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B. AMBERG, Prof. (Univ. Mainz, Germany),
 S. FRANCIOSI, Prof. (Univ. Salerno, Italy),
 F. DE GIOVANNI, Prof. (Univ. Napoli, Italy)

Rank formulae for faktorized groups

Формулы ранга для факторизуемых групп

The following inequalities for the torsion-free rank $r_0(G)$ of the group $G = AB$ and for the p^∞ -rank $r_p(G)$ of the soluble-by-finite group $G = AB$ are stated:

$$\begin{aligned} r_0(G) &\leq r_0(A) + r_0(B) - r_0(A \cap B), \\ r_p(G) &\leq r_p(A) + r_p(B) - r_p(A \cap B). \end{aligned}$$

Для свободного ранга $r_0(G)$ группы $G = AB$ и для p^∞ -ранга $r_p(G)$ почти разрешимой группы $G = AB$ установлены следующие неравенства:

$$\begin{aligned} r_0(G) &\leq r_0(A) + r_0(B) - r_0(A \cap B), \\ r_p(G) &\leq r_p(A) + r_p(B) - r_p(A \cap B). \end{aligned}$$

Для вільного ранга $r_0(G)$ групи $G = AB$ і для p^∞ -ранга $r_p(G)$ майже розв'язної групи $G = AB$ встановлені такі нерівності:

$$\begin{aligned} r_0(G) &\leq r_0(A) + r_0(B) - r_0(A \cap B), \\ r_p(G) &\leq r_p(A) + r_p(B) - r_p(A \cap B). \end{aligned}$$

1. Introduction. A group G has finite torsion-free rank if it has a series of finite length whose factors are either periodic or infinite cyclic. The number $r_0(G)$ of infinite cyclic factors in such a series is an invariant of G , called the torsion-free rank of G . Thus the function r_0 is constant on isomorphism classes, satisfies $r_0(H) \leq r_0(G)$ for every subgroup H of the group G and is additive on extensions, i. e. $r_0(G) = r_0(N) + r_0(G/N)$ for each normal subgroup N of G .

Let the group $G = AB$ with finite torsion-free rank be the product of two subgroups A and B . If one of the factors A and B is normal in G , it is clear that

$$r_0(G) = r_0(A) + r_0(B) - r_0(A \cap B).$$

Therefore it is natural to investigate the relations between the numbers $r_0(G)$, $r_0(A)$ and $r_0(B)$, when A and B are arbitrary subgroups of G . Results of this type can for instance be found in [1—5]. Our first theorem on this subject is the following.

Theorem A. *Let the group $G = AB$ be the product of two subgroups A and B . If G has finite torsion-free rank, then*

$$r_0(G) \leq r_0(A) + r_0(B) - r_0(A \cap B).$$

It seems to be unknown whether the inequality in Theorem A is actually an equality. This was shown to be true by Wilson [5] for a soluble-by-finite group with finite abelian section rank. Here a group is said to have finite abe-

lian section rank if it has no infinite abelian sections of prime exponent.

Of course, the same type of problems can be considered for other rank functions on a factorized group. If p is a prime, a group G has finite p^∞ -rank if it has a series of finite length whose factors either are of type p^∞ or have no sections of type p^∞ . The number $r_p(G)$ of factors of type p^∞ in such a series is an invariant of G , called the p^∞ -rank of G . Clearly a soluble-by-finite group with finite abelian section rank has finite p^∞ -rank for every prime p .

Theorem B. *Let the soluble-by-finite group $G = AB$ be the product of two subgroups A and B . If G has finite p^∞ -rank, then*

$$r_p(G) \leq r_p(A) + r_p(B) - r_p(A \cap B).$$

Again, it is unknown whether the inequality in Theorem B is actually an equality. It was shown by Wilson [5] that this is the case for a soluble-by-finite minimax group. Our next result extends Wilson's theorem to a wider class of groups. Recall that a soluble-by-finite group G is an S_1 -group if it has finite abelian section rank and the set $\pi(G)$ of prime divisors of orders of elements of G is finite.

