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## On conjugate pseudo-harmonic functions

We prove the following theorem. Let  $U$  be a pseudo-harmonic function on a surface  $M^2$ . For a real valued continuous function  $V : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  to be a conjugate pseudo-harmonic function of  $U$  on  $M^2$  it is necessary and sufficient that  $V$  is open on level sets of  $U$ .

**Keywords:** *a pseudo-harmonic function, a conjugate, a surface, an interior transformation*

Let  $M^2$  be a surface, i.e. a 2-dimensional and separable manifold,  $U : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a real-valued function on  $M^2$ . Denote also by

$$D = \{(x, y) \in \mathbb{R}^2 \mid x^2 + y^2 < 1\}$$

the open unit disk in the plane.

**Definition 1** (see [1,2]). *A function  $U$  is called pseudo-harmonic in a point  $p \in M^2$  if there exist a neighbourhood  $N$  of  $p$  on  $M^2$  and a homeomorphism  $T : D \rightarrow N$  such that  $T(0,0) = p$  and a function*

$$u = U \circ T : D \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^2$$

*is harmonic and not identically constant.*

*A neighbourhood  $N$  is called simple neighbourhood of  $p$ .*

We can even choose  $N$  and  $T$  from previous definition to comply with the equality

$$u(z) = U \circ T(z) = \operatorname{Re} z^n + U(p), \quad z = x + iy \in D,$$

for a certain  $n = n(p) \in \mathbb{N}$  (see [2]).

**Definition 2** (see [1,2]). *A function  $U$  is called pseudo-harmonic on  $M^2$  if it is pseudo-harmonic in each point  $p \in M^2$ .*

Let  $U : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a pseudo-harmonic function on  $M^2$  and  $V : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a real valued function.

**Definition 3** (see [1]). *A function  $V$  is called a conjugate pseudo-harmonic function of  $U$  in a point  $p \in M^2$  if there exist a neighbourhood  $N$  of  $p$  on  $M^2$  and a homeomorphism  $T : D \rightarrow N$  such that  $T(0,0) = p$  and*

$$u = U \circ T : D \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^2 \quad \text{and} \quad v = V \circ T : D \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^2$$

*are conjugate harmonic functions.*

We can choose  $N$  and  $T$  from previous definition in such way that

$$\begin{aligned} u(z) &= U \circ T(z) = \operatorname{Re} z^n + U(p), \\ v(z) &= V \circ T(z) = \operatorname{Im} z^n + V(p), \quad z = x + iy \in D, \end{aligned}$$

for a certain  $n = n(p) \in \mathbb{N}$  (see [2]).

**Definition 4** (see [1]). *A function  $V$  is called a conjugate pseudo-harmonic function of  $U$  on  $M^2$  if it is a conjugate pseudo-harmonic function of  $U$  in every  $p \in M^2$ .*

**Definition 5.** *Let  $U$  and  $V$  be continuous real valued functions on a surface  $M^2$ . We say that  $V$  is open on level sets of  $U$  if for every  $c \in U(M^2)$  a mapping*

$$V|_{U^{-1}(c)} : U^{-1}(c) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$$

*is open on the space  $U^{-1}(c)$  in the topology induced from  $M^2$ .*

**Theorem 1.** *Let  $U$  be a pseudo-harmonic function on  $M^2$ . For a real valued continuous function  $V : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  to be a conjugate pseudo-harmonic function of  $U$  on  $M^2$  it is necessary and sufficient that  $V$  is open on level sets of  $U$ .*

Let us remind following definition.

**Definition 6** (see [3]). A mapping  $G : M_1^2 \rightarrow M_2^2$  of a surface  $M_1^2$  to a surface  $M_2^2$  is called interior if it complies with conditions:

- 1)  $G$  is open, i. e. an image of any open subset of  $M_1^2$  is open in  $M_2^2$ ;
- 2) for every  $p \in M_2^2$  its full preimage  $G^{-1}(p)$  does not contain any nondegenerate continuum (closed connected subset of  $M_1^2$ ).

In order to prove theorem 1 we need following

**Lemma 1.** Let  $U$  be a pseudo-harmonic function on  $M^2$ . Let a real valued continuous function  $V$  be open on level sets of  $U$ .

