

COINCIDENCES FOR MAPS OF SPACES WITH FINITE GROUP ACTIONS

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ABSTRACT. Let G be a finite group acting freely in a Hausdorff, paracompact, connected and locally pathwise connected topological space X such that $H_i(X, Z) = 0$ for $0 < i < m$ and $H^{m+1}(G, Z) \neq 0$. Let $f : X \rightarrow Y$ be a map of X to a finite k -dimensional CW-complex Y . We show that if $m \geq |G|k$, then f has a (H, G) -coincidence point for some nontrivial subgroup H of G .

1. Introduction.

The classic Borsuk-Ulam theorem says that every map of S^n into the euclidean k -dimensional space R^k has an antipodal coincidence, that is, it maps some pair of

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antipodal points into a single point if $n \geq k$; moreover, the inequality $n \geq k$ is the best possible, since for $n < k$ there is an inclusion $S^n \rightarrow R^k$. This result can be generalized in many ways: S^n and R^k can be replaced by more general spaces X and Y , and the antipodal action of Z_2 on S^n can be replaced by actions of other groups. We will consider the following setting: suppose that X, Y are topological spaces, G is a group acting freely on X and $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is a map. If H is a subgroup of G , then H acts on the right on each orbit Gx of G as follows: if $y \in Gx$ and $y = gx, g \in G$, then $hy = ghx$. Following [7], [9] and [11], the concept of G -coincidence can be generalized as follows: a point $x \in X$ is said to be a (H, G) -coincidence point of f if f sends every orbit of the action of H on the G -orbit of x to a single point. Of course, if H is the trivial subgroup, then every point of X is a (H, G) -coincidence. If $H = G$, this is the usual definition of coincidence. If $G = Z_r, p$ divides r , and $H = Z_p$, then a (H, G) -coincidence is a (p, r) -coincidence in the sense of [9]. If $G = Z_p$ with p prime, then a nontrivial (H, G) -coincidence point is a G -coincidence point.

Generally speaking, we want to find conditions on X, Y and G which assure that every map $f : X \rightarrow Y$ has a (H, G) -coincidence point for some nontrivial subgroup $H \subset G$. Recently we have proved the following result ([7]).

Proposition. *Suppose that G is a finite group acting freely on a CW-complex X that is a homotopy m -dimensional sphere and suppose that $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is a map, where Y is a finite k -dimensional CW-complex. Then, if $m \geq |G|k$, there is a nontrivial subgroup $H \subset G$ and a (H, G) -coincidence point for f .*

For $X = S^m$, this question had been solved in [10] and [11] when $G = Z_2$ (compare also [12]), and more generally in [9] and [11] for $G = Z_q$ (in this case m is odd).

The aim of this paper is to show that the above result can be extended to a larger class of spaces X . Specifically, we will prove the following theorem.

Theorem 1. *Let X be a Hausdorff, paracompact, connected and locally pathwise connected topological space, and let G be a finite group acting freely on X . Suppose that $H^{m+1}(G, Z) \neq 0$ for some natural number $m \geq 1$ and $H_i(X, Z) = 0$ for $0 < i < m$. If Y is a finite k -dimensional CW-complex with $m \geq |G|k$ and $f : X \rightarrow Y$ is a map, then there is a nontrivial subgroup $H \subset G$ and a (H, G) -coincidence point for f .*

If G is a finite group which acts freely on a CW-complex of the homotopy type of a m -dimensional sphere, then by [3, Ch. XII, §11] $H^{m+1}(G, Z) \cong Z_{|G|}$, the cyclic group of order $|G|$; thus the above theorem is in fact an extension of our previous result. In addition, we will show that the inequality $m \geq |G|k$ is the best condition for the existence of G -coincidences if $G = Z_p$ with p prime.

Recently, in [18], A. Yu. Volovikov studied this question above for $G = Z_p^k = Z_p \oplus \dots \oplus Z_p$ (k summands), where p is a prime number, and X is a connected

CW-complex with a G -action such that $H^i(X, Z_p) = 0$ for $0 < i < m$; he used the concept of index $i(X)$ of [17]. However, our result does not imply the Volovikov's result when $k > 1$, since in his study $H = G$.

