

## No hexavalent half-arc-transitive graphs of order twice a prime square exist

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**Abstract.** A graph is *half-arc-transitive* if its automorphism group acts transitively on its vertex set and edge set, but not arc set. Let  $p$  be a prime. Wang and Feng (*Discrete Math.* **310** (2010) 1721–1724) proved that there exists no tetravalent half-arc-transitive graphs of order  $2p^2$ . In this paper, we extend this result to prove that no hexavalent half-arc-transitive graphs of order  $2p^2$  exist.

**Keywords.** Half-arc-transitive; bi-Cayley graph; vertex transitive; edge transitive.

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### 1. Introduction

All groups considered in this paper are finite, and all graphs are finite, connected, simple and undirected. For group-theoretic and graph-theoretic terminologies not defined here, we refer the reader to [4, 24].

For a graph  $\Gamma$ , let  $V(\Gamma)$ ,  $E(\Gamma)$ ,  $A(\Gamma)$  and  $\text{Aut}(\Gamma)$  be the vertex set, the edge set, the arc set and the full automorphism group of  $\Gamma$ , respectively. A graph  $\Gamma$  is said to be *vertex-transitive*, *edge-transitive* or *arc-transitive* if  $\text{Aut}(\Gamma)$  acts transitively on  $V(\Gamma)$ ,  $E(\Gamma)$  or  $A(\Gamma)$ , respectively. A graph is said to be *half-arc-transitive* provided that it is vertex- and edge-transitive, but not arc-transitive.

The investigation of half-arc-transitive graphs was initiated by Tutte [20] who proved that a vertex- and edge-transitive graph with odd valency must be arc-transitive. In 1970, Bouwer [2] constructed an infinite family of half-arc-transitive graphs, and proved the existence of half-arc-transitive graphs of every even valency at least 4. After Bouwer's work, many infinite families of half-arc-transitive graphs have been constructed (see, for example, [11, 16–18, 21]). In 1981, Holt [15] found a half-arc-transitive graph with 27 vertices and valency 4. Alspach *et al.* [1] proved that Holt's graph is the smallest half-arc-transitive graph. In the literature, tetravalent half-arc-transitive graphs have also received a lot of attention (see [7, 19]), and much work focuses on the classification problem. Let  $p$  be a prime. Xu [25] classified the tetravalent half-arc-transitive graphs of order  $p^3$  and Feng *et al.* [13] classified the tetravalent half-arc-transitive graphs of order  $p^4$ . It is known that no half-arc-transitive graphs of order  $p$  or  $p^2$  exist (see [1]). In [8], Cheng and Oxley

proved that there exist no half-arc-transitive graphs of order  $2p$ . In [23], Wang and Feng proved that no tetravalent half-arc-transitive graphs of order  $2p^2$  exist. In this paper, we shall extend this result to the hexavalent half-arc-transitive graphs of order  $2p^2$ .

The following is the main result of this paper.

**Theorem 1.1.** *No hexavalent half-arc-transitive graphs of order twice a prime square exist.*

## 2. Preliminaries

For a finite, simple and undirected graph  $\Gamma$  and a subset  $B$  of  $V(\Gamma)$ , the subgraph of  $\Gamma$  induced by  $B$  will be denoted by  $\Gamma[B]$ .

Let  $\Gamma$  be a connected vertex-transitive graph, and let  $G \leq \text{Aut}(\Gamma)$  be vertex-transitive on  $\Gamma$ . For a  $G$ -invariant partition  $\mathcal{B}$  of  $V(\Gamma)$ , the *quotient graph*  $\Gamma_{\mathcal{B}}$  is defined as the graph with vertex set  $\mathcal{B}$  such that for any two vertices  $B, C \in \mathcal{B}$ ,  $B$  is adjacent to  $C$  if and only if there exist  $u \in B$  and  $v \in C$  which are adjacent in  $\Gamma$ . Let  $N$  be a normal subgroup of  $G$ . Then the set  $\mathcal{B}$  of orbits of  $N$  in  $V(\Gamma)$  is a  $G$ -invariant partition of  $V(\Gamma)$ . In this case, the symbol  $\Gamma_{\mathcal{B}}$  will be replaced by  $\Gamma_N$ .

