The Six-Point Circle Theorem *

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Abstract

Given $\triangle ABC$ and angles $\alpha, \beta, \gamma \in (0, \pi)$ with $\alpha + \beta + \gamma = \pi$, we study the properties of the triangle $DEF$ which satisfies: (i) $D \in BC$, $E \in AC$, $F \in AB$, (ii) $\angle D = \alpha$, $\angle E = \beta$, $\angle F = \gamma$, (iii) $\triangle DEF$ has the minimal area in the class of triangles satisfying (i) and (ii). In particular, we show that minimizer $\triangle DEF$, exists, is unique and is a pedal triangle, corresponding to a certain pedal point $P$. Permuting the roles played by the angles $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$ in (ii), yields a total of six such area-minimizing triangles, which are pedal relative to six pedal points, say, $P_1, \ldots, P_6$. The main result of the paper is the fact that there exists a circle which contains all six points.

1 Introduction

Consider the following question in planar geometry: given three, nonconcurrent lines, $L_1, L_2, L_3$, along with three angles $\alpha, \beta, \gamma \in (0, \pi)$ satisfying $\alpha + \beta + \gamma = \pi$, find three points $X_1, X_2, X_3$ such that

$$X_1 \in L_1, \ X_2 \in L_2, \ X_3 \in L_3,$$

and

$$\angle X_2X_1X_3 = \alpha, \ \angle X_1X_2X_3 = \beta, \ \angle X_1X_3X_2 = \gamma.$$  \hspace{1cm} (1.2)

Somewhat informally, with $A, B, C$ playing the roles of the points of mutual intersection of the lines $L_1, L_2, L_3$, this asks whether given a fixed triangle $\triangle ABC$, one can inscribe a triangle $\triangle X_1X_2X_3$ of an arbitrarily prescribed shape. For a triangle, “shape” simply signifies the measures of its angles (in the current scenario $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$).

Although not necessarily obvious, this question turns out to have an affirmative answer. In fact, the collection $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ of all triangles $\triangle X_1X_2X_3$ satisfying (1.1) and (1.2) has infinite cardinality. Since all triangles in $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ have the same shape, what distinguishes them is their size. It is not too difficult to show that $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ contains triangles of arbitrarily large areas, hence, the most distinguished triangle in $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ is the one of the smallest area, called, for the purposes of this introduction, $\triangle \alpha\beta\gamma$. Part of our paper is devoted to studying this minimizer, which enjoys many interesting properties. Among other things we show that this triangle of minimal area is unique, and is also a pedal triangle. Recall that a pedal triangle is a triangle whose vertices are the projections of a point, called the pedal point of the pedal triangle, onto the sides of another triangle. Let $P_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ be the pedal point of $\triangle \alpha\beta\gamma$.

Of course, similar considerations apply to the situation when the ordered triplet $(\alpha, \beta, \gamma)$ in (1.2) is replaced by any of its permutations

$$(\alpha, \beta, \gamma), \ (\alpha, \gamma, \beta), \ (\beta, \alpha, \gamma), \ (\beta, \gamma, \alpha), \ (\gamma, \alpha, \beta), \ (\gamma, \beta, \alpha).$$ \hspace{1cm} (1.3)

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As before, these permutations lead to considering the collections $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$, $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\gamma\beta}$, ..., defined as above, which in turn have their own minimizers,
\begin{equation}
\Delta_{\alpha\beta\gamma}, \Delta_{\alpha\gamma\beta}, \Delta_{\beta\alpha\gamma}, \Delta_{\beta\gamma\alpha}, \Delta_{\gamma\alpha\beta}, \Delta_{\gamma\beta\alpha}.
\end{equation}
Once again, they are all pedal triangles with respect to six points, say,
\begin{equation}
P_{\alpha\beta\gamma}, P_{\alpha\gamma\beta}, P_{\beta\alpha\gamma}, P_{\beta\gamma\alpha}, P_{\gamma\alpha\beta}, P_{\gamma\beta\alpha}.
\end{equation}
Remarkably, even though these six points are obtained via constructions that start from starkly different sets of premises, they turn out to be concyclic. That is,

**Theorem 1.1 (THE SIX POINT CIRCLE THEOREM).** There exists a circle that contains all six points in $\{I\}$. 

This is the main result of the paper (cf. Theorem 3.2 for a formal statement). The starting point in its proof is to consider, besides the area-minimizing triangle inscribed in $\Delta ABC$ and having prescribed angles, the area-maximizing triangle circumscribed to $\Delta ABC$, having the same angles. This dual aspect of the problem under consideration is very useful in understanding the nature of the extremal triangles of a prescribed shape. A concrete step in this regard is proving a structure theorem, detailing how these three triangles are related to one another. For instance, we show that the area of $\Delta ABC$ is the geometric mean of the area-minimizer and the area-maximizer triangles; cf. Theorem 2.4. Since the conclusion in Theorem 1.1 involves a circle, it is not unnatural that another important tool in its proof is the geometrical inversion.

In §2, the properties of the area-minimizing and area-maximizing triangles having prescribed angles and being, respectively, inscribed and circumscribed in a given triangle are examined. Finally, §3 is devoted to presenting the proof of The Six Point Circle Theorem. The presentation in this paper is largely self-contained. For more basic concepts and definitions related to the geometry of the triangle the interested reader is referred to, e.g. [2], and the references therein.

### 2 Extremal Triangles of a Prescribed Shape

Throughout, we let $\Delta ABC$ denote the triangle with vertices $A, B, C$ and denote by $|\Delta ABC|$ the area of $\Delta ABC$.

