

---

## ON THE SUBPLANES OF THE HUGHES PLANES OF ODD SQUARE PRIME ORDER

ASSIA ROUSSEVA

In this paper we give a construction of a family of Baer subplanes of the Hughes plane  $H$  of odd square prime order  $q^2$ ,  $q \geq 5$ , which are not isomorphic to its well-known desarguesian Baer subplane  $H_0$  [1, 5.4].

**Keywords:** finite geometries, Hughes planes, Baer subplanes

**1991/95 Math. Subject Classification:** 51E15

### 1. DEFINITION AND MAIN PROPERTIES OF THE HUGHES PLANES

We recall the well-known properties of the Hughes plane  $H$  over an arbitrary regular nearfield  $R$  of odd square prime power order  $q^2$  [1]:

a.  $H$  is a projective plane of odd square prime power order  $q^2$ , and it is of Lenz-Barlotti type I.1 [1, 5.4].

b. Let  $P := \{P = (x_1, x_2, x_3)R, x_i \in Z(R), i = 1, 2, 3\}$ ;  $T := \{\text{all the rest points}\}$ ;  $L(1) := \{L_1^i, i = 0, 1, 2, \dots, r-1\}$ ;  $L(t) := \{L_t^i, t \in R \setminus Z(R), i = 0, 1, 2, \dots, r-1\}$ .

Then the points in the set  $P$  together with the lines joining them (that are the lines of the set  $L(1)$ ) form a desarguesian Baer subplane  $H_0$  of  $H$ .

c. The projective group of  $H_0$  is faithfully induced by the collineation group  $\Gamma = \text{GL}_3(q)$  ( $\text{GL}_3(q)$  is the group of nonsingular  $(3,3)$ -matrices with elements in

$Z(R) = \text{GF}(q)$ ). Every central collineation of  $H_0$  extends to a central collineation of  $H$  in  $\Gamma$ .

d. The full collineation group  $G$  of  $H$  has two points —  $P$  and  $T$ , two lines —  $L(1)$  and  $L(t)$ , and two flag orbits. Also,  $G$  is a semidirect product  $\Gamma \cdot \text{Aut } R$ ; this product is direct iff  $q$  is prime [1, 5.4].

Further we consider the case when  $q$  is an odd prime  $\geq 5$  and we use the notation  $F = \text{GF}(q)$ . Let  $f = z^2 - \alpha$  be an irreducible polynomial over  $F$ . Then one can describe the quadratic extension  $\Phi = \text{GF}(q^2)$  of  $F$  as follows:  $\Phi = \{az + b, a, b \in F, z \text{ — a root of } f\}$ .

Let  $\theta$  be a primitive element of  $\Phi$ . Then  $\Phi^* = \Phi \setminus \{0\} = \Phi_S \cup \Phi_N$ , where  $\Phi_S$  ( $\Phi_N$ ) is the set of squares (nonsquares) in  $\Phi$ , i.e.  $\Phi_S = \{u : u \in \Phi^*, u = \theta^{2k}, k \in \mathbb{N}\}$  and  $\Phi_N = \{u : u \in \Phi^*, u = \theta^{2l+1}, l \in \mathbb{N}\}$ .

Let  $K$  be the regular nearfield of order  $q^2$  with the same elements as  $\Phi$ , in which the addition is the same as in  $\Phi$ , while the multiplication, denoted by  $\circ$ , is defined as follows:  $w \circ u = uw$  if  $u \in \Phi_S$  and  $w \circ u = uw^q$  if  $u \in \Phi_N$  [2].

Since  $\alpha^q = \alpha$  for each  $\alpha \in F$ , we have  $\alpha \circ u = \alpha u$  when  $\alpha \in F$  and  $u \in K$ . It is known that the centre  $Z(K)$  is just the field  $F$ .

Let  $H = H(K)$  be the Hughes plane over  $K$ . The points of  $H$  are all ordered triples  $P = (x_1, x_2, x_3) = (x_1, x_2, x_3) \circ k = (x_1 \circ k, x_2 \circ k, x_3 \circ k)$ ,  $k \in K^* = K \setminus (0)$ ,  $x_i \in K$ ,  $i = 1, 2, 3$ , and  $(x_1, x_2, x_3) \neq (0, 0, 0)$ .

