



# Course 374 (Cryptography)

## Sample Paper 2

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?:?:00–?:?:00

*Attempt 4 questions from Part A, and 2 questions from Part B.*

### Part B

7. Show that the number of elements in a finite field is a prime power  $p^e$ ; and show that there is exactly one field (up to isomorphism) with  $p^e$  elements.

**Answer:**

(a) *Suppose  $k$  is a finite field of characteristic  $p$ . Then the elements  $0, 1, 2, \dots, p - 1$  form a subfield isomorphic to  $\mathbb{F}_p = \mathbb{Z}/(p)$ .*

*We can consider  $k$  as a vector space over this subfield  $\mathbb{F}_p$ . If the vector space is of dimension  $d$  with basis  $e_1, \dots, e_d$  then  $k$  consists of the  $p^d$  elements*

$$x = \lambda_1 e_1 + \dots + \lambda_d e_d,$$

*with  $\lambda_i \in \{0, 1, \dots, p - 1\}$ .*

(b) *We have to show*

- i. There exists a field containing  $p^n$  elements.*

ii. Two fields containing  $p^n$  elements are isomorphic;

i. Let

$$U_n(x) = x^{p^n} - x \in \mathbb{F}_p[x].$$

We can construct a splitting field  $K$  for  $U_n(x)$ , ie a field in which  $U_n(x)$  factorises completely into linear factors, by repeatedly adjoining roots of  $U_n(x)$ :

$$\mathbb{F}_p = k_0 \subset k_1 \subset \cdots \subset k_r = K,$$

where

$$k_{i+1} = k_i(\theta_i).$$

More precisely, suppose  $U_n(x)$  factorises over  $k_i$  into irreducible factors, as

$$U_n(x) = f_1(x) \cdots f_s(x).$$

If all the factors are linear, we are done. If not, say  $f_1(x)$  is not linear, then we adjoin a root of  $f_1(x)$ , ie we set

$$k_{i+1} = k_i[x]/(f_1(x)).$$

This ‘splits off’ a new linear factor  $(x - \theta_i)$ , where  $\theta_i$  is a root of  $f_1(x)$ , and so of  $U_n(x)$ . Since  $U_n(x)$  has at most  $p^n$  such factors, the process must end after at most  $p^n$  iterations.

The polynomial  $U_n(x)$  splits completely in  $K$ , say

$$U_n(x) = (x - \alpha_1) \cdots (x - \alpha_{p^n}).$$

The factors must be distinct, ie  $U_n(x)$  is separable, since

$$U_n'(x) = 1$$

and so

$$\gcd(U_n(x), U_n'(x)) = 1.$$

We claim that the roots

$$k = \{\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_{p^n}\}$$

form a subfield of  $k$ , containing  $p^n$  elements. For suppose  $\alpha, \beta \in k$ . Then

$$\begin{aligned} \alpha^{p^n} = \alpha, \beta^{p^n} = \alpha &\implies (\alpha\beta)^{p^n} = \alpha\beta \\ &\implies \alpha\beta \in k, \end{aligned}$$

while also

$$(\alpha + \beta)^{p^n} = \alpha^{p^n} + \beta^{p^n} = \alpha + \beta \implies \alpha + \beta \in k.$$

Thus we have constructed a field with  $p^n$  elements.

ii. Suppose  $k, k'$  are two fields with  $p^n$  elements. We assume the following result:

**Lemma 1.** If  $k$  is a finite field then the multiplicative group

$$k^\times = k \setminus \{0\}$$

is cyclic.

Let  $\pi \in k$  be a generator of  $k^\times$  (ie a primitive element of  $k$ ).

Suppose the minimal polynomial of  $\pi$  over  $\mathbb{F}_p$  is  $m(x)$ .

We also assume the following result (an easy consequence of Lagrange's Theorem):

**Lemma 2.** If the field  $k$  contains  $p^n$  elements, say

$$k = \{\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_{p^n}\}$$

then

$$U_n(x) = \prod_{\alpha \in k} (x - \alpha).$$

It follows in particular that

$$U_n(\pi) = 0.$$

Hence

$$m(x) \mid U_n(x).$$

Passing to  $k'$ , since

$$U_n(x) = \prod_{\alpha' \in k'} (x - \alpha')$$

and

$$m(x) \mid U_n(x)$$

it follows that there is an element  $\pi' \in k'$  satisfying

$$m(\pi') = 0.$$

Since  $m(x)$  is irreducible, it is the minimal polynomial of  $\pi'$ .