Then the mapping  $F : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ ,

$$F(p) = U(p) + iV(p), \quad p \in M^2$$

is interior.

First we will verify one auxiliary statement. Denote  $I = [0, 1]$ ,  $\overset{\circ}{I} = (0, 1) = I \setminus \{0, 1\}$ .

**Proposition 1.** In the condition of Lemma 1 the following statement holds true.

Let  $\gamma : I \rightarrow M^2$  be a simple continuous curve and  $\gamma(I) \subseteq U^{-1}(c)$  for a certain  $c \in \mathbb{R}$ . If the set  $\gamma(\overset{\circ}{I})$  is open in  $U^{-1}(c)$  in the topology induced from  $M^2$ , then the function  $V \circ \gamma : I \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is strictly monotone.

*Proof.* Suppose that contrary to the statement of Proposition the equality  $V \circ \gamma(\tau_1) = V \circ \gamma(\tau_2)$  is valid for certain  $\tau_1, \tau_2 \in I$ ,  $\tau_1 < \tau_2$ .

Since the function  $V \circ \gamma$  is continuous and a set  $[\tau_1, \tau_2]$  is compact, then following values

$$d_1 = \min_{t \in [\tau_1, \tau_2]} V \circ \gamma(t),$$

$$d_2 = \max_{t \in [\tau_1, \tau_2]} V \circ \gamma(t),$$

are well defined. Let us fix  $s_1, s_2 \in [\tau_1, \tau_2]$  such that  $d_i = V \circ \gamma(s_i)$ ,  $i = 1, 2$ .

We designate  $W = (\tau_1, \tau_2)$ . It is obviously the open subset of  $\overset{\circ}{I}$ . Let us consider first the case  $d_1 = d_2$ . It is clear that

$$[\tau_1, \tau_2] \subseteq (V \circ \gamma)^{-1}(d_1)$$

in this case. So the open subset  $\gamma(W)$  of the level set  $U^{-1}(c)$  is mapped by  $V$  onto a one-point set  $\{d_1\}$  which is not open in  $\mathbb{R}$  and  $V$  is not open on level sets of  $U$ .

Assume now that  $d_1 \neq d_2$ . Since  $V \circ \gamma(\tau_1) = V \circ \gamma(\tau_2)$  due to our previous supposition, then either  $s_1$  or  $s_2$  is contained in  $W$ .

Let  $s_1 \in W$  (the case  $s_2 \in W$  is considered similarly). Then  $V \circ \gamma(W) \subseteq [d_1, +\infty)$  and the open subset  $\gamma(W)$  of the level set  $U^{-1}(c)$  can not be mapped by  $V$  to an open subset of  $\mathbb{R}$  since its image contains the frontier point  $d_1 = V \circ \gamma(s_1)$ . So, in this case  $V$  is not open on level sets of  $U$ .

The contradiction obtained shows that our initial supposition is false and the function  $V \circ \gamma$  is strictly monotone on  $I$ .  $\square$

*Proof of Lemma 1.* Let  $p \in M^2$  and  $Q$  be an open neighbourhood of  $p$ .

We are going to show that the set  $F(Q)$  contains a neighbourhood of  $F(p)$ . At the same time we shall show that  $p$  is an isolated point of a level set  $F^{-1}(F(p))$ .

Without loss of generality we can assume that  $U(p) = V(p) = 0$ .

Let  $N$  be a simple neighbourhood of  $p$  and  $T : D \rightarrow N$  be a homeomorphism such that for a certain  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  the following equality holds true  $u(z) = U \circ T(z) = \operatorname{Re} z^n$ ,  $z \in D$  (see Definition 1 and the subsequent remark). It is clear that without losing generality we can regard that  $N$  is small enough to be contained in  $Q$ .

Observe that for an arbitrary level set  $\Gamma$  of  $U$  an intersection  $\Gamma \cap T(D) = \Gamma \cap N$  is open in  $\Gamma$ . Consequently, since  $T$  is homeomorphism then a mapping  $v = V \circ T : D \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is open on level sets of  $u = U \circ T : D \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  (see Definition 5).

Let us consider two possibilities.

