

A point P in the plane of a triangle

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Find a point P in the plane of a given triangle ABC such that the sum

$$\frac{|AP|^2}{b^2} + \frac{|BP|^2}{c^2} + \frac{|CP|^2}{a^2}$$

is minimal, where $a = BC, b = CA, c = AB$.

Solution by Arkady Alt , San Jose, California, USA.

Let Q be point on the plane with barycentric coordinates $(q_a, q_b, q_c) =$

$\left(\frac{1}{kb^2}, \frac{1}{kc^2}, \frac{1}{ka^2}\right)$, where $k = \frac{1}{b^2} + \frac{1}{c^2} + \frac{1}{a^2}$. Then by Leibnitz Formula

for distance between two points in barycentric coordinates we obtain

$$PQ^2 = \sum_{cyc} q_a PA^2 - \sum_{cyc} q_b q_c a^2 = \frac{1}{k} \sum_{cyc} \frac{PA^2}{b^2} - \frac{1}{k^2} \sum_{cyc} \frac{1}{c^2 a^2} \cdot a^2 =$$

$$\frac{1}{k} \sum_{cyc} \frac{PA^2}{b^2} - \frac{1}{k^2} \sum_{cyc} \frac{1}{c^2} = \frac{1}{k} \left(\sum_{cyc} \frac{PA^2}{b^2} - 1 \right).$$

Hence, $\sum_{cyc} \frac{PA^2}{b^2} = k \cdot PQ^2 + 1$ and, therefore, $\min \sum_{cyc} \frac{PA^2}{b^2} = 1 = \sum_{cyc} \frac{QA^2}{b^2}$.

That is $\sum_{cyc} \frac{PA^2}{b^2}$ is minimal iff $P = Q$, where Q is intersect point of cevians

$$AA_1, BB_1, CC_1 \text{ such that } \frac{BA_1}{A_1C} = \frac{F_c}{F_b} = \frac{q_c}{q_b} = \frac{c^2}{a^2}, \frac{CB_1}{B_1A} = \frac{q_a}{q_c} = \frac{a^2}{b^2},$$

$$\frac{AC_1}{C_1B} = \frac{q_b}{q_a} = \frac{b^2}{c^2}.$$