

## ***p*-harmonic diffeomorphisms**

**A. El Soufi, E. Sandier**

Laboratoire de Mathématiques et Physique Théorique, Université de Tours, Parc de Grandmont,  
F-37200 Tours, France, E-mail: elsoufi@univ-tours.fr, sandier@cmla.ens-cachan.fr

Received December 2, 1996 / Accepted December 17, 1996

### **Introduction**

In their paper [2], J.M. Coron and F. Hélein pointed out the following fact: if a harmonic map between surfaces satisfies a global hypothesis – namely being a  $C^1$ -diffeomorphism – then it is energy minimizing. Later Hélein [5, 6] proved a similar result for harmonic diffeomorphisms defined on a smooth domain of  $\mathbf{R}^n$ ,  $n \geq 3$  under the additional assumption that they are, roughly speaking,  $SO(n)$ -equivariant.

Coron-Hélein's result relies on an essentially two-dimensional technique while those of Hélein are based on one known as calibration or null Lagrangians. This latter technique had been used previously by F.H. Lin [8] in proving that the map  $x/|x|$  from the  $n$ -dimensional ball to the  $(n - 1)$ -dimensional sphere is energy minimizing.

In this paper, our aim is to establish in the framework of  $p$ -harmonic mappings results similar to those in [2] and [5, 6], again using calibration techniques. Let us mention extensions of the work of Lin [8] to the  $p$ -harmonic case: for the map  $x/|x|$  first, by Avellaneda-Lin [7], and for a similar problem in complex projective space by Nichols [9].

### **1 Statement of results**

In the sequel,  $\Omega$  will be a smooth bounded domain in  $\mathbf{R}^n$  endowed with the canonical metric  $c$ , and  $(M, h)$  a Riemannian manifold with boundary. The  $p$ -energy of a map  $u$  from  $\Omega$  to  $M$  is

$$E_p(u) = \int_{\Omega} |du|^p(x) dx^1 \wedge \dots \wedge dx^n,$$

where  $|du(x)|$  is the Hilbert-Schmidt norm of  $du_x$  taken with respect to the metrics  $c$  and  $h$ . We also define  $H^{1,p}(\Omega, M)$  to be the set of maps from  $\Omega$  to  $M$  with finite  $p$ -energy.

A map  $u$  in  $H^{1,p}(\Omega, M)$  is said to be  $p$ -harmonic if it is a critical point of the  $p$ -energy, i.e. if for any variation  $(u_t)_t$  of  $u$  such that  $u_t$  and  $u$  agree on  $\partial\Omega$  we have  $\frac{d}{dt}E_p(u_t)|_{t=0} = 0$ . Finally, if  $\phi : \Omega \rightarrow M$  is a fixed map, we denote by  $H_\phi^{1,p}(\Omega, M)$  the set of maps in  $H^{1,p}(\Omega, M)$  agreeing with  $\phi$  on  $\partial\Omega$ ; the map  $\phi$  will then be called  $p$ -minimizing if for all  $u$  in  $H^{1,p}(\Omega, M)$ ,  $E_p(u) \geq E_p(\phi)$ . We are now able to state our first result, concerning 1-harmonic diffeomorphisms:

**Theorem 1.** *Let  $\phi : (\Omega, c) \rightarrow (M, h)$  be a 1-harmonic  $C^1$ -diffeomorphism, with  $\Omega \subset \mathbf{R}^2$ , then  $\phi$  is 1-minimizing. Moreover,  $\phi$  is the only minimizer of  $E_1$  in  $H_\phi^{1,1}(\Omega, M)$ .*

Our second result deals with equivariant diffeomorphisms defined on  $\mathbf{B}^n$ , the unit ball in  $\mathbf{R}^n$ . A map  $\phi : \mathbf{B}^n \rightarrow (M, h)$  is called  $SO(n)$ -equivariant if, for any  $R \in SO(n)$  there exists an isometry  $\gamma$  of  $(M, h)$  such that  $\phi \circ R = \gamma \circ \phi$ .