Given a triangle $A_1A_2A_3$ along with a triangle $B_1B_2B_3$ inscribed in it, we first recall a result from [3] that gives a procedure for obtaining a triangle, $C_1C_2C_3$, that is inscribed in $\Delta B_1B_2B_3$ and is homotopic to $\Delta A_1A_2A_3$. By definition, two triangles are homotopic if their corresponding sides are parallel. The concurrence point of the lines passing through the corresponding vertices of two homotopic triangles is the homotopy center. The justification of the following useful result is left to the interested reader (a proof is given in [3]).

**Proposition 2.1.** Let $\Delta A_1A_2A_3$ be arbitrary and assume that $B_1 \in A_2A_3$, $B_3 \in A_2A_1$, $B_2 \in A_1A_3$ (see Figure 1 below). Take $C_1 \in B_2B_3$, $C_2 \in B_1B_3$, $C_3 \in B_1B_2$ such that
\begin{align}
\frac{A_1B_3}{B_3A_2} &= \frac{B_2C_3}{C_3B_1}, \quad \frac{A_2B_1}{B_1A_3} = \frac{B_3C_1}{C_1B_2}, \quad \frac{A_3B_2}{B_2A_1} = \frac{B_1C_2}{C_2B_3}, \quad (2.6)
\end{align}
Then $\Delta A_1A_2A_3$ and $\Delta C_1C_2C_3$ are homotopic and, in addition, $|\Delta B_1B_2B_3|$ is the geometric mean of $|\Delta A_1A_2A_3|$ and $|\Delta C_1C_2C_3|$, i.e.
\begin{equation}
|\Delta B_1B_2B_3|^2 = |\Delta A_1A_2A_3| \cdot |\Delta C_1C_2C_3|.
\end{equation}
Conversely, if $\Delta A_1A_2A_3$ and $B_1 \in A_2A_3$, $B_3 \in A_2A_1$, $B_2 \in A_1A_3$ are given and $C_1 \in B_2B_3$, $C_2 \in B_1B_3$, $C_3 \in B_1B_2$ are such that $\Delta A_1A_2A_3$ and $\Delta C_1C_2C_3$ are homotopic, then (2.6) and (2.7) hold.
Definition 2.2. (i) Call a triangle $XYZ$ inscribed in a given triangle $ABC$ if each of the lines $AB$, $BC$ and $AC$ contain precisely one of the vertices $X$, $Y$, $Z$. Call $\Delta XYZ$ circumscribed to $\Delta ABC$ if $\Delta ABC$ is inscribed in $\Delta XYZ$.

(ii) Given two fixed triangles $ABC$, called of reference, and $MNP$, called fundamental, let $I$ be the set of all triangles which are similar to the fundamental one and are inscribed in the triangle of reference, and let $C$ be the set of all triangles similar to the fundamental one and circumscribed to the reference one.

(iii) Given $\Delta ABC$, triangle of reference, and a fundamental triangle with angles $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$, denote by $I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ the set of all triangles $XYZ$ with $X, Y, Z$ belonging, respectively, to the lines $BC, AC, AB$, and for which $\angle X, \angle Y, \angle Z$ coincide with $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$ (in this order).

Likewise, let $C_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ denote the set of all triangles $XYZ$ for which $A, B, C$ belonging, respectively, to the lines $YZ, XZ, XY$, and for which $\angle X, \angle Y, \angle Z$ coincide with $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$ (in this order).

Clearly,

$$I = I_{\alpha\beta\gamma} \cup I_{\alpha\gamma\beta} \cup I_{\beta\alpha\gamma} \cup I_{\beta\gamma\alpha} \cup I_{\gamma\alpha\beta} \cup I_{\gamma\beta\alpha},$$

$$C = C_{\alpha\beta\gamma} \cup C_{\alpha\gamma\beta} \cup C_{\beta\alpha\gamma} \cup C_{\beta\gamma\alpha} \cup C_{\gamma\alpha\beta} \cup C_{\gamma\beta\alpha}. \quad (2.8)$$

Our next result shows the existence of area-minimizers and area-maximizers in the above classes. The issue of uniqueness for these extremal triangles will be dealt with in Theorem 2.4 below.

Theorem 2.3. There exists a triangle $\Delta M_1N_1P_1 \in I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ which has the smallest area amongst all the triangles in the class $I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$. Also, there exists a triangle $\Delta M_2N_2P_2 \in C_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ which has the largest area amongst all the triangles in the class $C_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$. In addition, any two such triangles satisfy

$$|\Delta M_1N_1P_1| \cdot |\Delta M_2N_2P_2| = |\Delta ABC|^2. \quad (2.9)$$

In fact, similar results are valid for each of the classes appearing in (2.8), including $I$ and $C$.