**Case 1.** Zero is a regular point of the smooth function  $u = U \circ T$ , i. e.  $n = 1$  and  $u(z) = \operatorname{Re} z$ ,  $z \in D$ .

In this case

$$u^{-1}(u(0)) = u^{-1}(U(p)) = T^{-1}(U^{-1}(U(p))) = \{0\} \times (-1, 1).$$

According to Proposition 1 the function  $v$  is strictly monotone on every segment which is contained in this interval, so it is strictly monotone on  $\{0\} \times (-1, 1)$ . Consequently, for points  $z_1 = 0 - i/2$  and  $z_2 = 0 + i/2$  the following inequality holds true  $v(z_1) \cdot v(z_2) < 0$ .

Let us note that from previous it follows that  $V$  is monotone on the arc  $\beta = T(\{0\} \times (-1, 1)) = U^{-1}(U(p)) \cap N$ . And since  $F^{-1}(F(p)) \cap N \subset \beta$  then  $F^{-1}(F(p)) \cap N = \{p\}$  and  $p$  is an isolated point of its level set  $F^{-1}(F(p))$ .

Let  $d_1 = v(z_1) < 0$  and  $d_2 = v(z_2) > 0$  (The case  $d_1 > 0$  and  $d_2 < 0$  is considered similarly). Denote

$$\varepsilon = \frac{1}{2} \min(|d_1|, |d_2|) > 0.$$

Function  $v$  is continuous, so there exists  $\delta > 0$  such that following implications are fulfilled

$$\begin{aligned} |z - z_1| < \delta &\Rightarrow |v(z) - d_1| < \varepsilon, \\ |z - z_2| < \delta &\Rightarrow |v(z) - d_2| < \varepsilon. \end{aligned}$$

Let us examine a neighbourhood  $W = (-\delta, \delta) \times (-1/2, 1/2)$  of 0, which is depicted on Figure 13. It can be easily seen that for every  $x \in (-\delta, \delta)$  following relations are valid

$$\begin{aligned} u(x + iy) &= x, \quad y \in (-\varepsilon, \varepsilon), \\ v(x - i/2) &< v(z_1) + \varepsilon < -2\varepsilon + \varepsilon = -\varepsilon, \\ v(x + i/2) &> v(z_2) - \varepsilon > 2\varepsilon - \varepsilon = \varepsilon. \end{aligned}$$

From two last lines and from the continuity of  $v$  on a segment  $\{x\} \times [-1/2, 1/2]$  it follows that  $v(\{x\} \times [-1/2, 1/2]) \supseteq (-\varepsilon, \varepsilon)$ . Therefore

$$F \circ T(\{x\} \times [-1/2, 1/2]) \supseteq \{x\} \times (-\varepsilon, \varepsilon), \quad x \in (-\delta, \delta).$$

Since  $T(W) \subseteq N \subseteq Q$  by the choice of  $N$ , then

$$0 = F(p) \in (-\delta, \delta) \times (-\varepsilon, \varepsilon) \subseteq F \circ T(W) \subseteq F(Q).$$

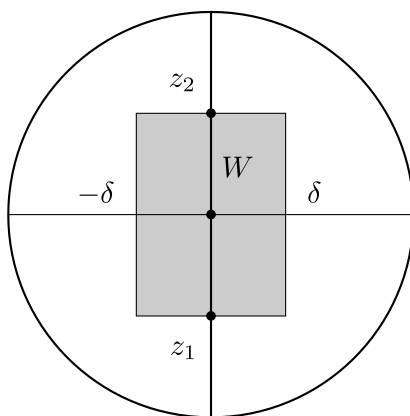


FIGURE 13

**Case 2.** Zero is a saddle point of  $u = U \circ T$ , i. e.  $u(z) = \operatorname{Re} z^n$ ,  $z \in D$  for a certain  $n > 1$ .

In this case

$$u^{-1}(u(0)) = T^{-1}(U^{-1}(U(p))) = \{0\} \cup \bigcup_{k=0}^{2n-1} \gamma_k,$$

where  $\gamma_k = \{z \in D \mid z = a \cdot \exp(\pi i(k - 1/2)/n), a \in (0, 1)\}$ ,  $k = 1, \dots, 2n - 1$ .

