

# The influence of $p$ -regular class sizes on normal subgroups

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*in collaboration with Zeinab Akhlaghi and Antonio Beltrán*

# Conjugacy class sizes

## Notation

Let  $G$  be a finite group and  $x \in G$ . We denote by

$$x^G = \{x^g : g \in G\}$$

the conjugacy class of  $x$  in  $G$  and by

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It is well-known that there exists a strong relation between  $cs(G)$  and the structure of  $G$ .

## Theorem (N. Itô, 1953)

*If  $|cs(G)| = 2$ , then  $G = P \times A$  with  $P$  a  $p$ -subgroup, for some prime  $p$ , and  $A \subseteq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ .*

# Conjugacy class sizes of $p$ -regular elements

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Let  $p$  be a prime number and  $G$  be a finite group.

An element  $x \in G$  is said to be a  **$p$ -regular element** (or a  $p'$ -element) if the order  $o(x)$  is not divisible by  $p$ .

We can consider the set

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## Some questions:

- What can be said about the structure of  $G$  from  $cs_{p'}(G)$ ?
- If  $H$  is a  $p$ -complement of  $G$ , which is the relation between  $cs_{p'}(G)$  and  $cs(H)$ ?

## Lemma

*Let  $H$  be a  $p$ -complement of a finite group  $G$ . Let  $x \in H$ .*

*(i) Then  $|x^G|_{p'}$  divides  $|x^H|$ .*



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## Example:

The symmetric group  $H = S_4$  is a Hall  $\{2, 3\}$ -subgroup of the symmetric group  $G = S_5$  (that is, a 5-complement of  $S_5$ ). The sets of class sizes are

$$\text{cs}(H) = \{1, 3, 6, 8\} \text{ and } \text{cs}_{p'}(G) = \{1, 10, 15, 20, 30\}.$$

Let  $x = (1, 2, 3) \in H$ , the class size  $|x^H| = 8$  and to  $|x^G| = 20$ .

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The quaternion group  $Q_8$  acts on  $T = [\mathbb{Z}_5 \times \mathbb{Z}_5]\mathbb{Z}_3$ .

We consider  $G = [T]Q_8$  (SmallGroup(600, 57) in GAP).

Let  $H = [\mathbb{Z}_5 \times \mathbb{Z}_5]Q_8$  be a 3-complement of  $G$ . We have

$$\text{cs}(H) = \{1, 2, 4, 10, 50\};$$

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Therefore, there is not relation between  $|\text{cs}(H)|$  and  $|\text{cs}_{p'}(G)|$ .

# Structure of $p$ -complements and $p$ -regular class sizes

New topic:

Some recent results have indicated that the structure of  $G$  and its  $p$ -complements are closely related to the set  $cs_{p'}(G)$ .

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## Theorem (E. Alemany-A. Beltrán-M. J. Felipe, 2009)

*Let  $H$  be a  $p$ -complement of  $G$ . If  $|\text{cs}_{p'}(G)| = 2$ , then either  $H$  is abelian or  $H = Q \times A$  with  $Q \in \text{Syl}_q(G)$  for  $q \neq p$  and then  $G = PQ \times A$ , with  $P \in \text{Syl}_p(G)$  and  $A \subseteq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ .*

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Let  $N$  be a normal subgroup of  $G$ . Then

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## Another new topic:

Recent results have put forward that there exists a strong relation between  $cs_G(N)$  and the structure of  $N$ .

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Theorem 1 (Akhlaghi-Beltrán-Felipe-Khatami, 2011):

*Let  $G$  be a **finite  $p$ -solvable group** and  $N$  be a normal subgroup of  $G$ . Suppose that  $N$  has two  $p$ -regular  $G$ -class sizes for some prime  $p$ . Then  $N$  has nilpotent  $p$ -complements.*

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Theorem 2 (Akhlaghi-Beltrán-Felipe, 2013):

*If  $N$  is a **solvable** normal subgroup of a group  $G$  with two  $G$ -class sizes of  $p$ -regular elements, then  $N$  has nilpotent  $p$ -complements.*

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Question:

- We wonder if a normal subgroup of  $G$  having two  $p$ -regular  $G$ -class sizes is solvable.

