SPHERICAL DISTRIBUTIONS ON LIE GROUPS
AND $C^\infty$ VECTORS

BY

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ABSTRACT. Given a Lie group $G$ (not necessarily unimodular) and a
subgroup $K$ of $G$ (not necessarily compact), it is shown how to associate with
every finite-dimensional unitary irreducible representation $\delta$ of $K$ a class of
distributions analogous to the class of spherical functions of height $\delta$ familiar
from the unimodular-maximal compact case. The two concepts agree as nearly
as possible. A number of familiar theorems are generalized to our situation.
As an application we obtain a generalization of the Frobenius reciprocity theo-
rem and of Plancherel's theorem to arbitrary induced representations of Lie
groups.

I. Introduction. Let $G$ be a Lie group (not necessarily unimodular) and $K$ a
closed (but not necessarily compact!) subgroup. In this paper we show how to
associate with every finite-dimensional irreducible unitary representation $\delta$ of $K$ a
class of distributions which is analogous to the class of spherical trace functions
of height $\delta$ on a unimodular group having a large compact subgroup (see [1]).
We obtain generalizations of a large number of results familiar from the large
compact case. For example, we obtain an essentially one-to-one correspondence
between spherical distributions and certain representations of an algebra of $K$
central distributions.

In the unimodular-large compact case our concept agrees with the usual
concept of spherical trace function [1] to the extent that the distributions we
study are given via integration against spherical trace functions. However, we do
not, in general, obtain all spherical trace functions in this manner. The reason
for this is our insistence upon unitarity. It can be shown (although we will not
do so here) that a development of spherical functions entirely analogous to the
one adopted here can be carried out in the large compact unimodular case utiliz-
ing nonunitary induced representations, which does yield all spherical tract func-
tions.

It is interesting (although perhaps not surprising) that in the nonunimodular
case the nonunimodular trace operators $Q_\pi$ associated with the nonunimodular
Plancherel formula play a significant role.
To motivate our generalization, suppose that $G$ is compact. Let $U$ be the unitary representation of $G$ induced by $\delta$ acting via right translation in the space $H = \{ F \in L^2(G, H_\delta) | F(kx) = \delta(k)F(x), k \in K, x \in G \}$. Let $\Pi$ be a projection onto a maximal primary subspace of $U$. Then one can show (as in the proof of Theorem 1 below) that there is a unique function $D_\Pi: G \rightarrow \text{Hom}_c(H_\delta, H_\delta)$ such that $D_\Pi(kxk') = \delta(k')^{-1}D_\Pi(x)\delta(k)^{-1} (x \in G, k, k' \in K)$ for which $\pi F(y) = \int_G D_\Pi(x)F(xy) \, dx$. One can also show that $\text{tr} D_\Pi(\cdot) = D_\Pi(\cdot)$ is a spherical trace function of height $\delta$ and that $D_\Pi(\cdot) = \int_K D_\Pi(k \cdot)\delta(k^{-1}) \, dk$. Furthermore, every spherical trace function arises in this manner. Thus, spherical trace functions are simply kernels (in the sense of integral operators) of certain intertwining operators.

It is this point of view we adopt in this paper. There are a large number of problems involved. If $G$ is not compact, intertwining operators for $U$ need no longer be integral operators. However, it turns out that they are always convolution against distributions. Furthermore, $U$ need have no primary subspaces. This causes problems, but they are solvable due to the direct integral theory of unitary representations.

Our techniques are $C^\infty$ vector techniques.

II. $C^\infty$ vectors. In this section we gather together the results from $C^\infty$ theory we shall need later.

Let $G$ be a Lie group and let $U$ be a continuous unitary representation of $G$ in a separable Hilbert space $H$. A vector $v \in H$ is said to be a $C^\infty$ vector for $U$ if the map $g \rightarrow U(g)v$ is a $C^\infty$ map of $G$ into $H$. If $X$ is an element of the Lie algebra $L$ of $G$, then $\partial U(X)v$ is defined to be $d/dt|_{t=0}U(\exp tX)v$ for $v \in C^\infty(U)$. The mapping $X \rightarrow \partial U(X)$ extends to a representation map of the enveloping algebra $\mathfrak{g}$ into the operators on $C^\infty(U)$. We topologize $C^\infty(U)$ via the seminorms $\|\partial U(X)\|$, $X \in \mathfrak{g}$. $C^\infty$ is an invariant subspace of $H$. The restriction $U^\infty$ of $U$ to $C^\infty$ is a differentiable representation in the $C^\infty$ topology. In text we will use without specific reference many standard results on $C^\infty$ vectors. We refer the reader to Poulsen [6] for such results.

In general, if $T$ is a topological vector space we denote by $T^\wedge$ the space of conjugate linear continuous functionals on $T$. If $A: T_1 \rightarrow T_2$ is a continuous linear mapping of two such spaces we denote by $A^\wedge$ its adjoint: $A^\wedge: T_2^\wedge \rightarrow T_1^\wedge$. If $U$ is a representation of $G$ in $T_1$, we denote by $U^\wedge$ the representation $U^\wedge(x) = U(x^{-1})^\wedge$. If $T$ has a continuous skew symmetric innerproduct $(\cdot, \cdot)$ defined on it, $T$ is isomorphic with a subspace of $T^\wedge$ which, if $T$ is a Hilbert space, is all of $T^\wedge$.

We shall consistently indentify $T$ with this subspace. These comments apply in particular to $H$ and to $C^\infty(U)$ relative to the restriction of the scalar product on $H$ to $C^\infty(U)$. We shall denote $C^\infty(U)^\wedge$ by $C^{-\infty}(U)$ and $(U^\infty)^\wedge$ by $U^{-\infty}$.

Note that under this identification $U^\wedge = U$. 

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The following theorems are the main facts about $C^\infty$ vectors we shall need [2], [5].

**Theorem A (Goodman).** Let $U$ be decomposed into a direct integral
\[ \int M \otimes U^\alpha \, du(\alpha) \] where $U^\alpha$ are unitary representations of $G$ realized in spaces $H^\alpha$. Then $\nu \in C^\infty(U)$ if $\nu^\alpha \in C^\infty(U^\alpha)$ for a.e. $\alpha$ and $\alpha \rightarrow \| \partial U^\alpha(X) \nu^\alpha \|^2$ is integrable for all $X \in 0$ and for a.e. $\alpha$. In this case $(\partial U(X) \nu)^\alpha = \partial U^\alpha(X) \nu^\alpha$ for a.e. $\alpha$.

**Theorem B.** In the above notation, if $\phi$ is a continuous functional on $C^\infty(U)$ then there exist a.e. unique functionals $\varphi^\alpha$ on $C^\infty(U^\alpha)$ such that $\phi(\nu) = \int M \varphi^\alpha(\nu^\alpha) \, du(\alpha)$ for all $\nu \in C^\infty(U)$ where the integral converges absolutely.

Now, if $V$ is another such representation let $I(U, V)$ be the space of all continuous intertwining operators from $U$ to $V$. If $A \in I(U, V)$, it is easily seen that $A$ maps $C^\infty(U)$ into $C^\infty(V)$ continuously. We shall denote this mapping by $A^\infty$. Also $A^\infty \in I(V, U)$. Let $A^{-\infty} = ((A^\infty)^\infty)^\infty$, $A^{-\infty} : C^{-\infty}(U) \to C^{-\infty}(V)$. Notice that the scalar product allows us to identify $H$ with a subspace of $C^{-\infty}(U)$ and that under this identification $A^{-\infty}$ extends $A$.

Now, if $U$ is irreducible, there is a natural Hilbert space structure on $I(U, V)$. In fact, if $A, B \in I(U, V)$, $B^*A \in I(U, U)$ and hence $B^*A = C(A, B)I$ by Shure's lemma where $C(A, B) \in C$. $C(\cdot, \cdot)$ defines a Hermitian scalar product on $I(U, V)$ which is obviously complete (in fact $C(B, B)$ is the square of the operator norm of $B$).

