DIHEDRAL COVERINGS OF ALGEBRAIC SURFACES AND THEIR APPLICATION

HIRO-O TOKUNAGA

Abstract. In this article, we study dihedral coverings of algebraic surfaces branched along curves with at most simple singularities. A criterion for a reduced curve to be the branch locus of some dihedral covering is given. As an application we have the following:

Let \( B \) be a reduced plane curve of even degree \( d \) having only \( a \) nodes and \( b \) cusps. If \( 2a + 6b > 2d^2 - 6d + 6 \), then \( \pi_1(\mathbb{P}^2 \setminus B) \) is non-abelian.

Note that Nori’s result implies that \( \pi_1(\mathbb{P}^2 \setminus B) \) is abelian, provided that \( 2a + 6b < d^2 \).

Introduction

Let \( \Sigma \) be a smooth surface, and \( S \) a normal surface equipped with a finite morphism \( \pi : S \to \Sigma \). We call \( S \) a \( D_{2n} \) covering if the rational function field, \( \mathcal{C}(S) \), of \( S \) is a Galois extension of \( \mathcal{C}(\Sigma) \) with Galois group \( D_{2n} \): the dihedral group of order \( 2n \). In previous articles \( \cite{T1}, \cite{T2} \) and \( \cite{T4} \), we developed a general theory for \( D_{2n} \) coverings and studied such coverings of \( \mathbb{P}^2 \). In this article, we continue to study the problem of existence of a \( D_{2n} \) covering possessing a given branch locus. More precisely, we consider the following:

Question 0.1. (a) Let \( B \) be a reduced divisor on \( \Sigma \) with at most simple singularities. Give a condition for \( B \) to be the branch locus of some \( D_{2n} \) covering \( \pi : S \to \Sigma \) which is branched along \( B \). Here simple singularities of curves are those in II, §8, \( \cite{BPV} \).

(b) (A weak version of (a).) Let \( B \) be as above. Give a condition for \( B \) to be the branch locus of some \( D_{2n} \) covering \( \pi : S \to \Sigma \) which is branched along \( B \) with ramification index 2. Here, the ramification index means one along the smooth part of \( B \).

Note that, if \( \Sigma \) is simply connected and \( B \) is irreducible, then any \( D_{2n} \) covering is branched along \( B \) with ramification index 2.

In \( \cite{T1} \) and \( \cite{T2} \), we studied Question 0.1 (a) in the case where \( \Sigma = \mathbb{P}^2 \) and \( \text{deg} B = 4, 5 \); and gave a characterization of possible branch curves in terms of the combination of singularities. In \( \cite{T4} \), we considered the same question in the case where \( \Sigma = \mathbb{P}^2 \) and \( B \) is an irreducible maximizing sextic curve with a triple point. In this article, we consider Question 0.1 (b) under more general settings as follows:

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As we will see in §1, if the \( D_{2n} \) covering in Question 0.1 (b) exists, then there exists a finite double covering \( f': Z' \to \Sigma \) branched along \( B \). This shows that as far as we consider Question 0.1(b), there is no harm to assume the existence of \( Z' \). We denote its canonical resolution by \( Z \). By the definition of the canonical resolution (see [H]), \( Z \) satisfies the following diagram:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
Z' & \xrightarrow{q} & Z \\
\downarrow f' & & \downarrow f \\
\Sigma & \xleftarrow{q} & \hat{\Sigma},
\end{array}
\]

where \( q: \hat{\Sigma} \to \Sigma \) is a composition of blowing-ups so that the induced morphism \( f \) is finite. We also denote the composite morphism \( q \circ f \) by \( \hat{f} \). Note that \( Z' \) is determined by \( B \) and a line bundle \( L \) on \( \Sigma \) such that \( 2L \sim B \) (see [BPV], I.17).

In this article, we study Question 0.1 (b) under the assumptions:

**Assumption 0.2.** The Néron-Severi group, \( \text{NS}(Z) \), of \( Z \) is torsion free.

Let \( T \) be a subgroup of \( \text{NS}(Z) \) generated by \( \hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma) \) and all the irreducible components of the exceptional divisor of the resolution \( g: Z \to Z' \). Now we are in a position to state our results.

