

## ON THE VARIETY GENERATED BY ALL NILPOTENT LATTICE-ORDERED GROUPS

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*To Valerie Kopytov on his sixty-fifth birthday*

ABSTRACT. In 1974, J. Martinez introduced the variety  $\mathcal{W}$  of weakly Abelian lattice-ordered groups; it is defined by the identity

$$x^{-1}(y \vee 1)x \vee (y \vee 1)^2 = (y \vee 1)^2.$$

We prove

**Theorem A.** *There is a centre-by-metabelian weakly Abelian ordered group that does not belong to the variety of lattice-ordered groups generated by all nilpotent lattice-ordered groups.*

This answers two questions of V. M. Kopytov.

We extend our techniques to show

**Theorem B.** *The quasivariety generated by all nilpotent lattice-ordered groups is the same as the variety generated by all nilpotent lattice-ordered groups.*

Our proof also gives a set of defining identities for this variety.

In contrast to Theorem A we show

**Theorem C.** *Every Abelian-by-nilpotent weakly Abelian lattice-ordered group belongs to the variety of lattice-ordered groups generated by all nilpotent lattice-ordered groups.*

### 1. BASIC DEFINITIONS AND FACTS

We will use the shorthand  $\mathbb{Z}$  for the group of integers under addition with the usual ordering,  $\mathbb{N}$  for the set of non-negative integers, and  $\mathbb{R}$  for the additive group of real numbers with the usual ordering.

We will use standard group-theoretic notation, as in, e.g., [7] and [14]. In particular, if  $G$  is any group, we write  $\zeta(G)$  for the *centre* of  $G$ ; and if  $f, g, h \in G$ , we write  $f^g$  for  $g^{-1}fg$  and  $[f, g]$  for  $f^{-1}g^{-1}fg = f^{-1}f^g$ ; and  $[f, g, h]$  as a shorthand for  $[[f, g], h]$ , etc. If  $H$  and  $K$  are subgroups of  $G$ , we write  $[H, K]$  for the subgroup

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generated by  $\{[h, k] : h \in H, k \in K\}$  and define the lower central series  $\gamma_m(G)$  of  $G$  inductively:

$$\gamma_1(G) = G, \quad \gamma_{m+1}(G) = [\gamma_m(G), G]$$

(for all  $m = 1, 2, 3, \dots$ ). Each  $\gamma_m(G)$  is an invariant subgroup of  $G$  (and hence a normal subgroup of  $G$ ). Moreover,  $G$  is *nilpotent class  $c$*  if and only if  $\gamma_{c+1}(G) = \{1\}$ ; i.e., if  $[g_1, \dots, g_{c+1}] = 1$  for all  $g_1, \dots, g_{c+1} \in G$ . Thus  $G/\gamma_{c+1}(G)$  is nilpotent of class  $c$  for all groups  $G$ . Throughout, let  $I_k(G)$  be the isolator subgroup of  $\gamma_k(G)$  in  $G$  ( $k \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ), and  $\Gamma(G)$  be  $\bigcap_{k \in \mathbb{Z}_+} I_k(G)$ .

If  $\mathfrak{X}$  is a class of groups closed under isomorphisms, then a group  $G$  is called *residually  $\mathfrak{X}$*  if there is a family  $\{N_i : i \in I\}$  of normal subgroups of  $G$  with  $\bigcap_{i \in I} N_i = \{1\}$  and each  $G/N_i \in \mathfrak{X}$ ; i.e.,  $G$  is a subdirect product of the  $\mathfrak{X}$ -groups  $G/N_i$  ( $i \in I$ ).

A group equipped with lattice operations such that  $x(y \vee z)t = xyt \vee xzt$  and  $x(y \wedge z)t = xyt \wedge xzt$  for all  $x, y, z, t$  is called a *lattice-ordered group* (or  *$\ell$ -group*, for short). If the lattice order is total (i.e., for any pair of elements  $x$  &  $y$ , either  $x \vee y = x$  or  $x \vee y = y$ ), then the  $\ell$ -group is said to be an *ordered group* (or  *$o$ -group* for short). As usual, we write  $x \leq y$  as a shorthand for either  $x \vee y = y$  or  $x \wedge y = x$ .

Let  $G$  be a partially ordered group (or p.o. group, for short),  $G^+ = \{g \in G : g \geq 1\}$  and  $G_+ = G^+ \setminus \{1\}$ . If  $X$  is a subset of a group  $G$ , let  $N_G(X)$  be the normal subsemigroup of  $G$  generated by  $X$ . As is well known (see, e.g., [12, page 2]),

**Lemma 1.1.**  *$G$  can be made into a p.o. group with  $G_+ = N_G(X)$  if and only if  $1 \notin N_G(X)$ .*

Recall [12, Theorems 3.1.5 and 3.1.7]

**Lemma 1.2.** *If  $G$  is a nilpotent or metabelian p.o. group, then the order can be extended so that  $G$  becomes an  $o$ -group.*

As is well known (see, e.g., [4, Chapter 2]), every element of an  $\ell$ -group  $G$  can be written in the form  $fg^{-1}$  for some  $f, g \in G^+$ ; moreover,  $\{|g| : g \in G\} = G^+ = \{g \vee 1 : g \in G\}$  where we write  $|g|$  for  $g \vee g^{-1}$ . Therefore  $G^+$  completely determines the order on  $G$ .

A subgroup  $C$  of an  $o$ -group  $G$  is called *convex* if for all  $c_1, c_2 \in C$ ,  $g \in G$ , ( $c_1 \leq g \leq c_2$  implies  $g \in C$ ). The set of convex subgroups of an  $o$ -group is totally ordered by inclusion [4, Lemma 3.1.2]. The set is closed under unions and intersections. Hence given any non-identity element  $g$  of an  $o$ -group  $G$ , there is a unique subgroup  $C_g$  maximal with respect to not containing  $g$ . It is called the *value* of  $g$  and is strictly contained in the convex subgroup  $C(g)$  of  $G$  generated by  $g$ . Furthermore,  $C_g \triangleleft C(g)$ . The pair  $(C_g, C(g))$  is called a *convex jump*, and  $C(g)/C_g$  is isomorphic (as an  $o$ -group) to an additive subgroup of  $\mathbb{R}$  (see, e.g., [4, Chapters 3 and 4]).

As is also standard, we write  $f \ll g$  for  $f^n \leq |g|$  for all  $n \in \mathbb{Z}$  (and say that  $f$  is *very much less* than  $g$ ). In any  $o$ -group,  $f_1 f_2 \ll g$  whenever  $f_1 \ll g$  &  $f_2 \ll g$  (see, e.g., [4, Chapter 3]).

