

## Epigroups whose subepigroup lattice is lower semimodular

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**Abstract** We characterize epigroups mentioned in the title.

**Keywords** Epigroup · Lower semimodular lattice · Subepigroup lattice of an epigroup

A semigroup  $S$  is called an *epigroup* if some power of each element in  $S$  lies in a subgroup of  $S$ . An epigroup can be considered as a unary semigroup, i.e. as a semigroup with an additional unary operation of taking pseudo-inverse (see [6, 7]). Investigations of connections between epigroups *per se* (i.e. those which are neither periodic semigroups nor groups) and their subepigroup lattices have started in [10]. First results obtained in this direction have been surveyed in [8]. In the latter paper the problem of studying epigroups with lower semimodular subepigroup lattice has been posed as well.

If  $x, y$  are elements of a lattice  $L$ , we write  $x \succ y$  to denote that  $x > y$  and there is no  $z \in L$  such that  $x > z > y$ . Recall that  $L$  is called *lower semimodular* if for all  $x, y \in L$  from  $x \vee y \succ x$  it follows that  $y \succ x \wedge y$ . An upper semimodular lattice is defined in a dual way. The structure of epigroups with upper semimodular subepigroup lattice is determined in [10]. The problem of investigation of semigroups with lower semimodular lattice of (usual) subsemigroups posed in [9], Problem 5.14, is deeply studied in [4]. Certain ideas and some of the auxiliary results of this paper are used to obtain the main result of the present paper. The lower semimodularity condition was

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considered for the lattice of all full inverse subsemigroups of an inverse semigroup in [1–3].

We treat as well-known basic notions of semigroup theory (such as Green’s relations, null semigroup, Brandt semigroup, principal factor, singular semigroup and so on). The reader can find corresponding information for example in [5]. We treat as known certain simple properties of epigroups; corresponding information can be found in [6, 7, 10]. We recall the definition of a pseudo-inverse element only. Let  $S$  be an epigroup and  $x \in S$ . A unique maximal subgroup of  $S$  that contains some power of  $x$  is denoted by  $G_x$ ; we denote the identity of  $G_x$  by  $e_x$ . It is known that  $xe_x = e_x x$  and this element is in  $G_x$  so that we can consider the inverse element  $(xe_x)^{-1}$  in  $G_x$ . This element is called the *pseudo-inverse* for  $x$  and is denoted by  $\bar{x}$ .

For an element  $a \in S$  we denote by  $J_a$  the  $\mathcal{J}$ -class of the epigroup  $S$  which contains the element  $a$ , by  $J(a)$  the principal ideal generated by  $a$ , and by  $I(a)$  the ideal  $J(a) \setminus J_a$ . If  $I(a) \neq \emptyset$ , then  $J(a)/I(a) = J_a \cup \{0\}$  is the *principal factor of  $S$  associated with  $a$* . We denote the elements of the Brandt semigroup  $B_2$  by  $0$  and  $e_{ij}$ , where  $i, j = 1, 2$ ; then  $e_{ij}e_{kl} = 0$  when  $j \neq k$  and  $e_{ij}e_{kl} = e_{il}$  when  $j = k$ .

Let  $\langle\langle X \rangle\rangle$  denote the subepigroup generated by a subset  $X$  of an epigroup  $S$ . Each element in  $\langle\langle X \rangle\rangle$  can be represented by an epigroup term over  $X$ , where the operations are multiplication and taking pseudo-inverse. The *depth* of an epigroup term is defined as follows: the depth of each element in  $X$  is  $0$ ; if  $u, v$  are terms of depth  $m$  and respectively  $n$ , then  $uv$  has depth  $m + n + 1$  and  $\bar{u}$  has depth  $m + 1$ .

The lattice of all subepigroup of an epigroup  $S$  is denoted by  $\text{Subepi } S$ .

The main result of the paper is the following statement.