Theorem C. *Let the soluble-by-finite group $G = AB$ with finite abelian section rank be the product of two subgroups A and B . If at least one of the sets $\pi(A)$ and $\pi(B)$ is finite, then*

$$r_p(G) = r_p(A) + r_p(B) - r_p(A \cap B)$$

for every prime p . In particular, the p^∞ -rank equality holds if $G = AB$ is an S_1 -group.

Most of our notation is standard and can be found in [6].

2. Rank inequalities. A map μ assigning to each group G either a non-negative integer $\mu(G)$ or ∞ is called an additive function if it is constant on isomorphism classes, satisfies $\mu(H) \leq \mu(G)$ for every subgroup H of the group G and $\mu(G) = \mu(N) + \mu(G/N)$ whenever N is a normal subgroup of G . The additive function μ is of infinite type if $\mu(E) = 0$ for every finite group E , but there exists a countable abelian group U such that $\mu(U) \neq 0$. If μ is an additive function of infinite type, it is clear that $\mu(G) = \infty$ for some countable abelian group G . Examples of additive functions of infinite type on groups are given by the rank functions r_0 and r_p for every prime p . Thus Theorems A and B will be obtained as special cases of a result concerning additive functions of infinite type on factorized groups.

Let μ be an additive function. We shall say that the μ -inequality holds for the factorized group $G = AB$ if

$$\mu(G) \leq \mu(A) + \mu(B) - \mu(A \cap B).$$

Similarly, the factorized group $G = AB$ satisfies the μ -equality if

$$\mu(G) = \mu(A) + \mu(B) - \mu(A \cap B).$$

Our first two lemmas were already proved in [1] for the torsion-free rank.

Lemma 1. *Let group $G = AB$ be the product of two subgroups A and B . If μ is an additive function and A contains a normal subgroup N of G such that the factor-group $G/N = (A/N)(BN/N)$ satisfies the μ -equality (respectively: the μ -inequality), then also $G = AB$ satisfies the μ -equality (respectively: the μ -inequality).*

Proof. Suppose that the μ -equality holds for the factor-group $G/N = (A/N)(BN/N)$. Since $(A \cap BN)/N \simeq (A \cap B)/(N \cap B)$, it follows that

$$\begin{aligned} \mu(G) &= \mu(N) + \mu(G/N) = \mu(N) + \mu(A/N) + \mu(BN/N) - \mu((A \cap BN)/N) = \\ &= \mu(A) + \mu(B) - \mu(B \cap N) - \mu(A \cap B) + \mu(N \cap B) = \\ &= \mu(A) + \mu(B) - \mu(A \cap B). \end{aligned}$$

The proof for the μ -inequality is similar.

The following lemma will be used to reduce the proofs of our theorems to triply factorized groups. Recall that if N is a normal subgroup of a factorized group $G = AB$, the factorizer $X(N)$ of N in G is the subgroup $AN \cap BN$. It

It is well-known that $X(N)$ has the triple factorization

$$X(N) = N(A \cap BN) = N(B \cap AN) = (A \cap BN)(B \cap AN).$$

Lemma 2. Let the group $G = AB$ be the product of two subgroups A and B . If μ is an additive function and N is a normal subgroup of G such that the μ -equalities (respectively: the μ -inequalities) hold for the factorizer $X(N) = (A \cap BN)(B \cap AN)$ and for the factor-group $G/N = (AN/N)(BN/N)$, then also $G = AB$ satisfies the μ -equality (respectively: the μ -inequality).

Proof. Suppose that the μ -equalities hold for the factorizer $X = X(N)$ and for the factor-group G/N . Since $X/N \simeq (A \cap BN)/(A \cap N) \simeq (B \cap AN)/(B \cap N)$, it follows that

$$\begin{aligned} \mu(G) &= \mu(G/N) + \mu(N) = \mu(AN/N) + \mu(BN/N) - \mu(X/N) + \mu(X) - \mu(X/N) = \\ &= \mu(A) - \mu(A \cap N) + \mu(B) - \mu(B \cap N) - 2\mu(X/N) + \mu(A \cap BN) + \\ &\quad + \mu(B \cap AN) - \mu(A \cap B) = \mu(A) + \mu(B) - \mu(A \cap B). \end{aligned}$$

The proof for the μ -inequality is similar.

