

THE DENSITY OF IMAGES OF UNIT JACOBIAN DETERMINANT POLYNOMIAL MAPS OF \mathbb{Z}^n

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ABSTRACT. Motivated by the Jacobian problem we establish the estimate

$$\#\{z \in F(\mathbb{Z}^n) : \max_{k=1, \dots, n} |z_k| \leq B\} = O(B^{n-1}), \text{ as } B \rightarrow +\infty,$$

for possible non-invertible maps $F = (F_1, \dots, F_n) \in \mathbb{Z}[X_1, \dots, X_n]^n$ with $\det DF \equiv 1$, where the implied constant depends on F .

1. INTRODUCTION

Let $n > 1$ be an integer and $X = (X_1, \dots, X_n)$ a n -tuple of variables. For $F = (F_1, \dots, F_n) \in \mathbb{Z}[X]^n$, considered as a polynomial map from \mathbb{C}^n into itself, let $JF := \det DF$ the Jacobian determinant of F . Our interest is with the asymptotic behavior of the quantity

$$N_F(\mathbb{Z}, B) := \#\{z \in F(\mathbb{Z}^n) : \max_{k=1, \dots, n} |z_k| \leq B\} \quad (1)$$

as $B \rightarrow +\infty$ for the case $JF \equiv 1$. The Jacobian conjecture (ref. [8, 1, 6]), posed by Ott-Heinrich Keller in [8] since 1939 and still open even for $n = 2$, says that if $F \in \mathbb{C}[X]^n$ with $JF \equiv c \neq 0$, then F is invertible. Following Van den Dries and McKenna [9], if this conjecture is false, then for $n \gg 1$ it has counterexamples $F \in \mathbb{Z}[X]^n$ with $JF \equiv 1$. This article is to establish a sharp upper bound of the quantity (1) for such possible counterexamples.

Theorem 1 (Main Theorem). *Suppose $F \in \mathbb{Z}[X]^n$ and $JF \equiv 1$. If F is not invertible, then*

$$N_F(\mathbb{Z}, B) = O(B^{n-1}),$$

where the implied constant depending on F .

The upper bound in the theorem is sharp in sense that if there is a non-invertible map $F \in \mathbb{Z}[X]^n$ with $JF \equiv 1$ and $F(0) = 0$, then $G(X, T) := (\frac{1}{T}F(TX), T) \in \mathbb{Z}[X, T]^{n+1}$, $JG \equiv 1$ and $N_G(\mathbb{Z}, B) \asymp B^n$. The asymptotic estimate follows from Theorem 1 and Schanuel's theorem [14], which asserts that $\#\{z \in \mathbb{Z}^n : \max_{k=1, \dots, n} |z_k| \leq B\} \asymp B^n$.

As an immediate consequence of Theorem 1, we obtain

Corollary 2. *Suppose $F \in \mathbb{Z}[X]^n$ and $JF \equiv 1$. The followings are equivalent:*

- a) F is invertible;
- b) $N_F(\mathbb{Z}, B) \geq cB^{n-1+\varepsilon}$ as $B \rightarrow +\infty$ for some $\varepsilon > 0$ and $c > 0$.

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In view of the well-known reduction results due to Yagzhev [16], Bass, Connel and Wright [1] and Druzkowski [5] and Corollary 1, to prove the Jacobian conjecture for all $n > 1$ one may try to find a lower bound in (b) for all $n > 1$ and all the cubic linear mappings $F \in \mathbb{Z}[X]^n$,

$$F_i(X) = X_i + (a_{i1}X_1 + \cdots + a_{in}X_n)^3, \quad a_{ij} \in \mathbb{Z}, \quad i, j = 1, \dots, n,$$

satisfying $JF \equiv 1$.