**III. Spherical functions.** Let $G$ be a (not necessarily unimodular) Lie group and $K$ any closed subgroup. Let $\Omega$ and $\omega$ be the respective modular functions for right Haar measure (i.e. $\int_G f(\gamma x) \, d\gamma = \Omega(\gamma^{-1}) \int_G f(x) \, dx$). Let $\Delta = (\omega/\Omega)^{1/2}$. Any locally integrable function $f$ on $G$ which satisfies $f(kx) = \Delta^2(k) f(x)$ defines a Radon measure $\mu(f)$ on $K \setminus G$ via the formula $\mu(f)(\tilde{\varphi}) = \int_G f(x) \varphi(x) \, dx$ where $\varphi \in C_c(G), \tilde{\varphi}(x) = \int_K \varphi(kx) \, dk$.

If $\mu(f)$ is finite we shall say that $f$ is integrable and we shall write $\mu(f)(K \setminus G) = S f(x) \, dx$. We remark that $f$ is integrable iff $\mu(|f|)$ is a finite measure. We also remark that if $g$ say belongs to $C_c(G)$, then
\[ S \left( \int_K \Delta^{-2}(k) g(kx) \, dk \right) \, dx = \int_G g(x) \, dx. \]

If $f$ is a locally integrable Hilbert space valued function which satisfies the above transformation property, such that $\| f(\cdot) \|$ is integrable, we may define $S f(x) \, dx$ by the requirement $(S f(x) \, dx, w) = S(f(x), w) \, dx$ for all $w$ in the space.

Now, let $\delta$ be a finite $N$-dimensional unitary irreducible representation of $K$ in a Hilbert space $H^\delta$. Let $U$ be the representation of $G$ which acts via right translation in the space $H$ of all locally integrable $H^\delta$-valued functions $F$ which satisfy
$F(kx) = \Delta(k)\delta(k)F(x),$

(2) $S(\|F\|^2) < \infty.$

$U$ is of course the unitary representation induced by $\delta$.

Now, let $A$ be a self-intertwining operator for $U$. We shall now associate with $A$ a matrix-valued distribution and a scalar-valued distribution in much the same way as we associated matrix-valued functions with intertwining operators in the compact case. Let us recall that if $f \in L^1(G)$, the operator $U(f)$ is defined by $\int_G \tilde{f}(x)U(x)\,dx$ where $\tilde{f}(x)$ is the function $f(x^{-1})\Omega(x^{-1})$. Also $f^*(x)$ is $\tilde{f}(x)^{-1}$, $f \cdot x = f(\cdot x)$ and $x \cdot f = f(x^{-1} \cdot)\Omega(x^{-1})$.

**Theorem 1.** Let $A: H \to H$ be an intertwining operator for $U$. Then there is a unique continuous linear map $\mathcal{D}_A: C_c^\infty(G) \to \text{Hom}_c(H^6, H^5)$ satisfying

$$AU(f)F(e) = S(\mathcal{D}_A(x \cdot f)F(x))\,dx.$$  

(Note that the integral makes sense.)

**Proof.** For $f \in C_c^\infty(G)$, let $\tau(f): H^6 \to H$ be

$$\tau(f) = \int_k f(kx)\Delta(k^{-1})\delta(k^{-1})\,dk.$$  

It is clear that $\tau(f)$ maps into $C^\infty(U)$. Hence $A\tau(f)$ maps into $C^\infty(U)$. Since $C^\infty(U)$ consists of C$^\infty$-, $H^6$-valued functions, point evaluation is continuous so we may define a linear mapping $\mathcal{D}_A(f)$ of $H^6$ into $H^6$ by $u \mapsto A\tau(f)u(e)$.

**Lemma.** $\mathcal{D}_A(f^*) = \mathcal{D}_A^*(f^*)$.

**Proof.** Let $f, g \in C_c^\infty(G)$. Then, for $u, w \in H^6$,

$$(A\tau(f)u, \tau(g)w) = S \left( \int_K (A\tau(f)u(x), \delta(k^{-1})w)\Delta(k^{-1})\tilde{g}(kx)\,dk \right)\,dx$$

(1)  

$$= S \left( \int_K (A\tau(f)u(kx), w)\tilde{g}(kx)\Delta^{-2}(k)\,dk \right)\,dx$$

But

$$A\tau(f)u(x) = (U(x)A\tau(f))(e) = (AU(x)\tau(f))(e)$$

$$= A\tau(f \cdot x)(e) = \mathcal{D}_A(f \cdot x).$$

Hence (1) equals $(\mathcal{D}_A(f^* \cdot g^*))^*u, w)$. Taking adjoints, (1) also equals $(v, \mathcal{D}_A^*(g \cdot f^*)w)$. Letting $g$ go through a partition of unity the result follows. Q.E.D.

Now, from the lemma and its proof...
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\( D_A(x \cdot f)^* = D_A \ast (f^* \cdot x) = A^* \tau(f^*)(x). \)

Hence

\[
(S(D_A(x \cdot f)F(x))dx, v) = S(F(x), A^* \tau(f^*)v(x))dx
\]

\[
= (F, A^* \tau(f^*)v) = (AF, \tau(f^*)v)
\]

\[
= S\left( \int_K (Af(x), f^*(kx)\Delta^{-1}(k)\delta^{-1}(k)v) dk \right) dx
\]

\[
= S\left( \int_K \tilde{\gamma}(kx)\Delta^{-1}(k)\delta(k)AF(x), v \right) dk \right) dx
\]

\[
= \left( \int_G \tilde{\gamma}(x)AF(x) \right) dx, v \right)
\]

\[
= (U(f)AF(e), v).
\]

This shows existence. Uniqueness follows by reversing the chain of equalities.

The continuity of \( f \mapsto D_A(f) \) is clear.  Q.E.D.

**Definition.** \( D_A \) is called the matrix kernel of \( A \). Its trace is denoted \( D_A \) and is called the scalar kernel.

The lemma used in the above proof has the following simple but important corollary.

**Corollary.** For all \( k \in K \),

(a) \( D_A(f \cdot k) = \Delta(k)\delta(k)D_A(f) \),

(b) \( D_A(k \cdot f \cdot k) = \Delta^2(k)D_A(f) \).

**Definition.** Property (b) above is called \( K \)-centrality.

Let us also remark that if there were a locally integrable function \( D_A(x) \) valued in operators on \( H^k \) which satisfied \( D_A(k_1xk_2) = \Delta(k_1k_2)\delta(k_1^{-1}) \)

\( D_A(x)\delta(k_1^{-1}) \) for which

\[
AF(y) = \int_G D_A(x)f(xy) \ dx
\]

for a dense set of \( F \) in \( H^k \), then (as the reader may easily verify) \( D_A(f) = \int_C D_A(x)f(x) \ dx \) for all \( f \subset C^\infty_c(G) \). Hence, we are justified in considering \( D_A \) as an analogue of the kernel of \( A \) in the compact case.

\( D_A \) determines \( A \). We may in fact write \( A \) as a "convolution" against \( D_A \), a fact that will be important later. To show this we need some notation. Let \( \mu \) and \( \eta \) be measures on \( G \) for which either \( \mu \) or \( \eta \) has compact support or both are finite. Then there exists a unique measure \( \rho \) such that for \( f \in C_c(G) \),

\[
\int f(x) \, d\mu(x) \, d\eta(y) = \int f(x) \, d\rho(x).
\]

We write \( \rho = \mu \ast \eta \). We shall identify functions \( g \) on \( K \) with the measure on \( G \) supported in \( K \) given by \( gdk \) on \( K \). Thus
\[ f * g(x) = \int_K f(xk^{-1})g(k) \, dk, \]
\[ g * f(x) = \int_K \Omega(k^{-1})g(k)f(k^{-1}x) \, dk. \]

Also let \( \chi_\delta(k) = N^{-1} \text{tr} \delta(k) \) and let \( \lambda_\delta(k) = \Delta^{-1}(k)\chi_\delta(k) \). A distribution \( \varphi \) on \( G \) is said to transform on the left according to \( \delta \) if \( \lambda_\delta * f = 0 \) implies \( \varphi(f) = 0 \) for \( f \in C_c^\infty(G) \). Notice that we cannot say \( \varphi(\lambda_\delta * f) = \varphi(f) \) since \( \lambda_\delta * f \) will not usually have compact support.