The next lemma on triply factorized groups was proved by Wilson in [5]. We give here a shorter proof.

Lemma 3. Let the soluble-by-finite group $G = AB = AK = BK$ be the product of two subgroups A and B and a torsion-free abelian normal subgroup $K \neq 1$ such that $A \cap K = B \cap K = 1$ and $C_G(K) = K$. If G has finite torsion-free rank; then it cannot act rationally irreducibly on K .

Proof. Since A is a linear group over the field of rational numbers, its periodic subgroups are finite (see [6, p. 85], Pt. 1), so that the set of primes $\pi(G)$ is finite and G has finite Prüfer rank (see [6], Pt. 2, Lemma 9.34). Then G is an S_1 -group and has no non-trivial periodic normal subgroups since $C_G(K) = K$. Therefore the Fitting subgroup F of G is nilpotent and G/F is a finitely generated abelian-by-finite group (see [6, p. 169], Pt. 2).

Assume that G acts rationally irreducibly on K . If $[K, F] \neq 1$, then the factor group $K/[K, F]$ is periodic. Since F is nilpotent, there exists a positive integer i such that $[K, F, \dots, F] = 1$, so that K is periodic. This contradiction

shows that $[K, F] = 1$, so that $F \leq C_G(K) = K$ and $K = F$. Therefore A and B are finitely generated abelian-by-finite groups. In particular G is finitely generated, and hence nilpotent-by-finite by a theorem of Zaïcev (see [7], Theorem 2). Thus G/K is finite, so that A and B are finite. It follows that $G = AB$ is finite, and this contradiction proves the lemma.

It is well-known that a group with finite torsion-free rank has a normal series of finite length whose factors are either periodic or torsion-free abelian groups of finite rank. Therefore Theorem A is special case of the following result.

Theorem 1. Let the group $G = AB$ be the product of two subgroups A and B , and let μ be an additive function of infinite type such that $\mu(G)$ is finite. If G has a normal series of finite length whose factors are either torsion-free abelian groups or abelian groups with the minimal condition or groups on which μ is zero, then the μ -inequality holds for $G = AB$.

Proof. Since the additive function μ is of infinite type and $\mu(G)$ is finite, G has no free abelian sections of infinite rank, and in particular every torsion-free abelian section of G has finite rank. If Σ is a normal series of finite length of G whose factors are either torsion-free abelian groups or abelian groups with the minimal condition or groups on which μ is zero, $\mu_0(\Sigma)$ denotes the sum of the ranks of the torsion-free abelian factors of Σ on which μ is not zero. We shall denote by $\mu_0(G)$ the minimum of all $\mu_0(\Sigma)$'s. The length of a shortest normal series Σ of G for which $\mu_0(\Sigma) = \mu_0(G)$ will be denoted by $\mu_1(G)$. It is clear that $\mu_0(H) \leq \mu_0(G)$ and $\mu_1(H) \leq \mu_1(G)$ for every subgroup H of G . Moreover, if N is a normal subgroup and UN/VN is a torsion-free abelian normal section of G , the torsion subgroup of UN/VN is the direct product of a G -invariant subgroup satisfying the minimal condition and a G -invariant subgroup on which μ is zero. Hence $\mu_0(G/N) \leq \mu_0(G)$, and if $\mu_0(G/N) = \mu_0(G)$, then $\mu_1(G/N) \leq \mu_1(G)$.

Assume that Theorem 1 is false, and among all the counterexamples for

which $\mu_0(G)$ is minimal choose one $G = AB$ such that also $\mu_1(G)$ is minimal. Let Σ be a normal series of G of length $\mu_1(G)$ for which $\mu_0(\Sigma) = \mu_0(G)$. If K is the smallest non-trivial term of Σ , the μ -inequality holds for the factor group $G/K = (AK/K)(BK/K)$. Hence the factorizer $X(K)$ of K is also a counterexample by Lemma 2, and so we may suppose that G has a triple factorization

$$G = AB = AK = BK,$$

where K is a normal subgroup of G .

