

COMPLETION VARIETIES

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This paper contains an answer to a question posed by H. Höft in 1974 ([2]). To state the problem we need some definitions and notations (for those not defined here see e.g. [1]).

A signature is a pair $\langle F, n \rangle$ where F is a set and $n: F \rightarrow \omega$. We say that $f \in F$ is an $n(f)$ -ary operation symbol. A partial algebra A is an algebra of signature $\langle F, n \rangle$ iff for every $f \in F$ it has an $n(f)$ -ary partial operation f^A and no other fundamental operations. We assume that a signature $\langle F, n \rangle$ is fixed for all algebras considered below.

An inner extension of a partial algebra $A = (A, (f^A)_{f \in F})$ is a partial algebra $A' = (A, (f^{A'})_{f \in F})$ with $f^A \subset f^{A'}$ for every $f \in F$. A' is an inner completion of A if it is total. Let A^* be the set of all inner completions of a partial algebra A and for a class \mathcal{K} of partial algebras let \mathcal{K}^* be the class of all inner completions of algebras in \mathcal{K} . If $A = (A, (f^A)_{f \in F})$ and $B = (B, (f^B)_{f \in F})$ are two partial algebras, then a mapping $h: A \rightarrow B$ is a homomorphism of A into B iff for any $f \in F$ and $a_1, \dots, a_{n(f)} \in A$ (clearly this sequence is empty when $n(f) = 0$), if $(a_1, \dots, a_{n(f)}) \in \text{Dom } f^A$, then $(h(a_1), \dots, h(a_{n(f)})) \in \text{Dom } f^B$ and $h(f^A(a_1, \dots, a_{n(f)})) = f^B(h(a_1), \dots, h(a_{n(f)}))$. If such h is onto, then B is said to be a homomorphic image of A . A subalgebra of a partial algebra $A = (A, (f^A)_{f \in F})$ is any partial algebra $B = (B, (f^B)_{f \in F})$ such that $B \subset A$ and for any $f \in F$ and $b_1, \dots, b_{n(f)} \in B$, $f^B(b_1, \dots, b_{n(f)})$ is defined in B (and then $f^B(b_1, \dots, b_{n(f)}) = f^A(b_1, \dots, b_{n(f)})$) iff $f^A(b_1, \dots, b_{n(f)})$ is defined in A and belongs to B . Direct products of partial algebras are defined componentwise in a natural way.

For a class \mathcal{K} of partial algebras let $H(\mathcal{K})$ be the class of all homomorphic images of partial algebras in \mathcal{K} , let $S(\mathcal{K})$ be the class of all isomorphic copies of subalgebras of partial algebras in \mathcal{K} and let $P(\mathcal{K})$ be the class of all isomorphic copies of direct products of partial algebras in \mathcal{K} .

Höft's problem can now be stated as follows: characterize those partial algebras A for which the equality $HSP(A^*) = [HSP(A)]^*$ holds. It is easy to see that $HSP(A^*)$ is always a subclass of $[HSP(A)]^*$ and that the equality

holds for all total algebras and for all one-element algebras; Höft furnishes an example of a non-trivial partial algebra for which it does not.

The first observation is that H and S are not relevant in the consideration of the problem.

LEMMA 1. For any partial algebra $A = (A, (f^A)_{f \in F})$, $S(A^*) = [S(A)]^*$.

Proof. Let $A_1 = (A_1, (f^{A_1})_{f \in F}) \in [S(A)]^*$. Define an inner completion $A_0 = (A, (f^{A_0})_{f \in F})$ of A so that for any $f \in F$, $f^A \subset f^{A_0}$ and $f^{A_0}|_{A_1} = f^{A_1}$; moreover, if $(a_1, \dots, a_{n(f)}) \notin \text{Dom } f^A \cup \text{Dom } f^{-1}$, then $f^{A_0}(a_1, \dots, a_{n(f)}) = a_1$. A_1 is then a subalgebra of A_0 , i.e., $A_1 \in S(A^*)$. On the other hand, if $A_1 = (A_1, (f^{A_1})_{f \in F})$ is a subalgebra of some $A_0 \in A^*$, then it is an inner completion of the partial algebra $(A_1, (f^A|_{A_1})_{f \in F}) \in S(A)$ and thus $A_1 \in [S(A)]^*$. \square

LEMMA 2. For any partial algebra $A = (A, (f^A)_{f \in F})$, $H(A^*) = [H(A)]^*$.

