

2-Elementary Subgroups of the Space Cremona Group

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Abstract We give a sharp bound for orders of elementary abelian two-groups of birational automorphisms of rationally connected threefolds.

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1 Introduction

Throughout this paper we work over \mathbb{k} , an algebraically closed field of characteristic 0. Recall that the *Cremona group* $\mathrm{Cr}_n(\mathbb{k})$ is the group of birational transformations of the projective space $\mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{k}}^n$. We are interested in finite subgroups of $\mathrm{Cr}_n(\mathbb{k})$. For $n = 2$ these subgroups are classified basically (see [5] and references therein) but for $n \geq 3$ the situation becomes much more complicated. There are only a few, very specific classification results (see e.g. [14, 15, 18]).

Let p be a prime number. A group G is said to be *p-elementary abelian* of rank r if $G \simeq (\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z})^r$. In this case we denote $r(G) := r$. A. Beauville [3] obtained a sharp bound for the rank of p -elementary abelian subgroups of $\mathrm{Cr}_2(\mathbb{k})$.

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Theorem 1.1 ([3]). *Let $G \subset \mathrm{Cr}_2(\mathbb{k})$ be a 2-elementary abelian subgroup. Then $r(G) \leq 4$. Moreover, this bound is sharp and such groups G with $r(G) = 4$ are classified up to conjugacy in $\mathrm{Cr}_2(\mathbb{k})$.*

The author [14] was able to get a similar bound for p -elementary abelian subgroups of $\mathrm{Cr}_3(\mathbb{k})$ which is sharp for $p \geq 17$.

In this paper we improve this result in the case $p = 2$. We study 2-elementary abelian subgroups acting on rationally connected threefolds. In particular, we obtain a sharp bound for the rank of such subgroups in $\mathrm{Cr}_3(\mathbb{k})$. Our main result is the following.

Theorem 1.2. *Let Y be a rationally connected three-dimensional algebraic variety over \mathbb{k} and let $G \subset \mathrm{Bir}_{\mathbb{k}}(Y)$ be a 2-elementary abelian group. Then $r(G) \leq 6$.*

Corollary 1.3. *Let $G \subset \mathrm{Cr}_3(\mathbb{k})$ be a 2-elementary abelian group. Then $r(G) \leq 6$ and the bound is sharp (see Example 3.4).*

Unfortunately we are not able to classify all the birational actions $G \curvearrowright \mathrm{Bir}_{\mathbb{k}}(Y)$ as above attaining the bound $r(G) \leq 6$ (cf. [3]). However, in some cases we get a description of these “extremal” actions.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In Sect. 3 we reduce the problem to the study of biregular actions of 2-elementary abelian groups on Fano-Mori fiber spaces and investigate the case of nontrivial base. A few facts about actions of 2-elementary abelian groups on Fano threefolds are discussed in Sect. 4. In Sect. 5 (resp. Sect. 6) we study actions on non-Gorenstein (resp. Gorenstein) Fano threefolds. Our main theorem is a direct consequence of Propositions 3.2, 5.1, and 6.1.

2 Preliminaries

Notation.

- For a group G , $r(G)$ denotes the minimal number of generators. In particular, if G is an elementary abelian p -group, then $G \simeq (\mathbb{Z}/p\mathbb{Z})^{r(G)}$.
- $\mathrm{Fix}(G, X)$ (or simply $\mathrm{Fix}(G)$ if no confusion is likely) denotes the fixed point locus of an action of G on X .

Terminal Singularities. Recall that the *index* of a terminal singularity $(X \ni P)$ is a minimal positive integer r such that K_X is a Cartier divisor at P .

Lemma 2.1. *Let $(X \ni P)$ be a germ of a threefold terminal singularity and let $G \subset \mathrm{Aut}(X \ni P)$ be a 2-elementary abelian subgroup. Then $r(G) \leq 4$. Moreover, if $r(G) = 4$, then $(X \ni P)$ is not a cyclic quotient singularity.*

Proof. Let m be the index of $(X \ni P)$. Consider the index-one cover $\pi: (X^\sharp \ni P^\sharp) \rightarrow (X \ni P)$ (see [19]). Here $(X^\sharp \ni P^\sharp)$ is a terminal point of index 1 (or smooth) and π is a cyclic cover of degree m which is étale outside of P .

Thus $X \ni P$ is the quotient of $X^\sharp \ni P$ by a cyclic group of order m . If $m = 1$, we take π to be the identity map. We may assume that $\mathbb{k} = \mathbb{C}$ and then the map $X^\sharp \setminus \{P^\sharp\} \rightarrow X \setminus \{P\}$ can be regarded as the topological universal cover. Hence there exists a natural lifting $G^\sharp \subset \text{Aut}(X^\sharp \ni P^\sharp)$ fitting in the following exact sequence

$$1 \longrightarrow C_m \longrightarrow G^\sharp \longrightarrow G \longrightarrow 1, \tag{*}$$

where $C_m \simeq \mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}$. We claim that G^\sharp is abelian. Assume the converse, then $m \geq 2$. The group G^\sharp permutes the eigenspaces of C_m in the Zariski tangent space T_{P^\sharp, X^\sharp} . Let $n := \dim T_{P^\sharp, X^\sharp}$ be the embedded dimension. By the classification of three-dimensional terminal singularities [10, 19] we have one of the following:

- (1) $\frac{1}{m}(a, -a, b)$, $n = 3$, $\gcd(a, m) = \gcd(b, m) = 1$;
- (2) $\frac{1}{m}(a, -a, b, 0)$, $n = 4$, $\gcd(a, m) = \gcd(b, m) = 1$; (**)
- (3) $\frac{1}{4}(a, -a, b, 2)$, $n = 4$, $\gcd(a, 2) = \gcd(b, 2) = 1$, $m = 4$,

where $\frac{1}{m}(a_1, \dots, a_n)$ denotes the diagonal action

$$x_k \mapsto \exp(2\pi i a_k / m) \cdot x_k, \quad k = 1, \dots, n.$$

Put $T = T_{P^\sharp, X^\sharp}$ in the first case and denote by $T \subset T_{P^\sharp, X^\sharp}$ the three-dimensional subspace $x_4 = 0$ in the second and the third cases. Then C_m acts on T freely outside of the origin and T is G^\sharp -invariant. By (*) we see that the derived subgroup $[G^\sharp, G^\sharp]$ is contained in C_m . In particular, $[G^\sharp, G^\sharp]$ is abelian and also acts on T freely outside of the origin. Assume that $[G^\sharp, G^\sharp] \neq \{1\}$. Since $\dim T = 3$, this implies that the representation of G^\sharp on T is irreducible (otherwise T has a one-dimensional invariant subspace, say T_1 , and the kernel of the map $G^\sharp \rightarrow GL(T_1) \simeq \mathbb{k}^*$ must contain $[G^\sharp, G^\sharp]$). In particular, the eigenspaces of C_m on T have the same dimension. Since T is irreducible, the order of G^\sharp is divisible by $3 = \dim T$ and so $m > 2$. In this case, by the above description of the action of C_m on T_{P^\sharp, X^\sharp} we get that there are exactly three distinct eigenspaces $T_i \subset T$. The action of G^\sharp on the set $\{T_i\}$ induces a transitive homomorphism $G^\sharp \rightarrow \mathfrak{S}_3$ whose kernel contains C_m . Hence we have a transitive homomorphism $G \rightarrow \mathfrak{S}_3$. Since G is a two-group, this is impossible.

Thus G^\sharp is abelian. Then

$$r(G) \leq r(G^\sharp) \leq \dim T_{P^\sharp, X^\sharp}.$$

This proves our statement. □

Remark 2.2. If in the above notation the action of G on X is free in codimension one, then $r(G) \leq \dim T_{P^\sharp, X^\sharp} - 1$.

For convenience of references, we formulate the following easy result.

Lemma 2.3. *Let G be a 2-elementary abelian group and let X be a G -threefold with isolated singularities.*

- (i) *If $\dim \text{Fix}(G) > 0$, then $\dim \text{Fix}(G) + r(G) \leq 3$.*
- (ii) *Let $\delta \in G \setminus \{1\}$ and let $S \subset \text{Fix}(\delta)$ be the union of two-dimensional components. Then S is G -invariant and smooth in codimension 1.*

Sketch of the proof. Consider the action of G on the tangent space to X at a general point of a component of $\text{Fix}(G)$ (resp. at a general point of $\text{Sing}(S)$). \square

3 G -Equivariant Minimal Model Program

Definition 3.1. Let G be a finite group. A G -variety is a variety X provided with a biregular faithful action of G . We say that a normal G -variety X is $G\mathbb{Q}$ -factorial if any G -invariant Weil divisor on X is \mathbb{Q} -Cartier.

The following construction is standard (see e.g. [15]).

Let Y be a rationally connected three-dimensional algebraic variety and let $G \subset \text{Bir}(Y)$ be a finite subgroup. Taking an equivariant compactification and running an equivariant minimal model program we get a G -variety X and a G -equivariant birational map $Y \dashrightarrow X$, where X has a structure a G -Fano-Mori fibration $f : X \rightarrow B$. This means that X has at worst terminal $G\mathbb{Q}$ -factorial singularities, f is a G -equivariant morphism with connected fibers, B is normal, $\dim B < \dim X$, the anticanonical Weil divisor $-K_X$ is ample over B , and the relative G -invariant Picard number $\rho(X)^G$ equals to one. Obviously, in the case $\dim X = 3$ we have the following possibilities:

- (C) B is a rational surface and a general fiber $f^{-1}(b)$ is a conic;
- (D) $B \simeq \mathbb{P}^1$ and a general fiber $f^{-1}(b)$ is a smooth del Pezzo surface;
- (F) B is a point and X is a $G\mathbb{Q}$ -Fano threefold, that is, X is a Fano threefold with at worst terminal $G\mathbb{Q}$ -factorial singularities and such that $\text{Pic}(X)^G \simeq \mathbb{Z}$. In this situation we say that X is G -Fano threefold if X is Gorenstein, that is, K_X is a Cartier divisor.

Proposition 3.2. *Let G be a 2-elementary abelian group and let $f : X \rightarrow B$ be a G -Fano-Mori fibration with $\dim X = 3$ and $\dim B > 0$. Then $r(G) \leq 6$. Moreover, if $r(G) = 6$ and $B \simeq \mathbb{P}^1$, then a general fiber $f^{-1}(b)$ is a del Pezzo surface of degree 4 or 8.*

Proof. Let $G_f \subset G$ (resp. $G_B \subset \text{Aut}(B)$) be the kernel (resp. the image) of the homomorphism $G \rightarrow \text{Aut}(B)$. Thus G_B acts faithfully on B and G_f acts faithfully on the generic fiber $F \subset X$ of f . Clearly, G_f and G_B are 2-elementary groups with $r(G_f) + r(G_B) = r(G)$. Assume that $B \simeq \mathbb{P}^1$. Then $r(G_B) \leq 2$ by the

classification of finite subgroups of $PGL_2(\mathbb{k})$. By Theorem 1.1 we have $r(G_f) \leq 4$. If furthermore $r(G) = 6$, then $r(G_f) = 4$ and the assertion about F follows by Lemma 3.3 below. This proves our assertions in the case $B \simeq \mathbb{P}^1$. The case $\dim B = 2$ is treated similarly. \square

Lemma 3.3 (cf. [3]). *Let F be a del Pezzo surface and let $G \subset \text{Aut}(F)$ be a 2-elementary abelian group with $r(F) \geq 4$. Then $r(F) = 4$ and one of the following holds:*

- (i) $K_F^2 = 4, \rho(F)^G = 1$;
- (ii) $K_F^2 = 8, \rho(F)^G = 2$.