2. Proof of the theorem.

Lemma 1. *Let G be a finite group such that $H^{m+1}(G, Z) \neq 0$ for some $m \geq 1$, and let p be a prime divisor of the order of $H^{m+1}(G, Z)$. Then the cohomology $H^m(G, Z_p)$ contains Z_p as a summand.*

Proof. By the universal coefficient formula,

$$H^{m+1}(G, Z) = \text{free part of}(H_{m+1}(G, Z)) \oplus \text{torsion}(H_m(G, Z)).$$

Since G is a finite group, the Z -homology of G has only torsion in dimensions greater than zero, hence $H_m(G, Z) \cong H^{m+1}(G, Z)$. By the universal coefficient theorem,

$$H^m(G, Z_p) \cong \text{Hom}(H_m(G, Z), Z_p) \oplus \text{Ext}(H_{m-1}(G, Z), Z_p)$$

and $\text{Hom}(H_m(G, Z), Z_p)$ has a summand isomorphic to Z_p . □

Let $B(G)$ be the classifying space for G . Since X is Hausdorff and paracompact, we can take a classifying map $c : X/G \rightarrow B(G)$ for the principal G -bundle $\pi : X \rightarrow X/G$.

Lemma 2. *Let p be a prime divisor of the order of $H^{m+1}(G, Z)$. Then the homomorphism*

$$c^* : H^m(B(G), Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(X/G, Z_p)$$

is injective (in particular, it is nontrivial by Lemma 1).

Proof. Consider the universal G -bundle $E(G) \rightarrow B(G)$. By [4, Ch. III, §4 page 208] we have a fibration $X \rightarrow X_G \xrightarrow{\rho} B(G)$, with base space $B(G)$, fibre map ρ and fiber X , and where $X_G = E(G) \times_G X$ (see also [1, Ch. IV, §6, Lemma 6.2 page 146]). Since G is a finite group and acts freely on X , then X_G is homotopy equivalent to X/G . If $h : X/G \rightarrow X_G$ is a homotopy equivalence, $\rho h : X/G \rightarrow B(G)$ also classifies the principal G -bundle $\pi : X \rightarrow X/G$, and so it is homotopic to c . Hence it suffices to show that $\rho^* : H^m(B(G), Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(X_G, Z_p)$ is injective. Consider the cohomology spectral sequence $\{E_r^{p,q}, \partial^r\}$ associated to the fibration $\rho : X_G \rightarrow B(G)$ (see for example Theorem 6 of [14, Ch 9, page 495]). Since $H_q(X, Z) = 0$ for $0 < q < m$, the $E_2^{p,q}$ term of this spectral sequence vanish for all $0 < q < m$. Therefore $E_2^{m,0} = E_3^{m,0} = \dots = E_\infty^{m,0}$ and follows that $E_\infty^{m,0} = H^m(B(G), Z_p)$.

By a routine argument of spectral sequence we obtain the following short exact sequence:

$$0 \rightarrow E_{\infty}^{m,0} = H^m(B(G), Z_p) \xrightarrow{\rho^*} H^m(X_G, Z_p) \rightarrow E_{\infty}^{0,m} \rightarrow 0.$$

Therefore ρ^* is injective and the result follows. □

Lemma 3. *Let X be a Hausdorff, connected and locally pathwise connected space, and let G be a finite group acting freely on X . Then for any $i \geq 0$ and a commutative ring R with a unit, there is a transfer homomorphism $\tau_X : H^i(X, R) \rightarrow H^i(X/G, R)$ with the following properties:*

i) if X is a k -dimensional G -CW-complex (not necessarily finite), then $\tau_X : H^k(X, R) \rightarrow H^k(X/G, R)$ is surjective;

ii) if Y is another space that satisfies the hypothesis of the lemma, $h : X \rightarrow Y$ is an equivariant map and $\bar{h} : X/G \rightarrow Y/G$ is the map induced by h , then $\tau_X h^ = \bar{h}^* \tau_Y$.*

