



## Some characterizations of the disc by properties of isoptic triangles

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**Abstract.** The main result in this article is the following: Let  $K \subset \mathbb{R}^2$  be a regular convex body and let  $\alpha, \beta, \theta$ , be three angles such that  $K$  has  $\alpha$ -chords,  $\beta$ -chords, and  $\theta$ -chords of constant length and  $\alpha + \beta + \theta = \pi$ , then  $K$  is a disc. We also prove another characterization of the disc with respect to properties of its  $(\alpha, \beta, \theta)$ -circumscribed triangles.

**Mathematics Subject Classification.** 52A10.

### 1. Introduction

Let  $K$  be a strictly convex body in the plane, i.e., a compact and convex set with non-empty interior and without segments in its boundary. Denote by  $\ell(t)$  the support line of  $K$  with outward normal vector  $u(t) = (\cos t, \sin t)$ , for every real number  $t$ . Consider now a triangle  $\Delta = \triangle ABC$  with given angles  $\alpha, \beta$ , and  $\theta$ . For every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$  there exists exactly one triangle similar to  $\Delta$  circumscribed to  $K$ , with its side  $A(t)C(t)$  over the line  $\ell(t)$ , and with the angles  $\alpha, \beta$ , and  $\theta$  in the counter clockwise sense as shown in Fig. 1. We denote such a triangle by  $\Delta(t) = A(t)B(t)C(t)$  and name it  $(\alpha, \beta, \theta)$ -triangle. Let  $D(t), E(t)$ , and  $F(t)$  be the contact points between  $K$  and the sides of  $\Delta(t)$ . When  $K$  is a disc, the following conditions hold:

- (1)  $\overline{A(t)D(t)} = \overline{A(t)F(t)}$ ,  $\overline{B(t)D(t)} = \overline{B(t)E(t)}$ ,  $\overline{C(t)E(t)} = \overline{C(t)F(t)}$ ,
- (2)  $\frac{\overline{A(t)D(t)}}{\overline{D(t)B(t)}} = \lambda_1$ ,  $\frac{\overline{B(t)E(t)}}{\overline{E(t)C(t)}} = \lambda_2$ ,  $\frac{\overline{C(t)F(t)}}{\overline{F(t)A(t)}} = \lambda_3$ , for three fixed numbers  $\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \lambda_3$ ,
- (3)  $\overline{D(t)F(t)} = \lambda_\alpha$ ,  $\overline{D(t)E(t)} = \lambda_\beta$ ,  $\overline{E(t)F(t)} = \lambda_\theta$ , for some fixed numbers  $\lambda_\alpha, \lambda_\beta, \lambda_\theta$ ,

for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ .

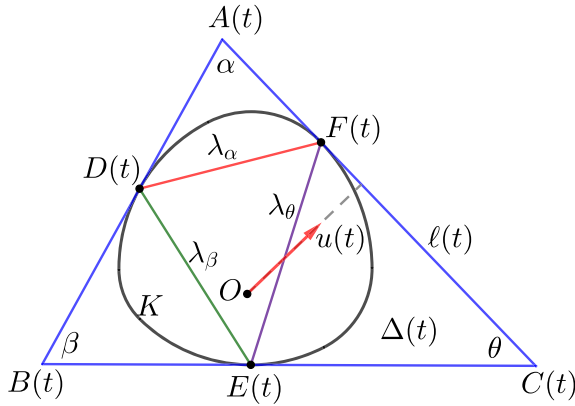


FIGURE 1. A triangle similar to  $\Delta$  circumscribed to  $K$

However, what happens if for a convex body  $K$ , any one of conditions (1), (2) or (3) holds for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ ? Is  $K$  a disc?

As we will see in the following sections, the answer is positive and it relies on results about isoptic curves. We may think that if the size of  $\Delta(t)$  is independent of  $t$ , i.e., it always has the same size, then it is sufficient to ensure that  $K$  must be a disc. However, this is not true: Let  $K$  be a convex body in the plane and let  $\mathcal{P}$  be a convex polygon. It is said that  $K$  is a rotor in  $\mathcal{P}$  if for every rotation  $\rho$ , there is a translate of  $\mathcal{P}$  that contains  $\rho(K)$  and all sides of  $\mathcal{P}$  are tangent to  $K$ . In the case where the polygon  $\mathcal{P}$  is a triangle with angles  $\alpha, \beta, \theta$ , it is known that there exist rotors different from discs if  $\frac{\alpha}{\pi}, \frac{\beta}{\pi}$ , and  $\frac{\theta}{\pi}$  are all rational numbers, see for instance [3], and for the particular case of rotors in equilateral triangles see [11].