**Lemma.** \( D_A \) transforms on the left according to \( \delta \).

**Proof.** Let \( g \in C_c^\infty(G) \). If \( f \in C_c^\infty(G) \) satisfies \( \lambda_\delta * f = 0 \), then

\[
D_A(f * g) = \int f(x)D_A(x * g) \, dx
= S \left( \int f(kx)\Delta^{-2}(k)D_A(kx * g) \, dk \, dx \right)
= S \left( \int f(kx)\Delta(k^{-1}) \text{tr} D_A(x * g) \, dk \, dx \right).
\]

But \( \lambda_\delta * f = 0 \) implies, by irreducibility,

\[
\int f(kx)\Delta(k^{-1})\delta(k^{-1}) \, dk = 0.
\]

Hence \( D_A(f * g) = 0 \) for all \( g \). Therefore \( D_A(f) = 0 \). Q.E.D.

Now, let \( C_c^\infty(G) = \lambda_\delta * C_c^\infty(G) \). If \( \varphi \) transforms according to \( \lambda_\delta \) on the left, then \( \varphi \) defines a functional \( \varphi' \) on \( C_c^\infty(G) \) via \( \varphi'(\lambda_\delta * f) = \varphi(f) \).

Let \( u, w \in \mathcal{H}_\delta \) and let \( u \otimes w \) be the operator \((\cdot, w)u\). Since \( \delta \) is irreducible, it is completely irreducible. Thus there are finite sequences \( k_i \in K \) and \( c_i \in C \) such that \( N^{-1} \sum c_i \Delta^{-1}(k_i)\delta(k_i) = u \otimes w \). Applying \( \Delta^{-1}(k)\delta(k)^{-1} \) to both sides and taking the trace we conclude that

\[
\Delta(k^{-1})(\delta(k^{-1})u, w) = \sum c_i \lambda_\delta(k^{-1}k_i)\Delta^{-2}(k).
\]

It follows then from the definition of \( \tau \) that

\[
(\tau(f)u(\cdot, w) = \sum c_i (\lambda_\delta * k_i) * f = \lambda_\delta \ast \left( \sum c_i (k_i^{-1} * f) \right).
\]

This is an element of \( C_c^\infty(G) \) and

\[
D_A((\tau(f)u(\cdot, w)) = D_A' \left( \lambda_\delta * \sum c_i k_i^{-1} \right) = D_A' \left( \sum c_i k_i^{-1} \right) = \text{tr} \sum c_i \Delta(k_i^{-1})D_A(u)\delta(k_i)
= \text{tr} D_A(f)(u \otimes w) = (D_A(f)u, w).
\]
Hence $D_A(f)$ is, in a sense, the integral of $\tau(f)$ against $D_A$. Furthermore $D_A(f) = A\tau(f)(e)$. Hence

$$(A\tau(f)\nu(x), w) = (U(x)A\tau(f)\nu(e), w) = (A\tau(f \cdot x)\nu(e), w)$$

$$= D'_A((\tau(f \cdot x)\nu(\cdot), w)) = D'_A((\tau(f)\nu(\cdot, x), w)).$$

Hence $A\tau(f)\nu(x)$ is the “integral” of $\tau(f)\nu(\cdot, x)$ against $D_A$. This determines $A$ at the dense set of elements of the form $\tau(f)\nu(\cdot)$ and hence determines $A$.

The significance of these observations is that they may be turned into a characterization of the distributions $D_A$. We shall need to consider the norm defined on $C(G)$ by $\|f\|_K^2 = \int |f(kx)|^2 \Delta^{-2}(k) \, dx$. This is finite on $C^\infty_c(G)$. Now let $\varphi$ be a $K$ central distribution which transforms according to $\Delta$ on the left. For $f \in C^\infty_c(G)$, let $[\varphi \cdot f](x) = \varphi'(f \cdot x)$. We shall say that $\varphi$ is finite provided the mapping of $C^\infty_c(G)$ into $C(G)$ given via $f \mapsto [\varphi \cdot f]$ is bounded in $\| \cdot \|_K$. Let $F_\delta$ be the space of such functionals.

**Theorem 2.** A distribution $\varphi$ is of the form $D_A$ for some $A \in I(U, U)$ iff $\varphi \in F_\delta$.

**Proof.** Let us note that if $F \in H$, then $\Delta^{-2}(k) \|F(kx)\|^2 \leq \|F(x)\|^2$. Hence $\|F(\cdot)\|_K^2 \leq \|F\|_H^K$.

Now, consider $|D'_A((\lambda_\delta \ast f) \cdot x)| = |D_A(f \cdot x)|$. This is bounded by a sum of terms of the form

$$|(D_A(f \cdot x)\nu, w)| = |(A\tau(f)\nu(x), w)|$$

$$\leq \|A\tau(f)\nu(x)\|_H^2 \|w\|.$$

Taking $K$ norms, we see that $\|D'_A : \lambda_\delta \ast f\|_K^2$ is bounded by a sum of terms $C\|A\tau(f)\nu\|_H \leq C' \|\tau(f)\nu\|_H$.

Let $w_1, \ldots, w_d$ be an orthonormal basis for $H^\delta$ and fix $w = w_i$. Let $c_i$ and $k_i$ be chosen as above. Then

$$(\tau(f)\nu(x), w) = \lambda_\delta \ast \left(\sum c_i k_i^{-1} \cdot f\right)(x).$$

Now if in the integral defining $\lambda_\delta \ast (k_i^{-1} \cdot f)$ we replace $k$ by $k_i^{-1} kk_i$ and note $\lambda_\delta(k_i^{-1} kk_i) = \lambda_\delta(k)$, we discover that $\lambda_\delta \ast (k_i^{-1} \cdot f) = k_i^{-1} \cdot (\lambda_\delta \ast f)\omega(k_i)$. It follows that $\|\tau(f)\nu(\cdot, w)\|_K \leq C_w \|D'_A \ast f\|_K$. Since $\|\tau(f)\nu(x)\|_K \leq \Sigma(\tau(f)\nu(x), w)), we have shown that $D'_A$ is finite.

Conversely, if $\varphi \in F_\delta$, the map $(v, w) \mapsto \varphi'(\tau(f)(\cdot, v), w))$ is continuous on $H^\delta \times H^\delta$ and hence there is an operator $D_\varphi(f)$ which represents it. Of course, if $\tau(f)\nu(\cdot) = \tau(g)\nu(\cdot)$, then for all $x$, $D_\varphi(f \cdot x)\nu = D_\varphi(g \cdot x)\nu$. This allows us to define an operator $A$ on the set of $\tau(f)\nu(\cdot)$ by $A(\tau(f)\nu)(x) = D_\varphi(f \cdot x)\nu$. It is
trivial that $A(\tau(f)\nu(\cdot))$ satisfies the transformation property of $H$. It follows from
the definition of $\varphi'$ that, for all $w \in l^\delta$,

$$\|A(\tau(f))\nu(\cdot), w\|_K \leq C\|\tau(f)\nu(\cdot), w\|_K$$

where $C$ is the bound on $[\varphi : \cdot ]$.

By reasoning similar to that done in the first part of the proof it follows
that $A$ is bounded in $H$ norm and hence extends uniquely to a bounded operator
on $H$ which clearly intertwines $U$. It is obvious from the uniqueness of $D_A$ that
$D_A = \varphi$. Q.E.D.

**Remarks.** We could, if we so desired, define intrinsically an algebra struc-
ture on $F_6$ that would make $A \rightarrow D_A$ an algebra isomorphism of $I(U, U)$ onto
$F_6$. However, since $F_6$ is in one-to-one correspondence with $I(U, U)$, we could
also define our algebra structure by requiring this map to be an isomorphism. We
take this latter course since we shall not need the intrinsic definition. The intrin-
sic definition is closely associated with convolution and is convolution when this
makes sense.

Now, if $A$ were to be a projection onto a primary subspace, it would be
logical, in view of the comments in §1, to call $D_A$ a spherical distribution. How-
however, this would yield a rather trivial theory in the cases where $U$ had a continuous
spectrum. We shall take a more general approach.

