

Let σ, θ be commuting involutions of the connected reductive algebraic group G where σ, θ and G are defined over a (usually algebraically closed) field $k, k \neq 2$. We have fixed point groups $H := G^\sigma$ and $K := G^\theta$ and an action $(H \times K) \times G \rightarrow G$, where $((h, k), g) \mapsto h g k^{-1}, h \in H, k \in K, g \in G$. Let $G// (H \times K)$ denote $O(G)^{H \times K}$ (the categorical quotient).

Let A be maximal among subtori B of G such that $\theta(s) = \sigma(s) = s^{-1}$ for all $s \in B$. There is the associated Weyl group $W := W_{H \times K}(A)$. We show:

1) The inclusion $A \rightarrow G$ induces an isomorphism $A/W \rightarrow G// (H \times K)$. In particular, the closed $(H \times K)$ -orbits are precisely those which intersect A .

2) The fibers of $G \rightarrow G// (H \times K)$ are the same as those occurring in certain associated symmetric varieties. In particular, the fibers consist of finitely many orbits.

We investigate the structure of W and its relation to other naturally occurring Weyl groups. We also consider the case where $k = R$.