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**Problem Sheet 1**  
**ASO: Group Theory**

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### Question 1

Let  $H$  and  $K$  be subgroups of a group  $G$ . Show that  $HK := \{hk : h \in H, k \in K\}$  is a subgroup of  $G$  if and only if  $HK = KH$ .

*Proof.* " $\Leftarrow$ ": Suppose that  $HK = KH$ . For  $a, b \in HK$ , there exists  $h_1, h_2 \in H$  and  $k_1, k_2 \in K$  such that  $a = h_1k_1, b = h_2k_2$ . Then  $ab^{-1} = h_1k_1(h_2k_2)^{-1} = h_1k_1k_2^{-1}h_2^{-1}$ . Since  $K$  is a subgroup of  $G$ ,  $k_1k_2^{-1} \in K$ . Then  $k_1k_2^{-1}h_2^{-1} \in KH = HK$ . There exists  $h' \in H, k' \in K$  such that  $k_1k_2^{-1}h_2^{-1} = h'k'$ . Hence  $ab = h_1h'k' \in HK$  since  $h_1h' \in H$ . By the subgroup test,  $HK$  is a subgroup of  $G$ .

" $\Rightarrow$ ": Suppose that  $HK$  is a subgroup of  $G$ . For  $kh \in KH$  ( $k \in K$  and  $h \in H$ ),  $h^{-1}k^{-1} \in HK$ . Since  $HK \leq G$ ,  $(h^{-1}k^{-1})^{-1} = kh \in HK$ . Hence  $KH \subseteq HK$ . On the other hand, for  $hk \in HK$  ( $k \in K$  and  $h \in H$ ), there exists  $h'k' \in HK$  ( $k' \in K$  and  $h' \in H$ ) such that  $hkh'k' = e$ . Then  $hk = k'^{-1}h'^{-1} \in KH$ . Hence  $HK \subseteq KH$ . We conclude that  $HK = KH$ .  $\square$

### Question 2

Let  $K \triangleleft G$ . Denote  $\overline{G} = G/K$  and let  $\overline{H} \leq \overline{G}$ . Show that  $H = \{h \in G : hK \in \overline{H}\}$  is a subgroup of  $G$ , containing  $K$  as a normal subgroup and such that  $H/K = \overline{H}$ . Show further that if  $\overline{H}$  is normal in  $\overline{G}$  then  $H$  is normal in  $G$ .

*Proof.* For  $h_1, h_2 \in H$ ,  $h_1K, h_2K \in \overline{H}$ . Since  $\overline{H} \leq \overline{G}$ ,  $h_1K(h_2K)^{-1} = h_1h_2^{-1}K \in \overline{H}$ . Hence  $h_1h_2^{-1} \in H$ . By the subgroup test  $H$  is a subgroup of  $G$ . Since  $K \in \overline{H}$ , we have  $K \subseteq H$ .  $K \triangleleft G$  implies that  $K \triangleleft H$ . And it is trivial that  $H/K = \{hK : h \in H\} = \overline{H}$ . Finally, suppose that  $\overline{H} \triangleleft \overline{G}$ . For  $h \in H, g \in G$ ,  $hK \in \overline{H}$ , and we have  $(gK)^{-1}(hK)(gK) = (g^{-1}hg)K \in \overline{H}$ . Hence  $g^{-1}hg \in H$ . We deduce that  $H$  is normal in  $G$ .  $\square$

### Question 3

Identify the following groups from the given presentations.

- (i)  $G_1 = \langle x \mid x^6 = e \rangle$ .
- (ii)  $G_2 = \langle x, y \mid xy = yx \rangle$ .
- (iii)  $G_3 = \langle x, y \mid x^3y = y^2x^2 = x^2y \rangle$ .
- (iv)  $G_4 = \langle x, y \mid xy = yx, x^5 = y^3 \rangle$ .
- (v)  $G_5 = \langle x, y \mid xy = yx, x^4 = y^2 \rangle$ .

