QUASI-GALOIS POINTS, I: AUTOMORPHISM GROUPS OF PLANE CURVES

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(Received May 11, 2017, revised August 28, 2017)

Abstract. We investigate the automorphism group of a plane curve, introducing the notion of a quasi-Galois point. We show that the automorphism group of several curves, for example, Klein quartic, Wiman sextic and Fermat curves, is generated by the groups associated with quasi-Galois points.

1. Introduction. The automorphism group $\operatorname{Aut}(C)$ of an algebraic curve *C* over an algebraically closed field *K* of characteristic $p \ge 0$ is a classical subject in algebraic geometry, and has been studied by many mathematicians. However, determining $\operatorname{Aut}(C)$ in general is difficult. In this article, we introduce the notion of a *quasi-Galois point* so that we represent $\operatorname{Aut}(C)$. We infer that quasi-Galois points play an important role for investigating $\operatorname{Aut}(C)$.

Let $C \subset \mathbf{P}^2$ be an irreducible plane curve of degree $d \ge 4$. Consider a point $P \in \mathbf{P}^2$ and let $\pi_P : C \dashrightarrow \mathbf{P}^1$ be the projection from *P*. We define the set

$$G[P] := \{ \tau \in \operatorname{Bir}(C) \mid \pi_P \circ \tau = \pi_P \}$$

of all birational transformations of C preserving the fibers of the projection π_P .

DEFINITION 1.1. If $|G[P]| \ge 2$, then we say that *P* is a *quasi-Galois point*.

This is a generalization of the Galois point, which was introduced by Hisao Yoshihara in 1996 (see [5, 12, 15]).

We show that Aut(C) is generated by associated groups G[P] with quasi-Galois points P, in the case where Aut(C) of a smooth plane curve C is simple and of even order (Theorem 2.7). The Klein quartic and the Wiman sextic are examples of this kind. For the Fermat curve, we prove a similar result (Theorem 3.5). For these results, we determine the defining equation of a curve with a quasi-Galois point (Theorem 2.3), and describe the number of quasi-Galois points for the Fermat curve (Theorem 3.3).

2. A representation of Aut(*C*). We introduce the system (X : Y : Z) of homogeneous coordinates on \mathbf{P}^2 with local coordinates x = X/Z, y = Y/Z for the affine open set $Z \neq 0$. The

²⁰¹⁰ Mathematics Subject Classification. Primary 14H37; Secondary 14H50.

Key words and phrases. Automorphism group, plane curve, projection, Galois point, quasi-Galois point.

The first author was partially supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Numbers 25800002 and JP16K05088. The second author was partially supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 26400057. The third author was partially supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Numbers 25400059 and JP16K0594.

line passing through points *P* and *Q* is denoted by \overline{PQ} , when $P \neq Q$. Let $G_0[P] \subset G[P]$ be the set of all elements of G[P] which are the restrictions of some linear transformations of \mathbf{P}^2 .

DEFINITION 2.1. A point *P* is said to be extendable quasi-Galois if $|G_0[P]| \ge 2$.

REMARK 2.2. If C is smooth, then any automorphism is the restriction of a linear transformation (see [1, Appendix A, 17 and 18] or [3]). Therefore, every quasi-Galois point is extendable and $G[P] = G_0[P]$.

THEOREM 2.3 (cf. [10, 15, 16]). If p = 0 or p does not divide the order $|G_0[P]|$, then the group $G_0[P]$ is a cyclic group. Furthermore, for an integer $n \ge 2$, n divides $|G_0[P]|$ if and only if there exists a linear transformation ϕ such that

(1) $\phi(P) = (1:0:0),$

(2) there exists an element $\sigma \in G_0[\phi(P)] \subset \text{Bir}(\phi(C))$ which is represented by the matrix

$$A_{\sigma} = \left(\begin{array}{ccc} \zeta & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{array} \right),$$

where ζ is a primitive *n*-th roof of unity, and (3) $\phi(C)$ is given by

$$\sum_{i} G_{d-ni}(Y,Z) X^{ni} = 0,$$

where G_{d-ni} is a homogeneous polynomial of degree d - ni in variables Y, Z.