**Theorem 0.3.** Let \( B \) be a curve as in Question 0.1(b) and suppose that \( Z \) satisfies Assumption 0.2. Let \( n \) be a fixed positive odd integer. If \( \text{NS}(Z)/T \) has a torsion of order \( n \) and \( \gcd(n, \text{disc}(\hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma))) = 1 \), where \( \text{disc}(\hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma)) \) is the determinant of the intersection matrix of the lattice \( \hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma) \), then there exists a \( D_{2n} \) covering of \( \Sigma \) branched along \( B \) with ramification index 2.

Using Theorem 0.3, we give a criterion for the existence of a \( D_{2p} \) (\( p \): odd prime) covering in terms of the number of singularities. To state our result, we need to define the total Milnor number (or the index) of \( B \). For a singularity \( x \in \text{Sing}(B) \), we denote its Milnor number by \( \mu_x \). For simple singularities, \( \mu_x = \text{the subindex of the type of } x \), where we use the notation \( a_n, d_n \) and \( e_n \) to describe the types of simple singularities. The total Milnor number, \( \mu(B) \), of \( B \) is \( \mu(B) = \sum_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)} \mu_x \).

**Theorem 0.4.** Let \( B \) be a curve as in Question 0.1(b) and suppose that \( Z \) satisfies Assumption 0.2. Let \( \mathcal{L} \) be the line bundle as above. Let \( p \) be a fixed odd prime. Define a non-negative integer \( l \) to be

\[
l = \begin{cases} 
\text{the number of singularities of type } a_{3k-1} & (k > 0) \text{ and } e_6, \text{ if } p = 3, \text{ and}; \\
\text{the number of singularities of type } a_{pk-1} & (k > 0), \text{ if } p \geq 5.
\end{cases}
\]

If \( p \nmid \text{disc}(\hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma)) \) and

\[
l > 24\chi(\mathcal{O}_\Sigma) + 4\left(h^1(\mathcal{O}_\Sigma) + h^1(\mathcal{O}_\Sigma(-\mathcal{L}))\right) + 4\mathcal{L}^2 + 2K_\Sigma \mathcal{L} - 2K_\Sigma^2 - 2 - \rho(\Sigma) - \mu(B),
\]

where \( K_\Sigma \) is the canonical bundle of \( \Sigma \), then there exists a \( D_{2p} \) covering of \( \Sigma \) branched along \( B \) with ramification index 2.

Note that Theorems 0.3 and 0.4 are generalization of the corresponding results (Theorem 0.6 and Proposition 3.1) in [T3].
We apply Theorem 0.3 to studying the fundamental group of the complement to the branch curve. It is easy to see that, if a $D_{2n}$ covering $\pi : S \rightarrow \Sigma$ with $B$ as the branch locus exists, then there exists a surjective homomorphism from $\pi_1(\Sigma \setminus B) \rightarrow D_{2n}$. This implies that $\pi_1(\Sigma \setminus B)$ is non-abelian. In particular, as we will see in §4, Assumption 0.2 holds when $\Sigma = P^2$. Hence we have the following corollaries.

**Corollary 0.5.** Let $p$ be a fixed odd prime. Let $B$ be a plane curve of degree $2m$ with at most simple singularities. Let $l$ be the integer as in Theorem 0.4. If $l > 4m^2 - 6m + 3 - \mu$, then there exists a $D_{2p}$ covering, $S$, of $P^2$ branched along $B$ with ramification index 2. In particular, $\pi_1(P^2 \setminus B)$ is non-abelian.

In particular, if $B$ has only nodes and cusps, we have the following:

**Corollary 0.6.** Suppose that $B$ has $a$ nodes and $b$ cusps. If $2a + 6b > 2(2m)^2 - 6(2m) + 6$, then there exists a $D_6$ covering, $S$, of $P^2$ branched along $B$ with ramification index 2. In particular, $\pi_1(P^2 \setminus B)$ is non-abelian.

**Remark 0.7.** (i) The inequality in Corollary 0.5 is sharp in the following sense: There exist pairs of irreducible plane sextic curves $(B_1, B_2)$ such that

(a) both $B_1$ and $B_2$ have the same combination of singularities; and it is either $3e_6$ or $e_6, 4a_2, 2a_1$, and

(b) there exists a $D_6$ covering branched along $B_1$ with ramification index 2, while there is no such covering for $B_2$.

For details, see [A], [T3] and [T5].

(ii) By [No], it is known that, if $2a + 6b < (2m)^2$, then $\pi_1(P^2 \setminus B)$ is abelian. This contrast makes our result more interesting.