Proof. It suffices to only deal with the class $I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ since a similar reasoning applies to all the classes in (2.8). The first issue is to show that there exists at least one area-minimizer in $I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$. We briefly sketch the argument for this, which is based on results from Calculus and Analytical Geometry. To get started, fix a unit vector $\vec{w} = w_1 \vec{i} + w_2 \vec{j}$ and consider the class of all triangles $XYZ$ satisfying

$$\angle X = \alpha, \quad \angle Y = \beta, \quad \angle Z = \gamma, \quad X \in BC, \quad Z \in AB, \quad XZ \parallel \vec{w}. \quad (2.10)$$
It is then clear that the coordinates of $Y$ and $Z$ depend linearly on those of $X$, with coefficients varying continuously with $w_1, w_2$. Since $X$ moves on a line (i.e., $BC$), it follows that the geometrical locus of the vertex $Y$ is itself a line. In addition, the characteristics of this line, called $L$, depend continuously on $w_1, w_2$. Now, the position of $X$ which, under the constraints (2.10), yields a triangle $XYZ$ in the class $I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$, is the one corresponding to the case when $Y = L \cap AC$. Linear algebra considerations then show that the coordinates of $X$ in this critical case are continuously dependent on $w_1, w_2$. Using the formula which expresses the area of a triangle in terms of the coordinates of its vertices, we then deduce that $|\Delta XYZ|$, corresponding the case when $\Delta XYZ \in I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$, is a continuous function in $w_1, w_2$. Since $w_1$ and $w_2$ vary in a compact set, it follows that the assignment $(w_1, w_2) \mapsto |\Delta XYZ|$ is bounded and it attains its extrema. In particular, there exists an area-minimizing triangle in $I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$.

To prove that there exists (at least) one area-maximizing triangle in $C_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$, we proceed as follows. Starting with an area-minimizing triangle $\Delta M_1N_1P_1$ (whose existence has just been established), construct a a new triangle, $\Delta M_2N_2P_2$ by taking the parallels through $A$, $B$ and $C$ to the sides of $\Delta M_1N_1P_1$. As a result, $\Delta M_2N_2P_2$ is homotopic to $\Delta M_1N_1P_1$ and circumscribed to $\Delta ABC$. Hence, $\Delta M_2N_2P_2 \in C_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$, and, thanks to Proposition 2.1,

\[ |\Delta M_2N_2P_2| \cdot |\Delta M_1N_1P_1| = |\Delta ABC|^2. \tag{2.11} \]

We claim that $\Delta M_2N_2P_2$ is area-maximizing in the class $C_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$. Indeed, if $\Delta M''N''P'' \in C_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ is arbitrary, let $M' \in BA$, $N' \in BC$, $P' \in AC$ (cf. Figure 2) be such that

\[ \frac{AM'}{M'B} = \frac{P''C}{CN''}, \quad \frac{BN'}{N'C} = \frac{M''A}{AP''}, \quad \frac{CP'}{P'A} = \frac{N''B}{BM''}. \tag{2.12} \]

Proposition 2.1 gives that $\Delta M'N'P'$ and $\Delta M''N''P''$ are homotopic (thus $\Delta M'N'P' \in I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$) and

\[ |\Delta M''N''P''| \cdot |\Delta M'N'P'| = |\Delta ABC|^2. \tag{2.13} \]

Since by definition $|\Delta M'N'P'| \geq |\Delta M_1N_1P_1|$, (2.11), (2.13) imply that $|\Delta M''N''P''| \leq |\Delta M_2N_2P_2|$. This justifies our claim that $\Delta M_2N_2P_2$ is area-maximizing in the class $C_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$.

Going further, we note that proving (2.3) uses a similar circle of ideas. Concretely, let $M' \in BA$, $N' \in BC$, $P' \in AC$ (cf. Figure 2) be such that

\[ \frac{AM'}{M'B} = \frac{P_2C}{CN_2}, \quad \frac{BN'}{N'C} = \frac{M_2A}{AP_2}, \quad \frac{CP'}{P'A} = \frac{N_2B}{BM_2}. \tag{2.14} \]

Proposition 2.1 shows that $\Delta M'N'P'$ and $\Delta M_2N_2P_2$ are homotopic and

\[ |\Delta M_2N_2P_2| \cdot |\Delta M'N'P'| = |\Delta ABC|^2. \tag{2.15} \]

The former property also entails $\Delta M'N'P' \in I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$, and, hence,

\[ |\Delta M_1N_1P_1| \leq |\Delta M'N'P'|. \tag{2.16} \]
The parallels through $A$, $B$ and $C$ to the sides of the triangle $\Delta M_1N_1P_1$ determine the triangle $M''N''P''$ which is homotopic to $\Delta M_1N_1P_1$ and circumscribed to $\Delta ABC$. As a result, $\Delta M''N''P'' \in \mathcal{C}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ which forces

$$|\Delta M''N''P''| \leq |\Delta M_2N_2P_2|.$$  \hfill (2.17)

In this context, Proposition 2.1 also gives that

$$|\Delta M''N''P''| \cdot |\Delta M_1N_1P_1| = |\Delta ABC|^2.$$  \hfill (2.18)

By combining (2.15)-(2.18) we obtain

$$|\Delta ABC|^2 = |\Delta M_1N_1P_1||\Delta M''N''P''| \leq |\Delta M_2N_2P_2||\Delta M'N'P'| = |\Delta ABC|^2,$$  \hfill (2.19)

so that, we actually have $|\Delta M''N''P''| = |\Delta M_2N_2P_2|$, $|\Delta M_1N_1P_1| = |\Delta M'N'P'|$. Therefore, $|\Delta ABC|^2 = |\Delta M_1N_1P_1||\Delta M''N''P''| = |\Delta M_1N_1P_1||\Delta M_2N_2P_2|$, finishing the proof of (2.9). \hfill $\square$

**Remark 1.** It is implicit in the proof of the above theorem that if $\Delta M_1N_1P_1$ is an area-minimizer in the class $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$, then the triangle $M_2N_2P_2$ that is in $\mathcal{C}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ and is homotopic to $\Delta M_1N_1P_1$ (constructed as in Proposition 2.1) is an area-maximizer in the class $\mathcal{C}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$. Conversely, if $\Delta M_2N_2P_2$ is an area-maximizer in the class $\mathcal{C}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$, then the triangle $M_1N_1P_1$ that is in $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ and is homotopic to $\Delta M_2N_2P_2$ (again, constructed as in Proposition 2.1) is an area-minimizer in the class $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$.