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Theorem A (Akhlaghi-Beltrán-Felipe, 2013):

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Theorem A (Akhlaghi-Beltrán-Felipe, 2013):

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Corollary B (Akhlaghi-Beltrán-Felipe, 2013):

*If  $N$  is a normal subgroup of a group  $G$  with two  $G$ -class sizes of  $p$ -regular elements, then either  $N$  has abelian  $p$ -complements or  $N = RP \times A$ , where  $P$  is a Sylow  $p$ -subgroup,  $R$  is a Sylow  $r$ -subgroup for  $r \neq p$  and  $A \subseteq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ .*



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Corollary C (Alemany-Beltrán-Felipe, 2011):

*Let  $N$  be a normal subgroup of a finite group  $G$  such that  $|\text{cs}_G(N)| = 2$ . Then either  $N$  is abelian or  $N = R \times A$ , where  $R$  is a Sylow  $r$ -subgroup of  $N$  for some prime  $r$  and  $A$  is central in  $G$ .*

# Preliminary results of the proof of Theorem A

## The prime graph

*Let  $G$  be a finite group. The **prime graph**  $\Gamma(G)$  of  $G$  is defined as follows. The vertices of  $\Gamma(G)$  are the primes dividing the order of  $G$  and two distinct vertices  $r$  and  $s$  are joined by an edge if there is an element in  $G$  of order  $rs$ .*

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The prime graph  $\Gamma(G)$  is a **tree** if any two primes are connected by exactly one simple path and it is a **forest** if it is a disjoint union of trees.

## Theorem 3 (M.S. Lucido, 2002)

Let  $G$  be a finite non-abelian simple group. If  $\Gamma(G)$  is a forest then  $G$  is one of the following simple groups:  $A_5$ ,  $A_6$ ,  $A_7$ ,  $A_8$ ,  $M_{11}$ ,  $M_{22}$ ,  $PSL_4(3)$ ,  $B_2(3)$ ,  $G_2(3)$ ,  $U_4(3)$ ,  $U_5(2)$ ,  ${}^2F_4(2)'$ , or belongs to one of the families:  $PSL_2(q)$ ,  $PSL_3(q)$ ,  $PSU_3(q)$ ,  $Sz(q^2)$  with  $q^2 = 2^f$  or  $q = 2^{f^2}$  with  $f$  an odd prime, and  $Ree(3^f)$ , with  $f$  an odd prime.

# Preliminary results of the proof of Theorem A

Theorem 4 (Akhlaghi-Beltrán-Felipe-Khatami, 2011):

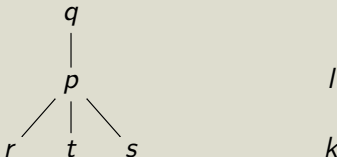
*Let  $N$  be a normal subgroup of a group  $G$  which has two  $p$ -regular  $G$ -class sizes for some prime  $p$ . Then either  $N$  has abelian  $p$ -complements or all  $p$ -regular elements of  $N/(N \cap \mathbf{Z}(G))$  have prime power order.*

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As a consequence, either  $N$  has abelian  $p$ -complements or the prime graph  $\Gamma(N/(N \cap \mathbf{Z}(G)))$  is a forest:



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- (3) It is easy to prove that  $|N/(N \cap \mathbf{Z}(G))|_{p'}$  divides  $|N \cap \mathbf{Z}(G)|$  by using the class equation.



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- (5) By (2), the chief factor  $N/K$  does not have any  $p$ -regular element whose order is divisible by two primes and necessarily  $N/K \cong S$ , with  $S$  a simple group whose prime graph is a forest.

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(6) It is not difficult to show

$$(N \cap \mathbf{Z}(G))_{\{r,p\}'} \cong K/\mathbf{O}_{\{r,p\}}(N) = \mathbf{Z}(N/\mathbf{O}_{\{r,p\}}(N));$$

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Hence,  $N/\mathbf{O}_{\{r,p\}}(N)$  is a quasi-simple group and  $|N \cap \mathbf{Z}(G)|_{\{r,p\}'}$  divides  $|M(S)|$ , where  $M(S)$  is the Schur multiplier of  $S$ .

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(8) Therefore, we obtain that  $|S|$  divides  $|M(S)|p^\alpha q^\beta$ , for some  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ .



# Sketch of the proof of Theorem A.

(6) It is not difficult to show

$$(N \cap \mathbf{Z}(G))_{\{r,p\}'} \cong K/\mathbf{O}_{\{r,p\}}(N) = \mathbf{Z}(N/\mathbf{O}_{\{r,p\}}(N));$$

$$\frac{N/\mathbf{O}_{\{r,p\}}(N)}{\mathbf{Z}(N/\mathbf{O}_{\{r,p\}}(N))} \cong N/K \cong S.$$

Hence,  $N/\mathbf{O}_{\{r,p\}}(N)$  is a quasi-simple group and  $|N \cap \mathbf{Z}(G)|_{\{r,p\}'}$  divides  $|M(S)|$ , where  $M(S)$  is the Schur multiplier of  $S$ .

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(9) Finally, we can check that this property is not possible for the simple groups listed by M.S. Lucido. The most complicated cases are  $PSL_2(q)$ ,  $PSL_3(q)$ ,  $PSU_3(q)$ .  $\square$

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Thank you very much  
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