

Geometry

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Monsoon 2025

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Chapter 1

Quadratic Curves

1.1 Conic Sections

Definition 1.1. A conic section, or a conic is a curve obtained from a cone's surface intersecting a plane.

Germinal Pierre Dendelin, a 19th century French-Belgian Mathematician, discovered this proof to demonstrate that any plane that cuts through a right circular cone produces a quadratic curve.

Theorem 1.1. *When a plane intersects a right circular cone, the curve produced will either be an ellipse, a parabola or a hyperbola.*

Proof. Place a sphere tangent to the intersecting plane π and the cone such that it touches the plane at F , and the cone in a circle C with centre O that lies on a horizontal plane ϵ .

Take an arbitrary point P on the curve Q , and extend the line VP from the vertex V of the cone to meet C at point L . Let D be the point on the intersection on the planes π and ϵ such that PD is perpendicular to the line of intersection. (If the planes do not intersect, Q will be a circle)

Drop a perpendicular PM on OL such that $\triangle PML$ and $\triangle PMD$ are both right angled. Denote $\angle PLM$ as α , and $\angle PDM$ as β .

From the triangles $\triangle PML$ and $\triangle PMD$

$$\begin{aligned}\sin \alpha &= \frac{PM}{PD} \\ \text{and } \sin \beta &= \frac{PM}{PL} \\ \text{i.e. } \frac{PL}{PD} &= \frac{\sin \alpha}{\sin \beta}\end{aligned}$$

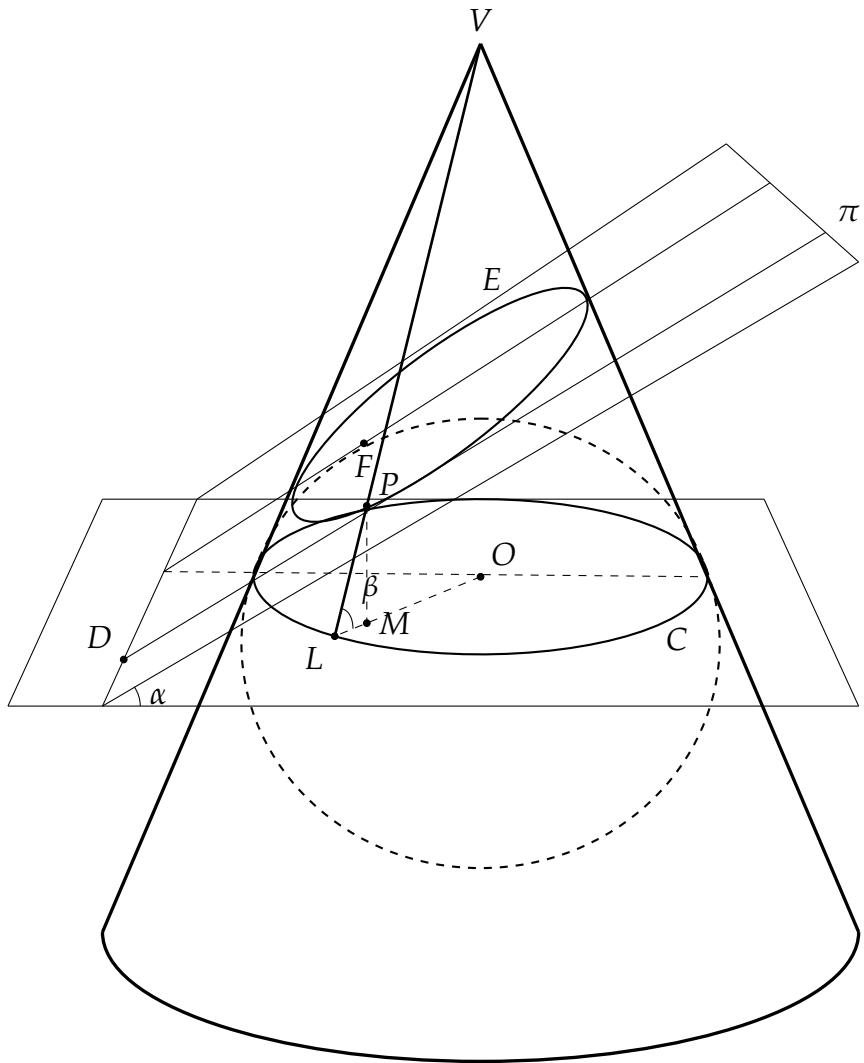


Figure 1.1: When $0 < \alpha < \beta < \frac{\pi}{2}$.

Since PL and PF are both tangents from P to the sphere, $PF = PL$. Therfore,

$$\frac{PF}{PD} = \frac{\sin \alpha}{\sin \beta}$$

i.e. $PF = e \cdot PD$, where $e = \sin \alpha / \sin \beta$

It follows from the focus - directrix definition that Q will be an ellipse if $\alpha < \beta$, a parabola if $\alpha = \beta$, or a hyperbola if $\alpha > \beta$. \blacksquare

Proof from [BEG12], with some modifications.