Assume first that $\mu(K) = 0$. Then

$$\mu(G) = \mu(K) + \mu(G/K) = \mu(G/K) = \mu(AK/K) = \mu(A/A \cap K) = \mu(A),$$

and so obviously

$$\mu(G) = \mu(A) \leq \mu(A) + \mu(B) - \mu(A \cap B).$$

Suppose now that K is a torsion-free abelian group such that $\mu(K) \neq 0$. The subgroup $A \cap K$ is normal in $G = AK$; and it follows from Lemma 1 that the μ -inequality does not hold for the factor-group

$$G/(A \cap K) = (A/(A \cap K))(B(A \cap K)/(A \cap K)),$$

so that $A \cap K = 1$. The centralizer $C_A(K)$ is normal in G , and also the group

$$G/C_A(K) = (A/C_A(K))(BC_A(K)/C_A(K))$$

is a counterexample by Lemma 1. Replacing G by $G/C_A(K)$, we may suppose that $C_A(K) = 1$. Therefore A is isomorphic with a group of automorphisms of K , and so is linear over the field of rational numbers. Since G has no free abelian sections of infinite rank, we obtain that A is soluble-by-finite by a theorem of Tits (see [8, p. 145]). Then also G is soluble-by-finite. As the μ -inequality does not hold for the group

$$G/(B \cap K) = (A(B \cap K)/(B \cap K))(B/(B \cap K)),$$

the intersection $B \cap K$ must be trivial, and Lemma 3 shows that G does not act rationally irreducibly on K . Let L be a proper non-trivial G -invariant subgroup of K such that K/L is torsion-free. Clearly $\mu_0(G/L) < \mu_0(G)$, and thus the μ -inequality holds for $G/L = (AL/L)(BL/L)$. Consider the factorizer $X(L)$ of L in $G = AB$. Since $X(L) \cap K = L(A \cap BL) \cap K = L$, we have that $X(L)/L$ is isomorphic with a subgroup of G/K , and hence $\mu_0(X(L)) < \mu_0(G)$. Therefore the μ -inequality holds for the factorized group $X(L) = (A \cap BL)(B \cap AL)$, and Lemma 2 proves that also $G = AB$ satisfies the μ -inequality. This contradiction shows that K cannot be torsion-free.

Suppose finally that K is an abelian group satisfying the minimal condition. Then there exists a finite G -invariant subgroup E of K such that K/E is radicable. Since $\mu_0(E) = 0$ it is clear that the μ -inequality does not hold for the factor-group $G/E = (AE/E)(BE/E)$, and without loss of generality it can be assumed that K is radicable. Let M be an infinite G -invariant subgroup of K with minimal total rank. Then M is radicable, and by induction on the total rank of K the μ -inequality holds for the group $G/M = (AM/M)(BM/M)$. It follows from Lemma 2 that the factorizer $X(M)$ of M in $G = AB$ is also a counterexample, so that $M = K$. Therefore each proper G -invariant subgroup of K is finite, and in particular K is a p -group for some prime p . The factor-group

$$G/A_G = (A/A_G)(BA_G/A_G)$$

is also a counterexample by Lemma 1, and hence we may suppose that there are no nontrivial normal subgroups of G contained in A . It follows that $A \cap K = C_A(K) = 1$, and so A is isomorphic with a group of automorphisms of K . Since K has no infinite proper A -invariant subgroups, A is an irreducible linear group (see [9], Lemma 5). Moreover A has no free abelian sections of infinite rank, so that it is soluble-by-finite (see [8, p. 145]), and hence even abelian-by-finite (see [6, p. 75], Pt. 1). This is a contradiction by Proposition 1 of [5]. The theorem is proved.

Theorem B also is an easy consequence of Theorem 1.

