

NON-VANISHING OF SYMMETRIC SQUARE L -FUNCTIONS

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ABSTRACT. Given a complex number s with $0 < \Re s < 1$, we study the existence of a cusp form of large even weight for the full modular group such that its associated symmetric square L -function $L(\text{sym}^2 f, s)$ does not vanish. This problem is also considered in other articles.

1. INTRODUCTION

Let k be an even positive integer and f a holomorphic cusp form of weight k with respect to the full modular group. We represent the Fourier expansion of f (at the cusp ∞) by

$$f(z) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \psi_f(n) n^{(k-1)/2} e(nz)$$

where $e(\alpha) = e^{2\pi i \alpha}$. Assume that $f(z)$ is an eigenfunction for all Hecke operators T_n , with $T_n f = \lambda_f(n) n^{(k-1)/2} f$. Note that $\lambda_f(n)$ is real and has the Deligne's bound

$$(1.1) \quad |\lambda_f(n)| \leq \tau(n)$$

where $\tau(n) = \sum_{d|n} 1$ is the divisor function. We normalize f so that $\psi_f(1) = 1$; then we have $\psi_f(n) = \lambda_f(n)$. Such an f is called a primitive form. Associated to each primitive f , the Rankin-Selberg convolution L -function $L(f \otimes f, s)$ and the symmetric square L -function $L(\text{sym}^2 f, s)$ are respectively defined as, for $\Re s > 1$,

$$L(f \otimes f, s) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \lambda_f(n)^2 n^{-s}$$

and

$$(1.2) \quad L(\text{sym}^2 f, s) = \zeta(2s) \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \lambda_f(n)^2 n^{-s}$$

where $\zeta(s)$ is the Riemann zeta-function. These two L -functions are closely linked by the relation (see [5, (0.2) and (0.4)])

$$\zeta(s) L(\text{sym}^2 f, s) = \zeta(2s) L(f \otimes f, s).$$

In this paper, we are concerned with the non-vanishing results of $L(\text{sym}^2 f, s)$ in the critical strip. Li [4] showed that for a given complex number $\rho \neq 1/2$

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satisfying $0 < \Re \rho < 1$ and $\zeta(\rho) \neq 0$, there are infinitely many primitive forms f of different weight such that $\zeta(2s)L(f \otimes f, s)$ do not vanish at $s = \rho$, or equivalently, $L(\text{sym}^2 f, \rho) \neq 0$. In addition, Kohnen and Sengupta [3] have recently showed that for any fixed $s = \sigma + it$ with $0 < \sigma < 1$ and $\sigma \neq 1/2$, and for all sufficiently large k , there exists a primitive form f of weight k such that $L(\text{sym}^2 f, s) \neq 0$. The approaches used in [4] and [3] are different: the former utilizes an approximate functional equation for an averaged sum of $L(\text{sym}^2 f, \rho)$ while the latter relies on a formula of Zagier. Here, we shall use another method to prove the theorem below, which includes the results in [3] and [4].

Theorem. *For any fixed $s \in \mathbf{C}$ with $0 < \Re s < 1$, there exist infinitely many even k such that $L(\text{sym}^2 f, s) \neq 0$ for some primitive form f of weight k . Furthermore, when $\Re s \neq 1/2$ or $s = 1/2$, there exists a constant $k_0(s)$ depending on s such that for all even $k \geq k_0(s)$, $L(\text{sym}^2 f, s)$ does not vanish for some primitive form f of weight k .*

Remark. The case $s = 1/2$ is not treated in either [3] or [4]. Moreover, our alternative proof is somewhat simpler than [4], and seems more ‘elementary’ than [3] (without using Zagier’s formula).