PROOF. We can assume that P = (1 : 0 : 0). The projection π_P is given by $(x : y : 1) \mapsto (y : 1)$. We have a field extension K(x, y)/K(y). Let $\sigma \in G_0[P]$ and $A_{\sigma} = (a_{ij})$ a matrix representing σ , as $\sigma : (X : Y : Z) \mapsto (X : Y : Z) {}^t A_{\sigma}$. Since $\sigma^*(y) = y$,

$$(a_{21}x + a_{22}y + a_{23}) - (a_{31}x + a_{32}y + a_{33})y = 0$$

in K(C) = K(x, y). Since $d \ge 4$, $a_{21} = a_{23} = a_{31} = a_{32} = 0$ and $a_{22} = a_{33}$. We take the representative matrix with $a_{22} = a_{33} = 1$. Let $N = |G_0[P]|$. If $a_{11} = 1$, then, by $A_{\sigma}^N = 1$, it follows that $Na_{12} = Na_{13} = 0$. Since N is not divisible by p if p > 0, $a_{12} = a_{13} = 0$. Then, there exists an injective homomorphism

$$G_0[P] \hookrightarrow K \setminus \{0\}; \ \sigma \mapsto a_{11}(\sigma),$$

where $a_{11}(\sigma)$ is the (1, 1)-element of A_{σ} . Therefore, $G_0[P]$ is a cyclic group.

By the assumption, the order of any element of $|G_0[P]|$ is not divisible by p if p > 0. Assume that $n \ge 2$ divides $|G_0[P]|$. Since $G_0[P]$ is a cyclic group, there exists an element $\sigma \in G_0[P]$ of order *n* and σ is represented by the matrix

$$A_{\sigma} = \left(\begin{array}{ccc} \zeta & a & b \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{array} \right),$$

where $a, b \in K$ and ζ is a primitive *n*-th root of unity. If we take

$$B = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & a & b \\ 0 & 1 - \zeta & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 - \zeta \end{pmatrix},$$

then

$$B^{-1}A_{\sigma}B = \left(\begin{array}{ccc} \zeta & 0 & 0\\ 0 & 1 & 0\\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{array}\right).$$

We take the linear transformation given by $(X : Y : Z) \mapsto (X : Y : Z) {}^{t}B^{-1}$, so that assertion (2) follows. Let $f(x, y) = \sum_{i} a_i(y)x^i$ be a defining polynomial with $a_0(y) \neq 0$. Then, $\sigma^* f = \sum_{i} a_i(y)\zeta^i x^i$. There exists $c \in K$ such that $cf = \sigma^* f$. Since $a_0(y) \neq 0$, it follows that c = 1. For all i, $a_i(y) = a_i(y)\zeta^i$. If $a_i(y) \neq 0$, then $\zeta^i = 1$. This implies that n divides i. Assertion (3) follows.

The if-part is obvious.

COROLLARY 2.4. For $\sigma \in G_0[P] \setminus \{1\}$, we define $F[P] := \{Q \in \mathbf{P}^2 \mid \sigma(Q) = Q\}$. If we use the standard form as in Theorem 2.3, $F[P] = \{P\} \cup \{X = 0\}$. In particular, the set F[P] does not depend on σ .

If C is smooth, we define

 $G_n(C) = \langle G[P] | P$: quasi-Galois with $|G[P]| = n \rangle \subset Aut(C)$

after Kanazawa–Takahashi–Yoshihara [8] and Miura–Ohbuchi [11]. Similar to [11, Theorem 1], we have the following.

THEOREM 2.5. Let C be smooth. Then, $G_n(C)$ is a normal subgroup of Aut(C).

On the other hand, we have the following.

PROPOSITION 2.6. Let $p \neq 2$, and let C be smooth. The following conditions are equivalent.

(1) The order |Aut(C)| is even.