The theorem of Singer [3] gives us the existence of a transformation

$$(x_1, x_2, x_3) \mapsto \left( \sum_{j=1}^3 a_{1j} x_j, \sum_{j=1}^3 a_{2j} x_j, \sum_{j=1}^3 a_{3j} x_j \right), \quad a_{ij} \in F,$$

such that the mapping  $(x_1, x_2, x_3) = P \mapsto AP = (a_{11}x_1, \dots, a_{33}x_3)$  is a collineation  $\gamma$  of order  $r = q^2 + q + 1$  of the desarguesian plane  $\pi(q)$  of order  $q$  over the field  $F$ .

The basic lines  $L$  of  $H$  are defined by the equations

$$L_t : x_1 + t \circ x_2 + x_3 = 0, \quad t \in \{\Phi \setminus F\} \cup \{1\}. \quad (1)$$

The point  $P = (x_1, x_2, x_3) \circ k$  is incident with the line  $L_t$  iff the triple  $(x_1, x_2, x_3)$  is a solution of (1). The remaining lines of  $H$  are  $L_t^{\gamma^i}$ ,  $i = 0, 1, 2, \dots, r-1$ , and  $A^i P$  is incident with  $L_t^{\gamma^i}$ ,  $i = 0, 1, 2, \dots, r-1$ , iff  $P$  is incident with  $L_t$  [2].

## 2. AUTOMORPHISMS OF THE NEARFIELD $K = K(q^2)$

It is quite evident that the automorphism group  $\text{Aut } K$  is isomorphic to  $\mathbb{Z}_2$ . Indeed, on the one hand,  $|\text{Aut } K| \leq 2$  [1, 5.2.2]. On the other hand, it is easy to check that the mapping  $\sigma : K \rightarrow K$ , defined by the correspondance  $az + b \mapsto (az + b)^\sigma = -az + b$ , is a nontrivial automorphism of  $K$ , usually called conjugation in  $K$ .

### 3. THE MAIN RESULT

Let  $\chi = \chi(S, L)$  be an arbitrary homology of order two of  $\mathbf{H}$  with centre  $S$  and axis  $L$  (since  $o(\chi) = 2$  and  $q$  is odd,  $S$  is not incident with  $L$ ). Actually,  $S \in P$  and  $L \in L(1)$ .

From 1.c, d and 2 it follows that there exists a collineation  $\psi = \sigma\chi$ , where  $\sigma \in \text{Aut } K$ ,  $\sigma \neq \text{id}$ . That gives us a reason to investigate the geometry of the  $\psi$ -invariant points and lines of  $\mathbf{H}$ . The main result in this paper is the following statement:

**Theorem.** *The  $\psi$ -invariant points and lines of  $\mathbf{H}$  form a Baer subplane  $\pi = \pi(S, L)$  of order  $q$  of  $\mathbf{H}$ , non-isomorphic to the subplane  $\mathbf{H}_0$ .*

Since the group  $\text{Aut } K$  is flag-transitive, it is sufficient to prove the theorem in the case when the homology  $\chi$  has as an axis the line  $L_1 : x_1 + x_2 + x_3 = 0$  and as a centre an arbitrary point  $S \in P$  which is not incident with  $L_1$ .

Let  $\chi^*$  be an arbitrary homology of  $\mathbf{H}$  with centre  $S = (a, b, c)$  ( $a, b, c \in F$ ) and axis  $L_1$ . Then the action of  $\chi^*$  over the points of  $\mathbf{H}$  can be presented as follows:

$$\chi^* : \bar{x}' \circ k^* = \mathbf{A}^* \bar{x}, \quad k^* \in K \setminus \{0\},$$

where the column vector  $\bar{x} = (x_1, x_2, x_3)^t$  is an arbitrary point of  $\mathbf{H}$ ,  $\bar{x}' = (x'_1, x'_2, x'_3)^t$  is its image under  $\chi^*$ , and the matrix  $\mathbf{A}^* \in \text{GL}_3(q)$  has the form

$$\mathbf{A}^* = \begin{pmatrix} a + \rho & a & a \\ b & b + \rho & b \\ c & c & c + \rho \end{pmatrix},$$

where  $\rho \in F$ . Let us point out that  $a + b + c \neq 0$  since  $S$  is not incident with  $L_1$ .