*Proof.* (i) We claim that  $G_1 \cong C_6$ . Suppose that  $C_6$  is generated by  $g$ . Consider the map that sends  $x$  to  $g \in C_6$ . By universal property of free groups it induces a group epimorphism  $\varphi : F(\{x\}) \rightarrow C_6$ . Since  $\varphi(x^6) = g^6 = e$ , by universal property of quotient groups,  $\varphi$  induces the group epimorphism  $\tilde{\varphi} : G_1 = F(\{x\})/\langle\langle x^6 \rangle\rangle \rightarrow C_6$ .

It remains to prove the injectivity. For  $x^n \in \ker \tilde{\varphi}$ ,  $\tilde{\varphi}(x^n) = g^n = e \implies n \in 6\mathbb{Z} \implies x^n = e$ . Hence  $\ker \tilde{\varphi} = \{e\}$ . We conclude that  $\varphi$  is a group isomorphism.

(ii) We claim that  $G_2 \cong \mathbb{Z}^2$ . Consider the map which sends  $x$  to  $(0, 1)$  and  $y$  to  $(0, 1)$ . It induces a group epimorphism  $\varphi : F(\{x, y\}) \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}^2$ . Since  $\varphi(xy(yx)^{-1}) = (1, 0) + (0, 1) - (1, 0) - (0, 1) = 0$ ,  $\varphi$  induces the group epimorphism  $\tilde{\varphi} : G_2 \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}^2$ .

It remains to prove the injectivity. Since  $xy = yx$  is a relation, we can verify that  $x, y, x^{-1}$  and  $y^{-1}$  commutes with each other. Inductively we have  $x^m y^n = y^n x^m$  for all  $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$ . Suppose that  $w \in F(\{x, y\})$  such that  $\varphi(w) = 0$ .  $w$  is a finite string with alphabet  $\{x, y\}$ . For each substring  $y^m x^n$  in  $w$ , we insert the relation  $y^{-m} x^n y^m x^{-n}$  between  $y^m$  and  $x^n$ . Inductively we have that  $w = x^i y^j \in G_2$ .

Therefore  $\tilde{\varphi}(w) = (i, 0) + (0, j) = (i, j) = (0, 0) \implies i = 0, j = 0 \implies w = 0$ . We conclude that  $\tilde{\varphi}$  is a group isomorphism.

**Remark.** Using the same idea, we can prove that  $\langle X_1 \mid R_1 \rangle \times \langle X_2 \mid R_2 \rangle \cong \langle X_1 \sqcup X_2 \mid R_1 \sqcup R_2 \sqcup [X_1, X_2] \rangle$ , where  $[X_1, X_2] := \{x_1 x_2 x_1^{-1} x_2^{-1} : x_1 \in X_1, x_2 \in X_2\}$  is the commutator of  $X_1$  and  $X_2$ .

- (iii) We claim that  $G_3 \cong \{e\}$ . The relation  $x^3 y = x^2 y$  implies that  $x = e$ . Hence  $x^3 y = y^2 x^2$  implies that  $y = y^2$ , which implies that  $y = e$ . Then  $G_3$  is the trivial group.
- (iv) As we have shown in part (ii), the relation  $xy = yx$  implies that  $G_4$  is Abelian. Then it is a finitely-presented  $\mathbb{Z}$ -module. There is an exact sequence:

$$\mathbb{Z}^2 \xrightarrow{\varphi} \mathbb{Z} \xrightarrow{\pi} G_4 \longrightarrow \{e\}$$

The group homomorphism  $\varphi : \mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}^2$  sends 1 to  $(4, -2)$ , which corresponds to the relations in  $G_4$ . This gives the presentation matrix:

$$\varphi = \begin{pmatrix} 5 \\ -3 \end{pmatrix}$$

We can put the matrix of  $\varphi$  into Smith normal form by repeatedly applying Euclidean algorithm:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 5 \\ -3 \end{pmatrix} \sim \begin{pmatrix} -1 \\ -3 \end{pmatrix} \sim \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 3 \end{pmatrix} \sim \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