Similar problems were recently studied: a convex body  $K$  is a disc if for some angles  $\alpha \in (0, \pi)$  and  $\beta = \alpha$ , it holds that  $\overline{A(t)D(t)} = \overline{D(t)B(t)}$ , for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$  (see [9]). If for some  $\alpha \in (0, \pi)$  it holds that  $\overline{B(t)D(t)}$  has a constant value for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ ,  $K$  is a disc (see [4]). If  $D(t)F(t) = \lambda_\alpha$ , for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$  and for a constant number  $\lambda_\alpha$ , and  $K$  has constant width or has rotational symmetry of angle  $\pi - \alpha$ , then  $K$  is a disc (see [7]). We can see that condition (1) implies that  $K$  must be a disc: just notice that the points  $D(t), E(t), F(t)$ , are points of contact between the incircle of  $\Delta A(t)B(t)C(t)$  and its sides. Now we use Lemma 3.3 in [6] and conclude that  $K$  is a disc. However, there are convex bodies different from discs, for which  $\overline{A(t)D(t)} = \overline{A(t)F(t)}$  for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$  (see [8]). Indeed, there are convex bodies, different from discs, for which this condition holds for three (or more) different angles  $\alpha, \beta, \theta \in (0, \pi)$ , but in this case the condition  $\alpha + \beta + \theta = \pi$  does not hold.

The main purpose of this paper is to prove that a convex body for which condition (3) holds, must be a disc.

### 2. Basic concepts of isoptic curves

The function  $p : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ , defined as  $p(t) = \max_{x \in K} \langle u(t), x \rangle$ , is known by the name of support function of  $K$ . When the origin  $O$  is contained in  $K$ ,  $p(t)$  is nothing else but the distance from  $O$  to the support line  $\ell(t)$ . The distance between the support lines  $\ell(t)$  and  $\ell(t + \pi)$  is called the width of  $K$  in direction  $u(t)$  and it is denoted by  $w(t)$ , in other words,  $w(t) = p(t) + p(t + \pi)$ . If  $w(t)$  is constant, independently of  $t$ , we say that  $K$  is a body of constant width. For any  $\alpha \in (0, \pi)$ , the  $\alpha$ -isoptic  $K_\alpha$  of  $K$  is defined as the locus of points at which two tangent lines to  $K$  intersect at an angle  $\alpha$ . Using the support function,  $\partial K$  is parameterized (see for instance [10]) by

$$\gamma(t) = p(t)u(t) + p'(t)u'(t), \text{ for } t \in [0, 2\pi].$$

The isoptic curve  $K_\alpha$  can be parameterized by the same angle by the formula (see [2] or [8])

$$\gamma_\alpha(t) = p(t)u(t) + \left[ p(t) \cot \alpha + \frac{1}{\sin \alpha} p(t + \pi - \alpha) \right] u'(t).$$

By Cauchy’s formula, the perimeter of  $K$  can be obtained by (see [10])

$$L(K) = \int_0^{2\pi} p(t) dt. \tag{1}$$

For any  $t \in \mathbb{R}$  we define (see Fig. 2)

$$\begin{aligned} a_\alpha(t) &= |\gamma_\alpha(t) - \gamma(t)|, \\ b_\alpha(t) &= |\gamma_\alpha(t) - \gamma(t + \pi - \alpha)|, \\ q_\alpha(t) &= |\gamma(t) - \gamma(t + \pi - \alpha)|. \end{aligned}$$

By some simple calculations we can express the lengths  $a(t)$  and  $b(t)$  in terms of the support function of  $K$ :

$$a_\alpha(t) = \frac{1}{\sin \alpha} [p(t + \pi - \alpha) + p(t) \cos \alpha - p'(t) \sin \alpha], \tag{2}$$

$$b_\alpha(t) = \frac{1}{\sin \alpha} [p(t + \pi - \alpha) \cos \alpha + p'(t + \pi - \alpha) \sin \alpha + p(t)]. \tag{3}$$