As above, applying Proposition 1 we conclude that function

$$v = V \circ T$$

is strictly monotone on each arc  $\gamma_k$ ,  $k = 1, \dots, 2n - 1$ . Since  $v$  is continuous and 0 is a boundary point for each  $\gamma_k$ , then

$$v(z) \neq v(0)$$

for all  $z \in \bigcup_k \gamma_k$ . Therefore,  $0 = (F \circ T)^{-1}(F \circ T(0))$  and  $F^{-1}(F(p)) \cap N = \{p\}$ , i. e.  $p$  is the isolated point if its level set  $F^{-1}(F(p))$ .

Let us designate by

$$R_k = \left\{ z \in D \mid z = ae^{i\varphi}, a \in [0, 1), \varphi \in \left[ \frac{\pi(k-1/2)}{2}, \frac{\pi(k+1/2)}{2} \right] \right\},$$

$$k = 0, \dots, 2n - 1$$

sectors on which disk  $D$  is divided by the level set  $u^{-1}(u(0))$ .

We also denote

$$D_l = \{z \in D \mid \operatorname{Re} z \leq 0\},$$

$$D_r = \{z \in D \mid \operatorname{Re} z \geq 0\}.$$

Consider map  $\Phi : D \rightarrow D$  given by the formula  $\Phi(z) = z^n$ ,  $z \in D$ . It is easy to see that for every  $k \in \{0, \dots, 2n-1\}$  depending on its parity sector  $R_k$  is mapped homeomorphically by  $\Phi$  either onto  $D_l$  or onto  $D_r$ . Let a mapping  $\Phi_k : R_k \rightarrow D_r$  is given by relation

$$\Phi_k = \begin{cases} \Phi|_{R_k}, & \text{if } k = 2m, \\ \operatorname{Inv} \circ \Phi|_{R_k}, & \text{if } k = 2m + 1, \end{cases} \quad k = 0, \dots, 2n - 1,$$

where  $\operatorname{Inv} : D \rightarrow D$  is defined by formula  $\operatorname{Inv}(z) = -z$ ,  $z \in D$ . Evidently, all  $\Phi_k$  are homeomorphisms.

We consider now inverse mappings  $\varphi_k = \Phi_k^{-1} : D_r \rightarrow D$ ,  $k = 0, \dots, 2n - 1$ . By construction all of these mappings are embeddings. Moreover, it is easy to see that

$$u_k(z) = u \circ \varphi_k(z) = \begin{cases} \operatorname{Re} z, & \text{when } k = 2m, \\ -\operatorname{Re} z, & \text{when } k = 2m + 1. \end{cases}$$

Let us fix  $k \in \{0, \dots, 2n - 1\}$ . It is clear that  $\varphi_k$  homeomorphically maps a domain

$$\mathring{D}_r = \{z \in D \mid \operatorname{Re} z > 0\}$$

onto a domain

$$\mathring{R}_k = \left\{ z \in D \mid z = ae^{i\varphi}, a \in (0, 1), \varphi \in \left( \frac{\pi(k-1/2)}{2}, \frac{\pi(k+1/2)}{2} \right) \right\},$$

so with the help of argument similar to the observation preceding to case 1 we conclude that the mapping  $\mathring{v}_k = v \circ \varphi_k|_{\mathring{D}_r} : \mathring{D}_r \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$

is open on level sets of the function  $\mathring{u}_k = u \circ \varphi_k|_{\mathring{D}_r} : \mathring{D}_r \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ . As above, applying Proposition 1 we conclude that function  $\mathring{v}_k$  is strictly monotone on each arc

$$\alpha_c = \mathring{u}_k^{-1}(\mathring{u}_k(c + 0i)) = \{z \in \mathring{D}_r \mid \operatorname{Re} z = c\}, \quad c \in (0, 1).$$

We already know that the function  $v$  is strictly monotone on the arcs  $\gamma_k$  and  $\gamma_s$ , where  $s \equiv k + 1 \pmod{2n}$ . Therefore the function  $v_k = v \circ \varphi_k : D_r \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is strictly monotone on the arcs

$$\begin{aligned} \alpha_- &= \varphi_k^{-1}(\gamma_k) = \{z \in D_r \mid \operatorname{Re} z = 0 \text{ and } \operatorname{Im} z < 0\}, \\ \alpha_+ &= \varphi_k^{-1}(\gamma_s) = \{z \in D_r \mid \operatorname{Re} z = 0 \text{ and } \operatorname{Im} z > 0\}. \end{aligned}$$