To motivate our discussion we prove a lemma. First some notation. Let $V$
be a unitary representation of $G$ realized in $L$. Let $f \in C_c^\infty(G)$ and consider $V(f)$.
Since $V(x)V(f) = V(f \cdot x)$, it is easily verified that $V(f) : L \rightarrow C^\infty(V)$. Hence
$V(f)^* : C_c^\infty(V) \rightarrow L$. Also, $V(x)V(f)^* = V^*(x \cdot f)$ so as before $V(f)^*$ in fact
maps $C_0^\infty(V)$ into $C^\infty(V)$. We shall denote $V(f)^*$ by $V^-(f)$ (it is in fact
the integral of $V^\infty$ against $f$ although we shall not need this fact). Then if
$u, w \in C^\infty(V)$ such expressions as $\langle V^{-\infty}(f)u, w \rangle$ make sense. If $u \in C^\infty(V)$ and
$w \in C^{-\infty}(V)$, we define $\langle w, u \rangle$ to be the conjugate of $\langle w, u \rangle$ so that $\langle w, V^{-\infty}(f)u \rangle$
is also meaningful. Also let $e$ denote evaluation at $e \in C^\infty(V)$.

**Lemma.** Let $\pi$ be an orthogonal projection onto an invariant subspace $H_\pi$
of $H$. Let $V = U|H_\pi$ and let $e_\pi = e|C^\infty(V) (= C^\infty(U) \cap H_\pi)$. Then for all $f \in$
$C_c^\infty(G)$, $D_\pi(f) = e_\pi V^{-\infty}(f)e_\pi^\wedge$.

**Proof.** By definition, $D_\pi(f)u = e_\pi \tau(f)u$. From the computation done at
the end of Theorem 1, $(eU(f)e)^\wedge = \pi^\wedge \tau(f^*) = \pi(f^*)$. Hence by definition,

$$D_\pi(f) = e_\pi \tau(f) = e_\pi (eU(f^*)e)^\wedge = e_\pi (e_\pi U(f^*)e)^\wedge$$

$$= e_\pi \pi^\wedge U(f^*)^\wedge e_\pi^\wedge = e_\pi V^{-\infty}(f)e_\pi^\wedge,$$

since $\pi^\wedge = \pi$. Q.E.D.
Suppose $U$ is type I. Let $M = U^\times$ (the space of equivalence classes of irreducible representations of $U$ given the Mackey-Borel structure; see [3]). Then there is a Borel measure $\mu$ on $M$ such that $U = \int_M \bigoplus U^\alpha d\mu(\alpha)$ where each $U^\alpha$ is a primary representation which generates a von Neumann algebra of class $\alpha \in U^\times$. Let $H^\alpha$ be the representation space of $U^\alpha$.

By the finite dimensionality of $H^\delta$ and Theorem B of §II, $\epsilon$ is a direct integral of continuous maps $\epsilon^\alpha: C^\infty(U^\alpha) \to H^\alpha$.

**Definition.** Let $D^\alpha(f) = \epsilon^\alpha(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(\epsilon^\alpha)^* \wedge$ and let $\mathcal{D}^\alpha(f) = \text{tr} \ D^\alpha(f)$. $\mathcal{D}^\alpha$ and $D^\alpha$ are called, respectively, the matrix-valued and scalar-valued spherical distributions of height $\delta$ associated with the element $\alpha \in U^\times$. (Notice that this is really defined only a.e. with respect to $\mu$. Note also that if we replace $\mu$ by a measure in the same measure class we change $D^\alpha$ and $\mathcal{D}^\alpha$ by constant multiples. The $\mathcal{D}^\alpha$ are, however, otherwise well defined.)

It is obvious from the uniqueness of the $\epsilon^\alpha$ that they satisfy similar transformation laws as does $\epsilon$. Hence, it is easily seen that $\mathcal{D}^\alpha$ and $D^\alpha$ satisfy the same transformation properties as the $\mathcal{D}_A$ and $D_A$ did above.

It is natural to ask if $D^\alpha$ has an expression as a trace of the restriction of an irreducible representation of $G$ to a $K$-invariant subspace analogous to the usual definition (see [1]). This is the case, although it will take some work to show it. Consider for $\alpha \in M$ the map $(\epsilon^\alpha)^*: H^\alpha \to C^{-\infty}(U^\alpha)$. Let $\pi^\alpha = (\epsilon^\alpha)^* \circ \epsilon^\alpha$ and let $K^\alpha$ be the image of $(\epsilon^\alpha)^*$. $K^\alpha$ is invariant under $(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}K$ and $(\epsilon^\alpha)^*$ intertwines $\Delta U^\alpha|K$ and $\delta$ (this is just a restatement of the transformation property of $\epsilon^\alpha$). $\epsilon$ has the property that the only $U$ invariant subspace on which it is zero is the zero subspace. Hence the $\epsilon^\alpha$ are nonzero for a.e. $\alpha$. It follows from Shure's lemma that $(\epsilon^\alpha)^*$ is invertible as a map of $H^\delta$ into $K^\alpha$. Let $j^\alpha$ be its inverse. Then

$$\mathcal{D}^\alpha(f) = \epsilon^\alpha(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(\epsilon^\alpha)^* = j^\alpha \pi^\alpha(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(\epsilon^\alpha)^{-1}.$$ 

Hence $D^\alpha(f) = \text{tr} \ \pi^\alpha(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)|K^\alpha$. Since $\pi^\alpha$ maps onto $K^\alpha$ and intertwines $\Delta^2(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}|K$, this is in form analogous to the usual definition of spherical function. The problem, however, is that $U^\alpha$ is only primary and not irreducible. The fact that one can compute the spherical functions using any one of the irreducible constituents of $U^\alpha$ seems to be a deep fact and is our first main result.

**Theorem 3.** Let $\alpha \in M$. Let $T^\alpha$ be any irreducible unitary representation quasi-equivalent to $U^\alpha$ realized in $L^\alpha$. Then for a.e. $\alpha$ there is a map $\sigma^\alpha: C^\infty(T^\alpha) \to C^{-\infty}(T^\alpha)$ which intertwines $T^\alpha|K$ and $\Delta(T^\alpha)^{-\infty}|K$ and which represents $D^\alpha$ in the following sense.

There is a canonical Hilbert space structure on the image $L^\alpha_\sigma$ of $\sigma^\alpha$ which
makes $\Delta T^\alpha - \delta|L_5^\alpha = T^0$ unitary for which the map $\sigma^\alpha T^\alpha(f)|L_5^\alpha$ is trace class for all $f \in C_c^\infty(G)$. Then $D^0(f) = \text{tr} \sigma^\alpha T^\alpha(f)^{-\infty}|L_5^\alpha$.

Furthermore, $T^0$ is the orthogonal direct sum in $L_5^\alpha$ of $n$ copies of $\delta$ where $n$ is the (possibly infinite) multiplicity of $T$ in $U^\alpha$.

**Proof.** Let

$$L_5^\alpha = \text{span}\{A_{i}^{-\infty}e^\alpha(u)|A \in I(U^\alpha, T^\alpha), u \in \mathcal{H}_T\}.$$  

Before describing the Hilbert structure on $L_5^\alpha$ we need a lemma.

**Lemma.** Suppose $A_1, \ldots, A_K \in I(U^\alpha, T^\alpha)$ are linearly independent and suppose $v_1, \ldots, v_K \in \mathcal{H}_T$ satisfy $\sum_{i=1}^K A_i^{-\infty}(e^\alpha)^\wedge(v_i) = 0$. Then $v_1 = v_2 = \cdots = v_K = 0$.

**Proof.** We proceed by induction on $K$. We omit the $K = 1$ case since it is analogous to the induction step. Since the set of $W$ such that $-A_{i=1}^{-\infty}(\tau_i)^\wedge(w) = \sum_{i=1}^K A_i^{-\infty}(e^\alpha)^\wedge(w)$ for some $W_i \in \mathcal{H}_T$ is $\delta$-invariant and nonzero ($u_{K+1}$ belongs to it!), it is all of $\mathcal{H}_T$. For all $W$ there are elements $W_i = \tau_i(W)$ which satisfy the above. By the induction hypothesis the $W_i$ are unique. It follows that the $\tau_i$ are linear and intertwine $\delta$ and hence $\tau_i \equiv c_i I$. Hence $-A_{i=1}^{-\infty}(e^\alpha)^\wedge(u) = \sum_{i=1}^K c_i A_i^{-\infty}(e^\alpha)^\wedge(u)$ for all $v$, i.e. $-e^\alpha A_{i=1}^{-\infty} = e^\alpha(\Sigma c_i A_i^\wedge)$. Now $e^\alpha$ has the property that $e^\alpha(U^\alpha(g)v) = 0$ for all $g$ implies $v = 0$ ($u \in C^\infty(U^\alpha)$ (Theorem IV of [5]). Applying $U^\alpha(g)$ on the right in the above equation and using the commuting property of the $A_i$, we see that $A_{i=1}^{-\infty} = \Sigma c_i A_i$, contradicting independence and thus the fact that $v_{K+1} \neq 0$. Q.E.D.