Proof. First we define τ_X at the cochain level. Let $\mu \in S^i(X, R)$ a singular i -cochain; that is, μ is a R -homomorphism from the singular i -chain R -module $S_i(X, R)$ into R . Take the standard i -simplex σ_i and fix a base point $z \in \sigma_i$. Let $\phi : \sigma_i \rightarrow X/G$ be a singular i -simplex, and

$$\pi^{-1}(\phi(z)) = \{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_r\},$$

where r is the order of G and $\pi : X \rightarrow X/G$ is the quotient map. Since $\pi : X \rightarrow X/G$ is a r -fold covering with X locally pathwise connected, and σ_i is simply connected, there are unique liftings

$$\phi_1, \phi_2, \dots, \phi_r : \sigma_i \rightarrow X$$

of ϕ such that $\phi_i(z) = a_i$, $i = 1, 2, \dots, r$. Define

$$\bar{\mu}(\phi) = \mu(\phi_1) + \mu(\phi_2) + \dots + \mu(\phi_r).$$

It is straightforward to verify that the assignment $\mu \mapsto \bar{\mu}$ is R -linear and maps cocycles into cocycles and coboundaries into coboundaries, hence it defines an R -homomorphism $\tau_X : H^i(X, R) \rightarrow H^i(X/G, R)$ (which depends on the base point of σ_i). The fact that these transfer homomorphisms satisfy ii) follows from the commutativity relation $\bar{h}\pi_X = \pi_Y h$, where π_X, π_Y are the quotient maps corresponding to X and Y .

Suppose now that X is a k -dimensional G -CW-complex. Consider $S^j(\quad, R) = \text{Hom}_R(S_j(\quad, R), R)$, where $S_j(\quad, R)$ is the free R -module generated by the open

j -dimensional cells. Since X is a G -CW-complex, X/G has the induced CW-structure; in particular, if $\{e_\alpha\}$ are the k -cells of X/G , then for each α there are exactly r k -cells $e_\alpha^1, e_\alpha^2, \dots, e_\alpha^r$ of X mapped by π into e_α . In this case the transfer homomorphism $\tau_X : H^k(X, R) \rightarrow H^k(X/G, R)$ is the homomorphism induced by the chain map $\tau_X : S^k(X, R) \rightarrow S^k(X/G, R)$ given by $\tau_X(\mu)(e_\alpha) = \mu(e_\alpha^1) + \mu(e_\alpha^2) + \dots + \mu(e_\alpha^r)$. Take a k -cocycle $\eta \in S^k(X/G, R)$ and define a k -cochain $\eta' \in S^k(X, R)$ by $\eta'(e_\alpha^j) = \eta(e_\alpha)$ if $j = 1$, and $\eta'(e_\alpha^j) = 0$ if $j \neq 1$, for every α . Clearly, $\tau_X(\eta') = \eta$; moreover, since X has dimension k , $S^{k+1}(X, R) = 0$, and so every k -cochain of X is a k -cocycle. Thus η' represents a cohomology class of $H^k(X, R)$ that is mapped by τ_X into $[\eta]$.

□

With the above lemmas, the remaining arguments are similar to those of [7].

Proof of the Theorem. Let $G = \{g_1, \dots, g_r\}$ be a fixed enumeration of elements of G , and $Y^r = Y \times \dots \times Y$. Consider the map $G \times Y^r \rightarrow Y^r$ given by

$$(g, (y_1, \dots, y_r)) \rightarrow (y_{\sigma_g(1)}, \dots, y_{\sigma_g(r)}),$$

where the permutation σ_g is defined by $g_i g = g_{\sigma_g(i)}$; this map is a left G -action on Y^r . For a subgroup $H \subset G$, let $(Y^r)^H$ be the fixed point set of H and $F = \bigcup_H (Y^r)^H$,

where H runs over all nontrivial subgroups of G . Let $Y_0^{(r)} = Y^r - F$; it is precisely the part of Y^r where the G -action is free. With this G -action on Y^r , $Y_0^{(r)}$ inherits a k -dimensional G -CW-structure from the CW-structure of Y . In fact, consider the usual product CW-structure on Y^r . If e^j is an open j -cell of Y^r with $e^j \cap F \neq \emptyset$, then $e^j - F$ is a disjoint union of open s -cells $e_{t_s}^s$, where $0 \leq s \leq j$, so that each e_i^s can be subdivided into open cells in such a way that they are freely interchanged by G . The required G -structure on $Y_0^{(r)}$ is given then by the union of these cells with the open cells e^j of Y^r such that $e^j \cap F = \emptyset$.