Proof. Similar to [3, §3]. \square

Example 3.4. Let $F \subset \mathbb{P}^4$ be the quartic del Pezzo surface given by $\sum x_i^2 = \sum \lambda_i x_i^2 = 0$ with $\lambda_i \neq \lambda_j$ for $i \neq j$ and let $G_f \subset \text{Aut}(F)$ be the 2-elementary abelian subgroup generated by involutions $x_i \mapsto -x_i$. Consider also a 2-elementary abelian subgroup $G_B \subset \text{Aut}(\mathbb{P}^1)$ induced by a faithful representation $Q_8 \rightarrow GL_2(\mathbb{k})$ of the quaternion group Q_8 . Then $r(G_f) = 4, r(G_B) = 2$, and $G := G_f \times G_B$ naturally acts on $X := F \times \mathbb{P}^1$. Two projections give us two structures of G -Fano-Mori fibrations of types (D) and (C). This shows that the bound $r(G) \leq 6$ in Proposition 3.2 is sharp. Moreover, X is rational and so we have an embedding $G \subset Cr_3(\mathbb{k})$.

4 Actions on Fano Threefolds

Main Assumption. From now on we assume that we are in the case (F), that is, X is a $G\mathbb{Q}$ -Fano threefold.

Remark 4.1. The group G acts naturally on the space of anticanonical sections $H^0(X, -K_X)$. Assume that $H^0(X, -K_X) \neq 0$. Since G is an abelian group, there exists a decomposition of $H^0(X, -K_X)$ into eigenspaces. Then any eigensection $s \in H^0(X, -K_X)$ defines an invariant member $S \in |-K_X|$.

Lemma 4.2. *Let X be a $G\mathbb{Q}$ -Fano threefold, where G is a 2-elementary abelian group with $r(G) \geq 5$. Let S be an invariant effective Weil divisor such that $-(K_X + S)$ is nef. Then the pair (X, S) is log canonical (lc). In particular, S is reduced. If $-(K_X + S)$ is ample, then the pair (X, S) is purely log terminal (plt).*

Proof. Assume that the pair (X, S) is not lc. Since S is G -invariant and $\rho(X)^G = 1$, we see that S is numerically proportional to K_X . Hence S is ample. We apply quite standard connectedness arguments of Shokurov [22] (see, e.g., [11, Prop. 2.6]): for a suitable G -invariant boundary D , the pair (X, D) is lc, the divisor $-(K_X + D)$ is ample, and the minimal locus V of log canonical singularities is also G -invariant. Moreover, V is either a point or a smooth rational curve.

By Lemma 2.1 we may assume that G has no fixed points. Hence, $V \simeq \mathbb{P}^1$ and we have a map $\zeta : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}(\mathbb{P}^1)$. By Lemma 2.3 $r(\ker \zeta) \leq 2$. Therefore, $r(\zeta(G)) \geq 3$. This contradicts the classification of finite subgroups of $PGL_2(\mathbb{k})$.

If $-(K_X + S)$ is ample and (X, S) has a log canonical center of dimension ≤ 1 , then by considering $(X, S' = S + \epsilon B)$, where B is a suitable invariant divisor and $0 < \epsilon \ll 1$, we get a non-lc pair (X, S') . This contradicts the above considered case. \square

Corollary 4.3. *Let X be a $G\mathbb{Q}$ -Fano threefold, where G is a 2-elementary abelian group with $r(G) \geq 6$ and let S be an invariant Weil divisor. Then $-(K_X + S)$ is not ample.*

Proof. If $-(K_X + S)$ is ample, then by Lemma 4.2 the pair (X, S) is plt. By the adjunction principle [22] the surface S is irreducible, normal and has only quotient singularities. Moreover, $-K_S$ is ample. Hence S is rational. We get a contradiction by Theorem 1.1 and Lemma 2.3(i). \square

Lemma 4.4. *Let S be a K3 surface with at worst Du Val singularities and let $\Gamma \subset \text{Aut}(S)$ be a 2-elementary abelian group. Then $r(\Gamma) \leq 6$.*

Proof. Let $\tilde{S} \rightarrow S$ be the minimal resolution. Here \tilde{S} is a smooth K3 surface and the action of Γ lists to \tilde{S} . Let $\Gamma_s \subset \Gamma$ be the largest subgroup that acts trivially on $H^{2,0}(\tilde{S}) \simeq \mathbb{C}$. The group Γ/Γ_s is cyclic. Hence, $r(\Gamma/\Gamma_s) \leq 1$. According to [13, Th. 4.5] we have $r(\Gamma_s) \leq 4$. Thus $r(\Gamma) \leq 5$. \square

Corollary 4.5. *Let X be a $G\mathbb{Q}$ -Fano threefold, where G is a 2-elementary abelian group. Let $S \in |-K_X|$ be a G -invariant member. If $r(G) \geq 7$, then the singularities of S are worse than Du Val.*

Proposition 4.6. *Let X be a $G\mathbb{Q}$ -Fano threefold, where G is a 2-elementary abelian group with $r(G) \geq 6$. Let $S \in |-K_X|$ be a G -invariant member and let $G_\bullet \subset G$ be the largest subgroup that acts trivially on the set of components of S . One of the following holds:*

- (i) *S is a K3 surface with at worst Du Val singularities, then $S \subset \text{Fix}(\delta)$ for some $\delta \in G \setminus \{1\}$ and $G/\langle \delta \rangle$ faithfully acts on S . In this case $r(G) = 6$.*
- (ii) *The surface S is reducible (and reduced). The group G acts transitively on the components of S and G_\bullet acts faithfully on each component $S_i \subset S$. There are two subcases:*
 - (a) *any component $S_i \subset S$ is rational and $r(G_\bullet) \leq 4$.*
 - (b) *any component $S_i \subset S$ is birationally ruled over an elliptic curve and $r(G_\bullet) \leq 5$.*

Proof. By Lemma 4.2 the pair (X, S) is lc. Assume that S is normal (and irreducible). By the adjunction formula $K_S \sim 0$. We claim that S has at worst Du Val singularities. Indeed, otherwise by the Connectedness Principle [22, Th. 6.9] S

has at most two non-Du Val points. These points are fixed by an index two subgroup $G' \subset G$. This contradicts Lemma 2.1. Taking Lemma 4.4 into account we get the case (i).

