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## Subgroups of $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups

CONSTANCIO HERNÁNDEZ<sup>1</sup>, MICHAEL TKAČENKO<sup>1</sup>

*Abstract.* The properties of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups and their subgroups are studied. We show that a locally compact group  $G$  is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable if and only if  $G$  is  $\sigma$ -compact. It is proved that a subgroup  $H$  of an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group  $G$  is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable if and only if  $H$  is  $z$ -embedded in  $G$ . Therefore, a subgroup of an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group need not be  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable, and we present a method for constructing non- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable dense subgroups of a special class of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups. Finally, we construct a closed  $G_\delta$ -subgroup of an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group which is not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.

*Keywords:*  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group,  $z$ -embedded set,  $\aleph_0$ -bounded group,  $P$ -group, Lindelöf group

*Classification:* Primary 54H11, 22A05; Secondary 22D05, 54C50

### 1. Introduction

A topological group  $G$  is called  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable ([7], [8]) if for every continuous function  $g: G \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  there exist a continuous homomorphism  $\pi: G \rightarrow H$  of  $G$  onto a second-countable topological group  $H$  and a continuous function  $h: H \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that  $g = h \circ \pi$ . The reals  $\mathbb{R}$  in this definition can be substituted by any second countable regular space  $X$ , thus giving us a possibility to factorize continuous functions  $f: G \rightarrow X$  via continuous homomorphism onto second countable topological groups ([8]). The class of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups is sufficiently wide; it contains all totally bounded groups,  $\sigma$ -compact groups (or, more generally, Lindelöf groups) and arbitrary subgroups of Lindelöf  $\Sigma$ -groups ([7], [8]). It is known, however, that subgroups of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups do not inherit this property ([7, Example 2]).

In fact, some results on topological groups proved before 1990 can now be reformulated in terms of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizability. For example, the theorem proved on pages 118–119 of [6] is equivalent to say that every compact topological group is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable. Theorem 1.2 of [2] implies, in particular, that every pseudocompact topological group is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable. Note that every pseudocompact group is totally bounded ([2, Theorem 11]).

Our aim is to study  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups and their subgroups. We show first that a locally compact group is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable if and only if it is  $\sigma$ -compact (Theorem 2.3). Then we characterize the subgroups of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups which

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inherit this property: a subgroup  $H$  of an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group  $G$  is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable if and only if  $H$  is  $z$ -embedded in  $G$  (Theorem 2.4). A slight modification of a construction in [7] gives us a lot of dense subgroups of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups which are not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable (see Theorem 3.1). We also construct a closed  $G_\delta$ -subgroup of an Abelian  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group which is not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable (Example 3.2).

Finally, we consider a formally weaker notion of a semi- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group and show that every semi- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.

## 2. $z$ -embedded subgroups of topological groups

The notion of an  $\aleph_0$ -bounded topological group introduced by Guran ([3]) plays an important rôle in our considerations.

**Definition 2.1.** A topological group  $G$  is said to be  $\aleph_0$ -bounded if for each neighborhood  $U$  of the identity, there exists a countable subset  $M \subseteq G$  such that  $G = M \cdot U$ .

It is known ([3]) that a topological group  $G$  is  $\aleph_0$ -bounded if and only if it embeds into a cartesian product of second countable topological groups as a topological subgroup. Although the following result was mentioned in [8], its proof was only sketched there.

**Lemma 2.2.** *Every  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group is  $\aleph_0$ -bounded.*

PROOF: Let  $G$  be an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group. It suffices to show that  $G$  can be embedded as a topological subgroup into a product of second countable groups. Let  $\mathcal{N}(e)$  be a neighborhood base at the identity  $e$  of  $G$ . For every neighborhood  $U \in \mathcal{N}(e)$ , let  $f_U: G \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a continuous function such that  $f(e) = 1$  and  $f(G \setminus U) = \{0\}$ . Since  $G$  is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable, there exist a second countable group  $H_U$ , a continuous homomorphism  $\pi_U: G \rightarrow H_U$  and a continuous function  $h: H_U \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that  $f = h \circ \pi_U$ . Observe that the diagonal product  $\varphi = \Delta\{\pi_U : U \in \mathcal{N}(e)\}$  is a topological monomorphism of  $G$  to the group  $\Pi = \prod\{H_U : U \in \mathcal{N}(e)\}$ .

