

**EXTENDING KATO’S RESULT
TO ELLIPTIC CURVES WITH p -ISOGENIES**

CHRISTIAN WUTHRICH

ABSTRACT. Let E be an elliptic curve without complex multiplication defined over \mathbb{Q} and let p be an odd prime number at which E has good and ordinary reduction. Kato has proved in [Kat04] half of the main conjecture for E under the condition that the representation $\rho_p: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \rightarrow \text{Aut}(T_p E)$ of the absolute Galois group of \mathbb{Q} attached to the Tate module $T_p E$ is surjective. We prove here that the result still holds if E admits an isogeny of degree p . As a by-product, we show that the p -adic L -functions attached to an elliptic curve with good ordinary reduction at p is always an integral series.

1. Introduction

Let E be an elliptic curve without complex multiplication defined over \mathbb{Q} and let $p > 2$ be a prime number. Suppose that E has good ordinary reduction at p . We denote by $\rho_p: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \rightarrow \text{Aut}(T_p E)$ the representation of the absolute Galois group of \mathbb{Q} attached to the Tate module $T_p E$.

Let E_{p^∞} be the group of all points on E whose order is a power of p . Let \mathbb{Q}_∞ be the cyclotomic \mathbb{Z}_p -extension and \mathbb{Q}_n its n -th layer. The Selmer group of E is defined as the kernel of the map

$$\mathcal{S}(E/\mathbb{Q}_n) = \ker\left(\text{H}^1(\mathbb{Q}_n, E_{p^\infty}) \rightarrow \prod_v \text{H}^1(\mathbb{Q}_{n,v}, E)\right),$$

where the product runs over all places v in \mathbb{Q}_n . The Pontryagin dual of the direct limit of these groups under the restriction maps

$$X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty) = \text{Hom}\left(\varinjlim \mathcal{S}(E/\mathbb{Q}_n), \mathbb{Q}_p/\mathbb{Z}_p\right)$$

has naturally the structure of a finitely generated Λ -module, if Λ denotes the Iwasawa algebra of the \mathbb{Z}_p -extension $\mathbb{Q}_\infty/\mathbb{Q}$. By Theorem 17.4 of [Kat04], we know that $X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$ is Λ -torsion. The characteristic ideal $\text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ in Λ is an important algebraic object attached to E and p .

On the analytic side, Mazur and Swinnerton-Dyer have constructed in [MSD74] a p -adic L -function $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$ in $\Lambda \otimes \mathbb{Q}_p$. See section 3 for more details. It was conjectured that this series has integral coefficients. We will prove the following extension of Proposition 3.7 in [GV00].

Theorem 5. *The analytic p -adic L -function $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$ belongs to Λ for all elliptic curves E/\mathbb{Q} with good ordinary reduction at $p > 2$.*

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The conclusion can certainly not be extended to the supersingular case since the p -adic L -functions in this case will never be integral. The supersingular case is well explained in [Pol03] where it is shown how one can extract integral power series.

The main conjecture asserts that the element $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$ generates the characteristic ideal $\text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$. Kato has proved in [Kat04] half of the main conjecture under the assumption that the representation ρ_p is surjective. Our aim is to extend his result to curves where the $G_{\mathbb{Q}}$ -module $E[p]$ is reducible.

Theorem 4. *Let E/\mathbb{Q} be an elliptic curve without complex multiplication and let $p > 2$ be a prime. Suppose that E has good ordinary reduction at p and that the representation ρ_p is either surjective or that $E[p]$ is reducible. Then $\text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ divides the ideal generated by $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$.*

The same argument does not extend to the remaining cases; for them we only obtain a conditional result. See Proposition 7.

In special cases, Greenberg and Vatsal have proved in [GV00] the full main conjecture. Namely if the E admits an isogeny of degree p whose kernel is either ramified at p and odd or unramified at p and even.

The paper consists of two parts. The first part concerns the so-called fine Selmer group. The existence of Kato's Euler system gives directly a bound on this group. We use a result of Coates and Sujatha in [CS05] to strengthen the usual bound.

The second part transfers the bound from the fine Selmer group to the Selmer group using global duality. The proof of theorem 4 is first done on the so-called optimal curve where one knows already that the p -adic L -function is integral.

2. The fine Selmer group

Let E be an elliptic curve defined over \mathbb{Q} and let p be any odd prime. We define the fine¹ Selmer group to be the subgroup of $\mathcal{S}(E/\mathbb{Q}_n)$ defined by imposing stronger conditions at the completion $\mathbb{Q}_{n,\mathfrak{p}}$ of \mathbb{Q}_n at the unique prime \mathfrak{p} above p :

$$0 \longrightarrow \mathcal{R}(E/\mathbb{Q}_n) \longrightarrow \mathcal{S}(E/\mathbb{Q}_n) \longrightarrow H^1(\mathbb{Q}_{n,\mathfrak{p}}, E_{p^\infty})$$

The dual of the direct limit of the groups $\mathcal{R}(E/\mathbb{Q}_n)$ will be denoted by $Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$; it is again a finitely generated Λ -module. Theorem 12.4.1 in [Kat04] proves that $Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$ is Λ -torsion. Denote by $\text{char}_\Lambda(Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ the characteristic ideal of $Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$ in Λ .