**Theorem** *Let  $S$  be an epigroup. The lattice  $\text{Subepi } S$  is lower semimodular if and only if the following conditions hold:*

- (1) *each principal factor of  $S$  is a semigroup of some of the following types:*
  - (1a) *a null semigroup;*
  - (1b) *a group with lower semimodular subgroup lattice (with zero adjoined);*
  - (1c) *a singular semigroup (with zero adjoined);*
  - (1d) *the 5-element Brandt semigroup  $B_2$ ;*
- (2) *for all  $e \in E_S, a \in S$ , from  $ea \in H_e \setminus \{e\}$  it follows that  $e \in \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle$ ;*
- (3) *for all  $a, b, x \in S$  such that  $x$  is not in a non-trivial group,*
  - (3a) *if  $ab \notin J_x$  and  $x = xab$  [ $x = abx$ ], then either  $x \in \langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle$  or  $x = xa$  [ $x = bx$ ];*
  - (3b) *if the associated principal factor of  $x$  is null and  $x = bax$ , then either  $x \in \langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle$  or  $x = xa = bx$ .*

Observe that, as was shown in [4], for periodic semigroups, condition (3b) follows from condition (3a). We do not know whether condition (3a) implies condition (3b) for epigroups which are not periodic semigroups; the proof for the periodic case presented in [4] does not extend to arbitrary epigroups.

Our first auxiliary result is parallel to statement 1 of Lemma 1.3 in [4].

**Lemma 1** *Let  $S$  be an epigroup. If  $U \succ V$  in the lattice  $\text{Subepi } S$ , then the set  $U \setminus V$  is contained in a  $\mathcal{J}$ -class of  $S$ .*

*Proof* Take  $x, y \in U \setminus V$ . Since  $x \in \langle\langle V, y \rangle\rangle$  and  $x \notin V$ , we can represent  $x$  by a term which involves some elements of  $V$  and necessarily involves  $y$ . If this term is a product that involves  $y$  or its pseudo-inverse  $\bar{y}$ , then  $x$  is divided by  $y$  or by  $\bar{y}$ , so in this case  $x \in J(y)$ , since  $\bar{y}$  is divided by  $y$ . If this term is the pseudo-inverse element for such a product, then  $x$  is divided by the product and therefore is divided by  $y$ . We have  $x \in J(y)$ . By symmetry it follows that  $y \in J(x)$ . Thus,  $J_x = J_y$ , as required.  $\square$

Now we are ready to prove that the conditions of Theorem are sufficient. Let  $S$  be an epigroup which satisfies all these conditions. It is easy to see that a lattice  $L$  is lower semimodular if and only if for all  $u, v, w \in L$  from  $u \succ v \not\prec u \wedge w$  it follows that  $u \wedge w \succ v \wedge w$ . Thus, we ought to show that, for all  $U, V, W \in \text{Subepi } S$ , from  $U \succ V \not\prec U \cap W$  it follows that  $U \cap W \succ V \cap W$ . First we prove several auxiliary statements.

Let us verify that if the difference  $U \setminus V$  is not contained in a subgroup of  $S$ , then this difference consists of a unique element, and if  $U \setminus V \subseteq H$  for a subgroup  $H$  of  $S$ , then  $U \cap H \succ V \cap H$ . By Lemma 1,  $U \setminus V \subseteq J_a$  for an element  $a \in U \setminus V$ . Arguing by contradiction, assume that  $J_a$  is not a group and the difference  $U \setminus V$  consists of more than 1 element. By condition 1 the associated principal factor  $P$  of  $a$  is either a null semigroup or a combinatorial completely [0-]simple semigroup. Assume that  $P$  is a null semigroup. Let  $x, y$  be distinct elements in  $(U \setminus V) \cap P$ . Since  $U \succ V$ , we have  $x \in \langle\langle y, V \rangle\rangle$  and  $y \in \langle\langle x, V \rangle\rangle$ , so  $x$  can be represented by a term  $t$  of  $y$  and elements of  $V$  and  $y$  can be represented by a term  $t'$  of  $x$  and elements of  $V$ . The pseudo-inverse  $\bar{y}$  does not occur in  $t$  because  $\bar{y} \in I(y)$ . In a similar way, the pseudo-inverse  $\bar{x}$  does not occur in  $t'$ . Since  $axb \in P \cup V$  for all  $a, b \in V$  and  $P$  is null, we conclude that  $t = a_0yb_0$  for some  $a_0, b_0 \in V^1$ , so  $x = a_0yb_0$ . In a similar way we have  $y = a_1xb_1$  for some  $a_1, b_1 \in V^1$ . Thus  $x = a_0a_1xb_1b_0$ . By condition (3b), it follows that  $x = a_0a_1x = xb_1b_0$ . Now we come to a contradiction repeating arguments in the last paragraph of part (1) of the proof of Lemma 4.1 in [4].

Let  $P$  be a combinatorial completely [0-]simple semigroup. Then the class  $J_a$  is either a singular semigroup or a Brandt semigroup  $B_2$ . Consider each of the two possibilities.