We denote by  $2$  the element  $1 + 1$ , where  $1$  is the unit element of the multiplication in  $F$  (and, respectively, in  $K$ ). Since the characteristic of  $F$  is odd,  $2 \neq 0$ . Then the homology  $\chi = (S, L_1)$  of order two with centre  $S = (a, b, c)$  and axis the line  $L_1$  is defined by the matrix

$$\mathbf{A} = \begin{pmatrix} 2^{q-2}(a - b - c) & a & a \\ b & 2^{q-2}(b - a - c) & b \\ c & c & 2^{q-2}(c - a - b) \end{pmatrix}.$$

If the collineation  $\psi$  fixes some quadrangle (four points, no three of which are incident with one and the same line) pointwisely, then  $\psi$  maps to itself some proper subplane of  $\mathbf{H}$ . We will show that there exist four points, no three of which are incident with one and the same line, and which are invariant with respect to  $\psi$ .

The  $\psi$ -invariant points and lines are exactly these, which the homology  $\chi$  maps onto their conjugated ones, respectively. With the line  $L_1$  are incident precisely  $q + 1$  different points of the orbit  $P$ . Obviously, these points together with the centre of  $\psi$  — the point  $S = (a, b, c)$  — are invariant with respect to the collineation  $\psi$ . If the  $\psi$ -invariant points and lines of  $\mathbf{H}$  form a Baer subplane, then every point of the supposed subplane will be incident with exactly  $q + 1$  different  $\psi$ -invariant lines. Since all basic lines  $L_t(1)$  are incident with the point  $P_1 = (-1, 0, 1)$ , one can expect that there exist  $q + 1$   $\psi$ -invariant ones among them. That is why we have

to find the number of lines  $L_t(1)$ , which are mapped under the homology of order two  $\chi = \chi(S, L_1)$  in their conjugated lines  $L_t\sigma = (L_t)^\sigma$ , respectively.

Let  $L_t \neq L_1$ ,  $L_t : x_1 + t \circ x_2 + x_3 = 0$ ,  $t \in K \setminus F$ . Since the line  $L_t$  is different from the line  $y = 0$ , an arbitrary point  $T$ , not incident with  $L_t$ ,  $T \neq P_1$ , has coordinates  $(x_1, 1, -(x_1 + t))$ ,  $x_1 \in K$ . Then  $\chi(T) = T'$ , where  $T' = (2^{q-2}(a - b - c)x_1 + a - a(x_1 + t), 2^{q-2}(b - a - c) - bt, cx_1 + c - 2^{q-2}(c - a - b)(x_1 + t))$ . Therefore  $\chi(L_t) = L'_t$ ,  $L'_t = P_1 T'$  and the element  $t' \in K \setminus F$  is uniquely determined by the equation

$$t' \circ (m + bt) = 2m + b - mt, \quad (2)$$

where  $m = 2^{q-2}(a - b + c)$ . Hence  $m \in F$  and  $m$  depends on the coordinates of the centre  $S = (a, b, c)$  only.

Now we will find the number of distinct solutions of the equation (2) when  $t' = t^\sigma$ . It is convenient to consider two cases with respect to  $b$ :  $b = 0$  and  $b \neq 0$ .

*Case 1.* Let  $b = 0$ , i.e.  $S = (a, 0, c)$ . In this case the equation (2) is of the form

$$mt' = m(2 - t). \quad (3)$$

Here  $m = 2^{q-2}(a + c)$  and since  $S$  is not incident with  $L_1$ ,  $a + c \neq 0$ , i.e.  $m \neq 0$ . Therefore  $m^{-1} \in F^*$  and (3) yields that

$$t' = 2 - t. \quad (3')$$

In general, each  $t \in K \setminus F$  is of the form  $t = dz + e$ ,  $d \in F^*$ ,  $e \in F$ . As it was mentioned above, we are looking for the solutions of (3') when  $t' = t^\sigma$ , i.e. when  $t' = -dz + e$ . Then from (3') we obtain that

$$-dz + e = -dz + 2 - e. \quad (3'')$$

Hence  $d$  is an arbitrary element of  $F^*$  and  $e = 1$ . These solutions give us exactly  $q - 1$  distinct  $L_t$ -lines ( $t = dz + 1$ ,  $d \in F^*$ ), which are mapped under the homology  $\chi$  in their conjugated ones, respectively.