Proof. $H(A^*) \subset [H(A)]^*$ is obvious, since a homomorphic image of an inner completion of A is a homomorphic image of A – and it is a total algebra. Let $B = (B, (f^B)_{f \in F}) \in H(A)$ and let $h: A \rightarrow B$ be an epimorphism. Furthermore, let $B_1 = (B, (f^{B_1})_{f \in F})$ be an inner completion of B . Define an algebra $A_1 = (A, (f^{A_1})_{f \in F})$ as follows: let $f \in F$ and $a_1, \dots, a_{n(f)} \in A$; put

$$f^{A_1}(a_1, \dots, a_{n(f)}) = \begin{cases} f^A(a_1, \dots, a_{n(f)}) & \text{if } (a_1, \dots, a_{n(f)}) \in \text{Dom } f^A, \\ a & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

where $a \in \overline{h^{-1}(\{f^B(h(a_1), \dots, h(a_{n(f)}))\})}$. Then h is a homomorphism of a total algebra $A_1 \in A^*$ onto B_1 , which proves $B_1 \in H(A^*)$. \square

Unfortunately – and here is the essence of the problem – there is no “Lemma 3” for products. Consider $A = (\{a, b\}, f^A)$ with $n(f) = 1$ and such that $f^A(a) = b \notin \text{Dom } f^A$. There are two inner completions of A , each of them satisfying the equation $f(x) = f^3(x)$ (which is also true in $P(A^*)$). Define $B = (\{a, b\}^2, f^B)$ so that $f^B(a, a) = (b, b)$, $f^B(b, b) = (a, b)$, $f^B(a, b) = (b, a)$ and $f^B(b, a) = (a, a)$. Then $B \in [P(A)]^*$ and $B \notin P(A^*)$, since $f^B(a, a) \neq (f^B)^3(a, a)$. Clearly $P(A^*) \subset [P(A)]^*$ is always true.

We can however characterize equations valid in $[P(A)]^*$. For a class \mathcal{K} of total algebras (of a given signature) let $\text{Eq}(\mathcal{K})$ be the set of all equations satisfied by all algebras in \mathcal{K} . If E is any set of equations, let \bar{E} be its closure (the smallest set of equations containing E and closed under identities, symmetry, transitivity, substitution and the congruence condition). If A is a partial algebra, let $\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)$ be the set of all total equations in A , i.e., the set of all equations $p = q$ such that polynomials p^A and q^A induced by the terms p and q in A are total and equal. For any equation φ let φ_L and φ_R denote the left-hand and the right-hand side of φ , correspondingly. If φ is an equation in n variables, we write $(A, a_1, \dots, a_n) \models \varphi$ to state that both φ_L^A and φ_R^A are defined on a_1, \dots, a_n and the elements a_1, \dots, a_n of A satisfy φ ; $A \models \varphi$ means that $(A, a_1, \dots, a_n) \models \varphi$ for all a_1, \dots, a_n in A . For a set of equations

E , $A \models E$ means $A \models \varphi$ for all $\varphi \in E$. We write \vec{x}_n for a vector (x_1, \dots, x_n) of variables or elements of an algebra and \vec{s}_n for a vector (s_1, \dots, s_n) of terms or polynomials in an algebra. Thus, e.g., $\vec{s}_n(\vec{x}_k)$ denotes a vector $(s_1(x_1, \dots, x_k), \dots, s_n(x_1, \dots, x_k))$ of terms (when the s_i are terms and the x_i are variables) or elements of an algebra (when the s_i are polynomials and the x_i are elements of the algebra).

LEMMA 3. For any partial algebra $A = (A, (f^A)_{f \in F})$,

$$\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*) = \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}.$$

Proof. If φ is a total equation in A , then it is also total in every algebra in $P(A)$ and thus in any inner completion of an algebra in $P(A)$. Therefore

$$\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A) \subset \text{Eq}([P(A)]^*)$$

and consequently

$$\overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)} \subset \overline{\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*)} = \text{Eq}([P(A)]^*)$$

(the latter being a closed set of equations).

For any term p define inductively $\text{Fun}(p)$ as follows:

if $p = x$ for some variable x , then $\text{Fun}(p) = 0$;

if $p = f(\vec{t}_n)$ for some terms t_i ($i = 1, \dots, n$) and $f \in F$ then $\text{Fun}(p) = \text{Fun}(t_1) + \dots + \text{Fun}(t_n) + 1$.

