

# Symmetrizations of convex sets and convergence of their iterations

Gabriele Bianchi, Richard J. Gardner e Paolo Gronchi

MathAnalysis(at)UniFiPiSi II, Pisa, November 2019



G. Bianchi, R.J. Gardner and P. Gronchi, *Symmetrizations in Geometry*, Adv. Math. 2017

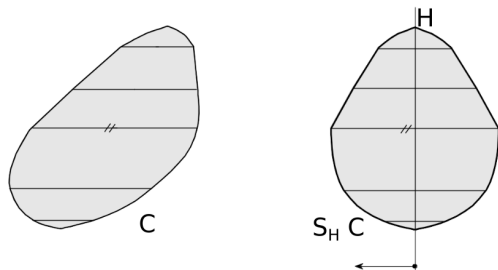


—————, *Convergence of Symmetrization Processes*, arXiv 2019

# Let us begin with some examples: Steiner

Let  $H$  be an hyperplane

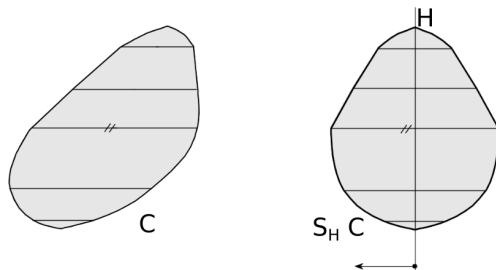
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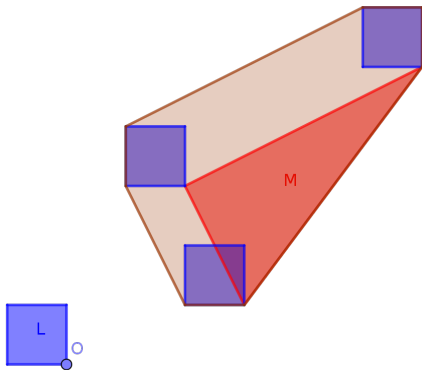


- ▶ does not change volume
- ▶ in general, it decreases surface area

# Minkowski symmetrization: preliminaries

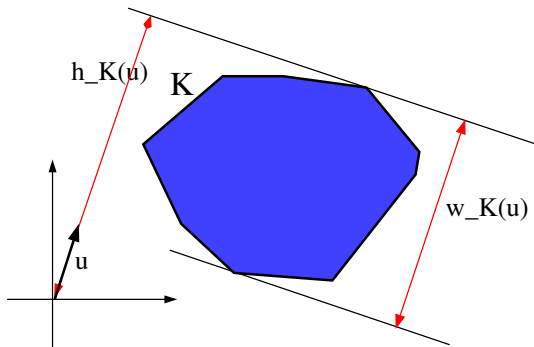
Minkowski sum of  $L$  and  $M$

$$\begin{aligned}L + M &= \{x + y : x \in L, y \in M\} \\ &= \bigcup_{y \in M} (L + y)\end{aligned}$$



# Minkowski symmetrization: preliminaries

Support function  $h_K(u)$  and width  $w_K(u)$



$$\text{Mean width} = \int_{S^{n-1}} w_K(u) du$$

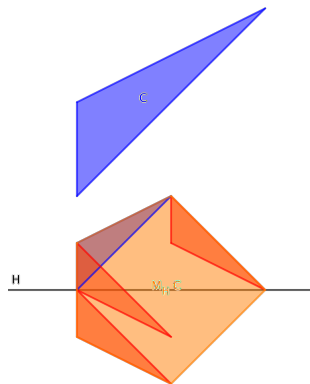
# Minkowski symmetrization

Let  $H$  be a subspace of dimension  $i$ ,  
 $1 \leq i \leq n - 1$ .

**Minkowski symmetry** with respect to  $H$  of  
convex body  $C$ :

$$M_H C = \frac{1}{2}C + \frac{1}{2}R_H C$$

where  $R_H$  denotes reflection with respect to  $H$ .



- ▶ What do I mean by  $R_H$ ? if  $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$  and  $x = h + h' \in H \times H^\perp$  then  $R_H x = h - h'$ .

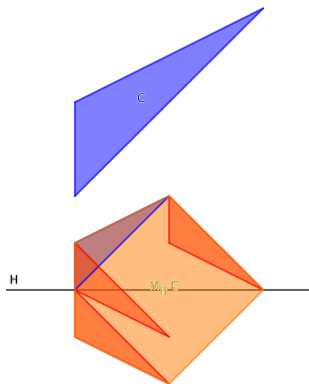
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- ▶  $M_H$  is linear:  $M_H(K + L) = M_H K + M_H L$
- ▶  $M_H$  does not change mean width
- ▶ in general,  $M_H$  increases surface area and volume



# Iterating the symmetrizations in order to converge to a ball

let  $\diamond_H$  denote Steiner or Minkowski symmetrization

It is known that there are sequences  $(H_m)$  of hyperplanes such that, for any choice of the convex body  $C$ , as  $m \rightarrow \infty$

$$(\diamond_{H_m} \diamond_{H_{m-1}} \cdots \diamond_{H_1} C) \rightarrow \text{ball}.$$

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- ▶ Ingredient of a proof of the isoperimetric inequality in the class of convex bodies

# plan of the talk

In this research we have:

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- ▶ studied their most meaningful properties and the relations existing among them;
- ▶ characterized Steiner and Minkowski symmetrizations on the basis of some of these properties;
- ▶ applied these ideas to the study of the convergence to a ball of iterations of symmetrizations.

## Definition of $i$ -symmetrization

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Any map  $\diamond_H : \mathcal{E} \rightarrow \mathcal{E}_H$

where

- ▶  $\mathcal{E} = \{\text{convex bodies}\}$  or  $\mathcal{E} = \{\text{compact sets}\}$ ,
- ▶  $\mathcal{E}_H =$   
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some of the properties which appear to be relevant:

- ▶ **monotonicity** (wrt inclusion):  $K_1 \subset K_2 \implies \diamond K_1 \subset \diamond K_2$
- ▶  **$\mathcal{F}$ -preserving** ( $\mathcal{F}$  is a functional):  $\mathcal{F}(K) = \mathcal{F}(\diamond K)$
- ▶ **invariance on  $H$ -symmetric sets**:  $\diamond K = K$  for every  $H$ -symmetric  $K$
- ▶ **invariance on  $H$ -symmetric cylinders**
- ▶ **invariance wrt translations orthogonal to  $H$  of  $H$ -symmetric sets**:  $\diamond(K + x) = K$  for every  $H$ -symmetric set  $K$  and  $x \in H^\perp$

**An unified definition of Steiner and Minkowski symmetrization  
which shows their duality**

# an unified dual definition of Steiner e Minkowski symm.

## Theorem

For every  $i$  and  $K \in \{\text{convex bodies}\}$  we have

$$F_H K = \bigcup_{y \in H^\perp} (K + y) \cap R_H(K + y)$$

and

$$M_H K = \bigcap_{y \in H^\perp} \text{conv} \left( (K + y) \cup R_H(K + y) \right)$$

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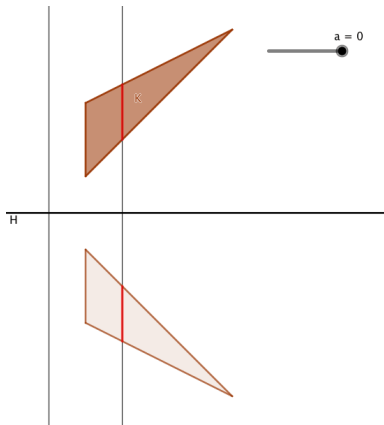
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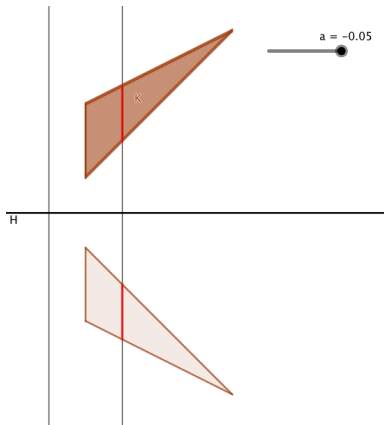
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- ▶ in the next slides we visualize the theorem and give an idea of its proof for  $i = n - 1$



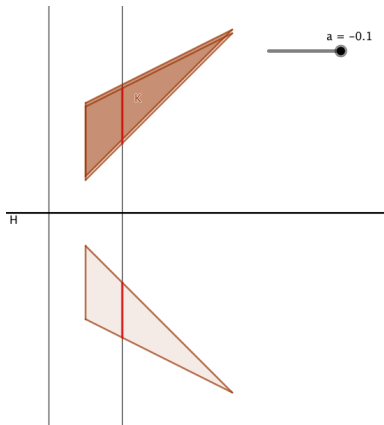
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The intersection of the two red segments has length equal to that of the corresponding chord for one value of  $y$  and less than that for all other values



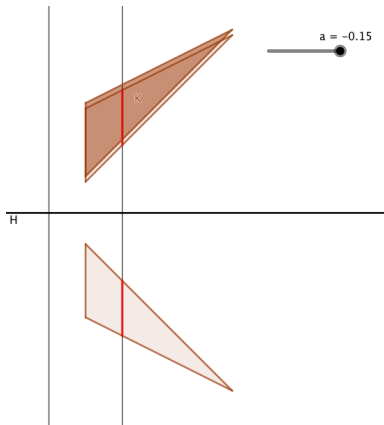
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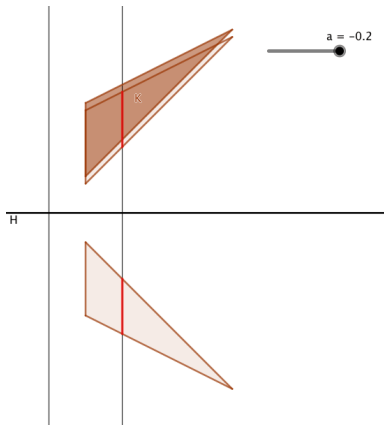
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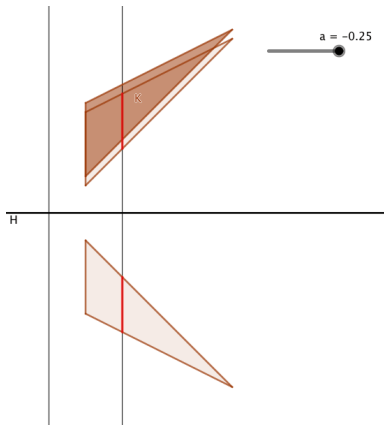
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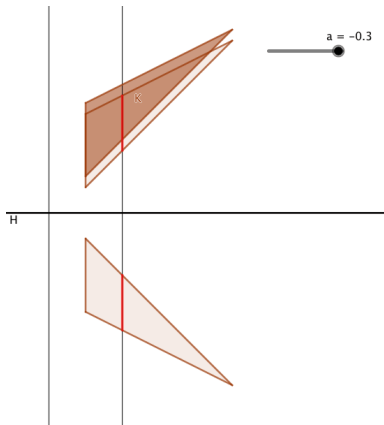
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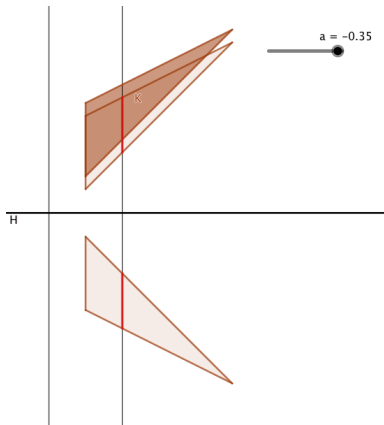
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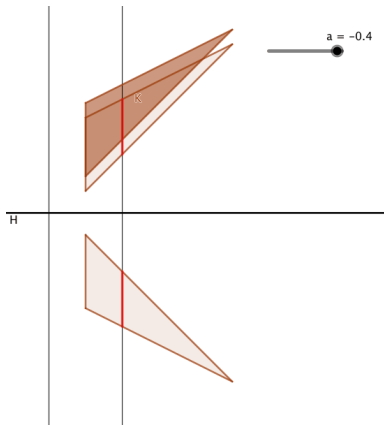
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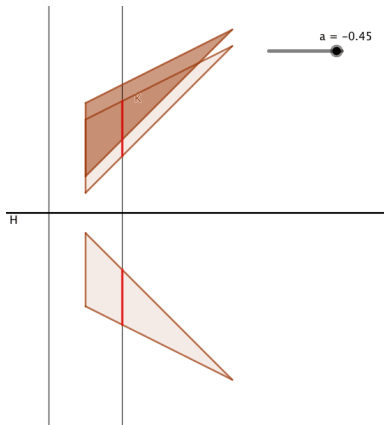
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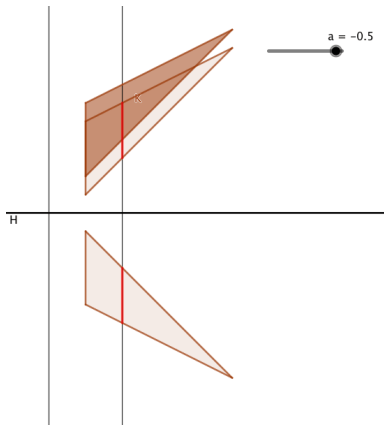
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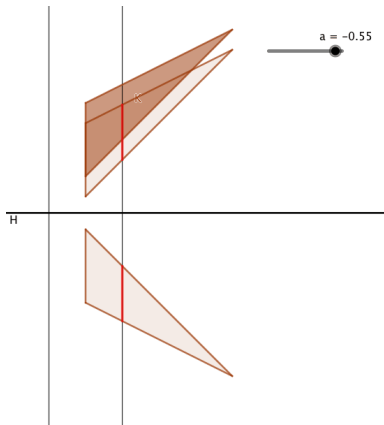
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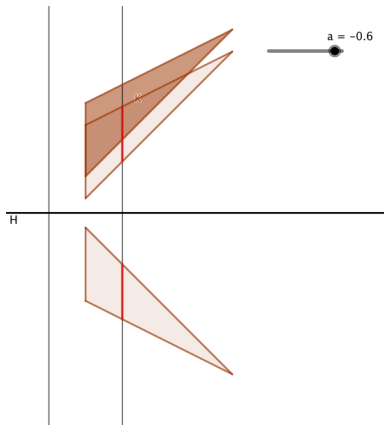
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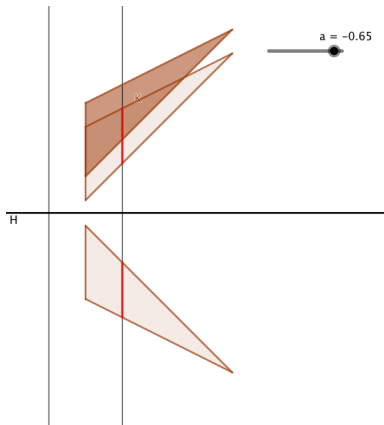
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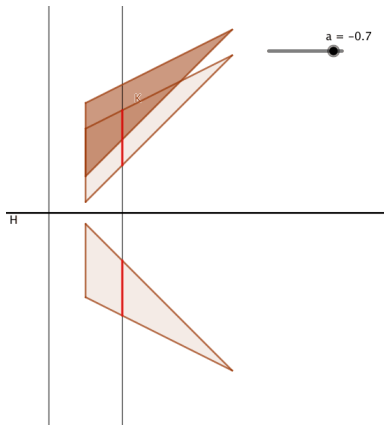
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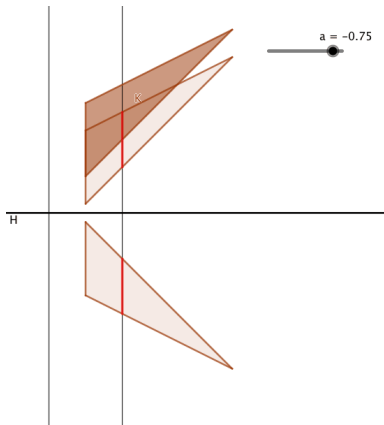
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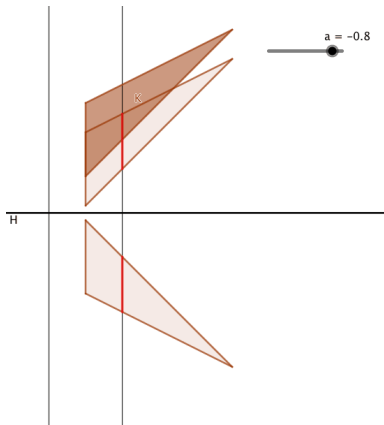
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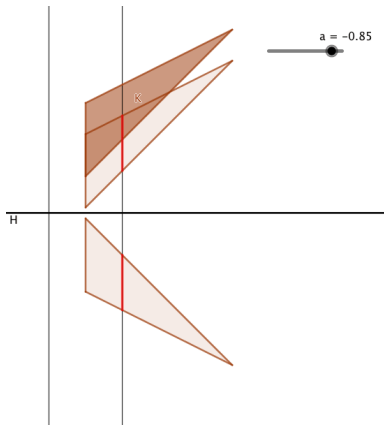
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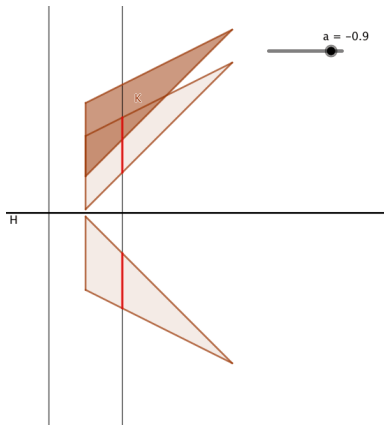
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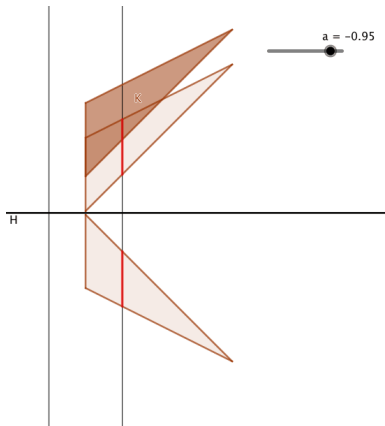
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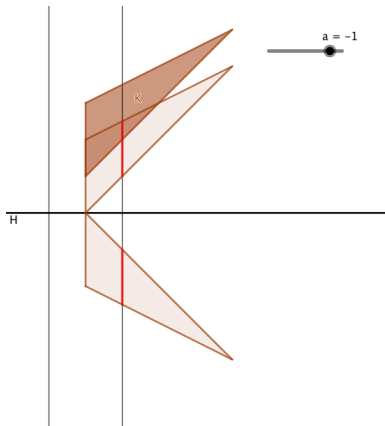
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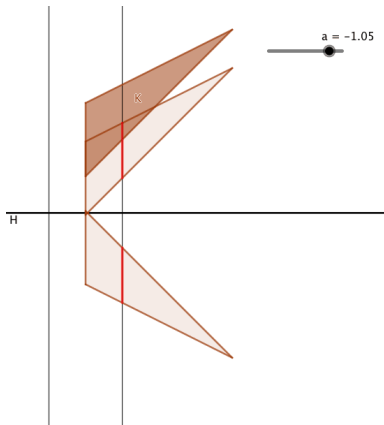
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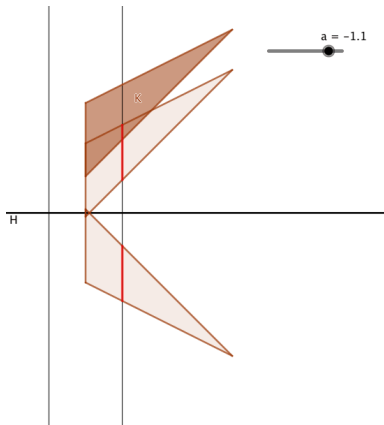
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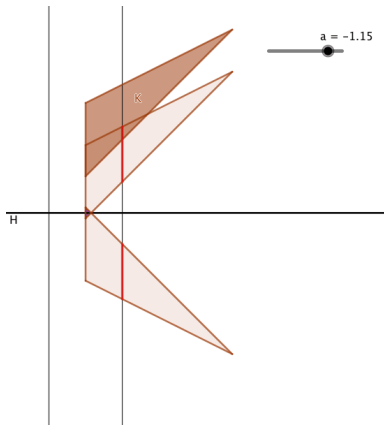
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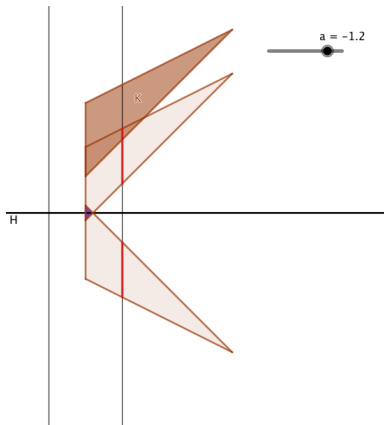
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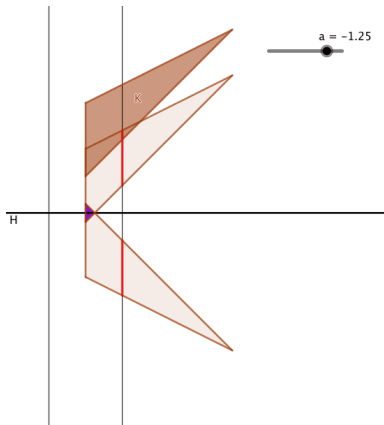
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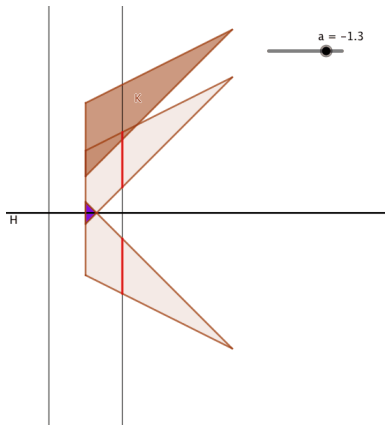
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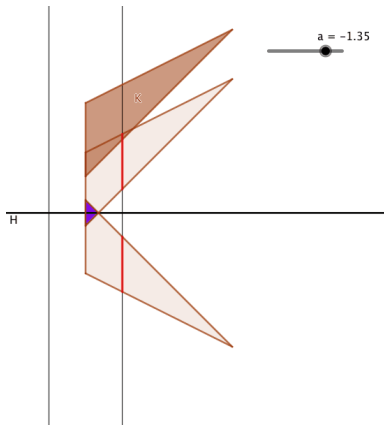
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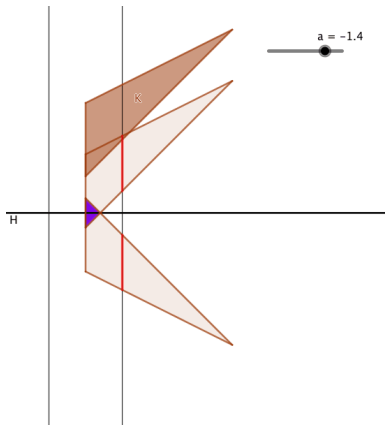


a = -1.35

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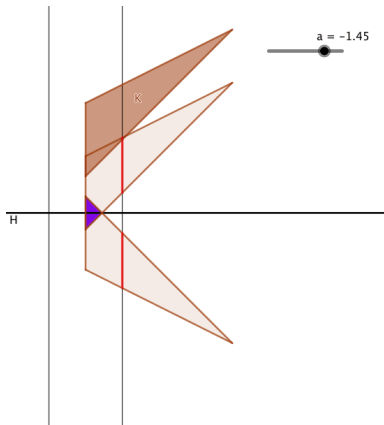