(iii) In [O], Oka recently showed that there exist sextic curves, $B_1$ and $B_2$, with 3 nodes and 6 cusps such that $\pi_1(P^2 \setminus B_1)$ is non-abelian, while $\pi_1(P^2 \setminus B_2)$ is abelian. This shows that the inequality Corollary 0.6 is the best possible.

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**Notations and Conventions.** In this paper, the ground field is always the complex number field $C$.

Let $X$ be a normal variety, and let $Y$ be a smooth variety. Let $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ be a finite morphism from $X$ to $Y$. We define the branch locus of $f$, which we denote by $\Delta(X/Y)$, as follows:

$$\Delta(X/Y) = \{y \in Y|\exists \pi^{-1}(y) < \deg \pi\}.$$

Let $S$ be a finite double covering of a smooth projective surface $\Sigma$. The “canonical resolution” of $S$ always means the resolution given by Horikawa in [H].

For simple singularities of curves, we use the notations, $a$, $d$ and $e$, to describe the types of such singularities. Note that the capital letters, $A$, $D$ and $E$ are used for the corresponding types in [BPV].
Let $D_1, D_2$ be divisors.
$D_1 \sim D_2$: linear equivalence of divisors.
$D_1 \sim_{\mathbb{Q}} D_2$: \(\mathbb{Q}\)-linear equivalence of divisors.
$D_1 \approx D_2$: algebraic equivalence of divisors.
$D_1 \approx_{\mathbb{Q}} D_2$: \(\mathbb{Q}\)-algebraic equivalence of divisors.

1. Preliminaries

This section consists of 3 subsections. All are summaries on the known facts and results, which we need to prove Theorems 0.3 and 0.4.

1. Summary on \(D_{2n}\) \((n: \text{odd})\) coverings. In this article, we only consider the case that the Galois group is \(D_{2n}\), \((n: \text{odd})\).

We denote by \(D_{2n}\) a dihedral group of order 2\(n\), which is generated by two elements \(\sigma\) and \(\tau\) with the relations \(\sigma^2 = \tau^n = (\sigma\tau)^2 = 1\).

Let \(\pi: X \rightarrow Y\) be a \(D_{2n}\) covering. Let \(C(X)^\tau\) be the invariant subfield of \(C(X)\) by \(\tau\). \(C(X)^\tau\) is a quadratic extension of \(C(Y)\). Let \(D(X/Y)\) be the \(C(X)^\tau\)-normalization of \(Y\). \(D(X/Y)\) is a double covering of \(Y\) satisfying a commutative diagram as follows:

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
X & \xrightarrow{\beta_2} & D(X/Y) \\
\downarrow \pi & & \\
Y & \xrightarrow{\beta_1} & \\
\end{array}
\]

where \(\beta_1: D(X/Y) \rightarrow Y\) is a double covering of \(Y\) and \(\beta_2: X \rightarrow D(X/Y)\) is an \(n\)-fold cyclic covering of \(D(X/Y)\). Note that \(\Delta(D(X/Y)/Y) = \Delta(X/Y)\) if \(\pi\) is a \(D_{2n}\) covering branched along \(B\) with ramification index 2. We fix these notations throughout this article. The following proposition is fundamental in constructing a \(D_{2n}\) covering.

**Proposition 1.1.** Let \(n\) be an odd integer \(\geq 3\). Let \(f: Z \rightarrow Y\) be a smooth finite double covering of \(Y\). We denote the covering transformation by \(\sigma\). Let \(D\) be an effective divisor such that

(i) \(D\) and \(\sigma^*D\) have no common component,
(ii) if we let \(D = \sum_i a_i D_i\) be the irreducible decomposition, then for all \(i\), \(a_i > 0\) and the greatest common divisor of \(a_i\)'s and \(n\) is 1, and
(iii) there exists a line bundle \(L\) such that \(D - \sigma^*D \approx nL\).

Then there exists a \(D_{2n}\) covering, \(X\) of \(Y\) such that

(a) \(D(X/Y) = Z\) and (b) the branch locus of \(\beta_2\), \(\Delta(X/Z)\), is contained in \(\text{Supp}(D + \sigma^*D)\), i.e., \(\Delta(X/Y) \subset \Delta(Z/Y) \cup f(\text{Supp}(D))\).

