

# Arithmetic of Markoff surfaces

Fei XU

School of Mathematical Sciences

Capital Normal University

# I. Introduction

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Theorem (Fermat): When the genus of  $X$  is 0, then

$$X(\mathbb{Q}) = \emptyset \quad \text{or} \quad |X(\mathbb{Q})| = \infty$$

Theorem (Mordell): When the genus of  $X$  is 1, then

$$X(\mathbb{Q}) = \emptyset \quad \text{or} \quad X(\mathbb{Q}) \text{ is a finitely generated abelian group}$$

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- Let  $\Omega_{\overline{X}}$  be the sheaf of differentials of  $\overline{X}$  and

$$\omega_{\overline{X}} = \bigwedge^{\dim(X)} \Omega_{\overline{X}}$$

be the canonical divisor of  $\overline{X}$

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- Case of Calabi-Yau varieties.
- For abelian varieties, there is a generalization of BSD conjecture.
- There are two classes of 2-dimensional Calabi-Yau varieties: abelian surfaces and K3 surfaces which are simply connected.
- For a K3 surface  $X$ , it is conjectured that either  $X(\mathbb{Q}) = \emptyset$  or  $X(\mathbb{Q})$  is Zariski dense in  $X$ .

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**Example.** Euler generalized the Fermat equation and conjectured

$$X : x_1^n + x_2^n + \cdots + x_{n-1}^n = x_n^n$$

has no solution of positive integers for  $n > 2$ .

- $X$  is a Calabi-Yau variety.
- Lander and Parkin (1966) found a counterexample

$$27^5 + 84^5 + 110^5 + 133^5 = 144^5$$

by a direct computer searching.

- When  $n = 4$ ,  $X$  is a K3 surface.

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- Elkies (1988) provided a counterexample for  $n = 4$

$$2682440^4 + 15365639^4 + 18796760^4 = 20615673^4$$

and  $X(\mathbb{Q})$  is Zariski dense in  $X$ .

Sketch of Elkies' idea: There is a morphism  $\psi$

$$Y : \begin{cases} (u^2 + 2)\left(\frac{r-s}{2}\right)^2 = -(3u^2 - 8u + 6)\left(\frac{r+s}{2}\right)^2 - 2(u^2 - 2)\left(\frac{r+s}{2}\right) - 2u \\ \pm(u^2 + 2)t^2 = 4(u^2 - 2)\left(\frac{r+s}{2}\right)^2 + 8u\left(\frac{r+s}{2}\right) + (2 - u^2) \end{cases}$$

$$\longrightarrow Z : \{r^4 + s^4 + t^4 = 1\}$$

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- One can partially compactify  $Y$  to  $Y^c$  with the fibration  $Y^c \xrightarrow{\phi} \mathbb{P}^1$  by sending  $(r, s, t, u) \mapsto [u, 1]$ . Moreover, the morphism  $\psi$  can be extended to

$$\psi : Y^c \rightarrow Z \quad \text{and} \quad \psi(Y^c(\mathbb{Q})) = Z(\mathbb{Q}).$$

- Each fiber of  $\phi$  over  $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{Q})$  is an intersection of two conics over  $\mathbb{Q}$ . By using the Hasse principle for conics with several testing, one can choose  $\phi^{-1}([16, -5])$  which is

$$153y^2 = -779x^2 - 206x + 80, \quad 153t^2 = 412x^2 - 320x - 103$$

where  $x = \frac{r+s}{2}$  and  $y = \frac{r-s}{2}$ .

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- All rational points of first conic can be parametrized by

$$x = \frac{51k^2 - 34k - 5221}{14(17k^2 + 779)}, \quad y = \frac{17k^2 + 7558k - 779}{42(17k^2 + 779)}$$

by Fermat's method. Substituting this  $x$  into the second conic and using the new coordinates  $\xi = (k + 2)/7$  and  $\eta = 3(17k^2 + 779)t/14$ , one has

$$\eta^2 = -31790\xi^4 + 36941\xi^3 - 56158\xi^2 + 28849\xi + 22030.$$

- By computer searching, one obtains

$$(\xi, \eta) = \left(-\frac{31}{467}, \frac{30731278}{467^2}\right)$$

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- 1)  $\overline{X}$  is simply connected.
- 2) There is a smooth compactification  $X \hookrightarrow X^c$  over  $\mathbb{Q}$  such that  $D = X^c \setminus X$  is a simple normal crossing divisor.
- 3)  $[D] + \omega_{X^c} = 0$  in  $\text{Pic}(X^c)$ .