$a = -1.4$

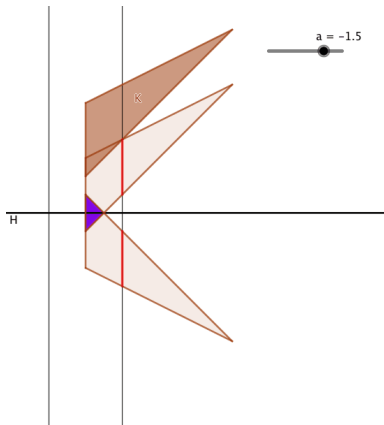
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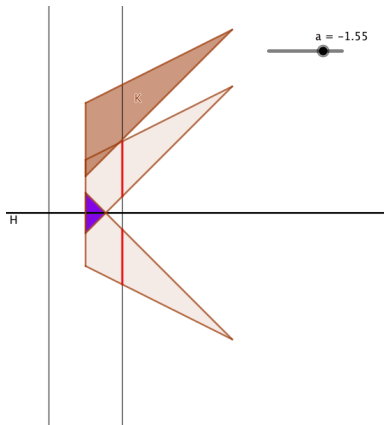
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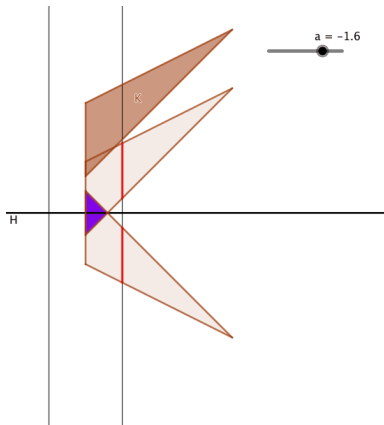
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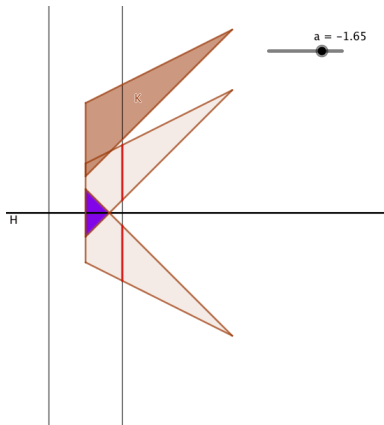
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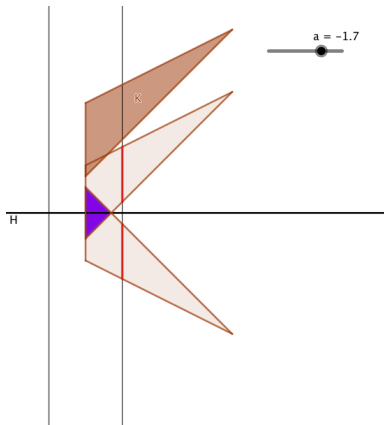
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a = -1.65

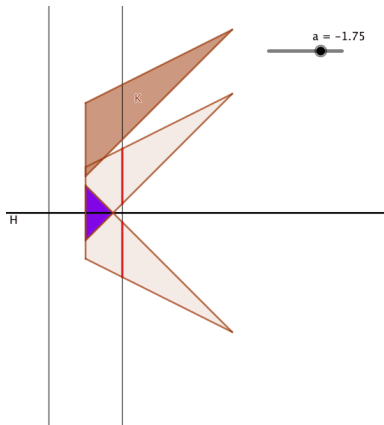
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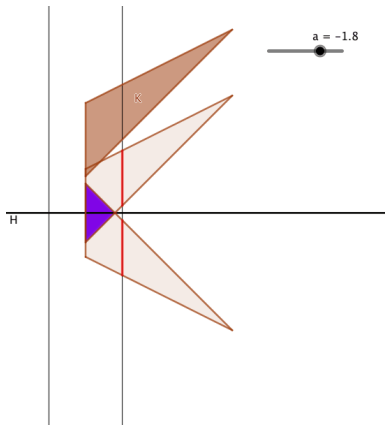


$a = -1.75$

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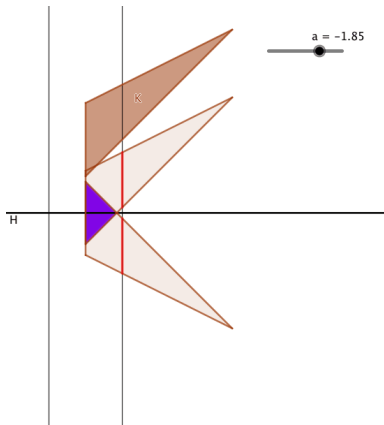
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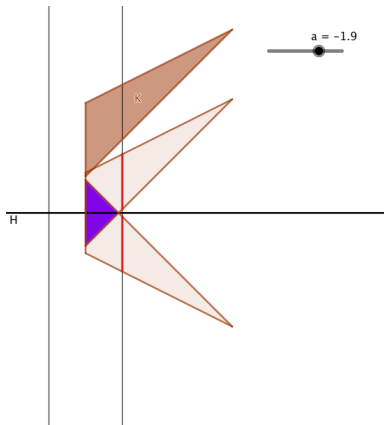
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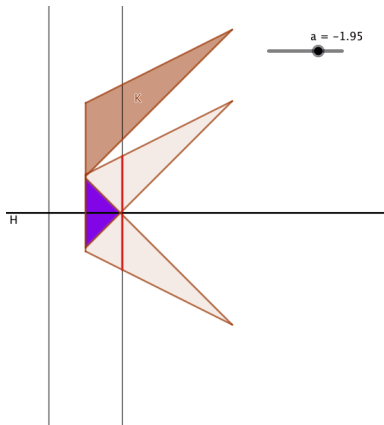
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$a = -1.9$