**Theorem 2.** *Let  $\phi : (\mathbf{B}^n, c) \rightarrow (M, h)$  be a  $p$ -harmonic,  $SO(n)$ -equivariant  $C^1$ -diffeomorphism with  $p$  an integer between 1 and  $n - 1$ , then  $\phi$  is  $p$ -minimizing. Moreover,  $\phi$  is the only minimizer of  $E_p$  in  $H_\phi^{1,p}(\mathbf{B}^n, M)$ .*

The simplest example of a map satisfying the hypothesis in Theorems 1 and 2 is the identity map of  $(\Omega, c)$ . Non trivial examples in the equivariant case have been constructed by A. Fardoun [4].

Before we proceed with the proofs, notice that if  $u : (\Omega, c) \rightarrow (M, h)$ , then  $u \circ \phi^{-1} : (\Omega, c) \rightarrow (\Omega, \phi^*h)$  has same  $p$ -energy as  $u$ , so that what we really want to prove in Theorem 1 is that if the identity map  $I : (\Omega, c) \rightarrow (\Omega, g)$  is 1-harmonic, with  $g$  a continuous metric, then  $I$  is the unique minimizer of  $E_1$  in  $H_I^{1,1}(\Omega, \Omega)$ .

As for Theorem 2, the additional hypothesis that  $\phi$  be  $SO(n)$ -equivariant translates into  $g = \phi^*h$  is an  $SO(n)$ -invariant metric on  $\mathbf{B}^n$ . It suffices then to prove that given any continuous  $SO(n)$ -invariant metric  $g$  on  $\mathbf{B}^n$ , if the identity map  $I : (\mathbf{B}^n, c) \rightarrow (\mathbf{B}^n, g)$  is  $p$ -harmonic, with  $1 \leq p \leq n - 1$  an integer, then  $I$  is the unique minimizer of  $E_p$  in  $H_I^{1,p}(\mathbf{B}^n, \mathbf{B}^n)$ .

## 2 1-harmonic diffeomorphisms

Taking into account the above remarks, it suffices to study the case of the identity map  $I : (\Omega, c) \rightarrow (\Omega, g)$ , where  $g$  is a continuous riemannian metric on  $\Omega$  such that  $I$  is  $p$ -harmonic.

We define the stress energy tensor  $S^p$  associated to the functional  $E_p$  at the map  $I$  by

$$S^p = |dI|^{p-2} \left( \frac{1}{p} |dI|^2 c - g \right) = T(g)^{p-2} \left( \frac{1}{p} T(g)^2 c - g \right),$$

where  $T(g) = \sum_i g_{ii}$  is the trace of the metric  $g$  relative to the canonical metric  $c$ . It is then known (see [1] and [3]) that  $I$  is  $p$ -harmonic if and only if  $S^p$  is conserved, i.e. has null divergence. We now consider the  $n$ -form  $\omega_p$  on  $\Omega \times \Omega \subset \mathbf{R}^{2n}$  given in cartesian coordinates by

$$\omega_p(x, y) = \sum_{i,k} S_{ik}^p(y) \, dy^1 \wedge \dots \wedge dy^{k-1} \wedge dx^i \wedge dy^{k+1} \wedge \dots \wedge dy^n.$$

We have

$$d\omega_p(x, y) = - \sum_i (\delta S^p)_i(y) \, dx^i \wedge dy^1 \wedge \dots \wedge dy^n,$$

where  $\delta S^p$  is the divergence of  $S^p$ . Therefore we have the

**Lemma 1.1.** *The identity map  $I : (\Omega, c) \rightarrow (\Omega, g)$  is  $p$ -harmonic if and only if  $\omega_p$  is a closed form*

Now, to any  $u$  mapping  $\Omega$  to itself let us associate the map

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{u} : \Omega &\rightarrow \Omega \times \Omega \\ x &\rightarrow (x, u(x)) \end{aligned}$$

whose image is  $\Gamma(u)$ , the graph of  $u$ . A simple calculation shows that

$$\tilde{I}^* \omega_p = \left( \frac{n}{p} - 1 \right) |dI|^p dx^1 \wedge \dots \wedge dx^n,$$

so that

$$\int_{\Gamma(I)} \omega_p = \int_{\Omega} \tilde{I}^* \omega_p = \left( \frac{n}{p} - 1 \right) E_p(I).$$