1. Let  $J_a$  be a singular semigroup. For definiteness, suppose that  $J_a$  is left singular, i.e.  $xy = x$  for all  $x, y \in J_a$  (the right singular case is treated in a symmetric way). Fix an element  $b \in J_a \cap (U \setminus V)$  which is not equal to  $a$ . Then  $U = \langle\langle a, V \rangle\rangle = \langle\langle b, V \rangle\rangle$ , whence  $a \in \langle\langle b, V \rangle\rangle$  and  $b \in \langle\langle a, V \rangle\rangle$ . Let us prove that

$$a = v_1b, \quad b = v_2a \quad \text{for some } v_1, v_2 \in V \setminus J(a). \tag{1}$$

We establish the first equality, the second is verified in a similar way. Since  $a \in \langle\langle b, V \rangle\rangle$ , take a representation of the element  $a$  by a term  $t$  of the least depth from the elements of  $\{b\} \cup V$ . Since  $a^2 = a$ , we have  $\bar{a} = a$ . Then  $t = t_1t_2$ , where  $t_1, t_2$  are terms whose depths are less than the depth of  $t$ . Denote the elements in  $S$  represented by these terms by the same letters. So we conclude that  $t_i \in J_a$  or  $t_i \in V \setminus J(a)$ ,  $i = 1, 2$ . Clearly,  $t_2a \in J_a$ . If  $t_1 \in J_a$ , then  $a = a^2 = t_1t_2a = t_1$ , because  $J_a$  is left singular. We have a contradiction with the choice of  $t$ . If  $t_1, t_2 \notin J_a$ , then  $t_1, t_2 \in V$  and so  $a \in V$ , which is impossible. Therefore,  $t_1 \in V \setminus J(a)$ ,  $t_2 \in J_a \setminus V$ . Now we are to show that  $t_2 = vb$  for some  $v \in V$ . Let us consider the leftmost occurrence of  $b$  in  $t_2$ . Since

$vb, bv \in J_a$  for all subwords of the kind  $vb$  or  $bv$  occurring in the term  $t_2$  and  $J_a$  is an idempotent semigroup, we conclude that the operation of taking pseudo-inverse does not occur in  $t_2$ . Since  $J_a$  is a singular semigroup, by the choice of the term  $t$ , we have  $t_2 = vbw = vb \cdot bw = vb$  for all  $w \in \langle\langle b, v \rangle\rangle$ . Thus  $a = t_1vb$ , whence putting  $v_1 = t_1v$ , we obtain the first equality in (1).

The equalities (1) give  $a = v_1b = v_1v_2a$ . Since  $v_1, v_2 \in V \setminus J(a)$ , the condition  $v_1v_2 \in J_a$  implies that  $a = v_1v_2a = v_1v_2$ , i.e.  $a \in V$ , which is impossible. So,  $v_1v_2 \notin J_a$ . Since  $a \notin \langle\langle v_1, v_2 \rangle\rangle$ , condition (3a) gives  $a = v_2a$ , whence  $a = b$  in view of the second equality in (1). This contradicts the assumption  $a \neq b$ . Case 1 is completely treated.

2. Let  $J_a \cup \{0\}$  be a Brandt semigroup  $B_2$ . We denote the elements of  $J_a$  by  $e_{11}, e_{12}, e_{21}, e_{22}$  in accordance with the agreement in the beginning of the paper. Consider all the possibilities which can arise here.

2.1.  $e_{11}, e_{12} \in U \setminus V$ . Then  $e_{11} \in \langle\langle e_{12}, V \rangle\rangle$  and  $e_{12} \in \langle\langle e_{11}, V \rangle\rangle$ . Consider a representation of the element  $e_{11}$  by a term  $t$  of the least depth which involves elements of  $V$  and necessarily involves  $e_{12}$ . Since either  $\bar{x} = x$  or  $\bar{x} \in I(a)$  for all  $x \in J_a$  and the term  $t$  is of the least depth, the operation of taking pseudo-inverse does not occur in  $t$ . The equality  $e_{11} = e_{11}^2$  gives  $e_{11} = e_{11}t$ . Since  $e_{11}ve_{12} = e_{12}$  and  $e_{12}ve_{12} = e_{12}$  for all  $v \in V \setminus I(a)$ , by the minimality of depth of the term  $t$  we obtain  $t = e_{12}v_1$  for some  $v_1 \in V \setminus I(a)$ . Therefore,  $e_{11} = e_{12}v_1$ . In a similar way we prove that  $e_{12} = e_{11}v_2$  for some  $v_2 \in V \setminus I(a)$ . So,  $e_{11} = e_{11}v_2v_1$ . Observe that  $v_2v_1 \notin J_a$  since otherwise  $v_2v_1 = e_{11}$ , which is impossible. Since  $e_{11} \neq e_{11}v_2$ , by condition (3a) we obtain that  $e_{11} \in \langle\langle v_1, v_2 \rangle\rangle$ , which is a contradiction showing that case 2.1 is impossible.

