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On a conjecture of Zassenhaus on
torsion units in integral group rings II

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Introduction. Let $U_1\mathbb{Z}G$ be the group of units of augmentation one in the integral group ring $\mathbb{Z}G$ of a finite group G and let $TU_1\mathbb{Z}G$ be the subset of torsion units. For two elements α, β of the rational group algebra $\mathbb{Q}G$ (or of $\mathbb{Z}G$) we write $\alpha \sim \beta$ if there is a unit γ of $\mathbb{Q}G$ such that $\alpha = \gamma^{-1}\beta\gamma$. There is a well known conjecture of Zassenhaus:

$$(ZC) \quad u \in TU_1\mathbb{Z}G \quad \rightarrow \quad \exists g \in G \quad \text{such that} \quad u \sim g.$$

This conjecture has been confirmed in [1] and [3] for groups G which are nilpotent class 2 or are split metacyclic with

$G = \langle a \rangle * \langle x \rangle$, $O(a)$ a prime power and $O(x)$ relatively prime to $O(a)$.

It is the purpose of this paper to extend this to some more metacyclic groups. We prove the

Theorem. Let G be the split metacyclic group, $G = \langle a \rangle * \langle x \rangle$, with $O(a) = n$, $O(x) = t$ and $(n, t) = 1$. Then for any unit $u \in TU_1\mathbb{Z}G$ there is a $g \in G$ such that $u \sim g$.

In the proof we need to use the main result of [3], namely that (ZC) holds if n is a prime power.

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§ 2. Some Lemmas

We recall Lemma 2 of [1].

Lemma 2.1. Let G be a split extension $A \rtimes X$ where A is an abelian normal p -group and X any group. Let $u \in U_1 \mathbb{Z}G$ be written as $u = vw$, $v \in U(1+\Delta(G,A))$, $w \in U\mathbb{Z}X$. If u has finite order not divisible by p , then $u \sim w$.

Here, $\Delta(G,A)$ denotes the kernel of the natural map $\mathbb{Z}G \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}(G/A)$.

Lemma 2.2. Let $G = \langle a \rangle \rtimes \langle x \rangle$, $O(a) = n$, $O(x) = t$ with $(n,t) = 1$. If $u \in TU_1 \mathbb{Z}G$ has prime power order, then $u \sim g$ for some $g \in G$.

Proof. Let $O(u) = p^k$. If p divides $O(x)$, then we are done by repeated applications of the last lemma. Therefore, suppose

$$n = p^m n_1, (p, n_1) = 1, m > 0.$$

Then $G = \langle a^{p^m} \rangle \rtimes G_1$, $G_1 = \langle a^{n_1} \rangle \rtimes \langle x \rangle$. It follows by (2.1) that $u \sim v$, $v \in U\mathbb{Z}G_1$. Thus the lemma is a consequence of the main result of [3].

Lemma 2.3.

Let $G = \langle a \rangle \rtimes \langle x \rangle$ with $a^x = a^j$, $O(a) = p^m$, $O(x) = t$, $(p,t) = 1$. Then for an element $a^i x^k$ of G either x^k is central or $(a^i x^k)^t = 1$.

Proof. Let $a^i = b$, $x^k = y$. Then

$$(by)^t = b^{1+j^k+\dots+j^{k(t-1)}}.$$

Now, $(1-j^k)(1+j^k+\dots+j^{k(t-1)}) = (1-j^{kt}) \equiv 0 \pmod{p^m}$. Consequently, either $p \mid (1-j^k)$ in which case $j^{kp^{m-1}} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^m}$ implying that $j^k \equiv 1 \pmod{p^m}$ (because $(0(j), p) = 1$) and thus y to be central, or $p \nmid (1-j^k)$ and $1 + j^k + \dots + j^{k(t-1)} \equiv 0 \pmod{p^m}$ which forces $(by)^t = 1$.

Lemma 2.4. Let $G = \langle a \rangle * \langle x \rangle$, $0(a) = n$, $0(x) = t$, $(t, n) = 1$.

Suppose that $u \in TU_1 \mathbb{Z}G$ and that all primes dividing n divide $0(u)$.

Then we can write $u = u_1 u_2$, $u_1 \in 1 + \Delta(G, \langle a \rangle)$ and u_2 central.

