

THE LOCAL-GLOBAL PRINCIPLE FOR DIVISIBILITY IN CM ELLIPTIC CURVES

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ABSTRACT. We consider the local-global principle for divisibility in the Mordell-Weil group of a CM elliptic curve defined over a number field. For each prime p we give sharp lower bounds on the degree d of a number field over which there exists a CM elliptic curve which gives a counterexample to the local-global principle for divisibility by a power of p . As a corollary we deduce that there are at most finitely many elliptic curves (with or without CM) which are counterexamples with $p > 2d + 1$. We also deduce that the local-global principle for divisibility by powers of 7 holds over quadratic fields.

1. INTRODUCTION

Let E/k be an elliptic curve over a number field k . We say that a k -rational point $P \in E(k)$ is divisible by the integer N if there exists $Q \in E(k)$ such that $NQ = P$. The question motivating this paper is the extent to which this notion of divisibility satisfies a local-global principle. Namely, if there exists $Q_v \in E(k_v)$ such that $NQ_v = P$ for all (or all but possibly finitely many) completions k_v of k does it follow that P is divisible by N ?

Over the past decades there has been substantial interest in the problem of determining conditions on N and k implying that such a local-global principle holds for all elliptic curves over k [DZ01, DZ04, DZ07, PRV12, PRV14, Cre16, LW16, Ran18]. Due to its connection with a question of Cassels [Cas62, Problem 1.3], the analogous question where $E(k) = H^0(k, E)$ is replaced by the Galois cohomology group $H^1(k, E)$ has also received much attention [ÇS15, Cre13, Cre16]. Function field analogues of these questions were studied in [CV17]. In all cases the positive results in the literature concerning local-global divisibility in the groups $E(k)$ and $H^1(k, E)$ have relied on the same technique, which considers a more general local-global principle for the N -torsion subgroup of E (see Definition 1.1 below).

The approach to establishing such a local-global principle can be summarized as follows. First one aims to identify purely group-theoretic conditions on the image of the mod N Galois representation $\rho_N : \text{Gal}(k) \rightarrow \text{Aut}(E[N]) \simeq \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/N)$ which guarantee that the local-global principle for divisibility by N holds. Elliptic curves for which these conditions are not satisfied correspond to non-cuspidal k -rational points on some modular curve with level N structure. These curves have only finitely many points defined over number fields of degree $\leq d$, provided N is sufficiently large. In many cases one can show that all of the low degree points are cusps. This has resulted in proofs that these local-global principles for divisibility by a prime power $N = p^n$ hold for all p larger than an explicit bound depending only on the degree of the number field (See [PRV12, Corollary 2] or [ÇS15, Theorem B(1)]). In the case $k = \mathbb{Q}$, the bound is $p \geq 5$ [PRV14, Corollary 4] and it is known to be sharp [Cre16]. For degrees greater than 1 the exact bound is unknown.

Establishing an exact bound requires identifying the sporadic points on these modular curves and checking whether the local-global principle holds for the corresponding elliptic

curves. To that end, we undertake a detailed analysis of the local-global principle for divisibility on CM curves, as these are a common source of low degree points on modular curves.

Before stating our main results let us define the local-global principle we refer to.

Definition 1.1. *For a set of places S of k define*

$$\mathbb{H}^1(k, E[N]; S) := \ker \left(\mathrm{H}^1(k, E[N]) \rightarrow \prod_{v \notin S} \mathrm{H}^1(k_v, E[N]) \right),$$

where $\mathrm{H}^1(k, E[N])$ denotes Galois cohomology of the N -torsion subgroup of E . We say that the local-global principle holds for $(E/k, N)$ if $\mathbb{H}^1(k, E[N]; S) = 0$ for every finite set of places S of k .

If the local-global principle holds for $(E/k, N)$, then the local-global principle for divisibility by N holds for $\mathrm{H}^i(k, E)$ for all $i \geq 0$ (See [Cre16, Theorem 2.1] and Lemma 2.2). The goal of this paper is to determine the minimal degree of a number field over which there is a CM elliptic curve for which the local-global principle fails for given prime power $N = p^n$. In Section 3 we prove the following.

Theorem 1.2. *Let $\mathcal{O} \subset K$ be an order of conductor f in a quadratic imaginary field K and let $j = j(\mathcal{O})$ be the j -invariant of an elliptic curve with complex multiplication by \mathcal{O} . Let p^n be an odd prime power, let $k = \mathbb{Q}(j)$ and set $u = 2$ if $j \neq 0$ and $u = 3$ if $j = 0$.*

- (1) *Let L be a number field and let E/L be an elliptic curve with CM by \mathcal{O} . Then the local-global principle for $(E/L, p^n)$ holds in any of the following cases:*
 - (a) *p does not divide f and p splits in K ;*
 - (b) *p does not divide f , p is inert in K and $[L : k] < (p^2 - 1)/u$; or*
 - (c) *p divides f or p ramifies in K and $[L : k] < (p - 1)/2$.*
- (2) *These bounds above are sharp:*
 - (b') *If p does not divide f and p is inert in K , then there exists a number field L of degree $(p^2 - 1)/u$ over k and an elliptic curve E/L with $j(E) = j$ such that the local-global principle fails for $(E/L, p^2)$.*
 - (c') *If p ramifies in K but does not divide f , then there exists a number field L of degree $(p - 1)/2$ over k and an elliptic curve E/L with $j(E) = j$ such that the local-global principle fails for $(E/L, p^2)$.*

Using Theorem 1.2 one can determine the minimal degree of a number field L for which there exists a CM elliptic curve E/L for which the local-global principle for $(E/L, p^n)$ fails for some n . In Section 4 we give several explicit examples where the local-global principle fails over number fields of minimal degree. The following table gives the values $d = d(p)$ for some small values of p .

p	3	5	7	11	13	17	19	23
d	1	4	3	5	12	32	9	33

The case $p = 3$ recovers the examples given in [Cre16, LW16] showing that the local-global principle for $(E/\mathbb{Q}, 9)$ can fail. For further details see Section 4.1.