Since second countable groups  $H_U$  are  $\aleph_0$ -bounded, the group  $\Pi$  is  $\aleph_0$ -bounded as well. Now, subgroups of  $\aleph_0$ -bounded groups are  $\aleph_0$ -bounded, so  $G$  inherits this property.  $\square$

**Theorem 2.3.** *A locally compact  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group is  $\sigma$ -compact.*

PROOF: Suppose that  $G$  is a locally compact  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group. Then there exists a neighborhood  $U$  of the identity of  $G$  such that  $\overline{U}$  is compact. Since every  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group is  $\aleph_0$ -bounded (Lemma 2.2), there is a countable subset  $C \subseteq G$  such that  $C \cdot U = G$ . Therefore,  $\{g \cdot \overline{U} : g \in C\}$  is a countable family of compact sets whose union is  $G$ .  $\square$

Tkačenko [7] showed that subgroups of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups are not necessarily  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable. On the other hand, an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable subgroup of an arbitrary topological group  $G$  is  $z$ -embedded in  $G$  ([4]). In the following theorem we give

a complete characterization of subgroups of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups which preserve the property of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizability. Let  $X$  be a topological space and let  $A \subseteq X$ . We say that  $A$  is  $z$ -embedded in  $X$  if every cozero set  $B$  in  $A$  is of the form  $B = A \cap C$ , where  $C$  is a cozero set in  $X$ .

**Theorem 2.4.** *A subgroup  $H$  of an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group  $G$  is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable if and only if  $H$  is  $z$ -embedded in  $G$ .*

PROOF: We shall only give the proof of the fact that  $z$ -embedding is a sufficient condition for the subgroup  $H$  to be  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable because the proof of necessity appears as Theorem 3.1 of [4]. Let  $f: H \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a continuous function. Consider the family  $\gamma$  of all open intervals in  $\mathbb{R}$  with rational end points. For every  $U \in \gamma$ , let  $V_U$  be a cozero set in  $G$  such that  $V_U \cap H = f^{-1}(U)$ . There exists a continuous function  $g_U: G \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that  $g_U^{-1}(U) = V_U$ . The diagonal product  $g = \Delta_{U \in \gamma} g_U$  is a continuous mapping of  $G$  to the second countable space  $\mathbb{R}^\gamma$  and, by  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizability of  $G$ , there exist a continuous homomorphism  $\pi$  of  $G$  onto a second countable topological group  $G^*$  and a continuous function  $g^*: G^* \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^\gamma$  such that  $g = g^* \circ \pi$ .