### 3. Some useful lemmas about isoptic curves

**Lemma 1.** *Let  $K$  be a strictly convex body in the plane and let  $\alpha, \theta \in (0, \pi)$  be angles such that  $a_\alpha(t) = a_\alpha(t + \theta)$ , for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ . Then,  $K$  has rotational symmetry of angle  $\theta$ .*

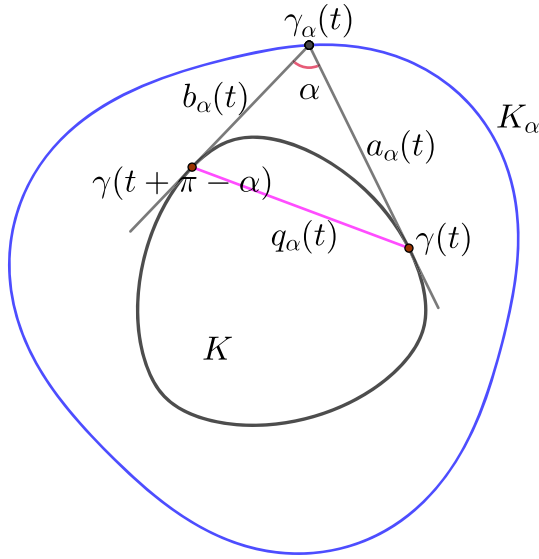


FIGURE 2. Parameters of the isoptic curve

*Proof.* Recall that  $a_\alpha(t) = \frac{1}{\sin \alpha} [p(t + \pi - \alpha) + p(t) \cos \alpha - p'(t) \sin \alpha]$ . The hypothesis  $a_\alpha(t) = a_\alpha(t + \theta)$  implies that

$$p(t + \pi - \alpha) + p(t) \cos \alpha - p'(t) \sin \alpha = p(t + \theta + \pi - \alpha) + p(t + \theta) \cos \alpha - p'(t + \theta) \sin \alpha,$$

which is equivalent to

$$[p'(t + \theta) - p'(t)] \sin \alpha = [p(t + \theta) - p(t)] \cos \alpha + p(t + \theta + \pi - \alpha) - p(t + \pi - \alpha).$$

Let  $y(t) = p(t + \theta) - p(t)$ . Using the previous equality we obtain the following differential equation

$$y'(t) \sin \alpha = y(t) \cos \alpha + y(t + \pi - \alpha). \tag{4}$$

We express  $y$  and  $y'$  in terms of their Fourier Series:

$$y(t) = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} c_n e^{int},$$

$$y'(t) = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} ni c_n e^{int}.$$

Then,

$$\sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} ni \sin \alpha c_n e^{int} = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \cos \alpha c_n e^{int} + \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (-1)^n e^{-in\alpha} c_n e^{int}$$

and we have

$$ni \sin \alpha c_n = \cos \alpha + (-1)^n e^{-in\alpha} c_n.$$

We claim that  $c_n = 0$  for every  $n$  not equal to 1 or  $-1$ . Suppose this is not the case. Then,

$$ni \sin \alpha = \cos \alpha + (-1)^n \cos n\alpha - (-1)^n i \sin(n\alpha).$$

Equivalently

$$n \sin \alpha = -(-1)^n \sin(n\alpha) \text{ and } \cos \alpha + (-1)^n \cos n\alpha = 0.$$

Notice that the first equation is not satisfied when  $n \neq 0, 1, -1$  while the second is false for  $n = 0$ . The claim now follows and we conclude that

$$p(t + \theta) - p(t) = y(t) = c_{-1}e^{-it} + c_1e^{it} = a_1 \cos t + b_1 \sin t,$$

where  $c_1 = a_1 - b_1i = \overline{c_{-1}}$ . Using vector notation we obtain

$$p(t + \theta) = p(t) + \langle (a_1, b_1), u(t) \rangle.$$

Let  $t_0$  be such that  $u(t_0 + \theta)$  is parallel to  $(a_1, b_1)$ . Notice that

$$p(t_0 + 2\theta) = p(t_0 + \theta) + \langle (a_1, b_1), u(t_0 + \theta) \rangle = p(t_0 + \theta) + \|(a_1, b_1)\|,$$

$$p(t_0 + 3\theta) = p(t_0 + 2\theta) + \|(a_1, b_1)\| = p(t_0 + \theta) + 2\|(a_1, b_1)\|,$$