The main result in this section describes the structure of the configuration consisting of a given triangle $ABC$ along with the area-minimizing triangle in $\mathcal{I}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ and the area-maximizing triangle in $\mathcal{C}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$. Recall that an antipedal triangle of a point $P$ with respect to $\Delta ABC$ is the triangle whose vertices are the intersection points of the perpendiculars to $PA$, $PB$, and $PC$, passing through $A$, $B$, and $C$, respectively. Also, the isogonal of a point $P$ in $\Delta ABC$ is the concurrence point of the reflections of the lines $PA$, $PB$, and $PC$ across the angle bisectors of $A$, $B$, and $C$. 

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Theorem 2.4. Retain notation and conventions introduced earlier. Given \( \triangle ABC \), reference triangle, and \( \triangle MNP \) fundamental triangle with angles \( \alpha, \beta, \gamma \in (0, \pi) \), let \( I_{\alpha \beta \gamma} \) and \( C_{\alpha \beta \gamma} \) be as before.

Then there exist a unique \( \triangle EFD \in I_{\alpha \beta \gamma} \) which is area-minimizing in this class, along with a unique \( \triangle QRS \in C_{\alpha \beta \gamma} \) which is area-maximizing in this class. In addition, these triangles enjoy the following properties:

(i) The triangles \( EFD \) and \( QRS \) are homotopic;

(ii) The triangles \( EFD \) and \( QRS \), are the pedal and the antipedal triangles of some points \( K \) and \( L \), respectively, with respect to \( \triangle ABC \);

(iii) Let \( T \) be the concurrency point of the projections of \( Q, R, S \) on the sides of the triangle \( ABC \). Then the pairs of points \((L, K)\) and \((T, L)\) are isogonal in the triangles \( ABC \) and \( QRS \), respectively;

(iv) If \( O \) is the homotopy center of \( \triangle EFD \) and \( \triangle QRS \), then \( O, K, T \) lie on the same line.

Before proceeding with the proof of this theorem, a comment is in order.

Remark 2. As a corollary of the above theorem, there exists a unique area-minimizing triangle in each of the classes \( I, I_{\alpha \beta \gamma}, \ldots \), listed in the first line of (2.8). Moreover, there exists a unique area-maximizing triangle in each of the classes \( C, C_{\alpha \beta \gamma}, \ldots \), listed in the second line of (2.8). In each case, similar properties to (i) – (iv) above hold.

Proof of Theorem 2.4. By design, the triangles \( QRS \) and \( MNP \) are similar (cf. Figure 3), so that \( \angle Q = \angle M, \angle R = \angle N, \angle S = \angle P \). If we do not impose the condition that the triangle \( QRS \) has maximal area in the class \( C_{\alpha \beta \gamma} \), then the triangle \( QRS \) is not completely determined. There are, however, certain restrictions on the location of its vertices, due solely to the membership to \( C_{\alpha \beta \gamma} \). Concretely, the point \( S \) must lie on the circle passing through \( A \) and \( B \) and such that the arc \( \widehat{AB} = 2\angle S \). Let us denote by \( O_1 \) the center of this circle (see Figure 4). Likewise, the point \( Q \) lies on a circle (whose center we denote by \( O_2 \)) passing through \( B \) and \( C \) and such that \( BC = 2\angle Q \). Finally, the point \( R \) lies on a circle (centered at some point, denoted by \( O_3 \)) passing through \( A \) and \( C \) and for which \( AC = 2\angle R \).

Since \( \angle M + \angle N + \angle P = \angle Q + \angle R + \angle S = \pi \), it is not difficult to see that these three circles, have a common point, which we denote by \( L \). Observe next that a particular position of the point \( S \) on the circle \((O_1)\) determines also the positions of the points \( Q \) and \( R \) on the circles \((O_2)\) and \((O_3)\), respectively. The idea is now to determine the position of the point \( S \) on the circle \((O_1)\) for which the triangle \( QRS \) has maximal area.
Since the angles of $\Delta QRS$ are fixed, maximizing $|\Delta QRS|$ amounts to maximizing the length of one of its sides, say $SQ$. Let $O'_1$ and $O'_2$ be, respectively, the projections of $O_1$ and $O_2$ onto the line $SQ$, and let $O''_1 \in O'_1O_1$ be such that $O''_1O'_2 \parallel O_1O_2$. Then we can write

$$O_1O_2 = O''_1O'_2 \geq O'_1O'_2 = BO'_1 + BO'_2 = \frac{BS}{2} + \frac{BQ}{2} = \frac{SQ}{2}.$$  

(2.20)

This implies $2O_1O_2 \geq SQ$, an inequality from which we see that the maximum of $|\Delta QRS|$ is attained when $SQ \parallel O_1O_2$.