Combining the above with [Ran18] and explicit lower bounds for the gonality of modular curves [Abr96] we will prove the following.

Theorem 1.3. *Let $d \geq 1$ be an integer and let $p \geq 17$ be a prime number $p > 2d + 1$. Then there are at most finitely many elliptic curves E/L defined over a number field of degree $d = [L : \mathbb{Q}]$ such that the local-global principle for $(E/L, p^n)$ fails for some $n \geq 1$. Moreover, any such counterexample to the local-global principle yields a non-cuspidal non-CM point of degree $\leq d$ on the modular curve $X(p)$ parameterizing isomorphism classes of elliptic curves with full level p structure $E[p] \simeq \mu_p \times \mathbb{Z}/p$.*

Theorem 1.3 should be compared with [PRV12, Corollary 2] and [CS15, Theorem B(1)] which assert that the local-global principle holds for $(E/L, p^n)$ for all $[L : \mathbb{Q}] \leq d$ provided $p > (1 + 3^{d/2})^2$. The conclusion of our corollary is weaker in that it allows finitely many possible exceptions, but our bound on p is linear rather than exponential in the degree d . We expect that our bound holds without exceptions for most (if not all) primes p . Sporadic points of degree $d \leq (p - 1)/2$ on $X(p)$ should be quite rare as these curves have gonality $\Theta(p^3)$. Moreover, the existence of such a point does not necessarily imply that there is a counterexample to the local-global principle, as there are additional (and rather strict) conditions which must also be satisfied by the mod p^2 Galois representation of the corresponding elliptic curves.

The points of degree at most 2 on the Klein quartic $X(7)$ are determined in [Tze04]. The rational points are all cusps and the degree 2 points have residue field $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$ and lie above $j = 0$ on $X(1)$. Since 7 splits in $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$, Theorem 1.2 shows that the local-global principle for $(E/\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3}), 7^n)$ holds for the corresponding curves. Thus the following corollary.

Corollary 1.4. *The local-global principle holds for $(E/L, 7^n)$ for every elliptic curve E/L over a quadratic number field and every $n \geq 1$.*

Note that by Theorem 1.2 the local-global principle with $N = 7^n$ can fail for elliptic curves over cubic number fields. For an explicit example, see Section 4.2.

2. GROUP THEORETIC RESULTS ON H_*^1

Let p be an odd prime.

Definition 2.1. *Let $V_n := \mathbb{Z}/p^n \times \mathbb{Z}/p^n$ be the natural module with a left action of $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p^n)$. For a subgroup $G \subset \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p^n)$ let $H^i(G, V_n)$ denote the i -th cohomology group of the G -module V_n . Define*

$$H_*^1(G, V_n) := \bigcap_{g \in G} \ker \left(H^1(G, V_n) \xrightarrow{\mathrm{res}_g} H^1(\langle g \rangle, V_n) \right),$$

where $\langle g \rangle$ denotes the cyclic subgroup of G generated by g .

The following lemma is well known in the literature on questions of local-global divisibility.

Lemma 2.2. *Let E/k be an elliptic curve over a number field and let $G \subset \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p^n)$ denote the image of the representation $\mathrm{Gal}(k) \rightarrow \mathrm{Aut}(E[p^n]) \simeq \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p^n)$ (for some choice of isomorphism $\mathrm{Aut}(E[p^n]) \simeq \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p^n)$). Then the local global principle holds for $(E/k, p^n)$ if and only if $H_*^1(G, V_n) = 0$.*

Proof. To simplify notation let $\mathbb{K} := k(E[p^n])$ and identify $G \simeq \mathrm{Gal}(\mathbb{K}/k)$. For each place v of k , choose a place \mathfrak{v} of \mathbb{K} above v and let $G_{\mathfrak{v}} = \mathrm{Gal}(\mathbb{K}_{\mathfrak{v}}/k_v)$ be the decomposition group. For

any finite set of primes S , the inflation-restriction sequence gives the following commutative and exact diagram.

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
0 & \longrightarrow & H^1(G, E[p^n]) & \xrightarrow{\text{inf}} & H^1(k, E[p^n]) & \xrightarrow{\text{res}} & H^1(\mathbb{K}, E[p^n]) \\
& & \downarrow a & & \downarrow b & & \downarrow c \\
0 & \longrightarrow & \prod_{v \notin S} H^1(G_v, E[p^n]) & \longrightarrow & \prod_{v \notin S} H^1(k_v, E[p^n]) & \longrightarrow & \prod_{v \notin S} H^1(\mathbb{K}_v, E[p^n])
\end{array}$$

Since $H^1(\mathbb{K}, E[p^n]) = \text{Hom}_{\text{cont}}(\text{Gal}(\mathbb{K}), E[p^n])$, Chebotarev's density theorem implies that the map c is injective. Hence $\text{III}^1(k, E[p^n]; S) = \ker(b) = \text{inf}(\ker(a))$. By a second application of Chebotarev's density theorem, the groups G_v range (up to conjugacy) over all cyclic subgroups of G . From this it follows that $\ker(a) \subseteq H_*^1(G, E[p^n])$. We deduce from this that $\text{III}^1(k, E[p^n]; S) \subset \text{inf}(H_*^1(G, E[p^n]))$ with equality in the case that S contains all of the finitely many places where the decomposition group is not cyclic. The result follows. \square

Definition 2.3. For an odd integer $m \geq 3$ and $\delta \in \mathbb{Z}/N$ define

$$\begin{aligned}
C_{\delta, m} &:= \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} a & b \\ \delta b & a \end{bmatrix} : a, b \in \mathbb{Z}/m, a^2 - \delta b^2 \in (\mathbb{Z}/m)^\times \right\} \subset \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/m), \text{ and} \\
N_{\delta, m} &:= \left\langle \begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, C_{\delta, m} \right\rangle \subset \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/m).
\end{aligned}$$

When $m = p^n$ is a prime power, we say that $G \subset N_{\delta, p^n}$ is a **full subgroup** if the kernels of the reduction mod p maps $N_{\delta, p^n} \rightarrow \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p)$ and $G \rightarrow \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p)$ are equal.

