mathbf{F})$ , so that  $t$  is a scalar matrix. It is clear that we must have  $t^2 = \lambda^{k_f - k_g}$  by comparing determinants, and this gives the result.  $\square$

**Theorem 3.2.2.** *If  $f$  is not Galois-conjugate to a twist of  $g$ , then for all but finitely many primes  $p$  we have  $\rho_{f,g,p}(H) = G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ .*

*Proof.* Let us fix embeddings of  $F_f$  and  $F_g$  into  $\mathbf{C}$ , and let  $F$  be their composite.

The above theorem shows that for all  $p$  outside some finite set  $S$ , if  $\rho_{f,g,p}(H) \neq G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ , then there is some prime  $v$  of  $F$  above  $p$  dividing the product

$$\prod_{\gamma \in \text{Gal}(F_g/\mathbf{Q})} (a_\ell(f)^2 - \ell^{k_f - k_g} \gamma(a_\ell(g))^2)$$

for all primes  $\ell$  whose Frobenius elements lie in  $H$ . Since no nonzero element of  $F$  may be divisible by infinitely many primes, we deduce that either  $\rho_{f,g,p}(H) = G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  for all but finitely many  $p$ , or the above product is zero, so for each prime  $\ell$  whose Frobenius lies in  $H$ , there is  $\gamma \in \text{Gal}(F_g/\mathbf{Q})$  (possibly depending on  $\ell$ ) such that we have

$$\frac{a_\ell(f)^2}{\ell^{k-1}\varepsilon_f(\ell)} = \gamma \left( \frac{a_\ell(g)^2}{\ell^{k-1}\varepsilon_g(\ell)} \right)$$

(since  $\varepsilon_f(\ell) = \varepsilon_g(\ell) = 1$  for all such  $\ell$ ). Since there are only finitely many possible  $\gamma$ , there must be at least one  $\gamma \in \text{Gal}(F_g/\mathbf{Q})$  such that the above equality holds for a set of  $\ell$  of positive upper density. By Lemma 3.1.1, this implies that for some (and hence any)  $\gamma' \in \text{Gal}(L_g/\mathbf{Q})$  lifting  $\gamma$ , the conjugate form  $g^\gamma$  is a twist of  $f$ .  $\square$

### 3.3. Open image for all $p$ .

**Proposition 3.3.1.** *Let  $p$  be arbitrary and let  $U$  be a subgroup of  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  which has open image in  $G_f(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  and  $G_g(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ . Then either  $U$  is open in  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ , or there are primes  $v$  of  $F_f$  and  $w$  of  $F_g$  above  $p$ , a field isomorphism  $F_{f,v} \cong F_{g,w}$ , and an isomorphism  $B_f \otimes F_{f,v} \cong B_g \otimes F_{g,w}$ , such that  $U$  has a finite-index subgroup contained in a conjugate of the subgroup*

$$\{(x, y, \lambda) \in G(\mathbf{Z}_p) : y_w = \lambda^{(k_f - k_g)/2} x_v\}$$

where  $x_v$  and  $y_w$  are the projections of  $x$  and  $y$  to the direct summands  $(B_f \otimes F_{f,v})^\times$  and  $(B_g \otimes F_{g,w})^\times$ .

*Proof.* This follows in a very similar way to Proposition 3.2.1 with all the groups concerned replaced by their Lie algebras. We know that  $\mathfrak{u} = \text{Lie}(U)$  is a subalgebra of  $\text{Lie}(G)$  which surjects onto  $\text{Lie}(G_f)$  and  $\text{Lie}(G_g)$ . Since  $G_f^\circ$  and  $G_g^\circ$  are semi-simple we deduce that  $\mathfrak{u}^\circ = \text{Lie}(U^\circ)$  is a subgroup of  $\text{Lie}(G_f^\circ) \oplus \text{Lie}(G_g^\circ)$  surjecting onto either factor. By Goursat's Lemma for Lie algebras, we deduce that it must be contained in the graph of an isomorphism between simple factors of  $\text{Lie}(G_f^\circ)$  and  $\text{Lie}(G_g^\circ)$ . Using Lemma 1.1.4, we deduce the above result.  $\square$

**Proposition 3.3.2.** *If  $f$  is not Galois-conjugate to a twist of  $g$ , then  $\rho_{f,g,p}(H)$  is open in  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  for all primes  $p$ .*