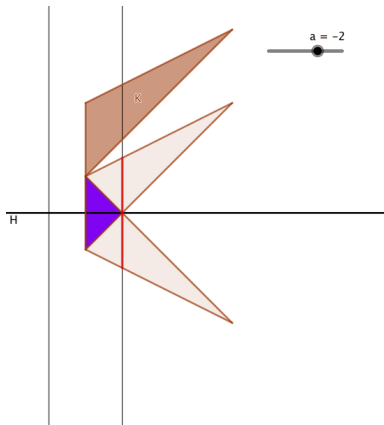
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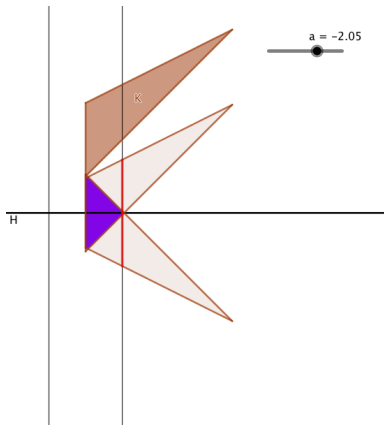
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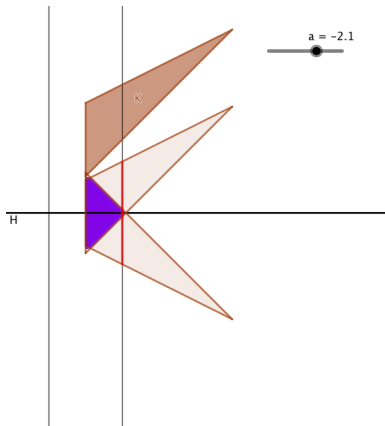
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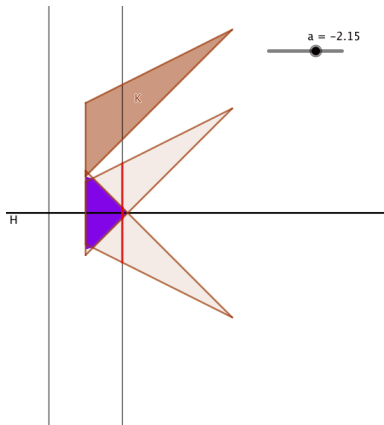
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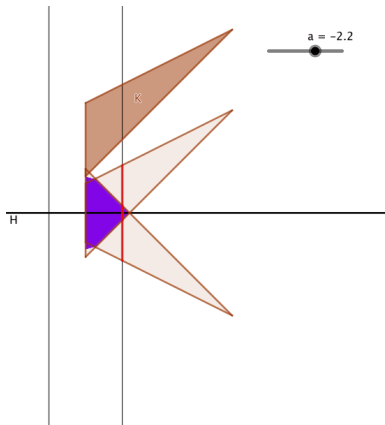
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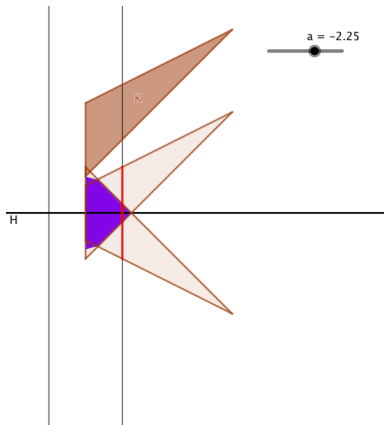
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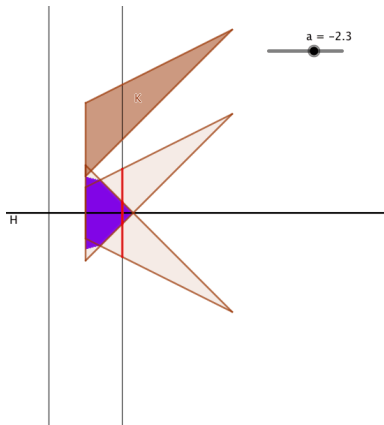
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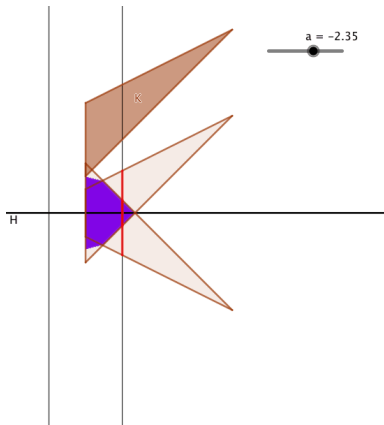
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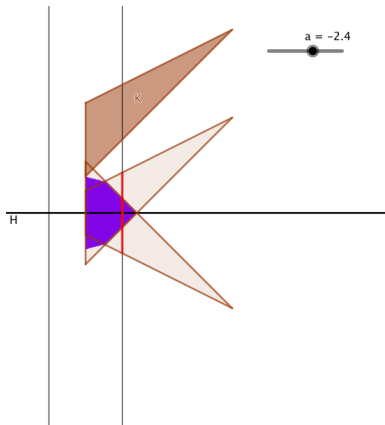
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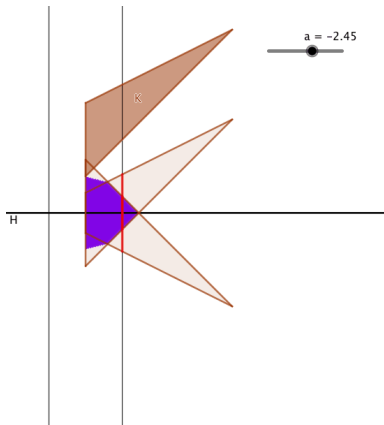
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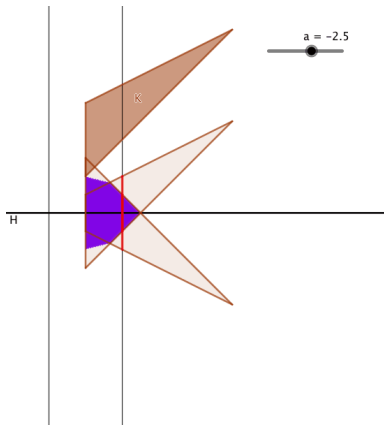
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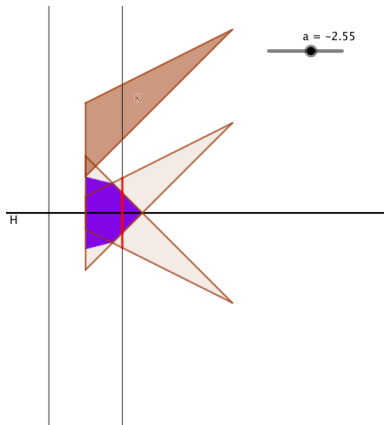
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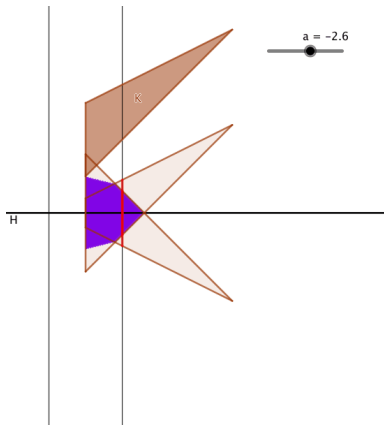
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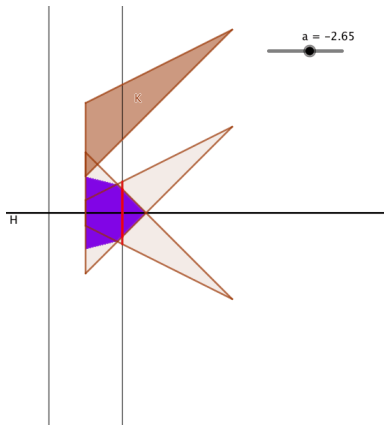
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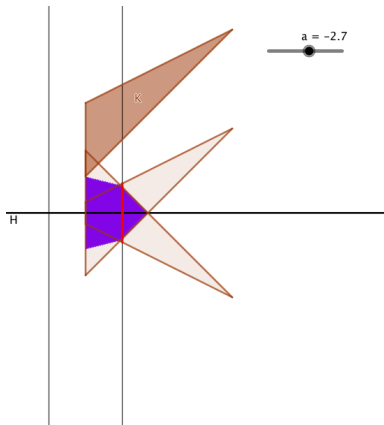
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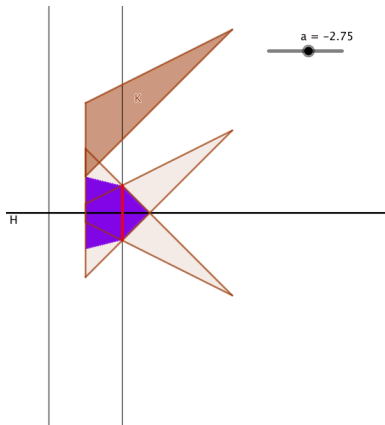
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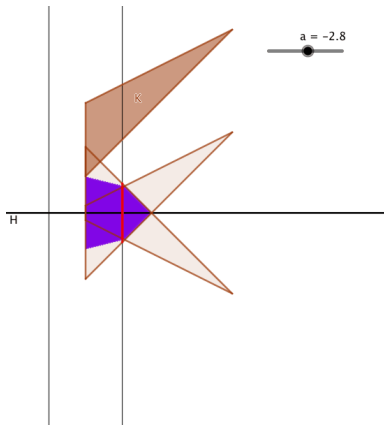
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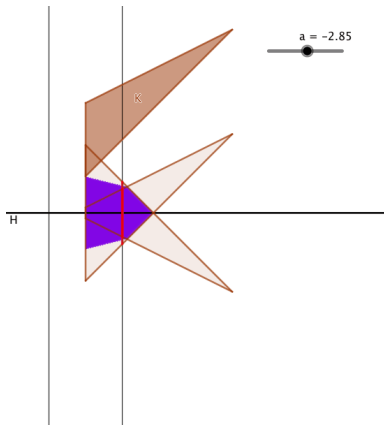
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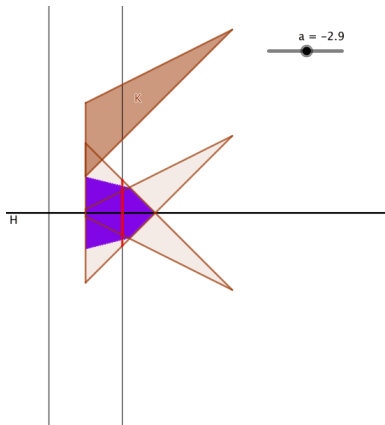
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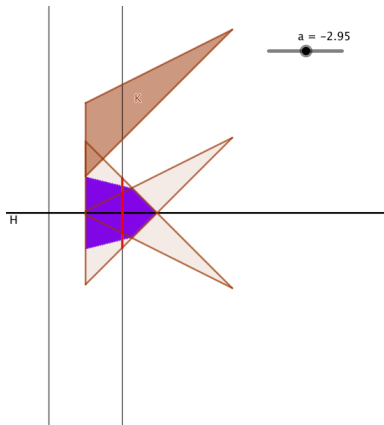
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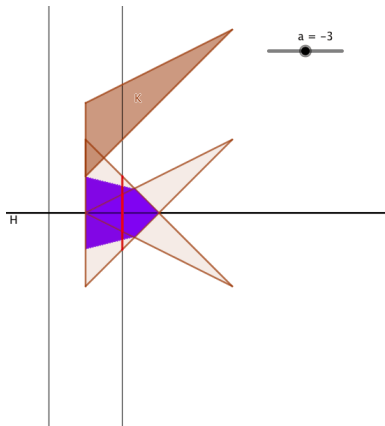
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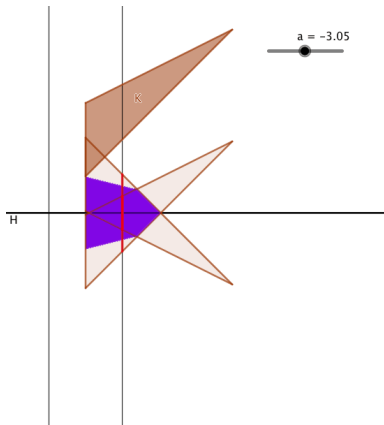
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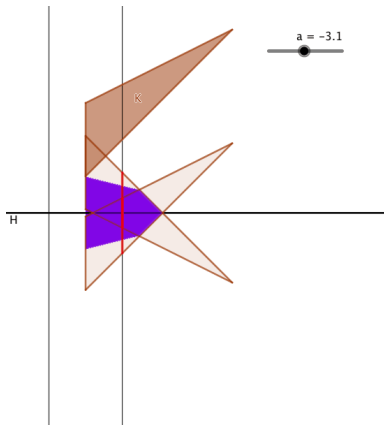
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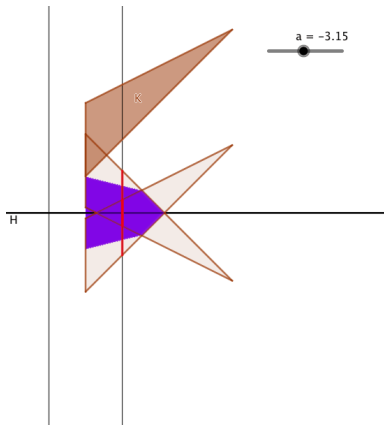
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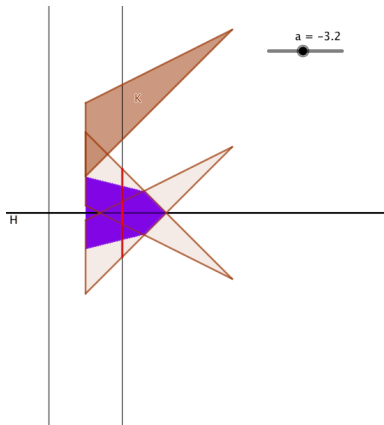
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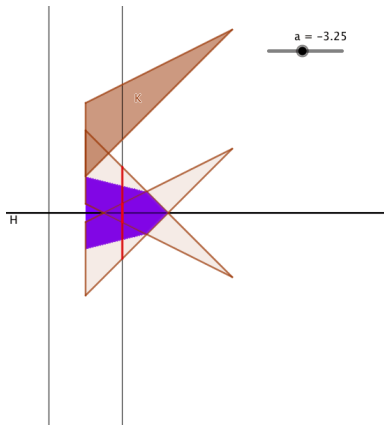
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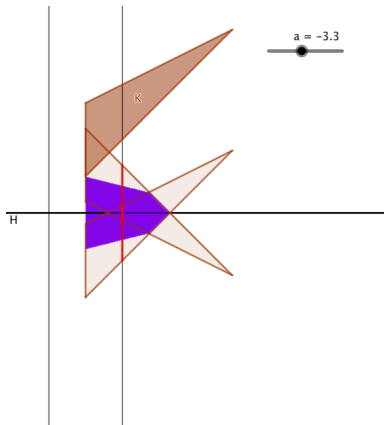
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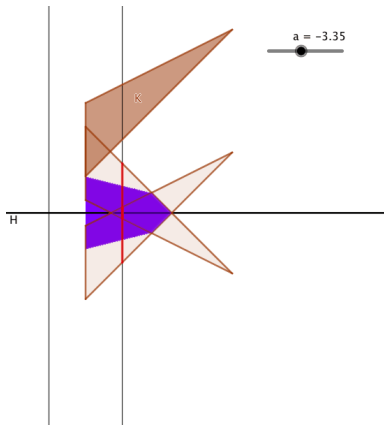
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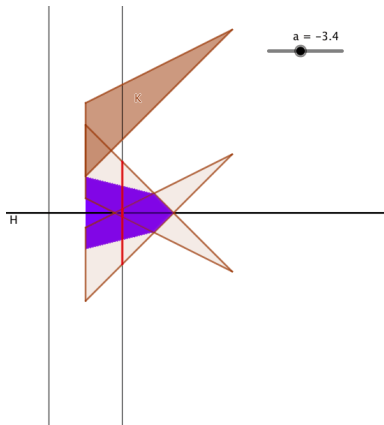
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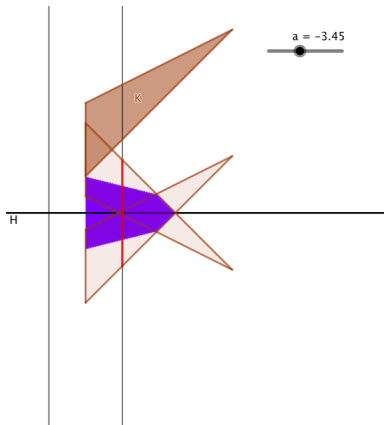
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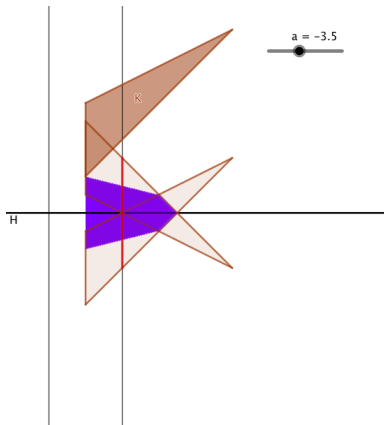
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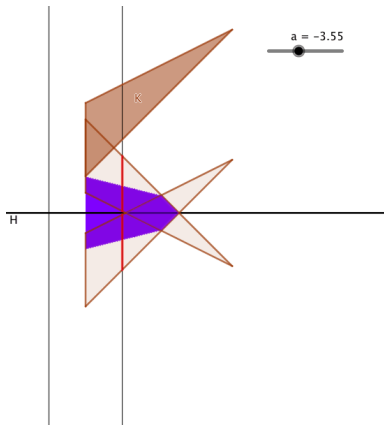
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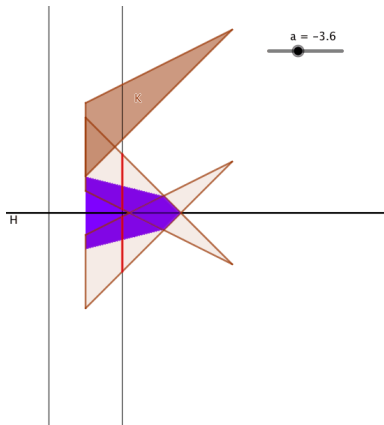
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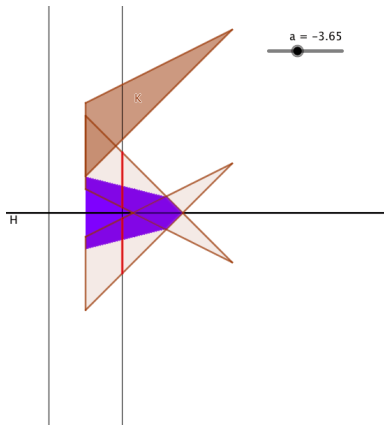
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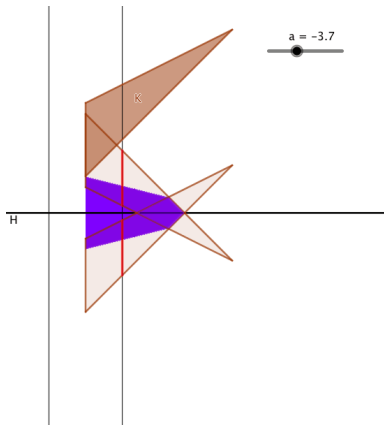
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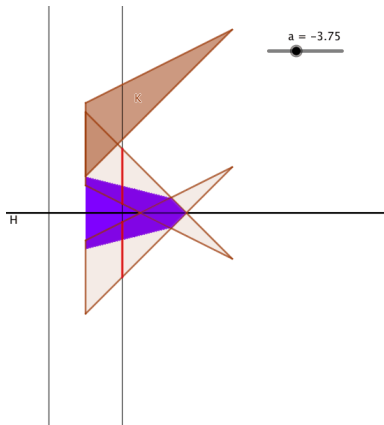
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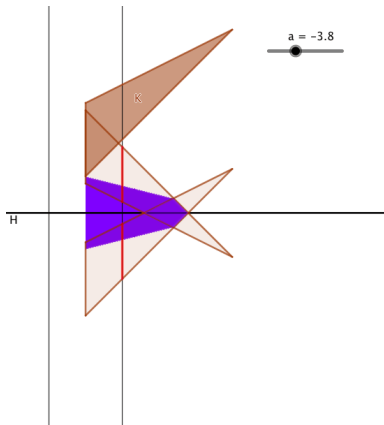
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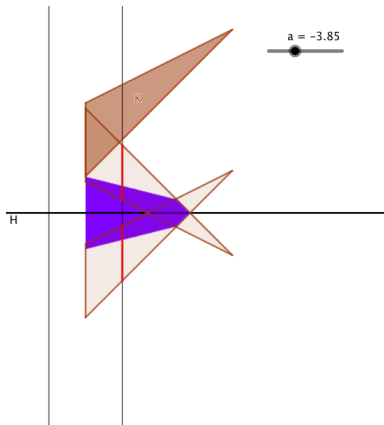
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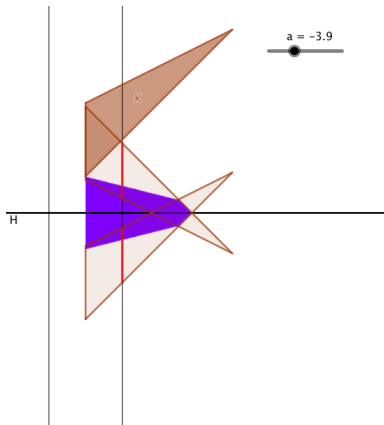
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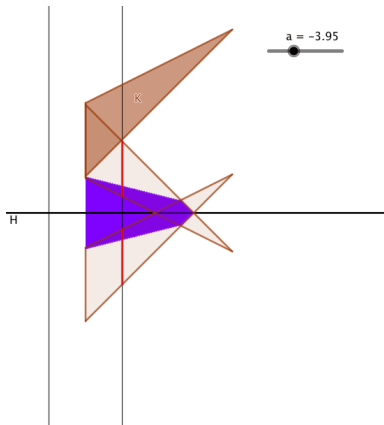
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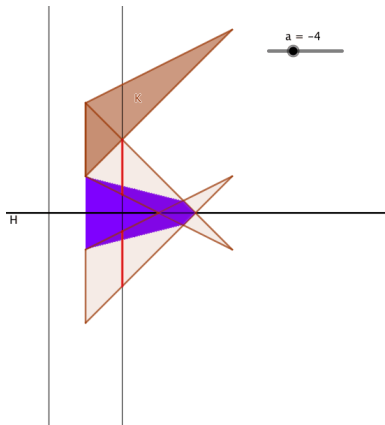
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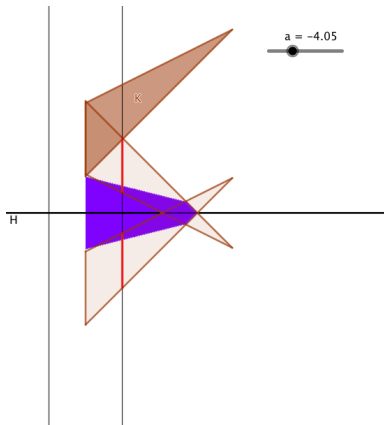
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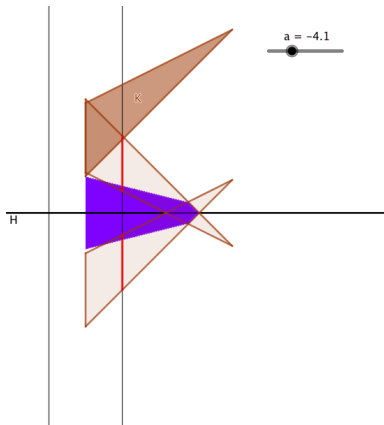
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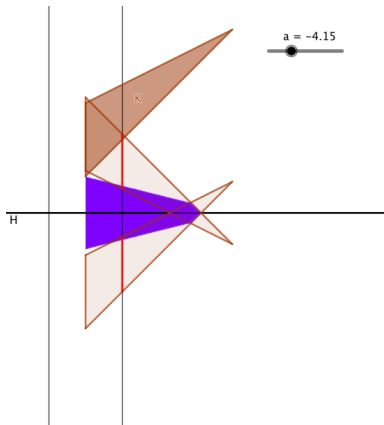
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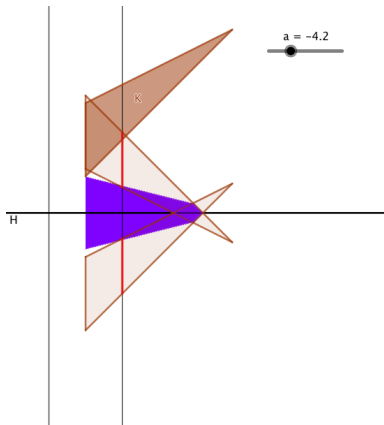
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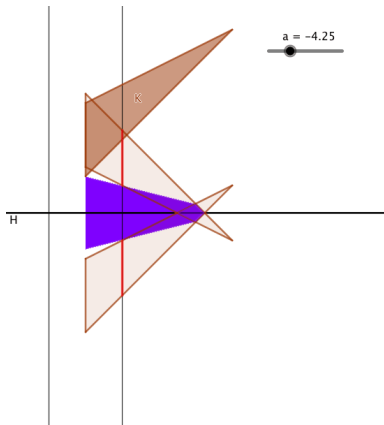
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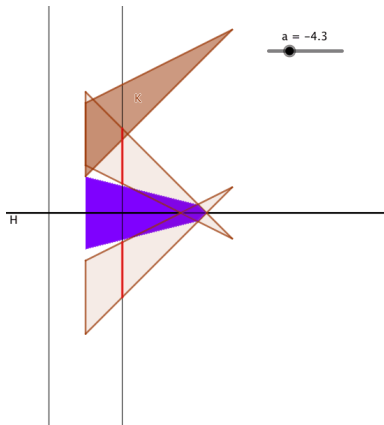
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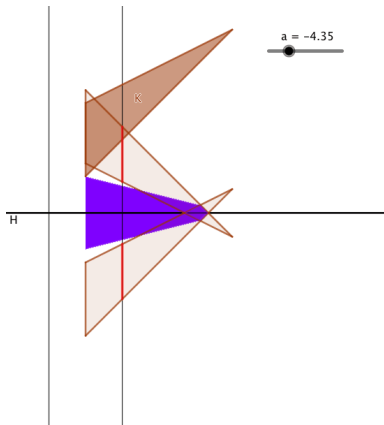
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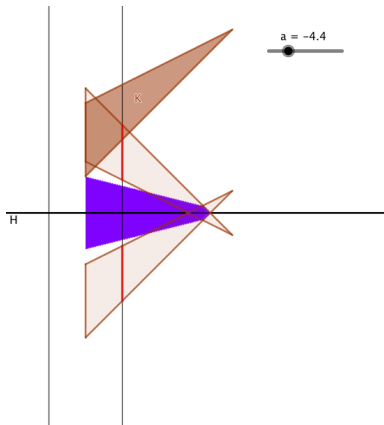
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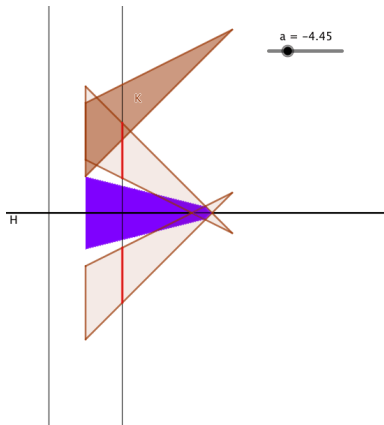
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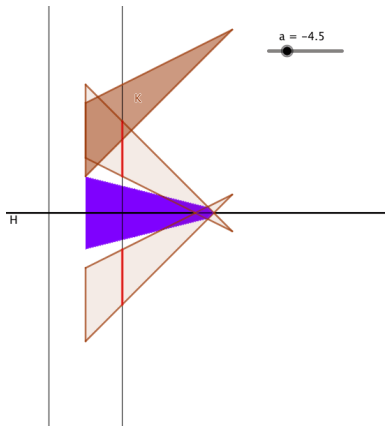
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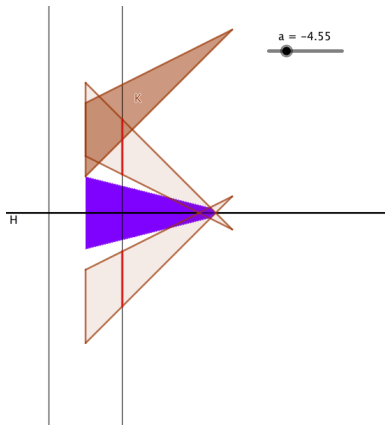
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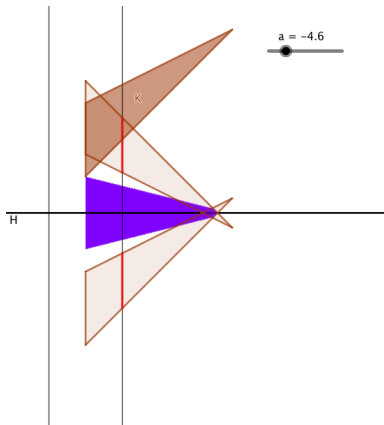
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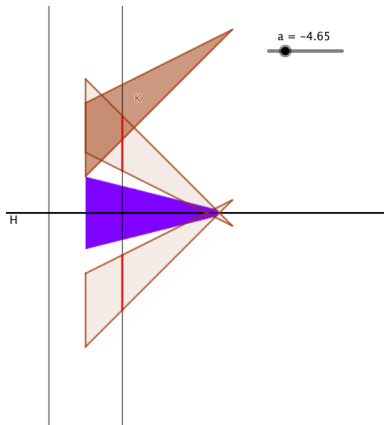
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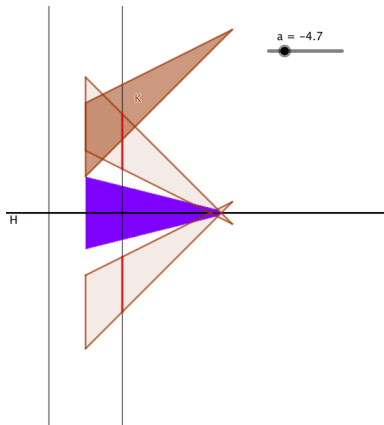
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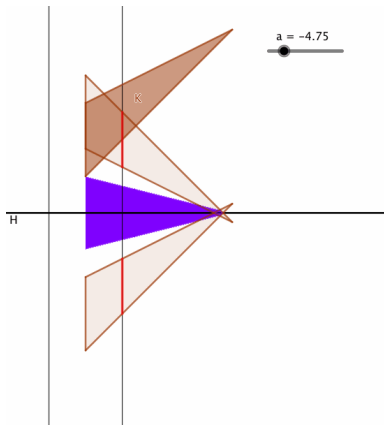
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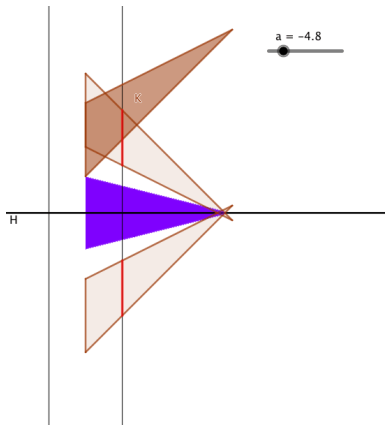
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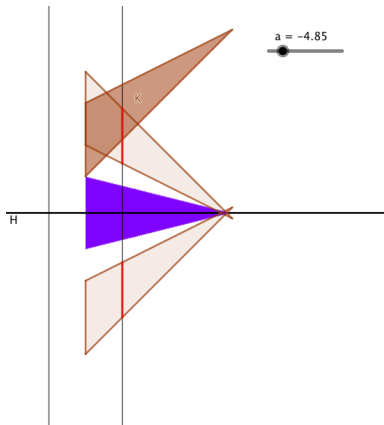
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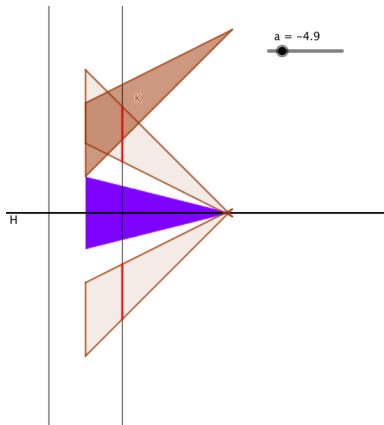
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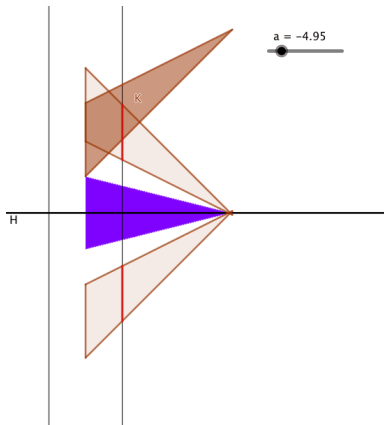
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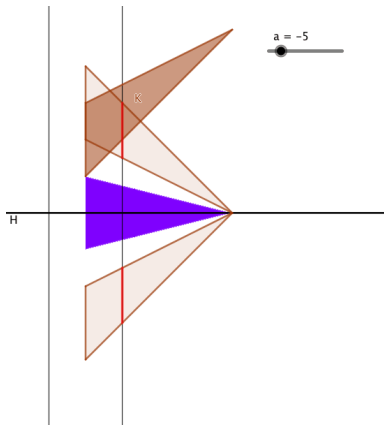
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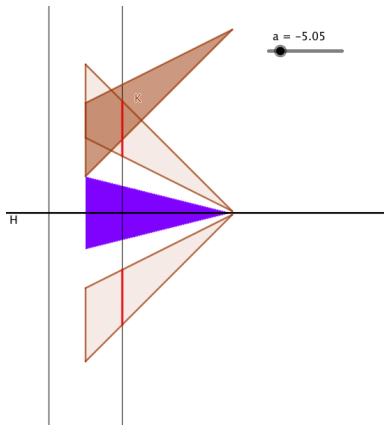
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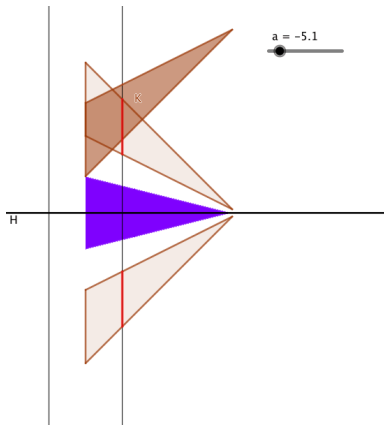
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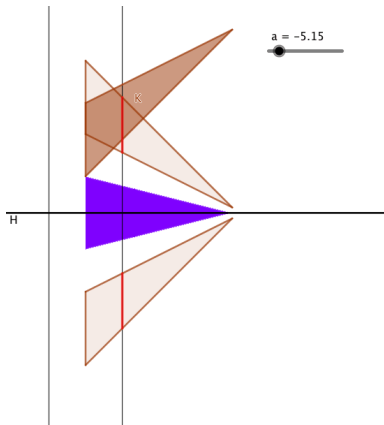
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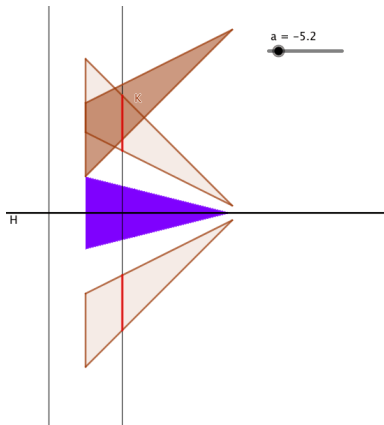
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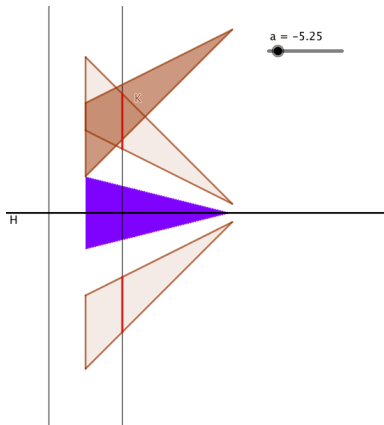
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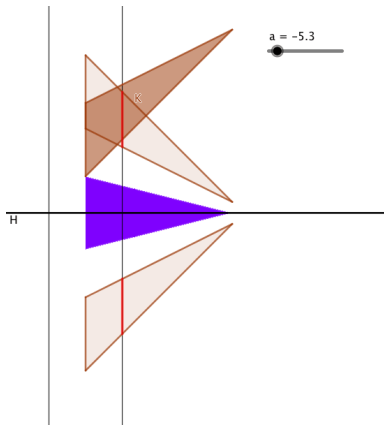
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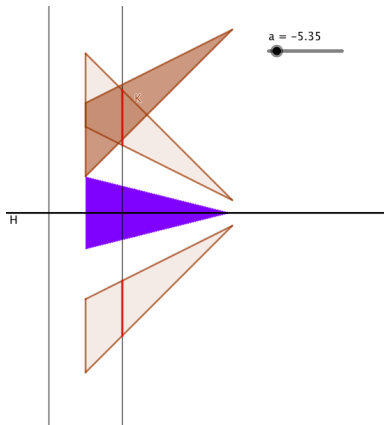
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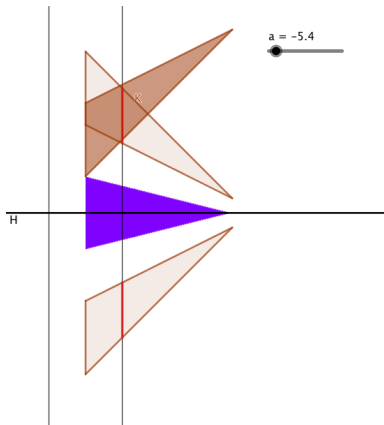
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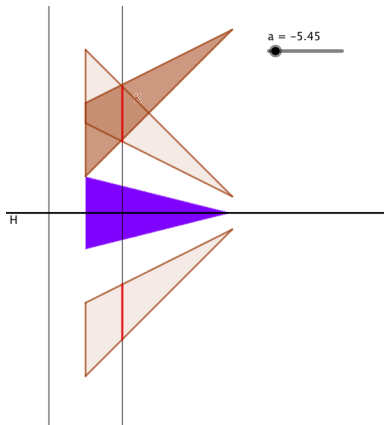
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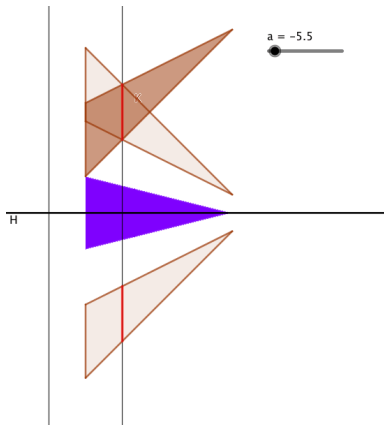
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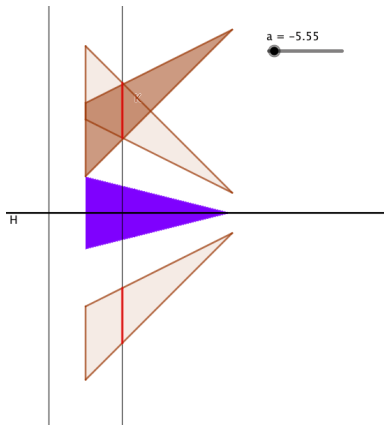
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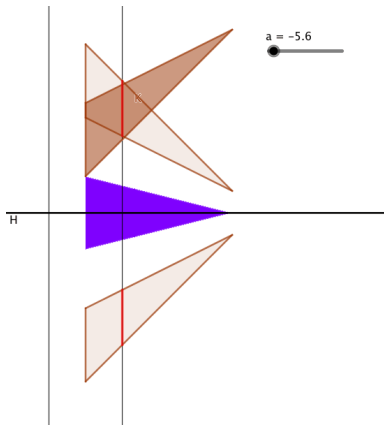
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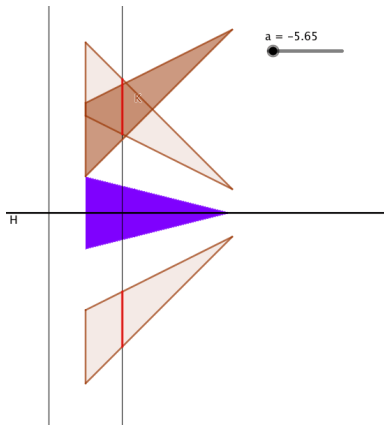
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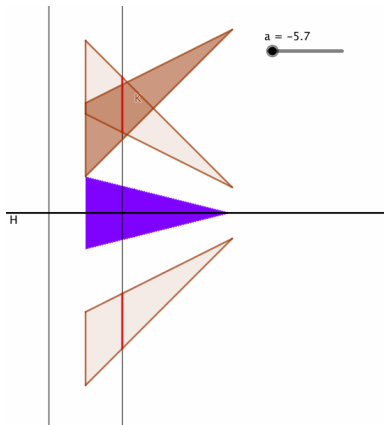
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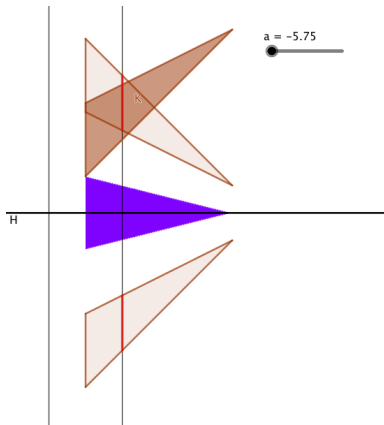
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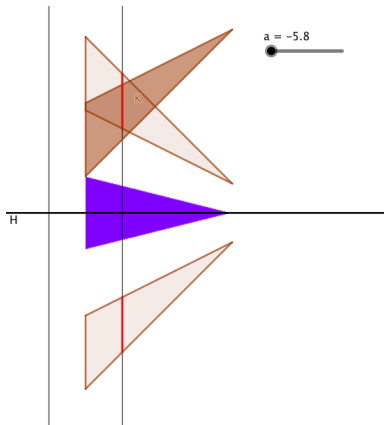
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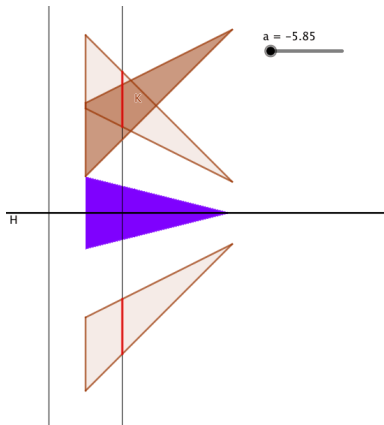
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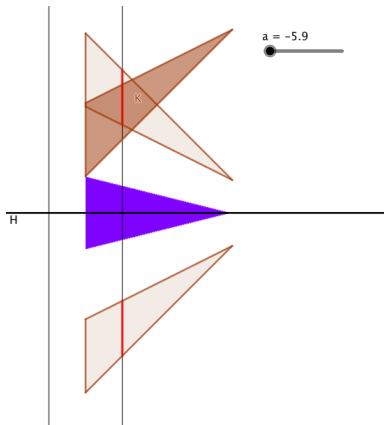
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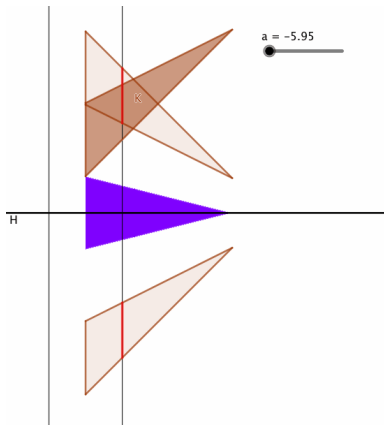
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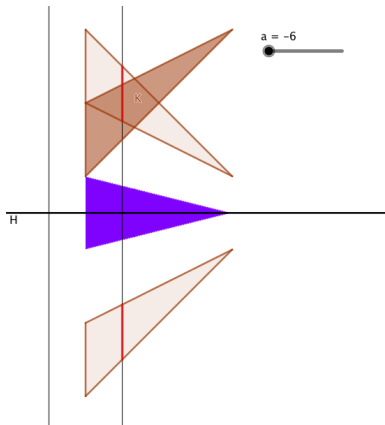
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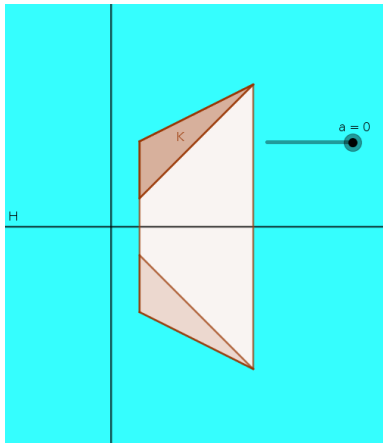
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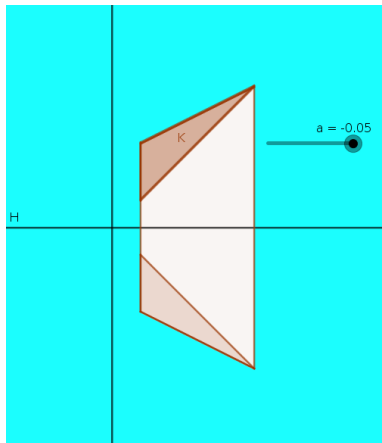