Proof of Theorem B. Let W be an abelian section of G , and let P be the Sylow p -subgroup of W . Then $P = D \times R$, where D is a radicable

p -group satisfying the minimal condition and R is reduced. A basic subgroup S of R has no radicable quotients of infinite rank, since G has finite p^∞ -rank. Hence S has finite exponent (see [10, p. 91], Vol. I), so that $R=S$, and in particular R has no sections of type p^∞ . This argument shows that the derived series of the soluble radical of G can be refined to a normal series of finite length of G whose factors are either torsion-free abelian groups or abelian groups with the minimal condition or groups without section of type p^∞ . Application of Theorem 1 completes the proof of Theorem B.

3. Rank equalities. In order to prove Theorem C we need the following two technical lemmas.

Lemma 4. *Let G be a group with finite p^∞ -rank for a certain prime p , and let H be a subgroup of G such that for every element x of G there exists a positive integer $m = m(x)$ prime to p for which $x^m \in H$. Then $r_p(H) = r_p(G)$.*

Proof. Let K/L be a normal section of type p^∞ of G , and assume that $(H \cap K)/(H \cap L)$ has finite order p^n . If x is an element of K , there exists a positive integer m prime to p such that $x^m \in H$. Then x^{mp^n} belongs to $H \cap L$, and hence x^{p^n} belongs to L . This contradiction shows that $(H \cap K)/(H \cap L)$ must be infinite, and so of type p^∞ . It follows that $r_p(H) = r_p(G)$.

Lemma 5. *Let G be a locally nilpotent group whose commutator subgroup G' is periodic and has no elements of order p , for a certain prime p . If a and b are elements of G such that $a = bx$, where x is an element whose order is finite and prime to p , then there exists a positive integer m prime to p such that $a^m = b^m$.*

Proof. It is clearly enough to prove the lemma for the subgroup $\langle a, b \rangle$, so that we may suppose that G is a finitely generated nilpotent group. In particular G' is a finite group whose order n is prime to p . Obviously we may also assume that G is not abelian. Then $G/(G' \cap Z(G))$ has nilpotency class less than G , and by induction there exists a positive integer k prime to p such that $a^k = b^k u$, where u belongs to $G' \cap Z(G)$. Therefore

$$a^{kn} = (b^k u)^n = b^{kn} u^n = b^{kn},$$

and the lemma is proved, since kn is prime to p .

It is well-known that a soluble-by-finite S_1 -group is hypercentral-by-polycyclic-by-finite (see for instance [11], Corollary 2.4). Thus Theorem C will follow from our next result.

Theorem 2. *Let the soluble-by-finite group $G = AB$ with finite abelian section rank be the product of two subgroups A and B . If at least one of the subgroups A and B is hypercentral-by-polycyclic-by-finite, then*

$$r_p(G) = r_p(A) + r_p(B) - r_p(A \cap B)$$

for every prime p .

Proof. Assume that the theorem is false, and among the counterexamples with minimal torsion-free rank consider those for which the p^∞ -rank is minimal. Choose finally one of these $G = AB$ having a normal series Σ of minimal length whose factors are either torsion-free abelian groups (of finite rank) or radicable abelian p -groups (with the minimal condition) or periodic abelian groups without elements of order p or finite groups. If K is the smallest non-trivial term of Σ , the p^∞ -rank equality holds for the factor-group $G/K = (AK/K)(BK/K)$, and Lemma 2 shows that the factorizer $X(K) = (A \cap BK)(B \cap AK)$ of K is also a counterexample. Therefore we may suppose that G has a triple factorization

$$G = AB = AK = BK,$$

where K is normal in G . If K is either a torsion-free abelian group or a radicable abelian p -group, then a contradiction can be obtained as in the proof of Theorem 1. Assume that K is finite. Then A and B have finite indices in G , so that also $A \cap B$ has finite index in G . It follows that $r_p(G) = r_p(A) = r_p(B) = r_p(A \cap B)$, and hence clearly

$$r_p(G) = r_p(A) + r_p(B) - r_p(A \cap B).$$

This contradiction proves that K must be a periodic abelian group without elements of order p .