Hence  $\text{im } \varphi = \mathbb{Z}$ . By exactness and first isomorphism theorem, we have

$$G_4 = \text{im } \pi \cong \mathbb{Z}^2 / \ker \pi \cong \mathbb{Z}^2 / \text{im } \varphi = \mathbb{Z}^2 / \mathbb{Z} \cong \mathbb{Z}.$$

- (v) The procedure is the same as in part (iv). The relation  $xy = yx$  implies that  $G_5$  is Abelian. We can write down its presentation matrix and put it into Smith normal form:

$$\varphi = \begin{pmatrix} 4 \\ -2 \end{pmatrix} \sim \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ -2 \end{pmatrix} \sim \begin{pmatrix} 2 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

Hence  $\text{im } \varphi = 2\mathbb{Z}$ . We have

$$G_5 \cong \text{coker } \varphi = \mathbb{Z}^2 / \text{im } \varphi = \mathbb{Z}^2 / 2\mathbb{Z} \cong \mathbb{Z} \oplus \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}.$$

**Remark.** Part (iv) and (v) are special cases of the Structure Theorem for finitely generated modules over a PID. □

#### Question 4

Let  $G$  be a non-Abelian group of order 8. We know then that all elements have order 1, 2 or 4 and there exist elements of order 4. Let  $a$  be an element of order 4, set  $A = \langle a \rangle$  and let  $b \in G \setminus A$ . Show that  $b^{-1}ab = a^{-1}$  and that either  $b^2 = e$  or  $b^2 = a^2$ . Use this to prove that up to isomorphism there are just five groups of order 8.

*Proof.* If  $G$  has an element of order 8, then  $G \cong C_8$  is a cyclic group and is Abelian. If  $G$  has only elements of order 1 and 2, then by Prelim Group Theory Sheet 4 Question 5 we know that  $G \cong C_2^3$  is Abelian.

Suppose that  $G$  is non-Abelian. We have  $G = \langle a \rangle \cup b\langle a \rangle$ . We obtain a complete list of elements in  $G$ :

$$G = \{e, a, a^2, a^3, b, ba, ba^2, ba^3\}.$$

Consider the element  $ab \in G$ . Clearly  $ab \notin \langle a \rangle$  because  $b \notin \langle a \rangle$ .  $ab \neq ba$  because  $G$  is non-Abelian. If  $ab = ba^2$ , then

$$a^3 b = a^2 ba = aba^4 = ab \implies a^2 = e,$$

which is a contradiction. It could only be the case that

$$ab = ba^3 = ba^{-1} \implies b^{-1}ab = a^{-1}.$$

The order of  $b$  is 2 or 4. If  $b^2 = e$ , then  $G = \langle a, b \mid a^4, b^2, abab^{-1} \rangle \cong D_8$ . If  $b^2 \neq e$ , then  $b$  has order 4, and  $b^2$  has order 2. Since  $a$  and  $a^3$  has order 2,  $b^2 \neq a, a^3$ . If  $b^2 = ba$ , then  $b = a$ , which is impossible. If  $b^2 = ba^2$ , then  $b = a^2$  has order 2, which is impossible. If  $b^2 = ba^3$ , then  $b = a^3$ , which is impossible. The only possibility is that  $b^2 = a^2$ . The map  $a \mapsto i$ ,  $b \mapsto j$ ,  $ba \mapsto k$ ,  $a^2 \mapsto -1$  induces a group isomorphism  $G \rightarrow Q_8$ . We deduce that any non-Abelian group of order 8 is isomorphism to  $D_8$  and  $Q_8$ . Moreover, we know that the Abelian groups of order 8 are  $C_8$ ,  $C_4 \times C_2$  and  $C_2^3$ . We conclude that there are five different groups of order 8 up to isomorphism.  $\square$

### Question 5

Let  $G = \langle x, y \mid x^2 = e = y^2 \rangle$  and let  $D_\infty$  denote the isometry group of  $\mathbb{Z}$ , the *infinite dihedral group*.