- (2) The group Aut(C) contains an involution.
- (3) There exists a quasi-Galois point P such that |G[P]| is even.

PROOF. If $|\operatorname{Aut}(C)|$ is even, then a Sylow 2-group contains an element of order two. Therefore, assertion (1) \Rightarrow (2) follows. Since G[P] is a subgroup of $\operatorname{Aut}(C)$, the assertion (3) \Rightarrow (1) is obvious.

We prove $(2) \Rightarrow (3)$. Let $\sigma \in \operatorname{Aut}(C)$ be an involution and A_{σ} a matrix representing σ . Since $A_{\sigma}^2 = \lambda I_3$ for some $\lambda \neq 0$, where I_3 is the identity matrix, we can assume that $A_{\sigma}^2 = I_3$. The eigenvalues of A_{σ} are 1 or -1. For any vector $x \in K^3$, (A - E)x and (A + E)x are contained in the direct sum of eigenspaces, since (A + E)(A - E) = (A - E)(A + E) = 0. Then, 2x = -(A - E)x + (A + E)x also. By the assumption $p \neq 2$, the direct sum of eigenspaces spans the vector space K^3 . We find that A_{σ} is diagonalizable. For a suitable system of coordinates, we can assume that A_{σ} is one of the following matrices:

$$\pm \left(\begin{array}{ccc} -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{array} \right), \quad \pm \left(\begin{array}{ccc} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{array} \right), \quad \pm \left(\begin{array}{ccc} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \end{array} \right).$$

It follows from Theorem 2.3 that (1 : 0 : 0), (0 : 1 : 0) and (0 : 0 : 1) are quasi-Galois, for each case. Then, |G[P]| is even.

Combining Theorem 2.5 and Proposition 2.6, we have the following.

THEOREM 2.7. Let $p \neq 2$, and let C be smooth. If Aut(C) is simple and |Aut(C)| is even, then Aut(C) = $G_n(C)$ for some even integer $n \geq 2$. For example, if p = 0, and C is the Klein quartic or the Wiman sextic (see [4, 14] and [7, Remark 2.4]), then Aut(C) = $G_2(C)$.

PROOF. By Proposition 2.6, if $|\operatorname{Aut}(C)|$ is even, then there exists a quasi-Galois point P with |G[P]| = n, where n is an even integer. Since $G_n(C) \neq \{1\}$ is a normal subgroup by Theorem 2.5, by the assumption that $\operatorname{Aut}(C)$ is simple, it follows that $G_n(C) = \operatorname{Aut}(C)$.

For the Klein quartic and the Wiman sextic, Aut(*C*) is a simple group of even order (see [2, Section 232], [6, pp.348–349], [9] for the Klein quartic and see [14] for the Wiman sextic). Since if $G_n(C) \neq \{1\}$ then the number *n* must divide d = 4 (resp., d = 6), *n* is equal to two or four (resp., two or six) for the Klein quartic (resp., the Wiman sextic). It follows from [12, Example 4.8] that there does not exist a point *P* with |G[P]| = 4 for the Klein quartic. For the Wiman sextic, if there exists a point *P* with |G[P]| = 6, then there exists an element of order six, by Theorem 2.3. Since Aut(*C*) $\cong A_6$ for the Wiman sextic, there does not exist an element of order six. Therefore, n = 2.

3. Fermat curves. In this section, we assume that *C* is the Fermat curve $X^d + Y^d + Z^d = 0$ of degree $d \ge 4$ in p = 0. Let $P_1 = (1 : 0 : 0)$, $P_2 = (0 : 1 : 0)$, and let $P_3 = (0 : 0 : 1)$. It follows from Yoshihara–Miura's theorem [12, 15] that $|G[P_i]| = d$ (i.e. P_i is outer Galois) for each *i*, and the number of points $P \in \mathbf{P}^2 \setminus C$ with |G[P]| = d is three.