*Case 2.* Let  $b \neq 0$ , i.e.  $S = (a, 1, c)$ . Now from (2) we have the following equation when  $t^\sigma = t'$ , namely

$$t^\sigma \circ (m + t) = 2m + 1 - mt. \quad (4)$$

Here  $m = 2^{q-2}(a + c - 1)$  and since  $a + 1 + c \neq 0$ ,  $m \neq -1$ . As  $t$  has the representation  $t = dz + e$ , so that  $t^\sigma = -dz + e$ ,  $d \in F^*$ ,  $e \in F$ , the relation (4) immediately gives

$$(-dz + e) \circ (dz + m + e) = -mdz + 2m - me + 1. \quad (4')$$

For the result of multiplication in the left-hand side of (4') we have two possibilities, namely,

$$(-dz + e) \circ (dz + m + e) = \begin{cases} (-dz + e)(dz + m + e) & \text{if } dz + m + e \in \Phi_S, \\ (dz + e)(dz + m + e) & \text{if } dz + m + e \in \Phi_N. \end{cases}$$

If we assume that  $dz + m + e \in \Phi_N$ , then for  $d$  and  $e$  we have from (4') that  $(m + 2e)dz + d^2z^2 + e(m + e) = -mdz + 2m + 1 - me$ . Since  $z^2 = \alpha$ , we obtain

$$(m + 2e)dz + \alpha d^2 + e(m + e) = -mdz + 2m + 1 - me. \quad (4'')$$

Hence  $e = -m$ , i.e.  $e \neq 1$ , and  $d^2\alpha = (e - 1)^2$ , i.e.  $d \neq 0$ . Therefore  $\alpha = [d^{-1}(e - 1)]^2$ , i.e.  $\alpha$  is a square in the field  $F$ , but this contradicts the choice of  $\alpha$ . Therefore, if there exists a solution of the equation (4'), then  $dz + m + e \in \Phi_S$ .

Suppose that  $dz + m + e \in \Phi_S$ . Now (4') is reduced to

$$\alpha d^2 = e^2 + 2me - 2m - 1. \quad (4''')$$

We transform the right-hand side of (4''') as follows:  $e^2 + 2me - 2m - 1 = e^2 + 2me + m^2 - m^2 - 2m - 1 = (e + m)^2 - (m + 1)^2$ , and then (4''') becomes

$$(-\alpha)d^2 + (e + m)^2 = (m + 1)^2, \quad (5)$$

where  $m \neq -1$  is a fixed element of  $F$  and  $\alpha = z^2$ .

Let  $\eta$  be a quadratic character of  $\text{GF}(q)$  ( $q$  — odd), i.e.  $\eta(c) = 1$  if  $c$  is a square in  $\text{GF}(q)$  and  $\eta(c) = -1$  if  $c$  is a nonsquare in  $\text{GF}(q)$ . Define the function  $v$  on  $\text{GF}(q)$  by  $v(b) = -1$  if  $b \in \text{GF}^*(q)$  and  $v(0) = q - 1$ . Let  $N(\alpha_1 y_1^2 + \alpha_2 y_2^2 = b)$  ( $b \in \text{GF}(q)$ ,  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2 \in \text{GF}^*(q)$ ) be the number of the solutions of the equation  $\alpha_1 y_1^2 + \alpha_2 y_2^2 = b$  in the field  $\text{GF}(q)$ . Then [4, 6.24]

$$N(\alpha_1 y_1^2 + \alpha_2 y_2^2 = b) = q + v(b)\eta(-\alpha_1\alpha_2).$$

In the case of the equation (5) in the variables  $y_1 = d$  and  $y_2 = e + m$  we have  $\alpha_1 = -\alpha$ ,  $\alpha_2 = 1$  and  $b = (m + 1)^2$ . Since  $m \neq -1$  and  $\alpha$  is a nonsquare in  $\text{GF}(q)$ ,  $v((m + 1)^2) = -1$  and  $\eta(-\alpha_1\alpha_2) = \eta(\alpha) = -1$ . Therefore  $N((-\alpha)d^2 + (e + m)^2 = (m + 1)^2) = q + 1$ .