The case $n = 2$ of Theorem 1 can be easily reduced from a pioneer result in [10], which asserts that if $F \in \mathbb{Z}[X_1, X_2]^2$ with $JF \equiv 1$ is not invertible, then the numbers of integer points on the fibers $F_1 = k, k \in \mathbb{Z}$, are uniformly bounded. In Section 3, instead of Theorem 1 we will prove a version for the case of $F \in \mathcal{O}_K[X]^n$, where $K = \mathbb{Q}$ or any imaginary quadratic number field and \mathcal{O}_K is the ring of integral numbers of K (Theorem 7, Section 3). We will try to show the uniform boundedness of the numbers $\#(l \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n))$ for generic lines l in \mathbb{C}^n (Lemma 4, Section 2). Our argument here is closed to those in [9, 10], which uses the special property of such fields K : $|r| \geq 1$ for all $0 \neq r \in \mathcal{O}_K$.

In pursuing the Jacobian problem it would be useful to consider the following problem.

Question A: Let K be any number field of degree d over \mathbb{Q} and $F \in K[X]^n$ with $JF \equiv 1$. Is

$$N_F(K, B) := \#\{z \in F(K^n) : \text{Height}(z) \leq B\} = O(B^{(n-1)d}) \quad (2)$$

if F is not invertible?

In a contrast to (2), for any $f \in K[X]^n$ of geometric degree > 1 the image set $f(K^n)$ is “thin” in K^n in sense of J-P. Serre ([15]), and hence,

$$N_f(K, B) = O(B^{(n-\frac{1}{2})d}(\log B)^\lambda), \quad 0 < \lambda \leq 1,$$

by Cohen’s theorem on the density of thin sets (ref. [3, 15]). This bound seems to be optimum, for example, $N_f(K, B) \asymp B^{(n-\frac{1}{2})d}$ for $f(X) = (X_1^2, X_2, \dots, X_n)$.

Uniform Bound Conjecture (see, for example, [2, 13]) asserts that for any number field K and any integer $g > 1$ there is a constant $B(K, g)$ depending K and g such that any curve of genus g defined over K can have no more than $B(K, g)$ rational points. This conjecture implies a positive answer to Question A, except for when the preimages $F^{-1}(l)$ of generic lines l in \mathbb{C}^n are irreducible curves of genus $g = 0; 1$ (Theorem 9, Section 3). Analogous to those in Corollary 2, a complete positive answer to Question A would allow to consider the Jacobian conjecture over number fields as a problem of finding lower bounds of $N_F(K, B)$.

2. INTEGRAL POINTS ON PREIMAGES OF LINES

In sequels, $\overline{\mathbb{Q}}$ is the field of all algebraic numbers, K is any number field and \mathcal{O}_K - the ring of integral numbers of K . Let us denote by $l(u, v)$ the complex line of direction $0 \neq v \in \mathbb{C}^n$ passing through a point $u \in \mathbb{C}^n$, $l(u, v) = \{u + tv : t \in \mathbb{C}\}$.

Recall, for any dominant morphism $f : V \rightarrow W$ of irreducible complex affine varieties V and W , the *bifurcation value set* E_f of f is the smallest closed algebraic subset of W such that the restriction $f : V \setminus f^{-1}(E_f) \rightarrow W \setminus E_f$ defines a locally trivial smooth fibration. In the situation when $V = W = \mathbb{C}^n$ and $Jf \equiv c \neq 0$, either E_f is empty, i.e. f is invertible, or the bifurcation value set E_f coincides with the non-proper value set of F - the set of all values $a \in \mathbb{C}^n$ such that $f(x_k) \rightarrow a$ for some sequences $x_k \rightarrow \infty$. In the late case E_f is a hypersurface in \mathbb{C}^n given by $H_f(X) = 0$ for a non-constant $H_f \in \mathbb{C}[X]$ (ref. [7]). Let K_f denote the cone of tangents at infinity of E_f , i.e. $K_f = \{v \in \mathbb{C}^n : h_f(v) = 0\}$, where h_f is the leading homogeneous of H_f .