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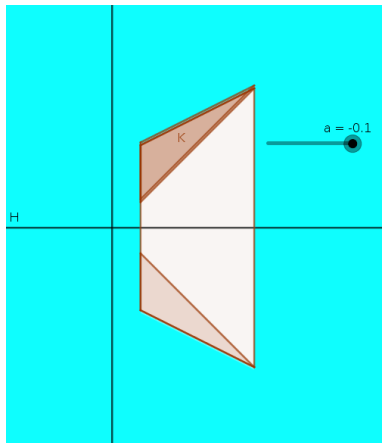
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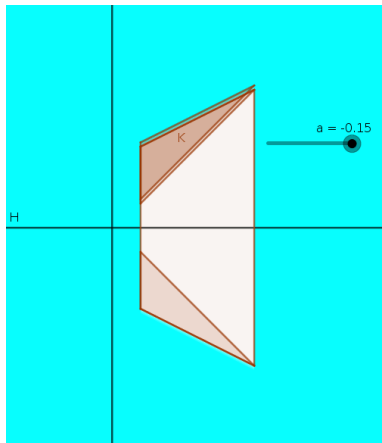


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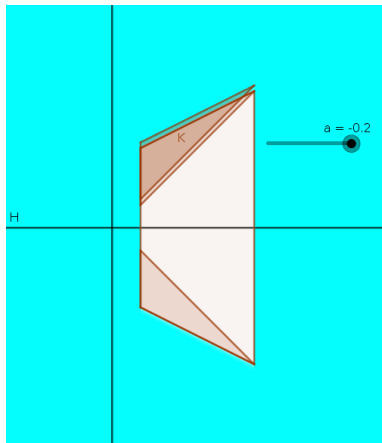


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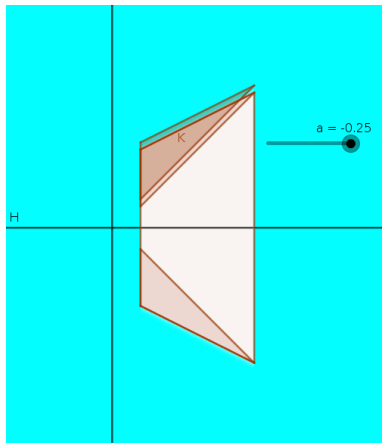




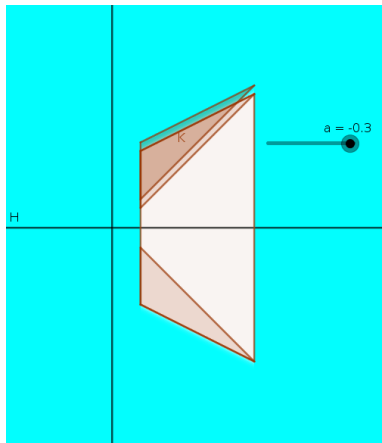
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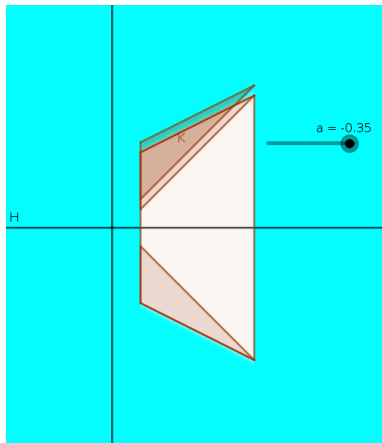
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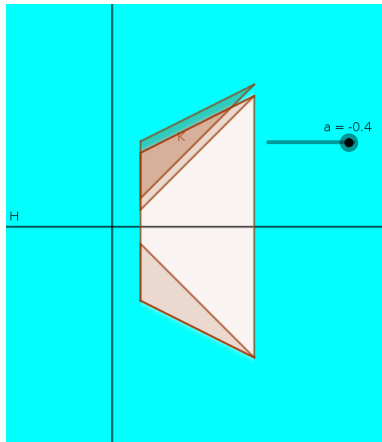
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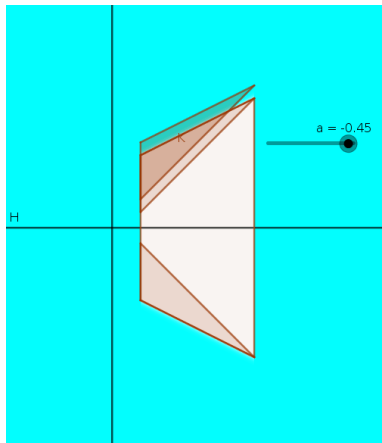
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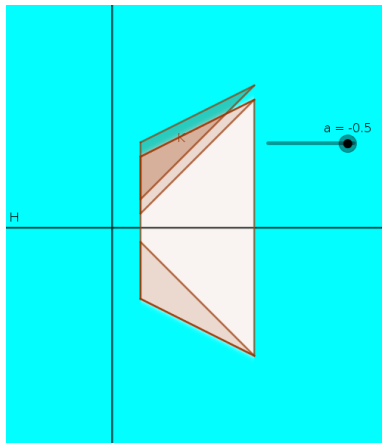
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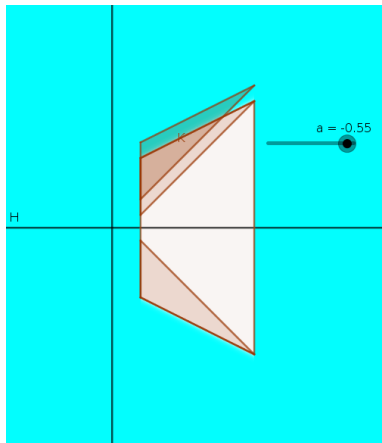


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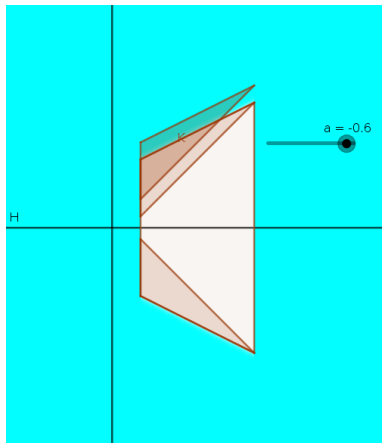


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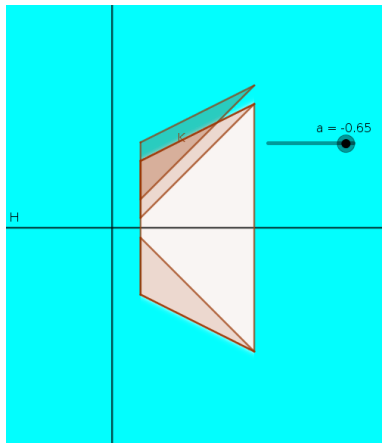




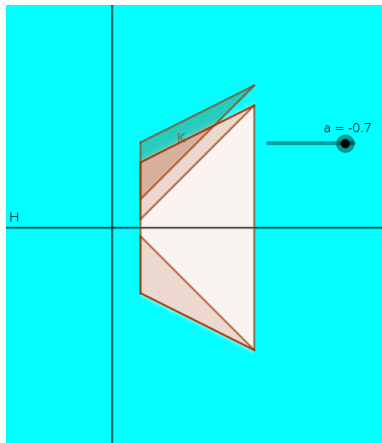
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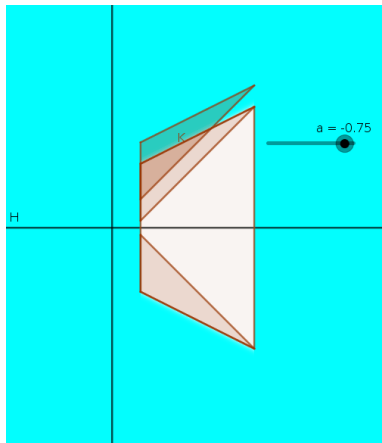
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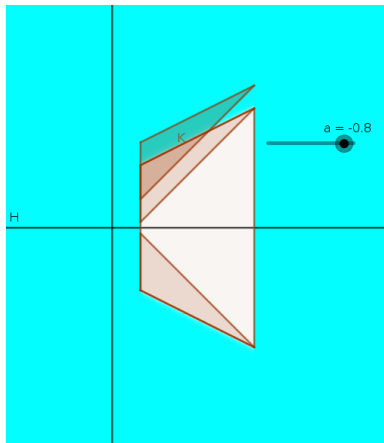
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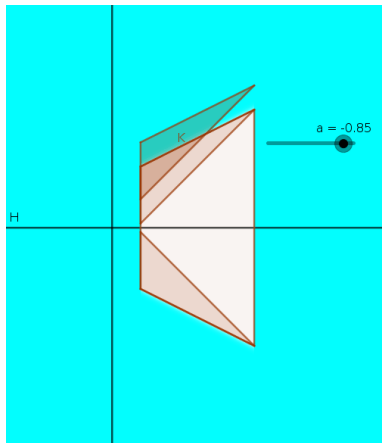
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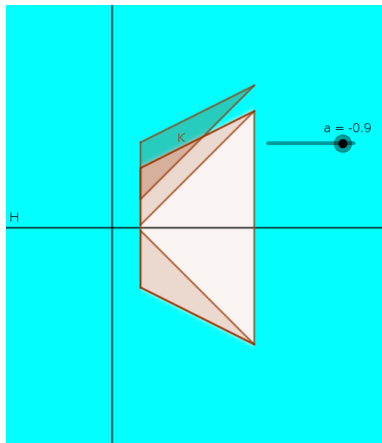
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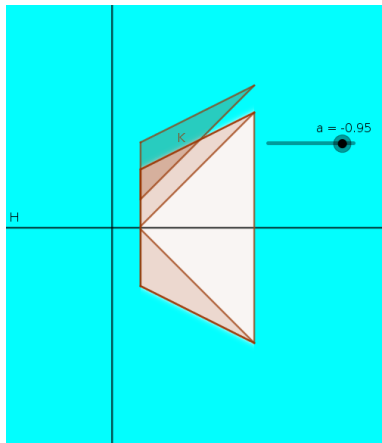


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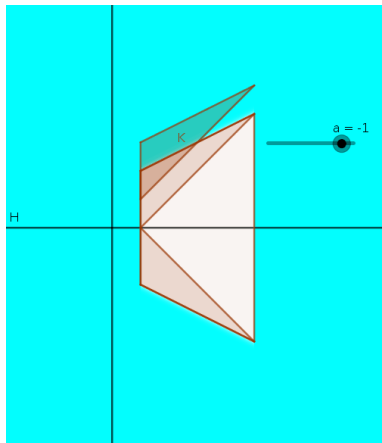


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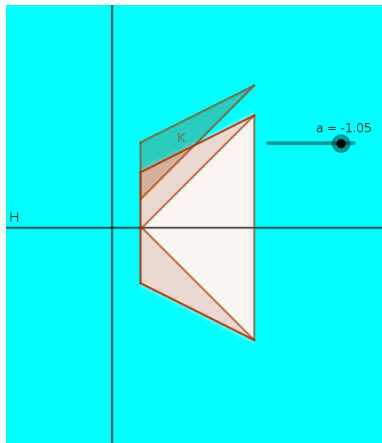




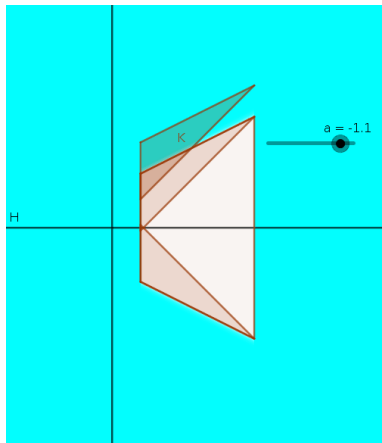
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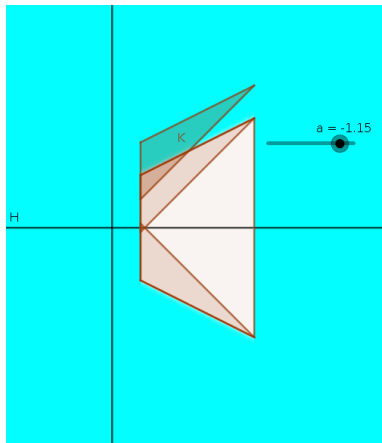
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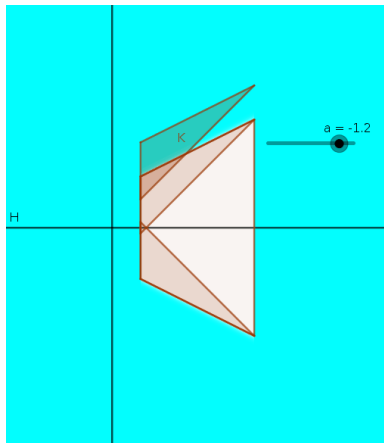
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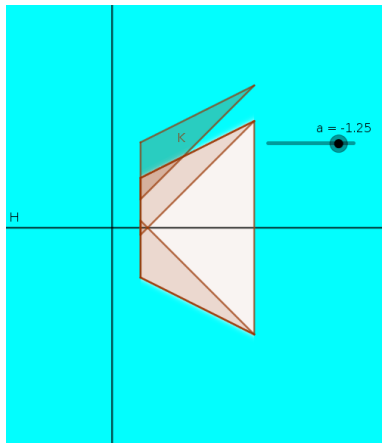
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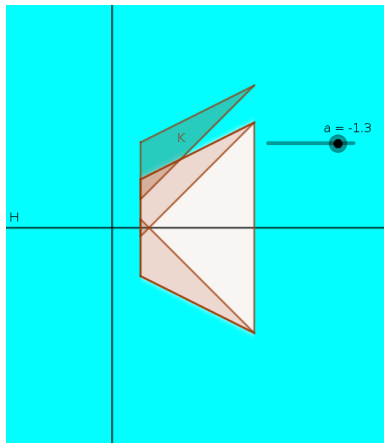
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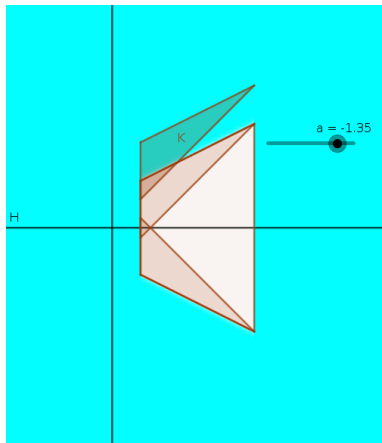


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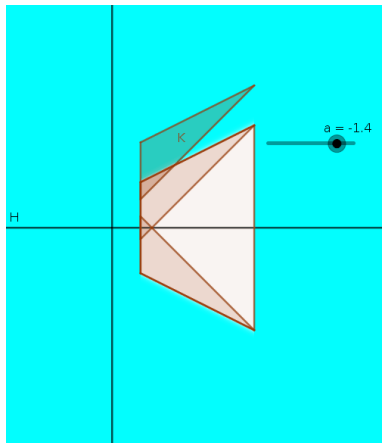


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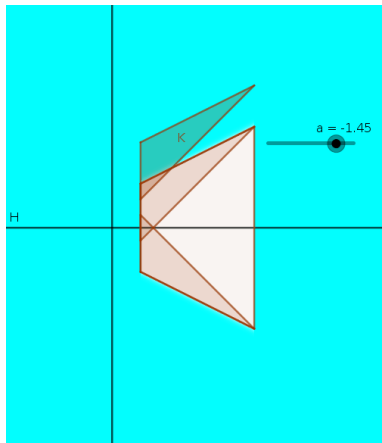




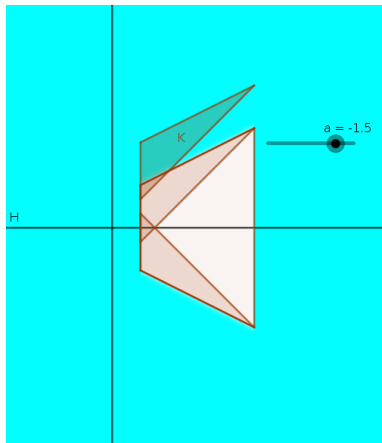
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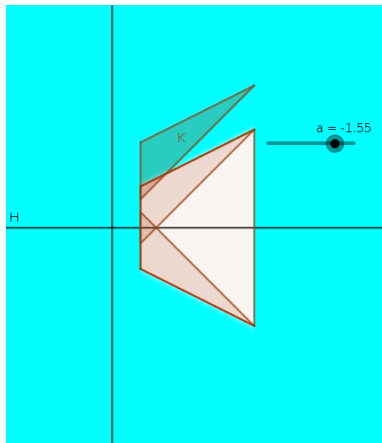
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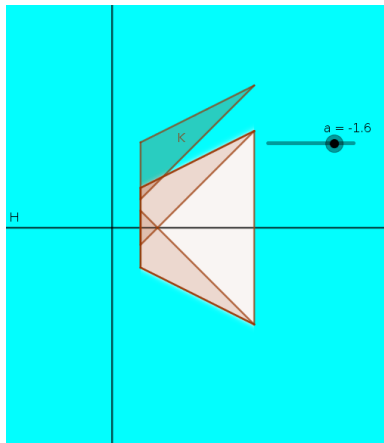
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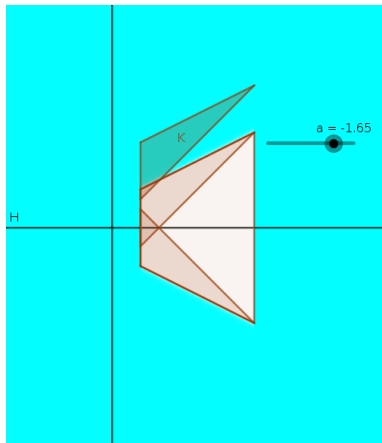
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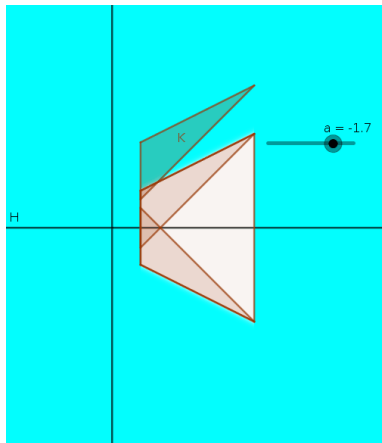
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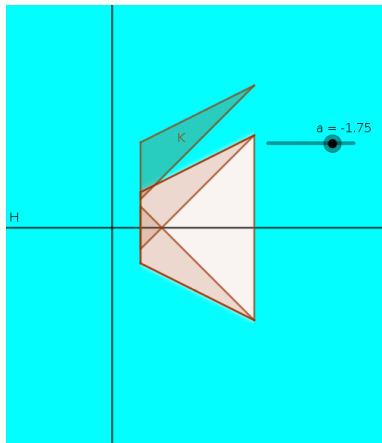


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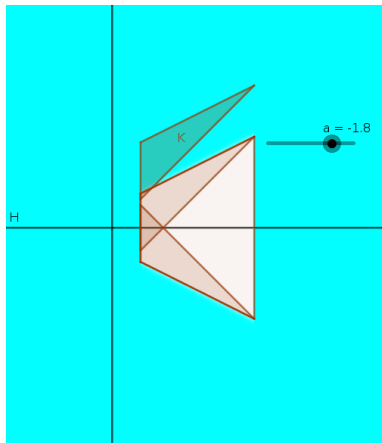


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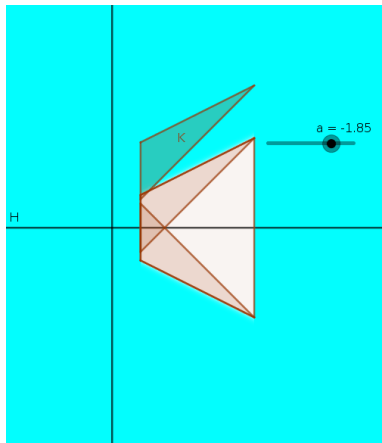




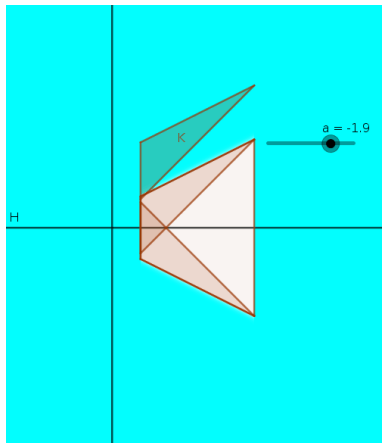
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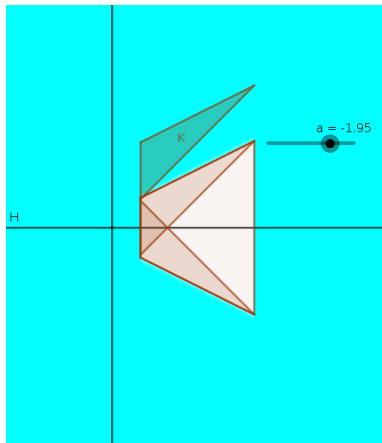
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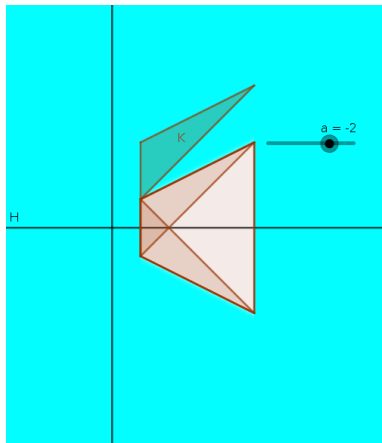
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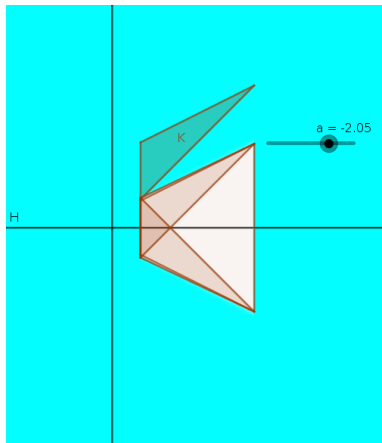
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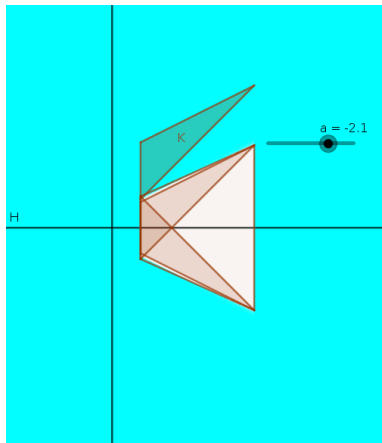
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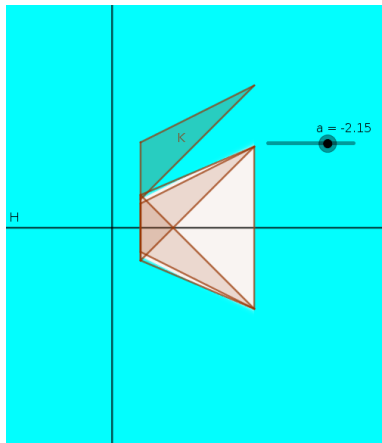