We will use the lemma in the form of the following corollary.

**Corollary.** If $e_1, \ldots, e_d$ are linearly independent elements of $\mathcal{H}_T^\delta$ and $A_1, \ldots, A_d \in I(U^\alpha, T^\alpha)$ are such that $\Sigma A_i^{-\infty}(e^\alpha)^\wedge(e_i) = 0$, then $A_i = 0$, $i = 1, \ldots, d$.

**Proof.** Let $B_1, \ldots, B_K$ be a basis for the vector space spanned by the $\{A_i\}$. Write $A_i^{-\infty} = \Sigma c_{ij} B_j^{-\infty}$. Then

$$0 = \sum_{ij} c_{ij} B_j^{-\infty}(e^\alpha)^\wedge(e_i) = \sum_j B_j(e^\alpha)^\wedge(\Sigma c_{ij} e_i).$$

Hence, by the above $\Sigma_i c_{ij} e_i = 0$, i.e., $c_{ij} = 0$. Hence $A_i = 0$ for all $i$. Q.E.D.

Now, let $e_1, \ldots, e_d$ be an orthonormal basis for $\mathcal{H}_T^\delta$. Let $L_5^\alpha = \{A^{-\infty}e^\alpha(e_i)|A \in I(U^\alpha, T^\alpha)\}$. By the above corollary $L_5^\alpha$ is the direct sum of the $L_5^\alpha$. From the same corollary, the map $A \rightarrow A^{-\infty}e^\alpha(e_i)$ is 1-1. Hence we may define an inner product $(\cdot, \cdot)_5^\alpha$ on $L_5^\alpha$ by setting

$$\left(\Sigma A_i^{-\infty}e^\alpha(e_i), \Sigma B_i^{-\infty}e^\alpha(e_i)\right)_5^\alpha = \Sigma C(A_i^\wedge, B_i^\wedge),$$
where $C$ is the inner product $I(T^\alpha, U^\alpha)$ defined in §II. Notice that under this inner product $L_\delta^g \cong I(T^\alpha, U^\alpha)^d$. Hence completeness follows. Notice also that for $A_i \in I(U^\alpha, T^\alpha)$, $v_i \in H^\delta$, $i = 1, 2$, we have

$$(A_1^* e_\alpha \langle v_1, \rangle, A_2^* e_\alpha \langle v_2, \rangle)_{H^\delta}^g = C(A_2^*, A_1^*)(v_1, v_2).$$

Hence the scalar product does not depend on the choice of basis for $H^\delta$. The above equality and the fact that $A_i^* e_\alpha \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ intertwines $\Delta(T^\alpha)^{-\infty} |K$ and $\delta$ show that $\Delta(T^\alpha)^{-\infty} |K$ is unitary on $L_\delta^g$. The injection of $L_\delta^1$ into $C^{-\infty}(T^\alpha)$ is continuous since $A_n^* e_\alpha \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ converges to $A^{-\infty} e_\alpha \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ iff $A_n^*$ converges to $A^*$ in $C(\cdot, \cdot)$ which is equivalent to $A_n^*$ tending to $A^*$ uniformly. This implies that $A_n^* \rightarrow A^*$ uniformly on bounded subsets of $C^{-\infty}(T^\alpha)$ and hence that, in $C^{-\infty}(T^\alpha)$, $A_n^* e_\alpha \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle \rightarrow A^{-\infty} e_\alpha \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$. Thus the natural injection of $L_\delta^g$ into $C^{-\infty}(T^\alpha)$ is continuous. Let $\sigma^\alpha$ denote the injection and let $\sigma^\alpha: C^{-\infty}(T^\alpha) \rightarrow L_\delta^g$ be its adjoint. ($C^{-\infty}$ is reflexive!)

Now, we are finally in a position to prove the trace formula. Let $E_i, i = 1, \ldots$, be an orthonormal basis of $I(T^\alpha, U^\alpha)$. It is easily seen that $E_i$ are isometries and that $H^\alpha$ is the orthogonal direct sum of the images of the $E_i$. It follows that the maps $\pi_i = E_i E_i^*$ are orthogonal projections onto invariant irreducible subspaces of $H^\alpha$ and $\Sigma_i \pi_i = I$. Hence, for $f \in C_c^\infty(G)$,

$$D^\alpha(f) = \text{tr } D^\alpha(f) = \text{tr } e_\alpha(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(e_\alpha)^\wedge = \sum_i \text{tr } e_\alpha \pi_i(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(e_\alpha)^\wedge = \sum_i \text{tr } e_\alpha E_i E_i^*(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(e_\alpha)^\wedge = \sum_i \text{tr } e_\alpha E_i(T^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(E_i^*)^{-\infty}(e_\alpha)^\wedge.$$

But

$$(e_\alpha E_i(T^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(E_i^*)^{-\infty}(e_\alpha)^\wedge e_i, e_j) = \langle (T^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(E_i^*)^{-\infty}(e_\alpha)^\wedge e_j, (E_i^*)^{-\infty}(e_\alpha)^\wedge e_j \rangle = (\sigma^\alpha(T^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)F_{ij}, F_{ij})_g^g,$$

where $F_{ij} = (E_i^*)^{-\infty}(e_\alpha)^\wedge e_j$.

Note that the series of operators on $H^\delta$, $\sum e_\alpha \pi_i(U^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)(e_\alpha)^\wedge$, converges pointwise since $\Sigma \pi_i$ converges in $C^{-\infty}(U^\alpha)$ and hence it converges in any norm by finite dimensionality. Hence

$$D^\alpha(f) = \sum_{ij} (\sigma^\alpha(T^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f)F_{ij}, F_{ij})_g^g = \text{tr } \sigma^\alpha(T^\alpha)^{-\infty}(f) |L_\delta^g,$$

as claimed.

To finish the proof we need only compute the multiplicity of $\delta$ in $T^0$. 

However, if $E_i$ are as above $v \rightarrow (E_i^\alpha)^{-\omega}(e^\alpha)^\ast(v)$ intertwines $\delta$ and $T^0$. Since the ranges of these maps are orthogonal and clearly span $L_5^0$ topologically, the multiplicity of $\delta$ in $T^0$ is the dimension of the span of the $E_i$ which is the multiplicity of $T^\alpha$ in $U_5^\alpha$. Q.E.D.

Now, if $K$ is compact, the above can be made considerably more precise. Notice that in this case $\Omega|K = \omega \equiv 1$. Let $N = \dim H_5$.

**Theorem 4.** Let $K$ be compact and let notation be as above. Let $T^\alpha(x_5) = \int_K x_5(k^{-1})T^\alpha(k)\,dk$. Let $L_5^0$ be the image of $L^\alpha$ under $T^\alpha(x_5)$ (so $L^\alpha$ is the space of vectors which transform according to $\delta$ under $T^\alpha$). Then there is a continuous map $Q^\alpha: C^\omega(T^\alpha) \rightarrow C^\omega(T^\alpha)$ such that $L_5^0 = (Q^\alpha)^*(L_5^0)$ and such that $N^{-1/2}Q_\alpha^2$ is a unitary isomorphism of $L_5^0$ onto $L_5^0$. Furthermore

$$\sigma^\alpha = N^{-1}(Q^\alpha)^\ast T^\alpha(x_5)Q^\alpha$$

and $D^\alpha(f) = N^{-1} \operatorname{tr} Q^\alpha T^\alpha(x_5) \ast f)Q^\alpha|L_5^0$. $Q^\alpha$ can be chosen so that it is formally selfadjoint on $C^\omega(T^\alpha)$ and satisfies $Q^\alpha(U^\alpha)^\ast(g) = (\Omega(g))^\ast(U^\alpha)^\ast(g)Q^\alpha$ for all $g \in G$. This uniquely determines $Q^\alpha$. In fact $Q^\alpha$ is the nonunimodular weight function of Moore. In particular, if $G$ is unimodular $Q^\alpha = 1$ and $D^\alpha(f) = N^{-1}T^\alpha(x_5)T^\alpha(f)|L_5^0$.