Kato constructs an Euler system \mathbf{c} attached to E and p . This is a collection of cohomology classes $\mathbf{c}_K \in H^1(K, T_p E)$ for sufficiently many abelian extensions K of \mathbb{Q} , including $K = \mathbb{Q}(\mu[p^k])$ for all $k \geq 0$. The norm compatibility imposed on an Euler system, provides us with an element \mathbf{c}_∞ in the projective limit

$$\mathbf{c}_\infty \in \varprojlim_n H^1(\mathbb{Q}_n, T_p E) = H_\infty^1(\mathbb{Q}, T_p E)$$

where the limit follows the corestriction map. We also recall that $H_\infty^1(\mathbb{Q}, T_p E)$ is a Λ -module of rank 1. The ideal

$$\text{ind}_\Lambda(\mathbf{c}_\infty) = \{\psi(\mathbf{c}_\infty) \mid \psi \in \text{Hom}_\Lambda(H_\infty^1(\mathbb{Q}, T_p E), \Lambda)\}$$

in Λ measures the Λ -divisibility of \mathbf{c}_∞ in $H_\infty^1(\mathbb{Q}, T_p E)$.

¹This group is sometimes called the “strict” or “restricted” Selmer group.

Lemma 1. *Let E be an elliptic curve and p an odd prime such that E admits an isogeny of degree p . Then the fine Selmer group $Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$ is a finitely generated \mathbb{Z}_p -module, i.e. its μ -invariant vanishes.*

Proof. Let $\phi: E \rightarrow E'$ be an isogeny with cyclic kernel $E[\phi]$ of order p defined over \mathbb{Q} . The extension K of \mathbb{Q} fixed by the kernel of $\rho_\phi: G_\mathbb{Q} \rightarrow \text{Aut}(E[\phi])$ is a cyclic extension of degree dividing $p-1$. Let Δ be the Galois group of K/\mathbb{Q} . Over the abelian field K , the curve admits a p -torsion point. We can therefore apply Corollary 3.6 in [CS05] (a consequence of the theorem of Ferrero-Washington) to $Y(E/K_\infty)$ where K_∞ is the cyclotomic \mathbb{Z}_p -extension of K . This proves that $Y(E/K_\infty)$ is a finitely generated \mathbb{Z}_p -module. Write $\mathcal{R}(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$ and $\mathcal{R}(E/K_\infty)$ for the dual of $Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$ and $Y(E/K_\infty)$ respectively. Then we have the following diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 0 & \longrightarrow & \mathcal{R}(E/K_\infty)^\Delta & \longrightarrow & H^1(K_\infty, E_{p^\infty})^\Delta \\
 & & \uparrow & & \uparrow \\
 0 & \longrightarrow & \mathcal{R}(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty) & \longrightarrow & H^1(\mathbb{Q}_\infty, E_{p^\infty}) \\
 & & & & \uparrow \\
 & & & & H^1(\Delta, E(K_\infty)_{p^\infty})
 \end{array}$$

and since the group Δ is of order prime to p , the kernel on the right is trivial. We deduce that the left hand side is injective, too, and hence that the dual map $Y(E/K_\infty) \rightarrow Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$ is surjective. Therefore $Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$ is a finitely generated \mathbb{Z}_p -module. \square

Theorem 2. *If E/\mathbb{Q} is an elliptic curve without complex multiplication and $p > 2$ a prime such that the representation $\rho_p: G_\mathbb{Q} \rightarrow \text{Aut}(T_p E)$ is either surjective or that $E[p]$ is reducible then $\text{char}_\Lambda(Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ divides $\text{ind}_\Lambda(\mathbf{c}_\infty)$.*

Proof. If we are in the surjective case, then the theorem is a known consequence of Kato's Euler system. See Theorem 2.3.3 and Proposition 3.5.8 in [Rub00]. In the latter case when ρ_p is not surjective, we know that there exists an isogeny $\phi: E \rightarrow E'$ of degree p defined over \mathbb{Q} . The Euler system argument gives us only a divisibility of the form

$$\text{char}_\Lambda(Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)) \mid p^t \cdot \text{ind}_\Lambda(\mathbf{c}_\infty)$$

for some integer $t \geq 0$, see Theorem 2.3.4 in [Rub00]. The previous lemma shows now that $\text{char}_\Lambda(Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ is not divisible by p and hence we can take t to be equal to 0. \square

3. The Selmer group

Suppose now that the curve E has good and ordinary reduction at the odd prime p . It is known that there exists an element $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T) \in \Lambda \otimes \mathbb{Q}_p$, called the analytic p -adic L -function, which interpolates in a certain precise way the Hasse-Weil L -function associated to E which we are going to recall now. Let γ be a topological generator of $\Gamma = \text{Gal}(\mathbb{Q}_\infty/\mathbb{Q})$. Let $\chi: \Gamma \rightarrow \mu_{p^\infty}$ be a Dirichlet character of conductor p^{k+1} .