Residually ordered  $\ell$ -groups form a variety  $\mathcal{R}$  in the class of all  $\ell$ -groups (see, e.g., [4, Section 3.8] or [9, Section 9.3]). Hence any  $G \in \mathcal{R}$  is  $\ell$ -isomorphic to a subdirect product of  $o$ -groups. So any subvariety of  $\mathcal{R}$  is generated by all of its  $o$ -groups. But any  $o$ -group is  $o$ -isomorphic to a subgroup of an ultraproduct of its

finitely generated subgroups. Consequently we get:

**Lemma 1.3.** *Any subvariety of  $\mathcal{R}$  is generated by its finitely generated o-groups.*

This is one of the essential tools in our proofs.

A lattice-ordered group  $G$  is called *weakly Abelian* if  $g^{-1}|f|g \leq |f|^2$  for all  $f, g \in G$  [11] (or see [4, Section 6.4] or [9, Sections 6.2 and 9.4]). Equivalently, with the above shorthand, this law can be written in the form

$$f^g \leq f^2 \text{ for all } f \in G^+, g \in G.$$

Throughout we will use the following well-known result [11] (or see, e.g., [4, Lemma 6.4.1]):

**Lemma 1.4.** *An  $\ell$ -group  $G$  is weakly Abelian if and only if  $|[f, g]| \ll |f|$  for all  $f, g \in G$ .*

Hence every weakly Abelian  $\ell$ -group is residually ordered; i.e., a subdirect product of (weakly Abelian) o-groups [*ibid.*]. Weakly Abelian o-groups are called *centrally ordered* and have recently been studied by the authors with A. H. Rhemtulla (see [2] and [3]). Note that in any centrally ordered group,  $C(g)$  and  $C_g$  are normal subgroups of  $G$  for all  $g \in G \setminus \{1\}$ . Moreover,  $C_g g$  is central in  $G/C_g$  and  $[G, C(g)] \subseteq C_g$  [*op. cit.*].

We will need one fact from [3]:

**Lemma 1.5** ([3, Theorem D]). *If  $G$  is a finitely generated centrally ordered Abelian-by-nilpotent group and  $g$  is a non-identity element of  $G$ , then  $G/C_g$  is residually torsion-free-nilpotent.*

Any locally nilpotent  $\ell$ -group is weakly Abelian ([8], [13] or see [4, Theorem 6.D] or [9, Theorem 9.4.1]); so the variety of  $\ell$ -groups generated by all nilpotent  $\ell$ -groups is contained in  $\mathcal{W}$ . In 1984, V. M. Kopytov asked if the converse were true [16, Question 40] (cf., Kopytov’s stronger question [10, Problem 5.23]).

Since weakly Abelian  $\ell$ -groups are residually ordered, the question is equivalent to:

*Does every centrally ordered group belong to the variety of lattice-ordered groups generated by all nilpotent lattice-ordered groups?*

Theorem A provides negative answers to Kopytov’s questions.

For prior work on this topic, see [5] and [6].

Let  $\mathfrak{N}$  be the class of all lattice-ordered groups that are nilpotent.

Throughout, let  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$  denote the variety of lattice-ordered groups generated by  $\mathfrak{N}$ . So  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$  is defined by all identities that hold in all nilpotent  $\ell$ -groups. Every element of  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$  is an  $\ell$ -homomorphic image of a subdirect product of nilpotent o-groups.

We will write  $q(\mathfrak{N})$  for the quasi-variety of lattice-ordered groups generated by  $\mathfrak{N}$ . It is the smallest class of  $\ell$ -groups that is closed under  $\ell$ -isomorphisms, sublattice subgroups, direct products and ultraproducts and contains  $\mathfrak{N}$ . It is the class of  $\ell$ -groups defined by all implications of the form

$$\begin{aligned} (\forall x_1, \dots, x_n)[(u_1(x_1, \dots, x_n) = 1 \ \& \ \dots \ \& \ u_k(x_1, \dots, x_n) = 1) \\ \rightarrow w(x_1, \dots, x_n) = 1] \end{aligned}$$

that hold in all  $\ell$ -groups belonging to  $\mathfrak{N}$ , where  $u_1(x_1, \dots, x_n), \dots, u_k(x_1, \dots, x_n), w(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  are  $\ell$ -group words.

Clearly,  $q(\mathfrak{N}) \subseteq \hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ .

## 2. THE PROOF OF THEOREM A

Let  $G$  be a group with generators  $a_1, a_2, y, c$  and relations

$$\begin{aligned} (1) \quad & [a_1, a_2] = [a_1, y] = [a_2, y] = 1, \\ (2) \quad & [a_i^{\pm 1}, c, c] = [a_i^2, c, c] = 1 \quad (i = 1, 2), \\ (3) \quad & cc^{a_2^2} = c^{2y}, \\ (4) \quad & [[a_1^2, c], [a_2, c]] = [[a_1^2, c], [a_2^{-1}, c]], \\ (5) \quad & [d, a_1] = [d, a_2] = [d, y] = [d, c] = 1, \end{aligned}$$

where  $d := [[a_1^2, c], [a_2, c]]$ .

This is a finitely presented group. By (5),

$$(6) \quad d \in \zeta(G).$$

To prove Theorem A, we first establish two facts:

(i) if  $G^\psi$  is a torsion-free nilpotent homomorphic image of  $G$ , then  $d^\psi = 1$  (and so  $d \in \Gamma(G)$ );

(ii)  $G$  has a centrally orderable homomorphic image  $G^\varphi$  with  $d^\varphi \neq 1$ .

To prove (i) we need

**Lemma 2.1.** *In  $G$ ,*

$$(7) \quad c \in \zeta(\langle\langle c, c^{(a_1^2)}, c^{(a_2^{\pm 1})} \rangle\rangle),$$

and for all  $m \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ,

$$(8) \quad [[a_1^2, c], [a_2^{2m+1}, c]] = d.$$

*Proof.* Trivially, in any group  $L$ ,

$$(9) \quad [x, y] = 1 \text{ implies } [x^p, y^q] = 1 \text{ for all } p, q \in \mathbb{Z}.$$

By standard commutator calculus and induction on  $k$ ,

$$(10) \quad [x, y, y] = 1 \text{ implies } [x, y^k] = [x, y]^k \text{ for all } k \in \mathbb{Z}.$$

Moreover,

$$[x, y, y] = [y^{-x}y, y] = [y^{-x}, y]^y.$$

Thus

$$(11) \quad [x, y, y] = 1 \text{ if and only if } [y^x, y] = 1.$$

This gives (7).

We prove (8) by induction on  $m \in \mathbb{N} \cup \{-1\}$ .

By (4),  $d = [[a_1^2, c], [a_2^{-1}, c]]$ , so (8) is true if  $m = -1$  or  $0$ .

We now induct on  $m$  using  $y$ .

We have  $d = [c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2}] = [c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2^{-1}}]$ .