**Proof.** Before proceeding, let us recall some facts about tensor products of Hilbert spaces. If $H$ is a Hilbert space let $H^*$ denote the conjugate space (i.e. $H$ with scalar multiplication given by $c \cdot v = \overline{cv}$). Then $H^{**} = H$. If $H_1$ and $H_2$ are Hilbert spaces, $H_1 \otimes H_2$ is the space of Hilbert-Schmidt mappings of $H_1$ into $H_2$. If $v \in H_1$ and $w \in H_2$, then $v \otimes w \in H_1 \otimes H_2$ is the map $(v, \cdot)w$. The tensor product is associative. In fact, by definition $(H_1 \otimes H_2)^* = H_1^* \otimes H_2^*$. If $F: H_1^* \otimes H_2^* \rightarrow H_3$ belongs to $(H_1 \otimes H_2)^*$, then $F$ is a map $F: v \rightarrow v(w) = \overline{F(v \otimes w)}$. Then $F_v \in H_2 \otimes H_3$ and $v \rightarrow F_v$ defines an element $F \in H_1 \otimes (H_2 \otimes H_3)$. The mapping $F \rightarrow F$ is a unitary isomorphism.

If $A_i: H_i \rightarrow H_i$ are continuous linear operators, $i = 1, 2$, then $A_1 \otimes A_2$ is the operator on $H_1 \otimes H_2$ given by $F \rightarrow A_2 FA_1^*$ ($A_1^*$ is $A_1$ considered as an operator on $H_1^*$). If $V_i$ are representations of $G$ in $H_i$, $V_1 \otimes V_2(b) = V_1(b^{-1}) \otimes V_2(b)$.

We shall need the following lemma, which is known.

**Lemma.** Let $T$ be an irreducible unitary representation of $G$ in $L$ and let $I$ be the identity representation in $H$. Then $I(T, I \otimes T)$ is the space of operators $v \rightarrow v \otimes \sigma, v \in H$.

Now, let $\widetilde{L} = L^2(G, dx, H^k)$ and let $\widetilde{K}$ and $\widetilde{L}$ be, respectively, the left and right regular unitary representations of $G$ in $\widetilde{L}$ (i.e. $\widetilde{L}(y)F(x) = \Omega^{-y}(y)F(y^{-1}x)$
and \( \hat{R}(y)F(x) = F(xy) \) for all \( y, x \in G, F \in \mathcal{H} \). Then, by compactness of \( K \), \( \mathcal{H} \) is set theoretically and norm-wise just the space of all functions \( F \) in \( \mathcal{H} \) which satisfy \( \hat{L}(k^{-1})F = \delta(k)F \) for all \( k \in K \). The map \( \Gamma = \int_K \delta(k)\hat{L}(k)\,dk \) is easily seen to be a projection onto \( \mathcal{H} \) which commutes with \( \hat{R} \). Also \( U = \hat{R}|\mathcal{H} \).

The harmonic analysis of \( \hat{R} \) is essentially equivalent to that of the \( L^2 \) regular representations. Let \( R \) and \( L \) denote, respectively, the \( L^2 \) right and left unitary representations of \( G \) in \( L^2(G, dx) \). The map \( v \otimes f \rightarrow vf(\cdot) \) sets up a unitary isomorphism between \( H^5 \otimes L^2 \) and \( \hat{\mathcal{H}} \). Its inverse is given by considering \( F \in \hat{\mathcal{H}} \) to be a map of \((H^5)^*\) into \( L^2 \) given via \( v \rightarrow \langle F(\cdot), v \rangle \). Under this isomorphism \( \hat{R} \) becomes \( I \otimes R \), \( \hat{L} \) becomes \( I \otimes L \) and \( \Gamma = \int_K \delta(k) \otimes L(k)\,dk \). Also \( C^w(\hat{R}) = H^5 \otimes C^w(G) \). If \( F \in H^5 \otimes C^w(G) \) and \( \rho \) represents evaluation at \( e \) in \( C^w(G) \) (which is continuous) then \( v \rightarrow \rho(F(v)) \) defines an element \( \tilde{e}(F) \) of \((H^5)^* = H^5\). The functional \( F \rightarrow \tilde{e}(F) \) is easily seen to correspond to evaluation at \( e \) in \( \hat{\mathcal{H}} \).

In [5] we obtained the following description of the harmonic analysis of \( R \).

**Theorem C.** There is a measure space \( M \), a Borel measure \( \mu \) on \( M \) and a measurable family \( T^\alpha \) of irreducible unitary representations of \( G \) in \( L^\alpha \) indexed by \( M \) such that

\[
L^2(G) \cong \int_M \bigoplus (L^\alpha)^* \otimes L^\alpha \,d\mu(\alpha).
\]

Under this isomorphism

\[
R = \int_M \bigoplus I^\alpha \otimes T^\alpha \,d\mu(\alpha),
\]

\[
L = \int_M \bigoplus (T^\alpha)^* \otimes I^\alpha \,d\mu(\alpha) \quad (I^\alpha = \text{identity on } L^\alpha).
\]

Furthermore there is an essentially selfadjoint operator \( Q^\alpha : C^w(T^\alpha) \rightarrow C^w(T^\alpha) \) continuously such that for all \( F \in C^w(I^\alpha \otimes T^\alpha), Q^\alpha F \) is bounded and of trace class. In this case \( \rho = \int \bigoplus \rho^\alpha \,d\mu(\alpha) \) where \( \rho^\alpha \) is the functional \( F \rightarrow \text{tr} \, Q^\alpha F \) on \( C^w(I^\alpha \otimes T^\alpha) \).

If \( f \in C^w(G) \), then \( T^\alpha(f)Q^\alpha \) is a bounded Hilbert-Schmidt operator of \( L^\alpha \) into \( L^\alpha \) for which \( f \rightarrow T^\alpha(f)Q^\alpha \) extends to a unitary isomorphism of \( L^2 \) onto the above direct integral which intertwines \((I^\alpha)^* \otimes T^\alpha \) and \( \hat{R} \) and \((T^\alpha)^* \otimes I^\alpha \) and \( \hat{L} \).

Furthermore, \( Q^\alpha \) satisfies \( T^\alpha(\xi)Q^\alpha = \Omega^{-1}(\xi)Q^\alpha T^\alpha(\xi) \) on \( C^w(T^\alpha) \) and is uniquely determined up to scalars by this property.

Now, from the general theory of direct integrals, tensor products factor through direct integrals. Hence

\[
\hat{\mathcal{H}} \cong \int_M \bigoplus H^5 \otimes ((L^\alpha)^* \otimes L^\alpha) \,d\mu(\alpha)
\]

\[
\approx \int_M \bigoplus (H^5 \otimes (L^\alpha)^* \otimes L^\alpha) \,d\mu(\alpha).
\]
Let $H^\alpha = (I \otimes (L^\alpha)^*) \otimes L^\alpha$, $R^\alpha = (I \otimes I^\alpha*) \otimes T^\alpha$, $\Gamma^\alpha = (I \otimes (T^\alpha)^*) \otimes I^\alpha$.

Let $\Gamma^\alpha = \int_k \delta(k) \otimes T^\alpha(k) dk$ and let $\Gamma^\alpha = \Gamma^\alpha \otimes I^\alpha$ (so that $\Gamma$ is the direct integral of $\Gamma^\alpha$). $\tilde{\alpha}$ also factors as a direct integral of maps $\tilde{\alpha}: C_\infty(\tilde{R}^\alpha) \to \rho^\delta$ given via $(\tilde{\alpha}F, w) = \rho^\delta(Fw)$ for $F \in C_\infty(\tilde{R})$, $w \in H_\delta$. Here we are considering $F \in \rho^\delta(\tilde{L}^\alpha \otimes (L^\alpha)^*)$. (This follows from the uniqueness in Theorem B of the introduction.)