Now assume that S is not normal. Let $S_i \subset S$ be an irreducible component (the case $S_i = S$ is not excluded). If the action on components $S_i \subset S$ is not transitive, there is an invariant divisor $S' < S$. Since X is $G\mathbb{Q}$ -factorial and $\rho(X)^G = 1$, the divisor $-(K_X + S')$ is ample. This contradicts Corollary 4.3.

By Lemma 2.3(ii) the action of G_\bullet on each component S_i is faithful.

If S_i is a rational surface, then $r(G_\bullet) \leq 4$ by Theorem 1.1. Assume that S_i is not rational. Let $v: S' \rightarrow S_i$ be the normalization. Write $0 \sim v^*(K_X + S) = K_{S'} + D'$, where D' is the *different*, see [22, §3]. Here D' is an effective reduced divisor and the pair is lc [22, 3.2]. Since S is not normal, $D' \neq 0$. Consider the minimal resolution $\mu: \tilde{S} \rightarrow S'$ and let \tilde{D} be the crepan pull-back of D' , that is, $\mu_*\tilde{D} = D'$ and

$$K_{\tilde{S}} + \tilde{D} = \mu^*(K_{S'} + D') \sim 0.$$

Here \tilde{D} is again an effective reduced divisor. Hence \tilde{S} is a ruled surface. Consider the Albanese map $\alpha: \tilde{S} \rightarrow C$. Let $\tilde{D}_1 \subset \tilde{D}$ be an α -horizontal component. By the adjunction formula \tilde{D}_1 is an elliptic curve and so C is. Let Γ be the image of G_\bullet in $\text{Aut}(C)$. Then $r(\Gamma) \leq 3$ and so $r(G_\bullet) \leq 5$. So, the last assertion is proved. \square

5 Non-Gorenstein Fano Threefolds

Let G be a 2-elementary abelian group and let X be $G\mathbb{Q}$ -Fano threefold. In this section we consider the case where X is non-Gorenstein, i.e., it has at least one terminal point of index > 1 . We denote by $\text{Sing}'(X) = \{P_1, \dots, P_M\}$ the set of non-Gorenstein points.

Recall that any (analytic) threefold terminal singularity $U \ni P$ has a small deformation U_t , where $t \in (\text{unit disk}) \subset \mathbb{C}$, such that for $0 < |t| \ll 1$ the threefold $U_t \ni P_{i,t}$ has only cyclic quotient singularities $U_t \ni P_{i,t}$ of the form $\frac{1}{m_i}(1, -1, a_i)$ with $\text{gcd}(m_i, a_i) = 1$ [19]. The collection $\mathbf{B}(U, P) := \left\{ \frac{1}{m_i}(1, -1, a_i) \right\}$ does not depend on the choice of deformation and called the *basket* of $U \ni P$. For a threefold X with terminal singularities we denote by $\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{B}(X)$ its *global basket*, the union of baskets of all singular points.

Proposition 5.1. *Let X be a non-Gorenstein Fano threefold with terminal singularities. Assume that X admits a faithful action of a 2-elementary abelian group G with $r(G) \geq 6$. Then $r(G) = 6$, G transitively acts on $\text{Sing}'(X)$, $|-K_X| \neq \emptyset$, and the configuration of non-Gorenstein singularities is described below.*

- (1) $M = 8, \mathbf{B}(X, P_i) = \left\{ \frac{1}{2}(1, 1, 1) \right\};$
- (2) $M = 8, \mathbf{B}(X, P_i) = \left\{ \frac{1}{3}(1, 1, 2) \right\};$
- (3) $M = 4, \mathbf{B}(X, P_i) = \left\{ 2 \times \frac{1}{2}(1, 1, 1) \right\};$

- (4) $M = 4, \mathbf{B}(X, P_i) = \{2 \times \frac{1}{3}(1, 1, 2)\};$
- (5) $M = 4, \mathbf{B}(X, P_i) = \{3 \times \frac{1}{2}(1, 1, 1)\};$
- (6) $M = 4, \mathbf{B}(X, P_i) = \{\frac{1}{4}(1, -1, 1), \frac{1}{2}(1, 1, 1)\}.$

Proof. Let $P^{(1)}, \dots, P^{(n)} \in \text{Sing}'(X)$ be representatives of distinct G -orbits and let G_i be the stabilizer of $P^{(i)}$. Let $r := r(G), r_i := r(G_i)$, and let $m_{i,1}, \dots, m_{i,v_i}$ be the indices of points in the basket of $P^{(i)}$. We may assume that $m_{i,1} \geq \dots \geq m_{i,v_i}$. By the orbifold Riemann–Roch formula [19] and a form of Bogomolov–Miyaoka inequality [8, 9] we have

$$\sum_{i=1}^n 2^{r-r_i} \sum_{j=1}^{v_i} \left(m_{i,j} - \frac{1}{m_{i,j}} \right) < 24. \tag{***}$$

If P is a cyclic quotient singularity, then $v_i = 1$ and by Lemma 2.1 $r_i \leq 3$. If P is not a cyclic quotient singularity, then $v_i \geq 2$ and again by Lemma 2.1 $r_i \leq 4$. Since $m_{i,j} - 1/m_{i,j} \geq 3/2$, in both cases we have

$$2^{r-r_i} \sum_{j=1}^{v_i} \left(m_{i,j} - \frac{1}{m_{i,j}} \right) \geq 3 \cdot 2^{r-4} \geq 12.$$

Therefore, $n = 1$, i.e., G transitively acts on $\text{Sing}'(X)$, and $r = 6$.

If P is not a point of type $cAx/4$ (i.e., it is not as in (3) of (**)), then by the classification of terminal singularities [19] $m_{1,1} = \dots = m_{1,v_1}$ and (***) has the form

$$24 > 2^{6-r_1} v_1 \left(m_{1,1} - \frac{1}{m_{1,1}} \right) \geq 8 \left(m_{1,1} - \frac{1}{m_{1,1}} \right).$$

Hence $r_1 \geq 3, v_1 \leq 3, m_{1,1} \leq 3$, and $3 \cdot 2^{r_1-3} \geq v_1 m_{1,1}$. If $r_1 = 3$, then $v_1 = 1$. If $r_1 = 4$, then $v_1 \geq 2$ and $v_1 m_{1,1} \leq 6$. This gives us the possibilities (1)–(5).