Assume that

$$d^4 = [c^{2a_1^2}, c^{2a_2^{2k+1}}] = [c^{2a_1^2}, c^{2a_2^{2k-1}}].$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned} d^4 &= [c^{2a_1^2}, c^{2a_2^{2k+1}}]y = [c^{a_1^2}c^{a_1^2a_2^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+1}}c^{a_2^{2k+3}}] \\ &= [c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+1}}c^{a_2^{2k+3}}]c^{a_1^2a_2^2} \cdot [c^{a_1^2a_2^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+1}}c^{a_2^{2k+3}}] \\ &= [c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+3}}]c^{a_1^2a_2^2} \cdot [c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+1}}]c^{a_2^{2k+3}}c^{a_1^2a_2^2} \cdot [c^{a_1^2a_2^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+3}}] \cdot [c^{a_1^2a_2^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+1}}]c^{a_2^{2k+3}} \\ &= [c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+3}}]c^{a_1^2a_2^2} \cdot d^3. \end{aligned}$$

Thus,  $[c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+3}}]c^{a_1^2a_2^2} \in \zeta(H)$  and  $[c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2^{2k+3}}] = d$ . So  $[c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2^n}] = d$  for all odd  $n \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ . But  $[[a_1^2, c], [a_2^n, c]] = [c^{a_1^2}, c^{a_2^n}]$  using (7) and standard commutator calculus. (8) now follows.  $\square$

We now use Lemma 2.1 to establish (i).

Let  $p$  be an odd prime and  $2m + 1$  range over all powers of  $p$  in (8). By Gruenberg’s Theorem [14, Theorem 5.2.21], every finitely generated torsion-free nilpotent group is a residually finite  $p$ -group. By (8),  $d = 1$  in any finite  $p$ -group that is an image of  $G$ . Therefore,  $d = 1$  in every torsion-free nilpotent homomorphic image of  $G$ .  $\square$

We now prove (ii). That is, the initial group,  $G$ , has a centrally ordered homomorphic image  $G^\varphi$  with  $d^\varphi = [[a_1^2, c], [a_2, c]]^\varphi \neq 1$ . For this we construct an example. The first examples we considered were based on [1, Statement 6]; what is presented here is several modifications later.

**Example 2.2.** Let  $C$  be the free nilpotent class 2 group with free generators  $\{c_{m,n} : m, n \in \mathbb{Z}\}$ . The centre of  $C$  is the free Abelian group with free generators  $[c_{m,n}, c_{p,q}]$  ( $m, n, p, q \in \mathbb{Z}$ ) where  $(m, n) > (p, q)$  lexicographically. We embed  $C$  in a divisible nilpotent class 2 group  $C^b$ ; so each element of  $C^b$  can be written uniquely (to within the order that the commutators appear) in the form

$$c_{m_1, n_1}^{r_1} \cdots c_{m_k, n_k}^{r_k} \prod_{i=1}^{\ell} [c_{p_i, q_i}, c_{p'_i, q'_i}]^{t_i},$$

where  $(m_1, n_1) > \cdots > (m_k, n_k)$  lexicographically,  $p_i, p'_i, q_i, q'_i \in \mathbb{Z}$  with  $(p_i, q_i) > (p'_i, q'_i)$  lexicographically ( $i = 1, \dots, \ell$ ) and  $r_1, \dots, r_k, t_1, \dots, t_\ell \in \mathbb{Q}$  (see [15, Theorem 8.5]). We add the relations

$$(12) \quad [c_{m,n}, c_{p,q}] = [c_{m-p,0}, c_{0,q-n}] \quad (m, n, p, q \in \mathbb{Z}),$$

$$(13) \quad [c_{m,0}, c_{0,2q}] = [c_{2m+1,0}, c_{0,2q+1}] = 1 \quad (m, q \in \mathbb{Z}),$$

$$(14) \quad [c_{2m,0}, c_{0,2q+1}] = [c_{2,0}, c_{0,1}]^m \quad (m, q \in \mathbb{Z}),$$

and quotient out from  $C^b$  the divisible normal subgroup determined by these relations. We obtain a factor group  $C^\#$  with centre  $D$ , the divisible closure of  $\langle d \rangle$  in  $C^\#$ , where  $d := [c_{2,0}, c_{0,1}]$ . So  $D$  is a rank 1 Abelian group.

Note that  $C^\#$  is a divisible nilpotent class 2 group and each element of  $C^\#$  can be uniquely written in the form

$$c_{m_1, n_1}^{r_1} \cdots c_{m_k, n_k}^{r_k} d^t,$$

where  $(m_1, n_1) > \cdots > (m_k, n_k)$  lexicographically and  $r_1, \dots, r_k, t \in \mathbb{Q}$  (see [15, Theorem 8.5]).

Let  $a, b$  be automorphisms of  $C^b$  determined by

$$(15) \quad a : c_{m,n} \mapsto c_{m+1,n} \quad b : c_{m,n} \mapsto c_{m,n+1}.$$

Note that  $a, b$  induce automorphisms of  $C^\#$ .

*Proof.* We need only show that  $a, b$  respect the relations (12)–(14). This is immediate since

$$[c_{m,0}, c_{0,q}]^a = [c_{m+1,0}, c_{1,q}] = [c_{m,0}, c_{0,q}] = [c_{m,1}, c_{0,q+1}] = [c_{m,0}, c_{0,q}]^b.$$

Therefore  $a$  and  $b$  induce well-defined automorphisms of  $C^\#$ . □

We observe that automorphisms  $a$  and  $b$  commute and fix  $D$  pointwise.

So we can construct a splitting extension  $K = C^\# \rtimes \langle a, b \rangle$  with Abelian top group  $\langle a, b \rangle$ . Note that  $K/D \cong (C^\#/D) \wr \langle a, b \rangle$  and  $C^\#/D$  is Abelian. Thus  $K/D$  is metabelian with torsion-free Abelian quotients  $\gamma_n(K/D)/\gamma_{n+1}(K/D)$  and so is residually torsion-free-nilpotent. Furthermore,  $\zeta(K) = D$ .

Each element of  $K$  can be written uniquely in normal form

$$a^p b^q c_{m_1, n_1}^{r_1} \dots c_{m_k, n_k}^{r_k} d^t,$$

where  $p, q, m_1, n_1, \dots, m_k, n_k \in \mathbb{Z}$  and  $r_1, \dots, r_k, t \in \mathbb{Q}$ , and  $(m_1, n_1) > \dots > (m_k, n_k)$  in the lexicographic order on  $\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{Z}$ .