Lemma 3. (Main Lemma in [12]) *Suppose $F \in \mathbb{C}[X]^n$ and $JF \equiv 1$, but F is not invertible. Then, there exists a non-constant polynomial $\sigma_F \in \mathbb{C}[U, V]$, $U = (U_1, \dots, U_n)$ and $V = (V_1, \dots, V_n)$, such that*

- a) $\sigma_F(\bar{u}, V) \neq 0$ and $\sigma_F(U, \bar{v}) \neq 0$ for $\bar{u} \notin E_F$ and $\bar{v} \notin K_F$, and
- b) *the preimages $F^{-1}(l)$, $l = l(u, v)$ with $u, v \in \mathbb{C}^n$ and $\sigma_F(u, v) \neq 0$, are irreducible affine curves of same genus g_F and number $n_F > 2$ of irreducible branches at infinity.*

Moreover, in the case $F \in K[X]^n$ for a number field K ,

- c) $H_F, \sigma_F \in \overline{\mathbb{Q}}[X]$ and
- d) *for every line $l = l(u, v)$, $u, v \in K^n$ and $\sigma_F(u, v) \neq 0$, the preimage $F^{-1}(l)$ has at most finitely many integral points in K^n .*

From now on, we assume that K is \mathbb{Q} or any imaginary quadratic number field. Such fields K can be characterized by the property: $|r| \leq 1$ for all $0 \neq r \in \mathcal{O}_K$. Let

$$\theta_K := \sup_{c \in \mathbb{C}} \#\{r \in \mathcal{O}_K : |c - r| \leq 1\},$$

This number θ_K is at most 7, since in any disk of radius 1 in \mathbb{C} there is no more than seven distinct points s_i such that $|s_i - s_j| \geq 1$. For example, $\theta_{\mathbb{Q}} = 3$, $\theta_{\mathbb{Q}(i)} = 5$ and $\theta_{\mathbb{Q}(i\sqrt{3})} = 7$.

The remains of this section is to prove the following.

Lemma 4. *In addition to Lemma 3, in the case $F \in \mathcal{O}_K[X]^n$ for $K = \mathbb{Q}$ or any imaginary quadratic number field,*

$$\begin{aligned} \#(l \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n)) &\leq \theta_K \deg E_F \\ \#(F^{-1}(l) \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n) &\leq \theta_K \deg(F) \deg E_F \end{aligned}$$

for all $l = l(u, v)$, $u, v \in K^n$ with $\sigma_F(u, v) \neq 0$, where $\deg(F)$ is the geometric degree of F .

First, we present a variation of the earlier nice result due to Van den Dries in [9], which asserts that if $F \in \mathbb{Z}[X]^n$ and $JF \equiv 1$, but F is not invertible, then F maps the lattice \mathbb{Z}^n into the narrow neighborhood $E_F + \{z \in \mathbb{C}^n : \max_{i=1, \dots, n} |z_i| \leq 1\}$ of E_F .

Lemma 5. *Let $K = \mathbb{Q}$ or any imaginary quadratic number field. Suppose $F \in \mathcal{O}_K[X]^n$ and $a \in \mathcal{O}_K^n$ with $JF(a) = 1$. Let $0 < k \leq n$, $W := \{x \in \mathbb{C}^n : x_i = F_i(a), i = k+1, \dots, n\}$, V denote the unique irreducible component of $F^{-1}(W)$ such that $a \in V$ and $f := F|_V : V \rightarrow W$. Then, either*

- a) *there is a point $c \in E_f$ such that $\max_{i=1, \dots, k} |F_i(a) - c_i| \leq 1$, or*
- b) *f is invertible, f^{-1} is a polynomial map of the variables X_i s, $i = 1, \dots, k$, with coefficients in \mathcal{O}_K and $f : (V, V \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n) \rightarrow (W, W \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n)$ is isomorphic.*

Proof. Our argument here is analogous to those in [9, 10], which is based on the implicit function theorem and the fact that power series with coefficients in \mathcal{O}_K and with convergent radius > 1 must be polynomials.