For a positive integer  $n$ , let  $\mathbb{Z}_n$  denote the cyclic group of order  $n$  and  $\mathbb{Z}_n^*$  be the multiplicative group of  $\mathbb{Z}_n$  consisting of numbers coprime to  $n$ . For two groups  $M$  and  $N$ ,  $N \rtimes M$  denotes a semidirect product of  $N$  by  $M$ . For a subgroup  $H$  of a group  $G$ , denote by  $C_G(H)$  the centralizer of  $H$  in  $G$  and by  $N_G(H)$  the normalizer of  $H$  of  $G$ .

Let  $G$  be a permutation group on a set  $\Omega$  and  $\alpha \in \Omega$ . Denoted by  $G_\alpha$  the stabilizer of  $\alpha$  in  $G$ , that is, the subgroup of  $G$  fixing the point  $\alpha$ . We say that  $G$  is *semiregular* on  $\Omega$  if  $G_\alpha = 1$  for every  $\alpha \in \Omega$  and *regular* if  $G$  is transitive and semiregular. It is well-known that a graph  $\Gamma$  is a *Cayley graph* if it has a group of automorphisms acting regularly on  $V(\Gamma)$ . If we, instead, require the graph  $\Gamma$  to have a group of automorphisms acting semiregularly on  $V(\Gamma)$  with two orbits, then we obtain a so-called *bi-Cayley graph*.

The following proposition is easy to obtain (see, for example, [23, Proposition 1.2]).

### PROPOSITION 2.1

*Every edge-transitive Cayley graph over an abelian group is also arc-transitive.*

Note that every bi-Cayley graph admits the following concrete realization. Given a group  $H$ , let  $R, L$  and  $S$  be subsets of  $H$  such that  $R^{-1} = R$ ,  $L^{-1} = L$  and  $R \cup L$  does not contain the identity element of  $H$ . The *bi-Cayley graph* over  $H$  relative to the triple  $(R, L, S)$ , denoted by  $\text{BiCay}(H, R, L, S)$  is the graph having vertex set the union of the right part  $H_0 = \{h_0 \mid h_0 \in H\}$  and the left part  $H_1 = \{h_1 \mid h_1 \in H\}$ , and edge set the union of the right edges  $\{\{h_0, g_0\} \mid gh^{-1} \in R\}$ , the left edges  $\{\{h_1, g_1\} \mid gh^{-1} \in L\}$  and the spokes  $\{\{h_0, g_1\} \mid gh^{-1} \in S\}$ . If  $|R| = |L| = s$ , then  $\text{BiCay}(H, R, L, S)$  is said to be an *s-type bi-Cayley graph* (see [27]). Let  $\Gamma = \text{BiCay}(H, R, L, S)$ . For  $g \in H$ , define a permutation  $R(g)$  on the vertices of  $\Gamma$  by the rule

$$h_i^{R(g)} = (hg)_i, \quad \forall i \in \mathbb{Z}_2, h \in H.$$

Then  $R(H) = \{R(h) \mid h \in H\}$  is a semiregular subgroup of  $\text{Aut}(\Gamma)$  which is isomorphic to  $H$  and has  $H_0$  and  $H_1$  as its orbits. When  $R(H)$  is normal in  $\text{Aut}(\Gamma)$ , the bi-Cayley graph

$\Gamma = \text{BiCay}(H, R, L, S)$  will be called a *normal bi-Cayley graph* over  $H$  (see [28]). A bi-Cayley graph over an abelian group is simply called a *bi-abelian*.

The following proposition is about half-arc-transitive bi-abelians.

**PROPOSITION 2.2** [9, Proposition 1.3]

*Every connected regular edge transitive bi-Cayley graph  $\Gamma = \text{BiCay}(H, R, L, S)$  over an abelian group is vertex-transitive. Moreover, if  $\Gamma$  is half-arc-transitive, then  $R \cup L$  is non-empty and does not contain involutions  $|R| = |L|$  is even,  $|S| > 2$ , and the valency of  $\Gamma$  is at least 6.*

In view of [22], we have the following proposition.