- A log K3 surface is a generalization of K3 surface.

**Conjecture (Vojta).** If  $X$  be a log K3 surface over  $\mathbb{Q}$  and  $\mathfrak{X}$  be an integral model of  $X$  over  $\mathbb{Z}$ , then there is a number field  $F$  such that  $\mathfrak{X}(\mathcal{O}_F)$  is Zariski dense in  $\mathfrak{X}$  where  $\mathcal{O}_F$  is the ring of integers of  $F$ .

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## II. Brauer-Manin obstruction

- Let  $X$  be a variety over  $\mathbb{Q}$  and  $\text{Br}(X) = H_{\text{et}}^2(X, \mathbb{G}_m)$  and

$$\text{Br}_1(X) = \ker(\text{Br}(X) \rightarrow \text{Br}(\overline{X})).$$

- Let  $\mathbf{A}_{\mathbb{Q}}$  be the adèles and  $\mathbf{A}_{\mathbb{Q}}^f$  be the finite adèles of  $\mathbb{Q}$ . Write

$$X(\mathbf{A}_{\mathbb{Q}})^{\text{Br}(X)} = \{(x_p) \in X(\mathbf{A}_{\mathbb{Q}}) : \sum_{p \leq \infty} \text{inv}_p(\xi(x_p)) = 0; \forall \xi \in \text{Br}(X)\}$$

where

$$\text{inv}_p : \text{Br}(\mathbb{Q}_p) \longrightarrow \mathbb{Q}/\mathbb{Z}$$

is the invariant map from the local class field theory for  $p \leq \infty$ .

- The class field theory implies

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$$X(\mathbb{Q}) \subseteq X(\mathbf{A}_{\mathbb{Q}})^{\text{Br}(X)} \subseteq X(\mathbf{A}_{\mathbb{Q}}).$$

## II. Brauer-Manin obstruction

**Definition.** We say  $X$  satisfies strong approximation with the Brauer-Manin obstruction if

$$X(\mathbb{Q}) \text{ is dense in } \text{pr}^f(X(\mathbf{A}_{\mathbb{Q}})^{\text{Br}(X)})$$

where

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**Conjecture** (Skorobogatov). If  $X$  is a K3 surface, then  $X$  satisfies strong approximation with the Brauer-Manin obstruction.

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### III. Markoff surfaces

- Let

$$\mathfrak{U}_m : x^2 + y^2 + z^2 - xyz = m$$

where  $m$  is a fixed integer. Then  $U_m = \mathfrak{U}_m \times_{\mathbb{Z}} \mathbb{Q}$  is called a Markoff surface over  $\mathbb{Q}$ .

- When  $m \neq 0$  and  $4$ , then  $U_m$  is smooth.
- A smooth compactification  $X_m$  of  $U_m$  is

$$t(x^2 + y^2 + z^2) - xyz = mt^3$$

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- Let  $\bar{X}_m \xrightarrow{\pi} \mathbb{P}^2$  be a blowing down the following six lines in  $\bar{X}_m$

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} l_1 : x = 2t, y - z = (\sqrt{m-4})t \\ l_2 : y = 2t, z - x = (\sqrt{m-4})t \\ l_3 : z = 2t, x - y = (\sqrt{m-4})t \\ l_4 : x = (\sqrt{m})t, y = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{m} + \sqrt{m-4})z \\ l_5 : y = (\sqrt{m})t, z = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{m} + \sqrt{m-4})x \\ l_6 : z = (\sqrt{m})t, x = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{m} + \sqrt{m-4})y \end{array} \right.$$

and  $L$  is the inverse image of a line in  $\mathbb{P}^2$ . Then  $\text{Pic}(\bar{X}_m) \cong \mathbb{Z}^7$  is generated by  $L, l_1, \dots, l_6$  such that

$$\langle L, L \rangle = 1, \quad \langle L, l_i \rangle = 0 \quad \text{and} \quad \langle l_i, l_i \rangle = -1$$

for  $1 \leq i \leq 6$  and  $\langle l_i, l_j \rangle = 0$  for  $i \neq j$ .

### III. Markoff surfaces

- The canonical divisor  $\omega_{\overline{X}_m}$  of  $\overline{X}_m$  satisfies

$$\omega_{\overline{X}_m} = -3L + \sum_{i=1}^6 l_i \text{ in } \text{Pic}(\overline{X}_m).$$

- The divisor  $D_m = X_m \setminus U_m$  consists of three lines

$$L_1 : \{t = x = 0\}, \quad L_2 : \{t = y = 0\}, \quad L_3 : \{t = z = 0\}$$

and

$$L_1 = L - l_1 - l_4, \quad L_2 = L - l_2 - l_5, \quad L_3 = L - l_3 - l_6 \text{ in } \text{Pic}(\overline{X}_m)$$

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### III. Markoff surfaces

- Basic question: For which  $m$ ,  $\mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}) \neq \emptyset$  ?