*Proof.* By the previous result, if  $\rho_{f,g,p}(H)$  is not open in  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ , there is an element  $\gamma \in \text{Gal}(F_f/\mathbf{Q})$  and a positive-density set of primes  $\ell$  such that we have

$$\frac{a_\ell(f)^2}{\ell^{k-1}\varepsilon_f(\ell)} = \gamma \left( \frac{a_\ell(g)^2}{\ell^{k-1}\varepsilon_g(\ell)} \right).$$

Ramakrishnan's theorem now tells us that  $g^\gamma$  is a twist of  $f$ .  $\square$

### 3.4. Adelic big image.

**Theorem 3.4.1.** *Let  $f, g$  be non-CM-type cusp forms of weights  $k_f, k_g \geq 2$ . Then either  $\rho_{f,g}(H)$  is open in  $G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ , or  $k_f = k_g$  and  $f$  is Galois-conjugate to a twist of  $g$ .*

*Proof.* Suppose  $f$  is not Galois-conjugate to a twist of  $g$ . Then, by the results of the previous two sections,  $\rho_{f,g}(H)$  is a compact subgroup of  $G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$  whose image is open in  $G(\mathbf{Q}_p)$  for all primes  $p$ , and equal to  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$  for all but finitely many  $p$ . Applying Theorem 1.2.3, we deduce that this subgroup must be open in  $G(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ .  $\square$

Via exactly the same methods and induction on  $n$ , one can prove the following generalization. We shall not give the proof here, as the notation becomes somewhat cumbersome, but the arguments are exactly as before:

**Theorem 3.4.2.** *Let  $f_1, \dots, f_n$  be newforms of weights  $k_1, \dots, k_n \geq 2$ . Then either*

- *there is a Dirichlet character  $\chi$  and  $i, j \in \{1, \dots, n\}$  such that  $f_i \otimes \chi$  is Galois-conjugate to  $f_j$ , with  $\chi \neq 1$  if  $i = j$ ;*
- *or there is an open subgroup  $H$  of  $G_{\mathbf{Q}}$  such that the image of  $H$  under the map*

$$\rho_{f_1} \times \cdots \times \rho_{f_n} \times \chi : G_{\mathbf{Q}} \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(L_{f_1} \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Q}}) \times \cdots \times \mathrm{GL}_2(L_{f_n} \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Q}}) \times \hat{\mathbf{Q}}^\times$$

*is an open subgroup of  $G(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ , where  $G$  is the algebraic group*

$$\left\{ (g_1, \dots, g_n, \lambda) \in B_{f_1}^\times \times \cdots \times B_{f_n}^\times \times \mathbf{G}_m : \mathrm{norm}(g_i) = \lambda^{1-k_i} \right\}.$$

*Remark 3.4.3.* Note that Serre [Ser94] has formulated a general conjecture on the image of Galois representations for motives: for any motive  $M$  of rank  $r$  over a number field  $K$ , one can define a connected subgroup  $MT(M)$  of  $\mathrm{GL}_r/\mathbf{Q}$  such that the image of  $\rho_M : G_K \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_r(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$  is contained in  $MT(M)(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ . Thus a finite-index subgroup  $H$  of  $G_{\mathbf{Q}}$  lands in  $MT^0(M)(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ , where  $MT^0(M)$  is the identity component.

In general one does not expect  $\rho_M(H)$  to be open in  $MT^0(M)(\hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ , because of obstructions arising from isogenies; e.g. if  $M = \mathbf{Q}(2)$ , then  $MT(M) = \mathbf{G}_m$ , but the image of  $G_{\mathbf{Q}}$  is the group of squares in  $\hat{\mathbf{Z}}^\times$ , which is not open. However, there is a distinguished class of “maximal” motives for which this should be the case.

The motive  $M(f)$  attached to a weight  $k$  modular form is not maximal if  $k > 2$ , but  $M(f) \oplus \mathbf{Q}(1)$  is maximal if  $f$  is not of CM type (cf. §11.10 of op.cit.), and the group  $G_f$  is the connected component of  $MT(M(f) \oplus \mathbf{Q}(1))$ . Thus we have verified Serre’s open image conjecture for the maximal motives

$$M(f_1) \oplus \cdots \oplus M(f_n) \oplus \mathbf{Q}(1)$$

whenever the  $f_i$  are non-CM forms of weight  $\geq 2$  and no  $f_i$  is Galois-conjugate to a twist of  $f_j$ .