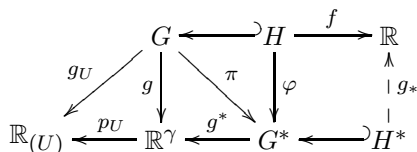


Diagram 1

We claim that for any  $x_0, x_1 \in H$ ,  $f(x_0) = f(x_1)$  whenever  $\pi(x_0) = \pi(x_1)$ . Assume the contrary, let  $f(x_0) \neq f(x_1)$  for some  $x_0, x_1 \in H$  with  $\pi(x_0) = \pi(x_1)$ . We can also assume that  $f(x_0) < f(x_1)$ . If  $r_0, r_1$  and  $r_2$  are rationals and  $r_0 < f(x_0) < r_1 < f(x_1) < r_2$ , consider the intervals  $U_0 = (r_0, r_1) \in \gamma$  and  $U_1 = (r_1, r_2) \in \gamma$ . Let  $p_{U_i}: \mathbb{R}^\gamma \rightarrow \mathbb{R} = \mathbb{R}_{U_i}$  be the natural projections,  $g \circ p_{U_i} = g_{U_i}$  ( $i = 0, 1$ ). On the one hand, the sets  $g_{U_0}^{-1}(U_0) \cap H = f^{-1}(U_0)$  and  $g_{U_1}^{-1}(U_1) \cap H = f^{-1}(U_1)$  are disjoint. This is equivalent to say that  $g^{-1}(O_0) \cap H$  and  $g^{-1}(O_1) \cap H$  are disjoint, where  $O_i = p_{U_i}^{-1}(U_i) \ni g(x_i)$  ( $i = 0, 1$ ). In particular,  $g(x_0) \neq g(x_1)$ . On the other hand,  $g = g^* \circ \pi$ , whence  $g(x_0) = g(x_1)$ , a contradiction.

Put  $H^* = \pi(H)$ . The assertion just proved implies that there exists a function  $g_*: H^* \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that  $f = g_* \circ \pi \upharpoonright_H$ . It remains to verify that  $g_*$  is continuous. Let  $U \in \gamma$  be arbitrary. Then

$$g_*^{-1}(U) = \pi(f^{-1}(U)) = \pi(g_U^{-1}(U) \cap H) = (g^*)^{-1}(p_U^{-1}(U)) \cap \pi(H)$$

is open in  $\pi(H) = H^*$ . Since  $\gamma$  is a base for  $\mathbb{R}$ , this proves the continuity of  $g_*$ . Thus, we have  $f = g_* \circ \varphi$ , where  $\varphi = \pi \upharpoonright_H$  is a continuous homomorphism of  $H$  onto the second countable group  $H^* \subseteq G^*$ , and hence  $H$  is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.  $\square$

It is clear that every retract of a space  $X$  is  $z$ -embedded in  $X$ . Indeed, if  $r: X \rightarrow X$  is a retraction and  $Y = r(X)$ , then for each continuous function  $f: Y \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ , the function  $\hat{f} = f \circ r$  is a continuous extension of  $f$  to  $X$ . Note also that if  $G$  is a topological group and  $H$  is an open subgroup of  $G$ , then  $H$  is a retract of  $G$ . Indeed, in every left coset  $U$  of  $H$  in  $G$ , pick a point  $x_U \in U$ . Define  $r: G \rightarrow H$  in the following way: if  $g \in H$ , then  $r(g) = g$ ; if  $g \in U$  and  $U \neq H$ , put  $r(g) = x_U^{-1}g$ . Since the left cosets are open and disjoint, the continuity of  $r$  is immediate. From these two observations we deduce the following results.

**Corollary 2.5.** *Let  $G$  be an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group and  $H$  a subgroup of  $G$ . If  $H$  is a retract of  $G$ , then  $H$  is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.*

**Corollary 2.6.** *An open subgroup of an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.*

### 3. Some examples

By Corollary 1.13 of [8], every Lindelöf topological group is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable. Let us call a topological group  $G$  a  $P$ -group if any intersection of countably many open sets in  $G$  is open. Making use of the existence of a special Lindelöf  $P$ -group  $\hat{G}$  of weight  $\aleph_1$  (see [1]), Tkačenko [7] constructed an example of a proper dense subgroup of  $\hat{G}$  which was not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable. Our aim is to show that *any* proper dense subgroup of an arbitrary Lindelöf  $P$ -group of weight  $\aleph_1$  is not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.

**Theorem 3.1.** *If  $H$  is a proper dense subgroup of a Lindelöf  $P$ -group  $G$  of weight  $\aleph_1$ , then  $H$  is not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.*

PROOF: Since  $G$  is a  $P$ -group, it is zero-dimensional. Therefore, we choose a base  $\mathcal{B} = \{O_\alpha : \alpha < \omega_1\}$  at the identity  $e$  of  $G$  satisfying the following conditions for each  $\alpha < \omega_1$ :

- (1)  $O_\alpha$  is a clopen set;
- (2)  $O_\alpha = \bigcap_{\beta < \alpha} O_\beta$  for any limit ordinal  $\alpha < \omega_1$ ;
- (4)  $O_{\alpha+1}^2 \subset O_\alpha$ ;
- (3)  $O_\alpha \setminus O_{\alpha+1} = A_\alpha \cup B_\alpha$  where  $A_\alpha$  and  $B_\alpha$  are nonempty disjoint clopen sets.

