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A Condition on a Certain Variety of Groups.

ALIREZA ABDOLLAHI(*) - BIJAN TAERI(*)

ABSTRACT - Let $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ be nonzero integers whose greatest common divisor is d . We prove that an infinite group G is of finite exponent dividing d if and only if for every n infinite subsets $X_1, \dots, X_n$ of G there exist $x_1 \in X_1, \dots, x_n \in X_n$ such that $x_1^{\alpha_1} \dots x_n^{\alpha_n} = 1$.

1. Introduction.

Let $\mathfrak{V}$ be a variety of groups defined by the law $v(x_1, \dots, x_n) = 1$. We say that G is a $\mathfrak{V}^\#$ -group if for every n infinite subsets $X_1, \dots, X_n$ of G there exist $x_1 \in X_1, \dots, x_n \in X_n$ such that $v(x_1, \dots, x_n) = 1$.

In [4] P.S. Kim, A.H. Rhemtulla and H. Smith posed the following question: for which variety $\mathfrak{V}$, is every infinite $\mathfrak{V}^\#$ -group a $\mathfrak{V}$ -group?

There exist positive answers for the variety $\mathfrak{A}$ of abelian groups defined by the law $[x, y] = 1$ (see [7]), the variety $\mathfrak{Q}_2$ defined by the law $[x, y]^2 = 1$ (see [5]), the varieties $\mathfrak{E}_2$ and $\mathfrak{E}_3$ of 2-Engel and 3-Engel groups defined by the laws $[x, y, y] = 1$ and $[x, y, y, y] = 1$, respectively (see [10] and [11]), the variety $\mathfrak{B}_n$ of groups of exponent dividing n , defined by the law $x^n = 1$ (see [6]), the variety $\mathfrak{N}_k$ of nilpotent groups of nilpotency class at most k , defined by the law $[x_1, \dots, x_{k+1}] = 1$ (see [6]), the variety $\mathfrak{C}_3$ of 3-abelian groups defined by the law $(xy)^3 y^{-3} x^{-3} = 1$

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(see [1]) and, the variety generated by the law $x_1 \dots x_n = 1$ (see [3]).

Now let $\mathfrak{V}$ and $\mathfrak{W}$ be varieties of groups defined by different laws $v(x_1, \dots, x_n) = 1$ and $w(y_1, \dots, y_m) = 1$, respectively. C. Delizia in [2] posed the question of whether $\mathfrak{V}^\# = \mathfrak{W}^\#$ when $\mathfrak{V} = \mathfrak{W}$, and for $k > 1$, he investigated the question for the varieties $\mathfrak{V} = \mathfrak{V}_k$ (the variety defined by the law $[x_1, \dots, x_k, x_1] = 1$) and $\mathfrak{W} = \mathcal{N}_k$.

For nonzero integers $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ with the greatest common divisor d , we have considered the question for the varieties $\mathfrak{V}$ defined by the law $x_1^{\alpha_1} \dots x_n^{\alpha_n} = 1$ and $\mathcal{B}_d$; proving

THEOREM. $\mathfrak{V}^\# = \mathcal{B}_d^\#$.

2. Proofs.

LEMMA 1. *Let $\mathfrak{V}$ be the variety defined by the law $w(x_1, \dots, x_n) = 1$. If G is an infinite FC-group in $\mathfrak{V}^\#$, then $G \in \mathfrak{V}$.*

PROOF. Let $g_1, \dots, g_n \in G$, then $|G : \bigcap_{i=1}^n C_G(g_i)| \leq \prod_{i=1}^n |G : C_G(g_i)| < \infty$. Thus $\bigcap_{i=1}^n C_G(g_i)$ is infinite. Let A be an infinite abelian subgroup of $\bigcap_{i=1}^n C_G(g_i)$. Then $A \in \mathfrak{V}$ by Lemma 3 of [3]. Now consider the infinite sets $g_1 A, \dots, g_n A$. By the property $\mathfrak{V}^\#$ there exist $a_1, \dots, a_n \in A$, such that $w(g_1 a_1, \dots, g_n a_n) = 1$. So

$$1 = w(g_1, \dots, g_n)w(a_1, \dots, a_n) = w(g_1, \dots, g_n) = 1,$$

and $G \in \mathfrak{V}$. ■

From now on, for nonzero constant integers $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ and any nonzero integer α we denote the varieties defined by the laws $w = x_1^{\alpha_1} \dots x_n^{\alpha_n}$ and $w = x^\alpha$, respectively, by $\mathfrak{V}$ and $\mathcal{B}_\alpha$. Also we denote the greatest common divisor of $\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n$ by d .