#### 4. SPECIAL ELEMENTS IN THE IMAGES

**4.1. Setup.** This section is more technical, and was the original motivation for the present work: to find elements in the images of  $\rho_{f,p} \times \rho_{g,p}$  with certain special properties. In this section we fix newforms  $f, g$  as before, and a Galois extension  $L/\mathbf{Q}$  with embeddings  $L_f, L_g \hookrightarrow L$ ; we then have representations  $\rho_{f,p}, \rho_{g,p} : G_{\mathbf{Q}} \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{L,p})$  for each prime  $\mathfrak{p}$  of  $L$ .

Let  $V_{\mathfrak{p}}$  be the four-dimensional  $L_{\mathfrak{p}}$ -vector-space  $L_{\mathfrak{p}}^{\oplus 4}$ , with  $G_{\mathbf{Q}}$  acting via the tensor-product Galois representation  $\rho_{f,p} \otimes \rho_{g,p}$ ; and let  $T_{\mathfrak{p}}$  be the  $G_{\mathbf{Q}}$ -stable  $\mathcal{O}_{L,p}$ -lattice  $\mathcal{O}_{L,p}^{\oplus 4}$  in  $V_{\mathfrak{p}}$ .

Our aim is to verify the following conditions, in as many cases as possible:

*Hypothesis* ( $\mathrm{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), V_{\mathfrak{p}})$ ).

- (1)  $V_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is an irreducible  $L_{\mathfrak{p}}[G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}]$ -module (where  $p$  is the rational prime below  $\mathfrak{p}$ ).

- (2) There is an element  $\tau \in G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  such that  $V_{\mathfrak{p}}/(\tau - 1)V_{\mathfrak{p}}$  has dimension 1 over  $L_{\mathfrak{p}}$ .

*Hypothesis* ( $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), T_{\mathfrak{p}})$ ).

- (1)  $T_{\mathfrak{p}} \otimes k_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is an irreducible  $k_{\mathfrak{p}} [G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}]$ -module, where  $k_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is the residue field of  $L_{\mathfrak{p}}$ .
- (2) There is an element  $\tau \in G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  such that  $T_{\mathfrak{p}}/(\tau - 1)T_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is free of rank 1 over  $\mathcal{O}_{L, \mathfrak{p}}$ .

Our formulation of these is exactly that of [Rub00, Chapter 2]. Note that  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), T_{\mathfrak{p}}) \Rightarrow \text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), V_{\mathfrak{p}})$ . We note the following preliminary negative result:

**Proposition 4.1.1.** *If  $\varepsilon_f \varepsilon_g$  is the trivial character, then  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), V_{\mathfrak{p}})$  is false (for every prime  $\mathfrak{p}$ ).*

*Proof.* If  $\varepsilon_f \varepsilon_g$  is trivial, the image of  $G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  under  $\rho_{f, \mathfrak{p}} \times \rho_{g, \mathfrak{p}}$  is contained in the subgroup  $\{(x, y) \in \text{GL}_2(L_{\mathfrak{p}}) \times \text{GL}_2(L_{\mathfrak{p}}) : \det(xy) = 1\}$ . An easy case-by-case check shows that the image of this subgroup under the tensor-product map to  $\text{GL}_4(L_{\mathfrak{p}})$  contains no element  $\tau$  such that  $\tau - 1$  has one-dimensional cokernel.  $\square$

**4.2. Special elements: the higher-weight case.** In this section, we assume  $f$  and  $g$  have weights  $\geq 2$ , both  $f$  and  $g$  are non-CM, and  $f$  is not Galois-conjugate to any twist of  $g$ .

We say  $\mathfrak{p}$  is a *good prime* if the prime  $p$  of  $\mathbf{Q}$  below  $\mathfrak{p}$  is  $\geq 5$ ,  $p$  is unramified in the quaternion algebra  $B$  over  $F_f \oplus F_g$  described above,  $p \nmid N_f N_g$ , and the conclusion of Theorem 3.2.2 holds for  $p$ . For any good prime, it is clear that the irreducibility hypothesis (1) in  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), T_{\mathfrak{p}})$  is satisfied.

For convenience we set  $N = \text{LCM}(N_f, N_g)$  if  $N_f$  and  $N_g$  are both odd, and  $N = 4 \text{LCM}(N_f, N_g)$  otherwise, so for any inner twist  $(\gamma, \chi)$  of either  $f$  or  $g$ , the conductor of  $\chi$  divides  $N$ .