Proof. If n is a prime power, then the result is true by the main result of [3] and the last lemma. Let $n = p^m n_1$, $m > 0$, $(p, n_1) = 1$, $n_1 > 1$. We use induction on the number of primes dividing n . Notice that $u \equiv x^k \pmod{\Delta(G, \langle a \rangle)}$ for some k . Writing

$$G = \langle a^{p^m} \rangle * G_1, \quad G_1 = \langle a^{n_1} \rangle * \langle x \rangle$$

we can express $u = v_1 v_2$, $v_1 \in 1 + \Delta(G, \langle a^{p^m} \rangle)$, $v_2 \in \mathbb{Z}G_1$.

Going mod $\langle a^{p^m} \rangle$ and applying Corollary 1 of [1] we conclude that p divides the order of v_2 . It follows that

$$v_2 = v_3 x^k \quad \text{with} \quad v_3 \in \Delta(G_1, \langle a^{n_1} \rangle).$$

Thus $u = v_1 v_3 x^k$ with $(x^k, a^{n_1}) = 1$ and $v_1 v_3 \in 1 + \Delta(G, \langle a \rangle)$.

Repeating this argument for different prime divisors of n we come to the conclusion that $u = u_1 x^k$, $u_1 \in \Delta(G, \langle a \rangle)$, x^k central, as desired.

3. Proof of Theorem - Some reductions.

We have a group $G = \langle a \rangle \rtimes \langle x \rangle$, $a^x = a^j$, $O(a) = n$, $O(x) = t$ with $(t, n) = 1$ and are given a unit $u \in TU_1 \mathbb{Z} G$. We wish to show that there is a $g \in G$ such that $u \sim g$. To that effect we use induction on $|G|$ and thus assume that the result is true for all metacyclic groups G of this type of smaller order. We can restrict ourselves to the case that n is divisible by at least two different primes.

(3.1) We may assume that all prime divisors of n divide $O(u)$.

Proof. Suppose that p is a prime number with

$$n = p^m n_1, (p, n_1) = 1, m > 0 \text{ and } (O(u), p) = 1.$$

Write $G = \langle a^{n_1} \rangle \rtimes G_1$, $G_1 = \langle a^{p^m} \rangle \rtimes \langle x \rangle$.

Then it follows by (2.1) that $u \sim v$, $v \in U\mathbb{Z} G_1$, and so by induction $v \sim g$, $g \in G$.

(3.2) We may assume that no Sylow p -subgroup of $\langle a \rangle$ is central in G .

Proof. Suppose that $\langle a \rangle$ has a central Sylow p -subgroup $\langle a_1 \rangle$.

Write

$$\langle a \rangle = \langle a_1 \rangle \times A_1, G = \langle a_1 \rangle \rtimes G_1, G_1 = A_1 \rtimes \langle x \rangle.$$

Then $u = u_1 u_2$, $u_1 \in 1 + \Delta(G, \langle a_1 \rangle)$, $u_2 \in \mathbb{Z} G_1$. Since a_1 is central in G it follows by ([4], p. 34) that $u_1 = a_1^r$, a central element of G .

Moreover, $u_2 \sim g$, $g \in G_1$ by induction. Thus $u \sim a_1^r g$ and the assertion follows.

(3.3) We may assume that $j \not\equiv 1 \pmod{p}$ for any prime p dividing n and therefore, $G' = \langle a \rangle$.

Proof. $j \equiv 1 \pmod{p} \Rightarrow j^{p^{m-1}} \equiv 1 \pmod{p^m} \Rightarrow j \equiv 1 \pmod{p^m}$, as the order of $j \pmod{n}$, being a divisor of t , is relatively prime to n . Therefore the Sylow p -subgroup is central and the assertion follows.

We shall prove as in ([1] and [3]) that for every absolutely irreducible representation T of G , $T(u) \sim T(g)$ for some $g \in G$. It is enough to do this for rationally inequivalent representations. This will complete the proof of the Theorem.

From [5, p. 62] we see that these representations up to rational equivalence are given by

$$T_{d,\mu}(a) = \begin{bmatrix} \zeta_d & & & & \\ & \zeta_d^j & & & \\ & & \ddots & & \\ & & & \zeta_d^{t_d-1} & \\ & & & & \zeta_d^j \end{bmatrix}_{t_d \times t_d} \quad T_{d,\mu}(x) = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & \dots & \dots & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ \eta^\mu & 0 & \dots & \dots & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}_{t_d \times t_d}$$

where, d runs over the divisors of n , ζ is a fixed primitive n -th root of unity, $\zeta_d = \zeta^d$, t_d is the order of $j \pmod{n/d}$, and η is a primitive t/t_d -th root of unity; $\mu = 0, 1, 2, \dots, t/t_d - 1$.

