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Epsilon factors for unitary groups. Preliminary report.

Refinements due to Prasad of results of Tunnell and Saito about representations of GL_2 over a local field have a natural interpretation in terms of unitary groups. We discuss this, which involves the embedding of U_1 inside U_2 , and related results about $U_2 \subset U_3$. If time permits, we consider the global aspects, including period integrals and central values of L -functions. (Received February 26, 2007)