But since  $\omega_p$  is closed, for any  $u$  mapping  $\Omega$  to itself and agreeing with the identity mapping  $I$  on the boundary of  $\Omega$ , we have

$$\int_{\Omega} \tilde{u}^* \omega_p = \int_{\Gamma(u)} \omega_p = \int_{\Gamma(I)} \omega_p = \left( \frac{n}{p} - 1 \right) E_p(I).$$

In other words, the lagrangian  $L_p(u, du)$  defined by

$$\tilde{u}^* \omega_p = L_p(u, du) dx^1 \wedge \dots \wedge dx^n$$

is a *null lagrangian*. Our Theorem 1 is now a consequence of the following lemma.

**Lemma 1.2.** *Let  $n = 2$ . For any  $u \in H_I^{1,1}(\Omega, \Omega)$ , we have the pointwise inequality*

$$|du|(x) \geq L_1(u, du)(x),$$

moreover,  $|du| = L_1(u, du)$  holds a.e. in  $\Omega$  if and only if  $u = I$ .

*Proof.* The stress energy tensor in the case  $p = 1$ ,  $n = 2$  is given by the  $2 \times 2$  matrix

$$S^1 = T(g)^{-1/2} \begin{pmatrix} g_{22} & -g_{12} \\ -g_{12} & g_{11} \end{pmatrix},$$

and the form  $\omega_1$ , written  $\omega$  in the sequel, is given by

$$T(g)^{1/2}(y)\omega(x, y) = dx^1 \wedge (g_{12}(y)dy^1 + g_{22}(y)dy^2) - dx^2 \wedge (g_{11}(y)dy^1 + g_{12}(y)dy^2).$$

Therefore, for any  $u = (u^1, u^2) \in H_T^{1,1}(\Omega, \Omega)$  and any  $x \in \Omega$  we have, writing  $y = u(x)$ ,

$$T(g)^{1/2}(y)\tilde{u}^*\omega(x) = \sum_{i,j \leq 2} g_{ij}(y)\partial_i u^j(x) dx^1 \wedge dx^2,$$

hence the expression for the null lagrangian

$$T(g)^{1/2}(y)L(u, du)(x) = \sum_{i,j \leq 2} g_{ij}(y)\partial_i u^j(x).$$

The right-hand side of this last equation happens to be the scalar product relative to the canonical metric  $c$  of the metric  $g$  at  $y = u(x)$  with the form  $T(X, Y) = c(du_x(X), Y)$ . We can therefore assume that we are using a frame in which,  $g(y)$  is a diagonal matrix:

$$g(y) = \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & 0 \\ 0 & \beta \end{pmatrix},$$

with  $\alpha, \beta$  two positive numbers. We now have

$$L(u, du)(x) = (\alpha + \beta)^{-1/2}(\alpha \partial_1 u^1(x) + \beta \partial_2 u^2(x)),$$

whereas the energy density is

$$|du|^2(x) = \alpha ((\partial_1 u^1(x))^2 + (\partial_2 u^1(x))^2) + \beta ((\partial_1 u^2(x))^2 + (\partial_2 u^2(x))^2),$$

so that, by a simple calculation,

$$|du|^2 = L(u, du)^2 + \frac{\alpha\beta}{\alpha + \beta} (\partial_1 u^1 - \partial_2 u^2)^2 + \alpha(\partial_2 u^1)^2 + \beta(\partial_1 u^2)^2.$$

It follows that  $|du|(x) \geq L(u, du)(x)$  with equality holding if and only if  $du_x$  is a dilatation of  $\mathbf{R}^2$ . Lemma 2.2 follows at once by noting that if, for all  $x \in \Omega$ ,  $du_x$  is a dilatation then  $u$  has to be a dilatation itself – in fact the identity map since the two agree on  $\partial\Omega$ .