LEMMA 2. *Let $G \in \mathfrak{V}^\#$ be an infinite group. If the set $T = \{g \in G \mid g^d = 1\}$ is infinite, then $G \in \mathfrak{V}$. In particular an infinite group in $\mathfrak{V}^\# \setminus \mathfrak{V}$ can not have an infinite subgroup in $\mathfrak{V}$.*

PROOF. Let X be an infinite subset of G . Let $1 \leq j \leq n$ be fixed. By considering the infinite subsets $X_i = T$, $i = 1, \dots, j-1$, $j+1, \dots, n$ and $X_j = X$, and using the property $\mathfrak{V}^\#$, we find the elements $g_i \in T$, $i = 1, \dots, j-1, j+1, \dots, n$ and $x \in X$ such that

$g_1^{\alpha_1} \dots g_j^{\alpha_j-1} x^{\alpha_j} g_{j+1}^{\alpha_{j+1}} \dots g_n^{\alpha_n} = 1$. But $g_i^{\alpha_i} = 1$, so we have $x^{\alpha_j} = 1$. Thus $G \in \mathcal{B}_{\alpha_j}^\#$, for all $j = 1, \dots, n$. Since $\mathcal{B}_{\alpha_j}^\# = \mathcal{B}_{\alpha_j} \cup \mathcal{F}$, we have $G \in \mathcal{B}_{\alpha_j}$, for all $j = 1, \dots, n$. So $G \in \mathcal{V}$, as required. ■

We define the class $\mathcal{V}(\infty)$ including all groups G in which any infinite subset X contains distinct elements $x_1, \dots, x_n$ such that $x_1^{\alpha_1} \dots x_n^{\alpha_n} = 1$. Also, if $k \geq n$ is an integer, we define the class $\mathcal{V}(k)$ including all groups G in which any subset X with $|X| = k$, contains distinct elements $x_1, \dots, x_n \in X$ such that $x_1^{\alpha_1} \dots x_n^{\alpha_n} = 1$. It is clear that, $\mathcal{V}(k) \subseteq \mathcal{V}(\infty)$ and $\mathcal{V}^\# \subseteq \mathcal{V}(\infty)$.

LEMMA 3. *Let $G \in \mathcal{V}(\infty)$ be an infinite group. Then $|H : C_H(g^d)|$ is finite, for any $g \in G$, and any infinite subgroup H of G .*

PROOF. Let H be an infinite subgroup of G and suppose, for a contradiction, that there is an element $g \in G$, such that $|H : C_H(g^d)|$ is infinite. Let T be a right transversal to $C_H(g^d)$ in H . List the elements of T as $t_1, t_2, \dots$ under some well ordering $\leq$, so that $t_i < t_j$ if $i < j$.

Consider the set $T^{(n)}$ of all n -element subsets of T . For each $t \in T^{(n)}$, list the elements $t_{i_1}, \dots, t_{i_n}$ of t in ascending order given by $\leq$, and write $\hat{t} = (t_{i_1}, \dots, t_{i_n})$. Create $n! + 1$ sets, one U_σ for each permutation σ of the set $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ and V : For each $t \in T^{(n)}$, $\hat{t} = (t_{i_1}, \dots, t_{i_n})$ put $t \in U_\sigma$ if

$$(g^{t_{\sigma(1)}})^{\alpha_1} \dots (g^{t_{\sigma(n)}})^{\alpha_n} = 1,$$

and put $t \in V$ if $t \notin U_\sigma$, for any σ .