⋮

$$p(t_0 + n\theta) = p(t_0 + \theta) + (n - 1)\|(a_1, b_1)\|.$$

Since the support function is bounded, we must have  $(a_1, b_1) = (0, 0)$ . We conclude that  $p(t + \theta) = p(t)$  for every  $t$ , which implies that  $K$  has rotational symmetry of angle  $\theta$ . □

As an application of Lemma 1, we have the following characterization of the disc, which we will prove for every kind of triangles in the following section.

**Proposition 1.** *Let  $K$  be a convex body and  $\alpha, \beta \in (0, \pi)$  such that  $2\alpha + \beta = \pi$ . Suppose that  $q_\alpha(t) = \lambda_\alpha$  and  $q_\beta(t) = \lambda_\beta$ , for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$  and for some positive numbers  $\lambda_\alpha$  and  $\lambda_\beta$ . Then  $K$  is a disc.*

*Proof.* Let  $\angle\gamma(t)\gamma(t+\pi-\alpha)\gamma(t-2\alpha) = \phi$  and  $\angle\gamma(t)\gamma(t+\pi-\alpha)\gamma_\alpha(t) = \alpha_1(t)$ , for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ , as shown in Fig. 3. Notice that  $\alpha_1(t + \pi - \alpha) = \alpha_1(t) + \phi - \alpha$ , for every  $t$ . Let  $t_1, t_2 \in [0, 2\pi]$  be such that  $\alpha(t_1) \leq \alpha(t) \leq \alpha(t_2)$  for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ . Since  $\alpha_1(t_1 + \pi - \alpha) = \alpha_1(t_1) + \phi - \alpha$ , we must have that  $\phi - \alpha \geq 0$ . Similarly,  $\alpha(t_2 + \pi - \alpha) = \alpha_1(t_2) + \phi - \alpha$  implies that  $\phi - \alpha \leq 0$ . We conclude that  $\alpha = \phi$  and  $\alpha_1(t + \pi - \alpha) = \alpha_1(t)$  for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ . Using the previous equality and the Law of sines for the triangles  $\Delta\gamma_\alpha(t+\pi-\alpha)\gamma(t-2\alpha)\gamma(t+\pi-\alpha)$

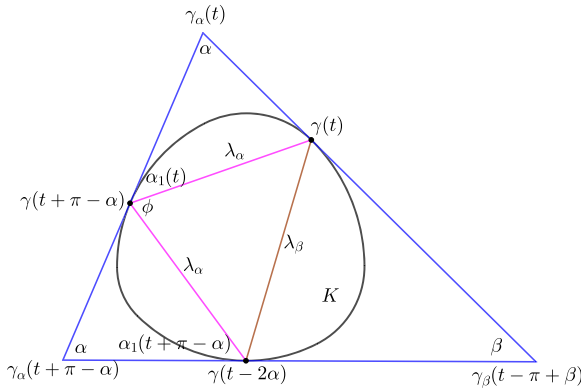


FIGURE 3. An isosceles circumscribed triangle

and  $\Delta\gamma_\alpha(t)\gamma(t+\pi-\alpha)\gamma(t)$  we conclude that for every  $t$  the following equalities hold

$$\frac{a_\alpha(t)}{\sin \alpha_1(t)} = \frac{\lambda_\alpha}{\sin \alpha} = \frac{a_\alpha(t+\pi-\alpha)}{\sin \alpha_1(t)}.$$

It follows that  $a_\alpha(t) = a_\alpha(t+\pi-\alpha)$  for every  $t$ . By Lemma 1,  $K$  has rotational symmetry of angle  $\alpha$ . The result now follows from Theorem 2 in [7].  $\square$