### 3 Equivariant diffeomorphisms

We now consider the case where  $\Omega = \mathbf{B}^n$ , the unit ball in  $\mathbf{R}^n$ , and  $g$  is a  $SO(n)$ -invariant continuous metric on  $\mathbf{B}^n$  – i.e. for any  $R \in SO(n)$ ,  $R^*g = g$ . Finally, we assume that the identity map  $I : (\mathbf{B}^n, c) \rightarrow (\mathbf{B}^n, g)$  is  $p$ -harmonic with  $p$  an integer strictly less than  $n$ .

The fact that  $g$  is  $SO(n)$ -equivariant implies that it can be written as,

$$g(x) = g_{\parallel}(r)dr^2 + g_{\perp}(r)r^2d\sigma^2,$$

where  $d\sigma^2$  is the canonical metric on the unit sphere in  $\mathbf{R}^n$ ,  $r = |x|$ , and  $g_{\parallel}, g_{\perp}$  are two continuous functions of  $r$ .

The stress-energy tensor  $S^p$  is now given by

$$S^p = T(g)^{\frac{p-2}{2}} \left[ \left( \frac{1}{p}T(g) - g_{\parallel} \right) dr^2 + (g_{\parallel} - g_{\perp})r^2d\sigma^2 \right],$$

with  $T(g) = g_{\parallel} + (n - 1)g_{\perp}$ . A straightforward calculation then gives

**Lemma 1.3.** *The identity map  $I : (\mathbf{B}^n, c) \rightarrow (\mathbf{B}^n, g)$  is  $p$ -harmonic if and only if*

$$\left( T(g)^{\frac{p-2}{2}} \left( \frac{1}{p}T(g) - g_{\parallel} \right) \right)' = \frac{n-1}{r}T(g)^{\frac{p-2}{2}}(g_{\parallel} - g_{\perp}),$$

where  $f'(r)$  is the derivative of  $f$  in the sense of distributions with respect to  $r$ .

The proof of Theorem 2 will follow – as in the previous section – from the existence of an  $n$ -form  $\omega$  on  $\mathbf{B}^n \times \mathbf{B}^n$  that “calibrates” the graph of the identity map – e.g. a form such that

- i)  $d\omega = 0$
- ii)  $\int_{\Gamma(I)} \omega = E_p(I)$
- iii)  $\int_{\Gamma(u)} \omega \leq E_p(u)$ , for all  $u \in H_I^{1,p}(\mathbf{B}^n, \mathbf{B}^n)$ ,

equality holding in iii) if and only if  $u = I$ .

#### In search of $\omega$

The cartesian coordinates on  $\mathbf{B}^n \times \mathbf{B}^n$  are still  $(x^1, \dots, x^n, y^1, \dots, y^n)$ . For property iii) above to hold, the form  $\omega$  should certainly be homogeneous of degree  $p$  in the  $dy^i$ 's. It is also very reasonable – considering the symmetries of the problem – to require that  $\omega$  be invariant by the action of  $SO(n)$  on  $\mathbf{B}^n \times \mathbf{B}^n$ . These two simple requirements leave in fact little choice.

Let us introduce the following notations: for any multi-index  $I = \{i_1, \dots, i_k\}$  subset of  $\{1, \dots, n\}$ , with  $i_1 < i_2 < \dots < i_n$ , write

$$dx^I = dx^{i_1} \wedge dx^{i_2} \wedge \dots \wedge dx^{i_k}.$$

For any integer  $1 \leq s \leq k$ , and  $J = \{j_1 < j_2 < \dots < j_s\} \subset I$ , let  $(dx^I)_J$  be the  $k$ -form on  $\mathbf{B}^n \times \mathbf{B}^n$  obtained from  $dx^I$  by replacing the factors  $dx^{j_1}, \dots, dx^{j_s}$  there by  $dy^{j_1}, \dots, dy^{j_s}$ , respectively. The sum of the  $(dx^I)_J$ 's where  $J$  runs over the set of all  $s$ -subindices of  $I$  – e.g.  $J \in \{\{j_1 < \dots < j_s\} \subset I\}$  – is denoted by  $(dx^I)_s$ . For instance, we have

$$(dx^1 \wedge dx^2 \wedge dx^3)_1 = dy^1 \wedge dx^2 \wedge dx^3 + dx^1 \wedge dy^2 \wedge dx^3 + dx^1 \wedge dx^2 \wedge dy^3.$$