**PROPOSITION 2.3** [22, Proposition 2.6]

*Let  $X$  be a connected half-arc-transitive graphs of valency  $2n$ . Let  $A = \text{Aut}(X)$  and let  $A_u$  be the stabilizer of  $u \in V(X)$  in  $A$ . Then each prime divisor of  $|A_u|$  is a divisor of  $n!$ . In particular, if  $X$  has valency 6 then  $A_u$  is a  $\{2, 3\}$ -group.*

By Theorems 1 and 3 of [5], we have the following proposition.

**PROPOSITION 2.4** [5]

*Let  $\Gamma$  be a arc-transitive graph of order  $p$  and valency  $n$  with  $p$  a prime and  $0 < n < p$ . Then  $n$  is even and divides  $p - 1$  and  $|\text{Aut}(\Gamma)| = np$ .*

Let  $p$  be a prime. The following two propositions are all cubic arc-transitive graphs of order  $2p$  and  $4p$ , respectively.

**PROPOSITION 2.5** [12, Proposition 2.8]

*Let  $p$  be a prime and let  $\Gamma$  be a connected cubic arc-transitive graph of order  $2p$ . Then  $\Gamma$  is 1-, 2-, 3- or 4-regular. Furthermore,*

- (1)  $\Gamma$  is 1-regular if and only if  $\Gamma$  is isomorphic to the graph  $\text{Cay}(D_{2p}, \{a, ab, ab^{-1}\})$ , where  $D_{2p} = \langle a, b \mid a^p = b^2 = 1, bab = 1 \rangle$ ,  $p \geq 13$  and  $p - 1$  is a multiple of 3. In this case, the Cayley graph  $\text{Cay}(D_{2p}, \{a, ab, ab^{-\lambda}\})$  is normal and it is independent of the choice of an element  $\lambda$  of order 3 in  $\mathbb{Z}_p^*$ .
- (2)  $\Gamma$  is 2-regular if and only if  $\Gamma$  is isomorphic to the complete graph  $K_4$  of order 4.
- (3)  $\Gamma$  is 3-regular if and only if  $\Gamma$  is isomorphic to the complete bipartite graph  $K_{3,3}$  of order 6 or the Petersen graph  $O_3$  of order 10.
- (4)  $\Gamma$  is 4-regular if and only if  $\Gamma$  is isomorphic to the Heawood graph of order 14.

**PROPOSITION 2.6** [26, Theorem 1.3]

*Let  $\Gamma$  be a connected cubic arc-transitive graph of order  $4p$ ,  $p$  a prime. Then  $\Gamma$  is one of the following:  $Q_3$ , the 3-dimensional cube;  $D_{20}$ , the dodecahedron;  $C_{28}$ , the Coxeter graph; and  $GP(10, 3)$ , the generalized Petersen graph, which is also the standard double cover of Petersen graph.*

### 3. Proof of Theorem 1.1

Suppose to the contrary,  $\Gamma$  is a hexavalent half-arc-transitive graph of order  $2p^2$  for a prime  $p$ . As the smallest half-arc-transitive graph has order 27, we can assume that  $p \geq 5$ . Let  $A = \text{Aut}(\Gamma)$  and let  $P$  be a Sylow  $p$ -subgroup of  $A$ . By Proposition 2.3, the vertex-stabilizer  $A_v$  of  $v \in V(\Gamma)$  in  $A$  is a  $\{2, 3\}$ -group and  $P_v = P \cap A_v = 1$ . Since  $|A| = 2p^2|A_v|$  is a  $\{2, 3, p\}$ -group, we have  $|P| = p^2$ . It follows that every orbit of  $P$  on  $V(\Gamma)$  has length  $|P : P_v| = |P| = p^2$ , and so  $\Gamma$  is a bi-Cayley graph on  $P$ .