Hence if  $f(x) \in \mathbb{F}_p[x]$  then

$$f(\pi) = 0 \iff m(x) \mid f(x) \iff f(\pi') = 0.$$

In particular,  $\pi'$  is a primitive element of  $k'$ , since

$$\begin{aligned}\pi'^d = 1 &\implies \pi' \text{ is a root of } x^r - 1 \\ &\implies \pi \text{ is a root of } x^r - 1 \\ &\implies \pi^d = 1.\end{aligned}$$

Now we define a map

$$\theta : k \rightarrow k'$$

by setting

$$\theta(\pi^r) = \pi'^r,$$

together with  $0 \mapsto 0$ . We note that  $\theta$  is well-defined, since  $\pi, \pi'$  have the same order.

Suppose

$$\alpha = \pi^r, \beta = \pi^s.$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned}\theta(\alpha\beta) &= \theta(\pi^{r+s}) \\ &= \pi'^{r+s} \\ &= \theta(\alpha)\theta(\beta).\end{aligned}$$

Also

$$\alpha + \beta = \pi^t \implies f(\pi) = 0,$$

where

$$f(x) = x^r + x^s - x^t.$$

In this case

$$\begin{aligned}f(\pi') = 0 &\implies \pi'^r + \pi'^s = \pi'^t \\ &\implies \theta(\alpha) + \theta(\beta) = \theta(\alpha + \beta).\end{aligned}$$

It is trivial to show that these results also hold if one or more of  $\alpha, \beta, \alpha + \beta$  is 0. Hence

$$\theta : k \rightarrow k'$$

is a ring-homomorphism.

Moreover,  $\theta$  is injective since

$$\theta(\pi^r) = 0 \implies \pi'^r = 0 \implies \pi = 0.$$

which is impossible.

Hence  $\theta$  is an isomorphism.

8. Show that a finite abelian group  $A$  is the direct sum of its  $p$ -primary parts  $A_p$  (consisting of the elements of order  $p^e$  for some  $e$ ).

Determine whether the equation

$$y^2 + xy = x^3 + 1$$

defines an elliptic curve over each of the fields  $\mathbb{F}_2, \mathbb{F}_3, \mathbb{F}_4, \mathbb{F}_5, \mathbb{F}_7, \mathbb{F}_8, \mathbb{F}_9$ ; and in those cases where it does, determine the group on the curve.

**Answer:**

(a) *Suppose*

$$|A| = n = p_1^{e_1} \cdots p_r^{e_r}$$

*Let*

$$q_i = \prod_{j \neq i} p_j^{e_j} = \frac{n}{p_i^{e_i}}.$$

*Then  $q_1, \dots, q_r$  are co-prime, and so (by the Chinese Remainder Theorem) we can find  $m_1, \dots, m_r$  such that*

$$m_1 q_1 + \cdots + m_r q_r = 1.$$

*Thus if  $a \in A$  then*

$$a = m_1 q_1 a + \cdots + m_r q_r a.$$

*But*

$$m_i q_i a \in A_{p_i}$$

*since*

$$\begin{aligned} p_i^{e_i} (m_i q_i a) &= m_i (p_i^{e_i} q_i) a \\ &= m_i (na) \\ &= 0. \end{aligned}$$

*Thus*

$$A = A_{p_1} + \cdots + A_{p_r}.$$

*It remains to show that the sum is direct. Suppose*

$$a_1 + \cdots + a_r = 0,$$

*where  $a_i \in A_{p_i}$ .*

By Lagrange's Theorem,

$$p_j^{e_j} a_j = 0.$$

It follows that

$$q_i a_j = 0$$

if  $i \neq j$ . Hence

$$q_i a_i = 0$$

But since

$$\gcd(p_i^{e_i}, q_i) = 1$$

we can find  $r, s$  such that

$$rp_i^{e_i} + sq_i = 1.$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned} a_i &= rp_i^{e_i} a_i + sq_i a_i \\ &= 0 + 0. \end{aligned}$$

Thus

$$a_1 = \cdots = a_r = 0,$$

and so the sum is direct.