Now for a general  $k$ -form on  $\mathbf{B}^n$ , say  $\tau = \sum_{I \in I_k} \tau_I(x) dx^I$ , where  $I_k = \{\{i_1, \dots, i_k\}; 1 \leq i_1 < \dots < i_k \leq n\}$  — and for any  $s \leq k$  — we define a new  $k$ -form on  $\mathbf{B}^n \times \mathbf{B}^n$  given by

$$(\tau)_s(x, y) = \sum_{I \in I_k} \tau_I(y) (dx^I)_s,$$

while we set  $(\tau)_0 = \sum_{I \in I_k} \tau_I(y) dx^I$ . The form  $(\tau)_s$  is then of degree  $s$  in the  $dy^i$ 's and of degree  $k - s$  in the  $dx^i$ 's.

Set  $\sigma = *(rdr) = * \sum_i x^i dx^i$ , where  $*$  is the hodge operator with respect to the canonical metric on  $\mathbf{B}^n$ . We will look for an  $\omega$  of the form

$$\omega(x, y) = \alpha(\rho) \rho d\rho \wedge (\sigma)_{p-1} + \beta(\rho) (rdr)_0 \wedge (\sigma)_p,$$

where  $\rho = |y|$  and therefore  $\rho d\rho = \sum_i y^i dy^i$ .

It is clear that such an  $\omega$  has the required degree in the  $dy^i$ 's and also the  $SO(n)$ -invariance. Besides, as a direct calculation shows,

$$\begin{aligned} d(\sigma)_s &= (s+1)(dx^1 \wedge \dots \wedge dx^n)_{s+1} \\ &= \frac{s+1}{\rho^2} (\rho d\rho \wedge (\sigma)_s + (rdr)_0 \wedge (\sigma)_{s+1}), \end{aligned}$$

and

$$d(rdr)_0 \wedge (\sigma)_s = \frac{1}{\rho^2} (rdr)_0 \wedge \rho d\rho \wedge (\sigma)_s,$$

so that

$$d\omega = \frac{1}{\rho^2} (p(\alpha - \beta) - \rho\beta') (rdr)_0 \wedge \rho d\rho \wedge (\sigma)_p.$$

Therefore,  $\omega$  is closed if and only if

$$\rho\beta' = p(\alpha - \beta).$$

Lemma 3.1 prompts us to choose as  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  the functions:

$$\begin{aligned} \beta &= T(g)^{\frac{p-2}{2}} \left( \frac{1}{p} T(g) - g_{\parallel} \right), \\ \alpha &= \frac{n-1}{p} T(g)^{\frac{p-2}{2}} (g_{\parallel} - g_{\perp}) + \beta = \frac{n-p}{p} T(g)^{\frac{p-2}{2}} g_{\parallel}. \end{aligned}$$

With this choice,  $\omega$  is closed if and only if the identity map  $I : (\mathbf{B}^n, c) \rightarrow (\mathbf{B}^n, g)$  is  $p$ -harmonic. Moreover,

$$\tilde{I}^* \omega = \frac{1}{p} C_{n-1}^p T(g)^{\frac{p}{2}} dx^1 \wedge \dots \wedge dx^n = \frac{1}{p} C_{n-1}^p |dI|^p dx^1 \wedge \dots \wedge dx^n,$$

so that

$$\int_{\Gamma(I)} \omega = \int_{\mathbf{B}^n} \tilde{I}^* \omega = \frac{1}{p} C_{n-1}^p E_p(I).$$