Since the location of the points $O_1$, $O_2$, $O_3$ depends only on $\Delta ABC$ and angles $\alpha, \beta, \gamma$, the result just established shows that there exists a unique area-maximizing triangle in $C_{\alpha,\beta,\gamma}$. Given an area-minimizing triangle $\Delta DEF$ in the class $C_{\alpha,\beta,\gamma}$, we can associate with it a homotopic triangle $\Delta QRS$ in $C_{\alpha,\beta,\gamma}$, which can be constructed following the recipe given in Proposition 2.1. Using the Remark 1, the latter triangle is area-maximizing in $C_{\alpha,\beta,\gamma}$ and, hence, must coincide with the unique area-maximizing triangle described in the first part of the current proof. This shows that $\Delta DEF$ is itself uniquely determined by the property that it is area-minimizing in $C_{\alpha,\beta,\gamma}$. This concludes the proof of the first claim made in the statement of Theorem 2.4. The above considerations also show that $\Delta DEF$ and $\Delta QRS$ are homotopic, thus proving item $(i)$.

As regards $(ii)$, let us recall from the first part of the proof that the triangle $QRS$ has a maximal area when $S = LO_1 \cap (O_1)$, $Q = LO_2 \cap (O_2)$, $R = LO_3 \cap (O_3)$. In particular, this implies that the triangles $QRS$ and $O_1O_2O_3$ are homotopic with homotopy center $L$ and dilation factor $\frac{1}{2}$. Next, since $O_1O_2 \parallel SQ$ and $O_1O_2 \perp BL$, it follows that $BL \perp SQ$. Similarly $LC \perp RQ$ and $LA \perp SR$. Altogether, these observations imply that the triangle $SRQ$ is the antipedal of $L$ with respect to the triangle $ABC$. Now, using that $DF \parallel SR$, $DE \parallel SQ$, and $FE \parallel RQ$ we obtain that $AL \perp DF$, $BL \perp DE$, and $CL \perp EF$. This means that the projections of the vertices of $\Delta ABC$ on the sides of $\Delta DEF$ are concurrent, therefore establishing that the triangles $ABC$ and $DEF$ are orthologic. As is well-know, this gives that the perpendiculars from $D, E, F$ onto $AB, BC, AC$ respectively, are also concurrent in a point, say $K$. Hence, $\Delta DEF$ is the pedal triangle of $K$ with respect to the triangle $ABC$. This finishes the proof of $(ii)$.

Consider next $(iii)$. Since the triangles $ABC$ and $SQR$ are orthologic, there exists a point $T$ such that $ST \perp AB$, $QT \perp BC$, and $RT \perp AC$. In the quadrilateral $ADKF$ we have

$$\angle KAF = \angle FDK \quad \text{and} \quad \angle FDK + \angle FDA = \angle FDA + \angle LAD = \frac{\pi}{2}.$$  

(2.21)

Therefore,

$$\angle FDK = \angle LAD.$$  

(2.22)

From (2.21) and (2.22) we see that the lines $AL$ and $AK$ are isogonal. Similarly, $BL$ and $BK$ are isogonal, proving that $L$ and $K$ are isogonal points in $\Delta ABC$. This concludes the proof of $(iii)$.
To prove \((iv)\), we start by observing that the dilation of center \(O\) and factor \(\frac{SQ}{DE}\) (i.e., the dilation which takes \(\Delta DEF\) into \(\Delta SQR\)) transforms the lines \(DK, EK\) and \(FK\) into the lines \(ST, RT\) and \(QT\), respectively. (Indeed, this is a direct corollary of the fact that dilations map parallel lines into parallel lines.) Thus, under such a transformation, the point \(K\) is mapped into \(T\) and, as a consequence, the points \(O, K\) and \(T\) are collinear. The proof of Theorem \(2.4\) is now finished. \(\Box\)

The result below essentially says that a pedal triangle (relative to \(\Delta ABC\)) is area-minimizing amongst all triangles of a similar shape inscribed in \(\Delta ABC\).

**Theorem 2.5.** Let \(P\) be a point contained inside the circumcircle of a given triangle \(ABC\). Let \(D, E, F\) be the projections of \(P\) onto the sides \(BC, AC\) and \(AB\), respectively, and set

\[
\alpha := \angle EDF, \quad \beta := \angle DEF, \quad \gamma := \angle EFD. \tag{2.23}
\]

Then \(\Delta DEF\) is the area-minimizing triangle in the class \(I_{\alpha \beta \gamma}\) (cf. \((ii)\) of Definition \(2.2\)).

**Proof.** Let \(K\) be the isogonal of \(P\) (relative to \(\Delta ABC\)) and denote by \(\Delta QRS\) the antipedal of \(K\) with respect to \(\Delta ABC\). Since \(\Delta DEF\) is the pedal triangle of the point \(P\) with respect to \(\Delta ABC\), then quadrilateral \(AFPE\) is inscribable. This implies that \(\angle PEF + \angle PAF = \frac{\pi}{2}\). Next, since \(K\) is the isogonal of \(P\), this further entails \(\angle PEF + \angle KAE = \frac{\pi}{2}\). This means that \(AK \perp EF\), i.e. \(RS \parallel EF\). Via a similar reasoning, we can show that the two other pairs of corresponding sides in \(\Delta QRS\) and \(\Delta DEF\) are parallel. This shows that \(\Delta QRS\) and \(\Delta DEF\) are homotopic. In particular, the angles of \(\Delta QRS\) are \(\alpha, \beta, \gamma\).