Let $a \in \mathcal{O}_K^n$ be as in the statement and put

$$d := \inf_{c \in E_f} \max_{i=1, \dots, k} |F_i(a) - c_i|.$$

Since E_f is closed, there is a point $c \in E_f$ such that $d = \max_{i=1, \dots, k} |F_i(a) - c_i|$. So, we have to show only that “ $d > 1$ ” \Rightarrow (b).

Assume that $d > 1$. We may take an $\varepsilon > 0$ so that $d - \varepsilon > 1$. Replacing $F(X)$ by $F(X - a) - F(a)$, if necessary, without a loss of generality we may assume that $F \in \mathcal{O}_K[X]^n$, $F(0) = 0$ and $JF(0) = 1$. Then, by the implicit analytic function theorem there exists

a unique local holomorphic inverse $G = (G_1, \dots, G_n)$ of F , defined on an open set U of $x \in \mathbb{C}^n$ with $|x_i| < r$ and $G_i \in \mathcal{O}_K[[X]]$, such that $G(0) = 0$.

Let $B := \{w \in W : |w_i| < d - \varepsilon, i = 1, \dots, k\}$, which is a simply connected open subset of $W \setminus E_f$. Let $g = (g_1, \dots, g_n) := G : U \cap B \rightarrow V$. Then, we have

$$g_i(X_1, \dots, X_k) = G(X_1, \dots, X_k, 0, \dots, 0), \quad i = 1, \dots, k,$$

which are power series in $\mathcal{O}_K[[X_1, \dots, X_k]]$.

Since $F : V \setminus f^{-1}(E_f) \rightarrow W \setminus E_f$ is a unbranched smooth covering and $B \subset W \setminus E_f$, the holomorphic map g can be extended over B and determines a unique smooth lift of f with $g(0) = 0$ and $f \circ g = Id_B$. Therefore, the power series g_i are absolutely convergence on the open box B . Since B contains the unit box $\{w \in W : |w_i| \leq 1, i = 1, \dots, k\}$, it follows that g_i s are polynomials of the variables $X_i, i = 1, \dots, k$, and with coefficients in \mathcal{O}_K . Thus, g is well defined over W and determines a unique inverse of f , as $f \circ g = Id_B$. In results, f gives an isomorphism of the pairs $(V, V \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n)$ and $(W, W \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n)$. \square \square

Lemma 6. *Let $K = \mathbb{Q}$ or any imaginary quadratic number field. Let $F \in \mathcal{O}_K[X]^n$ with $JF \equiv 1$. Let $l := l(u, v)$ be a line in \mathbb{C}^n , $u, v \in \mathcal{O}_K^n$. If $F^{-1}(l) \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n \neq \emptyset$ and $JF \equiv 1$ on $F^{-1}(l)$, then, either*

- a) $\#(l \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n)) \leq \theta_K \deg E_F$, or
- b) $F^{-1}(l)$ has a component V isomorphic to \mathbb{C} such that

$$f := F|_V : (V, V \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n) \rightarrow (l, l \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n)$$

is isomorphic.

Proof. Given $l = l(u, v)$ with $u \in \mathcal{O}_K^n$ and $0 \neq v \in \mathcal{O}_K^n$. We may assume that v is primitive, i.e. $\gcd(v_1, \dots, v_n) = 1$. We need the following elementary fact:

Claim 1. *For any number field k and for any two non-zero primitive vectors $v, w \in \mathcal{O}_k^n$ there is a linear transform of \mathcal{O}_k^n given by a matrix $T \in SL(n, \mathcal{O}_k)$, such that $T(v) = w$.*

(See, for example, in the proof of Theorem A' in [12]).