1.2 Group Laws on Conics

Consider a conic section $C : \{f(x) = 0, f(x) \in \mathbb{F}[x]\}$, where $\deg(f(x)) = 2$, and $ch(\mathbb{F}) \neq 2$, and a point $O \in C$. For any $P, Q \in C$, define a binary operation $\oplus : C \times C \rightarrow C$ by $P \oplus Q = R$, where R is such that $l_{PQ} \parallel l_{OR}$.

Theorem 1.2. *Set of points of C forms a group $G(C)$ under the binary operation \oplus , with O as the identity element.*

Proof. The line through O parallel to l_{PQ} necessarily meets C again, (counting algebraic multiplicities) since for any quadratic equation with real coefficients, if one of the roots is real, the other root must be real. Hence, \oplus is closed over C .

The point O serves as the identity element, and when Q is such that the line parallel to l_{PQ} that passes through O is tangent to the conic, i.e when $R = O$, we get $P \oplus Q = O$. Such Q is the inverse of P .

To prove associativity, we'll derive expressions for $P \oplus Q$ by parameterization for standard conics, i.e for the circle $x^2 + y^2 = 1$, for the parabola $y = x^2$, and for the hyperbola $xy = 1$. In the next Chapter, we will prove that all ellipses, hyperbolae, and parabolae are affine congruent to their respective standard forms. This result will generalize our results to all conics.

Let the point P be (p_1, p_2) , Q be (q_1, q_2) , O be (o_1, o_2) , and R be (r_1, r_2) , and let the slope of the line l_{PQ} be $\lambda = q_2 - p_2 / q_1 - p_1$, assuming $P \neq Q$, since associativity would be trivial then. Let ℓ be the line through O with slope λ . The coordinates of R will satisfy $\lambda = \frac{r_2 - o_2}{r_1 - o_1} = \frac{q_2 - p_2}{q_1 - p_1}$, $\Rightarrow r_2 = o_2 + \mu(q_2 - p_2)$ and $r_1 = o_1 + \mu(q_1 - p_1)$ for some $\mu \in \mathbb{F}$.

(i) Circle

Without loss of generality, let $O = (1, 0)$. Since R also lies on C , $r_1^2 + r_2^2 = 1$. i.e.

$$\begin{aligned} & (1 + \mu(q_1 - p_1))^2 + (0 + \mu(q_2 - p_2))^2 = 1 \\ \implies & \mu(\mu(q_1 - p_1)^2 + \mu(q_2 - p_2)^2 + 2(q_1 - p_1)) = 0 \\ \implies & \mu = 0 \text{ or } \mu = -\frac{2(q_1 - p_1)}{(q_1 - p_1)^2 + (q_2 - p_2)^2} \end{aligned}$$

We assume that $(q_1 - p_1)^2 + (q_2 - p_2)^2 \neq 0$. Because if it was so,

$$\begin{aligned}
& q_1^2 + p_1^2 - 2q_1p_1 + q_2^2 + p_2^2 - 2p_2q_2 = 0 \\
\implies & 1 - p_1q_1 - p_2q_2 = 0 \\
\implies & p_1^2q_1^2 = 1 + p_2^2q_2^2 - 2p_2q_2 \\
\implies & p_1^2q_1^2 = 1 + (1 - p_1^2)(1 - q_1^2) - 2p_2q_2 \\
\implies & 0 = 2 - p_1^2 - q_1^2 - 2p_2q_2 \\
\implies & (p_2 - q_2)^2 = 0 \\
\implies & p_2 = q_2 \text{ and similarly, } p_1 = q_1
\end{aligned}$$

Which is when $P = Q$, which we have assumed not to be true.

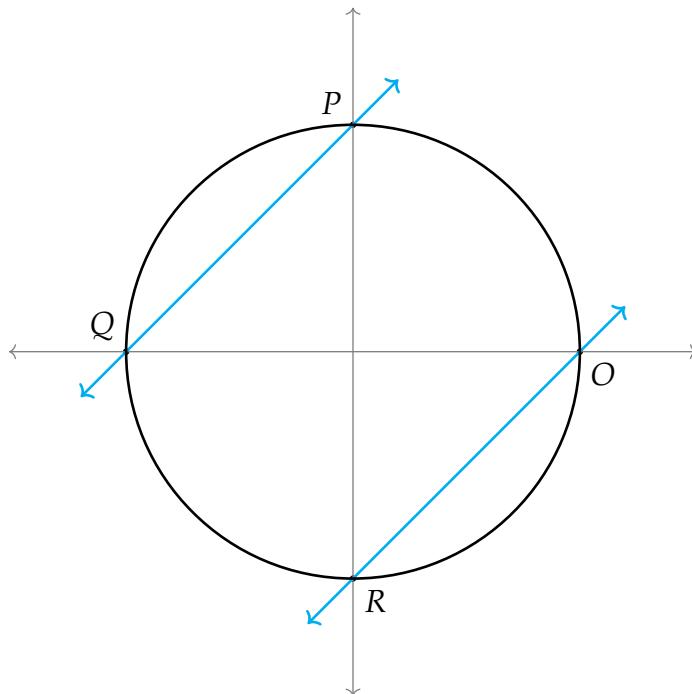


Figure 1.2: $R = P \oplus Q$ when C is a circle.