- (i) Show that  $G$  is infinite.
- (ii) Let  $z = xy$ . Show that every element of  $G$  can be uniquely written as  $z^k$  or  $yz^k$  where  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ . Show that  $G = \langle y, z \mid y^2 = e, yzy = z^{-1} \rangle$ .
- (iii) Show that  $y(n) = -n$  and  $z(n) = n + 1$  are elements of  $D_\infty$ . Deduce that  $G \cong D_\infty$ .

*Proof.* (i) We claim that  $(xy)^n$  are distinct elements in  $G$  for different  $n \in \mathbb{Z}$ . Suppose that there are  $n_1, n_2 \in \mathbb{Z}$  such that  $(xy)^{n_1} = (xy)^{n_2}$ . Then we have  $(xy)^m = e$  in  $G$ , where  $m := n_1 - n_2$ . Since  $G = F(\{x, y\}) / \langle\langle x^2, y^2 \rangle\rangle$  and  $(xy)^m$  is a reduced word in  $F(\{x, y\})$ ,  $(xy)^m \in \langle\langle x^2, y^2 \rangle\rangle$ . But

$$\langle\langle x^2, y^2 \rangle\rangle = \langle\{w^{-1}x^2w, w^{-1}y^2w : w \in F(\{x, y\})\}\rangle$$

Every non-empty word in  $\langle\langle x^2, y^2 \rangle\rangle$  must contain the substring  $x^2$  or  $y^2$ . Therefore  $m = 0$  and  $(xy)^{n_1} = (xy)^{n_2}$ . We conclude that  $G$  is infinite.

- (ii) We can perform a sequence of Tietze transformations:

$$\begin{aligned} G &= \langle x, y \mid x^2, y^2 \rangle \\ &\cong \langle x, y, z \mid x^2, y^2, z^{-1}xy \rangle \\ &\cong \langle x, y, z \mid x^2, y^2, x^{-1}zy^{-1} \rangle \\ &\cong \langle y, z \mid zy^{-1}zy^{-1}, y^2 \rangle \\ &\cong \langle y, z \mid z = yz^{-1}y, y^2 \rangle \\ &\cong \langle y, z \mid yzy = z^{-1}, y^2 \rangle \end{aligned}$$

$yzy = z^{-1}$  implies that  $z^{-1}y^{-1}z^{-1}y^{-1}$  and  $zyzy$  are relations in  $G$ . For a word  $w \in F(\{y, z\})$ , we insert the relation  $z^{-1}y^{-1}z^{-1}y^{-1}$  into the middle of the substrings  $zy$  and  $zy^{-1}$ , and  $zyzy$  into the middle of the substrings  $z^{-1}y$  and  $z^{-1}y^{-1}$ . After each operation we invert the order of  $y^i$  and  $z^j$  in the substrings. Since  $w$  has finite length, eventually we will obtain that  $w$  equals  $y^l z^k$  in  $G$ . Since  $y^2 = e$  in  $G$ , we may assume that  $l \in \{0, 1\}$ . In conclusion, every element in  $G$  can be written as  $z^k$  or  $yz^k$ .

Moreover, the expression is unique of each element, as we have proven in part (i) that  $z^{k_1} \neq z^{k_2}$  for  $k_1 \neq k_2$ .