(b)  $k = \mathbb{F}_2$  The equation takes the homogeneous form

$$F(X, Y, Z) \equiv Y^2 Z + XYZ + X^3 + Z^3 = 0.$$

We have

$$\begin{aligned} \partial F / \partial X &= YZ + X^2, \\ \partial F / \partial Y &= XZ, \\ \partial F / \partial Z &= Y^2 + XY + Z^2. \end{aligned}$$

At a singular point,

$$XZ = 0 \implies X = 0 \text{ or } Z = 0.$$

But

$$X = 0 \implies YZ = 0, Y^2 + Z^2 = 0 \implies Y = Z = 0,$$

while

$$Z = 0 \implies X = 0 \implies Y = 0.$$

Thus there is no singular point, and we have an elliptic curve. Returning to the inhomogeneous equation,

$$x = 0 \implies y^2 = 0 \implies y = 0,$$

while

$$x = 1 \implies y^2 + y = 0,$$

which is true for  $y = 0, 1$ .

Thus there are 3 affine points  $(0, 1)$ ,  $(1, 0)$ ,  $(1, 1)$  on the curve, which together with the point at infinity gives a group of order 4.

We have to determine if the group is

$$\mathbb{Z}/(4) \text{ or } \mathbb{Z}/(2) \oplus \mathbb{Z}/(2).$$

We can distinguish between these by the number of elements of order 2; the first group has 1, the second has 3.

Suppose  $P = (x_0, y_0)$ , Then  $-P$  is the point where the line  $OP$  through the point at infinity  $O = [0, 1, 0]$  meets the curve again. This is the line

$$x = x_0.$$

Thus  $P$  is of order 2, ie  $-P = P$ , if and only if this line meets the curve just once.

Since there is only 1 point with  $x = 0$ , the line  $x = 0$  meets the curve twice at  $A = (0, 0)$ . Thus  $A$  is of order 2.

There are two points on the line  $x = 1$ , so neither is of order 2.

We conclude that the group is  $\mathbb{Z}/(4)$ .

$k = \mathbb{F}_3$  Completing the square on the left, the equation becomes

$$(y + x/2)^2 = x^3 + x^2/4 + 1,$$

ie

$$y'^2 = x^3 + x^2 + 1,$$

on setting  $y' = y + x/2 = y - x$  and noting that  $1/4 = 1 \pmod{3}$ .

The polynomial  $p(x) = x^3 + x^2 + 1$  is separable, since  $p'(x) = 2x$  and so  $\gcd(p(x), p'(x)) = 1$ . Hence the curve is elliptic.

The quadratic residues mod 3 are 0, 1.

We draw up a table for  $x, x^3 + x^2 + 1$  and possible  $y$ :

$x$	$x^3 + x^2 + 1$	$y'$
0	1	$\pm 1$
1	0	0
-1	1	$\pm 1$

Thus the curve has 6 points (including the point at infinity). There is only one abelian group of order 6, namely  $\mathbb{Z}/(6)$ , so we conclude that this is the group on the curve.

$k = \mathbb{F}_4$  The argument in the case  $k = \mathbb{F}_2$  shows that the curve is non-singular, ie an elliptic curve  $\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_4)$ . Also

$$\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_2) = \mathbb{Z}/(4)$$

is a subgroup:

$$\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_2) \subset \mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_4).$$

In particular,  $\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_4)$  is of order  $4m$  for some  $m$ .

Suppose  $P = (a, b) \in \mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_4)$ . The line

$$OP : x = a$$

meets the curve where

$$y(y + a) = a^3 + 1.$$

Thus  $OP$  meets the curve again at

$$-P = (a, y + a).$$

Note that

$$-P = P \iff a = 0 \iff P = (0, 1).$$

It follows that there is just 1 point of order 2.

If  $x \in \mathbb{F}_4^\times$  then

$$x^3 = 1,$$

and so the equation reduces to

$$y(y + x) = 0.$$

Thus there are 2 solutions  $(x, 0), (x, x)$  for each  $x \in \mathbb{F}_4 \setminus \mathbb{F}_2$ .

It follows that there are 8 points on the curve. Since there is a subgroup  $\mathbb{Z}/(4)$  the group is either

$$\mathbb{Z}/(8) \text{ or } \mathbb{Z}/(4) \oplus \mathbb{Z}/(2).$$

Since there is only one point of order 2, we conclude that the group is  $\mathbb{Z}/(8)$ .

$k = \mathbb{F}_5$  In this case  $1/4 = -1$  and the curve takes the form

$$y^2 = p(x) \equiv x^3 - x^2 + 1.$$

Since

$$p'(x) = 3x^2 - 2x = 3x(x + 1).$$

Since neither 0 nor 1 is a root of  $p(x)$ , the polynomial is separable, and the curve is elliptic.