The $\mu = 0$ solution corresponds to O . Considering the other solution,

$$\begin{aligned}
r_1 &= 1 - \frac{2(q_1 - p_1)^2}{(q_1 - p_1)^2 + (q_2 - p_2)^2} \\
&= \frac{(q_2 - p_2)^2 - (q_1 - p_1)^2}{(q_1 - p_1)^2 + (q_2 - p_2)^2} \\
&= \frac{q_2^2 + p_2^2 - 2p_2q_2 - q_1^2 - p_1^2 + 2p_1q_1}{2(1 - p_1q_1 - p_2q_2)} \\
&= \frac{1 - p_1^2 - q_1^2 + p_1q_1 - p_2q_2}{1 - p_1q_1 - p_2q_2} \\
&= \frac{(p_1q_1 - p_2q_2)(1 - p_1q_1 - p_2q_2)}{1 - p_1q_1 - p_2q_2} \\
&= p_1q_1 - p_2q_2 \\
\text{and, } r_2 &= -\frac{2(q_1 - p_1)(q_2 - p_2)}{(q_1 - p_1)^2 + (q_2 - p_2)^2} \\
&= \frac{p_2q_2 + p_2q_1 - p_1p_2 - q_1q_2}{1 - p_1q_1 - p_2q_2} \\
&= \frac{(p_1q_2 + p_2q_1)(1 - p_1q_1 - p_2q_2)}{1 - p_1q_1 - p_2q_2} \\
&= p_1q_2 + p_2q_1
\end{aligned}$$

$$\implies R = P \oplus Q = (r_1, r_2) = (p_1q_1 - p_2q_2, p_1q_2 + p_2q_1)$$

(ii) **Parabola**

Without loss of generality, let $O = (0,0)$. The points of the standard parabola can be parameterized as (t, t^2) . Let $P = (p, p^2)$, $Q = (q, q^2)$, and $R = (r, r^2)$. Substituting these in λ ,

$$\begin{aligned}
\lambda &= \frac{r^2}{r} = \frac{q^2 - p^2}{q - p} \\
\implies r &= p + q \\
\implies P \oplus Q &= (p + q, (p + q)^2)
\end{aligned}$$

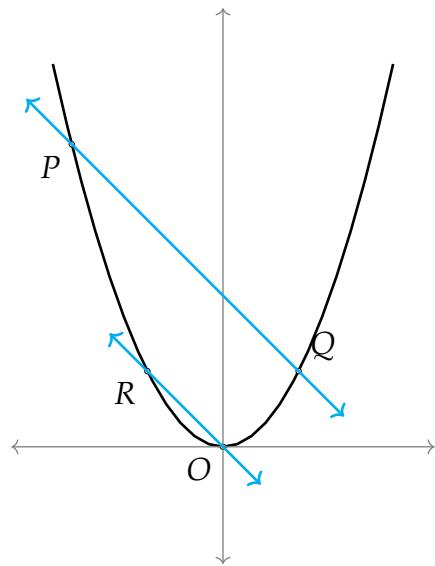


Figure 1.3: $R = P \oplus Q$ when C is the standard parabola.

(iii) Hyperbola

Without loss of generality, let $O = (1, 1)$. The points of the standard hyperbola can be parameterized as $(t, \frac{1}{t})$. Let $P = (p, \frac{w}{p})$, $Q = (q, \frac{1}{q})$, and $R = (r, \frac{1}{r})$. Substituting these in λ ,

$$\begin{aligned}\lambda &= \frac{\frac{1}{r} - 1}{r - 1} = \frac{\frac{1}{q} - \frac{1}{p}}{p - q} \\ \implies r &= pq \\ \implies P \oplus Q &= (pq, \frac{1}{pq})\end{aligned}$$

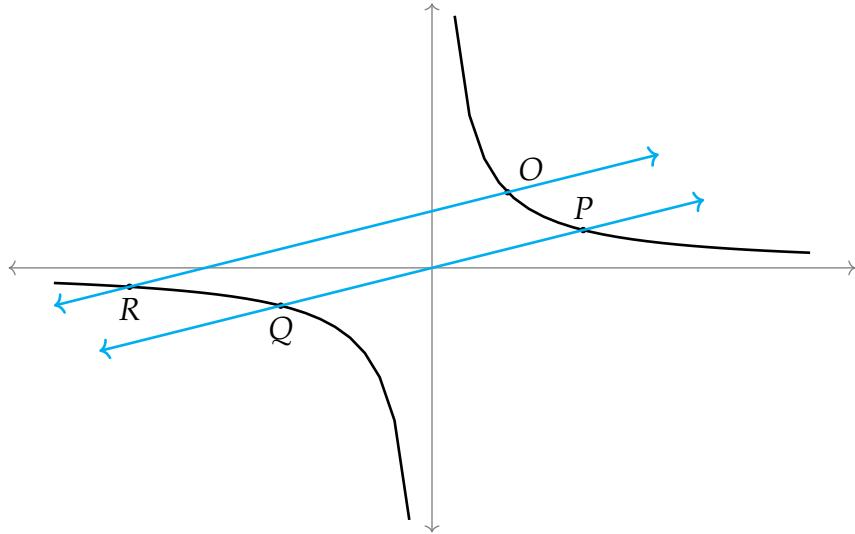


Figure 1.4: $R = P \oplus Q$ when C is the standard hyperbola.