Assume that P is a point of type $cAx/4$. Then $m_{1,1} = 4, v_1 > 1$, and $m_{1,j} = 2$ for $1 < j \leq v_1$. Thus (***) has the form

$$24 > 2^{6-r_1} \left(\frac{15}{4} + \frac{3}{2}(v_1 - 1) \right) = 2^{4-r_1} (9 + 6v_1).$$

We get $v_1 = 2, r_1 = 4$, i.e., the case (6).

Finally, the computation of $\dim |-K_X|$ follows by the orbifold Riemann–Roch formula [19]

$$\dim |-K_X| = -\frac{1}{2} K_X^3 + 2 - \sum_{P \in \mathbf{B}(X)} \frac{b_P(m_P - b_P)}{2m_P}.$$

6 Gorenstein Fano Threefolds

The main result of this section is the following:

Proposition 6.1. *Let G be a 2-elementary abelian group and let X be a (Gorenstein) G -Fano threefold. Then $r(G) \leq 6$. Moreover, if $r(G) = 6$, then $\text{Pic}(X) = \mathbb{Z} \cdot K_X$ and $-K_X^3 \geq 8$.*

Let X be a Fano threefold with at worst Gorenstein terminal singularities. Recall that the number

$$i(X) := \max\{i \in \mathbb{Z} \mid -K_X \sim iA, A \in \text{Pic}(X)\}$$

is called the *Fano index* of X . The integer $g = g(X)$ such that $-K_X^3 = 2g - 2$ is called the *genus* of X . It is easy to see that $\dim |-K_X| = g + 1$ [7, Corollary 2.1.14]. In particular, $|-K_X| \neq \emptyset$.

Notation. Throughout this section G denotes a 2-elementary abelian group and X denotes a Gorenstein G -Fano threefold. There exists an invariant member $S \in |-K_X|$ (see 4.1). We write $S = \sum_{i=1}^N S_i$, where the S_i are irreducible components. Let $G_\bullet \subset G$ be the kernel of the homomorphism $G \rightarrow \mathfrak{S}_N$ induced by the action of G on $\{S_1, \dots, S_N\}$. Since G is abelian and the action of G on $\{S_1, \dots, S_N\}$ is transitive, the group G_\bullet coincides with the stabilizer of any S_i . Clearly, $N = 2^{r(G)-r(G_\bullet)}$. If $r(G) \geq 6$, then by Proposition 4.6 we have $r(G_\bullet) \leq 5$ and so $N \geq 2^{r(G)-5}$.

Lemma 6.2. *Let $G \subset \text{Aut}(\mathbb{P}^n)$ be a 2-elementary subgroup and n is even. Then G is conjugate to a diagonal subgroup. In particular, $r(G) \leq n$.*

Proof. Let $G^\sharp \subset SL_{n+1}(\mathbb{k})$ be the lifting of G and let $G' \subset G^\sharp$ be a Sylow two-subgroup. Then $G' \simeq G$. Since G' is abelian, the representation $G' \hookrightarrow SL_{n+1}(\mathbb{k})$ is diagonalizable. \square

Corollary 6.3. *Let $Q \subset \mathbb{P}^4$ be a quadric and let $G \subset \text{Aut}(Q)$ be a 2-elementary subgroup. Then $r(G) \leq 4$.*

Lemma 6.4. *Let $G \subset \text{Aut}(\mathbb{P}^3)$ be a 2-elementary subgroup. Then $r(G) \leq 4$.*

Certainly, the fact follows by Blichfeldt's theorem which asserts that the lifting $G^\sharp \subset SL_4(\mathbb{k})$ is a monomial representation (see e.g. [20, §3]). Here we give a short independent proof.

Proof. Assume that $r(G) \geq 5$. Take any element $\delta \in G \setminus \{1\}$. By Lemma 2.1 the group G has no fixed points. Since the set $\text{Fix}(\delta)$ is G -invariant, $\text{Fix}(\delta) = L_1 \cup L_2$, where $L_1, L_2 \subset \mathbb{P}^3$ are skew lines.

Let $G_1 \subset G$ be the stabilizer of L_1 . There is a subgroup $G_2 \subset G_1$ of index 2 having a fixed point $P \in L_1$. Thus $r(G_2) \geq 3$ and the "orthogonal" plane Π is G_2 -invariant. By Lemma 6.2 there exists an element $\delta' \in G_2$ that acts trivially on Π , i.e., $\Pi \subset \text{Fix}(\delta')$. But then δ' has a fixed point, a contradiction. \square

Lemma 6.5. *If $\text{Bs}|-K_X| \neq \emptyset$, then $r(G) \leq 4$.*

Proof. By Shin [21] the base locus $\text{Bs}|-K_X|$ is either a single point or a rational curve. In both cases $r(G) \leq 4$ by Lemmas 2.1 and 2.3. \square