Things are beginning to look good, but we still have to check property iii) above (up to the factor  $\frac{1}{p} C_{n-1}^p$ ). Namely, let  $L(u, du)$  be the lagrangian defined for any  $u \in H_I^{1,p}(\mathbf{B}^n, \mathbf{B}^n)$  by

$$\tilde{u}^* \omega = L(u, du) dx^1 \wedge \dots \wedge dx^n,$$

then we have the

**Lemma 1.4.** *For all  $u \in H_I^{1,p}(\mathbf{B}^n, \mathbf{B}^n)$ ,*

$$L(u, du) \leq \frac{C_{n-1}^p}{p} |du|^p.$$

*Moreover, equality holds a.e. if and only if  $u = I$  in  $\mathbf{B}^n$ .*

*Proof.* Because of the  $SO(n)$ -invariance of  $\omega$  and  $|du|^p$ , it suffices to check the inequality at a point  $x = (r, 0, \dots, 0)$  where the covectors  $dr$  and  $dx^1$  coincide. Then we have

$$L(u, du) = \sum_{I \in I_p^1} \alpha(|u(x)|) M_I + \sum_{I \in I_p^0} \beta(|u(x)|) M_I,$$

where  $I_p^1$  is the set of ordered  $p$ -indices  $i_1 < \dots < i_p$  such that  $i_1 = 1$ ,  $I_p^0$  is the set of all other ordered  $p$ -indices, and where  $M_I$  – with  $I = \{i_1 < \dots < i_p\}$  – is the principal  $p$ -minor formed from the lines and columns of indices  $i_1, \dots, i_p$  of the jacobian matrix  $du_x$ , e.g.  $M_I = |\partial_{i_l} u^{i_k}(x)|_{1 \leq k, l \leq p}$ .

Hadamard's inequality now tells us that a determinant is bounded from above by the product of the euclidean norms of its columns, so that

$$M_I \leq \prod_{l=1}^p \left( \sum_{k \leq p} (\partial_{i_l} u^{i_k}(x))^2 \right)^{1/2} \leq |\partial_{i_1} u(x)| \cdots |\partial_{i_p} u(x)| = C^I.$$

On the other hand, we claim that  $\alpha(\rho)$  and  $\beta(\rho)$  are positive: this is clear for  $\alpha$  and we have from the closure condition for  $\omega$

$$(\rho^p \beta)' = \rho^{p-1} (\rho \beta' + p \beta) = p \rho^{p-1} \alpha > 0.$$

and therefore  $\beta \geq 0$ . Then we can deduce the inequality

$$L(u, du) \leq \sum_{I \in I_p^1} \alpha(|u(x)|) C^I + \sum_{I \in I_p^0} \beta(|u(x)|) C^I,$$

while on the other hand we have

$$|du|^p(x) = \left( g_{\parallel}(|u(x)|) |\partial_1 u(x)|^2 + g_{\perp}(|u(x)|) \sum_{i \geq 2} |\partial_i u(x)|^2 \right)^{p/2}.$$

Let  $\theta = T(g)^{-1}(x) g_{\parallel}(|u(x)|)$ , so that  $0 < \theta < 1$ . For  $1 \leq i \leq n$ , write  $\lambda_i = T(g)^{1/2}(x) |\partial_i u(x)|$ , and if  $I = \{i_1, \dots, i_p\}$ ,  $\lambda^I = \lambda_{i_1} \dots \lambda_{i_p}$ . The following holds:

$$L(u, du)(x) \leq f(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n),$$

with

$$f(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n) = \frac{n-p}{p} \theta \sum_{I \in I_p^1} \lambda^I + \left(\frac{1}{p} - \theta\right) \sum_{I \in I_p^0} \lambda^I,$$

and

$$\frac{C_{n-1}^p}{p} |du|^p(x) = g(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n),$$

with

$$g(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n) = \frac{C_{n-1}^p}{p} \left( \theta \lambda_1^2 + \frac{1-\theta}{n-1} \sum_{i=2}^n \lambda_i^2 \right)^{p/2}.$$