From the expressions obtained for $P \oplus Q$, in all three cases,
 $P \oplus (Q \oplus R) = (P \oplus Q) \oplus R$

■

Proof inspired from [Shi09].

Remark. It can also be proved that the group $\langle C, \oplus \rangle$ is isomorphic to some other well known groups in each case:

- When C is an ellipse, $\langle C, \oplus \rangle \cong \langle S^1, \cdot \rangle$, where $S^1 = \{e^{i\theta} \in \mathbb{C} : \theta \in [0, 2\pi)\}$.
- When C is a parabola, $\langle C, \oplus \rangle \cong \langle \mathbb{R}, + \rangle$.
- When C is a hyperbola, $\langle C, \oplus \rangle \cong \langle \mathbb{R}^\times, \cdot \rangle$.

1.3 Generating Solutions for Diophantine Equations

Consider the conic $C = \{(x, y) \in \mathbb{Q} | x^2 + y^2 = 1\}$, and $P = (1, 0) \in C$. Let l_m be the line with slope $m \in \mathbb{Q}$, passing through P and another point $Q = (x, y) \in C$. The coordinates of Q can be found by substituting $y = m(x - 1)$.

$$x^2 + m^2(x - 1)^2 - 1 = (1 + m^2)x^2 - 2m^2x - (1 - m^2) = 0$$

using the quadratic formula,

$$x = \frac{m^2 \pm 1}{1 + m^2}$$

using the non-trivial solution, we get $x = \frac{m^2 - 1}{m^2 + 1}$ and $y = \frac{-2m}{m^2 + 1}$. substituting these values in the equation for the conic,

$$\begin{aligned} & \left(\frac{m^2 - 1}{m^2 + 1}\right)^2 + \left(\frac{-2m}{m^2 + 1}\right)^2 = 1 \\ \implies & (m^2 - 1)^2 + (2m)^2 = (m^2 + 1)^2 \end{aligned}$$

This equation will produce integer solutions for $x^2 + y^2 = 1$, though not all of them. Similarly rational or integer solutions for any equations of the form $ax^2 + by^2 = c$, where $a, b, c \in \mathbb{Q}$.

Chapter 2

Affine Geometry

2.1 Affine Space

Definition 2.1. A set ε is endowed with the structure of an affine space by a vector space E and a mapping Θ that associates a vector of E with any ordered pair of points in ε ,

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \varepsilon \times \varepsilon & \longrightarrow & E \\ (A, B) & \longmapsto & \overrightarrow{AB} \end{array}$$

such that:

- for any point A of ε , the partial map $\Theta_A : B \mapsto \overrightarrow{AB}$ is a bijection from ε to E .
- for any points A, B , and C in ε , we have $\overrightarrow{AB} = \overrightarrow{AC} + \overrightarrow{CB}$.

The vector space E is the direction of ε , or its underlying vector space. The elements of ε are called points, and the dimension of the vector space E is called the dimension of ε . [Aud02]

2.1.1 Affine Transformations

2.2 Fundamental Theorem of Affine Geometry

2.3 Affine Congruence of Conics

Chapter 3

Projective Geometry

3.1 The Projective Space

Definition 3.1. Let E be a finite dimensional vector space. The *projective space* $P(E)$ deduced from E is the set of all 1 dimensional linear subspaces of E . [Aud02]

Remark. The dimension of $P(E)$ is $\dim E - 1$. If E consists only of the point 0, it does not contain any lines, and $P(E)$ is empty. Thus it shall be implicitly assumed that $\dim E \geq 1$. If $\dim E = 1$, E itself is a line, and thus the set of lines contains a unique element, $P(E)$ is a point.

A subset V of $P(E)$ is a projective subspace if it is an image of a nonzero vector subspace F of E .

Proposition 3.1. Let V and W be two projective subspaces of $P(E)$.

- If $\dim V + \dim W \geq \dim P(E)$, then $V \cap W$ is not empty.
- Let H be a hyperplane of $P(E)$, and let m be a point not in H . Every line through m intersects H at a unique point.

Proof. Let F and G be the vector subspaces of E from which V and W were deduced, i.e. $V = P(F)$, and $W = P(G)$. The statement can be translated into vector subspaces as

$$\begin{aligned} (\dim F - 1) + (\dim G - 1) &\geq (\dim E - 1) \\ \implies \dim F + \dim G &\geq \dim E + 1 \end{aligned}$$

We can use the linear algebraic properties to further deduce that:

$$\dim F + \dim G = \dim (F + G) + \dim (F \cap G) \leq \dim E + \dim (F \cap G)$$

Therefore,

$$\dim(F \cap G) \geq 1$$

This can be translated back into projective geometry to conclude that $V \cap W$ is not empty.