It is determined by its image $\chi(\gamma) = \zeta$ which is a primitive root of unity of order p^k . Then $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$ is characterised by

$$(1) \quad \mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, \zeta - 1) = \frac{1}{\alpha^{k+1}} \cdot \frac{p^{k+1}}{\tau(\chi^{-1})} \cdot \frac{L_E(\chi^{-1}, 1)}{\Omega_E}.$$

Here $\tau(\chi^{-1})$ is the usual Gauss sum and α is the unit root of the characteristic polynomial of Frobenius acting on $T_p E$. The real Néron period of E is denoted by Ω_E and $L_E(\chi^{-1}, s)$ is the Hasse-Weil L -function attached to E twisted by the character χ^{-1} .

We recall from [Ste89] that an elliptic curve E/\mathbb{Q} is called *optimal* among the curves in the isogeny class of E if the map $\varphi^*: \text{Pic}^0(E) \rightarrow \text{Pic}^0(X_1(N))$ induced by the modular parametrisation $\varphi: X_1(N) \rightarrow E$ is injective. It is conjectured that the optimal curve is a curve with minimal analytic μ -invariant. It is also conjectured that the μ -invariant of the optimal curve is zero. Greenberg and Vatsal have shown in Proposition 3.7 of [GV00] that the p -adic L -series of an optimal curve is integral, i.e. $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T) \in \Lambda$.

Lemma 3. *Let $p > 2$ be a prime. Let E/\mathbb{Q} be an elliptic curve without complex multiplication with good ordinary reduction at p and such that $E[p]$ is reducible. Suppose E is the optimal curve in the isogeny class. Then $\text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ divides the ideal $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T) \cdot \Lambda$.*

Proof. We follow the proof of Theorem 2.3.8 in [Rub00].

Let $\mathbb{Q}_{\infty, p}$ be the cyclotomic \mathbb{Z}_p -extension of \mathbb{Q}_p . Define the singular local cohomology group $Z(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty) = H_{\infty, s}^1(\mathbb{Q}_p, T_p E)$ to be the dual of $E(\mathbb{Q}_{\infty, p}) \otimes \mathbb{Q}_p/\mathbb{Z}_p$. It is a Λ -module of rank 1. By global duality (see Proposition 1.3.2 in [PR95]), we have the following exact sequence

$$(2) \quad 0 \rightarrow H_{\infty}^1(\mathbb{Q}, T_p E) \rightarrow Z(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty) \rightarrow X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty) \rightarrow Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty) \rightarrow 0.$$

Write $\mathbf{c}_{\infty, s}$ for the image of \mathbf{c}_∞ in $Z(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)$. Theorem 16.6.2 in [Kat04] states that the image of $\mathbf{c}_{\infty, s}$ via the Perrin-Riou–Coleman map $\text{Col}: Z(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty) \rightarrow \Lambda$ is up to a p -adic unit the analytic p -adic L -function $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$. Here we use that Greenberg and Vatsal [GV00, Theorem 3.1] have shown that the canonical period associated to the newform corresponding to E differs from Ω_E by a p -adic unit, if E is the optimal curve.

Rohrlich [Roh84] has shown that $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$ is non-zero. Hence $\mathbf{c}_{\infty, s}$ is not torsion and the characteristic ideal of the Λ -torsion module $Z(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)/\mathbf{c}_{\infty, s}\Lambda$, which is equal to $\text{Col}(Z(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))/\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)\Lambda$ contains $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)\Lambda$.

The sequence (2) induces an exact sequence of Λ -modules

$$0 \rightarrow \frac{H_{\infty}^1(\mathbb{Q}, T_p E)}{\mathbf{c}_{\infty} \Lambda} \rightarrow \frac{Z(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)}{\mathbf{c}_{\infty, s} \Lambda} \rightarrow X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty) \rightarrow Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty) \rightarrow 0$$

in which all terms are known to be torsion Λ -modules. We know that $H_{\infty}^1(\mathbb{Q}, T_p E)$ is a Λ -module of rank 1 and hence there is a Λ -morphism ψ from $H_{\infty}^1(\mathbb{Q}, T_p E)$ to Λ whose kernel is Λ -torsion and whose cokernel is pseudo-null. Since \mathbf{c}_∞ cannot be torsion, the quotient on the right hand side of the above sequence is Λ -torsion and its characteristic ideal is contained in $\psi(\mathbf{c}_\infty)\Lambda$. The latter is contained in $\text{ind}_\Lambda(\mathbf{c}_\infty)$.