Recall the (three, concurrent) circles \((O_1), (O_2), (O_3)\) introduced in the proof of Theorem \(2.4\). Then \(S \in (O_1), R \in (O_2), Q \in (O_3)\). Given that the quadrilateral \(AKCR\) is inscribable, it follows that \(K \in (O_1)\). Similarly, \(K \in (O_2), K \in (O_3)\). Hence, \(K\) is the common point of \((O_1), (O_2), (O_3)\), which implies that \(\Delta QRS\) is homotopic to \(\Delta O_1O_2O_3\). As pointed out already in the proof of Theorem \(2.4\), this necessarily implies that \(\Delta QRS\) is a maximizer in the class \(\mathcal{C}_{\alpha \beta \gamma}\). In turn, by \((iii)\) in Theorem \(2.4\) this forces \(\Delta DEF\) to be an area minimizer in \(I_{\alpha \beta \gamma}\). \(\Box\)

We end with a result which appears to be folklore (see [1]: a new proof has been given in [3]).

**Theorem 2.6.** Assume \(ABC\) to be a given triangle and denote by \(O\) and \(R\) the center and the radius of the circumcircle, respectively. Let \(M\) be an arbitrary point in \(\Delta ABC\) and let \(\Delta \alpha \beta \gamma\) be the pedal triangle of \(M\) with respect to \(\Delta ABC\). Then

\[
\frac{|\Delta \alpha \beta \gamma|}{|\Delta ABC|} = \frac{|R^2 - OM^2|}{4R^2}. \tag{2.24}
\]

### 3 The Main Result

This section is devoted to stating and proving the main result in this paper, Theorem \(3.2\). First, we take care of a number of prerequisites, starting with the result below.

**Theorem 3.1.** Let \(M\) be a point contained in the circumcircle of \(\Delta ABC\), which is assumed to have center \(O\) and radius \(R\). In addition, let \(N \in OM\) be such that \(OM \cdot ON = R^2\). Then the pedal triangles, \(\Delta M_1M_2M_3\) and \(\Delta N_1N_2N_3\), of the points \(M\) and \(N\) with respect to \(\Delta ABC\) are similar (with pairs of equal angles having vertices located on the same sides of \(\Delta ABC\)). Furthermore,

\[
|\Delta M_1M_2M_3| \leq |\Delta N_1N_2N_3|. \tag{3.25}
\]

Conversely, if \(M\) and \(N \in OM\) are two points such that their pedal triangles with respect to \(\Delta ABC\) are similar (with pairs of equal angles having vertices on the same sides of \(\Delta ABC\)), then \(OM \cdot ON = R^2\).
Proof. Let $X$, $Y$ and $Z$ be the centers of the circles $AMB$, $BMC$ and $AMC$, respectively (see Figure 5). By an inversion of center $O$ and modulus $R$, the triangle $ABC$ and the circle $(O)$ remain unchanged. The circles $(X)$, $(Y)$ and $(Z)$ are transformed in the circles $(X')$, $(Y')$ and $(Z')$, respectively, passing through $A$ and $B$, $B$ and $C$, $A$ and $C$, respectively, and have a common point $N$, which is the inverse transform of $M$ (see Figure 6).
Consider the lines \(aB\), \(bB\) and \(cB\), which are tangent to the circles \((O)\), \((X)\) and \((X')\), respectively (cf. Figure 7). As the inversion preserves the angle between two curves, we obtain that 

\[ \angle (O), (X) = \angle (O), (X') \], i.e., \(\angle bBa = \angle cBa\). We can write \(\angle bBa\) as the difference of \(\angle ABb\) and \(\angle ABa\). This difference in turn can be re-written as \(\angle g2 - \angle h2\). We have \(\angle cBd\) equal to \(\angle aBe\), which is further equal to \(\angle ABe + \angle aBA = \frac{h2}{2} + \frac{g2}{2}\). Using the fact that \(\angle bBa = \angle cBd\), we obtain that

\[ \angle BNA = \angle BMA - 2\angle ACB. \] (3.26)

If \(M_1M_2M_3\) and \(N_1N_2N_3\) are the pedal triangles of \(M\) and \(N\) respectively, with

\[ M_1, N_1 \in AB, M_2, N_2 \in BC, M_3, N_3 \in AC, \] (3.27)

then

\[ \angle ACB = \pi - \angle AN_3N_2 - \angle BN_2N_3 \]
\[ = \pi - \angle AN_3N_1 - \angle N_3 - \angle BN_2N_1 - \angle N_2. \] (3.28)

In addition, the quadrilaterals \(N_3N_1A\) and \(N_2NN_1B\) can be inscribed in a circle, therefore

\[ \angle N_1NA = \angle N_1N_3A \text{ and } \angle N_1N_2B = \angle BNN_1. \] (3.29)

Furthermore,

\[ \angle BNA = \angle N_1NA + \angle BNN_1, \text{ and } \angle N_1 = \pi - \angle N_2 - \angle N_3, \] (3.30)
Combining (3.26), (3.28), (3.29), and (3.30), we arrive at the conclusion that
\[ \angle N_1 = \angle BNA + \angle ACB. \]  
(3.31)

It is also possible to write
\[ \angle BMA = \pi - \angle MAM_1 - \angle MBM_1, \]  
(3.32)\[ \angle ACB = \pi - \angle CAB - \angle CBA, \]  
(3.33)\[ \angle CAB = \angle MAC + \angle MAM_1, \]  
(3.34)\[ \angle CBA = \angle MBC + \angle MBM_1. \]  
(3.35)

Therefore, by combining (3.32)-(3.35), we obtain
\[ \angle BMA - \angle ACB = \angle MAC + \angle MBC. \]  
(3.36)