Suppose that  $\Gamma = \text{BiCay}(P, R, L, S)$  is a hexavalent half-arc-transitive bi-Cayley graph over  $P$ . Since  $|P| = p^2$ ,  $P$  is abelian. By Proposition 2.2, we have  $R \cup L \neq \emptyset$ ,  $|R| = |L|$  is even and  $|S| > 2$ . As  $|R| + |S| = 6$ , it follows that  $|R| = 2$  and  $|S| = 4$ , namely,  $\Gamma$  is a 2-type bi-Cayley graph over  $P$ . If  $p = 5$  or 7, then by using Magma [3],  $\Gamma$  is not a half-arc-transitive. In the rest of the proof, we shall assume that  $p \geq 11$ . For convenience of the statement, we shall identify  $R(P)$  with  $P$ . Let  $G \leq A$  be such that  $P \leq G$  and  $G$  is vertex-, edge- but not arc-transitive on  $\Gamma$ . We shall first prove three claims.

*Claim 1.*  $P$  is non-normal in  $G$ .

Suppose the contrary,  $P \trianglelefteq G$ . Then the orbits of  $P$  are two blocks of imprimitivity of  $G$  on  $V(\Gamma)$ . Since  $G$  is edge-transitive on  $\Gamma$ , each induced subgraph  $\Gamma[P_i]$  is null. This implies that  $\Gamma$  is a 0-type bi-Cayley graph over  $P$ , which is contrary to the fact that  $\Gamma$  is a 2-type bi-Cayley graph over  $P$ .

*Claim 2.*  $G$  has no non-trivial normal 2-subgroups.

Let  $M = O_2(G)$  be the largest normal 2-subgroup of  $G$ . Consider the quotient graph  $\Gamma_M$ , and let  $Y$  be the kernel of  $G$  that acts on  $V(\Gamma_M)$ . If  $M \neq 1$ , then  $|V(\Gamma_M)| = p^2$ . The valency of  $\Gamma_M$  must be even. Since  $\Gamma$  is edge-transitive, we have the valency of  $\Gamma_M$  which divides the valency of  $\Gamma$ . So  $\Gamma_M$  has valency 2 or 6. Let  $\Delta$  and  $\Delta'$  be two adjacent orbits of  $M$ . If the valency of  $\Gamma_M$  is 2, then  $\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']$  has valency 3. This is impossible because  $|\Delta| = 2$ . Then  $\Gamma_M$  has valency 6,  $Y = M$  is semiregular and  $|M| = 2$ . Then  $PM/M$  is regular on  $V(\Gamma_M)$ , and hence  $PM$  is regular on  $V(\Gamma)$ . It follows that  $\Gamma$  is a Cayley graph on  $PM$ . As  $M \cong \mathbb{Z}_2$  and  $M \trianglelefteq G$ ,  $M$  is contained in the center of  $G$ , and so  $PM$  is abelian. This is contrary to Proposition 2.1.

*Claim 3.*  $G$  has no normal subgroups with orbits of length  $p$  or  $2p$ .

Let  $N$  be a normal subgroup of  $G$  such that  $N$  has an orbit of length  $\ell$  on  $V(\Gamma)$ . Consider the quotient graph  $\Gamma_N$ , and let  $K$  be the kernel of  $G$  which acts on  $V(\Gamma_N)$ . Then  $|V(\Gamma_N)| = \frac{2p^2}{\ell}$  and  $G/K \leq \text{Aut}(\Gamma_N)$  is vertex- and edge-transitive on  $\Gamma$ . Furthermore, the valency of  $\Gamma_N$  divides the valency of  $\Gamma$  because  $\Gamma$  is edge-transitive, and so the valency of  $\Gamma_N$  is 2, 3 or 6. Let  $\Delta$  and  $\Delta'$  be two adjacent orbits of  $N$ . Then the induced subgraph  $\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']$  is also edge-transitive.

Suppose first that  $\ell = p$ . If  $\Gamma_N$  has valency 2, then  $\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']$  is a cubic edge-transitive graph of order  $2p$ . Since  $p \geq 11$ , by Proposition 2.5, we have  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$  and  $\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']$  is 1-arc-regular. Let  $K^*$  be the subgroup of  $K$  fixing  $\Delta$  point-wise. If  $K^*$  does not fix  $\Delta'$  point-wise, then for any  $u, v \in \Delta'$ , if  $u, v$  are contained in the same orbit of  $K^*$ , then  $u, v$  would have the same neighborhood in  $\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']$ . This implies that  $\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']$  is of girth 4. However, this is impossible because  $\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']$  has girth 6 by Proposition 2.5. Thus,  $K^*$  fixes  $\Delta'$  point-wise. By the connectivity of  $\Gamma$ , we have that  $K^*$  fixes every orbit of  $N$  point-wise and so  $K^* = 1$ . This implies that  $K \leq \text{Aut}(\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']) \cong D_{2p} \times \mathbb{Z}_3$ . Since