2. PRELIMINARIES

Let $S_k(1)$ be the linear space of cusp forms of weight k for the full modular group $\Gamma = SL_2(\mathbf{Z})$. Then $S_k(1)$ is a finite-dimensional Hilbert space with respect to the Petersson inner product

$$\langle f, g \rangle = \int_{\Gamma \backslash \mathbf{H}} y^k f(z) \overline{g(z)} \frac{dx dy}{y^2}$$

and the set of all primitive forms \mathcal{B}_k forms an orthogonal basis for $S_k(1)$. Moreover, we have the Petersson trace formula: define

$$w_f = \frac{\Gamma(k-1)}{(4\pi)^{k-1} \langle f, f \rangle}$$

and $S(m, n, c) = \sum_{ad \equiv 1 \pmod{c}} e((am + dn)/c)$ (the classical Kloosterman sum); then

$$(2.1) \quad \sum_{f \in \mathcal{B}_k} w_f \lambda_f(m) \lambda_f(n) = \delta_{m,n} + 2\pi i^{-k} \sum_{c \geq 1} c^{-1} S(m, n, c) J_{k-1}\left(\frac{4\pi \sqrt{mn}}{c}\right)$$

where $\delta_{m,n} = 1$ or 0 according to whether $m = n$ or not, and $J_{k-1}(x)$ is the Bessel function. From [6, (5) in Section 2.13], we have the integral representation

$$(2.2) \quad J_{k-1}(x) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{-\pi}^{\pi} e^{-i(k-1)\theta + ix \sin \theta} d\theta.$$

Bounding trivially, using integration by parts or the Poisson integral representation $J_{k-1}(x) = (\sqrt{\pi} \Gamma(k-1/2))^{-1} (x/2)^{k-1} \int_{-1}^1 (1-t^2)^{k-3/2} e^{ixt} dt$ ([6, (3) in 2.3]), we have the following estimates: for $x \geq 0$,

$$(2.3) \quad \text{(i) } J_{k-1}(x) \ll 1, \quad \text{(ii) } J_{k-1}(x) \ll \frac{x}{k}, \quad \text{(iii) } J_{k-1}(x) \ll \frac{1}{\Gamma(k-1/2)} \left(\frac{x}{2}\right)^{k-1}.$$

Using the Weil bound

$$(2.4) \quad |S(m, n, c)| \leq (m, n, c)^{1/2} c^{1/2} \tau(c),$$

and $\lambda_f(1) = 1$, we have with (2.3)(ii)

$$(2.5) \quad \sum_{f \in \mathcal{B}_k} w_f \ll 1 + k^{-1} \sum_{c \geq 1} c^{-3/2} \tau(c) \ll 1.$$

Define

$$(2.6) \quad \begin{aligned} \Delta(s) &= \pi^{-3s/2} \Gamma\left(\frac{s+1}{2}\right) \Gamma\left(\frac{s+k-1}{2}\right) \Gamma\left(\frac{s+k}{2}\right) \\ &= \pi^{(1-3s)/2} 2^{1-s-k} \Gamma(s+k-1) \Gamma\left(\frac{s+1}{2}\right) \end{aligned}$$

(as $\Gamma(s)\Gamma(s+1/2) = \sqrt{\pi} 2^{1-2s} \Gamma(2s)$) and $\Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, s) = \Delta(s)L(\text{sym}^2 f, s)$. Then $\Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, s)$ is entire and satisfies the functional equation (shown by Shimura [5])

$$(2.7) \quad \Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, s) = \Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, 1-s).$$

Moreover one can show that $\Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, s) \rightarrow 0$ as $|\text{Im } s| \rightarrow \infty$ in any vertical strip $|\Re e s| \ll 1$.

Finally, let us explain the approach here (which is quite widely used in non-vanishing problems). Using residue theorem and the functional equation of $L(\text{sym}^2 f, \cdot)$, we can express $L(\text{sym}^2 f, s)$ as a convergent series. The averaging process (over all primitive forms) with Petersson trace formula yields that the (averaged) sum consists of two parts: the diagonal terms (contributed by $\delta_{m,n}$ in (2.1)) and the off-diagonal terms. (See (3.6) below.) We then obtain the asymptotic formula (3.13) after giving an estimation to the off-diagonal terms. Our result is deduced from this formula.