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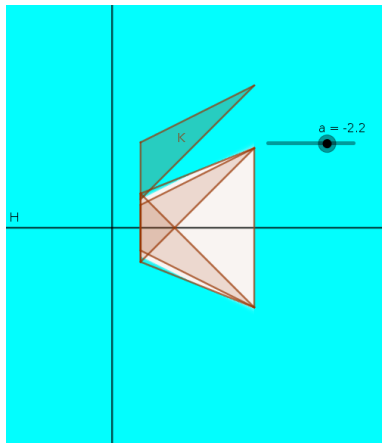


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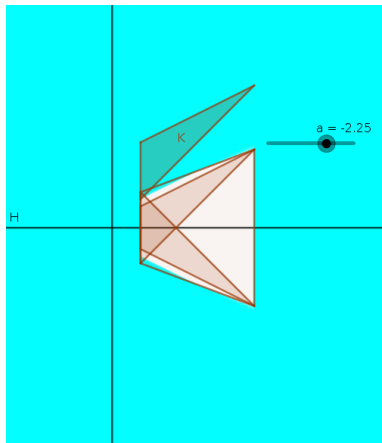




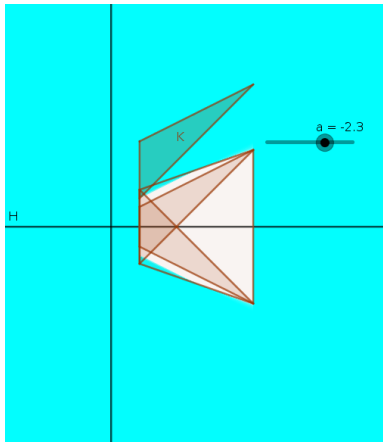
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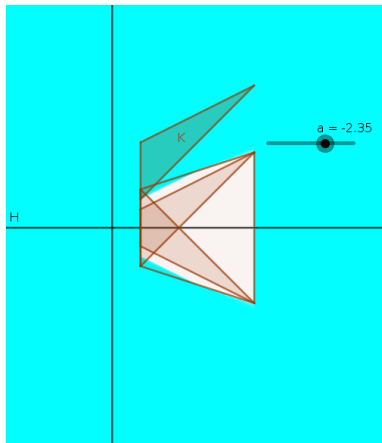
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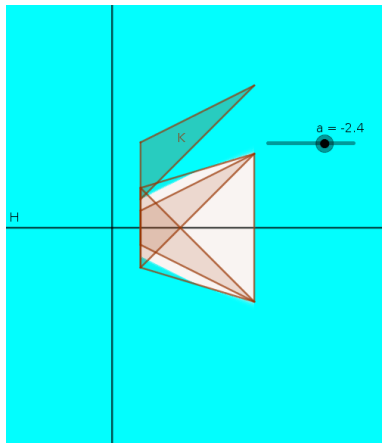
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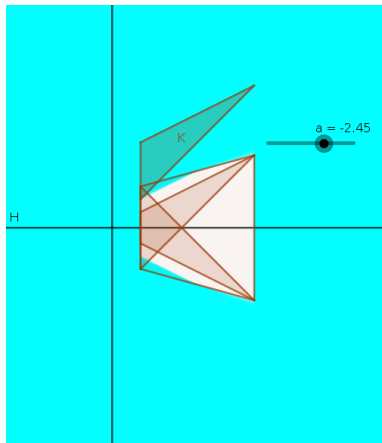
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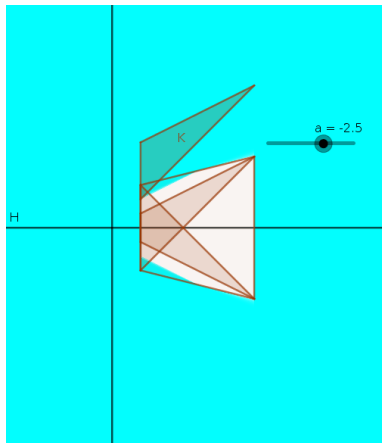
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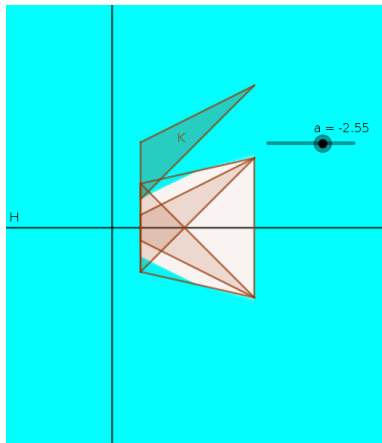


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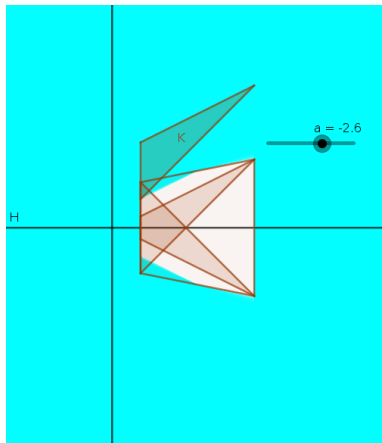


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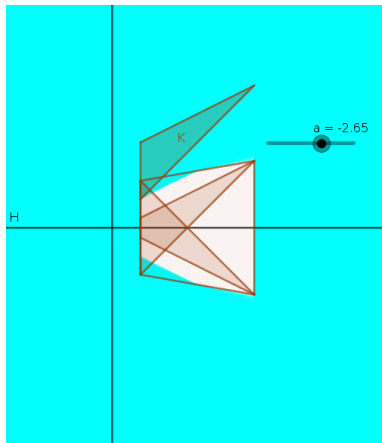




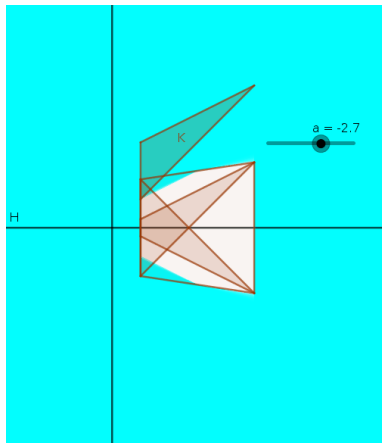
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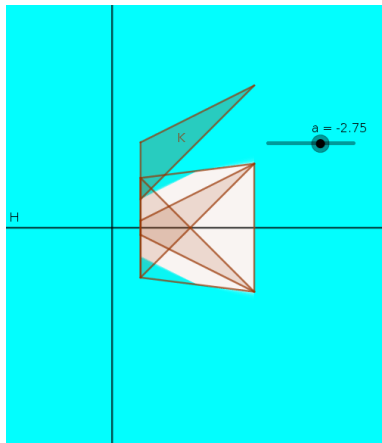
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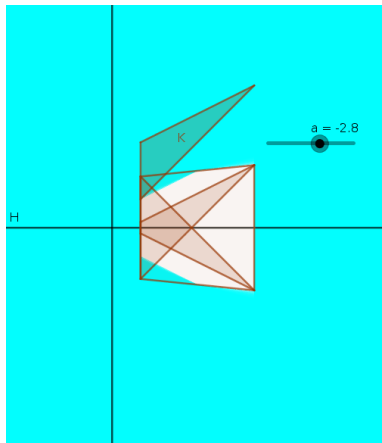
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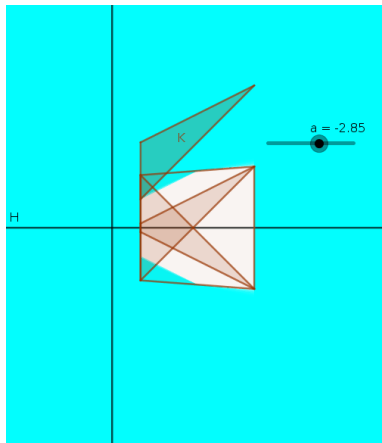
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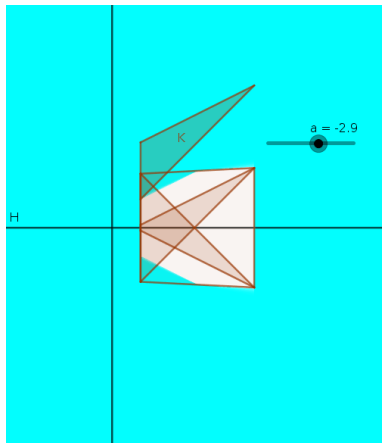
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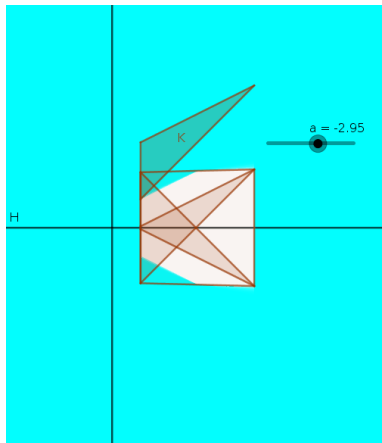


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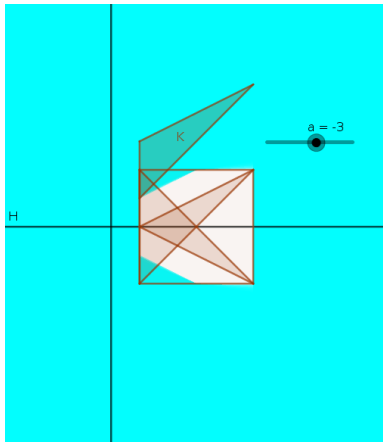


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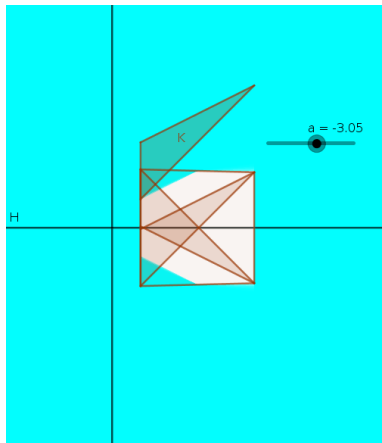




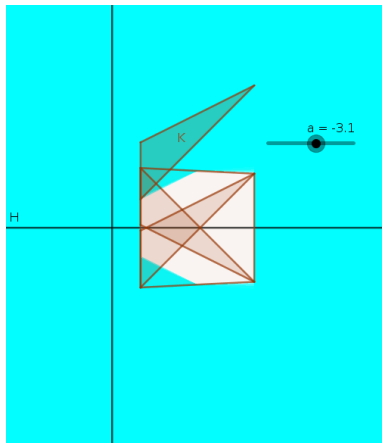
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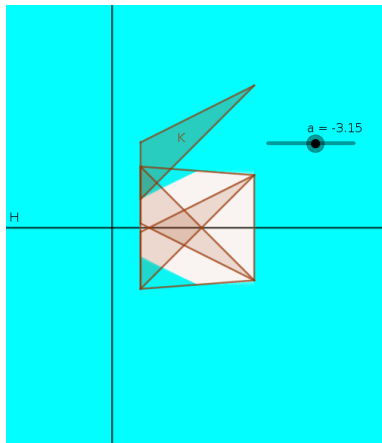
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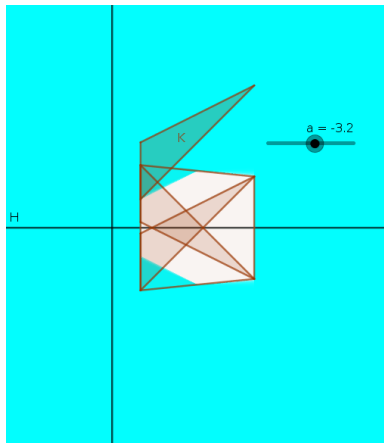
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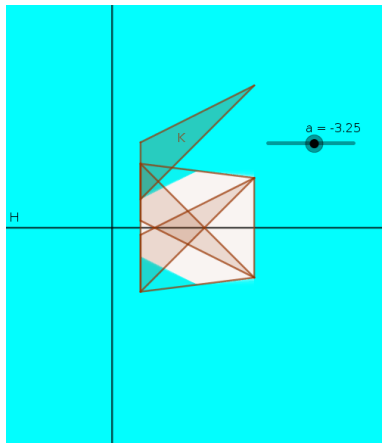
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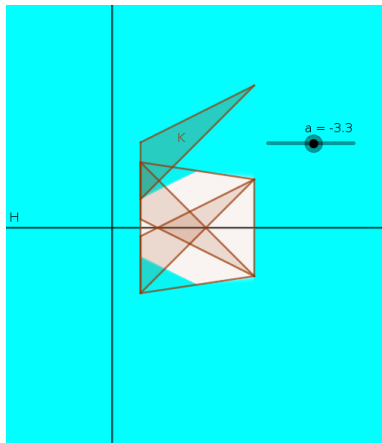
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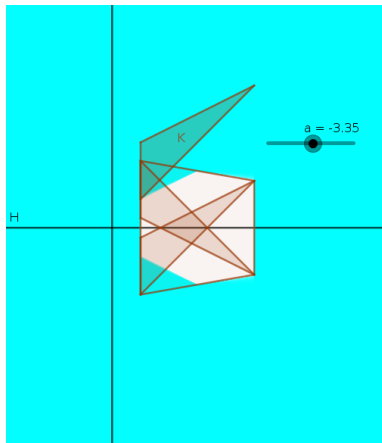


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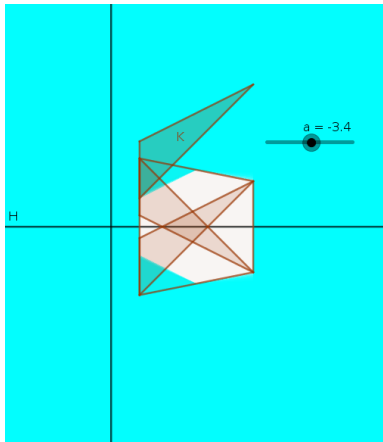


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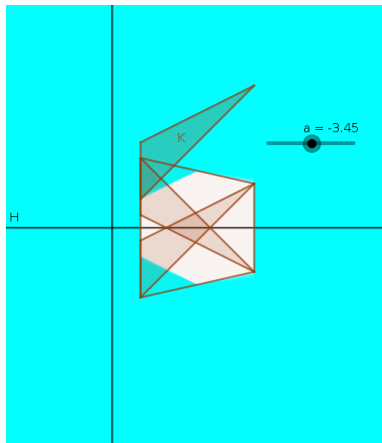




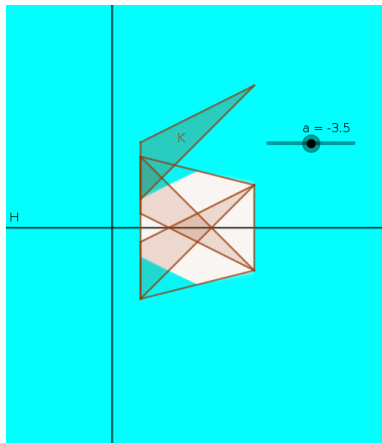
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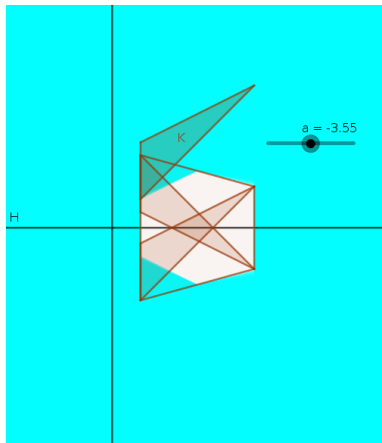
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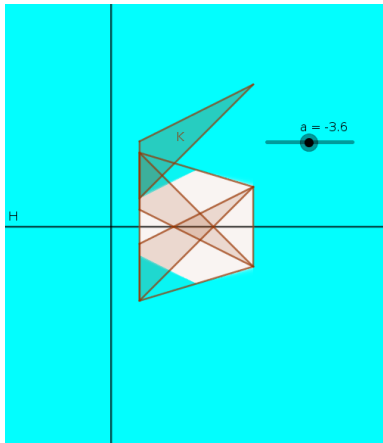
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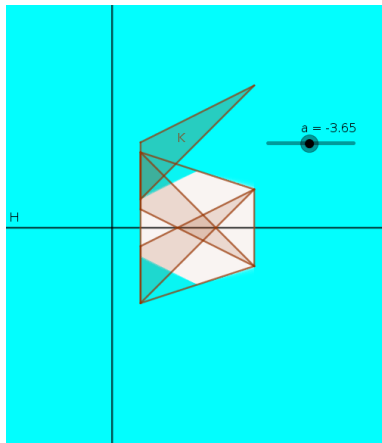
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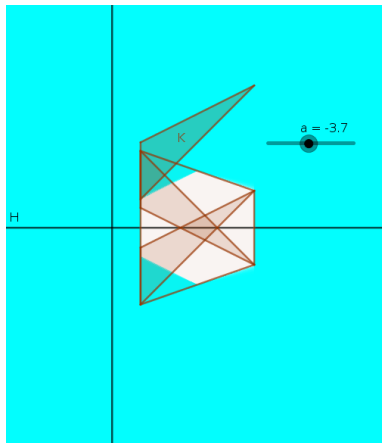
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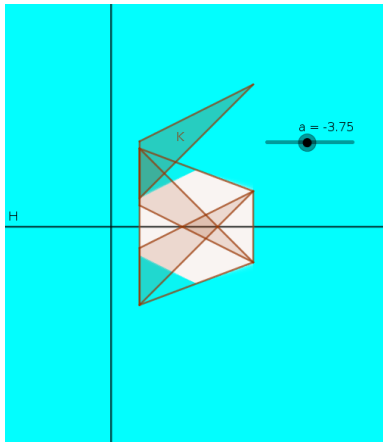


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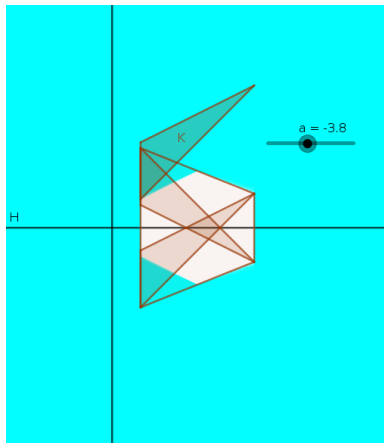


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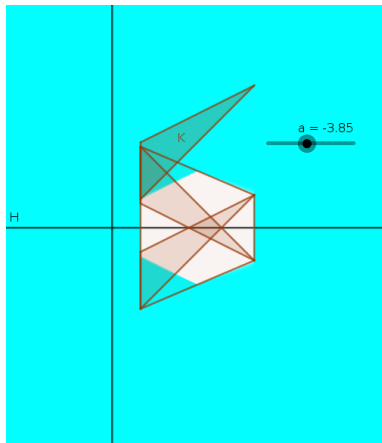




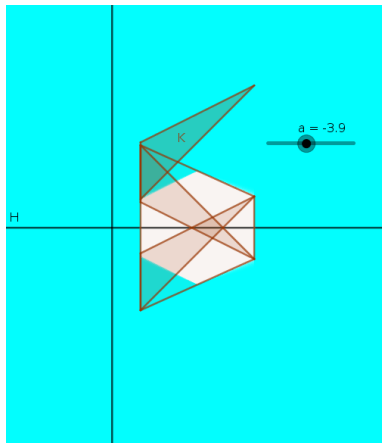
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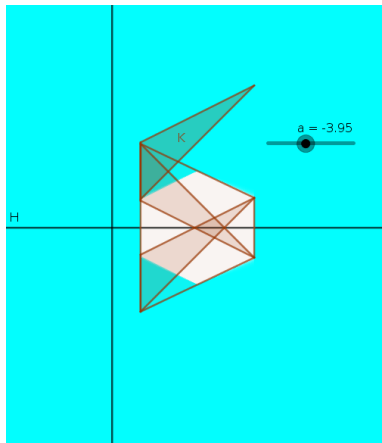
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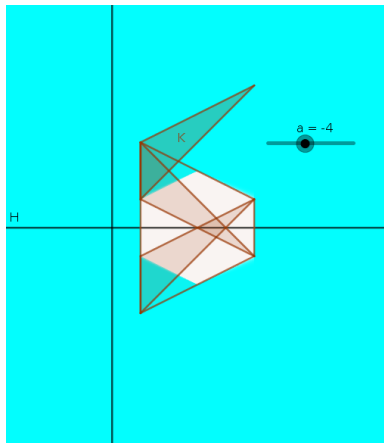
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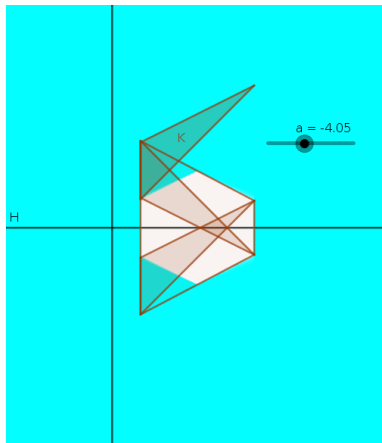
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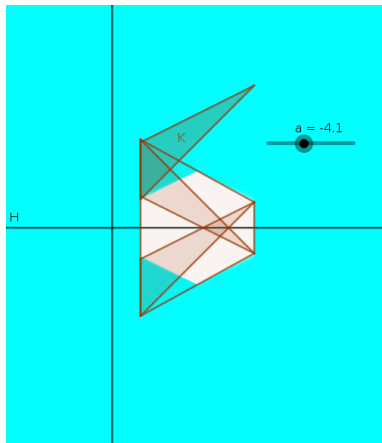
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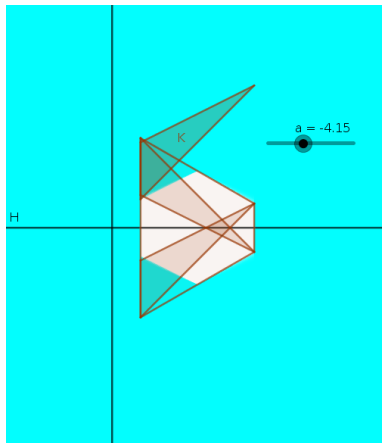


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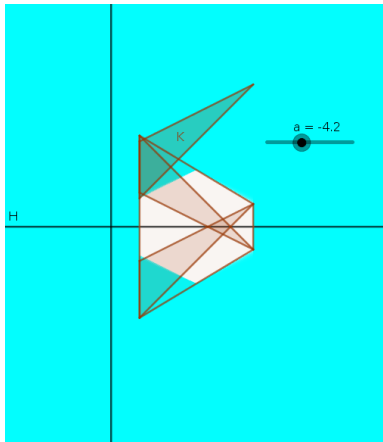


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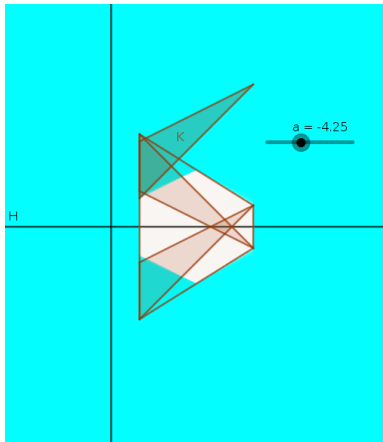