Lemma 6.6. *If $-K_X$ is not very ample, then $r(G) \leq 5$.*

Proof. Assume that $r(G) \geq 6$. By Lemma 6.5 the linear system $|-K_X|$ is base point free. It is easy to show that $|-K_X|$ defines a double cover $\phi : X \rightarrow Y \subset \mathbb{P}^{g+1}$ (cf. [6, Chap. 1, Prop. 4.9]). Here Y is a variety of degree $g - 1$ in \mathbb{P}^{g+1} , a variety of minimal degree. Let \bar{G} be the image of G in $\text{Aut}(Y)$. Then $r(\bar{G}) \geq r(G) - 1$. If $g = 2$ (resp. $g = 3$), then $Y = \mathbb{P}^3$ (resp. $Y \subset \mathbb{P}^4$ is a quadric) and $r(G) \leq 5$ by Lemma 6.4 (resp. by Corollary 6.3). Thus we may assume that $g \geq 4$. If Y is smooth, then according to the Enriques theorem (see, e.g., [6, Th. 3.11]) Y is a rational scroll $\mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{P}^1}(\mathcal{E})$, where \mathcal{E} is a rank 3 vector bundle on \mathbb{P}^1 . Then X has a G -equivariant projection to a curve. This contradicts $\rho(X)^G = 1$. Hence Y is singular. In this case, Y is a projective cone (again by the Enriques theorem). If its vertex $O \in Y$ is zero-dimensional, then $\dim T_{O,Y} \geq 5$. On the other hand, X has only hypersurface singularities. Therefore the double cover $X \rightarrow Y$ is not étale over O and so G has a fixed point on X . This contradicts Lemma 2.1. Thus Y is a cone over a curve with vertex along a line L . As above, L must be contained in the branch divisor and so $L' := \phi^{-1}(L)$ is a G -invariant rational curve. Since the image of G in $\text{Aut}(L')$ is a 2-elementary abelian group of rank ≤ 2 , by Lemma 2.3 we have $r(G) \leq 4$. \square

Remark 6.7. Recall that for a Fano threefold X with at worst Gorenstein terminal singularities one has $\iota(X) \leq 4$. Moreover, $\iota(X) = 4$ if and only if $X \simeq \mathbb{P}^3$ and $\iota(X) = 3$ if and only if X is a quadric in \mathbb{P}^4 [7]. In these cases we have $r(G) \leq 4$ by Lemma 6.4 and Corollary 6.3, respectively. If $\iota(X) = 2$, then X is so-called *del Pezzo threefold*. The number $d := (-\frac{1}{2}K_X)^3$ is called the *degree* of X .

Lemma 6.8. *Assume that the divisor $-K_X$ is very ample, $r(G) \geq 6$, and the action of G on X is not free in codimension 1. Let $\delta \in G$ be an element such that $\dim \text{Fix}(\delta) = 2$ and let $D \subset \text{Fix}(\delta)$ be the union of all two-dimensional components. Then $r(G) = 6$ and D is a Du Val member of $|-K_X|$. Moreover, $\iota(X) = 1$ except, possibly, for the case where $\iota(X) = 2$ and $-\frac{1}{2}K_X$ is not very ample.*

Proof. Since G is abelian, $\text{Fix}(\delta)$ and D are G -invariant and so $-K_X \sim_{\mathbb{Q}} \lambda D$ for some $\lambda \in \mathbb{Q}$. In particular, D is a \mathbb{Q} -Cartier divisor. Since X has only terminal Gorenstein singularities, D must be Cartier. Clearly, D is smooth outside of $\text{Sing}(X)$. Further, D is ample and so it must be connected. Since D is a reduced Cohen–Macaulay scheme with $\dim \text{Sing}(D) \leq 0$, it is irreducible and normal.

Let $X \hookrightarrow \mathbb{P}^{g+1}$ be the anticanonical embedding. The action of δ on X is induced by an action of a linear involution of \mathbb{P}^{g+1} . There are two disjointed linear subspaces $V_+, V_- \subset \mathbb{P}^{g+1}$ of δ -fixed points and the divisor D is contained in one of them. This means that D is a component of a hyperplane section $S \in |-K_X|$ and so $\lambda \geq 1$.

Since $r(G) \geq 6$, by Corollary 4.3 we have $\lambda = 1$ and $-K_X \sim D$ (because $\text{Pic}(X)$ is a torsion free group). Since D is irreducible, the case (i) of Proposition 4.6 holds.

Finally, if $\iota(X) > 1$, then by Remark 6.7 we have $\iota(X) = 2$. If furthermore the divisor A is very ample, then it defines an embedding $X \hookrightarrow \mathbb{P}^N$ so that D spans \mathbb{P}^N . In this case the action of δ must be trivial, a contradiction. \square

Lemma 6.9. *If $\rho(X) > 1$, then $r(G) \leq 5$.*

Proof. We use the classification of G -Fano threefolds with $\rho(X) > 1$ [17]. By this classification $\rho(X) \leq 4$. Let G_0 be the kernel of the action of G on $\text{Pic}(X)$.

Consider the case $\rho(X) = 2$. Then $[G : G_0] = 2$. In the cases (1.2.1) and (1.2.4) of [17] the variety X has a structure of G_0 -equivariant conic bundle over \mathbb{P}^2 . As in Proposition 3.2 we have $r(G_0) \leq 4$ and $r(G) \leq 5$ in these cases. In the cases (1.2.2) and (1.2.3) of [17] the variety X has two birational contractions to \mathbb{P}^3 and a quadric $Q \subset \mathbb{P}^4$, respectively. As above we get $r(G) \leq 5$ by Lemma 6.4 and Corollary 6.3.

Consider the case $\rho(X) = 3$. We show that in this case $\text{Pic}(X)^G \neq \mathbb{Z}$ (and so this case does not occur). Since G is a 2-elementary abelian group, its action on $\text{Pic}(X) \otimes \mathbb{Q}$ is diagonalizable. Since, $\text{Pic}(X)^G = \mathbb{Z} \cdot K_X$, the group G contains an element τ that acts on $\text{Pic}(X) \simeq \mathbb{Z}^3$ as the reflection with respect to the orthogonal complement to K_X . Since the group G preserves the natural bilinear form $\langle \mathbf{x}_1, \mathbf{x}_2 \rangle := \mathbf{x}_1 \cdot \mathbf{x}_2 \cdot K_X$, the action must be as follows:

$$\tau : \mathbf{x} \mapsto \mathbf{x} - \lambda K_X, \quad \lambda = \frac{2\mathbf{x} \cdot K_X^2}{K_X^3}.$$

Hence λK_X is an integral element for any $\mathbf{x} \in \text{Pic}(X)$. This gives a contradiction in all cases (1.2.5)–(1.2.7) of [17, Th. 1.2]. For example, in the case (1.2.5) of [17, Th. 1.2] our variety X has a structure (non-minimal) del Pezzo fibration of degree 4 and $-K_X^3 = 12$. For the fiber F we have $F \cdot K_X^2 = K_F^2 = 4$ and λK_X is not integral, a contradiction.