**Proof.** It is enough to find the three effective divisors \(D_1, D_2\) and \(D_3\) on \(Z\) satisfying the three conditions in Proposition 0.4 in [T1]. We first define \(D_1\) in the following way:

For the coefficient of each irreducible component \(D_i\) of \(D\), put \(a_i' = a_i - n\lceil a_i/n \rceil\), where \(\lceil \cdot \rceil\) denotes the greatest integer function. As \(n \nmid a_i\), \(a_i' > 0\). We rewrite
$D - \sigma^*D$ as follows:

$$D - \sigma^*D = \sum_{i} \left(a_i' D_i - a_i' \sigma^* D_i + n\left(\frac{a_i}{n}\right)(D_i - \sigma^* D_i)\right)$$

$$= \sum_{i, a_i' \leq \frac{n-1}{2}} \left(a_i' D_i - a_i' \sigma^* D_i + n\left(\frac{a_i}{n}\right)(D_i - \sigma^* D_i)\right)$$

$$+ \sum_{i, a_i' > \frac{n-1}{2}} \left((n - a_i')\sigma^* D_i - (n - a_i') D_i + n\left(\frac{a_i}{n}\right) + 1\right)(D_i - \sigma^* D_i).$$

Put

$$D_1 = \sum_{i, a_i' \leq \frac{n-1}{2}} a_i' D_i + \sum_{i, a_i' > \frac{n-1}{2}} (n - a_i') D_i.$$  

(Note that the greatest common divisor of the coefficients, $a_i'$s, and $n$ is 1 by the assumption (ii).) Since $\text{Pic}^0(Z)$ is $n$-divisible, by replacing $L$ by a suitable one, we may assume that $D - \sigma^* D \sim nL$. Hence we have

$$D_1 - \sigma^* D_1 \sim n \left(L - \sum_{i, a_i' \leq \frac{n-1}{2}} \left[\frac{a_i}{n}\right](D_i - \sigma^* D_i) - \sum_{i, a_i' > \frac{n-1}{2}} \left(\frac{a_i}{n}\right) + 1\right)(D_i - \sigma^* D_i).$$

Since any line bundle is linear equivalent to a difference of two effective divisors, the right hand side in the above is linear equivalent to a divisor of form $n(D_3 - D_2)$ where $D_2$ and $D_3$ are effective divisors. Thus we have three effective divisors $D_1$, $D_2$ and $D_3$ satisfying the three conditions in Proposition 0.4.

2. Preliminary from lattice theory. Here we summarize some elementary facts from lattice theory.

Let $L$ be a lattice, i.e.,

(i) $L$ is a free $\mathbb{Z}$ module and

(ii) $L$ is equipped with a non-degenerate bilinear symmetric pairing $\langle , \rangle$.

For a given lattice $L$, $\text{disc}L$ is the determinant of the intersection matrix. Note that it is independent of choice of a basis. We call $L$ unimodular if $\text{disc}L = \pm 1$.

Let $J$ be a sublattice of $L$. We denote its orthogonal complement with respect to $\langle , \rangle$ by $J^\perp$.

For a lattice $L$, we denote its dual lattice by $L^\vee$. Note that, by using the pairing, $L$ is embedded in $L^\vee$ as a sublattice with same rank. Hence the quotient group $L^\vee/L$ is a finite abelian group, which we denote by $G_L$.

Although the following lemma is often used under the assumption that $L$ is even unimodular, the statement also holds for any unimodular lattice (see [1]).

**Lemma 1.2.** Let $L$ be a unimodular lattice. Let $J_1$ and $J_2$ be sublattices of $L$ such that $J_1 = J_2$ and $J_2^\perp = J_1$. Then

$$G_{J_1} \cong G_{J_2}.$$  

A sublattice $M$ of $L$ is called primitive if $L/M$ is torsion-free.

**Example 1.3.** Let $S$ be a surface. Since $H^2(S, \mathbb{Z})/\text{NS}(S)$ is torsion free, $\text{NS}(S)$ is torsion free if and only if $H^2(S, \mathbb{Z})$ is. Therefore for the surface $Z$ in Theorems 0.3 and 0.4, $H^2(Z, \mathbb{Z})$ is torsion free. In fact, it is a unimodular lattice with respect to the intersection pairing, and $\text{NS}(S)$ is a primitive sublattice of it.
3. Analysis of the torsion part of $\text{NS}(Z)/T$. We use the same notations as those in Introduction. Throughout this subsection, we always assume that $\text{NS}(Z)$ is torsion free. We start with the following lemma.