It therefore remains to prove the following propositions.

Proposition 3.4. $u \in T(1 + \Delta(G, \langle a \rangle)) \Rightarrow T_{d,\mu}(u) \sim T_{d,\mu}(a^r)$ for some
 $r = r(d, \mu)$.

Notice that for all abelian representations T we have $T(u) = T(a^r) = 1$.

Proposition 3.5. We can choose an $r = r(d, \mu)$ which is independent of
 d and μ .

For proving Proposition 3.4 we may assume that all prime divisors of n divide $0(u)$ by (3.1) and moreover, by (3.3), that we are in the situation $G' = \langle a \rangle$ and $j \not\equiv 1 \pmod p$ for every prime divisor p of n .

4. Completion of Proof of Theorem

Lemma 4.1. $T_{1,\mu}$ is faithful on any cyclic group H of units of order
dividing n .

Proof. Use induction on $|H|$ and (2.2), remembering that $T_{1,\mu}$ is faithful on $\langle a \rangle$.

Lemma 4.2. Let $u \in T(1 + \Delta(G, \langle a \rangle))$. Suppose p is a prime dividing
 n . Then:

$$T_{1,\mu}(u^p) = 1 \Leftrightarrow T_{p,\mu}(u) = 1.$$

The proof is the same as the one of (iii) on page 262 of [3] by writing $T_{1,\mu} = T_1$, $T_{p,\mu} = T_p$. Notice that (ii) which is used in that proof can be replaced by (4.1) above.

(4.3) Proof of (3.4).

Write $n = p_1^{m_1} p_2^{m_2} \dots p_k^{m_k}$, a product of distinct primes. Then

$$O(u) = p_1^{\beta_1} p_2^{\beta_2} \dots p_k^{\beta_k}, \quad 0 < \beta_i \leq m_i.$$

We express $u = u_1 \dots u_k$, $O(u_i) = p_i^{\beta_i}$. Write $T = T_{1,u}$.

Then we know by (2.2) that $u_i \sim a^{\lambda_i}$ for some λ_i . Thus

$$T(u_i) \sim T(a^{\lambda_i}) = \begin{bmatrix} \zeta^{\lambda_i} & & & \\ & \zeta^{\lambda_i j} & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & \zeta^{\lambda_i j^{\ell-1}} \end{bmatrix}, \quad \ell = O(j) \bmod n.$$

Now,

$$O(\zeta^{\lambda_i}) = O(\zeta^{\lambda_i j}) = O(a^{\lambda_i}) = O(u_i) = p_i^{\beta_i}.$$

This is because $(j,n) = 1$ and since T is faithful on $\langle a \rangle$. As the u_i 's are powers of u , diagonalizing $T(u)$ gives a diagonal form for $T(u_i)$ as well; the eigenvalues of $T(u)$ are products

$$\zeta^{\lambda_i} \cdot \zeta^{\lambda_j j^{\mu}} \dots$$

Thus all eigenvalues of $T(u)$ have order $O(u)$. Let λ be an eigenvalue of $T(u)$. Then λ^j is also an eigenvalue of $T(u)$ as conjugating $T(u)$ by $T(x)$ means applying the automorphism $\zeta \rightarrow \zeta^j$ to the entries of $T(u)$.

If $\lambda j^v = \lambda$, then $j^v \equiv 1(0(u))$ and so $j^v \equiv 1(p_i^{\beta_i})$ for all i .

Because $0(j) \bmod n$ is relatively prime to n we conclude

$j^v \equiv 1(p_i^{\alpha_i})$ for all i and therefore $j^v \equiv 1(\bmod n)$.

Thus we have

$$T(u) \sim \begin{bmatrix} \lambda & & & \\ & \lambda^j & & \\ & & \lambda^{j^2} & \\ & & & \ddots \\ & & & & \lambda^{j^{\ell-1}} \end{bmatrix} \sim T(a^r) \text{ for some } r.$$

We wish to show that $T_{d,\mu}(u) \sim T_{d,\mu}(a^r)$ for a divisor d of n .