$K$  fixes each orbit of  $N$ , we have  $K \leq \mathbb{Z}_p \rtimes \mathbb{Z}_3$ . As  $\Gamma_N$  is a cycle of length  $2p$ , one has  $\text{Aut}(\Gamma_N) \cong D_{4p}$ , and so  $G/K \leq D_{4p}$ . Consequently,  $|G| \mid 12p^2$ . Since  $p \geq 11$  and  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$ , one has  $p > 11$ , and so the Sylow  $p$ -subgroup  $P$  of  $G$  is normal. This is contrary to Claim 1.

If  $\Gamma_N$  has valency 3, then since  $G/K$  is vertex- and edge-transitive on  $\Gamma_N$ , again by Proposition 2.5, we have  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$  and  $\Gamma_N$  is 1-arc-regular. It follows that  $|G/K| = 6p$ . On the other hand,  $\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']$  is a cycle of length  $2p$ . By the connectedness of  $\Gamma$ , it is easy to see that  $K$  acts faithfully on each orbit of  $N$ . This means that  $K \leq \text{Aut}(\Gamma[\Delta \cup \Delta']) \cong D_{4p}$ . Since  $K$  fixes each orbit of  $N$ , one has  $K \leq D_{2p}$ . As  $|G/K| = 6p$ , one has  $|G| \leq 12p^2$ . Since  $p \geq 11$  and  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$ , one has  $p > 11$ , and so the Sylow  $p$ -subgroup  $P$  of  $G$  is normal, contrary to Claim 1.

If  $\Gamma_N$  has valency 6, then  $K = N$  is semiregular on  $V(\Gamma)$ . Since  $p \geq 11$ , by [8, Theorem 2.4 and Table 1], we have  $p \geq 13$  and  $\Gamma_N$  is a 1-arc-regular graph of order  $2p$ . Then  $|G/N| \mid 12p$  and  $|G| \mid 12p^2$ . This forces that  $P \trianglelefteq G$ , a contradiction.

Suppose now that  $\ell = 2p$ . Then  $|V(\Gamma_N)| = p$  and so  $\Gamma_N$  is a Cayley graph on a cyclic group of order  $p$ . Then the valency of  $\Gamma_N$  is 2 or 6. If  $\Gamma_N$  has valency 2, then let  $V(\Gamma_N) = \{\Delta_0, \Delta_1, \dots, \Delta_{p-1}\}$  be the set of  $N$ -orbit such that  $\Delta_i$  is adjacent to  $\Delta_{i+1}$  for each  $i \in \mathbb{Z}_p$ . It follows that  $G/K \lesssim \text{Aut}(\Gamma_N) \cong D_{2p}$  and  $G/K$  is vertex- and edge-transitive on  $\Gamma_N$ . Therefore, for any  $0 \leq i, j \leq p-1$ ,  $\Gamma[\Delta_i \cup \Delta_{i+1}] \cong \Gamma[\Delta_j \cup \Delta_{j+1}]$ . If  $\Gamma[\Delta_i \cup \Delta_{i+1}]$  is connected, then  $\Gamma[\Delta_i \cup \Delta_{i+1}]$  is a cubic vertex- and edge-transitive graph of order  $4p$ , and so it is also arc-transitive. However, by Proposition 2.6, no cubic arc-transitive graphs of order  $4p$  with  $p \geq 11$  exist, a contradiction. Thus,  $\Gamma[\Delta_i \cup \Delta_{i+1}]$  is disconnected. Clearly, each component of  $\Gamma[\Delta_i \cup \Delta_{i+1}]$  is a cubic arc-transitive graph with order dividing  $4p$ , so each component of  $\Gamma[\Delta_i \cup \Delta_{i+1}]$  has order  $2p$ . Let  $C_i^0, C_i^1$  be the two components of  $\Gamma[\Delta_i \cup \Delta_{i+1}]$ . Since  $p \geq 11$ , again by Proposition 2.5, we have  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$ , and  $C_i^0$  and  $C_i^1$  are 1-arc-regular and of girth 6. This implies that  $K$  acts faithfully on  $\Delta_i$ , and so  $K \leq \text{Aut}(\Gamma[\Delta_i \cup \Delta_{i+1}]) \cong (\text{Aut}(C_i^0) \times \text{Aut}(C_i^1)) \rtimes \mathbb{Z}_2$ . Since  $C_i^0$  and  $C_i^1$  are cubic 1-arc-regular graphs of order  $2p$ , one has  $\text{Aut}(C_i^0) \cong \text{Aut}(C_i^1) \cong \mathbb{Z}_p \rtimes \mathbb{Z}_6$ . This implies that the Sylow  $p$ -subgroup of  $\text{Aut}(\Gamma[\Delta_i \cup \Delta_{i+1}])$  is normal, and so  $K$  would have a normal Sylow  $p$ -subgroup, say  $M$ . Then  $M$  is characteristic in  $K$  and hence is normal in  $G$ . Since  $p > 11$  and each orbit of  $K$  has length  $2p$ , each orbit of  $M$  would have length  $p$ . However, by the above arguments, this is impossible.