**Lemma 1.4.** $(\text{NS}(Z)/T)_{\text{tor}} = T^\perp/T$.

**Proof.** By definition, $(\text{NS}(Z)/T)_{\text{tor}} \subset T^\perp/T$, and we have $T^\perp \subset \text{NS}(Z)$ by Example 1.3. This implies our lemma.

$T^\perp$ is considered as a sublattice of $T^\vee$ by using the intersection pairing. By Lemma 1.4, this means that the torsion subgroup of $\text{NS}(Z)/T$ is considered as a subgroup of $G_T$. We next look at $G_T$.

Let $x$ be a singular point of $B$. Put $R_x$ = the subgroup of $T$ generated by all irreducible components of the exceptional divisor of $f^{-1}(x)$.

Then we have a decomposition of $T$ as follows:

$$T \cong f^* \text{NS}(\Sigma) \oplus \bigoplus_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)} R_x.$$  

With this decomposition, we have $T^\vee/T \cong G_f^* \oplus \bigoplus_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)} G_{R_x}$. Note that, for each $G_{R_x}$, we have the following classical fact:

**Fact 1.5.** Since we only consider a torsion element of odd order, the cases of $a_n$ and $e_6$ are all we need. We consider both $R_x$ and $R^\vee_x$ as subgroups of $R_x \otimes \mathbb{Q}$ and give a $\mathbb{Q}$-divisor that gives rise to a generator of $G_{R_x}$. To this purpose, we label irreducible components of the exceptional divisors for $A_n$ and $E_6$ singularities (see Figure 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The type of $x$</th>
<th>The type of $f^{-1}(x)$</th>
<th>$G_{R_x}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$d_n, n \equiv 1 \mod 2$</td>
<td>$D_n$</td>
<td>$\mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$d_n, n \equiv 0 \mod 2$</td>
<td>$D_n$</td>
<td>$(\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z})^{\oplus 2}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$e_6$</td>
<td>$E_6$</td>
<td>$\mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$e_7$</td>
<td>$E_7$</td>
<td>$\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$e_8$</td>
<td>$E_8$</td>
<td>${0}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lemma 1.6.** $G_{R_x}$ is generated by the class of $\mathbb{Q}$-divisors $D_x/(b + 1)$ (resp. $D_x^\vee$) for $x = a_b$ (resp. $x = e_6$), where

$$D_x = \begin{cases} \sum_{k=1}^{b+1}(b+1-k)(\Theta_k - \Theta_{b-k}), & \text{if } x = a_b \text{ b: even}, \\ \sum_{k=1}^{b+1}(b+1-k)(\Theta_k - \Theta_{b-k}) + \frac{b+1}{2}\Theta_{b+1}, & \text{if } x = a_b \text{ b: odd}, \end{cases}$$

and

$$D_x = (\Theta_1 - \Theta_5) + 2(\Theta_2 - \Theta_6) \text{ if } x = e_6.$$  

**Proof.** The inverse of the intersection matrix of $R_x$ shows that a generator is given by the class of $\mathbb{Q}$-divisors

$$\frac{1}{b+1}(b\Theta_1 + (b-1)\Theta_2 + \cdots + \Theta_b) \text{ for } x = a_b,$$
and
\[ \frac{1}{3}(4\Theta_1 + 5\Theta_2 + 6\Theta_3 + 3\Theta_4 + 2\Theta_5 + 4\Theta_6) \] for \( x = e_6 \).

Our statement is straightforward from these \( \mathbb{Q} \)-divisors.

**Remark 1.7.** Let \( \sigma \) denote the covering transformation of the double covering \( f: Z \to \hat{\Sigma} \). Then we have \( \sigma^*\Theta_k = \Theta_{n-k} \) (1 \( \leq k \leq \lfloor \frac{n}{2} \rfloor \)) for the exceptional divisor of an \( A_n \) singularity and \( \sigma^*\Theta_1 = \Theta_5 \) and \( \sigma^*\Theta_2 = \Theta_6 \) for those of an \( E_6 \) singularity by the construction of the canonical resolution.

2. Proof of Theorem 0.3

We first reduce the existence of a dihedral covering of \( \Sigma \) to that of \( \hat{\Sigma} \). Suppose that there exists a \( D_{2n} \) covering, \( \hat{S} \), of \( \hat{\Sigma} \) such that

(i) \( D(\hat{S}/\hat{\Sigma}) = Z \), and

(ii) \( \Delta(\hat{S}/Z) \subset \text{the support of the exceptional divisors of } g: Z \to Z' \).