PROPOSITION 3.1. (1) Let d = 2n, and let ζ satisfy $\zeta^{2n} = 1$. Then, points $(\zeta : 0 : 1), (1 : \zeta : 0)$ and $(0 : 1 : \zeta)$ are quasi-Galois points in $\mathbf{P}^2 \setminus C$.

(2) Let d = 2n + 1, and let η satisfy $\eta^{2n+1} = -1$. Then, points $(\eta : 0 : 1)$, $(1 : \eta : 0)$ and $(0 : 1 : \eta)$ are quasi-Galois points in C.

PROOF. Let *P* be one of the points given in (1). Since *C* is invariant under the linear transformations $(X : Y : Z) \mapsto (Z : X : Y)$ and $(X : Y : Z) \mapsto (\zeta^{-1}X : Y : Z)$, we can assume that P = (1 : 0 : 1). We take the linear transformation $\phi : (X : Y : Z) \mapsto (X + Z : Y : X - Z)$.

Then, $\phi^{-1}(P) = (1 : 0 : 0)$ and $\phi^{-1}(C)$ is given by

$$(X+Z)^{2n} + (X-Z)^{2n} + Y^{2n} = 2\sum_{k=0}^{n} \binom{2n}{2k} X^{2n-2k} Z^{2k} + Y^{2n} = 0.$$

By Theorem 2.3, $\phi^{-1}(P)$ is quasi-Galois. Therefore, *P* is quasi-Galois.

Let *P* be one of the points given in (2). Since *C* is invariant under the linear transformations $(X : Y : Z) \mapsto (Z : X : Y)$ and $(X : Y : Z) \mapsto (-\eta^{-1}X : Y : Z)$, we can assume that P = (-1 : 0 : 1). We take the linear transformation $\phi : (X : Y : Z) \mapsto (X + Z : Y : X - Z)$. Then, $\phi^{-1}(P) = (0 : 0 : 1)$ and $\phi^{-1}(C)$ is given by

$$(X+Z)^{2n+1} + (X-Z)^{2n+1} + Y^{2n+1} = 2\sum_{k=0}^{n} \binom{2n}{2k} X^{2n+1-2k} Z^{2k} + Y^{2n+1} = 0.$$

By Theorem 2.3, $\phi^{-1}(P)$ is quasi-Galois. Therefore, *P* is quasi-Galois.

PROPOSITION 3.2. If a point P satisfies 1 < |G[P]| < d, then |G[P]| = 2 and $P \in \{XYZ = 0\}$. Furthermore, the number of such points is at most 3d.

PROOF. We prove that $P \in \{XYZ = 0\}$. Assume for contradiction that $P \notin \{XYZ = 0\}$. Let $\sigma \in G[P] \setminus \{1\}$. The point P_1 is the only outer Galois point on the line $\overline{PP_1}$. It follows from Theorem 2.3 that $\sigma(\overline{PP_1}) = \overline{PP_1}$. Then, $\sigma(P_1) = P_1$. Similarly, $\sigma(P_2) = P_2$ and $\sigma(P_3) = P_3$. By Corollary 2.4, $\sigma(P) = P$. Since σ fixes non-collinear three points P_1, P_2, P_3 and the point $P \notin \bigcup_{i \neq j} \overline{P_iP_j}, \sigma$ is identity on \mathbf{P}^2 . This is a contradiction.

We can assume that $P \in \overline{P_1P_2}$. Let $\sigma \in G[P]$ be a generator. Since P_1 and P_2 are the only outer Galois points on the line $\overline{P_1P_2}$, σ acts on the set $\{P_1, P_2\}$. Note that $\sigma(P) = P$. Then, the restriction $\sigma|_{\overline{P_1P_2}}$ is of order two. By Theorem 2.3, the order of σ is equal to the order of $\sigma|_{\ell}$ for each line $\ell \ni P$. Therefore, |G[P]| = 2.