Finally, consider the case $\rho(X) = 4$. Then according to [17] X is a divisor of multidegree $(1, 1, 1, 1)$ in $(\mathbb{P}^1)^4$. All the projections $\varphi_i : X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^1, i = 1, \dots, 4$ are G_0 -equivariant. We claim that natural maps $\varphi_{i*} : G_0 \rightarrow \text{Aut}(\mathbb{P}^1)$ are injective. Indeed, assume that $\varphi_{1*}(\vartheta)$ is the identity map in $\text{Aut}(\mathbb{P}^1)$ for some $\vartheta \in G$. This means that $\vartheta \circ \varphi_1 = \varphi_1$. Since $\text{Pic}(X)^G = \mathbb{Z}$, the group G permutes the classes $\varphi_i^* \mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^1}(1) \in \text{Pic}(X)$. Hence, for any $i = 1, \dots, 4$, there exists $\sigma_i \in G$ such that $\varphi_i = \varphi_1 \circ \sigma_i$. Then

$$\vartheta \circ \varphi_i = \vartheta \circ \varphi_1 \circ \sigma_i = \varphi_1 \circ \sigma_i = \varphi_i.$$

Hence, $\varphi_{i*}(\vartheta)$ is the identity for any i . Since $\varphi_1 \times \dots \times \varphi_4$ is an embedding, ϑ must be the identity as well. This proves our claim. Therefore, $r(G_0) \leq 2$. The group G/G_0 acts on $\text{Pic}(X)$ faithfully. By the same reason as above, an element of G/G_0 cannot act as the reflection with respect to K_X . Therefore, $r(G/G_0) \leq 2$ and $r(G) \leq 4$. \square

Now we consider the case of del Pezzo threefolds.

Lemma 6.10. *If $\iota(X) = 2$, then $r(G) \leq 5$.*

Proof. By Lemma 6.9 we may assume that $\rho(X) = 1$. Let $A := -\frac{1}{2}K_X$ and let $d := A^3$ be the degree of X . Since $\rho(X) = 1$, we have $d \leq 5$ (see e.g. [16]). Consider the possibilities for d case by case. We use the classification (see [21] and [16]).

If $d = 1$, then the linear system $|A|$ has a unique base point. This point is smooth and must be G -invariant. By Lemma 2.1 $r(G) \leq 3$. If $d = 2$, then the linear system $|A|$ defines a double cover $\varphi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^3$. Then the image of G in $\text{Aut}(\mathbb{P}^3)$ is a 2-elementary group \bar{G} with $r(\bar{G}) \geq r(G) - 1$, where $r(\bar{G}) \leq 4$ by Lemma 6.4. If $d = 3$, then $X = X_3 \subset \mathbb{P}^4$ is a cubic hypersurface. By Lemma 6.2 $r(G) \leq 4$. If $d = 5$, then X is smooth, unique up to isomorphism, and $\text{Aut}(X) \simeq PGL_2(\mathbb{k})$ (see [7]).

Finally, consider the case $d = 4$. Then $X = Q_1 \cap Q_2 \subset \mathbb{P}^5$ is an intersection of two quadrics (see e.g. [21]). Let \mathcal{Q} be the pencil generated by Q_1 and Q_2 . Since X has a isolated singularities and it is not a cone, a general member of \mathcal{Q} is smooth by Bertini’s theorem and for any member $Q \in \mathcal{Q}$ we have $\dim \text{Sing}(Q) \leq 1$. Let D be the divisor of degree 6 on $\mathcal{Q} \simeq \mathbb{P}^1$ given by the vanishing of the determinant. The elements of $\text{Supp}(D)$ are exactly degenerate quadrics. Clearly, for any point $P \in \text{Sing}(X)$ there exists a unique quadric $Q \in \mathcal{Q}$ which is singular at P . This defines a map $\pi : \text{Sing}(X) \rightarrow \text{Supp}(D)$. Let $Q \in \text{Supp}(D)$. Then $\pi^{-1}(Q) = \text{Sing}(Q) \cap X = \text{Sing}(Q) \cap Q'$, where $Q' \in \mathcal{Q}$, $Q' \neq Q$. In particular, $\pi^{-1}(Q)$ consists of at most two points. Hence the cardinality of $\text{Sing}(X)$ is at most 12.

Assume that $r(G) \geq 6$. Let $S \in |-K_X|$ be an invariant member. We claim that $S \supset \text{Sing}(X)$ and $\text{Sing}(X) \neq \emptyset$. Indeed, otherwise $S \cap \text{Sing}(X) = \emptyset$. By Proposition 4.6 S is reducible: $S = S_1 + \dots + S_N$, $N \geq 2$. Since $\iota(X) = 2$, we get $N = 2$ and $S_1 \sim S_2$, i.e., S_i is a hyperplane section of $X \subset \mathbb{P}^5$. As in the proof of Corollary 4.3 we see that S_i is rational. This contradicts Proposition 4.6 (ii). Thus $\emptyset \neq \text{Sing}(X) \subset S$. By Lemma 6.8 the action of G on X is free in codimension 1. By Remark 2.2 for the stabilizer G_P of a point $P \in \text{Sing}(X)$ we have $r(G_P) \leq 3$. Then by the above estimate the variety X has exactly 8 singular points and G acts on $\text{Sing}(X)$ transitively.

Note that our choice of S is not unique: there is a basis $s^{(1)}, \dots, s^{(g+2)} \in H^0(X, -K_X)$ consisting of eigensections. This basis gives us G -invariant divisors $S^{(1)}, \dots, S^{(g+2)}$ generating $|-K_X|$. By the above $\text{Sing}(X) \subset S^{(i)}$ for all i . Thus $\text{Sing}(X) \subset \cap S^{(i)} = \text{Bs}|-K_X|$. This contradicts the fact that $-K_X$ is very ample. □

The following two examples show that the inequality $r(G) \leq 5$ in the above lemma is sharp.