**Proposition.**

$$\prod_p \mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}_p) = \emptyset$$

if and only if  $m \equiv 3 \pmod{4}$  or  $m \equiv \pm 3 \pmod{9}$ .

**Proposition.**  $\mathfrak{U}_m$  admits an automorphism group  $\Gamma$  generated by

- (a) The Vieta involution:  $(x, y, z) \mapsto (yz - x, y, z)$ ;
- (b) The sign change:  $(x, y, z) \mapsto (-x, -y, z)$ ;
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**Theorem** (Markoff, Hurwitz, Mordell, ..., Ghosh-Sarnak)

When  $m < 0$ , then each orbit of  $\Gamma$  contains a unique integral solution  $(x_0, y_0, z_0)$  such that

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**Theorem** (Ghosh-Sarnak).

$$\#\{m \in \mathbb{Z} : 0 < m \leq K, \prod_p \mathfrak{L}_m(\mathbb{Z}_p) \neq \emptyset \text{ but } \mathfrak{L}_m(\mathbb{Z}) = \emptyset\} \\ \gg \sqrt{K}(\log K)^{-\frac{1}{2}}$$

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## IV. Computation of Brauer groups

**Theorem** (Colliot-Thelene, Wei and X.; Loughran and Mitankin).

Let  $m \neq 0, 4$  and  $d = m - 4$ .

If  $[\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{m}, \sqrt{d}) : \mathbb{Q}] = 4$ , then

$$\mathrm{Br}(X_m)/\mathrm{Br}(\mathbb{Q}) = \mathrm{Br}_1(X_m)/\mathrm{Br}(\mathbb{Q}) \cong \mathbb{Z}/2$$

with a generator

$$\left\{ \left( \left( \frac{x}{t} \right)^2 - 4, d \right) = \left( \left( \frac{y}{t} \right)^2 - 4, d \right) = \left( \left( \frac{z}{t} \right)^2 - 4, d \right) \right\} \quad \text{over } t \neq 0.$$

If  $d \notin (\mathbb{Q}^\times)^2$  and  $m \in (\mathbb{Q}^\times)^2$ , then

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Sketch of proof. Since  $\overline{X}_m$  is rational, one obtains  $\text{Br}_1(X_m) = \text{Br}(X_m)$ .

By  $H^p(\mathbb{Q}, H^q(\overline{X}_m, \mathbb{G}_m)) \Rightarrow H^{p+q}(X_m, \mathbb{G}_m)$ , one has

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## IV. Computation of Brauer groups

**Theorem** (Colliot-Thelene, Wei and X.; Loughran and Mitankin).

Let  $m \neq 0, 4$  and  $d = m - 4$ .

If  $[\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{m}, \sqrt{d}) : \mathbb{Q}] = 4$  then

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with the generators  $\{(x - 2, d), (y - 2, d), (z - 2, d)\}$ .

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## IV. Computation of Brauer groups

Sketch of proof. By the exact sequence of  $\text{Gal}(\overline{\mathbb{Q}}/\mathbb{Q})$ -modules

$$0 \rightarrow \overline{\mathbb{Q}}^\times \rightarrow \overline{\mathbb{Q}}[U_m]^\times \rightarrow \text{Div}_{\overline{X}_m \setminus \overline{U}_m}(\overline{X}_m) \xrightarrow{\phi} \text{Pic}(\overline{X}_m) \rightarrow \text{Pic}(\overline{U}_m) \rightarrow 0$$

and  $\text{Div}_{\overline{X}_m \setminus \overline{U}_m}(\overline{X}_m) = \bigoplus_{i=1}^3 \mathbb{Z}L_i$ , one can show  $\phi$  is injective. Indeed, if

$$aL_1 + bL_2 + cL_3 = a(L - l_1 - l_4) + b(L - l_2 - l_5) + c(L - l_3 - l_6) = 0,$$

then  $a = b = c = 0$ . This implies that  $\overline{\mathbb{Q}}^\times = \overline{\mathbb{Q}}[U_m]^\times$  and the sub-lattice

$$\text{Div}_{\overline{X}_m \setminus \overline{U}_m}(\overline{X}_m) = \bigoplus_{i=1}^3 \mathbb{Z}L_i$$

is primitive in  $\text{Pic}(\overline{X}_m)$ . Therefore  $\text{Pic}(\overline{U}_m)$  is torsion free.