The quadratic residues mod 5 are  $\{0, \pm 1\}$ .

We draw up a table as before:

$x$	$x^3 - x^2 + 1$	$y$
0	1	$\pm 1$
1	1	$\pm 1$
2	0	0
-1	-1	$\pm 2$
-2	-1	$\pm 2$

Thus there are  $9 + 1 = 10$  points on the curve. Hence the group is  $\mathbb{Z}/(10)$ .

$k = \mathbb{F}_7$  Since  $1/4 = 2$  in this case, the equation is

$$y^2 = p(x) \equiv x^3 + 2x^2 + 1.$$

We have

$$p'(x) = 3x^2 + 4x = 3x(x - 1).$$

Since neither 0 nor 1 is a root of  $p(x)$ , the polynomial is separable, and the curve is elliptic.

The quadratic residues mod 7 are  $\{0, 1, 2, -3\}$ .

We draw up a table as before:

$x$	$x^3 + 2x^2 + 1$	$y$
0	1	$\pm 1$
1	-3	$\pm 2$
2	2	$\pm 3$
3	-3	$\pm 2$
-1	2	$\pm 3$
-2	1	$\pm 1$
-3	-1	-

Thus there are  $12 + 1 = 13$  points on the curve. Hence the group is  $\mathbb{Z}/(13)$ .

$k = \mathbb{F}_8$  The argument in the cases  $\mathbb{F}_2$  and  $\mathbb{F}_4$  remains valid here; the curve is non-singular and so elliptic. As before, we can write the equation as

$$y(y+x) = x^3 + 1.$$

Thus the points appear in pairs  $P = (x, y)$ ,  $-P = (x, y+x)$ , except when  $x = 0$ , in which case there is just one point  $(0, 1)$  of order 2.

Also, as in the case  $\mathbb{F}_4$ ,

$$\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_2) = \mathbb{Z}/(4) \subset \mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_8),$$

and in particular there are  $4n$  points for some  $n$ .

[But note that  $\mathbb{F}_4$  is not a subfield of  $\mathbb{F}_8$ .]

The Frobenius automorphism

$$\Phi : (x, y) \mapsto (x^2, y^2)$$

has order 3; so either

$$\Phi(P) = P \iff P \in \mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_2)$$

or else there is a triplet of points

$$\{P, \Phi P, \Phi^2 P\}.$$

It follows that the number of points in  $\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_8) \setminus \mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_2)$  is divisible by 3, as well as 4.

Since there are at most 2 values of  $y$  for each of the 8 values of  $x$ , there are at most 16 points on the curve (there is just one point for  $x = 0$  to balance the additional point at infinity).

It follows that the curve contains either 4 or 16 points.

Hasse's Theorem tells us that the number  $N$  of points on the curve satisfies

$$|N - 9| \leq 2\sqrt{8} < 6,$$

from which it follows that

$$4 \leq N \leq 14.$$

Hence  $N = 4$ , and so the group is  $\mathbb{Z}/(4)$ .

$k = \mathbb{F}_9$  As in the case  $\mathbb{F}_3$ , we can complete the square on the left and the curve takes the form

$$y^2 = p(x) \equiv x^3 + x^2 + 1.$$

We know that

$$\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_3) = \mathbb{Z}/(6) \subset \mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_9).$$

In particular the curve has  $6m$  points for some  $m$ .

Recall that the point  $(x, y)$  is of order 2 if  $y = 0$  and  $p(x) = 0$ .

We know that  $(1, 0)$  is one such point. In fact

$$p(x) = (x - 1)(x^2 - x - 1).$$

The polynomial  $g(x) = x^2 - x - 1$  is irreducible over  $\mathbb{F}_3$  (since none of  $\{0, \pm 1\}$  are roots). It follows that

$$\mathbb{F}_9 = \mathbb{F}_3[x]/(g(x)).$$

Hence

$$g(x) = (x - \alpha)(x - \beta)$$

with  $\alpha, \beta \in \mathbb{F}_9$ .

Thus there are 3 points of order 2 on the curve. Hence the 2-primary part of the group contains at least 4 points, and so the curve contains  $12n$  points for some  $n$ .