Thus $\text{Fun}(p)$ is the number of occurrences of operation symbols in p . For any equation φ set $\text{Fun}(\varphi) = \text{Fun}(\varphi_L) + \text{Fun}(\varphi_R)$.

Suppose now $\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*) - \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)} \neq \emptyset$ and let φ_0 be any equation in this set with a minimal number of occurrences of operation symbols, i.e., $\text{Fun}(\varphi_0) \leq \text{Fun}(\sigma)$ for any equation σ in $\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*) - \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$, φ_0 being non-total in A , it contains some non-total subterms. Again let $f(\vec{t}_{n(f)}(\vec{x}_n))$ be a subterm of φ_0 (i.e., a subterm of φ_{0L} or φ_{0R}) non-total in A and such that $\text{Fun}(f(\vec{t}_{n(f)}(\vec{x}_n))) \leq \text{Fun}(p)$ for any non-total subterm p of φ_0 . Thus the terms $t_i(\vec{x}_n)$ are total in A . Let φ'_0 be the equation obtained from φ_0 by substituting x_{n+1} for $f(\vec{t}_{n(f)}(\vec{x}_n))$ all throughout φ_0 (call φ'_0 the simplified equation for φ_0). We may assume that for equations σ satisfying the same conditions as φ_0 , $\text{Fun}(\varphi'_0) \leq \text{Fun}(\sigma')$, where σ' is the simplified equation for σ . Then we have

LEMMA 3a. If $f(\vec{r}_{n(f)}(\vec{x}_{n+1}))$ occurs in φ'_0 , then for some i with $1 \leq i \leq n(f)$,

$$r_i(\vec{x}_{n+1}) = t_i(\vec{x}_n) \notin \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}.$$

Proof. If the lemma were not true, we would be able to find an

equation φ_1 “simpler” than φ_0 . Indeed, suppose $f(\overrightarrow{r_{m(f)}(x_{n+1})})$ occurs in φ'_0 and $r_i(\overrightarrow{x_{n+1}}) = t_i(\overrightarrow{x_n}) \in \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$ for all i , $1 \leq i \leq n(f)$. Let φ'_1 be the equation obtained by substituting x_{n+1} for each occurrence of $f(\overrightarrow{r_{m(f)}(x_{n+1})})$ in φ'_0 and let φ_1 be the equation obtained by substituting $f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)})$ for each occurrence of x_{n+1} in φ'_1 (then φ'_1 is the simplified equation for φ_1). Clearly $\text{Fun}(\varphi'_1) < \text{Fun}(\varphi'_0)$. Moreover, since φ_1 is eventually built up from φ_0 by replacing every occurrence of $f(\overrightarrow{r_{m(f)}(x_1, \dots, x_n, f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)})})$ in φ_0 by $f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)})$ and

$$\text{Fun}(f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)})) \leq \text{Fun}(f(\overrightarrow{r_{m(f)}(x_1, \dots, x_n, f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)})}))$$

(either because the former is a subterm of the latter or by the assumption of the minimality of φ_0), then also $\text{Fun}(\varphi_1) \leq \text{Fun}(\varphi_0)$. Thus we shall have a contradiction if we prove that $\varphi_1 \in \overline{\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*) - \text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$. Since $r_i(\overrightarrow{x_{n+1}}) = t_i(\overrightarrow{x_n}) \in \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$ for $i = 1, \dots, n(f)$, we have

$$f(\overrightarrow{r_{m(f)}(x_{n+1})}) = f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)}) \in \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$$

and consequently $\varphi_{1R} = \varphi_{0R}$ and $\varphi_{1L} = \varphi_{0L}$ are in $\overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$. Thus $\varphi_0 \notin \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$ implies $\varphi_1 \notin \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$. Furthermore, since $\overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)} \subset \overline{\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*)}$, we infer that for any $B \in [P(A)]^*$, $B \models \varphi_{1L} = \varphi_{0L}$ and $B \models \varphi_{1R} = \varphi_{0R}$; hence $B \models \varphi_1$ iff $B \models \varphi_0$. This proves $\varphi_1 \in \overline{\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*) - \text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$, which contradicts the minimality of φ_0 in that set. \square