Let us verify that  $v_k$  is strictly monotone on the arc

$$\alpha_0 = \alpha_- \cup \{0\} \cup \alpha_+ = u_k^{-1}(u_k(0)) = \{z \in D_r \mid \operatorname{Re} z = 0\}.$$

Since  $v_k(0) = v(0) = V(p) = 0$  according to our initial assumptions and 0 is the boundary point both for  $\alpha_-$  and  $\alpha_+$ , then  $v_k$  is of fixed sign on each of these two arcs.

So we have two possibilities:

- either  $v_k$  has the same sign on  $\alpha_-$  and  $\alpha_+$ , then  $v_k|_{\alpha_0}$  has a local extremum in 0;
- or  $v_k$  has different signs on  $\alpha_-$  and  $\alpha_+$ , then  $v_k$  is strictly monotone on  $\alpha_0$ .

Suppose that  $v_k$  has the same sign on  $\alpha_-$  and  $\alpha_+$ .

We will assume that  $v_k$  is negative both on  $\alpha_-$  and  $\alpha_+$ . The case when  $v_k$  is positive on  $\alpha_-$  and  $\alpha_+$  is considered similarly.

Denote  $z_1 = 0 - i/2 \in \alpha_-$ ,  $z_2 = 0 + i/2 \in \alpha_+$ . Let

$$\hat{\varepsilon} = \frac{1}{2} \min(|v_k(z_1)|, |v_k(z_2)|) > 0.$$

From the continuity of  $v_k$  it follows that there exists  $\hat{\delta} > 0$  to comply with the following implications

$$(1) \quad \begin{aligned} |z - z_1| < \hat{\delta} &\Rightarrow |v_k(z) - v_k(z_1)| < \hat{\varepsilon}, \\ |z - z_2| < \hat{\delta} &\Rightarrow |v_k(z) - v_k(z_2)| < \hat{\varepsilon}, \\ |z| = |z - 0| < \hat{\delta} &\Rightarrow |v_k(z) - v_k(0)| = |v_k(z)| < \hat{\varepsilon}. \end{aligned}$$



Let  $c \in (0, \hat{\delta})$ . Then the point  $w_0 = c + i0$  is situated on the curve  $\alpha_c$  between points  $w_1 = c - i/2$  and  $w_2 = c + i/2$ . It follows from (1) that  $v_k(w_1) < -\hat{\varepsilon}$ ,  $v_k(w_2) < -\hat{\varepsilon}$  and  $v_k(w_0) \in (-\hat{\varepsilon}, 0)$ . But these three correlations can not hold true simultaneously since  $v_k$  is strictly monotone on  $\alpha_c$  as we already know.

The contradiction obtained shows us that  $v_k$  has different signs on  $\alpha_-$  and  $\alpha_+$ . So,  $v_k$  is strictly monotone on  $\alpha_0$ .

Now, repeating argument from case 1 we find such  $\varepsilon_k > 0$  and  $\delta_k > 0$  that the set

$$\hat{W}_k = [0, \delta_k) \times (-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2})$$

meets the relations

$$(2) \quad \begin{aligned} F \circ T \circ \varphi_k(\hat{W}_k) &\supseteq [0, \delta_k) \times (-\varepsilon_k, \varepsilon_k), & \text{if } k = 2m, \\ F \circ T \circ \varphi_k(\hat{W}_k) &\supseteq (-\delta_k, 0] \times (-\varepsilon_k, \varepsilon_k), & \text{if } k = 2m + 1. \end{aligned}$$

Let us denote  $W_k = \varphi_k(\hat{W}_k)$ ,

$$W = \bigcup_{k=0}^{2n-1} W_k, \quad \delta = \min_{k=0, \dots, 2n-1} \delta_k > 0, \quad \varepsilon = \min_{k=0, \dots, 2n-1} \varepsilon_k > 0.$$