2.2.  $e_{11}, e_{21} \in U \setminus V$  or  $e_{21}, e_{22} \in U \setminus V$  or  $e_{12}, e_{22} \in U \setminus V$ . These cases are treated in a way similar to case 2.1.

2.3.  $e_{11}, e_{22} \in U \setminus V$ . Since  $J_a \subseteq \langle\langle e_{12}, e_{21} \rangle\rangle$ , we conclude that either  $e_{12} \in U \setminus V$  or  $e_{21} \in U \setminus V$ , and we come to the conditions which were considered in case 2.1 and case 2.2.

2.4.  $e_{12}, e_{21} \in U \setminus V$ . In view of cases 2.1 and 2.2 we may assume that  $e_{11}, e_{22} \in V$ . We have  $e_{12} \in \langle\langle e_{21}, V \rangle\rangle$ . Consider a representation of the element  $e_{12}$  by a term  $t$  of the least depth which involves elements of  $V$  and necessarily involves  $e_{21}$ . In a similar way to the case 2.1 we note that the operation of taking pseudo-inverse does not occur in  $t$ . Since  $e_{21}ve_{21} = e_{21}$  for all  $v \in V \setminus I(a)$ , the term  $t$  has a unique occurrence of  $e_{21}$ , i.e.  $e_{12} = v_1e_{21}v_2$ . By multiplying the last equality through by  $e_{22}$  on the right and taking into account that  $e_{21}ve_{22} = e_{22}$  for all  $v \in V \setminus I(a)$ , we obtain  $e_{12} = e_{12}e_{22} = v_1e_{21}v_2e_{22} = v_1e_{22} \in V$ . Therefore,  $e_{12} \in V$ , which is impossible.

So, we have proved that if  $U \setminus V$  is not contained in a subgroup of  $S$ , then this difference has a unique element. Now we are to prove that if  $U \setminus V \subseteq H$  for some subgroup  $H$ , then  $U \cap H \succ V \cap H$ . Let  $U \setminus V \subseteq H$  and  $H$  is a non-trivial group. If  $|U \setminus V| = 1$ , then the required statement is obvious.

Suppose that  $|U \setminus V| > 1$ . Let  $e$  denote the identity of the subgroup  $H$ . Pick an element  $a \in U \setminus V$  distinct from  $e$ . Let us prove that  $e \in V$ . Arguing by contradiction, assume that  $e \notin V$ . Then  $U = \langle\langle e, V \rangle\rangle$ , in particular,  $a \in \langle\langle e, V \rangle\rangle$ . Let us fix a representation of the element  $a$  by a term  $t$  of the least depth. Since  $\bar{e} = e$  and  $\bar{x} \in H$  for all  $x \in H$ , the term  $t$  does not contain the operation of taking pseudo-inverse which is applied to the elements  $e$  or  $V$ . Then  $t$  contains at least one of the products  $ev, ve$

for  $v \in V$ . Clearly,  $ev, ve \in H$  and therefore  $ev = eve = ve$ , so these products can not be equal to  $e$ . By condition 2 we have  $e \in \langle\langle v \rangle\rangle$ . So,  $e \in V$ , which contradicts our assumption.

Now we are to show that  $\langle\langle a, V \cap H \rangle\rangle = U \cap H$  for all  $a \in U \setminus V$ , this will prove the required statement. Obviously,  $\langle\langle a, V \cap H \rangle\rangle \subseteq U \cap H$ . Let us establish the converse inclusion. Fix  $x \in U \cap H$ . Since  $U = \langle\langle a, V \rangle\rangle$ , the element  $x$  can be represented by a term  $t$  which contains  $a$  and elements of  $V$ . Let us take such a term of the least depth. Since  $a, x \in H$  and  $x \notin V$ , we see that  $a$  occurs in the term  $t$ . By the choice of  $t$ , this term does not contain the operation of taking pseudo-inverse which is applied to the elements of  $V$ . In addition, all the products of kind  $a^n v, va^n$  for  $v \in V$  and integers  $n$ , which occur in  $t$ , are in  $H$ . Since  $e \in V$ , we have  $a^n v = a^n eve$  and  $va^n = evea^n$ , so  $eve \in V \cap H$ . Therefore,  $x$  can be represented by a term  $t'$  which can be obtained from  $t$  by replacing  $v \in V$  by  $eve$ ; observe that  $eve \in V \cap H$ . Thus,  $x \in \langle\langle a, V \cap H \rangle\rangle$ , as required.