Then the Stein factorization, \( S \), of \( q \circ \hat{\pi}: \hat{S} \to \Sigma \) gives rise to the desired \( D_{2n} \) covering. Hence by Proposition 1.1 we only need to prove the following:

**Proposition 2.1.** There exist a divisor \( D \) and a line bundle \( L \) such that

(i) \( \text{Supp}(D + \sigma^*D) \subset \text{Supp}(\text{the exceptional divisor of } g) \), and

(ii) the pair \((D, L)\) satisfies the condition in Proposition 1.1.

We need several steps to prove Proposition 2.1.

Let \( \nu \) be the homomorphism \( T^{\perp \perp} \to T^\vee \to G_T \). Let \( L_1 \) be an element of \( T^{\perp \perp} \) which gives rise to an \( n \)-torsion in \( T^{\perp \perp}/T \). As \( G_T \cong G_{f^*\text{NS}(\Sigma)} \oplus \bigoplus_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)} G_{R_x} \), we write
\[ \nu(L_1) = (\alpha, (\beta_x)_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)}) \in G_{f^*\text{NS}(\Sigma)} \oplus \bigoplus_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)} G_{R_x}. \]

**Lemma 2.2.** \( \alpha = 0 \).

**Proof.** As \( \text{disc} f^* \text{NS}(\Sigma) = \text{disc} \hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma) \), \( \alpha = 0 \) by the assumption.

**Lemma 2.3.** If \( x \) is neither \( a_n \) nor \( e_6 \), \( \beta_x = 0 \).
Proof. This is immediate by Fact 1.5.

For simplicity, we put \( r_x = \frac{1}{b} (G_{R_x}) \) in the following. Note that \( r_x = b + 1 \) (resp. 3) if \( x \) is of type \( a_b \) (resp. \( e_6 \)).

**Lemma 2.4.** Suppose \( \beta_x \neq 0 \). Let \( s_x \) be the order of \( \beta_x \). As \( s_x \) is a common divisor of \( n \) and \( s_x \), we put \( r_x = s_x t_x \) and \( n = s_x u_x \). Then there exists an integer \( k_x \), \( 0 < k_x < s_x \), \( (k_x, s_x) = 1 \) such that

\[
\beta_x = \text{the class of } \frac{k_x}{s_x} D_x,
\]

where \( D_x \) is the divisor in Lemma 1.6.

Proof. As \( \beta_x \neq 0 \), \( x \) is of either type \( a_n \) or \( e_6 \). In such a case, \( G_{R_x} \) is a cyclic group with a generator as in Lemma 1.6, from which our lemma follows.

By Lemma 2.4, we have

\[
L_1 \cong \mathbb{Q} \sum_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)} \frac{k_x}{s_x} D_x \pmod T.
\]

This means that there exists an element, \( L_2 \), in \( T \) such that

\[
L_1 + L_2 \cong \mathbb{Q} \sum_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)} \frac{k_x}{s_x} D_x.
\]

**Lemma 2.5.** The greatest common divisor of the \( (nk_x/s_x)'s \) is 1.

Proof. Let \( d = \gcd \left( \frac{nk_x}{s_x} \right)_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)} \). Then \( \frac{nk_x}{s_x} (L_1 + L_2) \in T \) as \( \text{NS}(Z) \) is torsion free. This shows that the order of \( \nu(L_1 + L_2) = \nu(L_1) \) is a divisor of \( \frac{nk_x}{s_x} \). By our assumption, the order of \( \nu(L_1) \) is \( n \); and \( d = 1 \).

Now we define the divisor \( D \) on \( Z \) as follows:

If \( \beta_x \neq 0 \), \( x = a_b \), \( b \): even, then put

\[
D^+_x = \frac{nk_x}{s_x} \sum_{k=1}^{b} (b + 1 - k) \Theta_k.
\]

If \( \beta_x \neq 0 \), \( x = a_b \), \( b \): odd, then put

\[
D^+_x = \frac{nk_x}{s_x} \sum_{k=1}^{b-1} (b + 1 - k) \Theta_k.
\]

If \( \beta_x \neq 0 \), \( x = e_6 \), then put

\[
D^+_x = \frac{nk_x}{3} \Theta_1 + \frac{2nk_x}{3} \Theta_2.
\]