Under the above isomorphism of $\rho^\delta(\tilde{L}^\alpha \otimes (L^\alpha)^*)$ with $(H_\delta \otimes (L^\alpha)^*) \otimes L^\alpha$, this becomes $\tilde{\alpha}(w \otimes v) = W^* Q\alpha v$. (It is clear that $v \in C_\infty(T^\alpha)$ if $w \otimes v \in C_\infty(\tilde{R}^\alpha)$.) In fact, as a map of $(\rho^\delta)^*$ into $(L^\alpha)^* \otimes L^\alpha$, $w \otimes v$ becomes $\varphi \mapsto W(\varphi) \otimes v$. Now for $\varphi \in (\rho^\delta)^*$, $\rho^\delta(W(\varphi) \otimes v) = tr Q\alpha \circ (W(\varphi) \otimes v) = (Q\alpha, W(\varphi)) = (W^* Q\alpha v, \varphi)$. This shows our claim.

Let $h^\alpha = \tilde{\alpha}(H^\alpha)$ and $U^\alpha = \tilde{R}^\alpha | h^\alpha$. Then $H = \int M \otimes h^\alpha d\mu(\alpha)$. This is the primary decomposition of $U$ and each $U^\alpha$ is quasi-equivalent to $T^\alpha$. Now, let $A \in I(T^\alpha, \tilde{R}^\alpha)$. Since $I \otimes I^\alpha = I$ by the above Lemma, $A$ is of the form $v \mapsto W \otimes v$ for some $W \in \rho^\delta(\tilde{L}^\alpha \otimes (L^\alpha)^*)$.

Now, $L_\delta^\alpha$ is by the proof of Theorem 3 the space of functionals $A^w \in C(T^\alpha, U^\alpha)$, i.e. the functionals $x \mapsto (e^\alpha Ax, w) = (\tilde{\alpha}(W \otimes x), w)$ $= (W^* Q\alpha x, w) = (x, (Q\alpha)^* W^* w) \in C_\infty(T^\alpha)$). (Here $(Q\alpha)^*$ maps $C_\infty(T^\alpha)$ into $C_\infty(T^\alpha)$ and $W^*w$ is thought of as an element of $C_\infty(T^\alpha)$.) $A \in I(T^\alpha, U^\alpha)$ if and only if $\Gamma^\alpha A = A$, i.e. iff $\Gamma^\alpha W = W$. This is equivalent to $W$ intertwining $\delta^*$ and $(T^\alpha)^*|K$ which is equivalent to $W^*$ intertwining $\delta$ and $T^\alpha|K$. Hence $L_\delta^\alpha$ is the image under $(Q\alpha)^*$ of the space of vectors $W^*w$ ($W$ varying) which is just the image under $(Q\alpha)^*$ of the space $T^\alpha(\chi_\delta)(L^\alpha)$. This proves the first part of our claim.

To compute $||Q\alpha)^* W^* w||_\delta^2$ note that by definition it is $c(A, A)\|w\|^2$. However, $A^w$ is the map of $(\rho^\delta \otimes (L^\alpha)^*) \otimes L^\alpha$ into $L_\delta^\alpha$ given by $F \otimes v \mapsto v(F, W)$. Hence $A^w A(x) = (W, W)x$. Thus $c(A, A) = (W, W) = tr W^* W$. But $W^*W$ intertwines $\delta^*$ so $W^*W = dI$. Furthermore $dN = tr W^* W = (W, W) so c(A, A)\|w\|^2 = N\|w\|^2$. Hence $d\|w\|^2 = (W^* w, W^* w) = \|W^* w\|_\delta^2$. Thus $\|Q\alpha)^* W^* w\|_\delta^2 = N\|W^* w\|_\delta^2$, proving the unitarity.

To compute $D^\alpha$ we need $\sigma^\alpha$. $\sigma^\alpha$ is the adjoint of the injection $i$ of $L_\delta^\alpha$ into $C_\infty(T^\alpha)$. If $(Q\alpha)^*\alpha(x) \in L_\delta^\alpha, x \in T(\chi_\delta)L^\alpha$, and if $v \in C_\infty(T^\alpha)$, then

$$
\langle v, i((Q\alpha)^*\alpha(x)) \rangle = (Q\alpha^\alpha v, x) = (\sigma^\alpha(\chi_\delta) Q\alpha^\alpha v, x) = (Q\alpha^\alpha)^* T^\alpha(\chi_\delta) Q\alpha^\alpha v, (Q\alpha^\alpha)^* x) N^{-1}.
$$

Hence $\sigma^\alpha = N^{-1}(Q\alpha)^* T^\alpha(\chi_\delta) Q\alpha^\alpha$.

It follows that

$$
ND^\alpha(f) = tr(Q\alpha)^* T^\alpha(\chi_\delta) Q\alpha T^\alpha(f) \|L_\delta^\alpha
$$

$$
= tr T^\alpha(\chi_\delta) Q\alpha T^\alpha(f) \|L_\delta^\alpha
$$
by unitary invariance of the trace. Also, on $C_c^\infty(T^\alpha)$, $T^\alpha(f)Q^\alpha = (T^\alpha)^{-\alpha}(f)(Q^\alpha)^\alpha$ by the selfadjointness of $Q^\alpha$. Hence $T^\alpha(f)Q^\alpha$ has a bounded extension. Furthermore $\Omega \equiv 1$ on $K$ and hence $Q^\alpha$ commutes with $T^\alpha | K$. Thus $D^\alpha = N^{-1}Q^\alpha T^\alpha(\delta)T^\alpha(f)Q^\alpha | L_5^\alpha$. This finishes the theorem. Q.E.D.

Remarks. Theorem 3 can be considered both a generalization of the Frobenius reciprocity theorem and a generalization of the Plancherel theorem. In fact, the first statement is obvious. To see the second, note that by definition $D^\alpha(f) = e^\alpha(U^\alpha)^{-\alpha}(f)e^\alpha$ so

$$\int_M D^\alpha(f) \, d\mu(\alpha) = eU^{-\alpha}(f)e^\alpha = \tau(f)(e).$$

Theorem 3 then says that corresponding to a.e. irreducible representation $T^\alpha$ occurring in the decomposition of $U$ there is a subspace $L_5^\alpha$ of $C_c^\infty(U)$ and a Hilbert structure defined on $L_5^\alpha$ for which $\tau(f)(e) = \int_M \tau(T^\alpha(f))L_5^\alpha \, d\mu(\alpha)$. Note also that although the Hilbert structure on $L_5^\alpha$ is difficult to describe theoretically, the definition of $L_5^\alpha$ given in the proof of Theorem 3 depends only on the unitary equivalence class of $T^\alpha$ in the sense that if $T^\alpha$ is unitarily equivalent to $S^\alpha$, then the unitary equivalence gives rise to a unitary isomorphism of the corresponding $L_5^\alpha$, as the reader may easily verify. $L_5^\alpha$ depends on the measure $\mu$ to the extent that changing $\mu$ multiplies the scalar product by a positive constant. It would of course be desirable to have an intrinsic description of $L_5^\alpha$ such as is available in the $K$-compact case. We do not know of such a description except in certain specific cases which will be described in a later work.

From Theorem 4 we obtain the consistency of our concept of spherical function and Godement's.

Corollary. If $K$ is a large compact subgroup of $G$ and $G$ is unimodular then almost every $D^\alpha$ is given via integration against a spherical function in the sense of Godement [1].

Now, still assuming $K$ is compact, let $I_{c,5}$ be the space of all functions in $C_c(G)$ which satisfy (i) $f(kxk^{-1}) = f(x)$ and (ii) $\chi_5 \ast f = f$. It is well known that $I_{c,5}$ plays an important role in the study of spherical functions. To see why this is so first note that every such $f$, when identified with the distribution $fdx$ transforms on the left according to $\lambda_5$ (= $\chi_5$ in this case) and is $K$ central. $f$ is also finite. In fact, $A_f$ is the operator $F \mapsto \int f(x)F(x \cdot) \, dx$. Hence $I_{c,5} \subset F_5$. The significant fact about $I_{c,5}$ is the following

Lemma. The set of $A_f$, $f \in I_{c,5}$, is strong operator dense in $I(U, U)$ (if $K$ is compact).