Now define  $U'$  and  $V'$  by  $U' = (G \setminus O_0) \cup (\bigcup_{\alpha < \omega_1} A_\alpha)$  and  $V' = \bigcup_{\alpha < \omega_1} B_\alpha$ . From conditions (1) and (4) it follows that  $U'$  and  $V'$  are open sets. Conditions (2) and (4) imply that  $U' \cup V' = G \setminus \{e\}$ . Finally, (3) guarantees that  $U'$  and  $V'$  are nonempty.

Pick a point  $g \in G \setminus H$  and define  $U = gU' \cap H$  and  $V = gV' \cap H$ . Then  $U$  and  $V$  are non-empty open subsets of  $H$  and  $H = U \cup V$ . Let  $f$  be the function on  $H$  defined by the rule  $f(x) = 0$  if  $x \in U \cap H$  and  $f(x) = 1$  if  $x \in V \cap H$ . It is easy to see that  $f$  is continuous. Let  $\pi: H \rightarrow K$  be a continuous homomorphism of  $H$  to a metrizable group  $K$ . Then the kernel of  $\pi$  is a  $G_\delta$ -set in  $H$ , and hence is an open neighborhood of  $e$ . So, we can find  $\alpha < \omega_1$  such that  $O_\alpha \cap H \subseteq \ker \pi$ . Pick points  $a \in H \cap gA_{\alpha+1}$  and  $b \in H \cap gB_{\alpha+1}$ . Then  $ab^{-1} \in O_\alpha$  by (3) and

(4), which in turn implies that  $\pi(a) = \pi(b)$ , whereas  $f(a) = 0$  and  $f(b) = 1$ . This means that the group  $H$  is not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.  $\square$

The above theorem shows that there are many subgroups of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups which are not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable. In special classes of  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups the situation changes: by Corollary 1.13 of [8], every subgroup of a  $\sigma$ -compact topological group is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable. Intuitively,  $G_\delta$ -subgroups of a topological group seem close to be  $z$ -embedded in it. Thus, Theorem 2.4 might suggest the conjecture that a closed  $G_\delta$ -subgroup of an  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable as well. We show below that this is not the case.

**Example 3.2.** Let  $H$  be an  $\aleph_0$ -bounded Abelian group of weight  $\aleph_1$  which is not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable ([7, Example 2.1]). By a theorem of Guran [3],  $H$  can be considered as a subgroup of a product  $\Pi = \prod_{\alpha < \omega_1} G_\alpha$ , where each  $G_\alpha$  is a second countable Abelian group. Let  $G = \Pi^\omega$ . The subgroup  $H'$  of  $G$  that consists of all elements of the form  $(h, h, \dots)$  with  $h \in H$  is isomorphic to  $H$ .

By the Hewitt–Marczewski–Pondiczery theorem there exists a countable dense subset  $S$  of  $\Pi$ . Consider the subset  $D$  of  $G$  of all elements  $x \in G$  such that for a finite set of  $n_1, \dots, n_k \in \omega$ ,  $x(n_i) \in S$  and  $x(n) = 0$  for other indices  $n$ . It is easy to see that the set  $D$  is countable and dense in  $G$ . Let  $K = \langle D \rangle$  be the subgroup of  $G$  generated by  $D$ . Then  $K$  is a countable dense subgroup of  $G$  and  $K \cap H' = \{e_G\}$ . Since any dense subgroup of a product of second countable groups is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable ([8, Corollary 1.10]), we conclude that the subgroup  $L = K + H'$  of  $G$  is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable. On the other hand, since the diagonal  $\Delta = \{(x, x, \dots) : x \in G\}$  of the group  $G = \Pi^\omega$  is closed in  $G$  and  $H' \subseteq \Delta$ , we have  $\overline{H'} \subseteq \Delta$  and  $\Delta \cap K = \{e_G\}$ , whence  $\overline{H'} \cap L = H'$ . This means that  $H'$  is a closed subgroup of  $L$ . For each  $x \in K$ ,  $x + H'$  is a closed subset of  $L$  and it is easy to see that