We return to the proof of Lemma 3. Since $\varphi_0 \notin \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$ and φ_0 is obtained from φ'_0 by putting $f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)})$ instead of x_{n+1} , then also $\varphi'_0 \notin \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$. Moreover, $\text{Fun}(\varphi'_0) < \text{Fun}(\varphi_0)$ and therefore $\varphi'_0 \notin \overline{\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*)}$. Thus there exists an algebra $B = (B, (f^B)_{f \in F}) \in [P(A)]^*$ and elements $b_1, \dots, b_{n+1} \in B$ such that

$$(1) \quad (B, b_1, \dots, b_{n+1}) \not\models \varphi'_0.$$

Let $\{\overrightarrow{r_{m(f)}^j(x_{n+1})} : 1 \leq j \leq k\}$ for some $k \in \omega$ be the set of all $n(f)$ -tuples of terms such that for every j with $1 \leq j \leq k$, $f(\overrightarrow{r_{m(f)}^j(x_{n+1})})$ occurs in φ'_0 and $r_i^j(\overrightarrow{b_{n+1}}) = t_i^j(\overrightarrow{b_n})$. It follows from Lemma 3a that for every j there exists an $i_j \in \{1, \dots, n(f)\}$ such that $r_{i_j}^j(\overrightarrow{x_{n+1}}) = t_{i_j}^j(\overrightarrow{x_n}) \notin \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$. Observe also that either $r_{i_j}^j(x_1, \dots, x_n, f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)}))$ or $r_{i_j}^j(\overrightarrow{x_n})$ is a subterm of φ_0 as well as $f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)})$, so $\text{Fun}(r_{i_j}^j(\overrightarrow{x_{n+1}}) = t_{i_j}^j(\overrightarrow{x_n})) < \text{Fun}(\varphi_0)$, proving $r_{i_j}^j(\overrightarrow{x_{n+1}}) = t_{i_j}^j(\overrightarrow{x_n}) \notin \overline{\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*)}$ – again by minimality of φ_0 . Thus for every j with $1 \leq j \leq k$ there exists an algebra $C_j = (C_j, (f^{C_j})_{f \in F}) \in [P(A)]^*$ and elements $c_1^j, \dots, c_{n+1}^j \in C_j$ such that

$$(2) \quad (C_j, c_1^j, \dots, c_{n+1}^j) \not\models r_{ij}^j(\overrightarrow{x_{n+1}}) = t_{ij}^j(\overrightarrow{x_n}).$$

Let A' be any inner completion of A and set $C = B \times A' \times C_1 \times \dots \times C_k$; let $b'_i = b_i \times a_i \times c_i^1 \times \dots \times c_i^k$ for $i = 1, \dots, n$ and $b'_{n+1} = b_{n+1} \times a_1 \times c_{n+1}^1 \times \dots \times c_{n+1}^k$, where $a_1, \dots, a_n \in A$ are such that $f^A(t_{m(f)}^A(\overrightarrow{a_n}))$ is undefined in A (recall that $f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}(x_n)})$ is not total in A). Then

$$C \in P([P(A)]^*) \subset [P(P(A))]^* = [P(A)]^*,$$

i.e., $C \in (A^\beta)^*$ for some ordinal β . (N.B., the proof can be done for the class of completions of finite products instead of arbitrary ones, hence β can be chosen as a finite ordinal. This is not essential for the sequel.) We infer by (1) that $(C, b'_1, \dots, b'_{n+1}) \not\models \varphi'_0$. Define now an inner extension C_0 of the partial algebra A^β so that for any operation symbol $g \in F$,

$$g^{C_0}(d_1, \dots, d_{n(g)}) = \begin{cases} g^{A^\beta}(d_1, \dots, d_{n(g)}) & \text{if } (d_1, \dots, d_{n(g)}) \in \text{Dom } g^{A^\beta}, \\ g^C(d_1, \dots, d_{n(g)}) & \text{if there are terms } s_1, \dots, s_{n(g)} \text{ such that} \\ & g(\overrightarrow{s_{n(g)}(x_{n+1})}) \text{ is a subterm of } \varphi'_0 \text{ and} \\ & s_i^C(\overrightarrow{b'_{n+1}}) = d_i \text{ for } i = 1, \dots, n(g), \\ \text{undefined} & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Such definition of C_0 implies that both φ'_{0L} and φ'_{0R} are defined in C_0 for b'_1, \dots, b'_{n+1} and $\varphi'_{0L}(\overrightarrow{b'_{n+1}}) = \varphi'_{0L}^C(\overrightarrow{b'_{n+1}})$ as well as $\varphi'_{0R}(\overrightarrow{b'_{n+1}}) = \varphi'_{0R}^C(\overrightarrow{b'_{n+1}})$. Thus

$$(3) \quad (C_0, b'_1, \dots, b'_{n+1}) \not\models \varphi'_0.$$

(Observe that C_0 is a minimal inner extension of A^β satisfying this condition.)