Proof. Let notation be as in the previous proof. Since $\hat{K} = I \otimes R$, the space $I(\hat{K}, \hat{K})$ is the set of operators of the form $B \otimes A$ where $A \in I(R, R)$ and
From the general results of von Neumann algebras, $I(R, R)$ is the von Neumann algebra generated by \{$L(x) | x \in G$\}. Hence, \{$L(f) | f \in C_c^\infty(G)$\} is strong operator dense in $I(R, R)$, and thus the operators $B \otimes L(f)$ are strong operator dense in $I(\widehat{\mathbb{H}}, \widehat{\mathbb{R}})$. In terms of $\widehat{H}$ these are just the operators $F \mapsto \int_G g(x)BF(x^{-1})\, dx$.

Composing with $\Gamma$ we conclude that the operators on $H$ given by

$$A: F \mapsto \int_G \int_K g(x)\delta(k)BF(xk^{-1})\, dk\, dx$$

$$= \int_G \int_K g(xk)\delta(k)B\, dk\, F(x^{-1})\, dx$$

$$= \int_{K \setminus G} \int_K \int_K g(k'xk)\delta(k)BF(k'x^{-1})\, dk\, dk'\, dx$$

are dense in $I(U, U)$. Let $H(x) = \int_K \int_K g(k'xk)\delta(k)B\delta(k')\, dk\, dk'$ and let $h(x) = \text{tr} H(x)$. It is easily seen that $h$ is $K$ central, compactly supported and transforms on the left according to $\lambda_\delta$.

Furthermore,

$$\int_K h(kx)\delta(k)\, dk = \int_K \text{tr} H(kx)\delta(k)\, dk$$

$$= \int_K \text{tr}(H(x)\delta(k^{-1}))\delta(k)\, dk = H(x).$$

Thus

$$\int_G h(x)F(x)\, dx = \int_{K \setminus G} \int_K h(kx)F(kx)\, dk$$

$$= \int_{K \setminus G} \int_K h(kx)\delta(k)F(x)\, dk\, dx = \int_{K \setminus G} H(x)F(x^{-1})\, dx$$

$$= A(F).$$

This proves our claim. Q.E.D.

As an almost immediate corollary to this we have the following.

**Theorem 5.** There is an almost everywhere defined one-to-one correspondence between spherical distributions of height $\delta$ and certain irreducible representations of $I_{c, \delta}$.

**Proof.** Let notation be as in the proof of Theorem 3. Since $I(U, U)$ is the commutator of $U$ and we are dealing with the central decomposition, $I(U, U)$ decomposes as the direct integral of commutators of the $U^\alpha$. Furthermore, this decomposition has the property that for a.e. $\alpha$ the mapping $\pi^\alpha: A \rightarrow A^\alpha$ is a
* representation of $I(U, U)$. Also, any countable dense subset of $I(U, U)$ has a strong operator dense image under $\pi^\alpha$ for a.e. $\alpha$. Since $I_{c, \delta}$ contains a countable dense set, its image under $\pi^\alpha$ is, for a.e. $\alpha$, dense. Since $U^\alpha$ is primary, the algebra $I(U^\alpha, U^\alpha)$ has a faithful irreducible representation which is continuous in the strong operator topology. In fact the left action of $I(U^\alpha, U^\alpha)$ on the Hilbert space $I(T^\alpha, U^\alpha)$ given via composition is easily seen to define such a representation. Call this representation $\Lambda^\alpha$. Then $\Lambda^\alpha \pi^\alpha$ is an irreducible representation of $I(U, U)$ and the image of $I_{c, \delta}$ under it is strongly dense in its image. Hence $\Lambda^\alpha \pi^\alpha|_{I_{c, \delta}}$ is still irreducible. Note also that $\Lambda^\alpha \pi^\alpha$ acts on $I(T^\alpha, U^\alpha)$ and hence its dimension is $\dim I(T^\alpha, U^\alpha)$ which by Theorem 3 is the number of times $\delta$ occurs in $L^2$.

**Remarks.** If $K$ is not compact we can, with considerably less work, prove the same theorem with $F_6$ in place of $I_{c, \delta}$, since $F_6$ is isomorphic with $I(U, U)$. However, what we cannot prove for $K$ general is the following theorem.

**Theorem 6.** If $G$ is unimodular, $D^\alpha$ is a spherical distribution of height $\delta$ which corresponds to the representation $\Lambda^\alpha$ of $I(U, U)$, then for all $f \in I_{c, \delta}(G)$, $\Lambda^\alpha(f)$ is trace class and $D^\alpha(f) = C^\alpha \, \text{tr} \, \Lambda^\alpha(f)$ for some $C^\alpha \in C$.

**Proof.** Let us not initially assume $G$ unimodular. Then for $f \in C_c^\infty(G)$, by Theorem 4,

$$D^\alpha(f) = N^{-1} \text{tr} \, Q^\alpha T^\alpha(x_\delta \ast f)Q^\alpha|_{L^6} = N^{-1} \text{tr} \, Q^\alpha T^\alpha(x_\delta \ast f)Q^\alpha T^\alpha(x_\delta) = N^{-1} \text{tr} \, Q^\alpha T^\alpha(x_\delta \ast f \ast x_\delta)Q^\alpha.$$  

If $f \in I_{c, \delta}$ this becomes $N^{-1} \text{tr} \, Q^\alpha T^\alpha(f)Q^\alpha$. If $G$ is unimodular we may take the $Q^\alpha = I^\alpha$.

Now, consider $H \subset \hat{H} = H^\delta \otimes L^2$ as in the proof of Theorem 4. Then, by the proof of Theorem 4 and the lemma, the restriction to $H^\alpha$ of the space of operators $T^\alpha(f)^* \otimes I^\alpha$, $f \in I_{c, \delta}$ is strongly dense in $I(U^\alpha, U^\alpha)$. Hence the representation $\pi^\alpha$ of the above proof, when restricted to $I_{c, \delta}$ is the map $f \rightarrow T^\alpha(f)^* \otimes I^\alpha|_{H^\alpha}$. Now, for $f \in I_{c, \delta}$, the map

$$T^\alpha(f)^* \otimes I \rightarrow T^\alpha(f)^* \otimes I|_{H^\alpha}$$

is 1-1 since $T^\alpha(f)^*$ commutes with $\Gamma^\alpha$. The von Neumann algebra generated by $T^\alpha(h)^* \otimes I$ ($h \in C_c(G)$) has a semifinite trace $\tau$ given by $\tau(T^\alpha(h)^* \otimes I) = \text{tr} \, T^\alpha(h)^*$ which is (for a.e. $\alpha$) finite for $h \in C_c^\infty(G)$. Hence the algebra generated by $T^\alpha(f)^* \otimes I|_{H^\alpha}$ has a semifinite trace. Since this algebra is type I and is a factor (it is the commutator of the algebra generated by $U^\alpha$), we conclude that if $\Lambda^\alpha$ is any irreducible * representation of it, then $\text{tr} \, \Lambda^\alpha(T^\alpha(f)^* \otimes I)$ is finite for $f \in I_{c, \delta}$ and is a multiple of $\tau(T^\alpha(f)^* \otimes I) = \text{tr} \, T^\alpha(f)^*$. Since this is just $\pi^\alpha(f)$, we are done. Q.E.D.
Remarks. In the $K$ compact case one could almost certainly prove results similar to the above without the assumption that $G$ is a Lie group. However, in the noncompact case one cannot so easily do without $C^\infty$ vector techniques, even in the unimodular case. In fact, there exist examples of nilpotent Lie groups $G$ and cocompact discrete subgroups $\Gamma$ for which no unitary infinite-dimensional irreducible representations contain vectors invariant under $\Gamma$. In particular, if $\delta$ is the identity representation of $\Gamma$, then for "most" $\alpha$, $L_\delta^\alpha \subset C^{-\infty}(U^\alpha) \sim C^\alpha(U^\alpha)$. In a subsequent paper we will give "integral formulas" for the spherical functions in this case.

REFERENCES

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