Since the quadrilaterals \( M_3AM_1M \) and \( MM_1BM_2 \) can be inscribed in a circle,
\[ \angle MAC = \angle MM_1M_3 \]  
and \( \angle MBC = \angle MM_1M_2. \]  
(3.37)

However,
\[ \angle M_1 = \angle MM_1M_3 + \angle MM_1M_2 \]  
(3.38)

so therefore, by (3.36), (3.37), and (3.38),
\[ \angle M_1 = \angle BMA - \angle ACB. \]  
(3.39)

The identities (3.39) and (3.31) imply that \( \angle N_1 = \angle M_1. \) A similar reasoning can be used to show that \( \angle N_2 = \angle M_2 \) and that \( \angle N_3 = \angle M_3 \), proving that \( \Delta N_1N_2N_3 \) and \( \Delta M_1M_2M_3 \) are similar, with their corresponding angles’ vertices located on the same sides of the triangle \( ABC \).

Next we will prove (3.25). By Theorem 2.6
\[ \frac{|\Delta M_1M_2M_3|}{|\Delta N_1N_2N_3|} = \frac{R^2 - OM^2}{ON^2 - R^2} \]  
(3.40)

and the last fraction is \( \leq 1 \), as it can be seen from the fact that \( OM \leq R \leq ON \) and \( OM \cdot ON = R^2 \). Hence, (3.25) follows.

Now we will prove the converse statement referred to in Theorem 3.1. In order for \( \Delta N_1N_2N_3 \) and \( \Delta M_1M_2M_3 \) to be similar, it is a necessary condition that \( \angle BNA = \angle BMA - 2\angle ACB \), which is equivalent to \( \angle BNA = \frac{\pi}{2} - \frac{\angle N}{2} \). This can only occur when \( \angle BNA = \frac{\pi}{2} \) which implies that \( N \) is on the circle \( X' \). A similar reasoning can be applied to show that \( N \) must be on the circles \( Y' \) and \( Z' \), proving that \( N \) is the inversion of \( M \). This shows that the converse statement is also valid, completing the proof of Theorem 3.1.

**Remark 3.** (i) From the reasoning above we see that there exist precisely six points in the interior of the circumscribed circle of \( \Delta ABC \) such that their antipedal triangles with respect to \( \Delta ABC \) are similar to a given reference triangle \( MNP \). We shall call these points the *interior points of \( \Delta MNP \) with respect to \( \Delta ABC \).*

(ii) Likewise, there exist precisely six points in the exterior of the circumcircle of \( \Delta ABC \) with the same property as above. We shall call these points the *exterior points of \( \Delta MNP \) with respect to \( \Delta ABC \).*

After this preamble, we are ready to state and prove our main result:
Theorem 3.2. The pedal points of the six triangles, \( \Delta_{\alpha\beta\gamma}, \Delta_{\alpha\gamma\beta}, \Delta_{\beta\gamma\alpha}, \Delta_{\gamma\alpha\beta}, \Delta_{\gamma\beta\alpha} \), that are area-minimizers in the classes \( I_{\alpha\beta\gamma}, I_{\alpha\gamma\beta}, I_{\beta\gamma\alpha}, I_{\gamma\alpha\beta}, I_{\gamma\beta\alpha} \), respectively, all lie on a circle.

Proving Theorem 3.2 is equivalent to proving the following. Consider \( \triangle ABC \), triangle of reference, and \( \Delta D_0 E_0 F_0 \) a fixed fundamental triangle (in the terminology of Definition 2.2).

Let \( M_i, i = 1, 2, ..., 6 \), be six points such that, for each \( i \in \{1, 2, ..., 6\} \), the pedal triangle of \( M_i \) with respect to \( \Delta ABC \) is \( \Delta D_i E_i F_i \) with

\[
\angle D_i = \angle D_0, \quad \angle E_i = \angle E_0, \quad \angle F_i = \angle F_0,
\]

and

\[
D_1, D_2, E_3, E_4, F_5, F_6 \in AB, \\
D_3, D_5, E_1, E_6, F_2, F_4 \in BC, \\
D_4, D_6, E_2, E_5, F_1, F_3 \in AC,
\]

(see Figure 8). Then the points \( M_i, i = 1, 2, ..., 6 \), lie on the same circle.

**Figure 8**

Proof. Since \( \Delta D_1 E_1 F_1 \) is the antipedal triangle of \( M_1 \), with respect to \( \Delta ABC \), we can obtain (reasoning similarly to what was done in the proof of Theorem 3.1 to show that \( \angle M_1 = \angle BMA - \angle ACB \)) that

\[
\angle E_1 = \angle BMA - \angle A, \quad \angle D_1 = \angle AMB - \angle C, \quad \angle F_1 = \angle AM_1 C - \angle B.
\]

(3.43)
Similarly we obtain $\angle D_2 = \angle BM_2A - \angle C$. From $\angle D_0 = \angle D_1 = \angle D_2$, it follows that $\angle BM_1A = \angle BM_2A$, i.e.,

$$M_1, M_2 \text{ lie on a circle } (O_D), \text{ passing through } A \text{ and } B$$

and with the property that $\frac{1}{2} AB = \angle AM_1B = \angle C + \angle D_0$. \hspace{1cm} (3.44)

