

January 21, 1972
New Haven, CT

Dear Harish,

As you undoubtedly know I have received a formal invitation from Kaysen, which I have accepted.

I have thought quite a bit about your advice. I think you are right, that I should plan to lecture about my own work; and this I hope to do. However I am rather slow so that I doubt I shall have something worthwhile to say every year. Since the weakness of my ego insists on being considered, it is probably best for me to lecture only when I have something which I feel is finished and of real interest. For example, as I told you, I have been worrying about the relation between some L -series associated to the varieties obtained by dividing a bounded symmetric domain by an arithmetic group and the L -series I introduced in my Washington lecture. Although the relation is not yet perfectly clear to me, I do know pretty much what is going on and have enough of the ingredients of a proof to be sure I am on the right track. I am quite pleased by it all. It should convince even the most sceptical that the point of view of my Washington lecture is correct. However the work is not complete. In particular there is one serious point which I have not really been able to think about.

In any case I feel that I am justified in trying to get all this proved before I start to lecture.

My hope is that I would have enough ideas (and strength to carry them out) to be able to lecture profitably every two or three years. There are of course other ways to contribute to mathematical life at the Institute; but this I should think about after I arrive.

Yours,

Bob L.

Compiled on November 17, 2025.