3. PROOF OF THE THEOREM

Assume $0 < \Re e s \leq 1/2$. Consider the integral $(2\pi i)^{-1} \int_{\mathcal{R}} \Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, s+w) \frac{dw}{w}$ where \mathcal{R} is the positively oriented rectangular contour with vertices at $\pm 2 \pm iT$, we have, by residue theorem and taking $T \rightarrow \infty$, that

$$\begin{aligned} \Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, s) &= \frac{1}{2\pi i} \left(\int_{(2)} - \int_{(-2)} \right) \Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, s+w) \frac{dw}{w} \\ &= \frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{(2)} \Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, s+w) \frac{dw}{w} + \frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{(2)} \Lambda(\text{sym}^2 f, 1-s+w) \frac{dw}{w} \end{aligned}$$

after using the functional equation (2.7) and changing w to $-w$. Hence, if we write

$$(3.1) \quad V_z(y) = \frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{(2)} \zeta(2(z+w)) \Delta(z+w) y^{-w} \frac{dw}{w},$$

we get from (1.2) that

$$(3.2) \quad L(\text{sym}^2 f, s) \Delta(s) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{\lambda_f(n^2)}{n^{1-s}} V_{1-s}(n) + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{\lambda_f(n^2)}{n^s} V_s(n).$$

Let $z = 1-s$ or s . From (2.6),

$$(3.3) \quad \Delta(z+w) \ll_{|s|} 2^{-k} \Gamma(\Re e(z+w) + k - 1) \left| \Gamma\left(\frac{z+w+1}{2}\right) \right|$$

for $\Re(z+w) \geq -3/4$. Moving the line of integration to $\Re(z+w) = A$, we have for $A > \max(\Re z, 1/2)$,

$$(3.4) \quad V_z(y) \ll_{|s|, A} y^{\Re z - A} 2^{-k} \Gamma(k + A - 1).$$

Shifting to $\Re(z+w) = -1/2$ (across the poles at $w = 0, 1/2 - z$), we obtain with (3.3)

$$(3.5) \quad V_z(1) = \begin{cases} \zeta(2z)\Delta(z) + \Delta(1/2)(1/2 - z)^{-1} \\ \gamma\Delta(1/2) + 2^{-1}\Delta'(1/2) \end{cases} + O(2^{-k}\Gamma(k - 3/2))$$

where γ is the Euler constant. The second case corresponds to $z = 1/2$. As will be seen, the main term is given by

$$V_{1-s}(1) + V_s(1) = \begin{cases} \zeta(2-2s)\Delta(1-s) + \zeta(2s)\Delta(s) \\ 2\gamma\Delta(1/2) + \Delta'(1/2) \end{cases} + \dots$$

according to $s \neq 1/2$ or $s = 1/2$. Its order of magnitude is about $2^{-k}\Gamma(k - \Re s)$.

Let $0 < \nu \leq 10^{-3}$ be a fixed number. Both sums in (3.2) over $n > k^{1+5\nu}$ can be evaluated as follows: choosing $A = 1 + \nu^{-1}$ in (3.4), we have ($z = 1 - s$ or s)

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{n > k^{1+5\nu}} \frac{\lambda_f(n^2)}{n^z} V_z(n) &\ll 2^{-k}\Gamma(k + \nu^{-1}) \sum_{n > k^{1+5\nu}} \frac{\tau(n^2)}{n^{1+1/\nu}} \\ &\ll 2^{-k} k^{-4-1/\nu} \Gamma(k + \nu^{-1}) \ll 2^{-k} k^{-1/4} \Gamma(k - 1/2) \end{aligned}$$

by (1.1) and Stirling's formula ([1, Chapter 10]). Summing over all primitive forms and using (2.1), with $\lambda_f(1) = 1$,

$$(3.6) \quad \begin{aligned} &\Delta(s) \sum_{f \in \mathcal{B}_k} w_f L(\text{sym}^2 f, s) \\ &= V_{1-s}(1) + V_s(1) + \sum_{z=1-s, s} 2\pi i^{-k} \sum_{n \leq k^{1+5\nu}} n^{-z} V_z(n) \mathcal{J}(n) \\ &\quad + O\left(\sum_f w_f 2^{-k} k^{-1/4} \Gamma(k - 1/2)\right) \end{aligned}$$

where $\mathcal{J}(n) = \sum_{c \geq 1} c^{-1} S(1, n^2, c) J_{k-1}(4\pi n/c)$. We give an estimate for $\mathcal{J}(n)$. From (2.3)(ii) and (2.4),

$$\sum_{c > k^{1+20\nu}} c^{-1} S(1, n^2, c) J_{k-1}\left(\frac{4\pi n}{c}\right) \ll nk^{-1} \sum_{c > k^{1+20\nu}} c^{-3/2} \tau(c) \ll n/k^{3/2+9\nu}.$$