Now put \( D = \sum_{x \in \text{Sing}(B)} D^+_x \). Then

\[
D - \sigma^* D \approx n(L_1 + L_2 - \sum_{x=a_b, b\text{ odd}, \beta_x \neq 0} \frac{k_x r_x}{2s_x} \Theta_{x}^{r_x}).
\]

Put \( L = L_1 + L_2 - \sum_{x=a_b, b\text{ odd}, \beta_x \neq 0} \frac{k_x r_x}{2s_x} \Theta_{x}^{r_x} \). Then the pair \( (D, L) \) satisfies the condition in Proposition 2.1.
3. Proof of Theorem 0.4.

Thanks to Theorem 0.3, it is enough to show that $\text{NS}(Z)/T$ has a $p$-torsion. We first prove the following lemma:

**Lemma 3.1.** Let $b_i(Z)$ be the $i$-th Betti number of $Z$. Then we have

$$b_2(Z) = 24 \chi(\mathcal{O}_Z) + 4(h^1(\mathcal{O}_Z) + h^1(\mathcal{O}_Z(-L))) + 4\mathcal{L}^2 + 2K_Z\mathcal{L} - 2K_Z^2 - 2.$$ 

**Proof.** By [H], Lemma 6 and its proof, we have

$$\chi(\mathcal{O}_Z) = \frac{1}{2}(K_Z + \mathcal{L}) + 2\chi(\mathcal{O}_Z),$$

$$K_Z^2 = 2(K_Z + \mathcal{L})^2$$

and

$$h^1(\mathcal{O}_Z) = h^1(\mathcal{O}_Z) + h^1(\mathcal{O}_Z(-\mathcal{L})).$$

Hence the Noether formula gives

$$c_2(Z) = 12\chi(\mathcal{O}_Z) - c_1^2(Z) = 24\chi(\mathcal{O}_Z) + 4\mathcal{L}^2 + 2K_Z\mathcal{L} - 2K_Z^2.$$ 

As $b_1(Z) = b_3(Z) = 2h^1(\mathcal{O}_Z)$, we have the desired equality.

In the following, we make use of some Nikulin theory ([N]). This approach is a modification of Miranda-Persson’s in §4, [MP]. A similar argument is also found in [X].

Suppose that there exists no $p$-torsion in $T^{\perp \perp}/T$. Then

$$S_p(G_T) \cong S_p(G_{T^{\perp \perp}}),$$

where $S_p(G)$ denotes the $p$-Sylow group of $G$. By Lemma 1.6 and Example 1.7, we have

$$G_T^{\perp} \cong G_{T^{\perp \perp}}.$$ 

Hence the number of generators, $l_1$, of $S_p(G_{T^{\perp \perp}}) \leq \text{rank } T^{\perp} = b_2(Z) - \text{rank } T$. On the other hand, by the assumption and Lemma 3.1, we have $l_1 \geq l > b_2(Z) - \text{rank } T$. This leads us to a contradiction.

4. Applications

We keep the same notations as before.

**Application 1:** $\mathbb{D}_{2n}$ coverings of $\mathbb{P}^2$.

**Lemma 4.1.** Suppose that

(i) $\Sigma$ is simply connected, and

(ii) the linear system $|B|$ is a base point and fixed component free.

Then $\pi_1(Z) = 0$. In particular, $\text{NS}(Z)$ is torsion free.

**Proof.** Let $B_1$ be a smooth member of $|B|$. Then there exists a smooth double covering $Z_1$ of $\Sigma$ branched along $B_1$. By Brieskorn’s results for the simultaneous resolution of rational double points ([B1], [B2]), $Z$ is considered as a smooth deformation of $Z_1$. This implies that $Z$ is homeomorphic to $Z_1$. By Proposition 1.8, [C], $Z_1$ is simply connected. Hence $Z$ is simply connected.

In the case where $\Sigma = \mathbb{P}^2$, the two assumptions in Lemma 4.1 always hold. This gives Corollary 0.5
Example 4.2. (i) Put \( p = 3 \) and \( m = 2 \). Consider a plane quartic curve having \( 3a_2 \) singularities. Then there exists a \( D_6 \) covering branched along \( B \) with the ramification index 2. This gives another proof for Zariski’s result: \( \pi_1(\mathbb{P}^2 \setminus B) \) is non-abelian (\([\mathbb{Z}]\)).