If X is any space with a G -action, then a map $f : X \rightarrow Y$ induces an equivariant map $\phi : X \rightarrow Y^r$,

$$\phi(x) = (f(g_1 x), \dots, f(g_r x)).$$

Suppose that $f : X \rightarrow Y$ has no (H, G) -coincidence points for any nontrivial subgroup $H \subset G$. Then $\phi(X) \subset Y_0^{(r)}$, so ϕ factors through $Y_0^{(r)}$, $\phi = X \xrightarrow{\phi_0} Y_0^{(r)} \hookrightarrow Y^{(r)}$; ϕ_0 is an equivariant map and thus induces a map $\bar{\phi}_0 : X/G \rightarrow Y_0^{(r)}/G$.

Let $c_Y : Y_0^{(r)}/G \rightarrow B(G)$ be a classifying map for the principal G -bundle $\pi_{Y_0^{(r)}} : Y_0^{(r)} \rightarrow Y_0^{(r)}/G$. Then $c = c_Y \bar{\phi}_0 : X/G \rightarrow B(G)$ is a classifying map for the principal G -bundle $\pi_X : X \rightarrow X/G$ of the previous section.

Now let p be a prime that divides the order of $H^{m+1}(G, Z)$. First, if $m > rk$, then the topological dimension of $Y_0^{(r)}/G$ is less than m , hence $c_Y^* : H^m(B(G), Z_p)$

$\rightarrow H^m(Y_0^{(r)}/G, Z_p)$ is zero and $c^* = \bar{\phi}_0^* c_Y^* = 0$, which contradicts Lemma 2. Thus we can assume that $m = rk$. We will again obtain a contradiction to Lemma 2 by showing that $\bar{\phi}_0^* : H^m(Y_0^{(r)}/G, Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(X/G, Z_p)$ is zero.

The map $i^* : H^m(Y^r, Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(Y_0^{(r)}, Z_p)$ is a part of the cohomology sequence of the pair $(Y^r, Y_0^{(r)})$ and $H^m(Y^r, Y_0^{(r)}) = 0$, so i^* is surjective. Since $H_i(X, Z) = 0$ for $0 < i < m$, the universal coefficient theorem implies that $H^i(X, Z_p) = 0$ for $0 < i < m$. On the other hand, by the Künneth formula, any nonzero class of $H^m(Y^r, Z_p)$ is a cup product of k -dimensional classes and $0 < k < m$ (recall that $r \geq 2$), which implies that $\phi^* : H^m(Y^r, Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(X, Z_p)$ is zero. Since $\phi_0 i = \phi$, it follows that $\phi_0^* : H^m(Y_0^{(r)}, Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(X, Z_p)$ is zero.

Now consider the transfer homomorphisms $\tau_X : H^m(X, Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(X/G, Z_p)$ and $\tau_{Y_0^{(r)}} : H^m(Y_0^{(r)}, Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(Y_0^{(r)}/G, Z_p)$ given by Lemma 3. By ii) of that lemma we have the following commutative rectangle

$$\begin{array}{ccc} H^m(X, Z_p) & \xrightarrow{\tau_X} & H^m(X/G, Z_p) \\ \uparrow \phi_0^* & & \uparrow \bar{\phi}_0^* \\ H^m(Y_0^{(r)}, Z_p) & \xrightarrow{\tau_{Y_0^{(r)}}} & H^m(Y_0^{(r)}/G, Z_p), \end{array}$$

which implies that

$$\bar{\phi}_0^* \tau_{Y_0^{(r)}} : H^m(Y_0^{(r)}, Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(X/G, Z_p)$$

is zero. Since $Y_0^{(r)}$ is a m -dimensional G -CW-complex, part i) of Lemma 3 implies that $\tau_{Y_0^{(r)}}$ is surjective and so $(\bar{\phi}_0^*)^* : H^m(Y_0^{(r)}/G, Z_p) \rightarrow H^m(X/G, Z_p)$ is the zero homomorphism. \square