If  $\Gamma_N$  has valency 6, then  $K = N$  is semiregular on  $V(\Gamma_N)$  and so  $|K| = |N| = 2p$ . By Proposition 2.1,  $\Gamma_N$  is arc-transitive, and by Proposition 2.4,  $\Gamma_N$  is 1-arc-regular and  $6 \mid (p-1)$ . So,  $|G/N| \mid 6p$ . This implies that  $|G| \mid 12p^2$ , which means  $P \trianglelefteq G$ , contrary to Claim 1. This completes the proof of Claim 3.

Now we are ready to complete the proof of the theorem. Let  $N$  be a minimal normal subgroup of  $A$ . Then  $N > 1$ . Assume that  $N$  is solvable. Since  $|V(\Gamma)| = 2p^2$ ,  $N$  is an elementary abelian 2- or  $p$ -group. If  $N \cong \mathbb{Z}_p^2$ , then  $N = P$  is a normal Sylow  $p$ -subgroup of  $A$ , contrary to Claim 1. If  $N \cong \mathbb{Z}_p$ , then the length of each  $N$ -orbit is  $p$ , contrary to Claim 3. If  $N$  is a 2-group, then by Claim 2,  $N = 1$ , a contradiction.

Assume now that  $N$  is non-solvable. Then  $N \cong T^m$ , where  $T$  is a non-abelian simple  $\{2, 3, p\}$ -group. As  $p \geq 11$ , by [6, 14], a non-abelian simple  $\{2, 3, p\}$ -group is either  $\text{PSL}(2, 17)$  or  $\text{PSL}(3, 3)$ . Since  $p^3 \nmid |A|$ , we have  $m = 1$  or  $2$ . If  $m = 1$ , then  $N \cong T$ , and the length of each orbit of  $N$  would be  $p$  or  $2p$ , contrary to Claim 3. If  $m = 2$ , then  $N \cong T \times T$ , and  $P$  is a Sylow  $p$ -subgroup of  $N$ . Thus,  $N$  has at most two orbits on  $V(\Gamma)$ . If  $N$  has two orbits, then  $N$  has the same orbits with  $P$ , and since  $\Gamma$  is edge-transitive,