(ii) Put \( p = 3 \) and \( m = 3 \). Let \( B \) be the sextic curve as in the table in \( \S 6 \). \([T4]\). Then there exists a \( D_6 \) covering branched along \( B \) with the ramification index 2. Note that we proved the existence for only the first 7 cases in \([T4]\).

Remark 4.3. The author does not know any single example of a plane curve of degree \( \geq 8 \) enjoying the assumption in Corollary 0.5. Also, he does not know of any single example of a plane curve enjoying the assumption in Corollary 0.5 for \( p \geq 5 \).

Application 2: \( n \)-torsions of an elliptic surface and \( D_{2n} \) coverings

In \([T1], [T2] \) and \([T4] \), \( p \)-torsions of the Mordell-Weil group of an elliptic surface play important roles in constructing \( D_{2p} \) (\( p \): odd prime) coverings. We show that the results on the existence of \( D_{2p} \) coverings in previous articles follow easily from Theorem 0.4.

Let \( \xi : \mathcal{E} \to C \) be an elliptic surface over a curve \( C \) such that

(i) \( \xi \) is relatively minimal,

(ii) \( \xi \) has a section \( s_0 \), and

(iii) \( \xi \) has at least one singular fiber.

Under these assumptions, by Theorem 1.2 in \([S]\), \( \text{NS}(\mathcal{E}) \) is torsion free. Also it is well-known that \( \mathcal{E} \) is obtained as the canonical resolution of a double covering \( f' : \mathcal{E}' \to \Sigma \) of some ruled surface \( \Sigma \) over \( C \) having the branch locus \( \Delta(\mathcal{E}'/\Sigma) \) in the form of \( \Delta_0 + B_0 \) such that

(i) \( \Delta_0 \) is a section of \( \Sigma \) and \( B_0 \) is a tri-section with \( B_0 \cap \Delta_0 = \emptyset \),

(ii) the image of \( s_0 \) in \( \Sigma \) is \( \Delta_0 \), and

(iii) \( B_0 \) has at most simple singularities.

We denote the morphism from \( \mathcal{E} \to \Sigma \) by \( \hat{f} \).

We apply Theorem 0.3 to \( \Sigma \) and \( \Delta(\mathcal{E}'/\Sigma) \) and obtain the following theorem, which is again a generalization of Proposition 3.1 in \([T4]\).

**Theorem 4.4.** Let \( n \) be an odd number. Let \( MW(\mathcal{E}) \) be the Mordell-Weil group of \( \mathcal{E} \), i.e., the group of sections. If \( MW(\mathcal{E}) \) has an \( n \)-torsion, then there exists a \( D_{2n} \) covering, \( S \), of \( \mathcal{E} \) branched along \( \Delta(\mathcal{E}'/\Sigma) \) with ramification index 2.

**Proof.** As \( \text{disc}(\hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma)) = 4, \gcd(n, \text{disc}(\hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma))) = 1 \). Let \( T \) be as before and let \( T_\varphi \) be the subgroup of \( \text{NS}(\mathcal{E}) \) generated by \( s_0, F \): a fiber of \( \varphi \), and all the irreducible components of singular fibers not meeting \( s_0 \). By our construction, the difference between \( T \) and \( T_\varphi \) is just one between \( \hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma) \) and \( \mathbb{Z}s_0 \oplus \mathbb{Z}F \). As \( \hat{f}^* \Delta_0 = 2s_0 \) and a fiber of \( \Sigma \to C \) is also a fiber of \( \varphi \), \( \hat{f}^* \text{NS}(\Sigma) \) is a subgroup of \( \mathbb{Z}s_0 \oplus \mathbb{Z}F \) of index 2. This means that \( [T_\varphi : T] = 2 \); and we have the exact sequence

\[
0 \to \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \to \text{NS}(\mathcal{E})/T \to \text{NS}(\mathcal{E})/T_\varphi \to 0.
\]

This implies that, for \( n \): odd, \( \text{NS}(\mathcal{E})/T \) has an \( n \)-torsion if and only if \( \text{NS}(\mathcal{E})/T_\varphi \) does also. On the other hand, by Theorem 1.3 in \([S]\), \( \text{NS}(\mathcal{E})/T_\varphi \cong MW(\mathcal{E}) \). By Theorem 0.3, we have our statement.

**References**

DIHEDRAL COVERINGS


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