Finally we prove that the lattice  $\text{Subepi } S$  is lower semimodular. Take subepigroups  $U, V, W \in \text{Subepi } S$  such that  $U \succ V \not\preceq U \cap W$ . Using arguments similar to those of the last paragraph of Sect. 4 of [4], we prove that  $U \cap W \succ V \cap W$ . If  $|U \setminus V| = 1$ , then obviously  $U \cap W \succ V \cap W$ . Let  $U \setminus V \subseteq H$ , where  $H$  is a group with lower semimodular subgroup lattice. Let us pick distinct elements  $x, y$  in  $(U \cap W) \setminus (V \cap W)$ . Then  $x, y \in H$ . Above we have proved that  $U \cap H \succ V \cap H$ . Since  $H$  is lower semimodular, it follows that  $U \cap W \cap H \succ V \cap W \cap H$ . Thus  $y \in \langle\langle x, V \cap W \cap H \rangle\rangle$  whence  $y \in \langle\langle x, V \cap W \rangle\rangle$  and in a similar way  $x \in \langle\langle y, V \cap W \rangle\rangle$ . Therefore  $U \cap W \succ V \cap W$ . Sufficiency is proved.

Now we prove necessity of the conditions of Theorem. Let  $S$  be an epigroup whose lattice  $\text{Subepi } S$  is lower semimodular. Pick  $a \in S$  and let  $F = J(a)/I(a)$  be a principal factor of the epigroup  $S$ . Then, analogously to Lemma 3.1 of [4], we conclude that either  $\text{Subepi } F = L$  or  $\text{Subepi } F = L^0$ , where  $L = \{T \in \text{Subepi } S \mid I(a) \subseteq T \subseteq J(a)\}$  is an interval in the lattice  $\text{Subepi } S$ . Thus  $L$  and therefore  $L^0$  are lower semimodular. We conclude that every principal factor of the epigroup  $S$  has lower semimodular subepigroup lattice. As is known (see [6], Corollary of Proposition 1), a principal factor of an epigroup is a null semigroup or a completely 0-simple semigroup, or (if it is the kernel of the epigroup) a completely simple semigroup. By repeating the proof of Proposition 3.6 in [4], we obtain that a completely 0-simple semigroup with lower semimodular subepigroup lattice either is combinatorial or is a group with zero adjoined. In particular, every non-trivial subgroup of  $S$  is isolated. A completely simple semigroup with lower semimodular subepigroup lattice is either a group or a singular semigroup. Since a combinatorial epigroup is periodic, by Theorem 5.3 of [4] it follows that a combinatorial completely 0-simple epigroup with lower semimodular subepigroup lattice is isomorphic to the Brandt semigroup  $B_2$  or is a singular semigroup with zero adjoined. Thus, condition 1 holds for  $S$ .

Let us verify condition 2. This statement is parallel to Lemma 3.7 of [4]. Let  $e \in E_S, a \in S$ , and  $H_e$  is a non-trivial group. Assume that  $ea \in H_e$  and  $ea \neq e$ . We are to prove that  $e \in \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle$ . Let  $b = ea$ . Since  $a \notin I(e)$  and  $H_e = J_e$ , we conclude that  $J(e) \subseteq J(a)$  and  $b \in H_e$ . Moreover,  $ae, \bar{a}e, e\bar{a} \in H_e$ . From  $b \in H_e$  it follows that  $e \in \langle\langle b \rangle\rangle$ . We are to prove that, for all  $h \in H_e, c \in \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle$ , we have  $hc, ch \in H_e$ . Let  $c = a^n$ , where  $n$  is a positive integer. Then  $hc = hea^n = h(ea)a^{n-1} = heaea^{n-1} = h(ea)^2 a^{n-2} =$

$\dots = h(ea)^n = hb^n$ . Since  $h, b \in H_e$ , we have  $hc \in H_e$ . In a similar way, using the element  $ae$  instead  $b$ , we obtain that  $ch \in H_e$ . Using the same arguments to  $e\bar{a}$  and  $\bar{a}e$ , we conclude that  $hc, ch \in H_e$  for all  $c = \bar{a}^n$ ,  $n$  is a positive integer. Let  $f$  be the identity of the group  $\langle\langle a \rangle\rangle$ . Since  $f = a\bar{a}$ , clearly  $hf, fh \in H_e$ .