**Lemma 2.** *Let  $K$  be a strictly convex body in the plane and let  $\alpha \in (0, \pi)$  be a given angle. Then there exist two real numbers  $t_0, t_1 \in [0, 2\pi]$  such that  $a_\alpha(t_0) = b_\alpha(t_0)$  and  $a_\alpha(t_1 + \pi - \alpha) = b_\alpha(t_1)$ .*

*Proof.* From (2) and (3) we have that

$$\begin{aligned} & \sin \alpha [a_\alpha(t) - b_\alpha(t)] \\ &= p(t + \pi - \alpha)(1 - \cos \alpha) - p(t)(1 - \cos \alpha) - p'(t) \sin \alpha - p'(t + \pi - \alpha) \sin \alpha. \end{aligned}$$

By Cauchy’s formula for the perimeter and since  $p$  is a periodic function with period equal to  $2\pi$ , we have that

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_0^{2\pi} \sin \alpha [a_\alpha(t) - b_\alpha(t)] dt \\ &= L(K)(1 - \cos \alpha) - L(K)(1 - \cos \alpha) - p(t) \sin \alpha|_0^{2\pi} - p(t + \pi - \alpha) \sin \alpha|_0^{2\pi}, \end{aligned}$$

hence

$$\int_0^{2\pi} \sin \alpha [a_\alpha(t) - b_\alpha(t)] dt = 0.$$

Since  $a$  and  $b$  are continuous functions, we have that there exists a number  $t_0$  such that  $a_\alpha(t_0) = b_\alpha(t_0)$ .

The proof of the existence of  $t_1$  such that  $a_\alpha(t_1 + \pi - \alpha) = b_\alpha(t_1)$  is completely analogous.  $\square$

The following lemma gives another characterization of the disc.

**Lemma 3.** *Let  $K$  be a strictly convex body in the plane and let  $\alpha \in (0, \pi/2)$  be a given angle. Suppose  $a_\alpha(t) = \lambda a_{\pi-\alpha}(t)$ , for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$  and for  $\lambda > 1$ . Then  $K$  is a disc.*

*Proof.* We know that

$$a_\alpha(t) = \frac{1}{\sin \alpha} [p(t + \pi - \alpha) + p(t) \cos \alpha - p'(t) \sin \alpha]$$

and

$$\lambda a_{\pi-\alpha}(t) = \frac{\lambda}{\sin \alpha} [p(t + \alpha) - p(t) \cos \alpha - p'(t) \sin \alpha].$$

Then,

$$p(t + \pi - \alpha) + p(t) \cos \alpha - p'(t) \sin \alpha = \lambda p(t + \alpha) - \lambda p(t) \cos \alpha - \lambda p'(t) \sin \alpha,$$

or

$$(\lambda - 1)p'(t) \sin \alpha + p(t + \pi - \alpha) - \lambda p(t + \alpha) + (\lambda + 1)p(t) \cos \alpha = 0. \quad (5)$$

Let the Fourier series of  $p$  be given by

$$p(t) = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} c_n e^{int}.$$

By equation (5) we have

$$\begin{aligned} & \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} i(\lambda - 1)n \sin \alpha c_n e^{int} + \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (-1)^n c_n e^{-in\alpha} e^{int} - \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} \lambda c_n e^{in\alpha} e^{int} \\ & + \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} i(\lambda + 1) \cos \alpha c_n e^{int} = 0. \end{aligned}$$

We conclude that

$$[i(\lambda - 1)n \sin \alpha + (-1)^n e^{-in\alpha} - \lambda e^{in\alpha} + (\lambda + 1) \cos \alpha] c_n = 0,$$

i.e.,

$$\begin{aligned} & [i(\lambda - 1)n \sin \alpha + (-1)^n \cos n\alpha - (-1)^n i \sin n\alpha - \lambda \cos n\alpha - i\lambda \sin n\alpha \\ & + (\lambda + 1) \cos \alpha] c_n = 0. \end{aligned}$$

For  $n = 0$  we obtain

$$1 - \lambda + (\lambda + 1) \cos \alpha = 0,$$

which implies

$$\lambda = \frac{1 + \cos \alpha}{1 - \cos \alpha}. \tag{6}$$

Notice that if  $c_n \neq 0$  we must have

$$(\lambda - 1)n \sin \alpha - (\lambda + (-1)^n) \sin n\alpha = 0 \text{ and } ((-1)^n - \lambda) \cos n\alpha + (\lambda + 1) \cos \alpha = 0.$$