By (2.3)(iii), when $n \leq k^{1-\nu}$,

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{c \leq k^{1+20\nu}} c^{-1} S(1, n^2, c) J_{k-1}\left(\frac{4\pi n}{c}\right) &\ll \Gamma(k - 1/2)^{-1} \sum_{c \leq k^{1+20\nu}} c^{-1/2} \tau(c) (2\pi k^{1-\nu})^{k-1} \\ &\ll k^{(1-\nu)k} \Gamma(k - 1/2)^{-1} \ll n/k^{3/2+9\nu}, \end{aligned}$$

by Stirling's formula. Similarly, for $k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu}$ we have

$$\sum_{k^{6\nu} < c \leq k^{1+20\nu}} c^{-1} S(1, n^2, c) J_{k-1}(4\pi n/c) \ll n/k^{3/2+9\nu}.$$

Hence,

$$(3.7) \quad \mathcal{J}(n) = \delta(n, k) \sum_{c \leq k^{6\nu}} c^{-1} S(1, n^2, c) J_{k-1}\left(\frac{4\pi n}{c}\right) + O(nk^{-3/2-9\nu})$$

where $\delta(n, k) = 0$ if $n \leq k^{1-\nu}$, and 1 if $k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu}$. Inserting (3.7) into (3.6), together with (2.5) and the estimate

$$k^{-3/2-9\nu} \sum_{n \leq k^{1+5\nu}} |n^{1-z} V_z(n)| \ll 2^{-k} k^{-3/2-9\nu} (\log k) \Gamma(k+1) \ll 2^{-k} k^{-2\nu} \Gamma(k-1/2)$$

(following from (3.4) with $A = 2$), we see that (3.6) becomes

$$(3.8) \quad \begin{aligned} & \Delta(s) \sum_f w_f L(\text{sym}^2 f, s) \\ &= V_{1-s}(1) + V_s(1) + i^{-k} (\mathcal{E}_k(1-s) + \mathcal{E}_k(s)) + O(2^{-k} k^{-8\nu} \Gamma(k-1/2)) \end{aligned}$$

where

$$\mathcal{E}_k(z) = 2\pi \sum_{k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu}} n^{-z} V_z(n) \sum_{c \leq k^{6\nu}} c^{-1} S(1, n^2, c) J_{k-1}\left(\frac{4\pi n}{c}\right).$$

From (2.2), we have

$$(3.9) \quad \mathcal{E}_k(z) = \sum_{k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu}} n^{-z} V_z(n) \sum_{c \leq k^{6\nu}} c^{-1} S(1, n^2, c) \int_0^{\pi/2} 2\Re e f_k\left(\theta, \frac{4\pi n}{c}\right) d\theta$$

where $f_k(\theta, x) = e^{ix \sin \theta} (e^{-i(k-1)\theta} - e^{i(k-1)\theta})$. When $|x| \leq k^{6/5}$, we have

$$\left| \frac{d}{d\theta} (x \sin \theta \pm (k-1)\theta) \right| \asymp k \quad \text{for } \pi/2 - k^{-1/4} \leq \theta \leq \pi/2,$$

whence $\int_{\pi/2-k^{-1/4}}^{\pi/2} f_k\left(\theta, \frac{4\pi n}{c}\right) d\theta \ll k^{-1}$ for $4\pi n/c \leq k^{6/5}$ by integration by parts. From (3.4) with $A = 1$ and (2.4),

$$\begin{aligned} & \sum_{k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu}} n^{-z} V_z(n) \sum_{c \leq k^{6\nu}} c^{-1} S(1, n^2, c) \int_{\pi/2-k^{-1/4}}^{\pi/2} \Re e f_k\left(\theta, \frac{4\pi n}{c}\right) d\theta \\ & \ll 2^{-k} k^{-1} \Gamma(k) \sum_{k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu}} n^{-1} \sum_{c \leq k^{6\nu}} c^{-1/2} \tau(c) \ll 2^{-k} k^{-8\nu} \Gamma(k-1/2). \end{aligned}$$