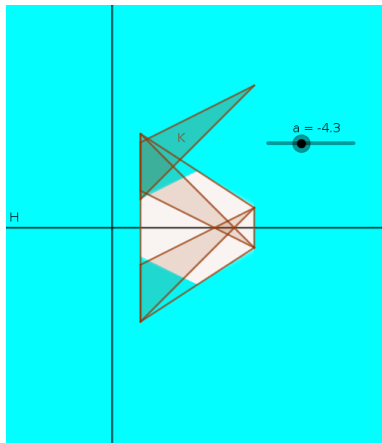
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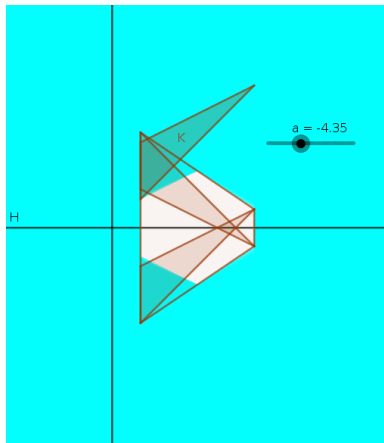
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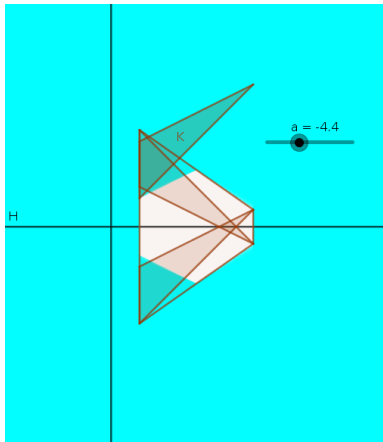
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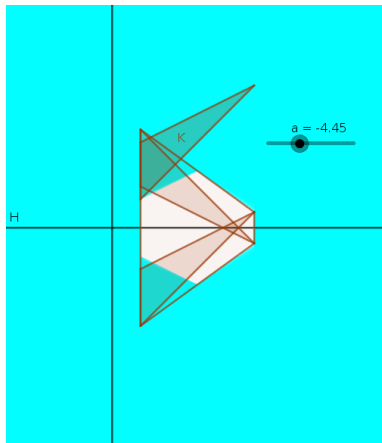
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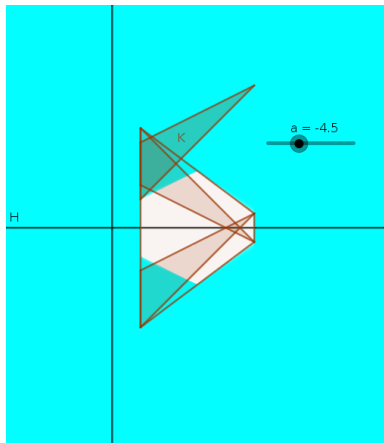
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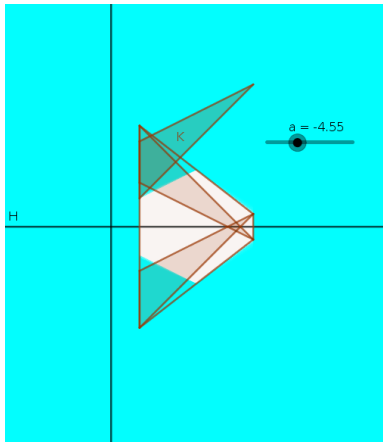


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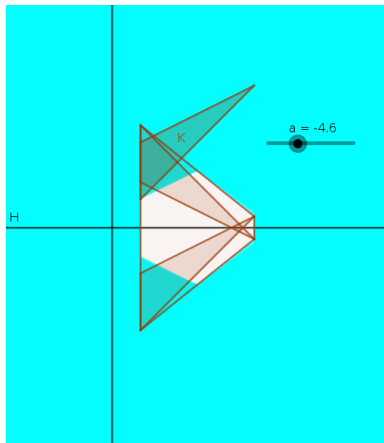


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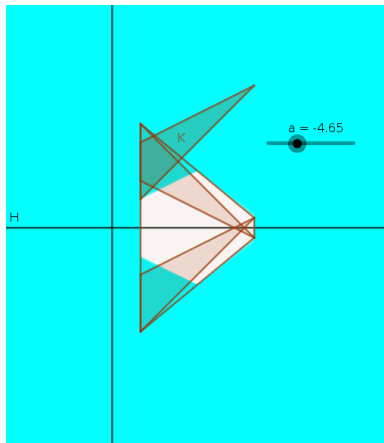




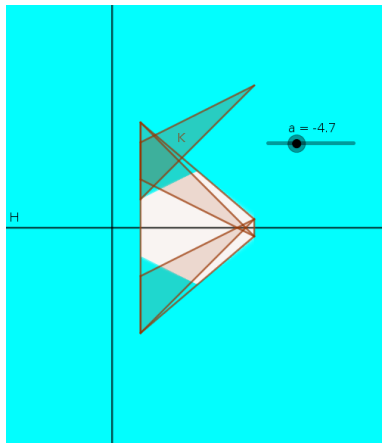
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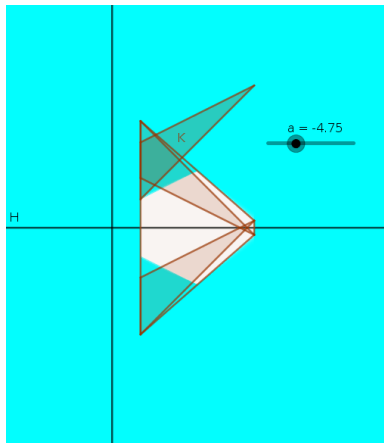
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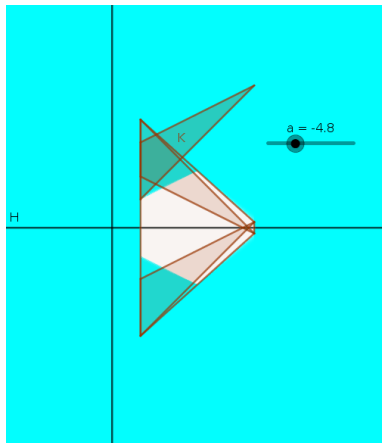
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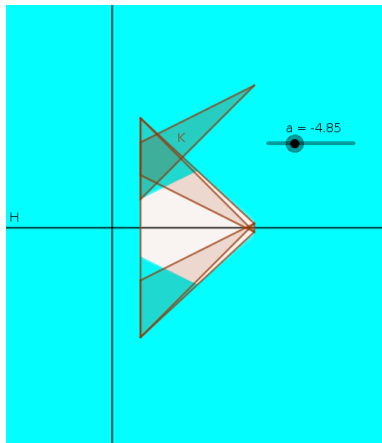
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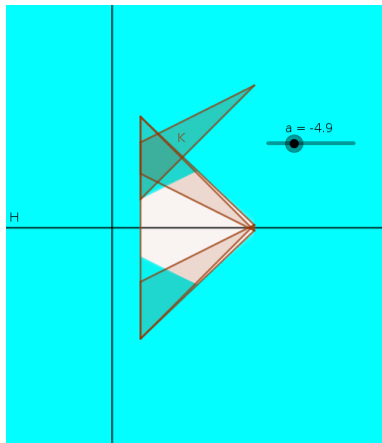
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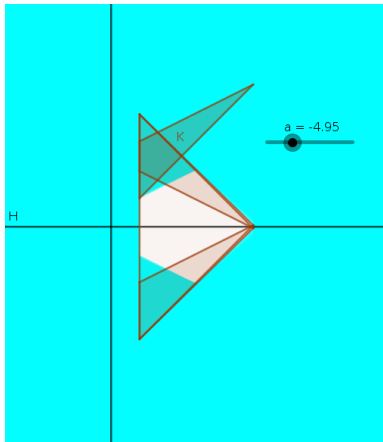


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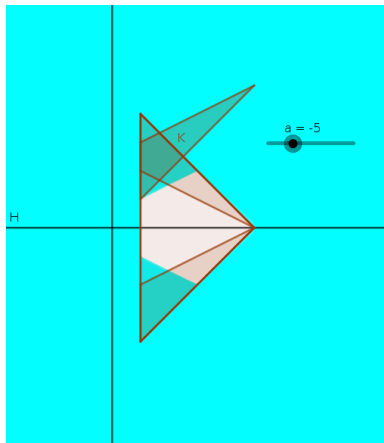


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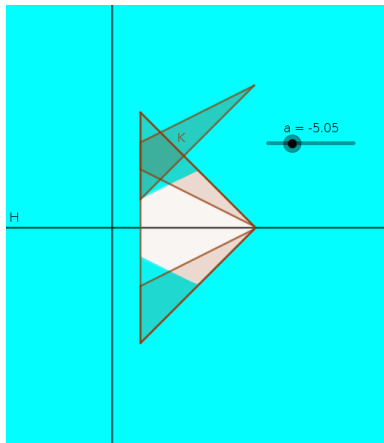




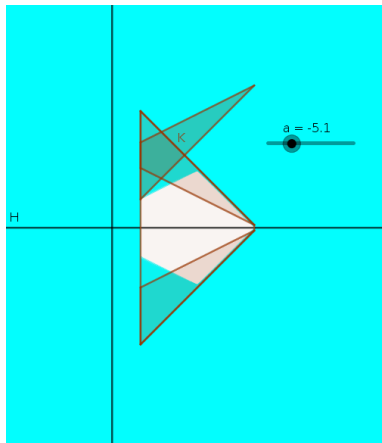
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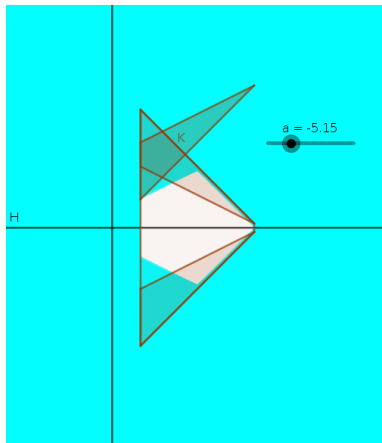
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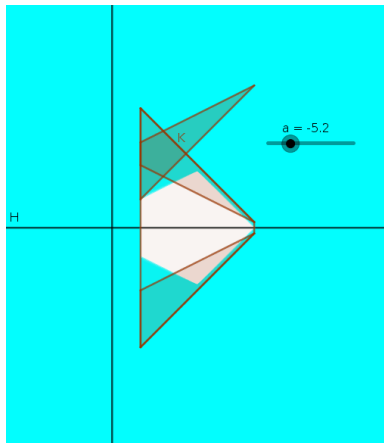
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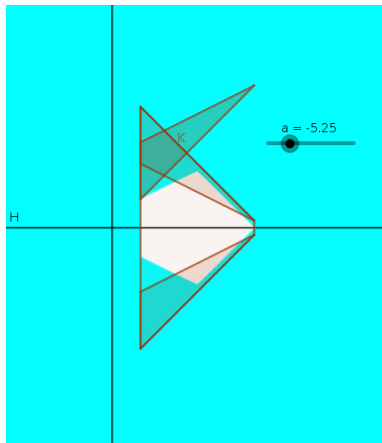
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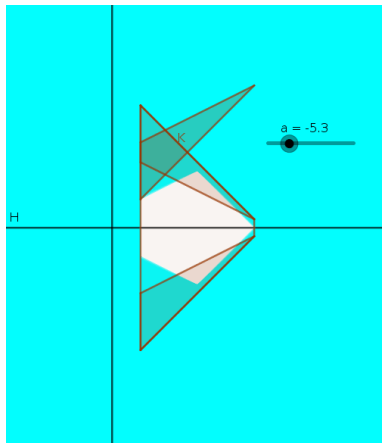
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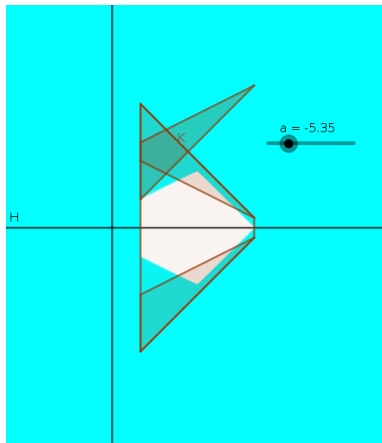


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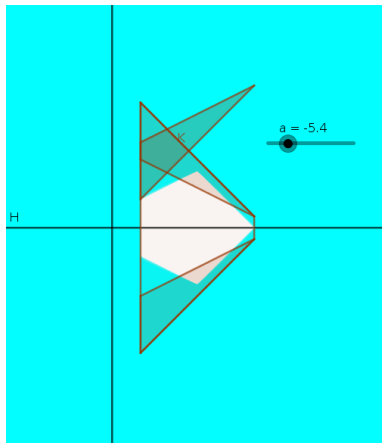


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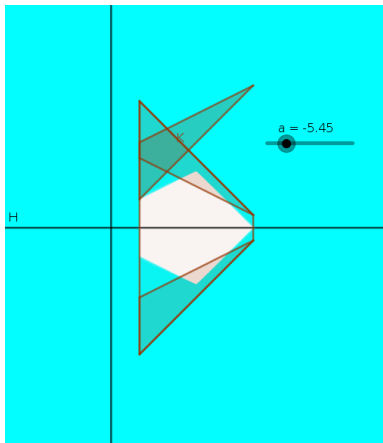




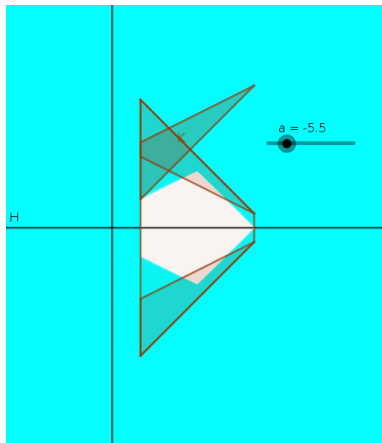
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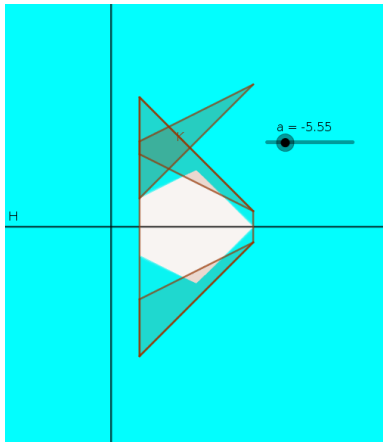
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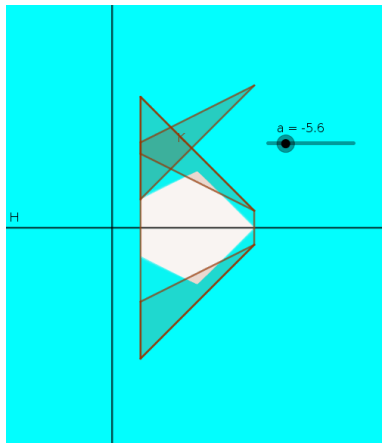
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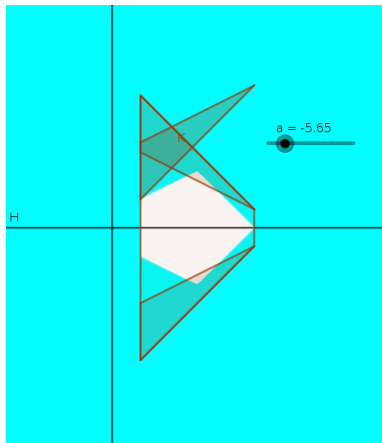
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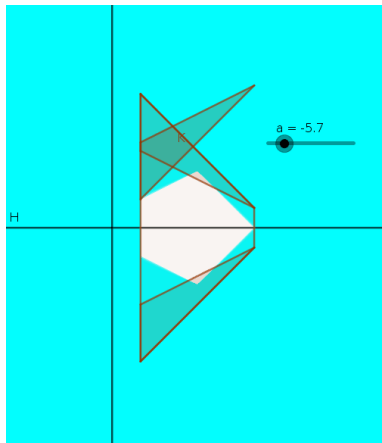
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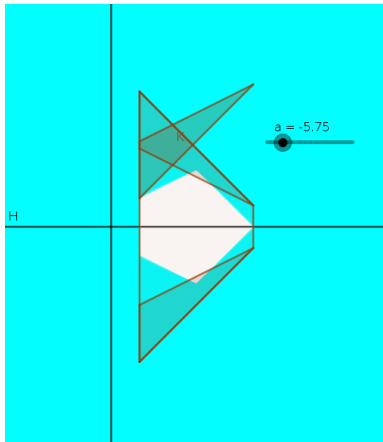


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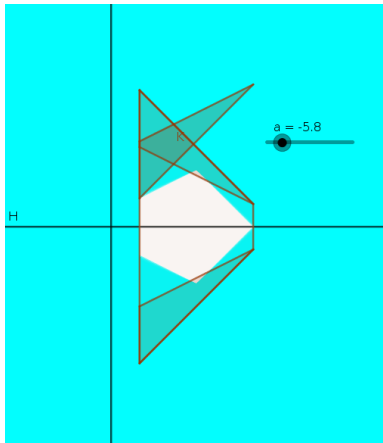


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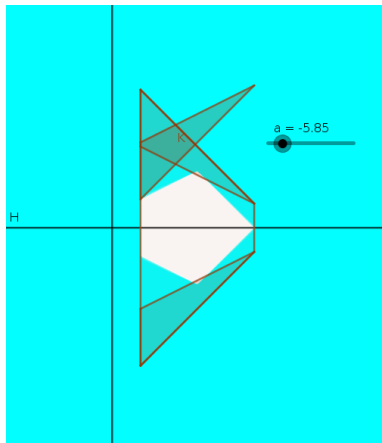




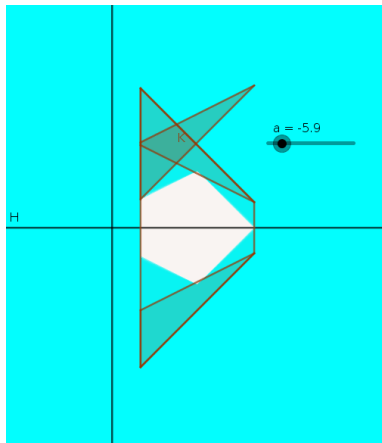
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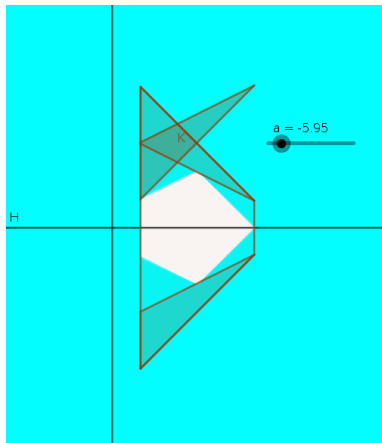
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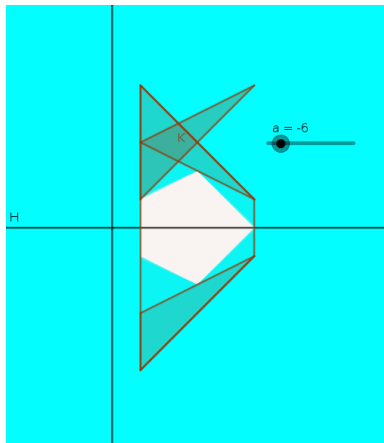
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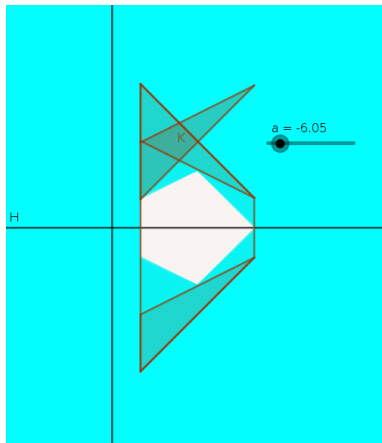
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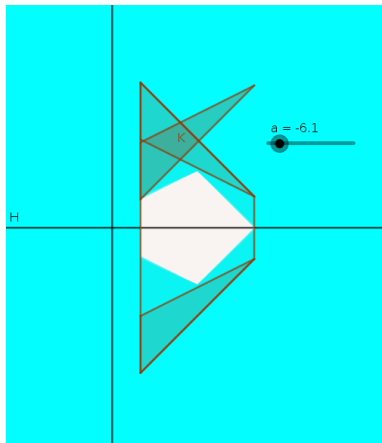
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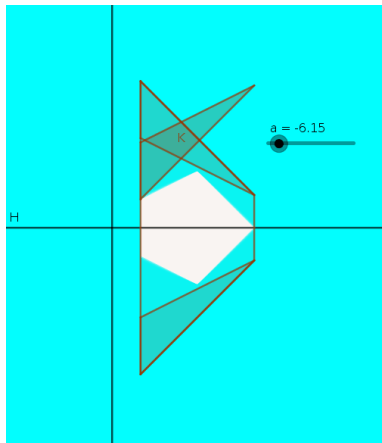


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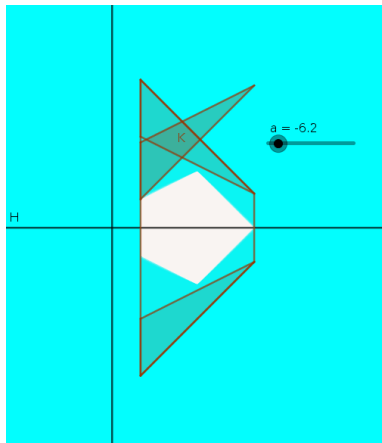


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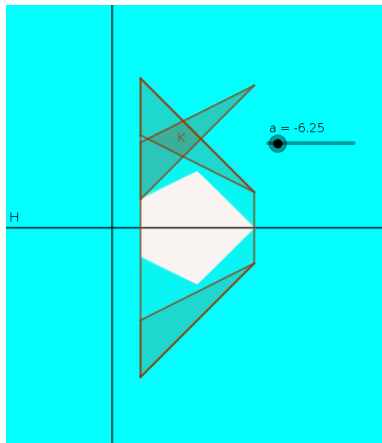




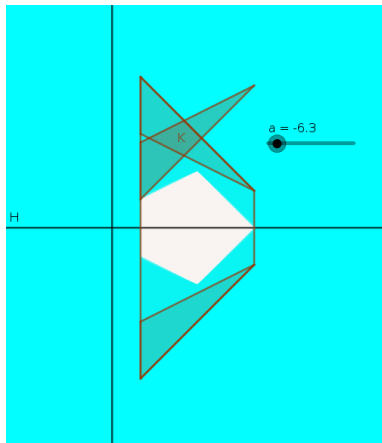
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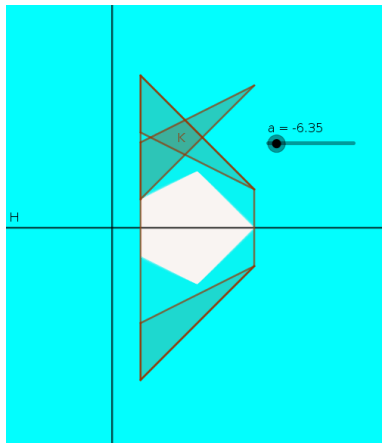
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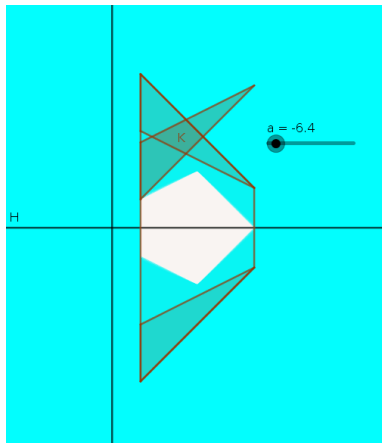
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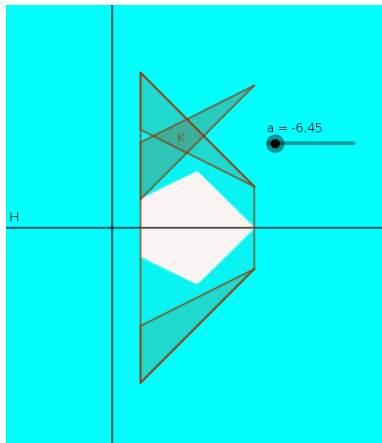
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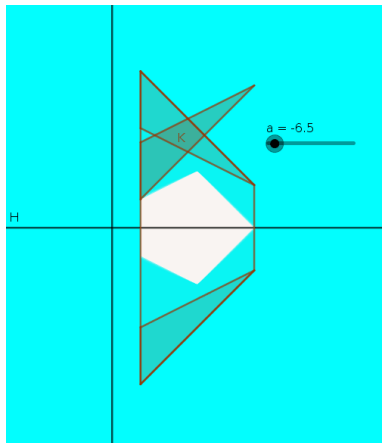
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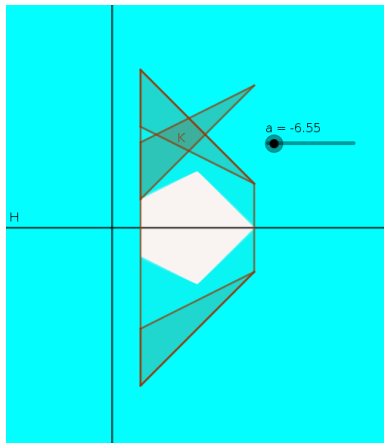


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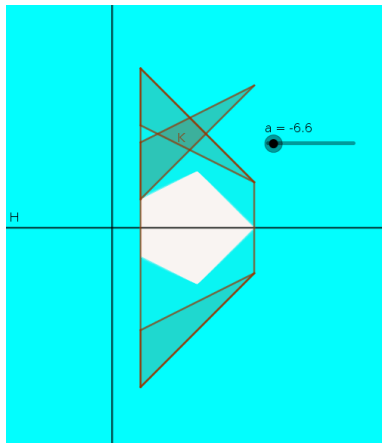


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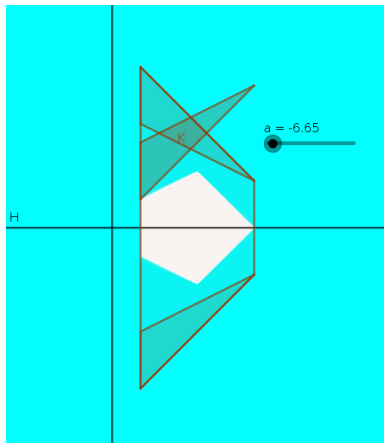