By Ramsey's Theorem, there exists an infinite subset $T_0 \subseteq T$, such that $T_0^{(n)} \subseteq U_\sigma$, for some σ , or $T_0^{(n)} \subseteq V$. Suppose, for a contradiction, that $T_0^{(n)} \subseteq V$, then the set $\{g^x | x \in T_0\}$, is infinite. By the property $\mathcal{V}(\infty)$, there exist n distinct elements $t_1, \dots, t_n \in T_0$, such that $(g^{t_1})^{\alpha_1} \dots (g^{t_n})^{\alpha_n} = 1$, but then $t = \{t_1, \dots, t_n\}$ lies in some U_σ , a contradiction.

Thus $T_0^{(n)} \subseteq U_\sigma$, for some σ . Moreover, by restricting the order $\leq$ to T_0 we may assume that $T_0 = \{t_1, t_2, \dots\}$ and $t_i < t_j$ if $i < j$. Hence for any $i_1 < i_2 < \dots < i_n$, we have

$$(g^{t_{i_{\sigma(1)}}})^{\alpha_1} \dots (g^{t_{i_{\sigma(n)}}})^{\alpha_n} = 1.$$

Now consider a sequence

$$i_1 < i_2 < \dots < i_{n-1} < i_n < i_{n+1} < i_{n+2} < i_{n+3} < \dots < i_{2n+1},$$

of $2n + 1$ indices and suppose that $k \in \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ is fixed and let $\sigma(s) = k$. Define a sequence $j_1 < \dots < j_n$ as follows: the first $k - 1$ elements are $j_1 = i_1, \dots, j_{k-1} = i_{k-1}$ (if $k = 1$ this is empty), $j_k = i_{n+1}$, and the last $n - k$ elements are $j_{k+1} = i_{n+3}, \dots, j_n = i_{2n-k+2}$ (if $k = n$ this is empty). Thus

$$(g^{t_{i_{n+1}}})^{\alpha_s} = ((g^{t_{\sigma(1)}})^{\alpha_1} \dots (g^{t_{\sigma(s-1)}})^{\alpha_{s-1}})^{-1} ((g^{t_{\sigma(s+1)}})^{\alpha_{s+1}} \dots (g^{t_{\sigma(n)}})^{\alpha_n})^{-1}.$$

Now if we put $j_k = i_{n+2}$ in the above sequence, we have

$$(g^{t_{i_{n+2}}})^{\alpha_s} = ((g^{t_{\sigma(1)}})^{\alpha_1} \dots (g^{t_{\sigma(s-1)}})^{\alpha_{s-1}})^{-1} ((g^{t_{\sigma(s+1)}})^{\alpha_{s+1}} \dots (g^{t_{\sigma(n)}})^{\alpha_n})^{-1},$$

and thus $(g^{t_{i_{n+1}}})^{\alpha_s} = (g^{t_{i_{n+2}}})^{\alpha_s}$. Therefore $t_{i_{n+1}}^{-1} t_{i_{n+2}} \in C_H(g^{\alpha_s})$. Now if k runs through the set $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$, so does s . Thus

$$t_{i_{n+1}}^{-1} t_{i_{n+2}} \in \bigcap_{s=1}^n C_H(g^{\alpha_s}) = C_H(g^d),$$

a contradiction. ■

It is natural to ask whether every infinite $\mathcal{V}(\infty)$ -group belongs to $\mathcal{V}$.

The answer, in general, is negative. In fact, there is an infinite group satisfying the condition $\mathcal{V}(k)$ for some positive integer k which does not belong to $\mathcal{V}$.

For example, we can take a group K (with $m = 2$ and n to be a sufficiently large prime, $n > 10^{10}$) in Theorem 31.5 in [8]. This group K is given by all relations of the form $A^{n^2} = 1$ and $A^n = B^n$, where A and B run through a special set of words. The group K is 2-generated and of exponent n^2 , and it is a central extension of $B(2, n)$ (this is the 2-generated free Burnside group of exponent n) by a cyclic central subgroup $\langle z \rangle$ of order n .

Thus K is infinite, since $B(2, n)$ is infinite, and $K^n = \langle z \rangle$ is a finite (central) cyclic subgroup of K . Now we show that the set X of all elements of order n in K coincides with $\langle z \rangle$ and thus is finite. For this purpose we need to show that all non-central elements of K have order n^2 . Take an element x outside $Z(K) = \langle z \rangle$. It follows from the construction of K that x is conjugate in K to a product $A^k z^t$, where $A^n = z$. Then $(A^k z^t)^n = (A^n)^k (z^n)^t = z^k \neq 1$, since k is not divided by n . Thus x is of order n^2 as required.