Lemma 2.4. Let $G \subset N_{\delta, p^n}$ and let $G' := G \cap C_{\delta, p^n}$. If $H_*^1(G, V_n) \neq 0$, then $H_*^1(G', V_n) \neq 0$.

Proof. Note that G' has odd order and index dividing 2 in G . So $H^i(G/G', V_n^{G'}) = 0$ for $i \geq 1$. Thus, the inflation-restriction sequence gives an injective map $H^1(G, V_n) \rightarrow H^1(G', V_n)$. This map sends $H_*^1(G, V_n)$ to $H_*^1(G', V_n)$ because every cyclic subgroup of G' is also a cyclic subgroup of G . \square

2.1. Split case.

Lemma 2.5. Suppose δ is a nonzero square mod p . Then for every $G \subset N_{\delta, p^n}$, we have $H_*^1(G, V_n) = 0$.

Proof. By Lemma 2.4 we may assume that $G \subset C_{\delta, p^n}$. Let $d \in \mathbb{Z}/p^n$ be a square root of δ . Then C_{δ, p^n} is conjugate to the group of diagonal matrices in $\text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p^n)$. Since G is diagonal, V_n splits as a product $V_n = W_1 \times W_2$ of cyclic G -modules of order p^n . Hence $H^1(G, V_n) \simeq H^1(G, W_1) \times H^1(G, W_2)$. We will show below that $H_*^1(G, W_i) = 0$ for $i = 1, 2$. It follows that $H_*^1(G, V_n) = 0$ as required.

Write $G = H_1 \times H_2$ where $H_i \subset G$ is the subgroup containing all matrices whose i -th diagonal entry is 1. Note that $W_1^{H_1} = W_1$ and that H_2 acts faithfully on W_1 (i.e., through an injective map $H_2 \rightarrow \text{Aut}(W_2) \simeq (\mathbb{Z}/p^n)^\times$). It follows from a standard computation in the cohomology of cyclic groups that $H^1(H_2, W_1) = 0$ (see [NSW08, Lemma 9.1.4]). Let $\xi \in H_*^1(G, W_1)$. Since $H_1 \subset G$ is a cyclic subgroup the restriction of ξ to H_1 is trivial. Hence ξ is in the image of the inflation map $H^1(H_2, W_1) = H^1(H_2, W_1^{H_1}) \rightarrow H^1(G, W_1)$. As noted above, $H^1(H_2, W_1) = 0$, so $\xi = 0$ showing that $H_*^1(G, W_1) = 0$. Swapping indices the same argument shows that $H_*^1(G, W_2) = 0$. \square

2.2. Inert case.

Lemma 2.6. *Suppose that δ is not a square modulo p . Let $G \subset N_{\delta, p^n}$ and let $G_1 \subset \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p)$ denote the image of G modulo p .*

- (1) *If G_1 is contained in neither $\begin{bmatrix} \pm 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$ nor $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$, then $H_*^1(G, V_n) = 0$.*
- (2) *If G is a full subgroup of N_{δ, p^2} with $G_1 \subset \begin{bmatrix} \pm 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$ or $G_1 \subset \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$, then $H_*^1(G, V_2) \neq 0$.*

Proof. Let us prove the first statement. Suppose $H_*^1(G, V_n) \neq 0$. Letting $G' = G \cap C_{\delta, p^n}$ we have $H_*^1(G', V_n) \neq 0$ by Lemma 2.4. Let G'_1 denote the image of G' modulo p . Since $\#C_{\delta, p} = p^2 - 1$ is prime to p , [Ran18, Theorem 2] there are two possibilities for G'_1

- (a) G'_1 is generated by a element of order dividing $p - 1$ with 1 as an eigenvalue, or
(b) G'_1 is generated by an element of order 3 acting irreducibly on $V_1 = p^{n-1}V_n$.

(We note that $G'_1 = S_3$ is impossible because $C_{\delta, p}$ is abelian). First consider case (a). The elements of order $p - 1$ in $C_{\delta, p}$ are diagonal matrices, so the condition on the eigenvalues implies that G'_1 is trivial. Then G_1 is generated by an element of order dividing 2 which has 1 as eigenvalue, so it must be contained in one of the two groups in the statement.

Now consider case (b). Then G' is abelian of order $3p^m$, so the Sylow-3-subgroup $P \subset G'$ is normal. The inflation-restriction sequence reads

$$H^1(G'/P, V_n^P) \rightarrow H^1(G', V_n) \rightarrow H^1(P, V_n).$$

Since P acts irreducibly on $V[p]$ we have $V_n^P = 0$, so the first term in the sequence is 0. The final term in the sequence is also trivial because P and V_n have relatively prime orders. By exactness of the inflation-restriction sequence we conclude $H^1(G', V_n) = 0$, contradicting the assumption $H_*^1(G', V_n) \neq 0$.