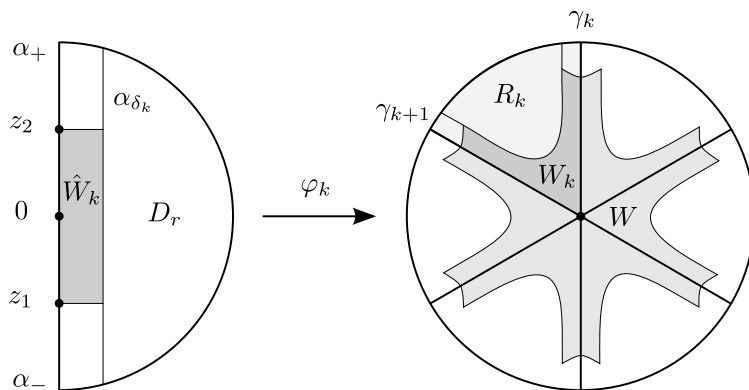


FIGURE 14

It is easy to show that  $W$  is an open neighbourhood of 0 in  $D$ . From (2) and from our initial assumptions it follows that

$$F(Q) \supseteq F(N) \supseteq F \circ T(W) \supseteq (-\delta, \delta) \times (-\varepsilon, \varepsilon).$$

So, we have proved that for an arbitrary point  $p \in M^2$  and its open neighbourhood  $Q$  a set  $F(Q)$  contains a neighbourhood of  $F(p)$ . Hence the mapping  $F : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  is open.

At the same time we have shown that an arbitrary  $p \in M^2$  is an isolated point of its level set  $F^{-1}(F(p))$ . It is easy to see now that any level set  $F^{-1}(F(p))$  can not contain a nondegenerate continuum.

Consequently, the map  $F$  is interior. □

*Proof of Theorem 1. Necessity.* Let  $U, V : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be conjugate pseudoharmonic functions on  $M^2$  (see Definitions 3 and 4).

Obviously,  $V$  is continuous on  $M^2$ . Suppose that contrary to the statement of Theorem there exists such  $c \in \mathbb{R}$  that  $V$  is not open on the level set  $\Gamma_c = U^{-1}(c) \subset M^2$ , i. e. a map  $V_c = V|_{\Gamma_c} : \Gamma_c \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is not open on  $\Gamma_c$  in the topology induced from  $M^2$ .

Let us verify that  $V_c$  has a local extremum in some  $p \in \Gamma_c$ .

Note that the space  $\Gamma_c$  is locally arcwise connected, i. e. for every point  $a \in \Gamma_c$  and its open neighbourhood  $Q$  there exists a neighbourhood  $\hat{Q} \subseteq Q$  of  $a$  such that every two points  $b_1, b_2 \in \hat{Q}$  can be connected by a continuous curve in  $Q$ . This is a straightforward corollary of the remark subsequent to Definition 1.

Since the map  $V_c$  is not open by our supposition, then there exists an open subset  $O$  of  $\Gamma_c$  such that its image  $R = V_c(O)$  is not open in  $\mathbb{R}$ . Therefore there is a point  $d \in R \setminus \text{Int } R$ . Fix  $p \in V_c^{-1}(d) \cap O$ .

Let us show that  $p$  is a point of local extremum of  $V_c$ . Fix a neighbourhood  $\hat{O} \subseteq O$  of  $p$  such that every two points  $b_1, b_2 \in \hat{O}$  can be connected by a continuous curve  $\beta_{b_1, b_2} : I \rightarrow \Gamma_c$  which meets relations  $\beta(0) = b_1, \beta(1) = b_2$  and  $\beta(I) \subseteq O$ . It is clear that an image of a path-connected set under a continuous mapping is

path-connected, therefore following inclusions are valid

$$\begin{aligned} (V_c(b_1), V_c(b_2)) &\subset V_c(I) \quad \text{if } V_c(b_1) < V_c(b_2), \\ (V_c(b_2), V_c(b_1)) &\subset V_c(I) \quad \text{if } V_c(b_2) > V_c(b_1). \end{aligned}$$

Evidently,  $p$  is not an interior point of  $V_c(\hat{O})$  since it is not the interior point of  $V_c(O)$  by construction and  $V_c(\hat{O}) \subseteq V_c(O)$ . Then there does not exist a pair of points  $b_1, b_2 \in \hat{O}$  such that

$$V_c(b_1) < V_c(p) < V_c(b_2)$$

and either  $V(b) \leq V(p)$  for all  $b \in \hat{O}$  or  $V(b) \geq V(p)$  for all  $b \in \hat{O}$ , i. e.  $p$  is the point of local extremum of  $V_c$ .

