

Indeed the property defines an irreducible hypersurface in $\text{Sym}^2 P$ invariant under $\text{PGL}_2 \mathbb{C}$. Ravi Vakil computed its degree: 3762 and gave some other characterizations of it.

We will give this property some geometric content.

Let D be any reduced divisor of deg 12 on a proj-line P . Following Deligne-Mostow we consider the μ_6 -cover of P totally ramified over D :

$$\begin{array}{c} C \\ \nearrow \downarrow \mu_6 \text{ Galois cover total ram. over } D. \\ D \subset P \end{array}$$

(in affine coord: if D given by $f \in \mathbb{C}[z]$ of deg 12, then affine piece of C is given by $w^6 = f(z)$.) Deligne-Mostow assign to C with its μ_6 -action the Jacobian $J(C)$ with its μ_6 -action. They show that these data define a point of a g -dim ball quotient $\Gamma_{DM} \backslash B^g$ (an example of a Shimura variety), and that this point actually completely determines D up to proj-equivalence (the moduli space of 12 elt subsets of a proj line $(= S_{12} \backslash M_{0,12})$ is thus realized as a Zariski-open subset of $\Gamma_{DM} \backslash B^g$).

Return to $\text{PSL}_2 \mathbb{Z} \curvearrowright \mathbb{H}_+$ Let $\Gamma := [\text{PSL}_2 \mathbb{Z}, \text{PSL}_2 \mathbb{Z}]$ has index 6 in $\text{PSL}_2 \mathbb{Z}$ and $\text{PSL}_2 \mathbb{Z} / \Gamma = (\text{PSL}_2 \mathbb{Z})_{ab} \cong \mu_6$ (you can see that from the iso $\text{PSL}_2 \mathbb{Z} = \mu_3 * \mu_2$). We get:

$$\begin{array}{c} \Gamma \backslash \hat{\mathbb{H}}_+ =: \hat{E} \\ \downarrow \mu_6 \\ \text{PSL}_2 \mathbb{Z} \backslash \hat{\mathbb{H}}_+ = \mathbb{P}^1 \end{array}$$

It turns out that Γ is also transitive on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{Q})$, so the preimage of ∞ in $\hat{E}$ is just one point (a cusp of $\hat{E}$). One computes that $\hat{E}$ has genus 1. So it will be the ell curve with j -invariant 0:

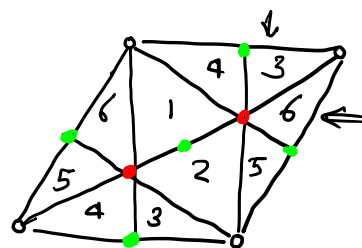
$$g(\hat{E}) = 1 \quad \text{cusp} = \text{origin}$$

The tessellation of $\hat{E}$ by the 6 copies of

(here taking the shape of an equilateral triangle



) is as depicted (opposite sides identified)



Back to the case of rational elliptic surface. Then $C_D \rightarrow P$ is the pull-back of $\hat{E} \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^1$. We have a Cartesian diagram as below.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} C_D & \xrightarrow{\tilde{J}} & \hat{E} \\ \nearrow \downarrow \mu_6 & & \downarrow \mu_6 \\ D \subset P & \xrightarrow{J} & \mathbb{P}^1 \\ \uparrow J^*(\infty) & & \end{array}$$

Hence $\text{Jac}(C_D)$ comes with a μ_6 -projection onto $\text{Jac}(\hat{E}) \cong \hat{E}$.

This property makes that under the Deligne-Mostow construction, $(\text{Jac}(C_D), \mu_6)$ lands in an 8-dimensional

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \Gamma_{DM}^0 \backslash B^8 & \rightarrow & \Gamma_{DM} \backslash B^9 \\ \uparrow & & \uparrow \\ B^0 \subset B^9 & & \\ \Gamma_{DM}^0 & \rightarrow & \Gamma_{DM}. \end{array}$$

This gives a complex-hyperbolic structure on the moduli space of rational elliptic surfaces!