We now prove part 2 of the lemma. Consider the matrices

$$\sigma_1 = \begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}, \sigma_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{bmatrix}, h_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 1+p & 0 \\ 0 & 1+p \end{bmatrix}, h_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & p \\ \delta p & 1 \end{bmatrix} \in \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p^2).$$

By assumption G is generated by h_1, h_2 and at most one of the σ_i . Then G is the semidirect product of $H = \langle h_1, h_2 \rangle$ and a subgroup of order dividing 2. Since G/H has order dividing 2 and p is odd the inflation-restriction sequence gives an isomorphism

$$H^1(G, V_2[p]) \simeq H^1(H, V_2[p])^{G/H} = \mathrm{Hom}_{G/H}(H, V_2[p]).$$

Let $\mathbf{v} \in V_2[p]^G$ be a nonzero element fixed by G and define $\phi : H \rightarrow V_2[p]$ as the homomorphism determined by $\phi(h_1) = \mathbf{v}$ and $\phi(h_2) = 0$. Since h_1 lies in the center of G and \mathbf{v} is fixed by G , ϕ is a G/H -equivariant homomorphism. By the isomorphism above this determines a nonzero class in $H^1(G, V_2[p])$. We claim that the image ϕ' of this class in $H^1(G, V_2)$ is a nonzero element of $H_*^1(G, V_2)$.

Let us give the details assuming $\sigma_1 \in G$, the other cases being handled similarly. Let $g \in G$. We will show that the restriction of ϕ to the subgroup generated by g is a coboundary. If $g \in H$, then $g = h_1^a h_2^b$ for some a, b and the condition that ϕ' restricts to a coboundary on the subgroup generated by g is that the equation

$$(2.1) \quad \begin{bmatrix} ap & bp \\ b\delta p & ap \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{x} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ ap \end{bmatrix}$$

has a solution $\mathbf{x} \in V_2$. This clearly has solutions when $ap = 0$. When $ap \neq 0$, $(a^2 - \delta b^2) \in (\mathbb{Z}/p^2)^\times$ because we have assumed δ is not a square modulo p . In this case the unique solution to (2.1) is $\mathbf{x} = \frac{a}{a^2 - \delta b^2} \begin{bmatrix} -b \\ a \end{bmatrix}$.

If, on the other hand, $g \notin H$, then $g = \sigma h_1^a h_2^b$ in which case the local condition becomes

$$(2.2) \quad \begin{bmatrix} ap & bp \\ -b\delta p & -2 - ap \end{bmatrix} \mathbf{x} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ ap \end{bmatrix},$$

which has the solution $x = p, y = -ap/2$.

The fact that (2.1) and (2.2) have solutions for any choice of a, b gives that $\phi' \in H_*^1(G, V_2)$. The fact that there is no common solution to (2.1) as one varies a, b shows that ϕ' is not trivial. \square

2.3. Ramified case.

Lemma 2.7. *Suppose that $\delta \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$. Let $G \subset N_{\delta, p^n}$ and let G_1 denote the image of G modulo p .*

(1) *If G_1 is contained in neither $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & * \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$ nor $\begin{bmatrix} \pm 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$, then $H_*^1(G, V_n) = 0$.*

(2) *If $\delta \not\equiv 0 \pmod{p^2}$, G is a full subgroup of N_{δ, p^2} and $G_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & * \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$, then $H_*^1(G, V_2) \neq 0$.*

Proof. For the first statement suppose $H_*^1(G', V_n) \neq 0$ where $G' = G \cap C_{\delta, p^n}$. Let G'_1 denote the image of G' modulo p . If $p \nmid \#G'_1$, then as in the proof of the preceding lemma, [Ran18] implies that G_1 is generated by a diagonal matrix of order dividing 2 with 1 as an eigenvalue. Otherwise $p \mid \#G'_1$. Since $\delta \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$, $C_{\delta, p}$ is a Borel subgroup. So in this case [Ran18] implies that G'_1 is the subgroup of strictly upper triangular matrices and that $G_1 = G'_1$ or G_1 is generated by G'_1 and $\text{diag}(1, -1)$ as required.

The assumption in the second statement of the lemma implies that G is generated by the matrices

$$\sigma = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{bmatrix}, g = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ \delta & 1 \end{bmatrix}, h = \begin{bmatrix} 1+p & 0 \\ 0 & 1+p \end{bmatrix} \in \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p^2).$$

We note that any element of G can be written in the form $\sigma^a g^b h^c$ for some integers a, b, c . Let $H = \langle h, g^p \rangle$ be the kernel of reduction modulo p . Then G/H is the dihedral group of order $2p$ generated by the images $\bar{\sigma}$ and \bar{g} of σ and g . A direct calculation shows that the cochain defined by

$$\bar{\sigma}^a \bar{g}^b \mapsto p \begin{bmatrix} b(b-1)/2 \\ (-1)^{ab} + (1 + (-1)^{a+1})/2 \end{bmatrix}$$

gives a nontrivial class in $H^1(G/H, V_2[p])$. We will show that the image ξ of this class in $H^1(G, V_2)$ is a nonzero element of $H_*^1(G, V_2)$. The proof is similar to that found in [Ran18, Lemma 11].

By induction one proves that

$$g^b = \begin{bmatrix} 1 + \delta \frac{b(b-1)}{2} & b + \delta \sum_{i=1}^b \frac{i(i-1)}{2} \\ \delta b & 1 + \delta \frac{b(b-1)}{2} \end{bmatrix}.$$

If $C \subset G$ is a cyclic subgroup generated by $\gamma = g^b h^c$, the condition that ξ is the class of a coboundary on C is that the equation

$$(2.3) \quad \begin{bmatrix} cp + \delta \frac{b(b-1)}{2} & b + cp + \delta \sum_{i=1}^b \frac{i(i-1)}{2} \\ \delta b & cp + \delta \frac{b(b-1)}{2} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} p \frac{b(b-1)}{2} \\ pb \end{bmatrix}.$$

has a solution with $x, y \in \mathbb{Z}/p^2$ for any choice of integers b, c . Since the right hand side lies in $pV_2 = V_2[p]$ and the determinant of the matrix on the left hand side is $\delta b^2 \not\equiv 0 \pmod{p^2}$, this equation has a solution. Namely, $x = p/\delta, y = -cp^2/\delta b$ (which is well defined in \mathbb{Z}/p^2 since $\delta \not\equiv 0 \pmod{p^2}$).