Now, if  $n \neq 1$  is an odd natural number, the first equation simplifies to

$$n \sin \alpha + \sin n\alpha = 0,$$

which is never satisfied. It follows that  $c_n = 0$  for every odd natural number  $n \neq 1$ . On the other hand, for every natural even number  $n \neq 0$ , we have

$$(1 - \lambda) \cos n\alpha + (\lambda + 1) \cos \alpha = 0.$$

Using equation (6) we conclude that

$$\cos n\alpha = -1,$$

which is impossible, since  $0 < \alpha < \pi/2$ . It follows that  $c_n = 0$  for every even number  $n > 0$  and that  $p(t) = c_0 + ce^{it}$ . Thus,  $K$  is a disc.  $\square$

### 4. Main results

The first result we prove here is concerns property (2) mentioned in the introduction.

**Theorem 1.** *Let  $K \subset \mathbb{R}^2$  be a strictly convex body and let  $\alpha, \beta, \theta \in (0, \pi)$  be three angles such that  $\alpha + \beta + \theta = \pi$ . Suppose that for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$*

$$\frac{b_\alpha(t)}{a_\beta(t + \pi - \alpha)} = \lambda_1, \quad \frac{b_\beta(t + \pi - \alpha)}{a_\theta(t - \pi + \theta)} = \lambda_2, \quad \frac{b_\theta(t - \pi + \theta)}{a_\alpha(t)} = \lambda_3,$$

for some constants  $\lambda_1, \lambda_2$ , and  $\lambda_3$ . Then  $K$  is a disc.

*Proof.* Since all  $(\alpha, \beta, \theta)$ -triangles are similar and the points  $\gamma(t + \pi - \alpha), \gamma(t - \pi + \theta), \gamma(t)$ , divide the corresponding sides in the given ratios  $\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \lambda_3$ , we have that

$$\frac{a_\alpha(t)}{b_\alpha(t)}, \quad \frac{a_\beta(t + \pi - \alpha)}{b_\beta(t + \pi - \alpha)}, \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{a_\theta(t - \pi + \theta)}{b_\theta(t - \pi + \theta)}$$

are also constant. Now, by Lemma 2 we have that  $a_\alpha(t) = b_\alpha(t), a_\beta(t) = b_\beta(t), a_\theta(t) = b_\theta(t)$  for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ . It follows that the points  $\gamma(t + \pi - \alpha), \gamma(t - \pi + \theta), \gamma(t)$  are the contact points between the incircle of the triangle  $\triangle \gamma_\alpha(t)\gamma_\beta(t + \pi - \alpha)\gamma_\theta(t - \pi + \theta)$  and its sides, for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ . Now, the hypothesis of Lemma 3.3 in [6] holds, and so we conclude that  $K$  is a disc.  $\square$

Now we present the main result of this work.



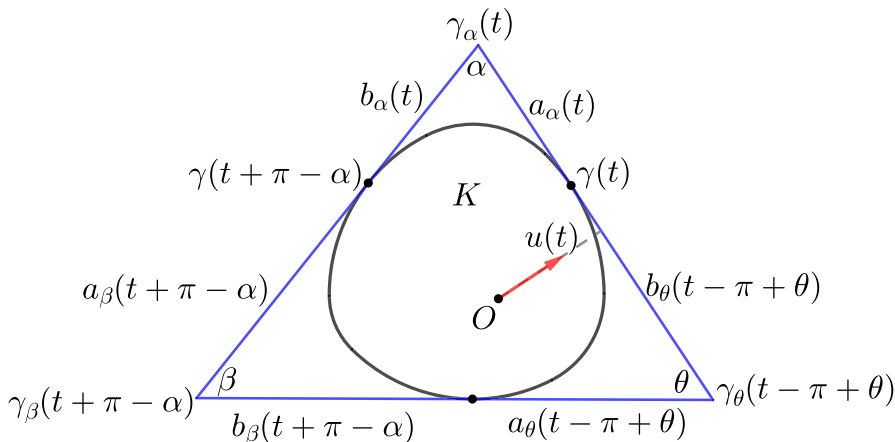


FIGURE 4.  $\gamma(t + \pi - \alpha)$ ,  $\gamma(t - \pi + \theta)$ ,  $\gamma(t)$ , divide the corresponding sides in the given ratios