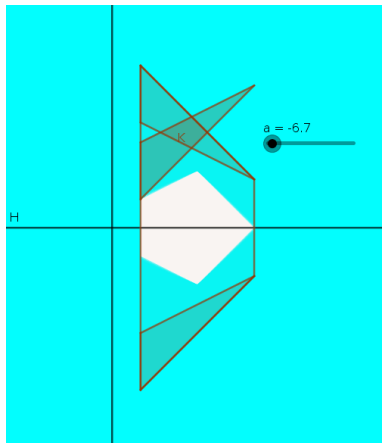
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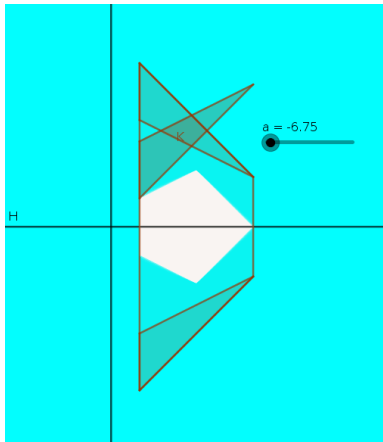
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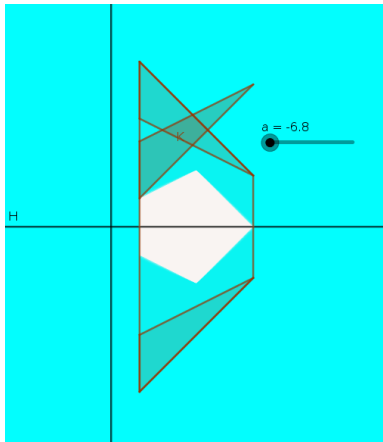
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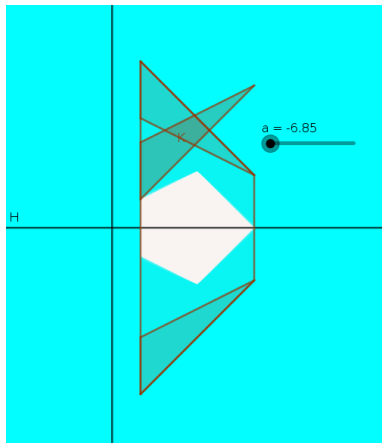
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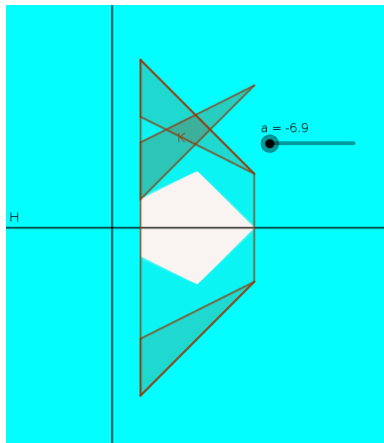
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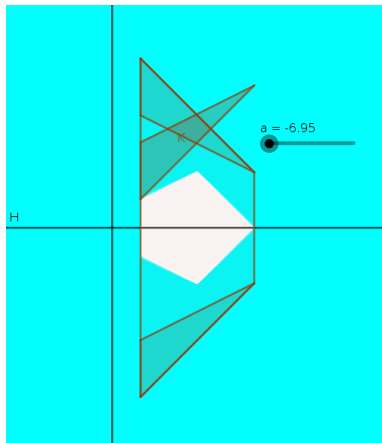


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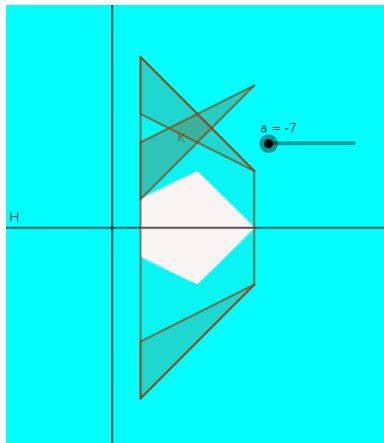


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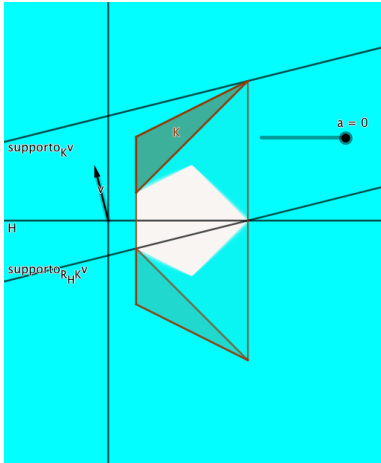




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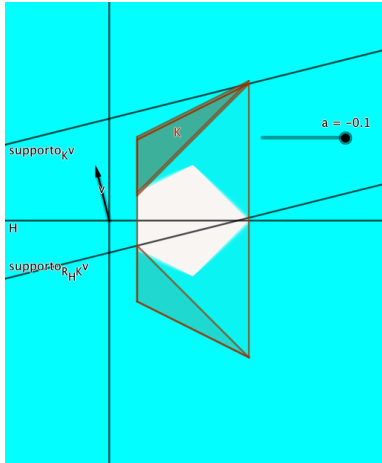


Let  $v \in S^{n-1}$ . For the support functions we have

$$h_{\bigcap_y \text{conv}((K+y), R_H(K+y))}(v) = \inf_y \left( h_{\text{conv}((K+y), R_H(K+y))}(v) \right) = \inf_y \left( \max(h_{K+y}(v), h_{R_H(K+y)}(v)) \right).$$

The animation shows that this infimum is attained when  $h_{K+y}(v) = h_{R_H(K+y)}(v)$ , and this happens exactly for  $y$  such that

$$h_{K+y}(v) = \frac{1}{2} \left( h_K(v) + h_{R_H(K)}(v) \right).$$

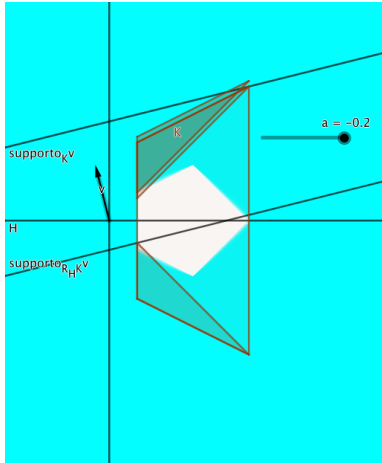


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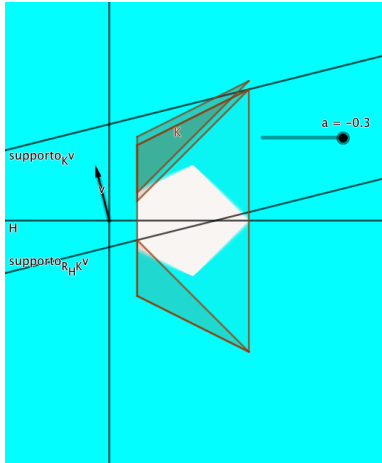


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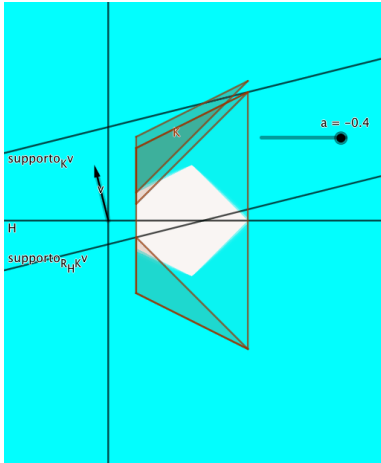


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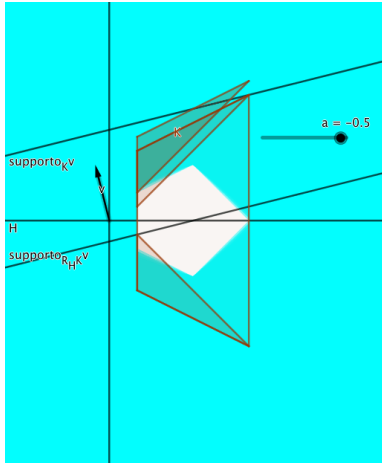


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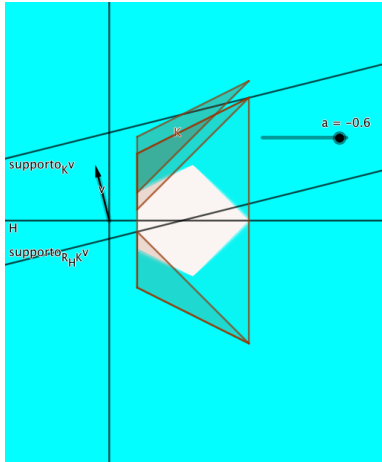
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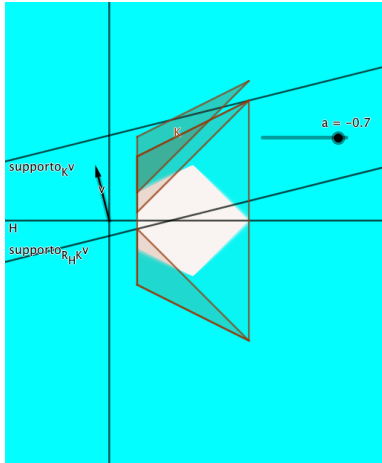


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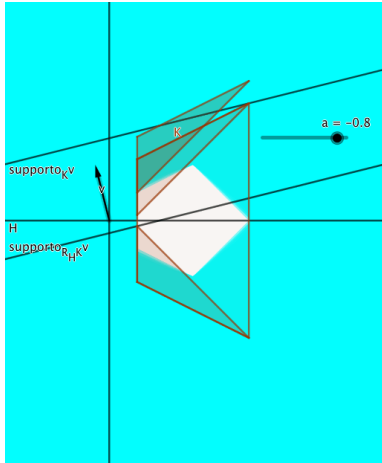


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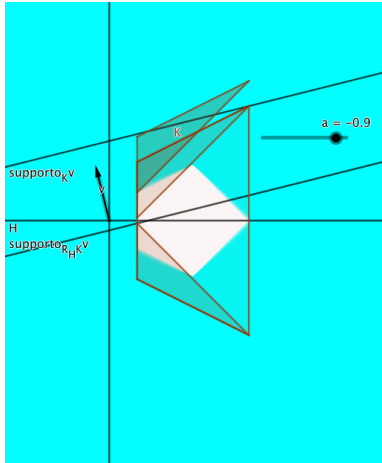


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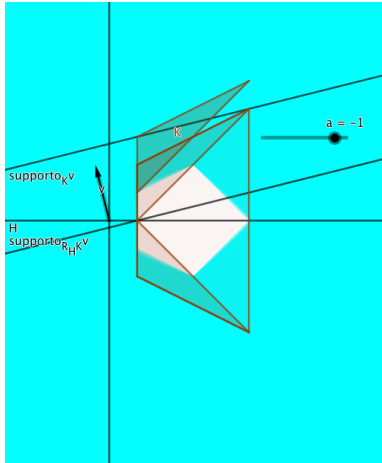


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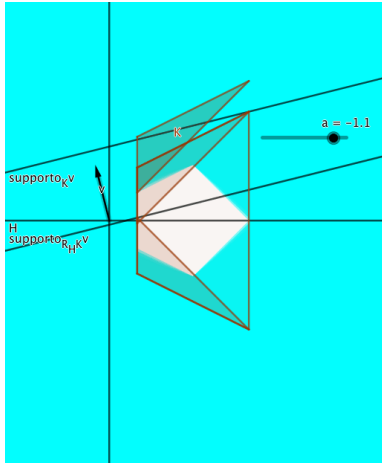


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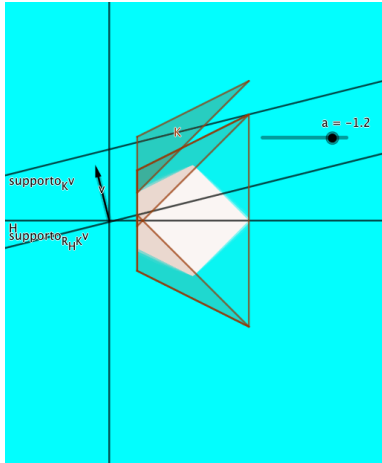


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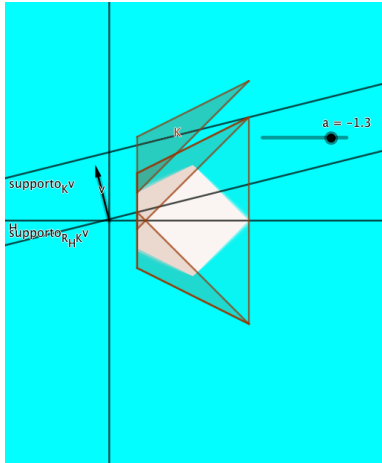


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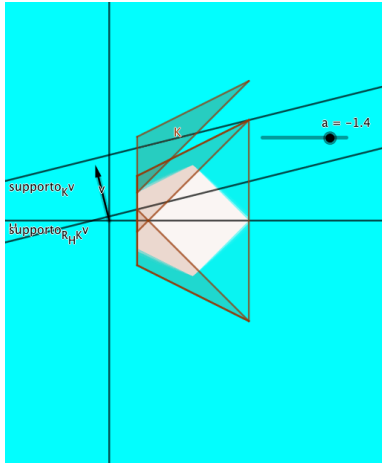
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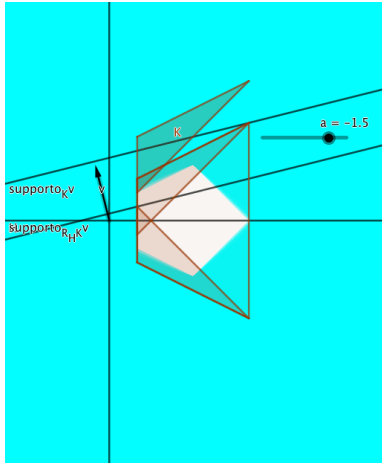


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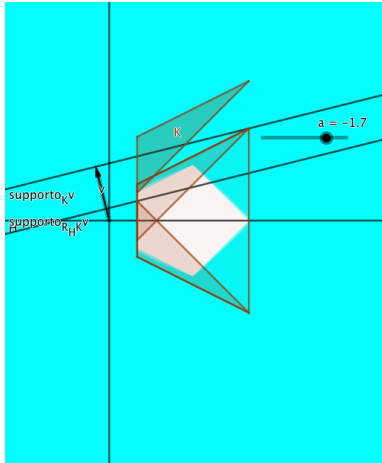
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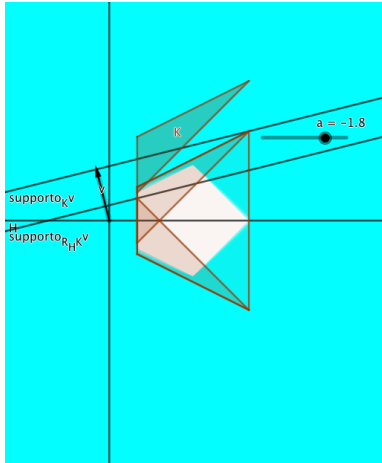


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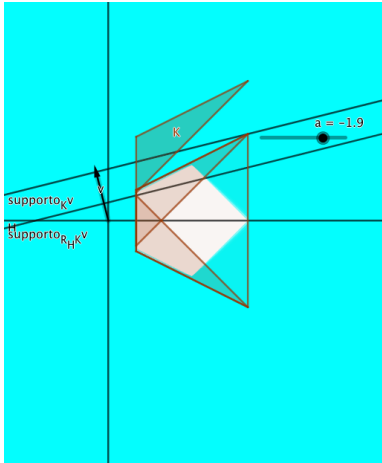


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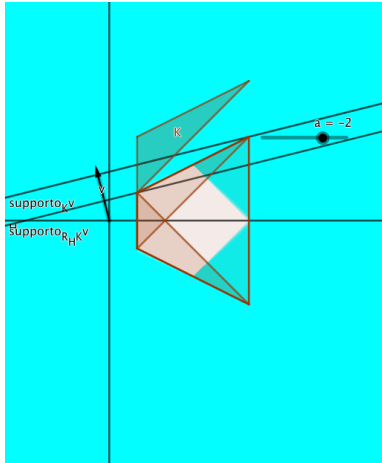


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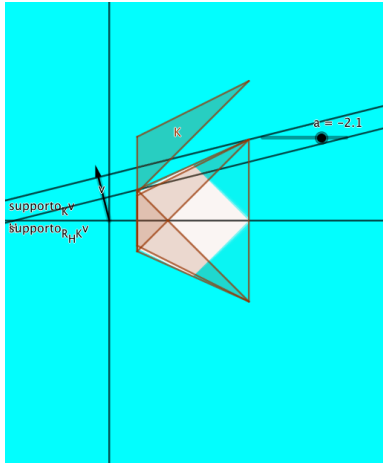


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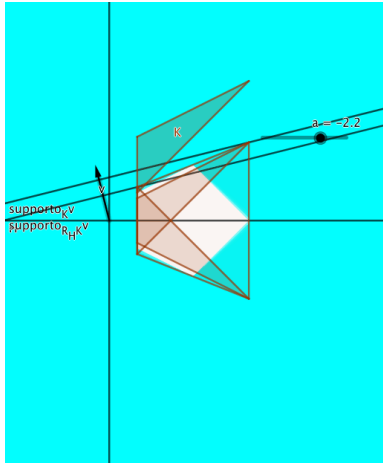
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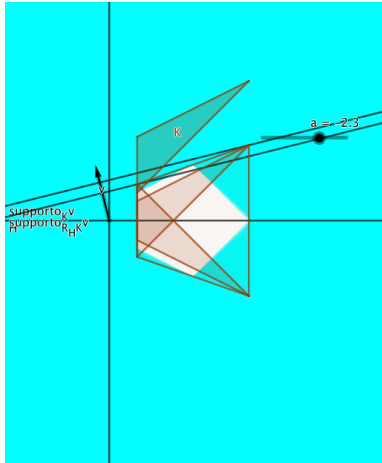


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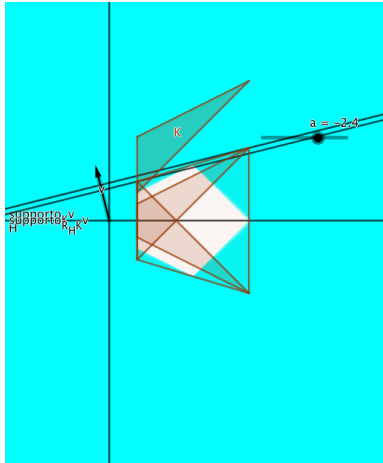


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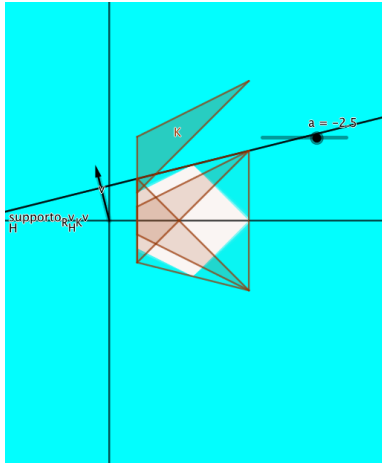


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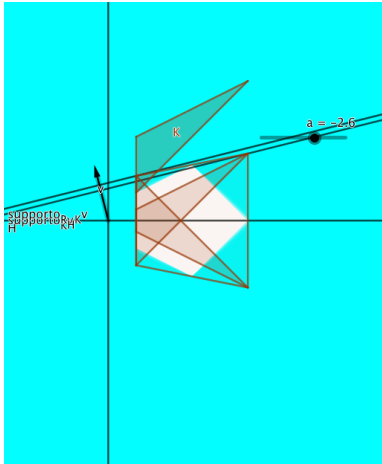


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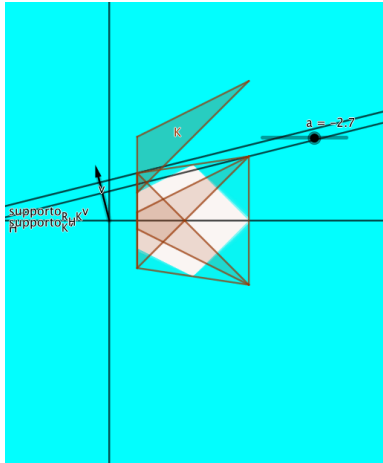


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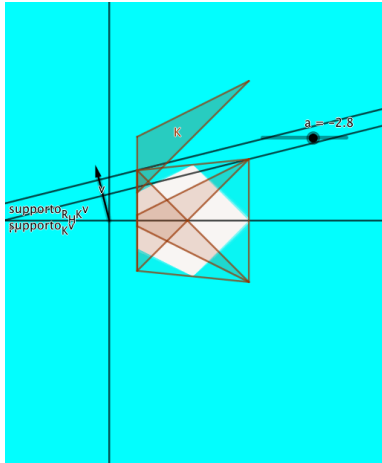


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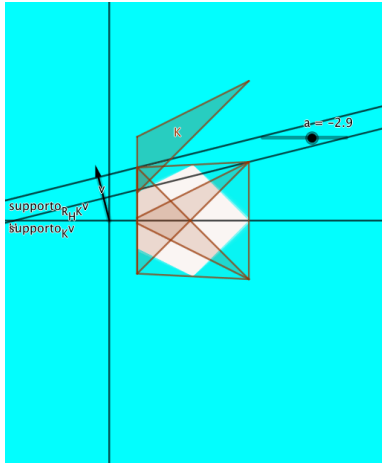


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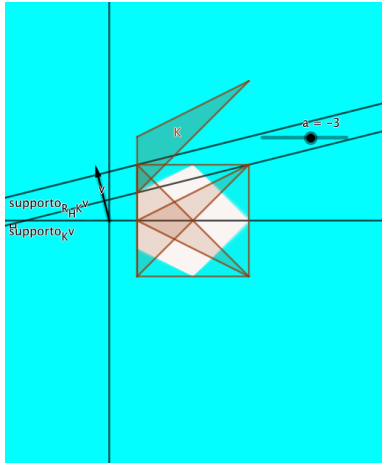
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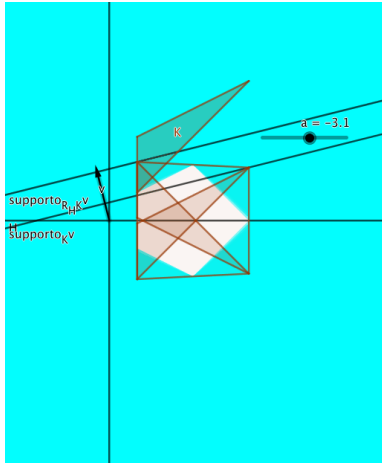


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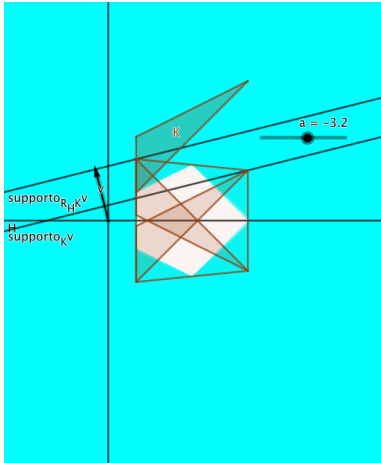


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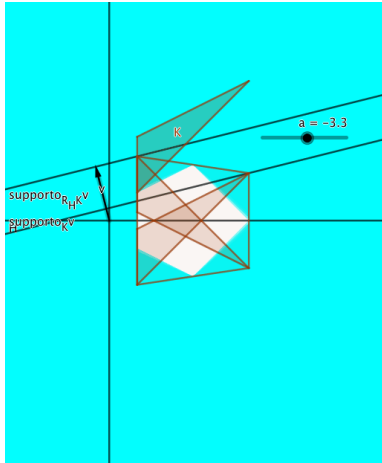


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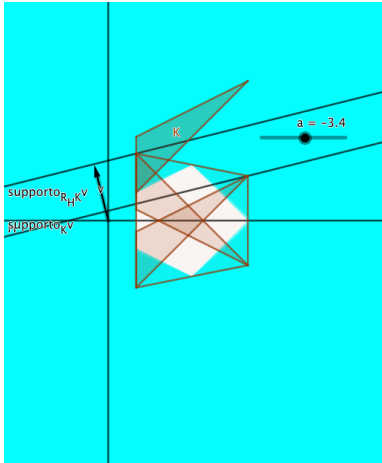