Similarly, if C is generated by $\sigma g^b h^c$, the local condition gives rise to the equation

$$\begin{bmatrix} cp + \delta \frac{b(b-1)}{2} & b + bcp + \delta \sum_{i=1}^b \frac{i(i-1)}{2} \\ -\delta b & -2 - cp - \delta \frac{b(b-1)}{2} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} x \\ y \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} p \frac{b(b-1)}{2} \\ -pb + p \end{bmatrix}.$$

in which case $x = 0, y = (b-1)p/2$ is a solution. We conclude that ξ lies in $H_*^1(G, V_2)$. As the solutions to (2.3) depend on b , ξ is nontrivial. \square

3. PROOFS OF THE THEOREMS

Before beginning the proof let us recall some relevant results concerning the mod N representations attached to CM elliptic curves.

Let $E/\mathbb{Q}(j(E))$ be an elliptic curve over $k = \mathbb{Q}(j(E))$ with complex multiplication by an order $\mathcal{O} \subset K$ where K is a quadratic imaginary field. Let $H = K(j(E))$ and let $h : E \rightarrow E/\text{Aut}(E) = \mathbb{P}^1$ be a Weber function. All elliptic curves with CM by \mathcal{O} are twists of one another and the field $H_N := H(h(E[N]))$ does not depend on the choice of twist.

As $E[N]$ is an $\text{End}(E) = \mathcal{O}$ module of rank 1 there is an isomorphism $\text{Aut}_{\mathcal{O}}(E[N]) \simeq (\mathcal{O}/N)^\times$. Assuming N is odd, the natural map $\mathcal{O}^\times \rightarrow (\mathcal{O}/N)^\times$ is injective and its image identifies with $\text{Aut}(E)$ as a subgroup of $\text{Aut}_{\mathcal{O}}(E[N])$. The restriction of $\rho_{H,N}$ to G_{H_N} induces a representation $\rho_{H_N} : G_{H_N} \rightarrow \text{Aut}(E) \simeq \mathcal{O}^\times$. In particular, $\text{Gal}(H(E[N])/H_N)$ may be viewed as a subgroup of $\text{Aut}(E)$. On the other hand, any choice of basis for $E[N]$ determines an isomorphism of groups $\text{Aut}(E[N]) \simeq \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/N\mathbb{Z})$. The main theorems of class field theory allow one to classify the possibilities for the image of the mod N representation $\rho_{k,N} : \text{Gal}(k) \rightarrow \text{Aut}(E[N])$. The following is taken from [LR].

Theorem 3.1 ([LR, Theorem 1.1]). *Suppose N is odd and let $\delta = \Delta_K f^2/4$, where Δ_K is the fundamental discriminant of K and f is the conductor of \mathcal{O} . Then there is a basis for $E[N]$ such that the image of $\rho_{k,N} : \text{Gal}(k) \rightarrow \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/N)$ lies in the group $N_{\delta,N}$ (see Definition 2.3) and is generated by $\begin{bmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$ and $C_{\delta,N} = \text{image}(\rho_{H,N})$. Moreover the index of the image of $\rho_{H,N}$ in $C_{\delta,N}$ is equal to the index of $\text{Gal}(H(E[N])/H_N)$ as a subgroup of $\text{Aut}(E) \simeq \mathcal{O}^\times$.*

Lemma 3.2. *Suppose $N = p$ is an odd prime and the mod p representation attached to E/k surjects onto $N_{\delta,p}$. Let $A \subset \text{Aut}(E) \subset N_{\delta,p}$ and $G \subset N_{\delta,p}$ with $A \cap G = 1$. Let $L \subset k(E[p])$ be the fixed field of the group $AG \subset N_{\delta,p}$. There exists a twist E'/L of E/L by a character $\chi : \text{Gal}(L) \rightarrow A \subset \text{Aut}(E)$ such that the mod p image attached to E'/L is equal to G if and only if G is a normal subgroup of AG .*

Remark 3.3. *The subgroup $A = \mu_2 \subset \text{Aut}(E)$ lies in the center of $N_{\delta,p}$ so in this case G is always normal in AG .*

Proof. To ease notation let $\mathbb{K} = k(E[p])$ and identify $N_{\delta,p} = \text{Gal}(\mathbb{K}/k)$. If G is a normal subgroup of AG , then the extension \mathbb{K}^G/L is Galois with Galois group isomorphic to A , which may be identified with a subgroup of $\text{Aut}(E) = \mu_m$. Then there is a character $\chi : \text{Gal}(L) \rightarrow \mu_m$ with kernel $\text{Gal}(\mathbb{K}^G)$ whose restriction to $\text{Gal}(\mathbb{K}^A)$ is the inverse of $\rho_{E/\mathbb{K}^A} : \text{Gal}(\mathbb{K}^A) \rightarrow A \subset \mu_m$. Let E'/L be the twist of E/L by χ . The mod p representations are related by $\rho_{E/L,p} \otimes \chi = \rho_{E'/L,p}$. So $\mathbb{K}^A = \ker(\rho_{E'/L,p}) = L(E'[p])$ and the image of $\rho_{E'/L,p}$ is equal to G .

Conversely, if there exists a twist as in the statement, then $M = \ker(\chi)$ is a Galois extension of L and $\text{Gal}(\mathbb{K}/M) = G$, so G is normal in $AG = \text{Gal}(\mathbb{K}/L)$. \square

Proof of Theorem 1.2.