Clearly, $\langle a^{n/d} \rangle$ is in the kernel of $T_{d,\mu}$. Write $\bar{G} = G/\langle a^{n/d} \rangle$

and $\bar{T}_{d,\mu}$ for the corresponding representations of $\bar{G}$. We see that

$$\bar{T}_{1,\mu}(\bar{u}) = T_{d,\mu}(u).$$

But from what we have already proved

$$\bar{T}_{1,\mu}(\bar{u}) \sim \bar{T}_{1,\mu}(\bar{a}^r) = T_{d,\mu}(a^r).$$

This completes the proof of (3.4).

(4.4) Proof of (3.5).

(a) We shall first show that $r = r(d,\mu)$ is independent of d .

Write $T_{1,\mu} = T_1$, $T_{p,\mu} = T_p$ for a prime divisor p of n .

It is enough to prove:

$$T_1(u) \sim T_1(a^r) , \quad T_p(u) \sim T_p(a^t) \quad \Rightarrow \quad T_p(a^t) \sim T_p(a^r) .$$

We use induction on $|0(u)|$ and $|G|$. There are two cases:

(i) $p^2 \nmid n$; (ii) $p^2 \mid n$. In the first case the dimension of T_p may be smaller than that of T_1 . In the second case they are the same. We deal with the two cases separately.

Case (i), $p \mid n$, $p^2 \nmid n$. Then we can assume that $p \mid |0(u)|$ as otherwise $u \sim$ a unit in a smaller group by the argument in (3.1). Thus

$$T_1(u^p) \sim T_1(a^{rp}) , \quad T_p(u^p) \sim T_p(a^{tp}) \Rightarrow T_p(a^{rp}) \sim T_p(a^{tp}) ,$$

by induction.

Comparing eigenvalues we get

$$rp^2 \equiv tp^2j^v \pmod{n} \quad \text{for some } v .$$

Therefore, $rp = tpj^v \pmod{n/p}$ which implies $r \equiv tj^v \pmod{n/p}$ as $p^2 \nmid n$.

It follows that $rp = tpj^v \pmod{n}$ and thus $T_p(a^r) \sim T_p(a^t)$ as desired.

Case (ii), $p^2 \mid n$, dimension of T_1 = dimension of T_p . Let

$$u = \sum_{i=0}^{t-1} f_i(a)x^i$$

with integral polynomials $f_i(a)$ in a of degree $\leq n-1$. Then

$$T_{d,\mu}(u) = \begin{bmatrix} \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{vs}(\zeta_d) \eta^{\mu v} & \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{1+vs}(\zeta_d) \eta^{\mu v} & \dots & \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{s-1+vs}(\zeta_d) \eta^{\mu v} \\ \dots & \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{vs}(\zeta_d^j) \eta^{\mu v} & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{vs}(\zeta_d^{j^{s-1}}) \eta^{\mu v} \end{bmatrix}$$

where $s = t_d = 0(j) \bmod n/d$, $\ell = t/s$, η is an ℓ th root of unity. By taking $d = 1$ and p , respectively, we obtain $T_1(u)$ and $T_p(u)$. We introduce, as in [1] and [3], the matrix

$$M(y) = \begin{bmatrix} \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{vs}(y) \eta^{\mu v} & \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{1+vs}(y) \eta^{\mu v} & \dots & \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{s-1+vs}(y) \eta^{\mu v} \\ & \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{vs}(y^j) \eta^{\mu v} & & \\ \dots & & \ddots & \\ & & & \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} f_{vs}(y^{j^{s-1}}) \eta^{\mu v} \end{bmatrix}$$

where y is an indeterminate. This matrix has coefficients in $\mathbb{Z}[\eta][y]$. Write for the characteristic polynomials

$$\text{Ch}_{\mu(y)}(z) = \sum_{\mu=0}^{s-1} \psi_{\mu}(y) z^{s-\mu}$$

$$\text{Ch}_{T_1(u)}(z) = \prod_{v=0}^{s-1} (z - \zeta^{rj^v})$$

$$\text{Ch}_{T_p(u)}(z) = \prod_{v=0}^{s-1} (z - \zeta^{ptj^v}) .$$

Now we follow page 263 and 264 of [3] verbatim, only replacing q by s , and conclude $\zeta^{pt} = \zeta^{prj^v}$ for some v . Hence $T_p(a^t) \sim T_p(a^r)$. (Observe that the n -th cyclotomic polynomial $\varphi_n(y)$ is also irreducible over the ring $\mathbb{Z}[\eta]$ of coefficients of the $\psi_{\mu}(y)$.)

(b) We have seen that $r(d, \mu) = r(\mu)$ is independent of d . It is enough to show that $T_{1, \mu}(a^{r(\mu)}) \sim T_{1, \mu}(a^{r(o)})$.