Now, to prove the second propositionerty, let J be the vector hyperplane of which H is image of. The point m is the image of a line l in E , not contained in the hyperplane J . The assertion, translated in terms of linear algebra, is that any plane P containing l meets J along a unique line. Since l is not in J , we have $P + J = E$. Hence,

$$\begin{aligned}\dim(P \cap J) &= \dim P + \dim J - \dim(P + J) \\ &= 2 + \dim E - 1 - \dim E = 1\end{aligned}$$

■

3.1.1 Projective Transformations

Definition 3.2. Let E and E' be two vector subspaces, and $p : E - \{0\} \rightarrow P(E)$ and $p' : E' - \{0\} \rightarrow P(E')$ be the two projections. A *projective transformation* $g : P(E) \rightarrow P(E')$ is a mapping such that there exists a linear isomorphism $f : E \rightarrow E'$ with $p' \circ f = g \circ p$.

Proposition 3.2. *The set of projective transformations from $P(E)$ to itself, $PGL(E)$, is a group under composition.*

Proof. From the definitions, the projective transformation that descends from identity map of E forms the identity of the group. For any projective tranformation g that descends from a linear isomorphism f , the transformation g' that descends from f^{-1} will act as its inverse. Since functional composition obeys associativity, $PGL(E)$ is a group. ■

3.2 Homogeneous Coordinates and Projective Frames

Given a basis of vector space E , the vectors in E can be descrirbed by their coordinates with respect to the basis.

Definition 3.3. A point m in $P(E)$ can be described by the nonzero vector that generates the line m . In a n -dimensional projective space $P(E)$, the $(n+1)$ tuples (x_1, \dots, x_{n+1}) and (x'_1, \dots, x'_{n+1}) represent the same point iff there exists a nonzero scalar λ such that $x_i = \lambda x'_i$ for all i .

Remark. Usually, the coordinates for projective spaces are represented as $[x_1 : \dots : x_{n+1}]$

In a projective space $P(E)$ with dimension n , we actually need $n + 2$ points to uniquely determine the basis of the underlying space E , which will be proved in the next lemma. It will also justify the next definition.

Definition 3.4. If E is a vector space of dimension $n + 1$, a *projective frame* of $P(E)$ is a set of $n + 2$ points (m_0, \dots, m_{n+1}) such that m_1, \dots, m_{n+1} are the images of the vectors e_1, \dots, e_{n+1} in a basis of E , and m_0 is the image of $e_1 + \dots + e_{n+1}$.

Lemma 3.1. Let (m_0, \dots, m_{n+1}) be a projective frame of $P(E)$. If the two bases of E (e_1, \dots, e_{n+1}) and (e'_1, \dots, e'_{n+1}) are such that $p(e_i) = p(e'_i) = m_i$ and $p(e_1 + \dots + e_{n+1}) = p(e'_1 + \dots + e'_{n+1}) = m_0$, then they are propositionortional.

Proof. Consider the points m_i of $P(E)$. Since the vectors e_i and e'_i both generate the line m_i , $e_i = \lambda_i e'_i$ for some nonzero λ_i . Using the $(n + 2)$ -th point, we can conclude that

$$(e_1 + \dots + e_{n+1}) = \lambda(e'_1 + \dots + e'_{n+1})$$

Thus,

$$\lambda_1 e_1 + \dots + \lambda_{n+1} e_{n+1} = \lambda(e_1 + \dots + e_{n+1})$$

As we are dealing with a basis, $\lambda_i = \lambda$. Thus two bases are propositionortional. ■

3.3 Some Results in Projective Geometry

Theorem 3.1 (Fundamental Theorem of Projective Geometry). Let (a_1, \dots, a_{n+2}) and (b_1, \dots, b_{n+2}) be two sets of points in \mathbb{RP}^n such that none of the a_i and b_i belong to the projective subspace defined by n of the others in their respective sets. Then there exists a unique projective transformation $f : \mathbb{RP}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{RP}^n$ such that, $f(a_i) = b_i$ for all $i = 1, \dots, n + 2$.

Proof. The set of points (a_i) and (b_i) are both projective frames of \mathbb{RP}^n . Let $(e_1, \dots, e_{n+1}), (e'_1, \dots, e'_{n+1}) \in \mathbb{R}^{n+1}$ be the basis that generate the frames (a_i) and (b_i) respectively. We know that there exists a unique isomorphism $f : \mathbb{R}^{n+1} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{n+1}$ such that $f(e_i) = e'_i$. The projective transformation g that descends from f will map the first frame to the second.

To prove the uniqueness: let f and f' two such projective transformations. The projective transformation $g^{-1} \circ g'$ from \mathbb{RP}^n into itself keeps the frame invariant. Thus it is the identity transformation. ■

Theorem 3.2 (Desargues's Theorem). *Let $\triangle ABC$ and $\triangle A'B'C'$ be triangles in \mathbb{R}^2 such that the lines AA' , BB' , and CC' meet at point U . Let BC and $B'C'$ meet at P , CA and $C'A'$ at Q , and AB and $A'B'$ at R . Then P , Q , and R are collinear.*