Part (1): Let L/k be a finite extension and let E/L be an elliptic curve with CM by \mathcal{O} . By [LR, Theorem 4.6] there exists an elliptic curve E'/k with CM by \mathcal{O} such that (under a suitable choice of basis for $E'[p^n]$) the image $G_{E'/k,p^n}$ of the representation $\rho_{E'/k,p^n} : \text{Gal}(k) \rightarrow \text{Aut}(E'[n]) \simeq \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p^n)$ is equal to N_{δ,p^n} . The image $G_{E'/L,p^n}$ of the mod p^n representation attached to the base change E'/L is the restriction of $\rho_{E'/k,p^n}$ to the subgroup $\text{Gal}(L) \subset \text{Gal}(k)$. Galois theory gives $[N_{\delta,p^n} : G_{E'/L,p^n}] \leq [L : k]$.

There is a character $\chi : \text{Gal}(L) \rightarrow \mu_m = \text{Aut}(E)$ such that $E' = E^\chi$ is the twist of E/L by χ . The mod p^n representations are related by $\rho_{E/L,p^n} = \rho_{E'/L,p^n} \otimes \chi$. The images $G_{E/L,p^n}$ and $G_{E'/L,p^n}$ of these representations are subgroups of N_{δ,p^n} whose sizes differ by a factor which divides $\ell := \#\text{image}(\chi)$. Thus $[N_{\delta,p^n} : G_{E/L,p^n}] \leq \ell[L : k]$. In particular, if $j \neq 0, 1728$, then $[N_{\delta,p^n} : G_{E/L,p^n}] \leq 2[L : k]$.

- (a) Assume that p does not divide f and that p splits in K . Then $\delta = \Delta_K f^2/4$ is a nonzero square modulo p . By Lemma 2.5 we have $H_*^1(G_{E/L,p^n}, V_n) = 0$. So the local-global principle holds for $(E/L, p^n)$ by Lemma 2.2.
- (b) Assume that p does not divide f , p is inert in K and $[L : k] < (p^2 - 1)/2$. First assume $j \neq 0, 1728$. Then by the discussion above we have

$$[N_{\delta,p} : G_{E/L,p}] \leq [N_{\delta,p^n} : G_{E/L,p^n}] \leq 2[L : k] < p^2 - 1.$$

The assumption on p implies that $\delta = \Delta_K f^2/4$ is not a square modulo p . So $\#N_{\delta,p} = 2(p^2 - 1)$ and the estimate above gives $\#G_{E/L,p} > 2$. In particular $G_{E/L,p}$ cannot be contained in either of the subgroups appearing in Lemma 2.6. We conclude from this and Lemma 2.2 that the local-global principle holds for $(E/L, p^n)$.

Now we consider the cases $j = 0$ or $j = 1728$. Let $m = \#\text{Aut}(E) \in \{4, 6\}$. Suppose $H_*^1(G_{E/L,p^n}, V_n) \neq 0$. We must show $[L : k] \geq 2(p^2 - 1)/u$. By Lemma 2.6, $G_{E/L,p}$ is trivial or is generated by $\text{diag}(-1, 1)$ or $\text{diag}(1, -1)$. If G is trivial, then the estimate $[N_{\delta,p^n} : G_{E/L,p^n}] \leq u[L : k]$ gives $[L : k] \geq 2(p^2 - 1)/u$. If $G_{E/L,p}$ is generated by either $\text{diag}(-1, 1)$ or $\text{diag}(1, -1)$, then $G_{E/L,p}$ is not normal in $G_{E/L,p} \text{Aut}(E)$. In fact, the only nontrivial subgroup $A \subset \text{Aut}(E)$ for which $G_{E/L,p}$ is normal in $G_{E/L,p}A$ is $A = \mu_2$. By Lemma 3.2 we conclude that the image of χ is contained in μ_2 . So $\ell := \#\text{image}(\chi) = 2$ and our estimate above gives $[N_{\delta,p^n} : G_{E/L,p^n}] \leq \ell[L : k] \leq 2[L : k]$, which implies $[L : k] \geq (p^2 - 1)/2 \geq 2(p^2 - 1)/u$ as required.

- (c) Assume that p divides f or p is ramified in K . Assume that $[L : k] < (p-1)/2$. These conditions imply $j \neq 0, 1728$ (Note that the condition on $[L : k]$ implies $p > 3$), so $\text{Aut}(E) = \mu_2$. Arguing as in the previous case we have $[N_{\delta,p} : G_{E/L,p}] < (p-1)/2$. In this case $\delta = \Delta_K f^2/4$ is 0 mod p , so $\#N_{\delta,p} = 2p(p-1)$ and we conclude $\#G_{E/L,p} > 2p$.

In particular $G_{E/L,p}$ cannot be contained in either of the subgroups appearing in Lemma 2.7. We conclude from this and Lemma 2.2 that the local-global principle holds for $(E/L, p^n)$.

Part (2): We now show that the bounds obtained in Part (1) are sharp. Let E'/k be, as above, an elliptic curve such that the mod p^n representation surjects onto N_{δ,p^n} . Let $\mathbb{K} = k(E'[p])$. We identify $N_{\delta,p} = \text{Gal}(\mathbb{K}/k)$. Let $H_p \subset \mathbb{K}$ be the subfield fixed by $\text{Aut}(E') \subset N_{\delta,p}$. As the notation suggests, $H_p = k(h(E'[p]))$ for a Weber function h . Hence H_p is independent of the choice of twist of E' . Let $H'_p \subset \mathbb{K}$ be the subfield fixed by $\mu_2 \subset \text{Aut}(E) \subset N_{\delta,p}$. Then $H_p = H'_p$ if $j \neq 0, 1728$.