So, using theorem 2, we conclude that

$$\begin{aligned} \text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)) &= \text{char}_\Lambda(Y(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)) \cdot \text{char}_\Lambda\left(\frac{Z(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty)}{\mathbf{c}_{\infty,s}\Lambda}\right) \cdot \text{char}_\Lambda\left(\frac{H_\infty^1(\mathbb{Q}, T_p E)}{\mathbf{c}_\infty \Lambda}\right)^{-1} \\ &\supset \text{ind}_\Lambda(\mathbf{c}_\infty) \cdot \mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T) \Lambda \cdot (\text{ind}_\Lambda(\mathbf{c}_\infty))^{-1} \\ &= \mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T) \Lambda \end{aligned}$$

□

Theorem 4. *Let E/\mathbb{Q} be an elliptic curve without complex multiplication and let $p > 2$ be a prime. Suppose that E has good ordinary reduction at p and that the representation ρ_p is either surjective or that $E[p]$ is reducible. Then $\text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ divides the ideal generated by $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$.*

Proof. If the representation ρ_p is surjective, then this is Theorem 17.4. in [Kat04].

Suppose now that $E[p]$ is reducible. Then there is an isogeny ϕ from E to the optimal curve E^{opt} in the isogeny class of E . Note that (1) and the formula for the change of the μ -invariant by Perrin-Riou [PR87, Appendice] show that the statement that $\text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ contains $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T) \Lambda$ is invariant under isogeny. So the conclusion drawn for E^{opt} in the previous lemma applies also to E . □

Theorem 5. *The analytic p -adic L -function $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$ belongs to Λ for all elliptic curves E/\mathbb{Q} with good ordinary reduction at $p > 2$.*

Proof. If the elliptic curve E admits no isogenies of degree dividing p this is well-known by [GV00, Proposition 3.7]. If this is not the case, then $E[p]$ is reducible and we have seen in the previous theorem 4 that the ideal generated by $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$ is divisible by an integral ideal $\text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$. □

Corollary 6. *If E/\mathbb{Q} is a semi-stable elliptic curve and $p > 3$ a prime of good ordinary reduction, then $\text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ divides the ideal generated by $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$.*

Proof. By a theorem of Serre ([Ser96, Proposition 1] and [Ser72, Proposition 21]), we know that the image of the representation $\bar{\rho}_p: G_\mathbb{Q} \rightarrow \text{Aut}(E[p])$ is either the whole of $\text{GL}_2(\mathbb{F}_p)$ or it is contained in a Borel subgroup. In the latter case the representation ρ_p is reducible and in the first case the representation $\rho_p: G_\mathbb{Q} \rightarrow \text{Aut}(T_p E)$ is surjective by another result of Serre [Ser81, Lemme 15]. □

Unfortunately, the hypothesis that E is semi-stable can not be dropped. There are curves E/\mathbb{Q} such that $\bar{\rho}_p$ has its image in the normaliser of a Cartan subgroup. In this case there are no p -torsion points defined over an abelian extension of \mathbb{Q} . Similarly there are also curves without complex multiplications for $p = 5$ such that the image of ρ_5 maps to the exceptional subgroup S_4 in $\text{PGL}(\mathbb{F}_5)$.

The methods in this article are not sufficient to extend the main theorem 4 to these cases. The best we can do is the following

Proposition 7. *Let E/\mathbb{Q} be an elliptic curve without complex multiplication, with good and ordinary reduction at $p > 13$ or $p = 7$. If the conjecture of Iwasawa on the vanishing of the classical μ -invariant in cyclotomic \mathbb{Z}_p -extensions is valid for abelian extensions of imaginary quadratic fields, then $\text{char}_\Lambda(X(E/\mathbb{Q}_\infty))$ divides the ideal generated by $\mathcal{L}_p(E/\mathbb{Q}, T)$.*

Proof. By theorem 4, we may assume that the image of $\bar{\rho}_p$ is contained in the normaliser of a Cartan subgroup. The case of the exceptional subgroups is excluded by the hypothesis on p by Lemme 18 in [Ser81].

The idea of the proof is the same as for the proofs of Theorem 2 and Theorem 4, but we replace the Corollary 3.6 in [CS05] by the previous Corollary 3.5 with L being the field $\mathbb{Q}(E[p])$. In our case L is an abelian extension of an imaginary quadratic field. \square

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ÉCOLE POLYTECHNIQUE FÉDÉRALE, 1015 LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND
E-mail address: christian.wuthrich@epfl.ch