Let  $L = \langle a, b, c_{0,0} \rangle$ . Now  $d = [c_{2,0}, [c_{0,0}, b^{2m+1}]]$ , so by applying Gruenberg’s Theorem to  $L/I_n(L)$ , we deduce that  $d \in I_n(L)$  for all  $n \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ . Hence  $d \in \Gamma(L) \subseteq \Gamma(K)$ , whence  $D \subseteq \Gamma(K)$ . Since  $\Gamma(K/D) = 1$ , we have  $\Gamma(K) \subseteq D$ . Therefore  $D = \Gamma(K)$ . Since  $C^\#$  is divisible and  $[C^\#, C^\#] \leq \zeta(C^\#) = D$ , by the normal form for elements of  $K$  we obtain  $D = \Gamma(K) = \bigcap_{i=1}^\infty \gamma_i(K)$ . It follows that  $\gamma_n(K)/\gamma_{n+1}(K) \cong \gamma_n(K/D)/\gamma_{n+1}(K/D)$  for all  $n \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ . Thus  $K$  has a central order with a series of convex subgroups

$$\{1\} < D = \bigcap_{i=1}^\infty \gamma_i(K) < \dots < \gamma_{n+1}(K) < \gamma_n(K) < \dots < \gamma_1(K) = K.$$

By (12)–(14), for all  $m, q \in \mathbb{Z}$  we get (in  $C^\#$ )

$$(16) \quad [c_{m+2,0}, c_{0,q}][c_{m-2,0}, c_{0,q}] = [c_{m,0}, c_{0,q}]^2 = [c_{m,0}, c_{0,q+2}][c_{m,0}, c_{0,q-2}].$$

In  $C^\#$ ,  $c_{m,n}$  commutes with  $c_{m+2,n}$  and  $c_{m,n+2}$  ( $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$ ). These lead us to the following:

Consider the injective endomorphism  $\beta$  of  $C^b$  determined by

$$(17) \quad \beta : c_{m,n} \mapsto c_{m,n+2}^{1/2} c_{m,n}^{1/2}.$$

A tedious but thoroughly routine verification shows that  $\beta$  respects the relations (12)–(14). Thus  $\beta$  induces an injective endomorphism of  $C^\#$ .

We extend  $\beta$  to an injective endomorphism of  $K$  by

$$(18) \quad \beta : a \mapsto a; \quad \beta : b \mapsto b.$$

Let  $K^b = \bigcup \{K^{\beta^{-n}} : n \in \mathbb{Z}_+\}$  with central order inherited from  $K$ , and let  $H = \langle K^b, \beta : (17), (18) \rangle$  be the ascending HNN-extension of  $K$  with respect to  $\beta$ . By the normal form for HNN-extensions, we see that  $H/D$  is a metabelian residually torsion-free-nilpotent group and  $D = \zeta(H)$ . Equations (17) and (18) show that  $\beta$  acts as the identity on  $D$ , and also on each  $\gamma_n(K)/\gamma_{n+1}(K)$  ( $n \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ). The latter follows at once from  $c_{m,n}^{\beta} = c_{m,n}^r [c_{m,n}^{r/2}, b^2]$ . Hence the central order on

$K$  is preserved by the injective endomorphism  $\beta$ , and we can extend this central order to  $H$  by the spelling for HNN-extensions, with

$$K^b \ll \beta.$$

Let  $K_0$  be the subgroup of  $H$  generated by  $a, b, c_{0,0}, \beta$ . Then  $K_0$ , the ‘‘Kopytov group’’, is centre-by-metabelian. By construction, the relations (1)–(5) hold in  $K_0$  under the substitution  $a, b, \beta, c_{0,0}$  for  $a_1, a_2, y, c$ , respectively, and  $d \neq 1$  by the normal form of the HNN-extension. Moreover,  $K_0$  is centrally orderable since  $H$  is.

Thus,  $K_0$  is a centrally orderable homomorphic image of  $G$  satisfying (ii).  $\square$

We must now show that (i) and (ii) imply Theorem A. This follows immediately from the following more general theorem.

**Theorem D.** *Let  $G_0$  be a lattice-ordered group and  $G_0 \in \hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ . If there is a group homomorphism  $\varphi$  from a finitely presented group  $G$  into  $G_0$ , then  $\Gamma(G) \subseteq \ker(\varphi)$ .*

For if  $G$  is defined by (1)–(5) and  $K_0$  is the centrally ordered group constructed in Example 2.2, then it follows from (i) and (ii) that  $d \in \Gamma(G) \setminus \ker(\varphi)$  where  $G^\varphi = K_0$ ; hence  $K_0 \in \mathcal{W} \setminus \hat{\mathfrak{N}}$  and Theorem A is established.  $\square$

To prove Theorem D, we will transform certain types of group implications into  $\ell$ -group identities. To achieve this we will need two lemmata.

Let  $H$  be a finitely generated group with generators  $h_1, \dots, h_n$ . Let  $U = \langle u_1, \dots, u_k \rangle$  be a finitely generated subgroup of  $H$ . We write

$$\Gamma_U(H) = \bigcap_{j=1}^{\infty} I(U^H \gamma_j(H)),$$

where  $I(G)$  is the isolator of  $G$ . So  $\Gamma_{\{1\}}(H) = \Gamma(H)$ . By construction,

$$\{1\} \subseteq U \subseteq U^H \subseteq \Gamma_U(H) \subseteq H.$$

**Lemma 2.3.** *Let  $H$  be a finitely generated group with generators  $h_1, \dots, h_n$ , and let  $U = \langle u_1, \dots, u_k \rangle$  be a finitely generated subgroup of  $H$ . Then for any  $w \in \Gamma_U(H)$ , there are  $m_0, \dots, m_k \in \mathbb{Z}$  with  $m_0 \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  such that*

$$(19) \quad w^{m_0} u_1^{m_1} \dots u_k^{m_k} \in \Gamma_{[U,H]}(H).$$

**Lemma 2.4.** *Let  $F = F(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  be the free group and  $U = \langle u_1, \dots, u_k \rangle$  a finitely generated subgroup of  $F$ . If  $w \in \Gamma_{[U,F]}(F)$ , then*

$$(**) \quad |w(y_1, \dots, y_n)| \ll \bigvee_{j=1}^k |u_j(y_1, \dots, y_n)|$$

holds in every nilpotent lattice-ordered group.

Actually, (\*\*) is an infinite set of identities since  $w_1 \ll w_2$  is a shorthand for  $w_1^m \leq w_2$  for all  $m \in \mathbb{Z}$ .

We first show that the lemmata indeed imply Theorem D.

*Proof.* Let  $G = \langle g_1, \dots, g_n : u_1(g_1, \dots, g_n) = 1, \dots, u_k(g_1, \dots, g_n) = 1 \rangle$ . Let  $F$  be the free group on  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  and  $u_j = u_j(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  be the result of replacing each occurrence of  $g_i$  in  $u_j(g_1, \dots, g_n)$  by  $x_i$  ( $1 \leq i \leq n; 1 \leq j \leq k$ ). Then the natural homomorphism  $\psi : F \rightarrow G$  determined by  $x_i \mapsto g_i$  ( $1 \leq i \leq n$ ) has kernel  $U^F$  where

$U = \langle u_1, \dots, u_k \rangle$ . If  $w(g_1, \dots, g_n) \in \Gamma(G) \setminus \ker(\varphi)$ , then  $w(g_1, \dots, g_n)^\varphi \neq 1$  in  $G_0$ . But  $w(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \Gamma_U(F)$  by definition. By Lemma 2.3, there are  $m_0, \dots, m_k \in \mathbb{Z}$  such that

$$\hat{w} := w^{m_0} u_1^{m_1} \dots u_k^{m_k} \in \Gamma_{[U,F]}(F).$$

By Lemma 2.4,

$$1 \neq |w(g_1, \dots, g_n)^\varphi|^{m_0} = |\hat{w}(g_1, \dots, g_n)^\varphi| \ll \prod_{j=1}^k |u_j(g_1, \dots, g_n)^\varphi| = 1,$$

since  $u_1(x_1, \dots, x_n), \dots, u_k(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \ker(\varphi)$ . This contradiction establishes the theorem.  $\square$

We now prove Lemma 2.3.