(b') Assume that p does not divide f and p is inert in K . Let $M \subset \mathbb{K}$ be the subfield fixed by $g = \text{diag}(-1, 1) \in N_{\delta,p}$ and let $L = M \cap H'_p = \mathbb{K}^{(g,-1)}$. Note that $[\mathbb{K} : L] = 4$ and $[\mathbb{K} : k] = \#N_{\delta,p} = 2(p^2 - 1)$, so $[L : k] = (p^2 - 1)/2$. Let $\chi : \text{Gal}(L) \rightarrow \mu_2$ be the quadratic character with $\ker(\chi) = \text{Gal}(M)$ and let E/L be the quadratic twist of E'/L by χ . The image $G_{E/L,p^2}$ of the mod p^2 representation attached to E/L is a full subgroup of N_{δ,p^2} whose image mod p is generated by $g = \text{diag}(-1, 1)$. So by Lemma 2.6 we have that $H_*^1(G_{E/L,p^2}, V_2) \neq 0$. By Lemma 2.2 we conclude that the local-global principle fails for $(E/L, p^2)$.

In the case $j = 0$ we can construct an example over a field of degree $(p^2 - 1)/3$ as follows. The field $H_p = k(E'[p])$ has degree $2(p^2 - 1)/6 = (p^2 - 1)/3$ and $\text{Gal}(\mathbb{K}/H_p) = \text{Aut}(E) = \mu_6$. By Lemma 3.2 (applied with $G = 1$) there exists a sextic twist of E'/H_p such that $H_p = H_p(E'[p])$. The image of the mod p^2 associated to this curve is the full subgroup of N_{δ,p^2} congruent to the trivial group modulo p . By Lemmas 2.6 and 2.2 the local-global principle fails for $(E'/H_p, p^2)$.

(c') Assume that p ramifies in K but does not divide f . Let $G \subset N_{\delta,p}$ be the subgroup generated by $\text{diag}(1, -1)$ and the strictly upper triangular matrices. Let $M \subset \mathbb{K}$ be the fixed field of G and let $L = M \cap H'_p$. In this case $[\mathbb{K} : k] = 2p(p - 1)$, so $[L : k] = (p - 1)/2$.

As in the preceding case, twisting E'/L by the quadratic character $\text{Gal}(L) \rightarrow \mu_2$ with kernel $\text{Gal}(M)$ yields an elliptic curve E/L such that the image $G_{E/L,p^2}$ of the mod p^2 representation is the full subgroup of $N_{\delta,p}$ whose image mod p is G . By Lemma 2.7 and 2.2 we conclude that the local-global principle fails for $(E/L, p^2)$.

□

Proof of Theorem 1.3. Let E/L be an elliptic curve over the number field L of degree $d = [L : \mathbb{Q}]$. Suppose $p > 2d + 1$ and that the local-global principle for $(E/L, p^n)$ fails. The determinant of the mod p representation $\text{Gal}(k) \rightarrow \text{Aut}(E[p]) \simeq \text{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p) \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}/p^\times$ is the p -cyclotomic character. Since $d < (p - 1)/2 = [\mathbb{Q}(\mu_p)^+ : \mathbb{Q}]$, the image of this determinant map is of size > 2 . [Ran18, Theorem 2] shows that the possibilities for the image of the mod p representation are rather limited. The only possibility compatible with the image of the determinant map having size greater than 2 is that the image is contained in $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & * \end{bmatrix}$.

In other words, $E[p] \simeq \mathbb{Z}/p \times \mu_p$ as a Galois module, so E/L corresponds to a non-cuspidal point in $X(p)(L)$. By Theorem 1.2, E/L does not have CM. It remains only to prove the finiteness of the set of points of degree $\leq (p - 1)/2$ on $X(p)$. By [Fre94] it suffices

to check that $X(p)$ has gonality $\gamma(X(p)) \geq (p-1)$. In [Abr96] one finds the estimate $\gamma(X(p)) \geq [\mathrm{PSL}_2(\mathbb{Z}) : \Gamma(p)]7/800 = 7(p^3 - p)/1600$, which suffices for $p \geq 17$. \square

4. EXPLICIT EXAMPLES

Proposition 4.1. *Suppose $p \equiv 3 \pmod{4}$ is a prime ramifying in K and let E/k be an elliptic curve with CM by an order in K whose conductor is not divisible by p . We assume $k = \mathbb{Q}(j(E))$. Then $[k(\mu_p) : k] = p-1$. Let $k(\mu_p)^+$ be the unique intermediate field of degree $(p-1)/2$ over k . There is a twist E'/k of E/k such that the local-global principle fails for $(E'/k(\mu_p)^+, p^2)$.*

Proof. Twisting if necessary, we may assume that the mod p^n representations attached to E/k surject onto N_{δ, p^n} . Let $\mathbb{K} = k(E[p])$ and identify $N_{\delta, p} = \mathrm{Gal}(\mathbb{K}/k)$. Since $\delta \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$, $N_{\delta, p}$ consists of the upper triangular invertible matrices. Note that $k(\mu_p) \subset \mathbb{K}$ is the subfield fixed by $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p) \cap N_{\delta, p}$. Since $p \equiv 3 \pmod{4}$, $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z}/p) \cap N_{\delta, p}$ is the group generated by -1 and the strictly upper triangular matrices. The subfield $k(\mu_p)^+$ is fixed by the complex conjugation, which acts on $E[p]$ as $\mathrm{diag}(-1, 1)$ or $\mathrm{diag}(1, -1)$. So $k(\mu_p)^+$ is the fixed field of the group $\begin{bmatrix} \pm 1 & * \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$ of order $4p$. The fixed field $M \subset \mathbb{K}$ of the group $G = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & * \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$ is a quadratic extension of $k(\mu_p)^+$. Let $E'/k(\mu_p)^+$ be the twist of $E/k(\mu_p)^+$ by the quadratic character with kernel $\mathrm{Gal}(M)$. Then the image of the mod p representation attached to $E'/k(\mu_p)$ is equal to G . By Lemma 2.7 we have $H_*^1(G_{E'/k, p^2}, E[p^2]) \neq 0$. The only primes that ramify in the extension $k(\mu_p)^+/k$ are those lying above p . \square