## IV. Computation of Brauer groups

By  $H^p(\mathbb{Q}, H^q(\overline{U}_m, \mathbb{G}_m)) \Rightarrow H^{p+q}(U_m, \mathbb{G}_m)$ , one has

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Let  $m \neq 0, 4$ ;  $d = m - 4$  and  $K = \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d}, \sqrt{m})$ .

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Otherwise  $\text{Br}(U_m) = \text{Br}_1(U_m)$ .

Sketch of proof. Recall  $\pi: \overline{X}_m \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^2$  is a contraction of  $\{l_1, \dots, l_6\}$  to  $\mathbb{P}^2$  and

$$\overline{X}_m = \overline{U}_m \cup \{L_1, L_2, L_3\}.$$

This implies that  $\pi$  induces an isomorphism

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## IV. Computation of Brauer groups

Let  $V = \overline{U}_m \setminus \{l_1, \dots, l_6\} \cong \mathbb{G}_m \times_{\overline{\mathbb{Q}}} \mathbb{G}_m$ . Then

$$0 \rightarrow \mathrm{Br}(\overline{U}_m) \rightarrow \mathrm{Br}(V) \xrightarrow{\mathrm{res}} \bigoplus_{i=1}^6 H_{\mathrm{et}}^1(D_i, \mathbb{Q}/\mathbb{Z})$$

where

$$D_i = l_i \setminus \{\text{the intersection point of } l_i \text{ with } L_1, L_2, L_3\} \cong \mathbb{A}^1$$

over  $\overline{\mathbb{Q}}$ . Since  $H_{\mathrm{et}}^1(\mathbb{A}_{\overline{\mathbb{Q}}}^1, \mathbb{Q}/\mathbb{Z}) = 0$ , one concludes that

$$\mathrm{Br}(\overline{U}_m) \cong \mathrm{Br}(V) \cong \mathrm{Br}(\mathbb{G}_m \times_{\overline{\mathbb{Q}}} \mathbb{G}_m) \cong \mathbb{Q}/\mathbb{Z}.$$

## IV. Computation of Brauer groups

**Example.** If  $\sqrt{-1} \notin \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d})$ , then  $\text{Br}(U_m) = \text{Br}_1(U_m)$ .

Proof. Suppose that  $-1$  and  $\frac{\sqrt{d}-\sqrt{m}}{2}$  are in  $(K^\times)^2$ . Since  $\sqrt{-1} \notin \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d})$ , one has  $K \neq \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d})$  and  $\sqrt{m} \notin \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d})$ . Then

$$\text{Norm}_{K/\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d})}\left(\frac{\sqrt{d}-\sqrt{m}}{2}\right) = \left(\frac{\sqrt{d}-\sqrt{m}}{2}\right)\left(\frac{\sqrt{d}+\sqrt{m}}{2}\right) = -1$$

On the other hand,  $\frac{\sqrt{d}-\sqrt{m}}{2} \in (K^\times)^2$ . This implies that  $\sqrt{-1} \in \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{d})$ . A contradiction is derived.



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## V. Integral Brauer-Manin obstruction

**Example.** If  $m = 4 + rv^2$  where  $r \in \mathbb{Z}$  is one of  $2, -2, -3, 12, -12$  and all prime factors of  $v$  are congruent to

$$\begin{cases} \pm 1 \pmod{8} & \text{when } r = 2 \\ \pm 1 \pmod{12} \text{ and } v^2 \equiv 25 \pmod{32} & \text{when } r = 12 \\ 1 \text{ or } 3 \pmod{8} & \text{when } r = -2 \text{ and } m < 0 \\ 1 \pmod{3} & \text{when } r = -3 \text{ and } m < 0 \\ 1 \pmod{3} & \text{when } r = -12, \end{cases}$$

then

$$\left( \prod_{p \leq \infty} \mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}_p) \right)^{\text{Br}_1(U_m)} = \emptyset$$

In particular,  $\mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}) = \emptyset$ .