**Theorem 2.** Let  $K \subset \mathbb{R}^2$  be a regular convex body and let  $\alpha, \beta, \theta \in (0, \pi)$  be three angles such that  $\alpha + \beta + \theta = \pi$ . Suppose that for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ ,  $q_\alpha(t) = \lambda_\alpha$ ,  $q_\beta(t) = \lambda_\beta$ ,  $q_\theta(t) = \lambda_\theta$ , for some constants  $\lambda_\alpha$ ,  $\lambda_\beta$ , and  $\lambda_\theta$ . Then  $K$  is a disc.

In the proof of Theorem 2 we will use the following lemma (see [11]). For the sake of completeness we give a proof here.

**Lemma 4.** Let  $C$  be one of the points of intersection between two circles  $\Gamma_1$  and  $\Gamma_2$  with centres  $O_1$  and  $O_2$ , respectively. The unique chord  $AB$ , with  $A \in \Gamma_1$ ,  $B \in \Gamma_2$ , through  $C$  and with maximum length is obtained when  $AB$  is orthogonal to the common chord between  $\Gamma_1$  and  $\Gamma_2$ , i.e., when  $AB$  is parallel to  $O_1O_2$ .

*Proof.* Let  $AB$  be any chord through  $C$ , as shown in Fig. 5. Let  $M_1$  and  $M_2$  be the orthogonal projections of  $O_1$  and  $O_2$  onto  $AB$ . We know that the length of  $M_1M_2$  is half the length of  $AB$ . Suppose the orthogonal projection,  $T$ , of  $O_1$  onto the line  $O_2M_2$  lies in the segment  $O_2M_2$ . Since  $O_1M_1M_2T$  is a rectangle, we have that the lengths of  $O_1T$  and  $M_1M_2$  are equal. From here we see that the maximum length of  $M_1M_2$  and hence of  $AB$  is when  $AB$  is parallel to  $O_1O_2$ . The case when the orthogonal projection of  $O_2$  onto the line  $O_1M_1$  lies in the segment  $O_1M_1$ , is completely analogous.  $\square$

*Proof of Theorem 2.* Let  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$  be any angle and let  $\Delta(t) = \Delta\gamma_\alpha(t)\gamma_\beta(t + \pi - \alpha)\gamma_\theta(t - \pi + \theta)$  be the corresponding circumscribed  $(\alpha, \beta, \theta)$ -triangle. The contact points between the sides of  $\Delta(t)$  and the boundary of  $K$  are  $\gamma(t)$ ,