Let, now $\mathcal{O}$ be the variety defined by the law $x_1^n \dots x_n^n = 1$. Then $K \in \mathcal{O}(n^2)$. For, let $x_1, \dots, x_{n^2}$ be distinct elements of K . Thus $x_1^n, \dots, x_{n^2}^n$

are in K^n and so there exists $\{y_1, \dots, y_n\} \subset \{x_1, \dots, x_{n^2}\}$ such that $y_1^n = \dots = y_n^n = c \in Z(K) = \langle z \rangle$. Therefore $y_1^n \dots y_n^n = c^n = 1$, since $|K| = |Z(K)| = n$.

COROLLARY 4. *Let $G \in \mathfrak{V}^\#$ be an infinite group, then $G^d = \langle g^d \mid g \in G \rangle$ is finite.*

PROOF. By Lemma 3, $|G : C_G(g^d)|$ is finite, for all $g \in G$. Thus $G^d \leq F$, the FC-center of G . If F is infinite then $F \in \mathfrak{V}$, by Lemma 1, and so $G \in \mathfrak{V} = \mathcal{B}_d \cup \mathcal{F}$ by Lemma 2, and thus $G^d = 1$. If F is finite, then G^d is also finite, as required. ■

PROOF OF THE THEOREM. Let G be an infinite group in $\mathfrak{V}^\#$ and assume $G \notin \mathfrak{V}$. Then G^d is finite, by Corollary 4. Write $H := C_G(G^d)$. Then G/H is finite and $a^d \in Z(H)$, for any $a \in H$. We show that $H/FC(H)$ has exponent 2 where $FC(H)$ is the FC-centre of H . Let $a \in H$, $a^2 \notin FC(H)$. Then the set $X = \{a^g \mid g \in H\}$ is infinite. Let $X_1 = X_2 = \dots = X_n = X$. Then, since $G \in \mathfrak{V}^\#$, there exist $g_1, \dots, g_n \in H$ such that

$$(a^{g_1})^{\alpha_1} (a^{g_2})^{\alpha_2} \dots (a^{g_n})^{\alpha_n} = 1 = a^{\alpha_1} a^{\alpha_2} \dots a^{\alpha_n}$$

since $a^d \in Z(H)$. Write $\alpha_i = d\beta_i$ for all $i \in \{1, \dots, n\}$. Then

$$(*) \quad (a^d)^{\beta_1 + \beta_2 + \dots + \beta_n} = 1.$$

Now let $Y = \{(a^2)^g \mid g \in H\}$, then Y is infinite, since $a^2 \notin FC(H)$. For $X_1 = Y$, $X_2 = X_3 = \dots = X_n = X$, there exist $h_1, \dots, h_n \in H$ such that $(a^{2h_1})^{\alpha_1} (a^{h_2})^{\alpha_2} \dots (a^{h_n})^{\alpha_n} = 1$. Then $a^{2\alpha_1 + \alpha_2 + \dots + \alpha_n} = 1$ and

$$(**) \quad (a^d)^{2\beta_1 + \beta_2 + \dots + \beta_n} = 1.$$

From (*) and (**), we get $(a^d)^{\beta_1} = 1$, and arguing similarly with $X = X_1 = \dots = X_{i-1} = X_{i+1} = \dots = X_n$ and $X_i = Y$, we obtain $(a^d)^{\beta_i} = 1$ for any i in the set $\{1, \dots, n\}$. Then $a^d = 1$, since $\gcd(\beta_1, \beta_2, \dots, \beta_n) = 1$. But from $a^d = 1$, we have $(a^g)^d = 1$, for any g in H and, by Lemma 2, the set $\{a^g \mid g \in H\}$ is finite, that is $a \in FC(H)$, a contradiction.

Therefore $H/FC(H)$ is a locally finite group, $FC(H)$ is finite by Lemmas 1 and 2, and so H is locally finite. Then H can not be infinite by Lemma 2. Thus H is finite which forces G to be finite. This is a contradiction, which completes the proof. ■

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