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**Example.** If  $m = 4 + 20v^2$  where all prime factors of  $v$  are congruent to  $\pm 1 \pmod{5}$ , then

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$$\#\{m \in \mathbb{Z} : |m| \leq K, \prod_{p \leq \infty} \mathcal{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}_p) \neq \emptyset \text{ but } (\prod_{p \leq \infty} \mathcal{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}_p))^{\text{Br}(U_m)} = \emptyset\} \\ \asymp \sqrt{K}(\log K)^{-\frac{1}{2}}$$

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## VI. Brauer-Manin obstruction + reduction

**Proposition** (Ghosh-Sarnak).

If  $m = 4 + 2l^2$  where  $l \geq 13$  is a prime with  $l \equiv \pm 4 \pmod{9}$ , then

$$\prod_{p \leq \infty} \mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}_p) \neq \emptyset \quad \text{but} \quad \mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}) = \emptyset.$$

**Proposition** (Colliot-Thelene, Wei and X.).

Let  $m = 4 + 2l^2w^2$  where  $w$  is an odd integer and  $l$  is a prime with  $l \equiv \pm 3 \pmod{8}$ .

If  $lw \equiv \pm 4 \pmod{9}$ , then

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## VI. Brauer-Manin obstruction + reduction

**Proposition** (Colliot-Thelene, Wei and X.).

If  $m = 4 + rl^2$  such that one of the following conditions holds

- i)  $r = 2$  and  $l \geq 13$  is a prime with  $l \equiv \pm 4 \pmod{9}$ ,
  - ii)  $r = 12$  and  $l \geq 37$  is a prime,  $l^2 \equiv 25 \pmod{32}$  and  $1 + 3l^2$  is not a sum of two squares (e.g.  $l = 37, 43, \dots$ ),
  - iii)  $r = -2$  and  $l \geq 13$  is a prime,
  - iv)  $r = -3$  and  $l \geq 17$  is a prime,
  - v)  $r = -12$  and  $l \geq 37$  is a prime,
- then

$$\mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}) = \emptyset.$$

## VI. Brauer-Manin obstruction + reduction

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If  $m = 4 + rl^2$  such that one of the following conditions holds

i)  $r = 2$  and  $l \geq 13$  is a prime with  $l \equiv \pm 4 \pmod{9}$ ,

ii)  $r = 12$  and  $l \geq 37$  is a prime,  $l^2 \equiv 25 \pmod{32}$  and  $1 + 3l^2$  is not a sum of two squares (e.g.  $l = 37, 43, \dots$ ),

iii)  $r = -2$  and  $l \geq 13$  is a prime,

iv)  $r = -3$  and  $l \geq 17$  is a prime,

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## VI. Brauer-Manin obstruction + reduction

Sketch of proof for case i).

Suppose  $\mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}) \neq \emptyset$ . By the reduction theory, there is  $(x_0, y_0, z_0) \in \mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z})$  such that

$$3 \leq x_0 \leq y_0 \leq -z_0 \quad \text{or} \quad x_0 = 0, 1, 2 \text{ (which can be excluded)}$$

This implies that  $x_0 \leq (4 + 2l^2)^{\frac{1}{3}}$ . Then  $x_0 < l - 2$ .

One concludes  $(l, x_0^2 - 4) = 1$  and the Hilbert symbol  $(x_0^2 - 4, 2)_l = 1$ . Therefore

$$(x_0^2 - 4, 2)_p = \begin{cases} 1 & p \neq 2 \\ -1 & p = 2 \end{cases}$$

This contradicts to the Hilbert (quadratic) reciprocity law.

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## VI. Brauer-Manin obstruction + reduction

By applying this idea, we can also improve the result of Loughran and Mitankin as follows

**Theorem** (Colliot-Thelene, Wei and X.).

$$\#\{m \in \mathbb{Z} : |m| \leq K, \left( \prod_{p \leq \infty} \mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}_p) \right)^{\text{Br}(U_m)} \neq \emptyset \text{ but } \mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}) = \emptyset\} \\ \gg \sqrt{K} (\log K)^{-\frac{1}{2}}$$

as  $K \rightarrow \infty$ .

## VII. Failure of strong approximation

**Theorem** (Colliot-Thelene, Wei and X.).

For any finite set  $S$  of primes, the image of the natural map

$$\mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}) \rightarrow \prod_{p \notin S} \mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}_p)$$

is not dense.

**Corollary.**  $\mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z})$  is not dense in  $pr^f((\prod_{p \leq \infty} \mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z}_p))^{\text{Br}(U_m)})$ .

On the other hand,  $\mathfrak{U}_m(\mathbb{Z})$  is Zariski dense in  $\mathfrak{U}_m$  if

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} m > 4 \text{ is not a square} \\ m \text{ is a square with a prime } p|m \text{ and } p \equiv 1 \pmod{4} \\ m < 0 \end{array} \right.$$

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Thank you for your attention !