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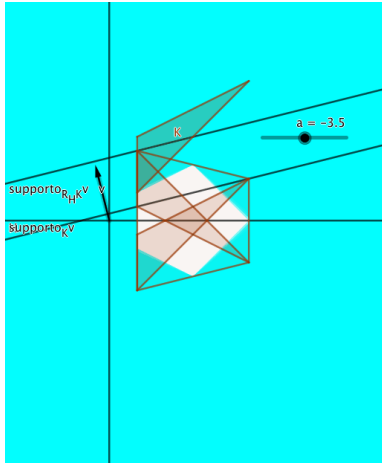


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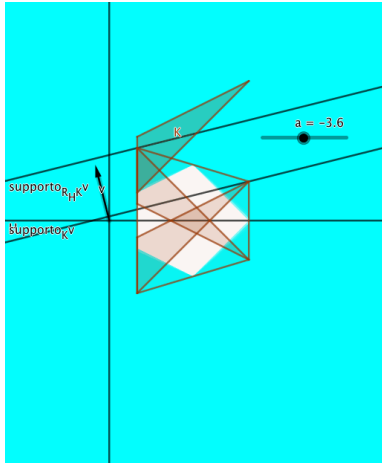


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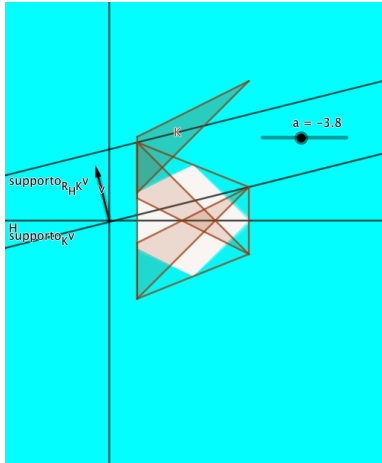
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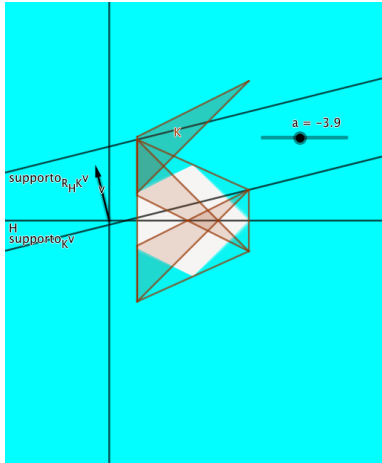


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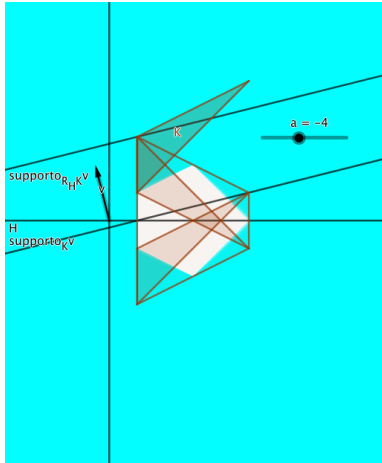


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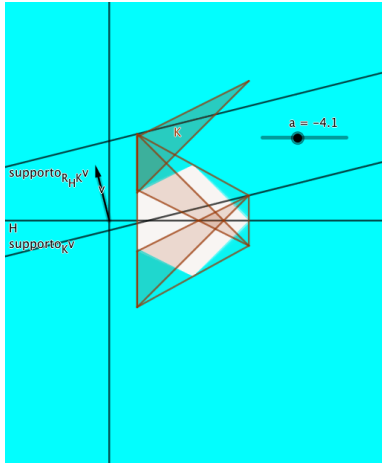


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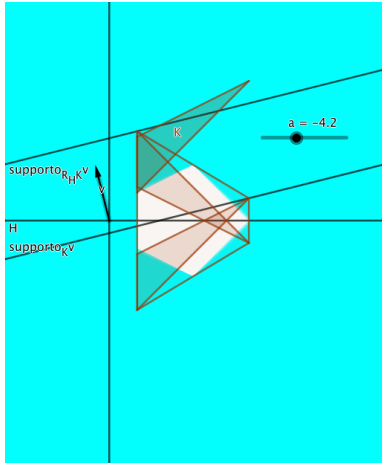


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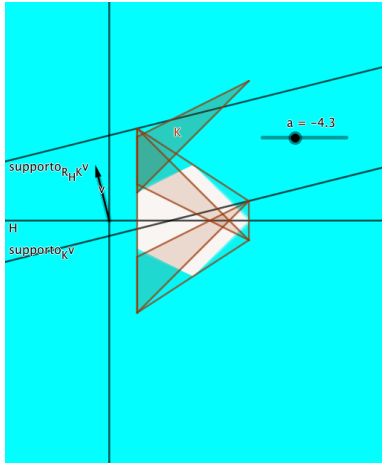


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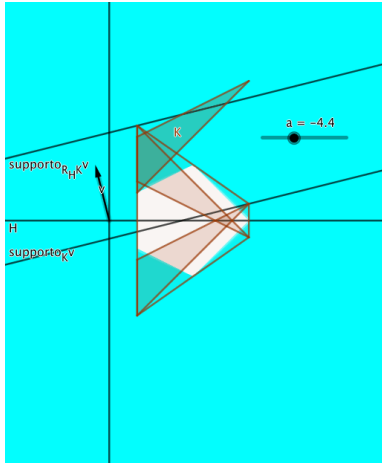


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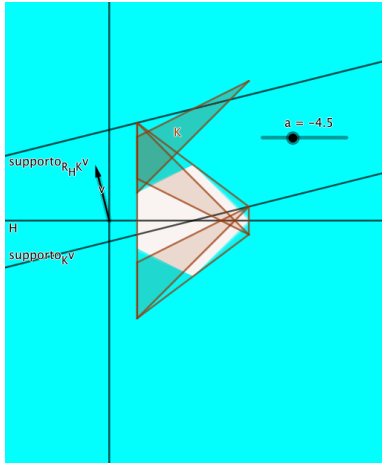


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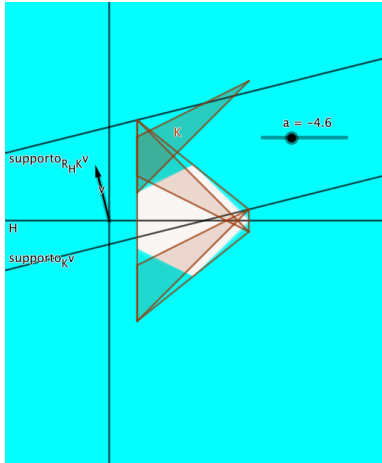
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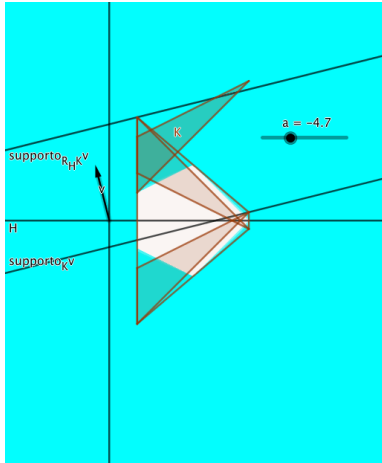


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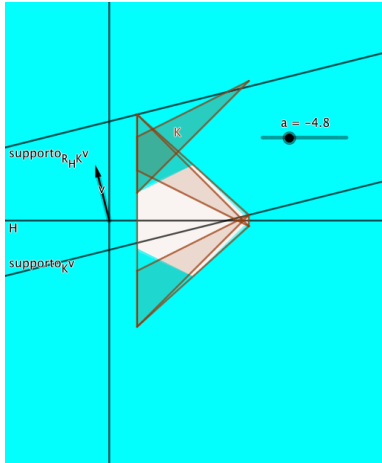


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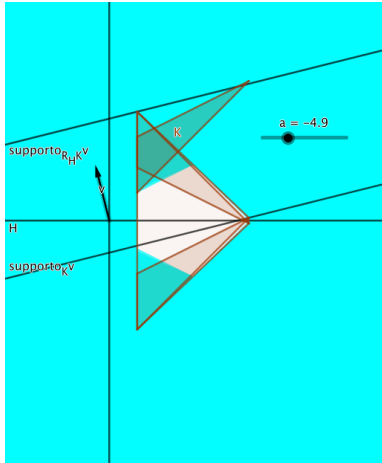


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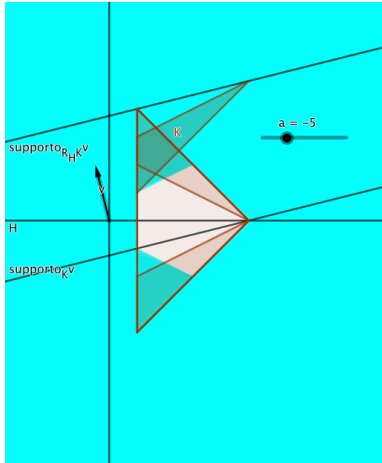


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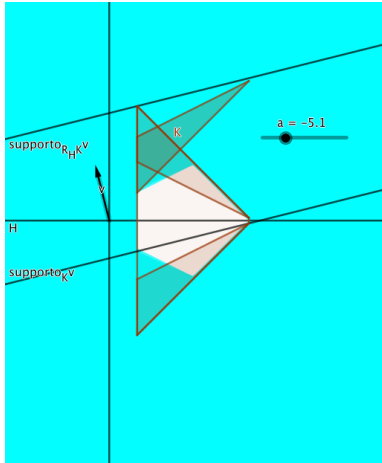


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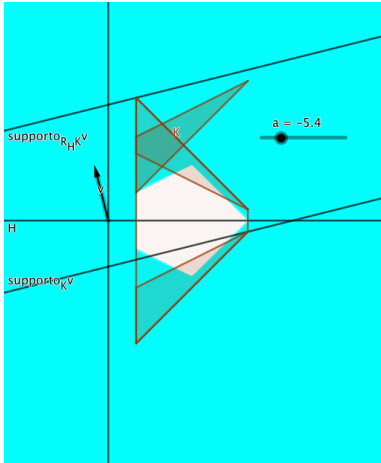
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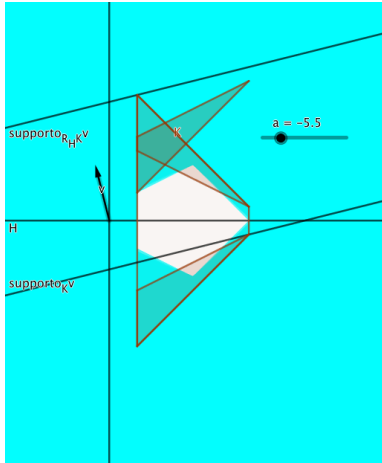


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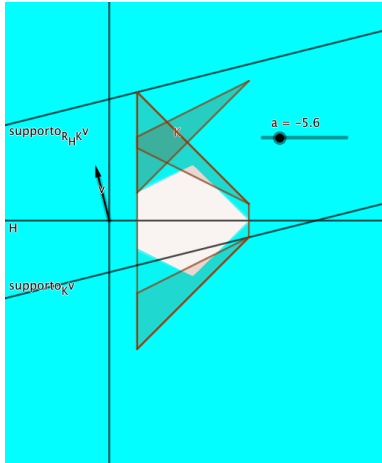


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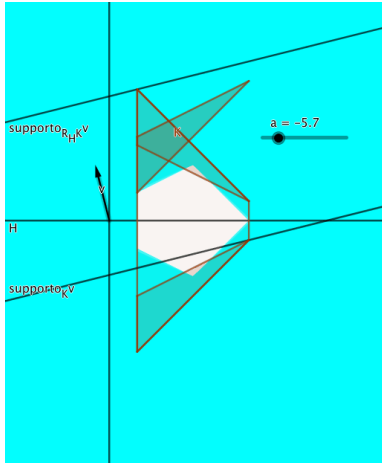


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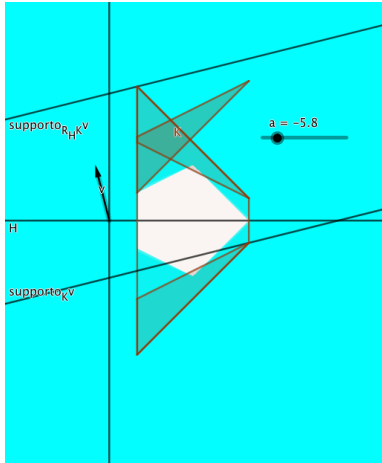


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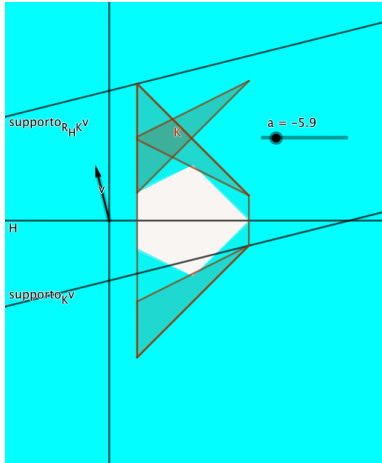


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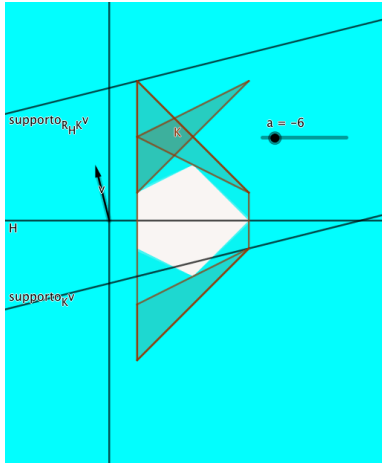


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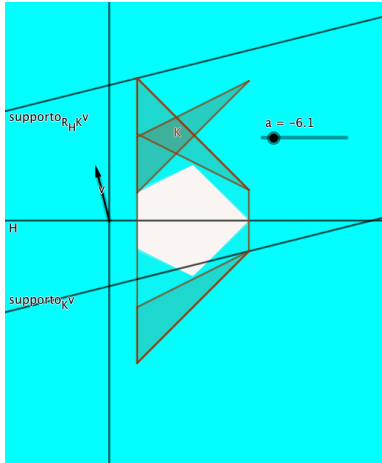


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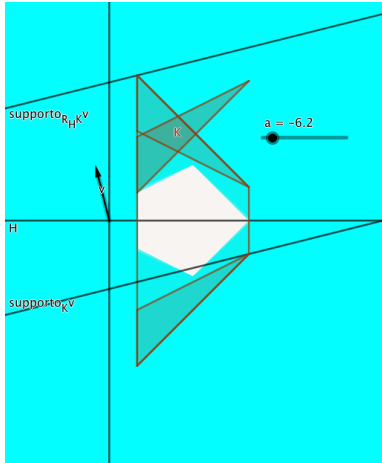
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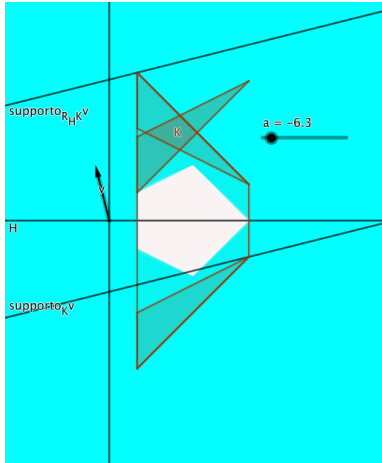


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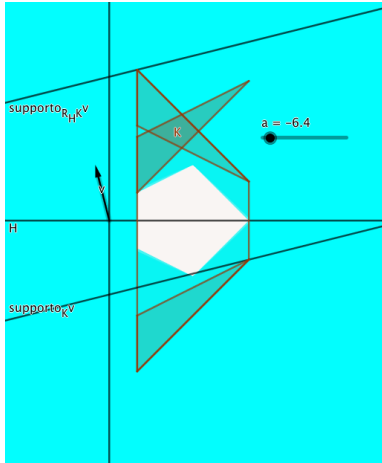


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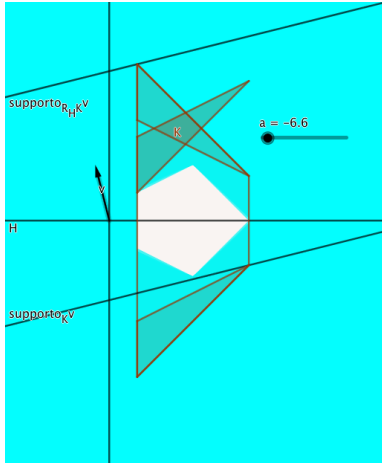
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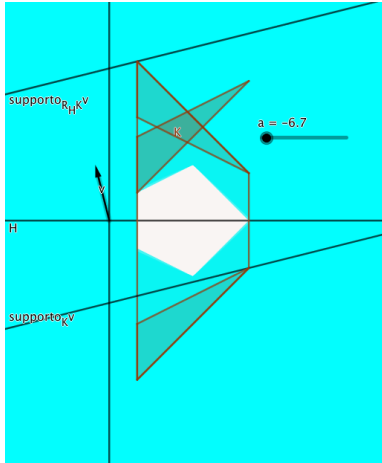


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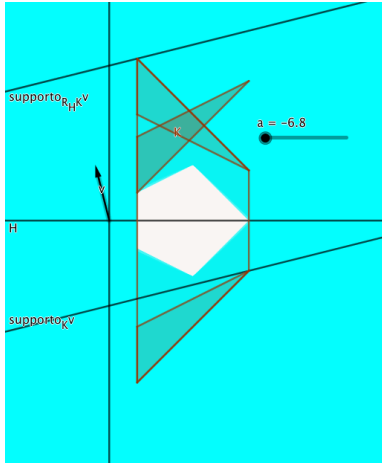


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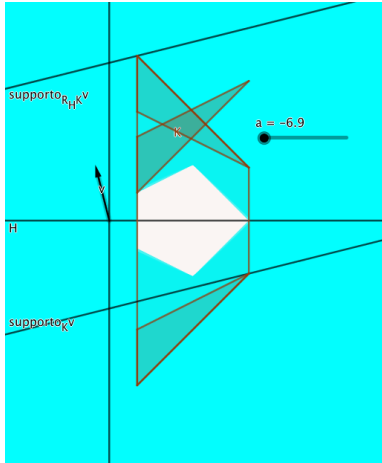


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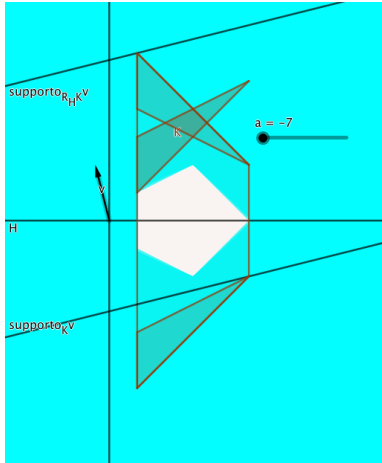
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# Inclusions of general symm.

## Corollary

Let  $1 \leq i \leq n - 1$  and  $K \in \{\text{convex bodies}\}$ . If  $\diamond_H$  is

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- ▶ No assumption is superfluous

proof of the inclusion  $\diamond K \subset M_H K$ :

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For every  $y \in H^\perp$  we have

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Since this holds  $\forall y$ , we have proved that

$$\diamond K \subset \bigcap_{y \in H^\perp} \text{conv} \left( (K + y) \cup R_H(K + y) \right) = M_H K$$

## Characterizations of Steiner and Minkowski symmetrizations

# characterizations of Minkowski symmetrization

## characterization 1

For every  $i$  and in the class {convex bodies}. Minkowski symmetrization is the only  $i$ -symmetrization which is

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## characterization 2

For every  $i$  and in the class {convex bodies}. Minkowski symmetrization is the only  $i$ -symmetrization which is

1. monotonic,
2. invariant on  $H$ -symmetric sets,
3. invariant w.r.t. translations orthogonal to  $H$  of  $H$ -symmetric sets and
4. **mean width preserving**.

- ▶ we do not have any example showing that in characterization 2 assumption 3 is really necessary.

# characterizations of Steiner symmetrization

in the class of convex bodies

Let  $i = n - 1$  and let the class be  $\{\text{convex bodies}\}$ . Steiner symmetrization is the only  $i$ -symmetrization which is

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- Let  $1 \leq i \leq n - 1$  and let  $C$  be compact. What we show is that, under those three hypothesis, **the measures of the sections of  $C$  orthogonal to  $H$  do not change during the symmetrization.**

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Let  $i = n - 1$  and let the class be {compact sets}. Steiner symm. is the only  $i$ -symm. which is

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# An open problem

Is there an  $(n-1)$ -symmetrization in  $\{\text{convex bodies}\}$  which is

1. monotonic,
2. invariant on  $H$ -symmetric sets,
3. and **surface area preserving**?

- ▶ Blaschke symm. preserves surface area but is not monotonic
- ▶ a partial answer is available in



C. Saroglou, On some problems concerning symmetrization operators,  
Forum Mathematicum 2019.

## Convergence of iterates of symmetrizations to a ball

Let  $\diamond_H$  be Steiner or Minkowski symmetrization

It is known that there are sequences  $(H_m)$  of hyperplanes such that, for any choice of the convex body  $K$ , as  $m \rightarrow \infty$

$$(\diamond_{H_m} \diamond_{H_{m-1}} \cdots \diamond_{H_1} K) \rightarrow \text{ball.}$$

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3 ingredients in this phenomenon:

- ▶ the choice of the symmetrization  $\diamond_H$
- ▶ the sequence  $(H_m)$  of subspaces (and, in particular, their dimension  $i$ )
- ▶ the class of subsets of  $\mathbb{R}^n$  on which the  $\diamond_H$  acts

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We are interested in studying this process for different symmetrizations, set class and to better understand which sequences "round"

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What if the hyperplanes in  $(H_m)$  form a **dense subset in  $S^{n-1}$** ?

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There exists a convex body  $K \subset \mathbb{R}^2$  and a sequence  $(H_m)$  of lines, dense in  $S^1$ , such that

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In  $\mathbb{R}^n$ , for each  $n$ , it is possible to rearrange any dense sequence  $(H_m)$  so that it "rounds" every convex body.



Bianchi, Klain, Lutwak, Yang and Zhang (2011)



# Literature

- ▶ speed of convergence to ball (how many symmetrizations are needed to transform a convex body in  $R^n$  of volume 1 to one at  $\varepsilon$  distance from the ball of volume 1?): Bourgain, Lindenstrauss, Milman, Klartag, Florentin and Segal
- ▶ results of probabilistic type : Mani-Levitska, Volčič, Van Shaftingen, Fortier e Burchard, Coupier e Davydov.

# universal sequences

Coupiér e Davydov (2014)

$(H_m)$  is called an  $\diamond$ -universal sequence in the set class  $\mathcal{E}$  if

$$\forall K \in \mathcal{E}, \quad \forall j \in \mathbb{N} \quad (\diamond_{H_m} \diamond_{H_{m-1}} \cdots \diamond_{H_j} K) \rightarrow \text{ball},$$

(convergence to ball independently of starting index)

**Universal sequences deserve this name**

## Theorem, Coupier and Davidov (2014)

Let  $i = n - 1$  and let the set class be  $\{\text{convex bodies}\}$ .

A sequence is **Minkowski-universal** if and only if it is **Steiner-universal**.

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Then a sequence is  **$\diamond$ -universal if and only if it is Minkowski-universal.**

# Is it more difficult to “round” compact sets?

”a compact set need not become convex”

There exists compact sets  $C \subset \mathbb{R}^2$  and “meaningful” sequences  $(H_m)$  such that

$$(\diamond_{H_m} \diamond_{H_{m-1}} \cdots \diamond_{H_1} C) \rightarrow \text{a non-convex set.}$$



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## Theorem

Let  $1 \leq i \leq n - 1$  and let  $\diamond$  be Steiner, Minkowski or Schwarz symm.

A sequence is  $\diamond$ -universal in the class of {compact sets} if it is  $\diamond$ -universal in the class of {convex bodies}



# Explicit construction of universal sequences

“Alphabet” = finite set  $\mathcal{F} = \{F_1, \dots, F_p\}$  of  $i$ -dimensional subspaces in  $\mathbb{R}^n$

## Sequences built from a finite “alphabet”

Sequences  $(H_m)$  with the property that every their element belongs to  $\mathcal{F}$

Example:  $(H_m) = F_3, F_3, F_1, F_4, F_2, F_3, F_1, F_3, F_1, F_1, F_4, \dots$

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These sequences are universal if the alphabet  $\mathcal{F}$  has the following property:

The (reflection) symmetry w.r.t every  $F_j$  implies full radial symmetry.

This research contains also results regarding how to construct alphabets with this property.