We are now to prove that  $\langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle = \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle \cup \langle\langle b \rangle\rangle$ . Using the statement proved in the previous paragraph, we have  $ba^n = (ea)a^n = (ea)^{n+1} = b^{n+1}$  for any positive integer  $n$ . In a similar way we have  $a^n b = b^{n+1}$ . We are to show that  $\bar{b} = e\bar{a}$ . We have  $b(e\bar{a}) = eae\bar{a} = ea\bar{a} = ef$ . Since  $ef \in H_e$  and  $(ef)^2 = efef = e f f = ef$ , we conclude that  $ef = e$ , so  $b(e\bar{a}) = e$ . Since  $e\bar{a} \in H_e$ , we have  $\bar{b} = e\bar{a}$ . Thus  $\langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle = \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle \cup \langle\langle b \rangle\rangle$ .

Let us prove that  $\langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle \succ \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle$ . For all  $x \in \langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle \setminus \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle$  we have  $x \in \langle\langle b \rangle\rangle$ . Since  $e \in \langle\langle b \rangle\rangle$ , it follows that  $e \in \langle\langle x \rangle\rangle$ . Since  $b = ea$ , we conclude that  $b \in \langle\langle a, x \rangle\rangle$ , as required. From the condition  $\langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle \succ \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle$ , by lower semimodularity of the lattice Subepi  $S$ , it follows that  $\langle\langle b \rangle\rangle \succ \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle \cap \langle\langle b \rangle\rangle$ , so  $\langle\langle a \rangle\rangle \cap \langle\langle b \rangle\rangle \neq \emptyset$  and  $e \in \langle\langle a \rangle\rangle$ . Therefore, condition 2 is proved.

The following statement can be proved in a similar way to Lemma 3.8 of [4].

**Lemma 2** *Let  $S$  be an epigroup. If  $S = \langle\langle x, y \rangle\rangle$ ,  $x \neq y$ , and neither of the elements  $x, y$  is contained in a non-trivial subgroup, then at least one of the subsets  $S \setminus \{x\}$  or  $S \setminus \{y\}$  is a subepigroup of  $S$ .*

We now are to prove that for the epigroup  $S$  condition (3a) holds. Arguing by contradiction, assume that  $a, b, x \in S$ , the element  $x$  is not in a non-trivial group and  $a, b \notin J_x$ ,  $x = xab$ ,  $x \neq xa$ ,  $x \notin \langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle$ . Set  $T = \langle\langle a, b, x \rangle\rangle$ . Since  $x \notin \langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle$ , by Zorn’s Lemma, in  $T$  there exists a subepigroup  $M$  which is maximal with the properties  $a, b \in M$  and  $x \notin M$ . Clearly  $T \succ M$ . Since  $x = xa \cdot b$  and  $b \in M$ , we conclude that  $xa \notin M$ . Let us prove that  $xa \notin \langle\langle x \rangle\rangle$ . Since  $\langle\langle M, x \rangle\rangle = T$  and  $T \succ M$ , lower semimodularity of the lattice Subepi  $S$  implies  $\langle\langle x \rangle\rangle \succ M \cap \langle\langle x \rangle\rangle$ . Since the element  $x$  is non-group, we have  $\langle\langle x \rangle\rangle \setminus \{x\} \subseteq M$ . Since  $x \neq xa$ , the inclusion  $xa \in \langle\langle x \rangle\rangle$  implies  $xa \in M$ , which is impossible. Observe that  $J_x = J_{xa}$ . Since  $x$  does not belong to a non-trivial group,  $J_x$  is not an isolated subgroup, and therefore  $xa$  does not belong to a non-trivial group. Changing the roles of  $x$  and  $xa$ , we obtain  $x \notin \langle\langle xa \rangle\rangle$ . Put  $U = \langle\langle x, xa \rangle\rangle$ . Since  $T \succ M$ , lower semimodularity of the lattice Subepi  $S$  implies  $U \succ M \cap U$ , which contradicts Lemma 2. This contradiction proves condition (3a) of Theorem.

To prove condition (3b), assume that  $x = bxa$ ,  $x \notin \langle\langle a, b \rangle\rangle$  and  $x \neq xa$  or  $x \neq bx$ . The end of the proof is almost identical to that in the previous case. The theorem is completely proved.

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