

Exercise 1. Let G be a group.

- (a) (3.1.36) Prove that if $G/Z(G)$ is cyclic, then G is abelian. (See the hint in the text.)

Proof. At first, we show $Z(G) \trianglelefteq G$.

We already know $Z(G) \leq G$. Besides, since

$\forall g \in G, z \in Z(G), gz = zg$ by the definition of $Z(G)$,

$$gzg^{-1} = zgg^{-1} = z \in Z(G), \forall g \in G, z \in Z(G)$$

Thus,

$$Z(G) \trianglelefteq G.$$

Since $G/Z(G)$ is cyclic, there exist $x \in G$ such that $G/Z(G) = \langle xZ(G) \rangle$.

Next we show every element of G can be written in the form $x^a z$ for some integer $a \in \mathbb{Z}$ and some element $z \in Z(G)$.

Then $\forall g \in G$, there exists $n \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that

$$gZ(G) = (xZ(G))^n = x^n Z(G)$$

since $Z(G) \trianglelefteq G$.

Then

$$(x^n)^{-1}g \in Z(G).$$

So there exists $z \in Z(G)$ such that

$$(x^n)^{-1}g = z$$

Thus,

$$g = x^n z$$

At last, we have $\forall g, h \in G$, there exists $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}, y, z \in Z(G)$ such that

$$g = x^m y, \text{ and } h = x^n z,$$

and we have

$$\begin{aligned} gh &= x^m y x^n z \\ &= x^m x^n y z \\ &= x^{m+n} z y \\ &= x^{n+m} z y \\ &= z x^{n+m} y \\ &= z x^n x^m y \\ &= x^n z x^m y \\ &= hg \end{aligned}$$

So G is abelian.

□

- (b) (3.2.4) Prove that if $|G| = pq$ where p and q are (not necessarily distinct) primes, then either G is abelian or $Z(G) = \{e\}$.

Proof. We first show that if H is a group and $|H| = p$, where p is a prime, then H is cyclic.

Let $x \in H$ and $x \neq 1$, then $|x| \neq 1$ and $|x| \mid |H|$.

So $|x| = p$ and then $\langle x \rangle = H$.

Thus, H is cyclic.

Since $Z(G) \leq G$, $|Z(G)| \mid |G|$.

Given $|G| = pq$ and p, q are primes, we have $|Z(G)| = 1$ or p , q or pq .

- (i) If $|Z(G)| = 1$, then $Z(G) = \{e\}$.
- (ii) If $|Z(G)| = pq$, we know $Z(G) \leq G$ and then $Z(G) = G$.
So $\forall h \in Z(G)$, we have $h \in G$ arbitrary and

$$hg = gh, \forall g \in G.$$

by the definition of $Z(G)$.

Thus G is abelian.

- (iii) If $|Z(G)| = p$, we have

$$|G/Z(G)| = \frac{|G|}{|Z(G)|} = q.$$

Since q is a prime, $G/Z(G)$ is cyclic by the previous proof.

Thus, G is abelian according to part (a).

- (iv) If $|Z(G)| = q$, follow the similar process as (iii), we have G is abelian.

In summary, if $|G| = pq$ where p, q are primes, then either G is abelian or $Z(G) = \{e\}$.

□

Exercise 2 (Bonus, 3.2.9). Prove Cauchy's Theorem: If G is a finite group and p is a prime number such that $p \mid |G|$, then there is an element $x \in G$ such that $|x| = p$. (Note that the text includes an outline of a proof in Exercise 3.2.9.)

Proof. Let

$$S = \{(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_p) \mid x_i \in G \text{ and } x_1 x_2 \dots x_p = 1\}.$$

- (1) At first, we show $|S| = |G|^{p-1}$.

Let $x_i, i = 1, 2, \dots, p-1$ be any element of G , then $x_p = x_1^{-1} x_2^{-1} \dots x_{p-1}^{-1}$.