Suppose that A is hypercentral-by-polycyclic-by-finite. As the factor-group

$$G/B_G = (AB_G/B_G)(B/B_G)$$

is also a counterexample by Lemma 1, we may assume that B contains no non-trivial normal subgroups of G . In particular $B \cap K = 1$, and hence B is hypercentral-by-polycyclic-by-finite. Application of Theorem B of [11] yields that also the group G is hypercentral-by-polycyclic-by-finite. Let N be a hypercentral normal subgroup of G such that the factor-group G/N is polycyclic-by-finite. As KN is also hypercentral, N can be chosen containing K . Then $N = K(A \cap N) = K(B \cap N)$, so that $r_p(N) = r_p(A \cap N) = r_p(B \cap N)$, since K has no elements of order p . Let a be an element of $A \cap N$, and write $a = bx$, where $b \in B \cap N$ and $x \in K$. Clearly $\langle a, b \rangle$ is a nilpotent group whose commutator subgroup $\langle a, b \rangle'$ is contained in K , and so has finite order prime to p . By Lemma 5 there exists a positive integer m prime to p such that $a^m = b^m$, so that a^m belongs to $A \cap B \cap N$. Thus it follows from Lemma 4 that $r_p(A \cap N) = r_p(A \cap B \cap N)$, and hence $r_p(N) \leq r_p(A \cap B)$. Since the factor-group G/N is polycyclic-by-finite, we have also that $r_p(G) = r_p(N)$. Therefore

$$r_p(G) = r_p(A) = r_p(B) = r_p(A \cap B),$$

and this contradiction proves the theorem.

It should be noted that the hypotheses of Theorem C can be weakened, assuming that the soluble-by-finite group G has finite p^∞ -rank and at least one of the factors A and B is a soluble S_1 -group. In fact, in this situation, one can quickly reduce to the case of a triply factorized group

$$G = AB = AK = BK,$$

where K is an abelian normal subgroup of G such that $A \cap K = B \cap K = 1$, and both the subgroups A and B are hypercentral-by-polycyclic and have finite abelian section rank. Thus it follows from a recent result of Sysak [12] and Wilson [13] that also the soluble group G has finite abelian section rank, and hence Theorem 2 can be applied.

Our last result gives another condition under which the p^∞ -rank equality holds.

Theorem 3. *Let the soluble-by-finite group $G = AB$ with finite abelian section rank be the product of two subgroups A and B . If at least one of the subgroups A and B is periodic by-polycyclic-by-finite, then*

$$r_p(G) = r_p(A) + r_p(B) - r_p(A \cap B)$$

for every prime p .

Proof. Assume that the theorem is false. As in the proof of Theorem 2 it can be assumed that G has a triple factorization

$$G = AB = AK = BK,$$

where K is a periodic abelian normal subgroup of G having no elements of order p . As one of the factors A and B is periodic-by-polycyclic-by-finite, it follows that also G is periodic-by-polycyclic-by-finite. The factorized group

$$G/A_G = (A/A_G)(BA_G/A_G)$$

is a counterexample, so that we may suppose that A contains no non-trivial normal subgroups of G , and in particular $C_A(K) = 1$. Let T be a periodic normal subgroup of G such that G/T is polycyclic-by-finite, and put $A_0 = A \cap T$. For each prime number q , the q -component K_q of K is an abelian group satisfying the minimal condition, so that its periodic group of automorphisms $A_0/C_{A_0}(K_q)$ is finite (see [6, p. 85], Pt. 1). On the other hand

$$\bigcap_q C_{A_0}(K_q) = C_{A_0}(K) = 1,$$

and hence A_0 is residually finite. Thus the Sylow subgroups of A_0 are finite, since G has finite abelian section rank, and so A_0 has no sections which are infinite p -groups. Moreover A/A_0 is polycyclic-by-finite and $G = AK$, where K is a periodic normal subgroup without elements of order p , so that also G has no infinite sections which are p -groups. In particular $r_p(G) = 0$, and this contradiction proves the theorem.

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