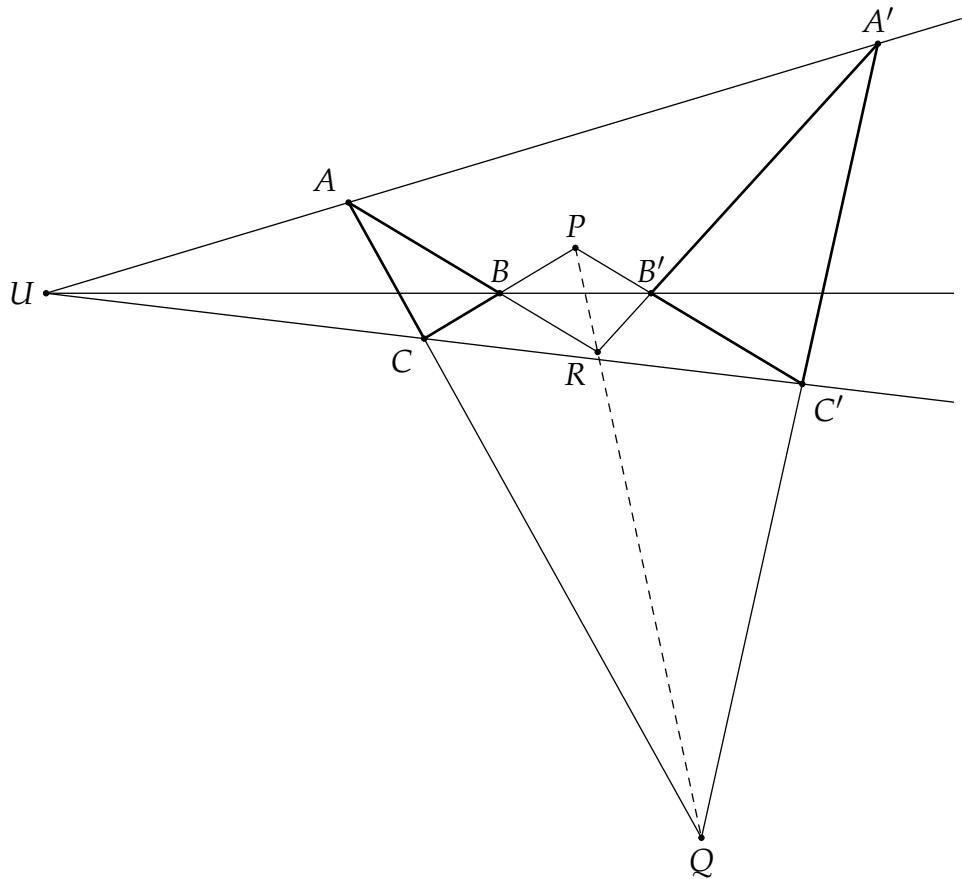


Figure 3.1: P , Q , and R are collinear.

Proof. We will prove the theorem for the special case where $A = [1 : 0 : 0]$, $B = [0 : 1 : 0]$, $C = [0 : 0 : 1]$, and $U = [1 : 1 : 1]$. From the fundamental theorem of projective geometry, we know that it will be congruent to any other configuration. We can use the fact that projective congruence preserves projective properties, to deduce that the theorem holds in general.

The line AU has the equation $y = z$. Since A' lies on AU , it must have coordinates $[a : b : b]$, where $b \neq 0$, since $A' \neq A$. We can also write $A' = [p : 1 : 1]$, where $p = a/b$. Similarly, $B' = [1 : q : 1]$, and $C' = [1 : 1 : r]$.

Now to find the point P , we find the equation of the line BC .

$$\begin{vmatrix} x & y & z \\ 1 & q & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & r \end{vmatrix} = 0 \implies (qr - 1)x - (r - 1)y + (1 - q)z = 0$$

Substituting $x = 0$ in the equation for the line $B'C'$, we get $(r - 1)y = (1 - q)z$, which implies $P = [0 : 1 - q : r - 1]$. Similarly we find that $Q = [1 - p : 0 : r - 1]$, and $R = [1 - p : q - 1 : 0]$.

To check the collinearity of P , Q , and R :

$$\begin{aligned} & \begin{vmatrix} 0 & 1 - q & r - 1 \\ 1 - p & 0 & r - 1 \\ 1 - p & q - 1 & 0 \end{vmatrix} \\ &= -(1 - q)(1 - p)(1 - r) + (r - 1)(1 - p)(q - 1) \\ &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

i.e P , Q , and R are collinear. ■

Proposition 3.3. *There is a unique projective conic through any given set of five points, no three of which are collinear.*

Proof. By the fundamental theorem of projective geometry, there exists a projective transformation t which maps the four out of given five points to the points $[1 : 0 : 0]$, $[0 : 1 : 0]$, $[0 : 0 : 1]$ and $[1 : 1 : 1]$. Let $[a : b : c]$ be the image of the fifth point under t . Since projective transformations preserve collinearity, no three of the five points are collinear, and also it can be deduced that a , b and c are nonzero, since if it were so, it would be collinear with other two points.