**Proposition 4.2.1.** *Let  $u \in (\mathbf{Z}/N\mathbf{Z})^\times$  be such that  $\varepsilon_f(u)\varepsilon_g(u) \neq 1$ . Let  $\mathfrak{p}$  be a good prime, and suppose that  $\chi_\gamma(u) = 1$  for all  $\gamma$  in the decomposition group of  $\mathfrak{p}$  in  $\Gamma_f$ , and similarly for  $\Gamma_g$ .*

*Then  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), V_{\mathfrak{p}})$  holds; and if  $p \geq 7$  and  $\varepsilon_f \varepsilon_g(u) \neq 1 \pmod{p}$ , then in fact  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), T_{\mathfrak{p}})$  holds.*

*Proof.* The condition on the decomposition groups implies that for  $\sigma \in G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  whose image in  $(\mathbf{Z}/N_f N_g \mathbf{Z})^\times$  is  $u$ , the quantities  $\alpha$  arising in Papier's theorem (Corollary 2.2.3) for  $f$  and  $g$  lie in  $F_{f, \mathfrak{p}}$  and  $F_{g, \mathfrak{p}}$  respectively, so we have  $\rho_{f, \mathfrak{p}}(\sigma) \in \text{GL}_2(F_{f, \mathfrak{p}})$  and  $\rho_{g, \mathfrak{p}}(\sigma) \in \text{GL}_2(F_{g, \mathfrak{p}})$ . Since

$$(\rho_{f, \mathfrak{p}} \times \rho_{g, \mathfrak{p}})(H \cap G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}) = \text{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{F_f, \mathfrak{p}}) \times \text{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{F_g, \mathfrak{p}}),$$

it follows that the image of  $G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  under  $\rho_{f, \mathfrak{p}} \times \rho_{g, \mathfrak{p}}$  contains the element

$$\left( \begin{pmatrix} x & 0 \\ 0 & x^{-1}\varepsilon_f(u) \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} y & 0 \\ 0 & y^{-1}\varepsilon_g(u) \end{pmatrix} \right)$$

for any  $x \in \mathcal{O}_{F_f, \mathfrak{p}}^\times$  and  $y \in \mathcal{O}_{F_g, \mathfrak{p}}^\times$ . Choosing  $x, y \in \mathbf{Z}_{\mathfrak{p}}^\times$  with  $xy = 1$  and  $x^{-2}\varepsilon_f(u) \neq 1$ ,  $x^2\varepsilon_g(u) \neq 1$  we see that the image of this element under the tensor product map is diagonal and has exactly one entry equal to 1, so  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), V_{\mathfrak{p}})$  holds.

If  $p \geq 7$ , then we may choose  $x$  such that  $x^{-2}\varepsilon_f(u) \neq 1$ ,  $x^2\varepsilon_g(u) \neq 1$  modulo  $p$  (as there are at least three distinct quadratic residues modulo  $p$ ); and the condition  $\varepsilon_f \varepsilon_g(u) \neq 1 \pmod{p}$  implies that the fourth diagonal entry is also not equal to 1 modulo  $p$ . So  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), T_{\mathfrak{p}})$  holds.  $\square$

*Remark 4.2.2.* In particular, the proposition applies if  $\varepsilon_f \varepsilon_g \neq 1$  and  $F_{f,\mathfrak{p}} = L_{f,\mathfrak{p}}$  and  $F_{g,\mathfrak{p}} = L_{g,\mathfrak{p}}$ , since in this case both decomposition groups are trivial and we may take any  $u$  with  $\varepsilon_f \varepsilon_g(u) \neq 1$ . See [LLZ14, Proposition 7.2.18], which is the special case where  $L_{f,\mathfrak{p}} = L_{g,\mathfrak{p}} = \mathbf{Q}_p$ .

**Proposition 4.2.3.** *Suppose there exists  $u \in (\mathbf{Z}/N\mathbf{Z})^\times$  such that  $\varepsilon_g(u) = -1$ , but  $\chi_\gamma(u) = 1$  for all  $\gamma \in \Gamma_f$ . Then for all good primes  $\mathfrak{p}$ ,  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), T_{\mathfrak{p}})$  holds.*

*Proof.* Since  $p \nmid N_f N_g$ , we may find  $\sigma \in G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  mapping to  $u$ . By Papier's theorem (Corollary 2.2.3 above), the image of the coset  $\sigma \cdot (H \cap G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})})$  under  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}} \times \rho_{g,\mathfrak{p}}$  is the set

$$\{(x, y) : x \in \text{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{F_f, \mathfrak{p}}), y \in \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & 0 \\ 0 & -\alpha^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \text{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{F_g, \mathfrak{p}})\},$$

where  $\alpha \in \mathcal{O}_{L_g, \mathfrak{p}}^\times$  is any element such that  $\gamma(\alpha) = \chi_\gamma(\sigma)\alpha$  for all inner twists  $(\gamma, \chi_\gamma)$  of  $g$  such that  $\gamma$  lies in the decomposition group of  $\mathfrak{p}$ .