An example. Suppose $G = Z_p$, where p is a prime. We can define a natural free action of G on S^{p-2} as follows. Let G act on \mathbb{R}^p , the p -dimensional euclidean space, by cyclic permutations of coordinates; the unit sphere $S^{p-1} \subset \mathbb{R}^p$ is invariant under this action. If we consider \mathbb{R}^p as the space $Map(G, \mathbb{R}) = \{\lambda : G \rightarrow \mathbb{R}\}$ of maps, then the action is given by $g\lambda(h) = \lambda(g^{-1}h)$, for $g \in G$ and $\lambda \in Map(G, \mathbb{R})$. Let Δ be the diagonal of \mathbb{R}^p , $\Delta = \{(x_1, \dots, x_p) \in \mathbb{R}^p \mid x_i = x_j, 1 \leq i, j \leq p\}$. Then the action is free on $\mathbb{R}^p - \Delta$, and in particular it is free on the unit sphere S^{p-2} in the orthogonal complement of the one-dimensional subspace Δ .

Let $\varphi : S^{p-2} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be defined by the first projection $\varphi(x_1, \dots, x_p) = x_1$. Clearly φ has no G -coincidence points and $\varphi(S^{p-2}) \subset [-1, 1]$.

Now let T be the one-dimensional CW-complex on the 2-plane that is the union of the segment $I_1 = [-1, 1]$ of the x -axis with the segment $I_2 = [0, 1]$ of the y -axis; thus $\varphi(S^{p-2}) \subset I_1$. Next take the join space $X^{p-1} = S^{p-2} * G$; it is a $(p-1)$ -dimensional CW-complex. If $p = 2$, then X^1 is homeomorphic to the circle S^1 .

The points of X^{p-1} can be written as $[\lambda, t, g]$, where $\lambda \in S^{p-2}$, $t \in [0, 1]$ and $g \in G$. An element $h \in G$ acts on $[\lambda, t, g]$ as $h[\lambda, t, g] = [h\lambda, t, hg]$, and this action of G on X^{p-1} is free. Define $\psi : X^{p-1} \rightarrow T$ by

$$\psi[\lambda, t, g] = \begin{cases} t\lambda(e) \in I_1, & g \neq e, \\ (2t-1)\lambda(e) \in I_1, & g = e, \quad 1/2 \leq t \leq 1, \\ 1-2t \in I_2, & g = e, \quad 0 \leq t \leq 1/2 \end{cases}$$

where e is the unity element of G . A direct calculation shows that ψ has no G -coincidence points.

Now consider the join $X = X^{p-1} * \dots * X^{p-1}$ of m copies of X^{p-1} . It is a CW-complex of dimension $mp-1$ with $H_i(X, Z) = 0$ for each $0 < i < mp-1$ satisfying all the remaining hypotheses of our theorem. A point of X can be written as $[t_1x_1 + \dots + t_mx_m]$, where $x_i \in X$, $t_1 + \dots + t_m = 1$ and $t_i \geq 0$, $i = 1, \dots, m$, and G acts freely on X through the diagonal action

$$g \cdot [t_1x_1 + \dots + t_mx_m] = [t_1(g \cdot x_1) + \dots + t_m(g \cdot x_m)].$$

We can define a map $F : X \rightarrow T^m$ as

$$F([t_1x_1 + \dots + t_mx_m]) = (t_1\psi(x_1), \dots, t_m\psi(x_m)).$$

The fact that ψ has no G -coincidence points implies that F has no G -coincidence points.

This construction shows that the hypothesis $m \geq |G|k$ has the following properties:

- a) It is the best condition for the existence of (H, G) -coincidences if all finite groups G are considered.
- b) It is the best condition for the existence of G -coincidences if $G = Z_p$ with p prime.