Let the conic that passes through these 5 points be of the form

$$Ax^2 + Bxy + Cy^2 + Fxz + Gyz + Hz^2$$

By substituting the points $[1 : 0 : 0]$, $[0 : 1 : 0]$, and $[0 : 0 : 1]$, the equation can be reduced to the form

$$Bxy + Fxz + Gyz = 0$$

Since the projective conic also passes through $[1 : 1 : 1]$ and $[a : b : c]$, we get the equations

$$B + F + G = 0$$

and

$$Bab + Fac + Gbc = 0$$

Solving these simultaneous equations, we get

$$F = -G \frac{ab - bc}{ab - ac}$$

and

$$B = -G \frac{ac - bc}{ac - ab}$$

It follows that the conic is of the form

$$-G \frac{ac - bc}{ac - ab} xy - G \frac{ab - bc}{ab - ac} xz + Gyz = 0$$

or

$$c(a - b)xy + b(c - a)xz + a(b - c)yz = 0$$

Since the conic is uniquely determined by the fifth point, it follows that it is unique. ■

Remark. The projective conic $E = \{[x : y : z] : xy + yz + zx = 0\}$ is called the standard projective conic. It passes through the triangle of reference formed by the points $[1 : 0 : 0]$, $[0 : 1 : 0]$, and $[0 : 0 : 1]$. This fact can be used to simplify calculations involving projective conics.

All the points on the conic except than $[1 : 0 : 0]$ can be parameterized as $[t^2 + t : t + 1 : -t]$, where $t \in \mathbb{R}$. All points on E satisfy $xy + yz + zx = 0$. Suppose $y \neq 0$, let $t = x/y$. Then $x = ty$, and so

$$\begin{aligned} (ty)y + yz + z(ty) &= 0 \\ \implies ty + (t+1)z &= 0 \\ \implies y = -\frac{t+1}{t}z, x = -(t+1)z \end{aligned}$$

Thus the point has homogeneous coordinates $\left[-(t+1)z : -\frac{t+1}{t}z : z\right]$, which can be rewritten in the form $[t(t+1) : t+1 : -t]$. This also happens to hold for the point $[0 : 0 : 1]$, where $y = 0$.

Proposition 3.4. *Let E_1 and E_2 be non-degenerate conics that pass through the points P_1, Q_1, R_1 and P_2, Q_2, R_2 respectively. Then there exists a projective transformation t which maps E_1 to E_2 such that $t(P_1) = P_2$, $t(Q_1) = Q_2$, and $t(R_1) = R_2$.*

Proof. We prove this result by proving that for any conic E_1 , there exists a transformation t_1 which maps it to the standard conic $xy + yz + zx = 0$ such that

$t_1(P_1) = [1 : 0 : 0]$, $t_2(Q_1) = [0 : 1 : 0]$, and $t_3(R_1) = [0 : 0 : 1]$ for any $P_1, Q_1, R_1 \in E$.

Let f be a transformation that maps P_1 to $[1 : 0 : 0]$, Q_1 to $[0 : 1 : 0]$, and R_1 to $[0 : 0 : 1]$. It will map the conic E_1 into a conic E' of the form

$$Fxy + Gyz + Hzy = 0$$

for some $F, G, H \in \mathbb{R}$. Divide the equation by FGH to rewrite E' in the form

$$\frac{xy}{GH} + \frac{yz}{FH} + \frac{zx}{FG} = 0$$

Now, let g be the transformation of the form $g([x : y : z]) = A[x : y : z] \forall [x : y : z] \in \mathbb{R}\text{Pr}^3$ where A is a 3×3 matrix such that

$$A = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{H} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{1}{G} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \frac{1}{F} \end{pmatrix}$$

Then, g maps E' to the standard conic $xy + yz + zx = 0$, leaving P , Q , and R unchanged. Let $t_1 = g \circ f$. Similarly, let t_2 be the function that maps the conic E_2 to the standard conic such that $t_2(P_2) = [1 : 0 : 0]$, $t_2(Q_2) = [0 : 1 : 0]$, and $t_2(R_2) = [0 : 0 : 1]$ for any $P_2, Q_2, R_2 \in E_2$.

The composite function $t = t_2^{-1} \circ t_1$ maps E_1 to E_2 such that $t(P_1) = P_2$, $t(Q_1) = Q_2$, and $t(R_1) = R_2$, as required. ■

Theorem 3.3 (Pascal's Theorem). *Let $A, B, C, A', B',$ and C' be six distinct points on a non-degenerate projective conic. Let BC and $B'C$ intersect at P , CA' and $C'A$ at Q , and AB' at R . The points P, Q , and R are collinear.*

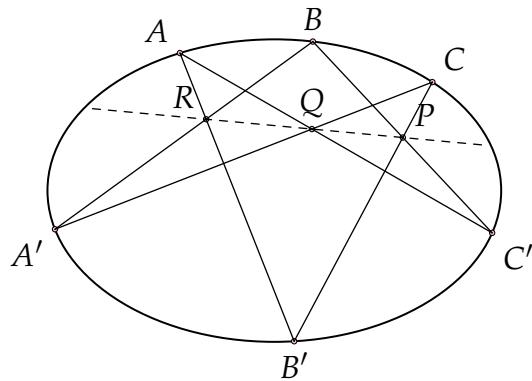


Figure 3.2: When the E is an ellipse.