It remains to compare two functions  $f$  and  $g$ , both homogeneous of degree  $p$ , hoping that  $g$  is always greater than  $f$ . To actually prove this, we look for the maximum of  $f$  under the constraint  $g = \text{Constant}$ . It is not difficult to see that this maximum must be achieved at a point of the form  $(\lambda, \mu, \dots, \mu) \in \mathbf{R}^n$ , with  $\lambda, \mu$  two positive numbers. Hence, it suffices to check the inequality at such points, and furthermore – because  $f$  and  $g$  are homogeneous – we can assume  $\mu = 1$ . To sum up, we are left with proving that  $f(\lambda, 1, \dots, 1) \leq g(\lambda, 1, \dots, 1)$ , which after minor simplifications amounts to

$$1 + p\theta(\lambda - 1) \leq (1 + \theta(\lambda^2 - 1))^{p/2},$$

$\lambda$  being a positive number. This last inequality is clear by noting that the right-hand side is a convex function of  $\lambda$  when  $p \geq 1$ , and that the linear term of its Taylor expansion at  $\lambda = 1$  is precisely the left-hand side. Moreover, one sees that equality holds if and only if  $\lambda = \mu = 1$ .

We now have proved the following inequality at  $x$ :

$$L(u, du)(x) \leq \frac{C_{n-1}^p}{p} |du|^p(x),$$

where equality holds if and only if  $|\partial_1 u|(x) = \dots = |\partial_n u|(x) = c$  and for all  $I \in I_p$ ,  $M_I = C^I = c^p$ . These two conditions are in fact equivalent to  $du(x)$  being



a dilatation of  $\mathbf{R}^n$ . Indeed, take  $1 \leq i \neq j \leq n$ , and  $I = \{i_1 < \dots < i_p\}$  such that  $i \in I$  and  $j \notin I$ , then

$$\begin{aligned} c^p = M_I &\leq \prod_{l=1}^p \left( \sum_{k \leq p} (\partial_i u^{i_k}(x))^2 \right)^{1/2} \leq \left( \sum_{k \leq p} (\partial_i u^{i_k}(x))^2 \right)^{1/2} c^{p-1} \leq \\ &\leq (c^2 - (\partial_i u^j(x))^2)^{1/2} c^{p-1}. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore  $M_I = c^p$  for all  $I$  implies  $\partial_i u^j(x) = 0$  for all  $i \neq j$ . Hence, the matrix  $du_x$  is diagonal and for any  $1 \leq i \leq n$  we have  $|\partial_i u^i(x)| = c$ . In fact, since the  $p$ -minors  $M_I$  are all positive, the  $\partial_i u^i(x)$ 's must all have the same sign, so that  $du(x) = \pm c(x)I$ , for all  $x$ . As in Lemma 2.2, this implies that  $u = I$ .

## References

1. P. Baird, J. Eells, A conservation law for harmonic maps, Springer Lecture Notes **894** (1981), 1–25
2. J.M. Coron, F. Hélein, Harmonic diffeomorphisms, minimizing harmonic maps and rotational symmetry, *Compositio Math.* **69** (1989), 175–228
3. A. El Soufi, A. Jeune, Indice de Morse des applications  $p$ -harmoniques, *Ann. de l'I.H.P., analyse non linéaire*, **13** (1996), 229–250
4. A. Fardoun, Ph.D. Thesis, Université de Brest, 1995
5. F. Hélein, Difféomorphismes entre un ouvert de  $\mathbf{R}^3$  et une variété riemannienne, *C.R. Acad. Sci. Paris*, **308**, Série I (1989), 237–240
6. F. Hélein, Harmonic diffeomorphisms with rotational symmetry, *J. reine angew. Math.* **30** (1990), 1–5
7. M. Avellaneda, F.H. Lin, Fonctions quasi-affines et minimisation de  $\int |\nabla u|^p$ , *C.R. Acad. Sci. Paris*, **306**, Série I (1988), 355–358
8. F.H. Lin, A remark on the map  $x/|x|$ , *C.R. Acad. Sci. Paris*, **305**, Série I (1987), 529–531
9. P. Nichols, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1994