Example 6.11. Let $X = X_{2,2} \subset \mathbb{P}^5$ be the variety given by $\sum x_i^2 = \sum \lambda_i x_i^2 = 0$ with $\lambda_i \neq \lambda_j$ for $i \neq j$ and let $G \subset \text{Aut}(X)$ be the 2-elementary abelian subgroup generated by involutions $x_i \mapsto -x_i$. Then X is a rational del Pezzo threefold of degree 4 and $r(G) = 5$.

Example 6.12 (suggested by the referee). Let A be the Jacobian of a curve of genus 2 and let Θ be its theta-divisor. The linear system $|2\Theta|$ defines a finite morphism $\alpha : A \rightarrow B \subset \mathbb{P}^3$ of degree 2 whose image $B = \alpha(A)$ is a quartic with 16 nodes [2, Chap. VIII, Exercises]. Let $\varphi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^3$ be the double cover branched along B . Then X is a del Pezzo threefold of degree 2 whose singular locus consists of 16 nodes. In this situation, the rank of the Weil divisor class group $\text{Cl}(X)$ equals to 7 (see [16, Th. 7.1]) and X has a small resolution which can be obtained by blowing up of six points in general position on \mathbb{P}^3 (see e.g. [4, 23, Chap. 3] or [16, Th. 7.1]). In particular, X is rational. The translation by a two-torsion point $a \in A$ induces a projective involution τ_a of $B \subset \mathbb{P}^3$. These involutions lift to X and generate a 2-elementary subgroup $H \subset \text{Aut}(X)$ with $r(H) = 4$. The Galois involution γ of the double cover φ is contained in the center of $\text{Aut}(X)$. Hence γ and H generate a 2-elementary subgroup $G \subset \text{Aut}(X)$ of rank 5.

Note that the fixed point locus of γ on X is a Kummer surface isomorphic to B . On the other hand, the fixed point loci of involutions acting on $X_{2,2}$ are either rational surfaces or subvarieties of dimension ≤ 1 . Hence the groups constructed in Examples 6.11 and 6.12 are not conjugate to each other in the Cremona group.

From now on we assume that $\text{Pic}(X) = \mathbb{Z} \cdot K_X$. Let $g := g(X)$.

Lemma 6.13. *If $g \leq 4$, then $r(G) \leq 5$. If $g = 5$, then $r(G) \leq 6$.*

Proof. We may assume that $-K_X$ is very ample. Automorphisms of X are induced by projective transformations of \mathbb{P}^{g+1} that preserve $X \subset \mathbb{P}^{g+1}$. On the other hand, there is a natural representation of G on $H^0(X, -K_X)$ which is faithful. Thus the composition

$$\text{Aut}(X) \hookrightarrow GL(H^0(X, -K_X)) = GL_{g+2}(\mathbb{k}) \rightarrow PGL_{g+2}(\mathbb{k})$$

is injective. Since G is abelian, its image $\bar{G} \subset GL_{g+2}(\mathbb{k})$ is contained in a maximal torus and by the above \bar{G} contains no scalar matrices. Hence, $r(G) \leq g + 1$. \square

Example 6.14. Let G be the two-torsion subgroup of the diagonal torus of $PGL_7(\mathbb{k})$. Then X faithfully acts on the Fano threefold in \mathbb{P}^6 given by the equations $\sum x_i^2 = \sum \lambda_i x_i^2 = \sum \mu_i x_i^2 = 0$. This shows that the bound $r(G) \leq 6$ in the above lemma is sharp. Note however that X is not rational if it is smooth [1]. Hence in this case our construction does not give any embedding of G to $\text{Cr}_3(\mathbb{k})$.

Lemma 6.15. *If in the above assumptions $g(X) \geq 6$, then X has at most 29 singular points.*

Proof. According to [12] the variety X has a *smoothing*. This means that there exists a flat family $\mathfrak{X} \rightarrow \mathfrak{T}$ over a smooth one-dimensional base \mathfrak{T} with special fiber $X = \mathfrak{X}_0$ and smooth general fiber $X_t = \mathfrak{X}_t$. Using the classification of Fano threefolds [6] (see also [7]) we obtain $h^{1,2}(X_t) \leq 10$. Then by Namikawa [12] we have

$$\#\text{Sing}(X) \leq 21 - \frac{1}{2}\text{Eu}(X_t) = 20 - \rho(X_t) + h^{1,2}(X_t) \leq 29.$$

Proof of Proposition 6.1. Assume that $r(G) \geq 7$. Let $S \in |-K_X|$ be an invariant member. By Corollary 4.5 the singularities of S are worse than Du Val. So S satisfies the conditions (ii) of Proposition 4.6. Write $S = \sum_{i=1}^N S_i$. By Proposition 4.6 the group G_\bullet acts on S_i faithfully and

$$N = 2^{r(G)-r(G_\bullet)} \geq 4.$$

First we consider the case where X is smooth near S . Since $\rho(X) = 1$, the divisors S_i 's are linear equivalent to each other and so $\iota(X) \geq 4$. This contradicts Lemma 6.10.

Therefore, $S \cap \text{Sing}(X) \neq \emptyset$. By Lemma 6.8 the action of G on X is free in codimension 1 and by Remark 2.2 we see that $r(G_P) \leq 3$, where G_P is the stabilizer of a point $P \in \text{Sing}(X)$. Then by Lemma 6.15 the variety X has exactly 16 singular points and G acts on $\text{Sing}(X)$ transitively. Since $S \cap \text{Sing}(X) \neq \emptyset$, we have $\text{Sing}(X) \subset S$. On the other hand, our choice of S is not unique: there is a basis $s^{(1)}, \dots, s^{(g+2)} \in H^0(X, -K_X)$ consisting of eigensections. This basis gives us G -invariant divisors $S^{(1)}, \dots, S^{(g+2)}$ generating $|-K_X|$. By the above $\text{Sing}(X) \subset S^{(i)}$ for all i . Thus $\text{Sing}(X) \subset \bigcap S^{(i)} = \text{Bs}|-K_X|$. This contradicts Lemma 6.6. \square

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