However, the coset  $\begin{pmatrix} \alpha & 0 \\ 0 & -\alpha^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \text{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{F_g, \mathfrak{p}})$  contains  $\begin{pmatrix} \alpha & 0 \\ 0 & -\alpha^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \alpha \\ \alpha^{-1} & 0 \end{pmatrix}$ . Since  $\alpha$  is only defined up to multiplication by  $\mathcal{O}_{F_f, \mathfrak{p}}^\times$ , we may assume that  $\alpha^2 \not\equiv 1 \pmod{\mathfrak{p}}$  (using the assumption that  $p \geq 5$ ). Then the element  $\begin{pmatrix} 0 & \alpha \\ \alpha^{-1} & 0 \end{pmatrix}$  is conjugate in  $\text{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{L_g, \mathfrak{p}})$  to  $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$ .

Hence the group  $G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  contains an element  $\tau$  whose image in  $\text{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{L_f, \mathfrak{p}}) \times \text{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{L_g, \mathfrak{p}})$  is conjugate to  $(\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix})$ , and this acts on  $T_{\mathfrak{p}}$  with cokernel free of rank 1 as desired.  $\square$

*Remark 4.2.4.* Note in particular that the hypotheses of the preceding proposition are satisfied if  $g$  has odd weight, and either  $N_f$  and  $N_g$  are coprime, or  $f$  has trivial character and no nontrivial inner twists.

**4.3. Special elements: the CM case.** We now suppose that  $f, g$  both have weights  $\geq 2$ , as before, and  $f$  is non-CM, but  $g$  is CM, associated to a Grössencharacter  $\psi$  of an imaginary quadratic field  $K$ . Let  $\tilde{L}_g$  be the extension of  $L_g$  in which the values of  $\psi$  lie, and let us suppose that our embedding  $L_g \hookrightarrow L$  extends to an embedding  $\tilde{L}_g \hookrightarrow L$ .

We let  $H$  be an open subgroup of  $G_K$ , with  $G_K/H$  abelian, such that  $H \subseteq H_f$  and  $\hat{\psi}(H) \subseteq (\hat{\mathcal{O}}_K)^\times(1-k)$ . In this CM setting, we say a prime  $\mathfrak{p}$  of  $L$  (above some rational prime  $p$ ) is *good* if  $p \nmid N_f N_g$ ,  $\mathfrak{p}$  is unramified in  $F_f$  and in the quaternion algebra  $B_f$ , the image of  $H$  under  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}}$  contains  $G_f(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ , and the image of  $G_K$  under  $\hat{\psi}_p$  contains  $(\mathcal{O}_K \otimes \mathbf{Z}_p)^\times(1-k)$ . Since  $H$  is open in  $G_{\mathbf{Q}}$ , all but finitely many primes  $p$  are good, as before.

**Proposition 4.3.1.** *Suppose there exists  $u \in (\mathbf{Z}/N\mathbf{Z})^\times$  such that  $\varepsilon_f \varepsilon_g(u) \neq 1$  and  $\varepsilon_K(u) = 1$ , where  $\varepsilon_K$  is the quadratic Dirichlet character attached to  $K$ .*

*Let  $\mathfrak{p}$  be a good prime such that  $L_{f,\mathfrak{p}} = F_{f,\mathfrak{p}}$  and  $\tilde{L}_{g,\mathfrak{p}} = \mathbf{Q}_p$ . Then  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), V_{\mathfrak{p}})$  holds; and if  $p \geq 7$  and  $\varepsilon_f \varepsilon_g(u) \not\equiv 1 \pmod{p}$ , then in fact  $\text{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), T_{\mathfrak{p}})$  holds.*

*Proof.* This is similar to Proposition 4.2.1. Since  $\text{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{F,\mathfrak{p}})$  and  $\mathbf{Z}_p^\times$  have no common quotient, the image of  $H \cap G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  under  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}} \times \rho_{g,\mathfrak{p}}$  is the whole of the group

$$\text{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{F,\mathfrak{p}}) \times \left\{ \begin{pmatrix} y & 0 \\ 0 & y^{-1} \end{pmatrix} : y \in \mathbf{Z}_p^\times \right\}.$$