*Proof.* Let  $w \in \Gamma_U(H)$ . Then for every  $j \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ , there is a positive integer  $t_j$  such that  $w^{t_j} \in U^H \gamma_j(H)$ ; say,

$$(*_j) \quad w^{t_j} \equiv u_1^{m_{1,j}} \dots u_k^{m_{k,j}} \pmod{[U, H]^H \gamma_j(H)}$$

with  $m_{1,j}, \dots, m_{k,j} \in \mathbb{Z}$ . We call  $(*_j)$  a  $j^{\text{th}}$ -representation for  $w$ ; it is not usually unique.

If  $t'_j \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  and  $m'_{1,j}, \dots, m'_{k,j} \in \mathbb{Z}$  with

$$(*'_j) \quad (w')^{t'_j} \equiv u_1^{m'_{1,j}} \dots u_k^{m'_{k,j}} \pmod{[U, H]^H \gamma_j(H)},$$

then we say that the  $(*_j)$  representation is less than the  $(*_j')$  representation if

$$(|m_{1,i}|, \dots, |m_{k,j}|) < (|m'_{1,i}|, \dots, |m'_{k,j}|),$$

in the lexicographic ordering on  $\mathbb{N}^k$ . This is a well-ordering.

For each  $j \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ , among all the representations  $(*_j)$  for positive powers of  $w$ , choose one so that the right-hand side of  $(*_j)$  is minimal. We will assume that the sequence  $\{t_j : j \in \mathbb{Z}_+\}$  has been chosen so that, for each  $j \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ,  $(*_j)$  is minimal for all positive powers of  $w$ .

Fix  $j_1$  and let  $j \geq j_1$ . We first establish:

*Claim:* If  $m_{1,j_1} \neq 0$ , then  $m_{1,j_1}$  divides  $m_{1,j}$  and  $t_j/t_{j_1} = m_{1,j}/m_{1,j_1}$ .

*Proof.* Let  $j \geq j_1$ . Since  $m_{1,j_1} \neq 0$ , we can write  $m_{1,j} = qm_{1,j_1} + r$  where  $q, r \in \mathbb{Z}$  with  $0 \leq r < |m_{1,j_1}|$ . Now

$$w^{t_j - qt_{j_1}} \equiv u_1^r u_2^{m_{2,j} - qm_{2,j_1}} \dots u_k^{m_{k,j} - qm_{k,j_1}} \pmod{[U, H]^H \gamma_{j_1}(H)}.$$

This contradicts the minimality of  $(*_{j_1})$  unless  $t_j = qt_{j_1}$ . Hence

$$1 \equiv u_1^r u_2^{m_{2,j} - qm_{2,j_1}} \dots u_k^{m_{k,j} - qm_{k,j_1}} \pmod{[U, H]^H \gamma_{j_1}(H)}.$$

If  $r \neq 0$ , then

$$u_1^r \equiv u_2^{qm_{2,j_1} - m_{2,j}} \dots u_k^{qm_{k,j_1} - m_{k,j}} \pmod{[U, H]^H \gamma_{j_1}(H)}.$$

Raising both sides of  $(*_{j_1})$  to the  $r^{\text{th}}$ -power and substituting the above gives a  $(*_{j_1})$  representation of a positive power of  $w$  with the exponent on  $u_1$  being  $0 < |m_{1,j_1}|$ . This contradicts the minimality of  $(*_{j_1})$ . Thus  $r = 0$  and we have  $m_{1,j}/m_{1,j_1} = q = t_j/t_{j_1}$ .  $\square$



The claim also implies that  $m_{1,j} \neq 0$  if  $j \geq j_1$  and  $m_{1,j_1} \neq 0$  (since  $t_j \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ).

Either  $m_{1,j} = 0$  for all  $j \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  or there is a least  $j_1 \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  with  $m_{1,j_1} \neq 0$ . Then for all  $j \geq j_1$ , there are  $q_j \in \mathbb{Z} \setminus \{0\}$  such that the minimal  $j^{th}$ -representation for all positive powers of  $w$  is

$$w^{t_{j_1} q_j} \equiv u_1^{m_{1,j_1} q_j} u_2^{m_{2,j}} \dots u_k^{m_{k,j}} \pmod{[U, H]^H \gamma_j(H)}.$$

Let  $w_1 = w^{t_{j_1}} u_1^{-m_{1,j_1}}$  if such a  $j_1$  exists; if no such  $j_1$  exists, let  $j_1 = 1$  and  $w_1 = w^{t_1} = w^{t_1} u_1^{-m_{1,1}}$ .

Repeating the above argument with  $w_1$  in place of  $w$ , we can find  $j_2 \geq j_1$  and  $q'_j \in \mathbb{Z}$  such that

$$w_1^{t'_{j_2} q'_j} \equiv u_2^{m'_{2,j_2} q'_j} u_3^{m'_{3,j}} \dots u_k^{m'_{k,j}} \pmod{[U, H]^H \gamma_j(H)}$$

for all  $j \geq j_2$ .

Let  $w_2 = w_1^{t'_{j_2}} u_2^{-m'_{2,j_2}}$ .

Continuing in this way, we obtain  $m_1, \dots, m_k \in \mathbb{Z}$  and  $m_0, q_j \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  such that

$$(w^{m_0} u_1^{m_1} \dots u_k^{m_k})^{q_j} \in [U, H]^H \gamma_j(H)$$

for all sufficiently large  $j \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ . This completes the proof of the lemma. □

We now prove Lemma 2.4.