We prove the latter assertion. Since the fixed field $K(C)^{G[P]}$ is an intermediate field of $K(C)/\pi_P^*K(\mathbf{P}^1)$, if *d* is odd (resp., *d* is even), then $P \in C$ (resp., $P \in \mathbf{P}^2 \setminus C$). If *d* is odd, then the assertion is obvious, since the number of points in $C \cap \{XYZ = 0\}$ is 3*d*. Assume that *d* is even. Then, $P \in \mathbf{P}^2 \setminus C$. Let $P \in \overline{P_1P_2}$ with |G[P]| = 2 and $\sigma \in G[P]$ a generator. Since $\sigma^2 = 1$, $\sigma(P_3) = P_3$ and σ acts on the set $\{P_1, P_2\}$, σ is represented by the matrix

$$\left(egin{array}{ccc} 0 & \xi & 0 \ \xi^{-1} & 0 & 0 \ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{array}
ight)$$

for some $\xi \in K$. Considering the action on the defining equation $X^d + Y^d + Z^d = 0$, $\xi^d = 1$ follows. Assume that

$$\begin{pmatrix} x \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \xi & 0 \\ \xi^{-1} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \xi \\ \xi^{-1} x \\ 0 \end{pmatrix},$$

up to a constant. Then, $x = \pm \xi$. The only fixed points of σ on the line $\overline{P_1P_2}$ are $(\xi : 1 : 0)$ and $(-\xi : 1 : 0) \in \mathbf{P}^2 \setminus C$. It follows from Corollary 2.4 that *P* must be $(\xi : 1 : 0)$ or $(-\xi : 1 : 0)$,

and hence, $P \in \{(\zeta : 1 : 0) | \zeta^d = 1\}$. Therefore, there exist at most *d* quasi-Galois points on the line $\overline{P_1P_2}$.

The number of quasi-Galois points $P \in C$ with |G[P]| = n (resp., $|G[P]| \ge n$) is denoted by $\delta[n]$ (resp., $\delta[\ge n]$). Similarly, we define $\delta'[n]$ and $\delta'[\ge n]$, when we consider the case $P \in \mathbf{P}^2 \setminus C$.

THEOREM 3.3. Let C be the Fermat curve of degree d. Then:

- (1) $\delta'[d] = 3.$
- (2) If *d* is even, then $\delta' \ge 2 = \delta'[d] + \delta'[2] = 3 + 3d$ and $\delta \ge 2 = 0$.
- (3) If d is odd, then $\delta'[\geq 2] = \delta'[d] = 3$ and $\delta[\geq 2] = \delta[2] = 3d$.

PROOF. Assertion (1) is nothing but Yoshihara–Miura's theorem [12, 15]. By Propositions 3.1 and 3.2, assertions (2) and (3) follow.

REMARK 3.4. For d = 4, 5, this theorem was obtained by Miura–Yoshihara [12, 13, 15].

THEOREM 3.5. Let C be the Fermat curve of degree d. Then:

(1)

$$\langle G_2(C), G_d(C) \rangle = \operatorname{Aut}(C)$$

(2) The assertion $G_2(C) \neq \langle G_2(C), G_d(C) \rangle$ holds if and only if d is divisible by 3. In this case, there exists a split exact sequence

$$0 \to (\mathbf{Z}/(d/3)\mathbf{Z}) \oplus (\mathbf{Z}/d\mathbf{Z}) \to G_2(C) \to S_3 \to 1$$

of groups, where S_3 is the symmetric group of degree three, and $|G_2(C)| = 2d^2$.

PROOF. We consider (1). Let $\sigma \in \operatorname{Aut}(C) \subset \operatorname{Aut}(\mathbf{P}^2)$. Then, σ acts on the set $\{P_1, P_2, P_3\}$ of outer Galois points. If $\sigma(P_1) = P_2$, then there exists $\phi_1 \in G_2(C)$ such that $\phi_1 \sigma(P_1) = P_1$, by using an action associated with a quasi-Galois point on the line $\overline{P_1P_2}$. If $\phi_1\sigma(P_2) = P_3$, then we take $\phi_2 \in G_2(C)$ such that $\phi_2(P_1) = P_1$ and $\phi_2(P_3) = P_2$, which comes from an action associated with a quasi-Galois point on the line $\overline{P_2P_3}$. Therefore, there exists $\phi \in G_2(C)$ such that $\phi\sigma(P_i) = P_i$ for i = 1, 2, 3. Then, $\phi\sigma$ is represented by the matrix of the form