Likewise (see Figure 9),

$$M_3, M_4 \text{ lie on a circle } (O_E), \text{ passing through } A \text{ and } B$$

and with the property that $\frac{1}{2} AB = \angle C + \angle E_0$. \hspace{1cm} (3.45)

$$M_5, M_6 \text{ lie on a circle } (O_F), \text{ passing through } A \text{ and } B$$

and with the property that $\frac{1}{2} AB = \angle C + \angle F_0$. \hspace{1cm} (3.46)

$$M_6, M_4 \text{ lie on a circle } (O_D'), \text{ passing through } A \text{ and } C$$

and with the property that $\frac{1}{2} AC = \angle B + \angle D_0$. \hspace{1cm} (3.47)

$$M_5, M_2 \text{ lie on a circle } (O_E'), \text{ passing through } A \text{ and } C$$

and with the property that $\frac{1}{2} AC = \angle B + \angle E_0$. \hspace{1cm} (3.48)

$$M_1, M_3 \text{ lie on a circle } (O_F'), \text{ passing through } A \text{ and } C$$

and with the property that $\frac{1}{2} AC = \angle B + \angle F_0$. \hspace{1cm} (3.49)

The key step in the proof is to make at this stage an inversion of center $A$ and arbitrary modulus. Since the lines $AB$ and $AC$ pass through $A$, they will remain unchanged. The points $B, C$ become $B'$ and $C'$, respectively. The circles $(O_D), (O_E), (O_F)$ will be transformed into the lines $d_D, d_E$ and $d_F$ respectively, which are concurrent at $B'$. Meanwhile, the circles $(O_D'), (O_E')$ and $(O_F')$ become the lines $d_D', d_E'$ and $d_F'$, respectively, which are concurrent at $C'$. The points $M_1, M_2, M_3, M_4, M_5, M_6$ will be transformed into $M_1', M_2', M_3', M_4', M_5'$ and $M_6'$ respectively, and $M_1', M_2' \in d_D, M_3', M_4' \in d_E, M_5', M_6' \in d_F, M_6', M_4' \in d_D', M_5', M_2' \in d_E', M_1', M_3' \in d_F'$. 

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The goal is to show that the points $M_1', M_2', M_3', M_4', M_5', M_6'$ lie on the same circle. We note that since under an inversion the angle between two curves is preserved, we have $\mathcal{A}(d_D, d'_F) = \mathcal{A}((O_D), (O'_F))$, as the angle between two circles is defined to be the angle between the tangents at one of their common points. Therefore, $\mathcal{A}(d_D, d'_F) = \mathcal{A}(\alpha A \beta) = \pi - \mathcal{A}(O_D A O'_F)$. However,

$$\mathcal{A}(O_D A O'_F) = \mathcal{A}(O_D A B) + \mathcal{A}A + \mathcal{A}(C A O'_F).$$  \hspace{1cm} (3.50)

On the other hand $\mathcal{A}(O_D A B) = \frac{\pi - \mathcal{A}(A O_D B)}{2} = \mathcal{A}C + \mathcal{A}D_0 - \frac{\pi}{2}$ and $\mathcal{A}(C A O'_F) = \mathcal{A}F_0 + \mathcal{A}B - \frac{\pi}{2}$. Hence,

$$\mathcal{A}(O_D A O'_F) = (\mathcal{A}A + \mathcal{A}B + \mathcal{A}C) + \mathcal{A}D_0 + \mathcal{A}F_0 - \pi = \mathcal{A}D_0 + \mathcal{A}F_0,$$

and $\mathcal{A}(d_D, d'_F) = \pi - \mathcal{A}(O_D A O'_F) = \mathcal{A}E_0$. 

Figure 9
Let $B'\delta$ be the tangent at $B$ to the circle determined by the points $A', B', C'$. Then $\angle(d_E, B'C') = \angle(\delta B'C') - \angle(\delta B', d_E)$. However, $\angle(\delta B'C') = \angle A$, and $\angle(\delta B', d_E) = \angle(C(A, B', C'), d_E) = \angle(BC, (O_E)) = -\angle B + (\pi - \angle C - \angle E_0)$, where $C(A, B, C)$ denotes the circle containing $A, B, C$. Therefore

$$\angle(d_E, B'C') = \angle E_0. \quad (3.52)$$

We have the pairs of lines $(d_D, d'_D)$, $(d_E, d'_E)$, $(d_F, d'_F)$ having the same slope as the line $BC$, and by symmetry, we see that $M'_4 M'_2 \parallel M'_1 M'_3 \parallel B'C'$. Hence, $\angle(M'_1 M'_2 B') = \angle(M'_2 B'C')$ and $\angle(B'M'_2 C') = \pi - \angle(M'_2 B'C') - \angle(M'_3 C'B') = \pi - \angle E_0 - \angle F_0 = \angle D_0$. As a consequence, the quadrilateral $M'_4 M'_2 M'_1 M'_5$ is inscribable. Since $\angle(B'M'_2 C') = \angle(B'M'_3 C') = \angle D_0$, it follows that the quadrilateral $M'_4 M'_2 M'_1 M'_6$ is also inscribable. The quadrilateral $M'_4 M'_2 M'_1 M'_6$ is an isosceles trapezoid, hence it is inscribable as well. As a result, $M'_6$ lies on the circumscribed circle to the quadrilateral $M'_4 M'_2 M'_1 M'_5$. Since $M'_5$ lies on the circumscribed circle to the quadrilateral $M'_6 M'_1 M'_3 M'_5$, it follows that all the points $M_i$, $i = 1, 2, ..., 6$, lie on the same circle.

**Remark 4.** Since the interior points lie on a circle, it follows that the exterior points lie on a circle (the transformed under the inversion of center $O$ and modulus $R$ of the former circle).

**References**

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