- (iii) For  $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$ ,  $|y(m) - y(n)| = |-m - (-n)| = |m - n|$ . So  $y \in D_\infty$ .  $|z(m) - z(n)| = |m + 1 - (n + 1)| = |m - n|$ . So  $z \in D_\infty$ . Since

$$y \circ y(n) = y(-n) = n$$

and

$$y \circ z \circ y(n) = y \circ z(-n) = y(-n + 1) = n - 1 = z^{-1}(n)$$

$y^2$  and  $yzzy = z^{-1}$  are relations in  $D_\infty$ . Therefore there exists a group epimorphism  $\varphi : G \twoheadrightarrow D_\infty$  which sends  $y, z$  in  $G$  to  $y, z$  in  $D_\infty$ . It remains to check the injectivity. For  $z^k \in G$ ,  $\varphi(z^k)(n) = n + k$ . Therefore  $z^k \in \ker \varphi$  implies that  $k = 0$ . For  $yz^k \in G$ ,  $\varphi(yz^k)(n) = -n + k$ . Then  $yz^k \notin \ker \varphi$  for all  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ . We deduce that  $\ker \varphi = \{e\}$ . We conclude that  $\varphi : G \rightarrow D_\infty$  is an isomorphism. □

### Question 6

- (i) Let  $n \geq 1$ . Show that  $(12)$  and  $(123 \cdots n)$  generate  $S_n$ .
- (ii) Show that  $\mathbb{Q}$  is not finitely generated.

*Proof.* (i) We follow the convention of multiplication order which is consistent with map compositions. First, note that

$$\begin{aligned} (2\ 3) &= (1\ 2 \cdots n)^{-1}(1\ 2)(1\ 2 \cdots n) \\ (3\ 4) &= (1\ 2 \cdots n)^{-1}(2\ 3)(1\ 2 \cdots n) \\ &\vdots \\ (n\ 1) &= (1\ 2 \cdots n)^{-1}(n-1\ n)(1\ 2 \cdots n) \end{aligned}$$

Hence  $(1\ 2)$  and  $(1\ 2 \cdots n)$  generates  $\{(1\ 2), (2\ 3), \dots, (n-1\ n), (n\ 1)\}$ .

Second, note that

$$\begin{aligned} (1\ 3) &= (2\ 3)(1\ 2)(2\ 3) \\ (1\ 4) &= (3\ 4)(1\ 2)(3\ 4) \\ &\vdots \\ (1\ n) &= (n-1\ n)(1\ n-1)(n-1\ n) \end{aligned}$$

Hence  $(1\ 2)$  and  $(1\ 2 \cdots n)$  generates  $\{(1\ 2), (1\ 3), \dots, (1\ n)\}$ .

Third, note that  $(i\ j) = (1\ i)(1\ j)(1\ i)$  for all  $i, j \in \{1, \dots, n\}$ . Hence  $(1\ 2)$  and  $(1\ 2 \cdots n)$  generates all transpositions in  $S_n$ .

Finally, for any  $k$ -cycle in  $S_n$ ,  $(i_1 \cdots i_k) = (i_1\ i_k)(i_1\ i_{k-1}) \cdots (i_1\ i_2)$ . All  $k$ -cycles are products of transpositions. In addition, all elements in  $S_n$  can be written uniquely as disjoint product of cycles. We conclude that  $(1\ 2)$  and  $(1\ 2 \cdots n)$  generates  $S_n$ .

- (ii)  $\mathbb{Q}$  is Abelian group. In particular it is a  $\mathbb{Z}$ -module. Suppose that it is finitely generated. Notice that  $2\mathbb{Z}$  is an ideal of  $\mathbb{Z}$  and  $(2\mathbb{Z})\mathbb{Q} = \mathbb{Q}$  since  $2 \in \mathbb{Q}$  is a unit. Then by Nakayama's Lemma there exists  $x \in 2\mathbb{Z}$  such that  $(1+x)\mathbb{Q} = 0$ . But  $x \neq -1$  implies that  $(1+x) \cdot 1 \neq 0$ , which is a contradiction. Hence  $\mathbb{Q}$  is not a finitely generated  $\mathbb{Z}$ -module. □

### Question 7

Write down all possible composition series of the following groups, verifying the Jordan-Hölder Theorem where appropriate.