$$\left(\begin{array}{rrrr} \alpha & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \beta & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{array}\right)$$

for some $\alpha, \beta \in K$. By considering the action on the defining equation $X^d + Y^d + Z^d = 0$, it follows that $\alpha^d = 1$ and $\beta^d = 1$. If we take

$$\phi_3 = \begin{pmatrix} \alpha^{-1} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \in G[P_1], \ \phi_4 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \beta^{-1} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \in G[P_2],$$

then $\phi_4\phi_3\phi\sigma = 1$ on \mathbf{P}^2 . Therefore, $\sigma = \phi^{-1}\phi_3^{-1}\phi_4^{-1} \in \langle G_2(C), G_d(C) \rangle$.

We consider (2). Let ζ be a primitive *d*-th root of unity. Note that 3*d* involutions of the form

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \zeta^{i} \\ 0 & \zeta^{-i} & 0 \end{pmatrix} (=: \sigma_{i}), \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & \zeta^{-i} \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ \zeta^{i} & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \zeta^{i} & 0 \\ \zeta^{-i} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

for i = 1, ..., d act on *C*. By Proposition 2.6 and Theorem 3.3, they generate $G_2(C)$. Let τ_1 (resp., τ_2) be the involution given by $(X : Y : Z) \mapsto (X : Z : Y)$ (resp., $(X : Y : Z) \mapsto (Z : Y : X)$). It follows that

$$\eta_1 := \sigma_1 \tau_1 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \zeta & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \zeta^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \text{ and } \eta_2 := \tau_2^{-1} \eta_1 \tau_2 = \begin{pmatrix} \zeta^{-1} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \zeta & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \sim \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \zeta^2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \zeta \end{pmatrix},$$

and $\eta_1, \eta_2 \in G_2(C)$. Then,

$$\eta_1\eta_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \zeta^3 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \in G[P_2].$$

If *d* is not divisible by 3, then $\eta_1\eta_2$ generates $G[P_2]$ and hence, $G[P_2] \subset G_2(C)$. Considering actions of $\tau_1, \tau_2 \in G_2(C)$, it follows that $G_d(C) \subset G_2(C)$. The only-if part of (2) follows. Assume that *d* is divisible by 3. Let $H_1 := \langle \eta_1, \eta_1\eta_2 \rangle$ and $H_2 := \langle \tau_1, \tau_2 \rangle$. Then, $\langle H_1, H_2 \rangle = G_2(C)$, H_1 is an abelian group isomorphic to $(\mathbf{Z}/(d/3)\mathbf{Z}) \oplus \mathbf{Z}/d\mathbf{Z}$, and $H_2 \cong S_3$. Since $\tau_i^{-1}\eta_j\tau_i \in H_1$ for i, j = 1, 2 (for example, $\tau_1^{-1}\eta_2\tau_1 = \eta_2\eta_1^{-1} \in H_1$), H_1 is a normal subgroup of $G_2(C)$. Note that any element of $G_2(C)$ is given by $\eta\tau$ for some $\eta \in H_1$ and $\tau \in H_2$. Then, there exists a split exact sequence

$$0 \to (\mathbf{Z}/(d/3)\mathbf{Z}) \oplus (\mathbf{Z}/d\mathbf{Z}) \to G_2(C) \to S_3 \to 1$$

of groups, and $|G_2(C)| = (d/3)d \times 6 = 2d^2$. Since

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \zeta & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \in G[P_2] - G_2(C),$$

it follows that $G_2(C) \neq \langle G_2(C), G_d(C) \rangle$.

REMARK 3.6. According to [11, Example 2], $G_d(C) \neq \text{Aut}(C)$.

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S. FUKASAWA, K. MIURA AND T. TAKAHASHI

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