We shall prove that $f^{C_0}(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}^{C_0}(b'_n)})$ is not defined in C_0 . Indeed, by the choice of the a_i 's, $(t_{m(f)}^A(\overrightarrow{a_n})) \notin \text{Dom } f^A$ and so $(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}^{C_0}(b'_n)}) \notin \text{Dom } f^{A^\beta}$. Moreover, if $s_1, \dots, s_{n(f)}$ were terms such that $f(\overrightarrow{s_{n(f)}(x_{n+1})})$ occurs in φ'_0 and $s_i^C(\overrightarrow{b'_{n+1}}) = t_i^C(\overrightarrow{b'_n})$ for all $i \in \{1, \dots, n(f)\}$, then also $s_i^\beta(\overrightarrow{b'_{n+1}}) = t_i^\beta(\overrightarrow{b'_n})$ for all i . This means that for some j , $1 \leq j \leq k$,

$$(\overrightarrow{s_{n(f)}(x_{n+1})}) = (\overrightarrow{r_{m(f)}^j(x_{n+1})}).$$

By the definition of C_j we then have

$$s_{ij}^{C_j}(\overrightarrow{c_{n+1}^j}) = r_{ij}^{C_j}(\overrightarrow{c_{n+1}^j}) \neq t_{ij}^{C_j}(\overrightarrow{c_{n+1}^j})$$

(by (2)) and consequently $s_{ij}^C(\overrightarrow{b'_{n+1}}) \neq t_{ij}^C(\overrightarrow{b'_n})$ contrarily to our assumption on the terms s_i . Thus $\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}^{C_0}(b'_n)} \notin \text{Dom } f^{C_0}$.

Now let C' be any inner completion of C_0 such that

$$(4) \quad f^{C'}(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}^C}(b'_n)) = b_{n+1}.$$

Then $C' \in [P(A)]^*$, being an inner completion of A . It follows from (3) that $(C', b'_1, \dots, b'_{n+1}) \not\models \varphi'_0$ and – recalling that φ_0 is obtained from φ'_0 by substituting $f(\overrightarrow{t_{m(f)}}(x_n))$ for x_{n+1} and taking (4) into account $(C', b'_1, \dots, b'_n) \not\models \varphi_0$. Hence $\varphi_0 \notin \text{Eq}([P(A)]^*)$ – contrarily to the initial assumption. This completes the proof of the inclusion $\text{Eq}([P(A)]^*) \subset \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$. \square

Now we are ready to state the main theorem:

THEOREM. For any partial algebra A ,

$$\text{HSP}(A^*) = [\text{HSP}(A)]^* \quad \text{iff} \quad \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)} = \text{Eq}(A^*).$$

Proof. To prove the sufficiency it is enough to show that the equality $\overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)} = \text{Eq}(A^*)$ implies $[\text{HSP}(A)]^* \subset \text{HSP}(A^*)$. Let B be any total algebra in the class $[\text{HSP}(A)]^*$. By Lemmas 1 and 2, $B \in \text{HS}([P(A)]^*)$ and hence $B \models \text{Eq}([P(A)]^*)$. By Lemma 3, this is equivalent to $B \models \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}$, which by assumption implies $B \models \text{Eq}(A^*)$. Thus $B \in \text{HSP}(A^*)$.

On the other hand, observe that $\overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)} \subset \text{Eq}(A^*)$, since every total equation which holds in A also holds in any inner completion of A . Thus we have the following chain of inclusions and equalities, assuming $\text{HSP}(A^*) = [\text{HSP}(A)]^*$ and using Lemmas 1, 2 and 3:

$$\begin{aligned} \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)} &\subset \text{Eq}(A^*) = \text{Eq}(\text{HSP}(A^*)) = \text{Eq}([\text{HSP}(A)]^*) \\ &= \text{Eq}(\text{HS}([P(A)]^*)) \subset \text{Eq}([P(A)]^*) = \overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)}, \end{aligned}$$

thus proving $\overline{\text{Eq}_{\text{tot}}(A)} = \text{Eq}(A^*)$. \square

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