$$\mathbb{Z}/12\mathbb{Z}, \quad D_{10}, \quad D_8, \quad Q_8.$$

*Proof.* The composition series of  $\mathbb{Z}/12\mathbb{Z}$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \{e\} &\triangleleft \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \triangleleft \mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z} \triangleleft \mathbb{Z}/12\mathbb{Z} \\ \{e\} &\triangleleft \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z} \triangleleft \mathbb{Z}/6\mathbb{Z} \triangleleft \mathbb{Z}/12\mathbb{Z} \\ \{e\} &\triangleleft \mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z} \triangleleft \mathbb{Z}/6\mathbb{Z} \triangleleft \mathbb{Z}/12\mathbb{Z} \end{aligned}$$

The length of composition series of  $\mathbb{Z}/12\mathbb{Z}$  is 3. The composition factors are  $C_2$ ,  $C_2$  and  $C_3$ .

Let  $D_{10} = \langle \sigma, \tau \mid \sigma^5, \tau^2, \sigma\tau\sigma\tau \rangle$ . The only non-trivial subgroup of  $D_{10}$  is  $\langle \sigma \rangle$ . Then the only composition series of  $D_{10}$  is

$$\{e\} \triangleleft \langle \sigma \rangle \triangleleft D_{10}$$

The composition factors are  $C_2$  and  $C_5$ .

Let  $D_8 = \langle \sigma, \tau \mid \sigma^4, \tau^2, \sigma\tau\sigma\tau \rangle$ . Since  $D_8$  is solvable, we know that every composition series of it has the form

$$\{e\} \triangleleft G_1 \triangleleft G_2 \triangleleft D_8,$$

where  $G_2$  is a normal subgroup of  $D_8$  of order 4, and  $G_1$  is a subgroup of  $G_2$  of order 2. If  $G_1$  is cyclic, then  $G_1 = \langle \sigma \rangle$ . The only subgroup in  $G_1$  is  $\langle \sigma^2 \rangle$ . If  $G_2$  is not cyclic, then it contains only elements of order 1 and 2. The only possibilities are  $\langle \sigma^2, \tau \rangle$  and  $\langle \sigma^2, \sigma\tau \rangle$ , each of which is isomorphic to  $V_4$ . In summary, all composition series of  $D_8$  are:

$$\begin{aligned} \{e\} &\triangleleft \langle \sigma^2 \rangle \triangleleft \langle \sigma \rangle \triangleleft D_8 \\ \{e\} &\triangleleft \langle \sigma^2 \rangle \triangleleft \langle \sigma^2, \tau \rangle \triangleleft D_8 \\ \{e\} &\triangleleft \langle \tau \rangle \triangleleft \langle \sigma^2, \tau \rangle \triangleleft D_8 \\ \{e\} &\triangleleft \langle \sigma^2 \tau \rangle \triangleleft \langle \sigma^2, \tau \rangle \triangleleft D_8 \\ \{e\} &\triangleleft \langle \sigma^2 \rangle \triangleleft \langle \sigma^2, \sigma\tau \rangle \triangleleft D_8 \\ \{e\} &\triangleleft \langle \sigma\tau \rangle \triangleleft \langle \sigma^2, \sigma\tau \rangle \triangleleft D_8 \\ \{e\} &\triangleleft \langle \sigma^3 \tau \rangle \triangleleft \langle \sigma^2, \sigma\tau \rangle \triangleleft D_8 \end{aligned}$$

All composition series of  $D_8$  have length 3 and composition factors  $C_2, C_2, C_2$ .

Let  $Q_8 = \{\pm 1, \pm i, \pm j, \pm k\}$ . Since  $Q_8$  is solvable, we know that every composition series of it has the form

$$\{1\} \triangleleft G_1 \triangleleft G_2 \triangleleft Q_8,$$

where  $G_2$  is a normal subgroup of  $D_8$  of order 4, and  $G_1$  is a subgroup of  $G_2$  of order 2. The normal subgroups of order 4 are  $\langle \pm i \rangle$ ,  $\langle \pm j \rangle$  and  $\langle \pm k \rangle$ , each of which is cyclic. Therefore all composition series of  $Q_8$  are:

$$\begin{aligned} \{1\} &\triangleleft \langle -1 \rangle \triangleleft \langle i \rangle \triangleleft Q_8 \\ \{1\} &\triangleleft \langle -1 \rangle \triangleleft \langle j \rangle \triangleleft Q_8 \\ \{1\} &\triangleleft \langle -1 \rangle \triangleleft \langle k \rangle \triangleleft Q_8 \end{aligned}$$