Proof. We know that any non-degenerate conic can be transformed to the standard conic. Let the conic be in the standard form $xy + yz + zx = 0$, with $A = [1 : 0 : 0]$, $B = [0 : 1 : 0]$, and $C = [0 : 0 : 1]$. Let the point $A' = [a^2 + a : a + 1 : -a]$, $B' = [b^2 + b : b + 1 : -b]$, and $C' = [c^2 + c : c + 1 : -c]$, for some $a, b, c \in \mathbb{R}$.

The line BC' has the equation $x = -(c+1)z$, and the line $B'C$ has the equation $x = by$. The point P lies on both of these lines. Hence it has the homogeneous coordinates $[b(c+1) : c+1 : -b]$. Similarly, $Q = [a(c+1) : c+1 : -c]$, and $R = [b(a+1) : b+1 : -b]$.

To check their collinearity, evaluate the determinant:

$$\begin{vmatrix} b(c+1) & c+1 & -b \\ a(c+1) & c+1 & -c \\ b(a+1) & b+1 & -b \end{vmatrix}$$

Which, after some row operations, simplifies to be equal to 0. Hence, the points P, Q , and R are collinear. \blacksquare

Proofs from [BEG12].

3.4 The Cross-Ratio

Definition 3.5. Let a, b, c and d be four points on a projective line D . There exists a unique map $g : D \rightarrow K \cup \{\infty\}$ that maps a to ∞ , b to 0, and c to 1. The image of d under this projective mapping is called the *cross-ratio* of the points (a, b, c, d) , and denoted $[a, b, c, d]$.

Proposition 3.5. Let a_1, a_2, a_3 , and a_4 be four points on the line D (the first three being distinct) and a'_1, a'_2, a'_3 , and a'_4 be four points on another line D' (satisfying the same assumption). There exists a projective transformation $f : D \rightarrow D'$ such that $f(a_i) = a'_i$ iff $[a_1, a_2, a_3, a_4] = [a'_1, a'_2, a'_3, a'_4]$.

Proof. Assume f is a projective mapping that sends a_i to a'_i . Let g and g' be functions such that $[a_1, a_2, a_3, a_4] = g(a_4)$, and $[a'_1, a'_2, a'_3, a'_4] = g'(a'_4)$. $g' \circ f$ is a function, which maps a_1 to ∞ , a_2 to 0, and a_3 to 1. But such function is unique. Hence, $g = g' \circ f$, which implies that $g(a_4) = g'(a'_4)$. That is,

$$[a_1, a_2, a_3, a_4] = [a'_1, a'_2, a'_3, a'_4] \quad \blacksquare$$

Remark. Formulas for cross-ratio

Let a, b , and c be four points on the affine line, the first three being distinct. Then

$$[a, b, c, d] = \frac{(d-b)(c-a)}{(d-a)(c-b)}$$

Also, since the points a and b are distinct, c and d can be written as

$$\begin{aligned}c &= \alpha a + \beta b \\d &= \gamma a + \delta b\end{aligned}$$

Then the cross-ratio

$$[a, b, c, d] = \frac{\gamma\beta}{\alpha\delta}$$

Proposition 3.6. *If a, b, c , and d are four collinear distinct points, then the following equalities hold*

$$\begin{aligned}[a, b, c, d] + [a, c, b, d] &= 1 \\[b, a, c, d] &= [a, b, c, d]^{-1} \\[a, b, d, c] &= [a, b, c, d]^{-1}\end{aligned}$$

Proof. Let f be the function that defines the cross-ratio, such that $[a, b, c, d] = f(d)$, and let f' be a function such that $f'(x) = 1 - f(x) \forall x$. The composite function $f' \circ f$ maps a to ∞ , b to 0, and c to 1. But the function that defines the cross-ratio $[a, c, b, d]$ also maps a to ∞ , b to 0, and c to 1. Since such function is unique,

$$\begin{aligned}[a, c, b, d] &= f' \circ f(d) \\&\implies [a, c, b, d] = 1 - [a, b, c, d]\end{aligned}$$

Let g be a function such that $g(x) = \frac{1}{f(x)} \forall x$. The composite function $g \circ f$ maps a to 0, b to ∞ , and c to 1. Thus it is the function that defines the cross-ratio $[b, a, c, d]$. That is,

$$\begin{aligned}[b, a, c, d] &= g \circ f(d) \\&\implies [b, a, c, d] = \frac{1}{f(d)} \\&= [a, b, c, d]^{-1}\end{aligned}$$

Let h be a function such that $h(x) = \frac{f(x)}{f(d)} \forall x$. The composite function $h \circ f$ maps d to 1, keeping the images of a and b unchanged. Hence, it is the defining function of the cross-ratio $[a, b, d, c]$. That is,

$$\begin{aligned}[a, b, d, c] &= h \circ f(c) \\&\implies [a, b, d, c] = \frac{f(c)}{f(d)} \\&= [a, b, c, d]^{-1}\end{aligned}$$

■

Remark. If $[a, b, c, d] = k$, the 24 cross-ratios obtained by permuting the four points take one of these six values:

$$k , \frac{1}{k} , 1-k , 1-\frac{1}{k} , \frac{1}{1-k} , \frac{k}{k-1}$$

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