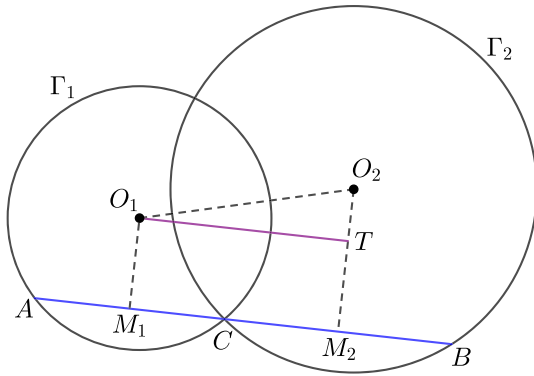


FIGURE 5. Maximum chord  $AB$  is when  $AB$  is parallel to  $O_1O_2$

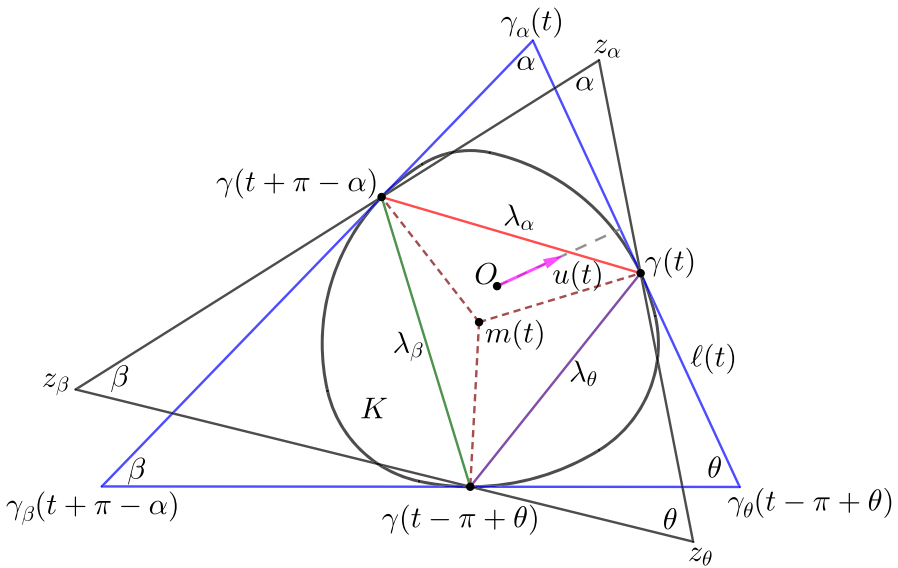


FIGURE 6. All circumscribed  $(\alpha, \beta, \theta)$ -triangles are maximal

$\gamma(t + \pi - \alpha)$ , and  $\gamma(t - \pi + \theta)$ , respectively. By Miquel's theorem we know that there exists a point  $m(t)$  in common to the circumcircles of triangles  $\Delta\gamma_\alpha(t)\gamma(t+\pi-\alpha)\gamma(t)$ ,  $\Delta\gamma_\beta(t+\pi-\alpha)\gamma(t-\pi+\theta)\gamma(t+\pi-\alpha)$ , and  $\Delta\gamma_\theta(t-\pi+\theta)\gamma(t)\gamma(t-\pi+\theta)$ . By Lemma 4 we obtain that the maximum  $(\alpha, \beta, \theta)$ -triangle circumscribed to  $\Delta\gamma(t)\gamma(t + \pi - \alpha)\gamma(t - \pi + \theta)$  is obtained when  $[m(t), \gamma(t)]$ ,  $[m(t), \gamma(t+\pi-\alpha)]$ ,  $[m(t), \gamma(t-\pi+\theta)]$  are orthogonal to the corresponding sides

of  $\Delta(t)$ . Suppose that this is not the case and let  $\Delta_{z_\alpha z_\beta z_\theta}$  be the maximum  $((\alpha, \beta, \theta)$ -triangle circumscribed to  $\Delta\gamma(t)\gamma(t + \pi - \alpha)\gamma(t - \pi + \theta)$ , as shown in Fig. 6. Since the boundary of  $K$  is regular, the sides of  $\Delta_{z_\alpha z_\beta z_\theta}$  intersect the interior of  $K$ . If we consider the corresponding support lines of  $K$ , parallel to the sides of  $\Delta_{z_\alpha z_\beta z_\theta}$ , we obtain an  $(\alpha, \beta, \theta)$ -triangle circumscribed to  $K$  with size bigger than the size of  $\Delta_{z_\alpha z_\beta z_\theta}$ . This is a contradiction since such a triangle must touch the boundary of  $K$  in three points which are vertices of a triangle congruent to  $\Delta(t)$ . It follows that the triangle  $\Delta(t)$ , for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ , is maximal. In particular, we have that the length of  $a_\alpha(t)$  is constant for every  $t \in [0, 2\pi]$ . We apply Lemma 2 in [4] and conclude that  $K$  is a disc.  $\square$

*Remark 1.* Indeed, we have that the points  $\gamma(t)$ ,  $\gamma(t + \pi - \alpha)$ , and  $\gamma(t - \pi + \theta)$  are the contact points between the incircle of  $\Delta(t)$  and the sides of  $\Delta(t)$ . We can also conclude the proof of the theorem using Lemma 3.3 in [6].

**Author contributions** JJ and FJ wrote the manuscript and JJ produce the figures. All authors reviewed the manuscript

### Declarations

**Conflict of interest** The authors declare no competing interests.

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Received: February 28, 2023

Revised: August 15, 2023

Accepted: August 19, 2023