each orbit of  $N$  does not contain edges. This is impossible because  $\Gamma$  is a 2-type bi-Cayley graph over  $P$ . Therefore,  $N$  is transitive on  $V(\Gamma)$ . Since  $\Gamma$  is half-arc-transitive, one has  $A(\Gamma) = (u, v)^A \cup (v, u)^A$  for each  $\{u, v\} \in E(\Gamma)$ . Let  $\Sigma = (V(\Gamma), (u, v)^A)$ . Let  $\Sigma^+(u) = \{v \mid (u, v) \in A(\Sigma)\}$  and  $\Sigma^-(u) = \{v \mid (v, u) \in A(\Sigma)\}$ . Then  $|\Sigma^+(u)| = |\Sigma^-(u)| = 3$  and  $\Gamma(u) = \Sigma^+(u) \cup \Sigma^-(u)$ . Since  $|\Sigma^+(u)| = 3$ ,  $A_u$  acts primitively on  $\Sigma^+(u)$ . Since  $1 \neq N_u \trianglelefteq A_u$ ,  $N_u$  is transitive on  $\Sigma^+(u)$ . It follows that  $N$  is transitive on  $A(\Sigma)$ , and so  $N$  is transitive on  $E(\Gamma)$ . Therefore,  $N$  is transitive on  $V(\Gamma)$  and  $E(\Gamma)$  but not on  $A(\Gamma)$ . Let  $R$  be a normal subgroup of  $N$  that is isomorphic to  $T$ . Then the length of each  $R$ -orbit is  $p$  or  $2p$ . This is contrary to Claim 3.  $\square$

## Appendix

In this section, we give the Magma codes to check whether there hexavalent half-arc-transitive 2-type bi-Cayley graphs over  $P$  exist or not, where  $|P| = p^2$  and  $p = 5$  or  $7$ .

Case 1.  $P \cong \mathbb{Z}_{p^2}$ .

```

for p in {5,7} do
G<a, c>:=Group<a, c | a^(p^2), c^2, a*c=c*a>;
I:=sub<G|>;
phi, H, K:=CosetAction(G,I);
x:=phi(a); z:=phi(c);
H1:=sub<H | x>;
V:={};
for t in H1 do
Include(~V,t*z);
Include(~V, t);
end for;
for i1, i2, i3, i4, i5 in {1..p^2-1} do
E:={};
for h in H1 do
Include(~E, {h, x^i1*h});
Include(~E, {h, x^-i1*h});
Include(~E, {h*z, x^i2*h*z});
Include(~E, {h*z, x^-i2*h*z});
Include(~E, {h, h*z});
Include(~E, {h, x^i3*h*z});
Include(~E, {h, x^i4*h*z});
Include(~E, {h, x^i5*h*z});
end for;
X:=Graph<V|E>;
if IsConnected(X) and Valence(X) eq 6 and IsEdgeTransitive(X) and IsVertexTransitive(X)
and IsSymmetric(X) eq false then
print p, i1, i2, i3, i4, i5;
end if;
end for;
end for;

```

Case 2.  $P \cong \mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_p$ .

```

for p in {5,7} do
G<a,b,c>:=Group<a,b,c | a^p, b^p, c^2, a*b=b*a, a*c=c*a, b*c=c*b>;
I:=sub<G |>;
phi, H, K:=CosetAction(G,I);
x:=phi(a); y:=phi(b); z:=phi(c);
H1:=sub<H|x, y>;
V:={};
for t in H1 do
Include(~V,t*z);
Include(~V, t);
end for;
for i1, i2, i3, i4, i5, j1, j2, j3, j4, j5 in {0..p-1} do
if x^i1*y^j1 ne x^0*y^0 and x^i2*y^j2 ne x^0*y^0 and x^i3*y^j3 ne x^0*y^0 and x^i4*y^j4
ne x^0*y^0 and x^i5*y^j5 ne x^0*y^0 then
E:={};
for h in H1 do
Include(~E, {h, x^i1*y^j1*h});
Include(~E, {h, x^-i1*y^-j1*h});
Include(~E, {h*z, x^i2*y^j2*h*z});
Include(~E, {h*z, x^-i2*y^-j2*h*z});
Include(~E, {h, h*z});
Include(~E, {h, x^i3*y^j3*h*z});
Include(~E, {h, x^i4*y^j4*h*z});
Include(~E, {h, x^i5*y^j5*h*z});
end for;
X:=Graph<V|E>;
if IsConnected(X) and Valence(X) eq 6 and IsEdgeTransitive(X) and IsVertexTransitive(X)
and IsSymmetric(X) eq false then
print p, i1, i2, i3, i4, i5, j1, j2, j3, j4, j5;
end if;
end if;
end for;
end for;

```

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