*Proof.* Assume the hypotheses of the lemma. Let  $G$  be a nilpotent class  $c$  o-group and  $g_1, \dots, g_n \in G$ . Let  $\varphi : F \rightarrow G_1 = \langle g_1, \dots, g_n \rangle$  be determined by  $x_i \mapsto g_i$  ( $1 \leq i \leq n$ ). Let  $v = v(g_1, \dots, g_n) = \bigvee_{j=1}^k |u_j(g_1, \dots, g_n)|$ , and  $C_v$  be its value in  $G$ . Hence  $u_1(g_1, \dots, g_n), \dots, u_k(g_1, \dots, g_n) \in C(v)$ . By Lemma 1.4,  $U^\varphi \subseteq C(v)$ , the cover of  $C_v$  in  $G$ . Since  $G$  is weakly Abelian,  $U^G \subseteq C(v)$ ; thus  $([U, F]^F)^\varphi = [U^{G_1}, G_1] \subseteq [C(v), G] \subseteq C_v$ . So if  $w(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \Gamma_{[U, F]}(F)$ , then  $w(x_1, \dots, x_n)^m \in [U, F]^F \gamma_{c+1}(F)$  for some  $m = m(c) \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ . Thus  $w(g_1, \dots, g_n)^m \in C_v$ . Therefore  $w(g_1, \dots, g_n) \in C_v$  (convex subgroups are isolated). Consequently

$$|w(g_1, \dots, g_n)| \ll \bigvee_{j=1}^k |u_j(g_1, \dots, g_n)|.$$

Since  $g_1, \dots, g_n$  were arbitrary in  $G$ , we get that  $(**)$  holds in  $G$ . Hence  $(**)$  holds in all nilpotent o-groups (it is independent of the nilpotency class of  $G$ ), and so in  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ . □

We now have, for example, by Theorem D:

**Corollary 2.5.** *If a lattice-ordered group  $G \in \hat{\mathfrak{N}}$  is finitely presented as an abstract group, then  $G$  is residually torsion-free-nilpotent.*

Finally in this section, we can now exhibit a central order on a free group that does not belong to  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ ; cf., [5].

**Corollary 2.6.** *There is a central order on  $F_4$ , the free group on 4 generators, so that  $(F_4, \leq) \notin \hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $K_0$  be the centrally ordered Kopytov group of Example 2.2, and let  $a, b, c, \beta$  be the free generators of  $F_4$ . Let  $\theta : F_4 \rightarrow K_0$  be the homomorphism given by  $a \mapsto a, b \mapsto b, c \mapsto c_{0,0}$ , and  $\beta \mapsto \beta$ . Let  $C = \ker(\theta)$ . Then  $C$  is a free group and so can be centrally ordered using the series  $C \cap \gamma_j(F_4)$  ( $j \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ). Then  $F_4$  is

centrally ordered by  $f > 1$  iff either  $(f \notin C \text{ and } f^\theta \in (K_0)_+)$  or  $f \in C_+$ . Since  $K_0 \notin \hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ , we have  $(F_{4, \le}) \notin \hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ . □

### 3. IDENTITIES IN NILPOTENT $\ell$ -GROUPS

In Lemma 2.4, we found a set of identities that hold in  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ . We now show that these are sufficient to define  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ .

Let  $\tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$  be the variety of  $\ell$ -groups defined by the identities  $(**)$  in Lemma 2.4. That is, the defining identities for  $\tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$  are:

for each  $k, m, n \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ,  $u_1(x_1, \dots, x_n), \dots, u_k(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in F = F(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  and  $w(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \Gamma_{[U, F]}(F)$ ,

$$|w(x_1, \dots, x_n)|^m \leq \bigvee_{j=1}^k |u_j(x_1, \dots, x_n)|,$$

where  $U = \langle u_1(x_1, \dots, x_n), \dots, u_k(x_1, \dots, x_n) \rangle$ .

By Lemma 2.4,

$$\hat{\mathfrak{N}} \subseteq \tilde{\mathfrak{N}} \subseteq \mathcal{W} \subseteq \mathcal{R}.$$

For, putting  $k = 1$ ,  $n = 2$ ,  $u_1 = x_1$ , and  $w = [x_1, x_2] \in [[x_1], F] \subseteq \Gamma_{[[x_1], F]}(F)$ , we obtain the identities  $|[x_1, x_2]|^m \leq |x_1|$  for all  $m \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  which define the weakly Abelian variety by Lemma 1.4.

The proof of Theorem D from Lemmata 2.3 and 2.4 (see Section 2) applies equally to  $\tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$ ; that is,

**Lemma 3.1.** *Let  $G_0$  be a lattice-ordered group and  $G_0 \in \tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$ . If there is a group homomorphism  $\varphi$  from a finitely presented group  $G$  into  $G_0$ , then  $\Gamma(G) \subseteq \ker(\varphi)$ .*

The main result of this section is

**Theorem E.**  $q(\mathfrak{N}) = \hat{\mathfrak{N}} = \tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$ .

Since we have provided an explicit set of defining laws for  $\tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$ , Theorem E gives both Theorem B and a set of defining identities for  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ .

To prove the theorem, we will need one extra technical fact.

**Lemma 3.2.** *Let  $F = F(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  be a free group of rank  $n$  and  $H = \langle h_1, \dots, h_n : u_1(h_1, \dots, h_n) = 1, \dots, u_p(h_1, \dots, h_n) = 1 \rangle$ . Let  $G \in \tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$  be an o-group that is a homomorphic image of  $H$  (qua group), say,  $G = H^\varphi$  with  $g_i = h_i^\varphi$  ( $i = 1, \dots, n$ ). Let  $\{w_1(x_1, \dots, x_n), \dots, w_k(x_1, \dots, x_n)\} \subseteq F$  be such that  $\{w_1(g_1, \dots, g_n), \dots, w_k(g_1, \dots, g_n)\} \subseteq G_+$ . Then there exists  $j_0 \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  and a total order on  $H/I_{j_0}(H)$  such that*

$$\{I_{j_0}(H)w_1(h_1, \dots, h_n), \dots, I_{j_0}(H)w_k(h_1, \dots, h_n)\} \subseteq (H/I_{j_0}(H))_+.$$

We now deduce Theorem E from Lemma 3.2.

*Proof.* By Lemma 2.4, it suffices to show that  $\tilde{\mathfrak{N}} \subseteq q(\mathfrak{N})$ . Since  $\tilde{\mathfrak{N}} \subseteq \mathcal{R}$ , by Lemma 1.3 it is enough to prove that every finitely generated o-group  $G \in \tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$  belongs to  $q(\mathfrak{N})$ .

Let  $G$  be such an o-group generated by  $g_1, \dots, g_n$ . Let  $F$  be the free group on  $x_1, \dots, x_n$ . Let  $\{R_i(x_1, \dots, x_n) : i \in \mathbb{Z}_+\}$  be the set of all words in  $F$  such that  $R_i(g_1, \dots, g_n) = 1$  in  $G$ . Then  $G \cong F/K$ , where  $K = \langle R_i(x_1, \dots, x_n) : i \in \mathbb{Z}_+ \rangle^F$ .

Let  $\varphi : F \rightarrow G$  be the group homomorphism determined by  $\varphi : x_\ell \mapsto g_\ell$  ( $\ell = 1, \dots, n$ ). Let  $\{c_i(g_1, \dots, g_n) : i \in \mathbb{Z}_+\}$  be an enumeration of  $G_+$ .

For each  $m \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ , let  $K_m = \langle R_i(x_1, \dots, x_n) : 1 \leq i \leq m \rangle^F$ , and  $G_m \cong F/K_m$ ; so  $G_m = F^{\varphi_m}$ , say. By construction, each  $G_m$  is a finitely presented group and the o-group  $G$  is a group homomorphic image of it.