The solution  $(0, 1 + m)$  of the equation (5) gives the line  $L_1$  and to the solution  $(0, -2m - 1) = (0, -(a + c))$  corresponds the line  $\text{SP}_1 : x_1 - (a + c)x_2 + x_3 = 0$ ,  $\text{SP}_1 \in L(1)$ .

For each of the remaining  $q - 1$  solutions  $(d, e + m)$  of the equation (5) we will prove that  $dz + (m + e) \in \Phi_S$ . Suppose that  $(d_1, e_1 + m)$  is a solution of (5) such that  $u = d_1z + (m + e_1) \in \Phi_N$ , i.e.  $u = \theta^{2l+1}$ . Then  $u \circ u = uu^q = (-\alpha)d_1^2 + (e_1 + m)^2 = (m + 1)^2$ , i.e.  $\theta^{(q+1)(2l+1)} = (m + 1)^2$ , and therefore  $\theta^{[(q^2-1)/2](2l+1)} = (m + 1)^{q-1} = 1$ . But, on the other hand,  $\theta^{[(q^2-1)/2](2l+1)} = (-1)^{2l+1} = -1$ . It turns out that  $1 = -1$ , which contradicts the oddness of the characteristic of the field  $F = \text{GF}(q)$ . Therefore every solution  $(d, e + m)$  of the equation (5) with  $d \neq 0$  gives an element  $w = dz + (m + e) \in \Phi_S$ . That means there exist exactly  $q - 1$  distinct basic lines  $L_t$  ( $\neq L_1$ ) invariant with respect to the collineation  $\psi$ .

Now it is easy to find  $\psi$ -invariant points, no three of which are incident with one and the same line. Let  $P_i \in P$ ,  $i = 1, 2, 3$ , be three different points which are incident with the axis  $L_1$  of the homology of order two  $\chi = \chi(S, L_1)$  and differ from the point  $(-1, 0, 1)$ . Then the points  $S, P_1, P_2, T = \text{SP}_3 \cap L_t$  have the desired property,  $L_t$  is an arbitrary invariant with respect to the  $\psi$  basic line different from  $L_1$  and  $S = (a, b, c)$  is the centre of  $\chi$ .

Hence for any point  $S \in P$  and any line  $L \in L(1)$ ,  $S$  non-incident with  $L$ , the points and lines of  $\mathbf{H}$  invariant with respect to the collineation  $\psi = \sigma\chi$  form a Baer subplane  $\pi = \pi(\chi)$  of  $\mathbf{H}$  of order  $q$  ( $\chi$  is the homology of order two with centre  $S$  and axis  $L$ ,  $\sigma \in \text{Aut } K$ ,  $\sigma \neq \text{id}$ ). It is clear that this subplane  $\pi = \pi(\chi)$  is not isomorphic to the well-known Baer subplane  $\mathbf{H}_0$  of  $\mathbf{H}$  with respect to the group

Aut  $\mathbf{H}$ . Otherwise there exists an element  $\phi \in \text{Aut } \mathbf{H}$  such that  $\phi(P_0) = T_0$ , where  $P_0$  and  $T_0$  are arbitrary points from the orbits  $P$  and  $T$ , respectively. Hence Aut  $\mathbf{H}$  acts transitively over the set of all points of  $\mathbf{H}$ , which is inadmissible in any Hughes plane.

It is naturally to ask whether the subplanes of the kind  $\pi = \pi(\chi)$  are isomorphic to each other with respect to the automorphism group of the plane  $\mathbf{H}$ . We claim that the answer of this question is positive.

Let  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  be arbitrary points of  $P$  and  $L^1, L^2$  be lines of  $L(1)$ ,  $S_i$  be non-incident with  $L^i$  ( $i = 1, 2$ ). Denote by  $\chi_i$  the homology of order two with centre  $S_i$  and axis  $L^i$  ( $i = 1, 2$ ). Let  $\pi_i = \pi_i(\chi_i)$  be the subplane generated by the collineation  $\psi_i = \sigma\chi_i$  ( $i = 1, 2$ ). If there exists an element  $\phi \in \text{Aut } \mathbf{H}$  such that  $\phi(S_1) = S_2$  and  $\phi(L^1) = L^2$ , then  $\phi(\pi_1) = \pi_2$ .