If we choose  $\sigma \in G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  lifting  $u$ , then  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}}(\sigma) \in \text{GL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{F,\mathfrak{p}})$ , and  $\rho_{g,\mathfrak{p}}(\sigma)$  is diagonal; thus the image of the coset  $\sigma \cdot (H \cap G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})})$  contains all elements of the form

$$\left( \begin{pmatrix} x & 0 \\ 0 & x^{-1} \varepsilon_f(u) \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} y & 0 \\ 0 & y^{-1} \varepsilon_g(u) \end{pmatrix} \right)$$

with  $x \in \mathcal{O}_{F_f, \mathfrak{p}}^\times$  and  $y \in \mathbf{Z}_p^\times$ . The proof now proceeds as before.  $\square$

**4.4. Special elements: the weight one case.** We now assume  $g$  is a weight 1 form, so the Galois representation  $\rho_g$  lands in  $\mathrm{GL}_2(L_g) \subset \mathrm{GL}_2(L_g \otimes \hat{\mathbf{Q}})$ , and has finite image (i.e. it is an Artin representation). In this section we *do* permit  $g$  to be of CM type. As in the previous section, we assume that our other newform  $f$  has weight  $\geq 2$  and is not of CM type.

**Theorem 4.4.1.** *Suppose  $N_f$  is coprime to  $N_g$ . Then for all primes  $\mathfrak{p}$  of  $L$  such that  $p \nmid N_g$  and  $p$  is unramified in  $F_f$  and  $B_f$ , we may find  $\tau \in G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  such that  $V_{\mathfrak{p}}/(\tau - 1)V_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is 1-dimensional over  $L_{\mathfrak{p}}$ .*

*For all but finitely many  $\mathfrak{p}$ , we may choose  $\tau$  such that  $T_{\mathfrak{p}}/(\tau - 1)T_{\mathfrak{p}}$  is free of rank 1 over  $\mathcal{O}_{L,\mathfrak{p}}$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $p$  be the rational prime below  $\mathfrak{p}$ . As  $\rho$  is unramified outside  $N_g$  and  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}}$  is unramified outside  $pN_f$ , and  $(pN_f, N_g) = 1$ , we conclude that the splitting field of  $\rho_g$  is linearly disjoint from that of  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}}$  and from  $\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})$ . Hence, given any  $a \in \rho_g(G_{\mathbf{Q}})$  and  $b \in \rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}}(G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})})$ , we may find  $\tau \in G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  such that  $\rho_g(\tau) = a$  and  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}}(\tau) = b$ .

We know that  $\rho_g$  is odd, so  $\rho(G_{\mathbf{Q}})$  contains an element  $a$  conjugate to  $\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ .

Meanwhile, since  $f$  is not of CM type,  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}}(G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})})$  contains a conjugate of an open subgroup of  $\mathrm{SL}_2(F_{f,\mathfrak{p}})$ , where  $F_{f,\mathfrak{p}}$  is the fixed field of the extra twists of  $f$  as in the previous section. In particular, it contains a conjugate of an open subgroup of  $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbf{Z}_p)$ ; so, after a suitable conjugation, the image contains the element  $b = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & p^r \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$  for  $r \gg 0$ . The preceding argument allows us to find  $\tau \in G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})}$  such that  $\rho_g(\tau) = a$  and  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}}(\tau) = b$ . As  $a \otimes b - 1$  clearly has 1-dimensional kernel, we are done.

For all but finitely many  $\mathfrak{p}$  we have the stronger result that  $\rho_{f,\mathfrak{p}}(G_{\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty})})$  contains a conjugate of  $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathcal{O}_{F,\mathfrak{p}})$ , so we may take  $r = 0$  and we deduce that  $a \otimes b - 1$  has 1-dimensional kernel modulo  $p$ .  $\square$

*Remark 4.4.2.* Further strengthenings of the results of this section may be possible: it seems reasonable to expect that whenever  $\varepsilon_f \varepsilon_g$  is nontrivial,  $\mathrm{Hyp}(\mathbf{Q}(\mu_{p^\infty}), T_{\mathfrak{p}})$  should hold for all but finitely many  $\mathfrak{p}$ . But I have not been able to prove this.

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