4.1. The case $p = 3$. Proposition 4.1 shows that there is an elliptic curve E/\mathbb{Q} of j -invariant 0 (so $K = \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$) such that the local-global principle fails for $(E/\mathbb{Q}, 9)$. Examples of such were first given in [Cre16] and then in [LW16]. In fact the proposition recovers these examples as all have j -invariant 0 and mod 9 image the full subgroup of $N_{6,9}$ congruent to $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & * \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$ modulo 3. In light of the fact that $\mathrm{Aut}(E) \simeq \mu_6$ for these curves, one can obtain infinitely many counterexamples to the local-global principle for $(E/\mathbb{Q}, 9)$ by taking cubic twists (which was already evident from [Cre16, Corollary 4.3]). This family of twists also contains the modular curve $X_0(27)$ whose mod 9 image is the full subgroup of $N_{6,9}$ congruent to $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$ modulo 3, giving a counterexample to the local-global principle for $(E/\mathbb{Q}, 9)$ with a different mod 3 image.

For an example with a different j -invariant one can consider the family of curves E/\mathbb{Q} with j -invariant $2^4 3^3 5^3$ which have CM by the order of conductor 2 in $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$. In this case $\mathrm{Aut}(E) \simeq \mu_2$ so there is a unique curve in the family whose mod 9 representation is the full subgroup of $N_{-3,9}$ congruent to $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & * \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$ modulo 3; it is the curve with Cremona reference 36.a2 and is a counterexample to the local-global principle for $(E/\mathbb{Q}, 9)$.

4.2. The case $p = 7$. There are two elliptic curves of conductor 49 over \mathbb{Q} with CM by the maximal order in $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-7})$. One is the modular curve $X_0(49)$ and the other, [LMFDB, Elliptic Curve 49.a2], is its twist by the quadratic character corresponding to $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-7})/\mathbb{Q}$. The images

of the mod 7 representations attached to the base changes of these curves to $\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7)^+$ are

$$\begin{bmatrix} \pm 1 & * \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{and} \quad \begin{bmatrix} 1 & * \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix},$$

respectively. For both curves the local-global principle for $(E/\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7), 49)$ fails, while only for the twist E of $X_0(49)$ does it fail for $(E/\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7)^+, 49)$. This gives the unique example of a CM elliptic curve over a cubic number field for which the local-global principle fails with $N = 7^n$. Since the conductor is $49 = 7^2$, the decomposition groups $D_{\mathfrak{q}} \subset \text{Gal}(\mathbb{Q}(E[49])/\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7)^+)$ are cyclic for all primes $\mathfrak{q} \nmid 7$. Moreover, 7 is totally ramified in the degree 42 extension $\mathbb{Q}(E[49])/\mathbb{Q}$ and so if \mathfrak{p} is the prime of $\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7)^+$ lying above 7, then the restriction map $H^1(\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7^+), E[7]) \rightarrow H^1(\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7)_{\mathfrak{p}}^+, E[7])$ is an isomorphism. We conclude that

$$\text{III}^1(\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7)^+, E[49]; S) \neq 0 \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad \mathfrak{p} \in S.$$

So while the local-global principle fails for $(E/\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7)^+, 49)$ the local-global principle for divisibility by 7^n holds in the groups $E(\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7)^+)$ and $H^1(\mathbb{Q}(\mu_7)^+, E)$.

4.3. The case $p = 5$. There is no rational j -invariant $j = j(\mathcal{O})$ of an order in a quadratic imaginary field such that 5 divides the conductor or ramifies in \mathcal{O} . So by Theorem 1.2 the local-global principle with $N = 5^n$ holds for CM curves over quadratic and cubic fields. The class number of $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-5})$ is 2, so there are elliptic curves with CM by the maximal order $\mathcal{O} \subset \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-5})$ defined over a quadratic field, namely $k = \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{5}) = \mathbb{Q}(j(\mathcal{O}))$. Theorem 1.2(c') implies that there is a CM elliptic curves over some quadratic extension L/k such that the local-global principle for $(E/L, 5^2)$ fails. Here we provide an explicit example.

Consider the curve E/k [LMFDB, Elliptic Curve 4096.1-k1] with Weierstrass equation

$$E : y^2 = f(x) := x^3 - \phi x^2 + (-\phi - 9)x + (-6\phi - 15),$$

where $\phi \in \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{5})$ satisfies $\phi^2 + \phi + 1 = 0$. The image of the mod 5 Galois representation is $\begin{bmatrix} \pm 1 & * \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$ (note that $k = \mathbb{Q}(\mu_5)^+$, so the diagonal entries must be squares in \mathbb{F}_5^\times). The 5-division polynomial of E/k has a root θ in a quadratic extension L/k , which turns out to be $L = \mathbb{Q}(\mu_{20})^+$. The root θ is the x -coordinate of a 5-torsion point on E . The quadratic twist of E by $d = f(\theta) \in L^\times/L^{\times 2}$ yields the curve [LMFDB, Elliptic Curves 25.a2] which has an L -rational 5-torsion point. The image of the mod 5 Galois representation attached to E^d is

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & * \\ 0 & \pm 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

and so, by Lemma 2.7, the local-global principle fails for $(E^d/L, 25)$. As 5 is the only prime of bad reduction and 5 is totally ramified in $L(E^d[5])$ we conclude (similarly to the $p = 7$ case) that $\text{III}^1(L, E^d[25]; S) \neq 0$ if and only if S contains the prime of L above 5.

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