Moufang Quasigroups

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ABSTRACT

Each of the Moufang identities in a quasigroup implies that the quasigroup is a loop.

§**1. Introduction.** A *quasigroup* is a system $(G, \cdot)$ such that G is a non-empty set and $\cdot$ is a binary function on G satisfying $\forall xz \exists! y(xy = z)$ and $\forall yz \exists! x(xy = z)$. A *loop* is a quasigroup which has an identity element, 1, satisfying $\forall x(x1 = 1x = x)$. Quasigroups are studied not only in algebra, but also in combinatorics, where they are identified with Latin squares, and in projective geometry, where they are identified with 3-webs. For details and references to earlier literature, see the books [1, 2].

By results of Bol and Bruck (see [1], p. 115), the following four identities:

$$M1: \ \forall xyz\,[\,(x(yz))x = (xy)(zx)\,] \qquad M2: \ \forall xyz\,[\,(xz)(yx) = x((zy)x)\,]$$

$$N1: \ \forall xyz\,[\,((xy)z)y = x(y(zy))\,] \qquad N2: \ \forall xyz\,[\,((yz)y)x = y(z(yx))\,]$$

are equivalent in loops; a loop satisfying these identities is called a *Moufang loop*. The purpose of this note is to show that every quasigroup satisfying any one of these identities is a loop (Theorems 2.2, 2.3), so that in fact these are equivalent in quasigroups. Observe that equations $M1, M2$ are mirrors of each other; that is, $M2$ is obtained by writing $M1$ backwards. Likewise, $N1, N2$ are mirrors of each other. Actually, [1] does not mention $M2$ explicitly, and just proves that $M1, N1, N2$ are equivalent, but any proof of $M1 \Leftrightarrow N1$ has a mirror which proves that $M2 \Leftrightarrow N2$.

Of course, a loop identity need not always imply its mirror. For example, the right and left Bol identities:

$$RBOL: \ \forall xyz\,[\,((xy)z)y = x((yz)y)\,] \qquad LBOL: \ \forall xyz\,[\,(y(zy))x = y(z(yx))\,]$$

are mirrors of each other, but, by an example of Zassenhaus (see [2], p. 46), there are 8-element loops satisfying one of these but not the other. In a quasigroup, equation $RBOL$ implies that there is a *left* identity element ([3] and Theorem 2.1); so, taking the mirror, $LBOL$ implies that there is a right identity, so that every quasigroup satisfying both $RBOL$ and $LBOL$ is a loop. However, by Robinson [6], there are non-loop quasigroups $(G, \circ)$ satisfying $RBOL$ but not $LBOL$; for example, let G be any field of characteristic other than 2, and let $x \circ y = y - x$.

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Our investigations have been aided by the automated deduction tool, OTTER, developed by McCune [5]. OTTER can prove theorems in full first-order logic, but it has been particularly useful in equational reasoning, where it can investigate substitutions much faster than a person can. Its proofs are long sequences of equations, and at first sight seem a bit inscrutable. However, as we showed in [4], by examining these proofs and trying different formulations of the input, one can often produce proofs which a person can easily verify by hand; we have done this in obtaining our proofs in §2.

§**2. Proofs.** We provide proofs for the three implications mentioned in §1. The first two are quite short. The first was given by Choudhury [3] in 1948, and we suspect that the second was also noticed before. We have not succeeded in finding a short proof of the third.

2.1. Theorem.([3]) Every quasigroup satisfying $RBOL$ has a left identity.

Proof. Fix any element a; then fix an e such that $ea = a$. Applying $RBOL$, we have $(az)a = ((ea)z)a = e((az)a)$ for every z. Now, for every y in a quasigroup, there is a z such that $(az)a = y$, so $y = ey$ for every y. □

2.2. Theorem. Every quasigroup satisfying either $M1$ or $M2$ has a two-sided identity.

Proof. We assume $M1$; the proof from $M2$ is the mirror of this one. Fix any element a; then fix an e such that $ae = a$. Applying $M1$, we have $(xa)x = (x(ae))x = (xa)(ex)$, and hence $x = ex$, for every x. So, e is a left identity. Now, fix b such that $be = e$. Applying $M1$ again, we have $(yb)e = (e(yb))e = (ey)(be) = ye$, and hence $yb = y$ for every y. So, b is a right identity, and $b = eb = e$. □

2.3. Theorem. Every quasigroup satisfying either $N1$ or $N2$ has a two-sided identity.

Proof. We assume $N1$. For each x, define $j(x)$ and $k(x)$ by: $x \cdot j(x) = k(x) \cdot x = x$. In a *loop*, we would have $j(x) = k(x) = 1$ for all x.