By Lemma 3.2, for each  $m \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  there is  $j = j(m) \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  and a total order on the torsion-free nilpotent group  $N_{m,j(m)} := G_m/I_{j(m)}(G_m)$  such that elements

$$I_{j(m)}(G_m)c_1(x_1^{\varphi_m}, \dots, x_n^{\varphi_m}), \dots, I_{j(m)}(G_m)c_m(x_1^{\varphi_m}, \dots, x_n^{\varphi_m})$$

all belong to  $(N_{m,j(m)})_+$ .

Let  $\mathcal{U}$  be an ultrafilter on  $\mathbb{Z}_+$ , and let  $H = (\prod_{m \in \mathbb{Z}_+} N_{m,j(m)})/\mathcal{U}$  be the resulting ultraproduct. Since each  $N_{m,j(m)}$  is an o-group, so is  $H$ . Moreover, since each  $N_{m,j(m)}$  is nilpotent, we get  $H \in q(\mathfrak{N})$ . Then  $G$  can be mapped into  $H$  by mapping  $g_\ell$  to the  $\mathcal{U}$ -equivalence class of the element whose  $m^{\text{th}}$  coordinate is  $I_{j(m)}(G_m)x_\ell^{\varphi_m}$  ( $m \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ), where  $\ell = 1, \dots, n$ . Call this map  $\theta$ . It is well defined since for each  $i \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ,  $\{m \in \mathbb{Z}_+ : i \leq m\} \in \mathcal{U}$  (so  $R_i(g_1^\theta, \dots, g_n^\theta) = 1$ ). Thus  $\theta$  is a group homomorphism that preserves order since  $\{c_i(g_1, \dots, g_n) : i \in \mathbb{Z}_+\}$  is an enumeration of  $G_+$  (again use  $\{m \in \mathbb{Z}_+ : i \leq m\} \in \mathcal{U}$ ). Hence  $G$  is  $\ell$ -isomorphic to a (sublattice) subgroup of the o-group  $H \in q(\mathfrak{N})$ . Consequently,  $G \in q(\mathfrak{N})$ .  $\square$

It only remains to prove Lemma 3.2.

*Proof.* If the lemma were false, choose a counter-example  $G$  with  $k$  minimal. By the minimality and rechristening, we may assume that

- (I)  $w_1(g_1, \dots, g_n) > \dots > w_k(g_1, \dots, g_n) > 1$  in  $G$ , and
- (II) there is  $j_0 \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  and a total order on  $H/I_{j_0}(H)$  in which

$$I_{j_0}(H)w_2(h_1, \dots, h_n), \dots, I_{j_0}(H)w_k(h_1, \dots, h_n) \in (H/I_{j_0}(H))_+.$$

Whenever  $j \geq j_0$ , there is a natural homomorphism from  $H/I_j(H)$  onto  $H/I_{j_0}(H)$  determined by  $I_j(H)h \mapsto I_{j_0}(H)h$ . Since  $H/I_j(H)$  is a torsion-free nilpotent group, by Lemma 1.2 we can lift any total order from  $H/I_{j_0}(H)$  to  $H/I_j(H)$  (let  $I_j(H)h \in (H/I_j(H))_+$  iff  $I_{j_0}(H)h \in (H/I_{j_0}(H))_+$ ; extend this partial order to a total order on  $H/I_j(H)$  by Lemma 1.2).

By Lemma 1.1, if  $j \geq j_0$ , we may assume that  $b_2, \dots, b_k \in (H/I_j(H))_+$  but

$$1 \in N_{H/I_j(H)}(b_1, \dots, b_k),$$

where  $b_i = I_j(H)w_i(h_1, \dots, h_n)$  ( $i = 1, \dots, k$ ).

Let  $d_i = w_i(g_1, \dots, g_n) \in G_+$  ( $i = 1, \dots, k$ ), and  $C = C_{d_1}$  be the value of  $d_1$  in  $G$ . By (I) we have  $d_1, \dots, d_k \in C(d_1)$  and  $C(d_1)/C \subseteq \zeta(G/C)$ .

Let  $K = \langle [b_i, h_\ell] : i = 1, \dots, k, \ell = 1, \dots, n \rangle^H$ . Let  $\bar{H} = H/K$  and  $\bar{G} = G/C$ ; write  $\bar{h}$  for  $Kh$  and  $\bar{g}$  for  $Cg$  ( $h \in H$ ;  $g \in G$ ). Since  $\bar{d}_i \in \zeta(\bar{G})$  ( $i = 1, \dots, k$ ),  $\bar{G}$  is a homomorphic image of  $\bar{H}$  under the naturally induced map, say,  $\bar{G} = \bar{H}^{\bar{\varphi}}$ . Note that  $\bar{H}$  is a finitely presented group and  $\bar{G} \in \mathfrak{N}$ .

Now  $\bar{d}_1 \geq \dots \geq \bar{d}_k \geq 1$  with  $\bar{d}_1 \in \bar{G}_+$ . Since  $\bar{b}_i \in \zeta(\bar{H})$  ( $i = 1, \dots, k$ ) and  $1 \in N_{H/I_j(H)}(b_1, \dots, b_k)$  for all  $j \geq j_0 \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ , we have (for such  $j$ )

$$(20) \quad \bar{b}_1^{m_{1,j}} \dots \bar{b}_k^{m_{k,j}} \equiv 1 \pmod{I_j(\bar{H})}$$

with  $m_{1,j} \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  and  $m_{2,j}, \dots, m_{k,j} \in \mathbb{N}$ .

For each  $j \geq j_0$ , we define  $\text{rank}_j(\bar{b}_1, \dots, \bar{b}_k)$  as the minimum of  $|\{i \in \{1, \dots, k\} : m_{i,j} \neq 0\}|$  ranging over all equivalences that can occur in (20).

If  $j \geq j_0$ , the natural homomorphism from  $\bar{H}/I_j(\bar{H})$  onto  $\bar{H}/I_{j_0}(\bar{H})$  gives that  $\bar{b}_1^{m_{1,j}} \cdots \bar{b}_k^{m_{k,j}} \equiv 1 \pmod{I_{j_0}(\bar{H})}$  whenever  $\bar{b}_1^{m_{1,j}} \cdots \bar{b}_k^{m_{k,j}} \equiv 1 \pmod{I_j(\bar{H})}$ . Hence  $\text{rank}_j(\bar{b}_1, \dots, \bar{b}_k)$  is an increasing positive-integer-valued function of  $j$ , bounded above by  $k$ . Thus there is  $j_1 \geq j_0$  such that  $\text{rank}_j(\bar{b}_1, \dots, \bar{b}_k)$  is constant on all integers greater than or equal to  $j_1$ , with  $m_{i,j} = 0$  iff  $m_{i,j_1} = 0$  ( $i = 1, \dots, k$ ). By the minimality of  $k$ , we have that  $\text{rank}_j(\bar{b}_1, \dots, \bar{b}_k) = k$  for all  $j \geq j_1$ . Thus, we can assume that if any of  $m'_{1,j}, \dots, m'_{k,j}$  is 0, then  $\bar{b}_1^{m'_{1,j}}, \dots, \bar{b}_k^{m'_{k,j}} \not\equiv 1$  in (20) ( $j \geq j_1$ ).