There are at most 2 points for each  $x \in \mathbb{F}_9$ . [In fact only 1 for  $x = 1, \alpha, \beta$ .] It follows that the curve has 12 points. Since there are 3 points of order 2, the 2-primary part is  $\mathbb{Z}/(2) \oplus \mathbb{Z}/(2)$ . Hence the group is

$$\mathbb{Z}/(2) \oplus \mathbb{Z}/(2) \oplus \mathbb{Z}/(3) = \mathbb{Z}/(6) \oplus \mathbb{Z}/(2).$$

9. Show that the map

$$\Phi : x \mapsto x^p$$

is an automorphism of the finite field  $\mathbb{F}_{p^e}$ ; and show that every automorphism of this field is of the form  $\Phi^r$  for some  $r$ .

Find an irreducible polynomial  $f(x)$  of degree 5 over  $\mathbb{F}_2$ . Hence or otherwise determine the group on the elliptic curve

$$y^2 + y = x^3 + x$$

over  $\mathbb{F}_{2^5}$ .

**Answer:**

(a) We have

$$\begin{aligned}\Phi(xy) &= (xy)^p \\ &= x^p y^p \\ &= \Phi(x)\Phi(y)\end{aligned}$$

while

$$\begin{aligned}\Phi(x+y) &= (x+y)^p \\ &= x^p + y^p \\ &= \Phi(x) + \Phi(y),\end{aligned}$$

since

$$p \mid \binom{n}{r}$$

for  $r = 1, \dots, n-1$ .

Thus  $\Phi$  is a ring-homomorphism. Moreover,  $\Phi$  is injective since

$$\Phi(x) = 0 \implies x^p = 0 \implies x = 0.$$

Hence  $\Phi$  is bijective (since the field is finite), ie  $\Phi$  is an automorphism.

(b) Suppose  $\Theta$  is an automorphism of  $k = \mathbb{F}_{p^e}$ . By definition  $\Theta(1) = 1$ . Hence  $\Theta$  leaves invariant the elements of the prime subfield  $\mathbb{F}_p$ . We assume the following result:

**Lemma 3.** Suppose  $f(x)$  is an irreducible polynomial of degree  $e$  over  $\mathbb{F}_p$ . Then  $f(x)$  factorizes completely over  $\mathbb{F}_{p^e}$ ; and if  $\alpha$  is one root then the others are

$$\Phi(\alpha), \Phi^2(\alpha), \Phi^{e-1}(\alpha).$$

[This follows from the fact that the polynomial

$$\prod_{0 \leq i < e} (x - \Phi^i \alpha)$$

is fixed under  $\Phi$ , and so has coefficients in  $\mathbb{F}_p$ .]

Let  $\pi$  be a primitive element of  $k$ . Then  $\Theta$  is completely determined by  $\Theta(\pi)$ , since

$$\Theta(\pi^r) = \Theta(\pi)^r.$$

Suppose  $m(x)$  is the minimal polynomial of  $\pi$  over  $\mathbb{F}_p$ . Then  $\Theta$  leaves  $m(x)$  invariant, since it leaves  $\mathbb{F}_p$  invariant. It follows that  $\Theta$  permutes the roots of  $m(x)$ .

But by the Lemma, these roots are  $\pi, \Phi\pi, \dots, \Phi^{e-1}\pi$ . Hence

$$\Theta\pi = \Phi^r\pi$$

for some  $r$ . It follows that

$$\Theta = \Phi^r.$$

- (c) If a polynomial of degree 5 is reducible then it must have a factor of degree 1 or 2.

There is just one irreducible polynomial of degree 2 over  $\mathbb{F}_2$ , namely  $m(x) = x^2 + x + 1$ . Thus a polynomial  $f(x) \in \mathbb{F}_2[x]$  of degree 5 is irreducible unless it is divisible by  $x, x + 1$  or  $m(x)$ .

Also

$$x^3 \equiv 1 \pmod{m(x)},$$

since

$$x^3 - 1 = (x - 1)m(x).$$

Let

$$f(x) = x^5 + x^2 + 1.$$

Then

$$f(0) = f(1) = 1,$$

while

$$f(x) \equiv x^2 + x^2 + 1 = 1 \pmod{m(x)}$$

since  $x^5 \equiv x^2$ . Hence  $f(x)$  is irreducible.