It is an interesting question whether this condition is the best possible for other finite groups G .

Expanding further on the above constructions, the first example of a map $f : S^{2m-1} \rightarrow Y$ of a sphere S^{2m-1} into a contractible m -dimensional polyhedron Y such that no pair of antipodes is identified was found in 1937 by H. Hopf [5]. Such examples were rediscovered in 1974 by Ščepin [12] and Stesin [15]; moreover, Ščepin's construction coincides with Hopf's construction but differs from Stesin's construction. Later such constructions were studied in [16], [13] and [10]. Also, Ščepin [12] proved that any map $S^{2m} \rightarrow Y$ to m -dimensional polyhedron Y identifies some pair of antipodes (thus Ščepin proved Hopf's conjecture [5]). Stesin [15] obtained the same result for maps homotopic to zero. Another proof of Ščepin result was found by Jaworowski in [11].

A map of a sphere S^{2m-1} into a contractible m -dimensional polyhedron which does not identify antipodes could be easily constructed using the result of Flores of [6] (probably Hopf was not acquainted with the result of Flores, in other case he could easily obtain the needed map; however, Hopf defined a much simpler map). In fact, let Δ_{m-1}^{2m} be the $(m-1)$ -skeleton of the $2m$ -dimensional simplex Δ^{2m} . Consider the join $\Delta_{m-1}^{2m} * \Delta_{m-1}^{2m}$ of two copies of Δ_{m-1}^{2m} and the subspace $S \subset \Delta_{m-1}^{2m} * \Delta_{m-1}^{2m}$ (called the *deleted join*) given by the union of all $\sigma_1 * \sigma_2$, where σ_1, σ_2 are nonempty simplexes in Δ_{m-1}^{2m} such that $\sigma_1 \cap \sigma_2$ is empty. The *interchanging* involution is free on S . Flores proved that S is equivariantly homeomorphic to S^{2m-1} considered with the antipodal involution (he used this nontrivial fact and Borsuk–Ulam theorem to prove that Δ_{m-1}^{2m} could not be embedded into the $(2m-2)$ -dimensional Euclidean space). Consider a map $\Delta_{m-1}^{2m} * \Delta_{m-1}^{2m} \rightarrow \Delta_{m-1}^{2m} * pt$ to the cone over Δ_{m-1}^{2m} (here pt denotes the one-point space), which is defined by collapsing one of Δ_{m-1}^{2m} . Then its restriction on S , composed with the equivariant homeomorphism $S^{2m-1} \rightarrow S$, is a map of a sphere S^{2m-1} into the contractible m -dimensional polyhedron $\Delta_{m-1}^{2m} * pt$, and this map does not identify antipodes.

This construction is close to examples of Vaisala [16], Scepin [13] and Izydorek & Jaworowski [10].

If X and Y are spaces as in the theorem and $f : X \rightarrow Y$ a map, let C_H be the set of all (H, G) -coincidence points of f . It is natural to study the size of $C = \bigcup_H C_H$, where H runs over all nontrivial subgroups of G . In [8], we studied the size of C_H in terms of the cohomological dimension of C_H , when H is a nontrivial normal cyclic subgroup of G with prime order p and X is the m -dimensional sphere. By arguments similar to those used in Section 3 of [8], p. 467-469, we can prove the following result.

Theorem 2. *Suppose that X, Y, G and f are as in Theorem 1 and H is a nontrivial normal cyclic subgroup H of a prime order p . Then $H^{m-|G|k}(C_H, Z_p) \neq 0$.*

Sketch Proof.

The proof of the main theorem of [8], Section 3, p. 467-469, can be adjusted to the more general situation of this paper by replacing the top-dimensional generator of $H^m(S^m/Z_p, Z_p)$ of [8] with the nonzero element $g^*(\alpha) \in H^m(X/Z_p, Z_p)$ given by Lemma 2.

□

Corollary. *$\dim(C) \geq m - |G|k$, where $\dim(C)$ is the covering dimension.*

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