So  $m_{1,j}, \dots, m_{k,j} \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  for all  $j \geq j_1$ .

By (20),  $\bar{b}_1 \in \Gamma_{\bar{B}_1}(\bar{H})$ , where  $\bar{B}_1 = \langle \bar{b}_2, \dots, \bar{b}_k \rangle \subseteq \bar{H}$ .

By Lemma 2.3, there exist  $t_1, t_2, \dots, t_k \in \mathbb{Z}$  with  $t_1 \in \mathbb{Z}_+$  such that

$$\hat{b}_1 := \bar{b}_1^{t_1} \bar{b}_2^{t_2} \cdots \bar{b}_k^{t_k} \in \Gamma_{[\bar{B}_1, \bar{H}]}(\bar{H}).$$

But  $[\bar{b}_i, \bar{H}] = 1$  for  $i = 1, \dots, k$  by the definition of  $K$ . Hence  $\hat{b}_1 \in \Gamma(\bar{H})$ . Therefore, for all  $j \geq j_1$ ,

$$(21) \quad \bar{b}_1^{t_1} \bar{b}_2^{t_2} \cdots \bar{b}_k^{t_k} \equiv 1 \pmod{I_j(\bar{H})}.$$

We now use that  $\text{rank}_j(\bar{b}_1, \dots, \bar{b}_k) = k$  for all  $j \geq j_1$  to get a contradiction if  $t_i < 0$  for some  $i = 2, \dots, k$ .

For *reductio ad absurdum*, assume that  $t_i < 0$  for some  $i = 2, \dots, k$ . Choose  $r \leq k$  maximal so that there are  $t_{i_2}, \dots, t_{i_r} < 0$ , where  $i_2, \dots, i_r$  are distinct members of  $\{2, \dots, k\}$ . Fix  $j \geq j_1$ . By rechristening, we may assume that  $-t_{i_2}/m_{i_2,j} = \max\{-t_{i_2}/m_{i_2,j}, \dots, -t_{i_r}/m_{i_r,j}\}$ . By (20) and (21), we get

$$\bar{b}_1^{-t_{i_2}m_{1,j} + t_1m_{i_2,j}} \bar{b}_{i_2}^{-t_{i_2}m_{i_2,j} + t_{i_2}m_{i_2,j}} \cdots \bar{b}_k^{-t_{i_2}m_{k,j} + t_1m_{i_2,j}} \equiv 1 \pmod{I_j(\bar{H})}.$$

In this expression, all exponents are non-negative by the maximality of the ratio, and  $-t_{i_2}m_{i_2,j} + t_{i_2}m_{i_2,j} = 0 < -t_{i_2}m_{1,j} + t_1m_{i_2,j}$ . This contradicts that  $\text{rank}_j(\bar{b}_1, \dots, \bar{b}_k) = k$ . Thus  $t_1, \dots, t_k \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ .

But  $\bar{G} = \bar{H}^{\bar{\varphi}}$  and  $\bar{G} \in \tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$ , so  $\hat{b}_1 \in \ker(\bar{\varphi})$  by Lemma 3.1. Consequently,

$$1 = \hat{b}_1^{\bar{\varphi}} = (\bar{b}_1^{t_1} \bar{b}_2^{t_2} \cdots \bar{b}_k^{t_k})^{\bar{\varphi}} = \bar{d}_1^{t_1} \cdots \bar{d}_k^{t_k} > \bar{d}_1.$$

This is impossible as  $\bar{d}_1 \in \bar{G}_+$ . The proof of the lemma (and hence Theorem B) is now complete.  $\square$

#### 4. THE PROOF OF THEOREM C

We begin with a lemma.

**Lemma 4.1.** *Let  $G$  be a centrally ordered group. Suppose that  $G/C$  is residually torsion-free-nilpotent for each value  $C$  of  $G$ . Then  $G \in q(\mathfrak{N})$ .*

*Proof.* Suppose that  $G \notin q(\mathfrak{N})$ . Then  $G \notin \tilde{\mathfrak{N}}$  by Theorem E, and so one of the identities (\*\*) fails in  $G$ . Thus there are  $k, m, n \in \mathbb{Z}_+$ ,  $g_1, \dots, g_n \in G$ ,  $u_1(x_1, \dots, x_n), \dots, u_k(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in F = F(x_1, \dots, x_n)$ , and  $w(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \Gamma_{[U, F]}(F)$  such that

$$(22) \quad |w(g_1, \dots, g_n)|^m > \prod_{j=1}^k |u_j(g_1, \dots, g_n)|,$$

where  $U := \langle u_1(x_1, \dots, x_n), \dots, u_k(x_1, \dots, x_n) \rangle$ .

Let  $C = C_w$  be the value of  $w = w(g_1, \dots, g_n)$  in  $G$ , and  $H = G/C$ . Let  $\bar{g} := Cg$  ( $g \in G$ ),  $\bar{v} = Cv(g_1, \dots, g_n)$  ( $v \in F$ ), and  $\bar{U} = \langle \bar{u}_1, \dots, \bar{u}_k \rangle \subseteq H$ . Now  $C(w)/C \subseteq \zeta(H)$ , so  $\bar{w}, \bar{u}_j \in \zeta(H)$  ( $j = 1, \dots, k$ ). It follows that  $[\bar{U}, H] = 1$ . Since  $w(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \Gamma_{[U, F]}(F)$ , we get  $\bar{w} \in \Gamma_{[\bar{U}, H]}(H) = \Gamma(H)$ . This contradicts that  $H$  is residually torsion-free-nilpotent.  $\square$

This is enough to prove Theorem C.

*Proof.* Since weakly Abelian  $\ell$ -groups are residually ordered, it is enough to prove the theorem for finitely generated centrally ordered Abelian-by-nilpotent groups by Lemma 1.3. The result follows from Lemmata 1.5 and 4.1.  $\square$

**Corollary 4.2.** (i) *There is a weakly Abelian lattice-ordered group with the maximal condition on normal subgroups that does not belong to  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$ .*

(ii)  *$\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$  is not closed under central extensions.*

*Proof.* Since Example 2.2 is cyclic-by-(finitely generated metabelian), it satisfies the maximal condition on normal subgroups. (ii) follows from Example 2.2 and Theorem C.  $\square$

## 5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The results we have obtained beg several questions. The easiest to state are:

1. Does  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$  have a finite set of defining identities? We suspect not.
2. What varieties of lattice-ordered groups can occur between  $\hat{\mathfrak{N}}$  and  $\mathcal{W}$ ? Is it possible that the latter covers the former (in which case the answer to Kopytov's question is only just "no")?

*Added in proof.* The results in Section 3 can be used to obtain the converse of Theorem D. Consequently,  $q(\hat{\mathfrak{N}})$  can be defined by *group* implications and contains the same groups as the quasi-variety generated by all torsion-free nilpotent groups.

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