- (d) Let us first verify that the curve is non-singular. The equation takes homogeneous form

$$F(X, Y, Z) = Y^2Z + YZ^2 + X^3 + XZ^2 = 0.$$

We have

$$\partial F / \partial X = X^2 + Z^2,$$

$$\partial F / \partial Y = Z^2,$$

$$\partial F / \partial Z = Y^2.$$

Thus at a singular point,

$$Y = Z = 0 \implies X = 0.$$

Hence there are no singular points, and the curve is elliptic.

Three ideas help us determine the group on the curve:

- i. Consider the points on the curve defined over  $\mathbb{F}_2$ , forming the subgroup  $\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_2) \subset \mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_{2^5})$ . It is readily verified that all 4 affine points

$$(0, 0), (0, 1), (1, 0), (1, 1)$$

lie on the curve. Adding the point at infinity, it follows that

$$\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_2) = \mathbb{Z}/(5).$$

In particular  $\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_{2^5})$  contains  $5m$  points, for some  $m$ .

- ii. The equation can be written

$$y(y + 1) = x^3 + x.$$

It follows that if  $P = (a, b)$  is on the curve then so is  $-P = (a, b + 1)$ . (This second point is  $-P$  because it is the point where the line

$$OP : x = a$$

meets the curve again.)

We see in particular that there are no points of order 2 on  $\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_{2^5})$ . So the number  $N$  of points is odd:  $5, 15, \dots$

- iii. Hasse's Theorem tells us that

$$|N - 33| \leq 2\sqrt{32} = 8\sqrt{2}.$$

Since  $[8\sqrt{2}] = 11$ , this yields

$$22 \leq N \leq 44.$$

Thus

$$N = 25 \text{ or } 35.$$

This leaves 3 possible cases:

$$\mathbb{Z}/(25), \mathbb{Z}/(35) \text{ and } \mathbb{Z}/(5) \oplus \mathbb{Z}/(5).$$

iv. Consider the action of the Frobenius automorphism

$$\Phi : (x, y) \mapsto (x^2, y^2) : \mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_{2^5}) \rightarrow \mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_{2^5}).$$

The fixed points of this map are precisely the 5 points of  $\mathcal{E}(\mathbb{F}_2)$ .

Moreover,

$$\Phi^5 = I.$$

Thus the group

$$\langle \Phi \rangle = C_5$$

acts on the group on the curve; and the fixed elements under this action form a subgroup of order 5.

This last observation allows us to distinguish between the 3 cases. An automorphism  $\theta$  of the group  $\mathbb{Z}/(n)$  is completely determined by

$$\theta(\bar{1}) = \bar{a}.$$

Moreover,  $a$  must be invertible mod  $n$ . It follows that

$$\text{Aut}(\mathbb{Z}/(n)) = (\mathbb{Z}/n)^\times.$$

This group has  $\phi(n)$  elements; and since

$$\phi(35) = \phi(5)\phi(7) = 4 \cdot 6 = 24,$$

the automorphism group of  $\mathbb{Z}/(35)$  cannot contain an element of order 5; so this case is impossible.

The group  $A = \mathbb{Z}/(25)$  has just one subgroup  $B$  with 5 elements. If an automorphism

$$\theta : A \rightarrow A$$

has  $\ker \theta = B$  then  $\text{im } \theta = B$  and so  $\theta^2 = 0$ , contradicting the assumption that  $\theta$  is an automorphism.

We are left with only 1 possibility; the group must be  $\mathbb{Z}/(5) \oplus \mathbb{Z}/(5)$ . [Although not necessary for this question, it is worth noting that we can regard the group  $\mathbb{Z}/(5) \oplus \mathbb{Z}/(5)$  as a 2-dimensional vector space over the field  $\mathbb{F}_5$ .

Thus the automorphism group of this group is  $\text{GL}(2, \mathbb{F}_5)$ , the group of invertible  $2 \times 2$  matrices over the field  $\mathbb{F}_5$ .

We can construct such a matrix by first choosing a non-zero vector for first column; this can be done in  $5^2 - 1 = 24$  ways. Then any

vector can be chosen for the second row, except for the 5 scalar products of the first row. This can be done in  $5^2 - 5 = 20$  ways.

It follows that the automorphism group in this case has 480 elements. By Sylow's Theorem, the subgroups of order 5 are all conjugate; a typical one is formed by the matrices

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & a \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \quad (a \in \mathbb{F}_5).$$

*It is readily verified that this automorphism subgroup leaves invariant a 1-dimensional subspace containing 5 vectors.]*