We are using induction on $|G|$ and $O(u)$. Consequently we may assume as in (3.1) that all primes dividing n divide $O(u)$. Thus for any proper divisor d of n

$$T_{1, \mu}(u^d) \sim T_{1, \mu}(a^{r(\mu)d}) , T_{1, o}(u^d) \sim T_{1, o}(a^{r(o)d})$$

implies that $T_{1, \mu}(a^{r(\mu)d}) \sim T_{1, \mu}(a^{r(o)d})$ (*) .

Let us consider the traces of the matrices $T_{1, \mu}(u)$:

$$\chi_{1, \mu}(u) = \text{tr} T_{1, \mu}(u) = \sum_{v=0}^{\ell-1} \text{tr}_j f_{vs}(\zeta) \eta^{\mu v} = \text{tr}_j \zeta^{r(\mu)} = \chi_{1, \mu}(a^{r(\mu)}) ,$$

where for an element $\alpha \in \mathbb{Q}(\zeta)$ we have denoted by $\text{tr}_j \alpha$ the trace of α with respect to the automorphism group generated by $\sigma_j: \zeta \rightarrow \zeta^j$.

Adding up the equations over all μ we get

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{\mu=0}^{\ell-1} \text{tr}_j \zeta^{r(\mu)} &= \sum_{\mu} \sum_{\nu} \text{tr}_j f_{\nu s}(\zeta) \eta^{\mu\nu} \\ &= \sum_{\nu} (\text{tr}_j f_{\nu s}(\zeta) \sum_{\mu} \eta^{\mu\nu}) \\ &= \ell \text{tr}_j f_o(\zeta) \end{aligned}$$

as for $\nu \neq 0$, $\sum_{\mu=0}^{\ell-1} \eta^{\mu\nu} = 0$.

Thus we have

$$\sum_{\mu=0}^{\ell-1} \text{tr}_j \zeta^{r(\mu)} \equiv 0 \pmod{\ell}.$$

Moreover, from (*) we have

$$\text{tr}_j \zeta^{r(\mu)d} = \text{tr}_j \zeta^{r(o)d} \quad \text{for all } \mu \text{ and all } d|n, d \neq 1.$$

Recall that $t_1 = 0(j) \pmod{n}$. Let us write the class sum of $a^{r(\mu)}$ in G :

$$C_{\mu} = \sum_{\nu=0}^{t_1-1} a^{r(\mu)j^{\nu}},$$

and $\alpha = \sum_{\mu=0}^{\ell-1} C_{\mu}$. Then we have:

$$\alpha(\zeta) = \sum_{\mu=0}^{\ell-1} c_{\mu}(\zeta) = \sum_{\mu=0}^{\ell-1} \sum_{v=0}^{t_1-1} \zeta^{r(\mu)j^v} = \sum_{\mu=0}^{\ell-1} \text{tr}_j \zeta^{r(\mu)} \equiv 0 \pmod{\ell},$$

$$\alpha(\zeta^d) = \sum_{\mu=0}^{\ell-1} \text{tr}_j \zeta^{dr(\mu)} = \ell \text{tr}_j \zeta^{r(o)d} \equiv 0 \pmod{\ell},$$

$$\alpha(1) \equiv 0 \pmod{\ell}.$$

Thus in the embedding

$$\mathbb{Z}\langle a \rangle \longrightarrow \bigcup_{d|n} \mathbb{Z}[\zeta_d] = R$$

the image of α is $\equiv 0 \pmod{\ell}$. But we know by ([2], p. 379) that

$0(a)R \subseteq \mathbb{Z}\langle a \rangle$. Since we have $(0(a), \ell) = 1$, it follows that

$\alpha \equiv 0 \pmod{\ell}$. Therefore, $c_{\mu} = c_0$ for all μ .

We have proved that

$$\text{tr}_j \zeta^{r(\mu)} = \text{tr}_j \zeta^{r(o)}, \quad \chi_{1,\mu}(u) = \chi_{1,\mu}(a^{r(o)}).$$

Thus $\chi_{d,\mu}(u) = \chi_{d,\mu}(a^{r(o)})$ for all d, μ .

Repeating this for all powers u^k of u we have

$$\chi_{d,\mu}(u^k) = \chi_{d,\mu}(a^{r(o)k}) \text{ for all } d, \mu.$$

Hence $u \sim a^{r(o)}$ and the proof is complete.

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