We put this estimate into (3.9). Then we interchange the sums in the remaining part and use the periodicity of $S(1, \cdot, c)$ to give

$$(3.10) \quad \begin{aligned} \mathcal{E}_k(z) &= \sum_{c \leq k^{6\nu}} c^{-1} \sum_{k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu}} S(1, n^2, c) n^{-z} V_z(n) \int_0^{\pi/2-k^{-1/4}} 2\Re e f_k\left(\theta, \frac{4\pi n}{c}\right) d\theta \\ & \quad + O(2^{-k} k^{-8\nu} \Gamma(k-1/2)) \\ &= \sum_{c \leq k^{6\nu}} \sum_{0 \leq r < c} c^{-1} S(1, r^2, c) T_z(r, c) + O(2^{-k} k^{-8\nu} \Gamma(k-1/2)) \end{aligned}$$

with

$$T_z(r, c) = 2 \sum_{\substack{k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu} \\ n \equiv r(c)}} n^{-z} V_z(n) \int_0^{\pi/2 - k^{-1/4}} \Re e f_k(\theta, \frac{4\pi n}{c}) d\theta.$$

From the definition of $f_k(\theta, \cdot)$ (the line below (3.9)), we see that

$$\begin{aligned} T_z(r, c) &\ll \int_0^{\pi/2 - k^{-1/4}} \left| \sum_{\substack{k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu} \\ n \equiv r(c)}} n^{-z} V_z(n) e\left(\frac{2n}{c} \sin \theta\right) \right| d\theta \\ &= \int_0^{\pi/2 - k^{-1/4}} \left| \int_{(\kappa)} \zeta(2(z+w)) \Delta(z+w) \sum_{\substack{k^{1-\nu} < n \leq k^{1+5\nu} \\ n \equiv r(c)}} n^{-z-w} e\left(\frac{2n}{c} \sin \theta\right) \frac{dw}{w} \right| d\theta \end{aligned}$$

by (3.1) with the path moved from $\Re e w = 2$ to $\kappa = 2 - \Re e z$. By (3.3), $\Delta(z+w) \ll 2^{-k} \Gamma(k+1) (|w|+1)^{-2}$ for $\Re e w = \kappa$. Hence,

$$(3.11) \quad \begin{aligned} T_z(r, c) &\ll 2^{-k} \Gamma(k+1) \\ &\quad \times \int_{(\kappa)} \int_0^{\pi/2 - k^{-1/4}} \left| \sum_{K_1 < m \leq K_2} \frac{e(2m \sin \theta)}{(cm+r)^{z+w}} \right| d\theta \frac{|dw|}{(|w|+1)^3} \end{aligned}$$

where $K_1 = (k^{1-\nu} - r)/c$ and $K_2 = (k^{1+5\nu} - r)/c$. Using $\sum_{m \leq M} e(2m\alpha) \ll |\sin(2\pi\alpha)|^{-1}$ with partial summation, or bounding trivially, the sum in (3.11) is

$$(3.12) \quad \ll (|w|+1) k^{2\nu-2} \min(|\sin(2\pi \sin \theta)|^{-1}, k)$$

as $\Re e(z+w) = 2$. After substituting (3.12) into (3.11), the θ -integral equals

$$\begin{aligned} &\int_0^{\pi/2 - k^{-1/4}} \min(|\sin(2\pi \sin \theta)|^{-1}, k) d\theta \\ &= \int_0^{\cos(k^{-1/4})} \min(|\sin(2\pi u)|^{-1}, k) \frac{du}{\sqrt{1-u^2}} \\ &\ll \left(\int_0^{k^{-1}} + \int_{1/2 - k^{-1}}^{1/2 + k^{-1}} \right) k du + \left(\int_{k^{-1}}^{1/2 - k^{-1}} + \int_{1/2 + k^{-1}}^{3/4} \right) |\sin(2\pi u)|^{-1} du \\ &\quad + \int_{3/4}^{1-(16k)^{-1/2}} |\sin(2\pi u)|^{-1} \frac{du}{\sqrt{1-u}} \ll 1 + \log k + k^{1/4} \end{aligned}$$