First, we show that $j(x) = k(x)$ for all x. To see this, fix a, let $b = j(a)$ and $c = k(a)$, so $ab = ca = a$, and we want to show $c = b$. Now fix d such that $da = b$. Applying $N1$, we have:

$$(ad)a = ((ca)d)a = c(a(da)) = c(ab) = ca = a \qquad (\alpha)$$

but we can also cancel the a to get:

$$ad = c \qquad (\beta)$$

Applying $N1$, (α), and (β):

$$ad = ((ad)a)d = a(d(ad)) = a(dc)$$

and we cancel to get:

$$dc = d \qquad (\gamma)$$

Applying $N1$, (β), and (γ):

$$((xd)a)d = x(d(ad)) = x(dc) = xd$$

Since $\forall y \exists x(xd = y)$, we have, for every y:

$$(ya)d = y \tag{δ}$$

Applying $N1$, (δ), and the definition of c:

$$(aa)c = [((aa)c)a] \cdot d = [a(a(ca))] \cdot d = (a(aa))d \tag{ϵ}$$

Applying $N1$, (δ) (with $y = a$), and the definition of d:

$$(a(aa))d = (((aa)\,d)\,(aa))\,d = (aa)\,(d\,((aa)\,d)) = (aa)(da) = (aa)b \tag{ζ}$$

By (ϵ) and (ζ), we have $(aa)c = (aa)b$, so $c = b$, as claimed.

So, we have, for all x:

$$x \cdot j(x) = j(x) \cdot x = x \tag{1}$$

We now show:

$$j(x) \cdot j(x) = j(x) \tag{2}$$

To see this, apply $N1$ and (1) to get

$$x = ((j(j(x)) \cdot j(x)) \cdot x) \cdot j(x) = j(j(x)) \cdot (j(x) \cdot (x \cdot j(x))) = j(j(x)) \cdot x$$

Then $j(j(x)) = j(x)$ follows from $j(j(x)) \cdot x = x = j(x) \cdot x$, and then $j(x) \cdot j(x) = j(x)$ follows, since $j(j(x)) \cdot j(x) = j(x)$ by (1).

Next, we show:

$$(x \cdot j(y)) \cdot j(y) = x \tag{3}$$

To see this, apply $N1$ and (2):

$$((x \cdot j(y)) \cdot j(y)) \cdot j(y) = x \cdot (j(y) \cdot (j(y) \cdot j(y))) = x \cdot j(y)$$

and now cancel the $j(y)$.

Finally, we show that $j(x)$ is a constant, which must then be a two-sided identity by (1). To see this, we fix elements a, b, and show $j(a) = j(b)$. Let $p = j(a)j(b)$. Note that $pj(b) = j(a)$ by (3). Applying $N1$ and (2),

$$p = j(a) \cdot j(b) = (j(a) \cdot j(a)) \cdot j(b) = ((p \cdot j(b)) \cdot j(a)) \cdot j(b) = p \cdot (j(b) \cdot (j(a) \cdot j(b))) = p \cdot (j(b) \cdot p)$$

Using this with $N1$ and (3), we have for any x:

$$((x \cdot p) \cdot j(b)) \cdot p = x \cdot (p \cdot (j(b) \cdot p)) = x \cdot p = ((x \cdot j(b)) \cdot j(b)) \cdot p$$

Cancelling, $j(b) = p = j(a)j(b)$. Since also $j(b) = j(b)j(b)$ by (2), we have $j(a) = j(b)$. □

References

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