By this fact we can choose a matrix $T \in SL(n, \mathcal{O}_K)$ such that $T(v) = e$, $e := (0, \dots, 0, 1)$. Replacing $F(X)$ by $T(F(X))$ and u by $T(u)$, we may assume that $l = l(u, e)$. Applying Lemma 5 to the case of $W = l$ and each of points $a \in F^{-1}(l) \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n$, either we obtain (b) or we have that

$$l \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n) \subset E_F + \{te : t \in \mathbb{C}, |t| \leq 1\}.$$

The late means that

$$l \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n) \subset \bigcup_{c \in l \cap E_F} (\{c + te : t \in \mathbb{C}, |t| \leq 1\} \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n)$$

that ensures $\#(l \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n)) \leq \theta_K \deg E_F$. \square \square

Proof of Lemma 4. By Lemma 3 (b), for any given line $l = l(u, v)$, $u, v \in \mathcal{O}_K^n$ with $\sigma_F(u, v) \neq 0$, the preimage $F^{-1}(l)$ is an irreducible affine curves having more than two irreducible branches at infinity. In particular, $F^{-1}(l)$ has no any component diffeomorphic to \mathbb{C} . The desired upper bounds then follows from Lemma 6. \square

3. PROOF OF MAIN THEOREM

Instead of Theorem 1 we will prove the following version for when $K = \mathbb{Q}$ or any imaginary quadratic number field. For convenience, in sequels we denote

$$N(\Omega, B) := \#\{z \in \Omega : \text{Height}(z) \leq B\}$$

for subsets Ω of K^n .

Theorem 7. *Let $K = \mathbb{Q}$ or any imaginary quadratic number field. Suppose $F \in \mathcal{O}_K[X]^n$ and $JF \equiv 1$. If F is not invertible, then*

$$N_F(\mathcal{O}_K, B) = O(B^{(n-1)d})$$

, where d is the degree of K over \mathbb{Q} .

Proof. Let F be as in the statement. Replacing $F(X)$ by $T(F(X))$ for some suitable linear transform $T \in \text{GL}(n, \mathbb{Z})$, if necessary, without a loss of generality we may assume that the polynomial $H_F \in \overline{\mathbb{Q}}[X]$ defining the bifurcation value set E_F satisfies

$$\deg_{X_i} H_F = \deg H_F, \quad i = 1, \dots, n. \quad (3)$$

Let $\sigma_F \in \overline{\mathbb{Q}}[U, V]$ be as in Lemma 3. We put

$$\begin{aligned} e_i &:= (e_{i1}, \dots, e_{in}), \quad e_{ij} = 0 \text{ for } j \neq i \text{ and } e_{ii} = 1; \\ E_i &:= \{x \in \mathbb{C}^n : x_i = 0\}; \\ M_i &:= \{l(u, e_i) : u \in E_i, \sigma_F(u, e_i) \neq 0\}. \end{aligned}$$

for $i = 1, \dots, n$. By definitions the condition (3) ensures that $E_i \not\subset E_F$ and $e_i \notin K_F$. Therefore, by Lemma 3 (a) every polynomial $\sigma_F(U, e_i)$ does not identify zero on E_i . It follows that $(\mathbb{C}^n \setminus M_i)$ s are closed algebraic proper subsets of \mathbb{C}^n .

Let S denote the intersection of all $(\mathbb{C}^n \setminus M_i)$, $i = 1, \dots, n$. We will show that $S = \emptyset$. This allows us to cover \mathbb{C}^n by the sets M_i ,

$$\mathbb{C}^n = \bigcup_{i=1}^n M_i. \quad (4)$$

Indeed, if $S \neq \emptyset$, each of irreducible components of S is an affine variety of dimension at most $n - 1$. Moreover, by definitions S contains all lines $l(z, e_i)$ passing through $z \in S$. So, the tangent space to S at each of smooth points of S must contain all n independent vectors e_i . This is impossible.