Due to the fact that the group Aut  $\mathbf{H}$  is flag-transitive, it is sufficient to consider only the case when the axis of  $\chi_1$  and  $\chi_2$  is the line  $L_1 : x_1 + x_2 + x_3 = 0$ , the centre  $S_1$  of  $\chi_1$  has coordinates  $(1, 0, 0)$ , and the centre  $S_2$  of  $\chi_2$  is an arbitrary point from the orbit  $P$  non-incident with  $L_1$ . Then  $S_2$  has coordinates  $(a, b, c)$ ,  $a, b, c \in F$  and  $a + b + c \neq 0$ .

In order to prove that the subplanes  $\pi_1 = \pi(\chi_1)$  and  $\pi_2 = \pi(\chi_2)$  are isomorphic, it is sufficient to show that there exists an automorphism  $\phi \in \text{Aut } \mathbf{H}$  which maps certain quadrangle of  $\pi_1$  into a quadrangle of  $\pi_2$ .

In the case when  $S_2 = (a, 0, b)$ , the points  $S_1, S_2$  and  $P_1 = (-1, 0, 1)$  are incident with the line  $x_2 = 0$ . Then the isomorphism between the subplanes  $\pi_1$  and  $\pi_2$  is realized by the elation  $\varepsilon_1 = \varepsilon_1(P_1, L_1)$  with centre  $P_1 = (-1, 0, 1)$ , axis  $L_1$  and  $\varepsilon_1(S_1) = S_2$ . It is obvious that in this case both subplanes  $\pi_1$  and  $\pi_2$  contain the lines of the form  $L_t : x_1 + t \circ x_2 + x_3 = 0$ , where  $t = dz + 1$ ,  $d \in F^*$ .

Let the points  $P_2 \neq P_3$  be in the orbit  $P$ ,  $P_2$  and  $P_3$  be incident with  $L_1$ , and suppose that  $P_2 \neq P_1$  and  $P_3 \neq P_1$ . The line  $S_1P_2$  intersects an arbitrary line  $L_{t_1} \in \pi_1$ ,  $t_1 = d_1z + 1$ ,  $d_1 \in F^*$  at a point  $T_1 \in \pi_1$ , and the line  $S_2P_2$  intersects the same line  $L_{t_1} \in \pi_2$  at a point  $T_2 \in \pi_2$ . Then the points  $S_1, P_2, P_3, T_1$  form a quadrangle in  $\pi_1$  and the points  $S_2, P_2, P_3, T_2$  — quadrangle in  $\pi_2$ . Since the point  $P_1$  is incident with all the lines  $L_t$ ,  $\varepsilon_1(L_t) = L_t$ , hence  $\varepsilon_1(S_1, P_2, P_3, T_1) = (S_2, P_2, P_3, T_2)$ , which gives us that  $\varepsilon_1(\pi_1) = \pi_2$ .

Let  $S_2 = (a, 1, c)$ . Since  $S_2$  is non-incident with  $L_1$ ,  $a + c + 1 \neq 0$  and the line  $S_1S_2$  intersects the line  $L_1$  at the point  $P_{12} = (-1 - c, 1, c)$ . Similarly, the isomorphism between the subplanes  $\pi_1$  and  $\pi_2$  is realized by the elation  $\varepsilon_2 = \varepsilon_2(P_{12}, L_1)$  with centre  $P_{12}$ , axis  $L_1$  and  $\varepsilon_2(S_1) = S_2$ . This elation is given by the matrix

$$\mathbf{B} = \begin{pmatrix} a & -1 - c & -1 - c \\ 1 & a + c + 2 & 1 \\ c & c & a + 2c + 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Actually, we have that each point  $G_1 \in \pi_1$  which is incident with the line  $S_1P_1$  is mapped under the elation  $\varepsilon_2$  into a point  $G_2 \in \pi_2$  which is incident with the line  $S_2P_1$ .