Namely, $x_i, i = 1, 2, \dots, p-1$ has $|G|$ choices each, and then x_p only has one.

So $|S| = |G|^{p-1}$.

Define a relation \sim on S by letting $\alpha \sim \beta$ if β is a cyclic permutation of α .

- (2) Then we show a cyclic permutation of an element of S is again an element of S .

$\forall s = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_p) \in S$, we have $x_1 x_2 \dots x_p = 1$.

Define

$$\pi : S \rightarrow S$$

$$(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_p) \mapsto (x_p, x_1, \dots, x_{p-1})$$

Then we define π as circular shift operation.

Since $(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_p) \in S$, $x_1 x_2 \dots x_p = 1$.

So $x_p x_1 x_2 \dots x_{p-1} x_p^{-1} = x_p 1 x_p^{-1}$.

Namely, $x_px_1\dots x_{p-1} = 1$. So $(x_p, x_1, \dots, x_{p-1}) \in S$.

Thus, π is well-defined.

Hence, a cyclic permutation of an element of S is again an element of S .

- (3) Next we show \sim is an equivalence relation.

Then we have a group $G = \langle \pi \rangle$ acting on the set S .

Thus, \sim is an equivalence relation.

- (4) Then we show an equivalence class contains a single element if and only if it is of the form (x, x, \dots, x) with $x^p = 1$.

Assume an equivalence class contains a single element $s = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_p)$ with $x_1x_2\dots x_p = 1$.

Then $\pi = \pi(s) = \pi^2(s) = \dots = \pi^{p-1}(s)$.

Look at the first element of all the elements $s, \pi(s), \pi^{p-1}(s)$, we have $x_1 = x_2 = \dots = x_p$.

Therefore, such a element is of the form $s = (x, x, \dots, x)$ with $x^p = 1$.

Assume an equivalence class contains the element which is of the form $s = (x, x, \dots, x)$ with $x^p = 1$.

Then it is obvious that $\pi^n(s) = s$ for $1 \leq n \leq p, n \in \mathbb{Z}$.

Thus, the equivalence only contains the single element $s = (x, x, \dots, x)$.

- (5) Then we show every equivalence class has order 1 or p . Let $G = \langle \pi \rangle$.

Then $|G| = p$. The orbits of S under the action of G form a partition of S .

Let $s \in S$, then its stabilizer $G_s \leq G$.

So $|G_s| = 1$ or p by Lagrange's theorem.

Let $\mathcal{O}(s)$ denote the orbit containing s .

- (a) If $|G_s| = p$, then $G_s = G$.

So $s = (g, g, \dots, g)$ for some $g \in G$ since s stay the same under all the π, π^2, \dots, π^p circular shift operations.

By part (d), $\mathcal{O}(s)$ has order 1.

- (b) If $|G_s| = 1$, then $G_s = \{e_G\}$.

Assume $|\mathcal{O}(s)| < p$, then $s = \pi^n(s)$ for $1 \leq n \leq p-1$.

Then $e_G \neq \pi^n \in G_s$, which is contradicted by $|G_s| = 1$.

So $|\mathcal{O}(s)| = p$ since $|\mathcal{O}(s)| \leq p$.

Let k be the number of classes of size 1 and d be the number of classes of size p .

Since S is the disjoint union of its orbits, we have $|S| = |G|^{p-1} = k + pd$.

- (6) By part(c), we have $\{(1, 1, \dots, 1)\}$ is an equivalence class of size 1, and then $k \geq 1$.

Since S has order divisible by p by part (a), we have $k \geq p \geq 2$.

So there is another element x different from $(1, 1, \dots, 1)$ which has order p .

Then by part (d), we have $x \in S$ is of the form (x, x, \dots, x) with $x^p = 1$.

□

Exercise 3 (3.3.7). Let M and N be normal subgroups of G such that $G = MN$. Prove that $G/(M \cap N) \cong (G/M) \times (G/N)$.