Now, since  $V$  is the conjugate pseudo-harmonic function of  $U$  in the point  $p$  (see Definition 3), we can take by definition a neighbourhood  $N$  of  $p$  in  $M^2$  and a homeomorphism  $T : D \rightarrow N$  such that a map  $f : D \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$

$$f(z) = u(z) + iv(z), \quad z \in D$$

is holomorphic on  $D$ . Here

$$u = U \circ T : D \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$$

and

$$v = V \circ T : D \rightarrow \mathbb{R}.$$

It is clear that without loss of generality we can choose  $N$  so small that either  $V(b) = V_c(b) \leq V_c(p) = V(p)$  for every  $b \in N \cap \Gamma_c$  or  $V(b) \geq V(p)$  for all  $b \in N \cap \Gamma_c$ .

Let for definiteness  $p$  is the local maximum of  $V_c$  and

$$V(b) \leq V(p)$$

for every  $b \in N \cap \Gamma_c$ . The case when  $p$  is the local minimum of  $V_c$  is considered similarly.

On one hand it follows from what we said above that

$$(\{U(p)\} \times (V(p), +\infty)) \cap f(D) = \emptyset$$

since  $u^{-1}(U(p)) = T^{-1}(\Gamma_c \cap N)$  and  $v(z) = V(T(z)) \leq V(p)$  for all  $z \in T^{-1}(\Gamma_c \cap N)$  by construction. Therefore a point

$$U(p) + iV(p) = f(T^{-1}(p))$$

is not the interior point of a set  $f(D)$ .

On the other hand it is known that the holomorphic map  $f$  is open, so the point  $f(T^{-1}(p))$  must be the interior point of the domain  $f(D)$ .

The contradiction obtained shows that our initial assumption is false and  $V$  is open on level sets of  $U$ .

*Sufficiency.* Let  $U$  be a pseudo-harmonic function on  $M^2$  and a continuous function  $V : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be open on level sets of  $U$ .

From Lemma 1 it follows that the mapping  $F : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ ,  $F(p) = U(p) + iV(p)$ ,  $p \in M^2$  is interior.

Let  $p \in M^2$  and  $N$  is a simple neighbourhood of  $p$  in  $M^2$ . Then there exists a homeomorphism  $T : D \rightarrow N$ . It is straightforward that for the open set  $N$  a mapping  $F_N = F|_N : N \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  is interior and its composition  $F_N \circ T = F \circ T : D \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  with the homeomorphism  $T$  is also an interior mapping.

Now from Stoilov theorem it follows that there exists a complex structure on  $D$  such that the mapping  $F \circ T$  is holomorphic in this complex structure (see [3]). But from the uniformization theorem (see [4]) it follows that a simple-connected domain has a unique complex structure. So the mapping  $F \circ T$  is holomorphic on  $D$  in the standard complex structure. Thus the functions

$$u = \operatorname{Re}(F \circ T) = U \circ T$$

and

$$v = \operatorname{Im}(F \circ T) = V \circ T$$

are conjugate harmonic functions on  $D$ . Consequently,  $V$  is a conjugate pseudo-harmonic function of  $U$  in the point  $p$ .

From arbitrariness in the choice of  $p \in M^2$  it follows that  $V$  is a conjugate pseudo-harmonic function of  $U$  on  $M^2$ .  $\square$

**Corollary 1.** *Let  $U, V : M^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be conjugate pseudoharmonic functions on  $M^2$ .*

*Then there exists a complex structure on  $M^2$  with respect to which  $U$  and  $V$  are conjugate harmonic functions on  $M^2$ .*

*Proof.* This statement follows from Theorem 1, Lemma 1 and the Stoilov theorem which says that there exists a complex structure on  $M^2$  such that the interior mapping  $F(p) = U(p) + iV(p)$ ,  $p \in M^2$  is holomorphic in this complex structure (see [3]).  $\square$

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