The homology of order two  $\chi_1 = \chi_1(S_1, L_1)$  with centre  $S_1 = (1, 0, 0)$  is given by the matrix

$$C = \begin{pmatrix} 2^{q-2} & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & -2^{q-2} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -2^{q-2} \end{pmatrix}.$$

The line  $S_1P_1 \in L(1)$  has an equation  $x_2 = 0$  and therefore it differs from the line  $x_3 = 0$ . Then each point  $G \neq S_1$  which is incident with the line  $S_1P_2$  has coordinates  $(dz + e, 0, 1)$ ,  $d, e \in F$ . The point  $G$  belongs to the subplane  $\pi_1$  iff  $\chi_1(G) = \sigma(G)$ . Hence the points  $G_1$  of  $\pi_1$ , incident with the line  $S_1P_1$ , have coordinates  $(dz - 1, 0, 1)$ ,  $d \in F$  (when  $d = 0$ ,  $G_1 = P_1$ ).

The homology of order two  $\chi_2 = \chi_2(S_2, L_1)$  with centre  $S_2 = (a, 1, c)$  and axis  $L_1$  is given by the matrix

$$D = \begin{pmatrix} 2^{q-2}(a - c - 1) & a & a \\ 1 & 2^{q-2}(-1 - a - c) & 1 \\ c & c & 2^{q-2}(c - a - 1) \end{pmatrix}.$$

The equation of the line  $S_2P_2 \in L(1)$  is  $x_1 - (a + c)x_2 - x_3 = 0$  and it is easy to see that the points  $G_2 \in \pi_2$ , which are incident with  $S_2P_2$ , have coordinates  $(dz + a, 1, -dz + c)$ ,  $d \in F$ .

We have  $\varepsilon(G_1) = G'$ , where the coordinates of the point  $G'$  are  $(adz - (a + c + 1), dz, cdz + (a + c + 1))$ ,  $a + c + 1 \neq 0$ . If  $d \neq 0$ , then the point  $G'$  has coordinates  $(adz - (a + c + 1), dz, cdz + (a + c + 1)) \circ (dz)^{-1}$ , that is  $G' = (-(a + c + 1)(dz)^{-1} + a, 1, (a + c + 1)(dz)^{-1} + c)$ . Since  $(dz)^{-1} = \bar{d}z$ ,  $G' = (d^* + a, 1, -d^* + c)$ , where  $d^* = -(a + c + 1)\bar{d}$ ,  $d^* \in F^*$ .

If  $d = 0$ , then  $G_1 = P_1 = G' = (-(a + c + 1), 0, (a + c + 1))$ . Hence  $G'$  is incident with  $S_2P_1$  and  $G' \in \pi_2$ .

Let  $P$  be an arbitrary point in the orbit  $P$ , let  $P$  be incident with the line  $L_1$  and  $P_1 \neq P \neq P_{12}$ . That is why the point  $P$  belongs to the subplane  $\pi_1$  as well as to the subplane  $\pi_2$ . Then the elation  $\varepsilon_2 = \varepsilon_2(P_12, L_1)$  maps the quadrangle  $(P_12, P, S_1, G_1)$  of  $\pi_1$  onto the quadrangle  $(P_12, P, S_2, G_2 = G')$  of  $\pi_2$  ( $S_1 \neq G_1 \neq P_12, S_2 \neq G_2 \neq P_12$ ).

In this way we have proved that the subplanes  $\pi_1$  and  $\pi_2$  are isomorphic with respect to the automorphism group of  $\mathbf{H}$ .

**Acknowledgements.** The author is thankful to Prof. Ch. Lozanov for his useful suggestions and attention shown to this paper.

## REFERENCES

1. Dembowski, P. *Finite Geometries*. Springer-Verlag, 1968.
2. Hall, M. *The Theory of Groups*. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1959.
3. Singer, I. A Theorem in Finite Projective Geometry and Some Applications to Number Theory. *Trans. Amer. Math. Soc.*, **43**, 1938, 377-385.

4. Lidl, R., H. Niederreiter. Finite fields. Addison — Wesley Publishing Company, Advance Book Reprogram/World Science Division Reading, 1983.

*Received March 26, 1999*

Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics  
"St. Kliment Ohridski" University of Sofia  
5 James Bourchier Blvd.  
BG-1164 Sofia, Bulgaria