All composition series of  $Q_8$  have length 3 and composition factors  $C_2, C_2, C_2$ . □

### Question 8

Let

$$\{e\} \triangleleft G_1 \triangleleft G \quad \text{and} \quad \{e\} = H_0 \triangleleft H_1 \triangleleft \cdots \triangleleft H_r = G$$

be two composition series for a group  $G$ . Why is  $r \geq 2$ ? Why is  $r = 2$  if  $H_{r-1} = G_1$ ? Show that if  $H_{r-1} \neq G_1$  then  $G_1 \cap H_{r-1} = \{e\}$ . Show that  $G_1 H_{r-1}$  is normal in  $G$  and that  $G/G_1 = H_{r-1}$ . Deduce that  $r = 2$ .

*Proof.* If  $r = 0$ , then  $G = \{e\}$ , which is impossible. If  $r = 1$ , then  $\{e\} \triangleleft G$  is a composition series. In particular,  $G$  is simple. Then  $G_1 = \{e\}$  or  $G$ , which is impossible. Hence  $r \geq 2$ .

If  $H_{r-1} = G_1$ , then  $H_{r-1}$  is simple.  $\{e\} \triangleleft H_{r-1} \triangleleft G$  is a composition series. We deduce that  $r = 2$ .

If  $H_{r-1} \neq G_1$ , then let  $K = G_1 \cap H_{r-1}$ . Since  $G$  and  $H_{r-1}$  are normal subgroups of  $G$ ,  $K$  is normal in  $G$ . In particular  $K$  is normal in  $G_1$ . But  $G_1$  is simple implies that  $K = \{e\}$ .

For  $a_1, a_2 \in G_1$  and  $b_1, b_2 \in H_{r-1}$ ,  $a_1 b_1, a_2 b_2 \in G_1 H_{r-1}$ .  $a_1 b_1 (a_2 b_2)^{-1} = a_1 b_1 b_2^{-1} a_2^{-1}$ . Since  $H_{r-1} \triangleleft G$ ,  $b_1 b_2^{-1} \in H_{r-1}$  and there exists  $b_3 \in H_{r-1}$  such that  $b_1 b_2^{-1} a_2^{-1} = a_2 b_3$ . Hence  $a_1 b_1 (a_2 b_2)^{-1} = a_1 a_2 b_3 \in G_1 H_{r-1}$ . By subgroup test,  $G_1 H_{r-1} \leq G$ . For  $g \in G$ ,  $a \in G_1$  and  $b \in H_{r-1}$ ,  $g^{-1}(ab)g = (g^{-1}ag)(g^{-1}bg) \in G_1 H_{r-1}$ . Hence  $G_1 H_{r-1} \triangleleft G$ .

We have  $G_1 \triangleleft G_1 H_{r-1} \triangleleft G$ . If  $G_1 H_{r-1} = G_1$ , then  $H_{r-1} \subseteq G_1$ , contradicting that  $G_1 \cap H_{r-1} = \{e\}$  and  $H_{r-1} \neq \{e\}$ . Therefore  $G_1 H_{r-1} = G$ . By second isomorphism theorem,

$$\frac{G}{G_1} = \frac{G_1 H_{r-1}}{G_1} \cong \frac{H_{r-1}}{G_1 \cap H_{r-1}} \cong H_{r-1}.$$

But we know that  $G/G_1$  is simple. Hence  $H_{r-1}$  is simple.  $\{e\} \triangleleft H_{r-1} \triangleleft G$  is a composition series. We conclude that  $r = 2$ . □