by using $\sin \alpha \geq 2\alpha/\pi$ if $0 \leq \alpha \leq \pi/2$. In view of (3.11) and (3.12), we conclude that $T_z(r, c) \ll 2^{-k} k^{2\nu-7/4} \Gamma(k+1) \ll 2^{-k} k^{2\nu-1/4} \Gamma(k-1/2)$, and by (3.10) that

$$\mathcal{E}_k(z) \ll 2^{-k} k^{2\nu-1/4} \Gamma(k-1/2) \sum_{c \leq k^{6\nu}} \sum_{0 \leq r < c} c^{-1} |S(1, r^2, c)| + 2^{-k} k^{-8\nu} \Gamma(k-1/2)$$

which is absorbed by the O -term in (3.8). Therefore, (3.8) and (3.5) yield

$$(3.13) \quad \begin{aligned} &\Delta(s) \sum_{f \in \mathcal{B}_k} w_f L(\text{sym}^2 f, s) \\ &= \begin{cases} \zeta(2-2s) \Delta(1-s) + \zeta(2s) \Delta(s) \\ \Delta'(1/2) + 2\gamma \Delta(1/2) \end{cases} + O(2^{-k} k^{-8\nu} \Gamma(k-1/2)). \end{aligned}$$

From Stirling's formula, we have $\Gamma(k+z-1) = \Gamma(k+a-1)e^{ib \log k + O(1/k)}$ ($z = a+ib$) for $|z| \leq k^{1/3}$ and $\Gamma'(k-1/2)/\Gamma(k-1/2) = \log k + O(1)$. Hence for the case $s = 1/2$, the dominating term in (3.13) is $\Delta'(1/2)$, of order $2^{-k}(\log k)\Gamma(k-1/2)$, for all large k , and we can thus conclude $\sum_{f \in \mathcal{B}_k} w_f L(\text{sym}^2 f, 1/2) \neq 0$. For the case $\Re s < 1/2$, the term $\zeta(2-2s)\Delta(1-s)$ ($\asymp 2^{-k}\Gamma(k-\Re s)$) dominates others for all large k . (Note that $\zeta(2-2s)$ is non-zero.) When $s = 1/2 + it$ and $t \neq 0$, denoting $a(t) = 2^{1/2-it}\pi^{-1/4-3it/2}\zeta(1+2it)\Gamma(3/4+it/2)$, the main term in (3.13) is

$$\begin{aligned} & \zeta(1+2it)\Delta(1/2+it) + \zeta(1-2it)\Delta(1/2-it) \\ &= 2^{-k} \left(a(t)\Gamma(k-1/2+it) + a(-t)\Gamma(k-1/2-it) \right) \\ &= 2^{-k}\Gamma(k-1/2) \left(2|a(t)| \cos(t \log k + \vartheta(t)) + O(k^{-1}) \right) \end{aligned}$$

where $\vartheta(t)$ is the argument of $a(t)$. Suppose $(2\pi)^{-1}t \log 2$ is irrational. Then by Kronecker's theorem ([2, Theorem 438]), there exist infinitely many r_i (depending on t) satisfying $|r_i t \log 2 + \vartheta(t) - 2\pi m_i| \leq \pi/4$ for some integer m_i . Thus, we take $k = 2^{r_i}$ for those sufficiently large r_i so that the right side of (3.13) is $\gg 2^{-k}|a(t)|\Gamma(k-1/2) > 0$. If $(2\pi)^{-1}t \log 2$ is rational, we consider instead $(2\pi)^{-1}t \log 3$ which must then be irrational. Our result follows with the previous argument. The case $1/2 < \Re s < 1$ is done because of the functional equation (2.7).

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