Now, by (4) the image set $F(\mathcal{O}_K^n)$ can be covered by the sets $M_i \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n)$, $i = 1, \dots, n$. This allows us to estimate

$$N(F(\mathcal{O}_K^n), B) \leq \sum_{i=1}^n N(M_i \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n), B).$$

Hence, to get the desired upper bound of $N(F(\mathcal{O}_K^n), B)$, it sufficients to establish

$$N(M_i \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n), B) = O(B^{(n-1)d}).$$

To do it, observe that $l(u, e_i) \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n) \neq \emptyset$ if and only if $u \in E_i \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n$. So, by definitions we can represent

$$M_i \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n) = \bigcup_{\{u \in E_i \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n : \sigma_F(u, e_i) \neq 0\}} (l(u, e_i) \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n)).$$

Then, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
N(M_i \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n), B) &= N\left(\bigcup_{\{u \in E_i \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n : \sigma_F(u, e_i) \neq 0\}} l(u, e_i) \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n), B\right) \\
&\leq \theta_K \deg E_F \#\{u \in E_i \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n : \sigma_F(u, e_i) \neq 0, \max_k |u_k| \leq B\} \text{ (by Lemma 4)} \\
&\leq \theta_K \deg E_F N(E_i \cap \mathcal{O}_K^n, B) \\
&\sim c_{\theta_K} \deg E_F B^{(n-1)d} \text{ as } B \rightarrow +\infty \text{ (by Schanuel's theorem)}.
\end{aligned}$$

Thus, we get

$$N(M_i \cap F(\mathcal{O}_K^n), B) = O(B^{(n-1)d}).$$

□

□

Let us to conclude the paper by some discussions on the asymptotic behavior of the counting function $N_F(K, B)$ for possible counterexamples $F \in K[X]^n$ to the Jacobian conjecture over an arbitrary number field K . Assume that $F \in K[X]^n$ is such a possible counterexample. Without a loss of generality we can assume $JF \equiv 1$.

i) Looking at the arguments in the proof of Theorem 7, the assumption that $K = \mathbb{Q}$ or any imaginary quadratic number field is used only to have the uniform bounds in Lemma 6. For any arbitrary number field K , the same arguments allows us to obtain the inequality

$$N(F(K^n), B) \leq n c_F(B) N(K^{n-1}, B), \quad (5)$$

where

$$c_F(B) := \sup_{l \in \Sigma_F} N(l \cap F(K^n), B) \quad (6)$$

and

$$\Sigma_F := \{l = l(u, v) : u, v \in K^n, \sigma_F(u, v) \neq 0\}. \quad (7)$$

ii) Lemma 3 (b) says that the preimages $F^{-1}(l)$, $l \in \Sigma_F$, are irreducible affine curves having same genus g_F and same number $n_F > 2$ of irreducible branches at infinity. As one of most simple parts of the Jacobian conjecture, it is guessed

Conjecture 8. *There does not exist counterexamples $F \in \mathbb{C}[X]^n$ to the Jacobian conjecture such that $g_F = 0$; 1.*

In our knowledge this conjecture is still open, except the case of $n = 2$ and $g_F = 0$ (see [11]).

Finally, as mentioned in Section 1 we present here a conditionally positive answer to Question A.

Theorem 9. *Let K be any number field of degree d over \mathbb{Q} and let $F \in K[X]^n$ with $JF \equiv 1$. Assuming Uniform Bound Conjecture and Conjecture 1, if F is not invertible, then*

$$N_F(K, B) = O(B^{(n-1)d}).$$

Proof. Let $c_F(B)$ and Σ_F be as in (6-7). Let

$$C_F := \sup_{l \in \Sigma_F} \#(F^{-1}(l) \cap K^n) \leq +\infty.$$

Obviously, $c_F(B) \leq C_F$. Conjecture 1 ensures $g_F > 1$. Hence, by Uniform bound Conjecture $C_F \leq B(g_F, K)$ for a constant $B(g_F, K)$. So, from (5) and Schanuel's theorem we can deduce that

$$N(F(K^n), B) \leq nB(g_F, K)N(K^{n-1}, B) \asymp B^{(n-1)d}.$$

This means $N_F(K, B) = O(B^{(n-1)d})$. \square

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