$$H' = \bigcap_{x \in K \setminus \{e_G\}} L \setminus (x + H').$$

Hence,  $H' \simeq H$  is a closed  $G_\delta$ -subgroup of the  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group  $L = K + H'$ , which is not  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.

#### 4. Semi- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups

The fact that a topological group  $G$  is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable can be expressed in the following form equivalent to the original one: given a continuous function  $f: G \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ , there exist a closed normal subgroup  $H$  of  $G$ , a Hausdorff second countable group topology  $\tau$  for the quotient group  $G/H$  coarser than the quotient topology  $\tau_q$  and a continuous function  $h: (G/H, \tau) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that  $f = h \circ \pi$ , where  $\pi: G \rightarrow G/H$  is the quotient homomorphism.

The motivation of the definition below arises if one omits the condition of normality of the subgroup  $H \subseteq G$ . Thus, we define a class of topological groups

containing  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable groups. We will see, however, that the two classes coincide (Theorem 4.3).

Let  $H$  be a closed subgroup of a topological group  $G$  and  $G/H = \{xH : x \in G\}$  a left coset space with the quotient topology  $\tau_q$ . A topology  $\tau \subseteq \tau_q$  for  $G/H$  is called *left-invariant* if the functions  $\phi_a: G/H \rightarrow G/H$  defined by  $\phi_a(xH) = axH$ ,  $x \in G$ , are continuous for all  $a \in G$ . This notation will be used in the proofs of Lemma 4.2 and Theorem 4.3.

**Definition 4.1.** A topological group  $G$  is said to be *semi- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable* provided that for every continuous function  $f: G \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  there exist a closed subgroup  $H$  of  $G$ , a second countable left-invariant  $T_1$  topology  $\tau$  on the left coset space  $G/H$  coarser than the quotient topology and a continuous function  $h: (G/H, \tau) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that  $f = h \circ \pi$ , where  $\pi: G \rightarrow G/H$  is the natural projection.

**Lemma 4.2.** *Every semi- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group is  $\aleph_0$ -bounded.*

PROOF: Let  $G$  be a semi- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group and  $V$  an open neighborhood of the identity  $e$  in  $G$ . Since a topological group is completely regular, there exists a continuous function  $f: G \rightarrow [0, 1]$  such that  $f(e) = 1$  and  $f(G \setminus V) = \{0\}$ . Since  $G$  is semi- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable, there exist a closed subgroup  $H$  of  $G$ , a left-invariant second countable  $T_1$  topology  $\tau$  on  $G/H$  and a continuous function  $h: (G/H, \tau) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that  $f = h \circ \pi$ , where  $\pi: G \rightarrow G/H$  is the natural projection. The set  $U = h^{-1}(\frac{1}{2}, 1]$  is open in  $(G/H, \tau)$  and  $e \in \pi^{-1}(h^{-1}(\frac{1}{2}, 1]) = f^{-1}(\frac{1}{2}, 1] \subseteq V$ . For each  $g \in G$ , the function  $\sigma_g: G \rightarrow G$  defined by  $\sigma_g(x) = gx$  is a homeomorphism of  $G$  onto  $G$ . Note that  $\pi \circ \sigma_g = \phi_g \circ \pi$  and, therefore,  $f \circ \sigma_g = h \circ \pi \circ \phi_g = h \circ \phi_g \circ \pi$ . Since

$$(f \circ \sigma_{x^{-1}})^{-1}(\frac{1}{2}, 1] = \sigma_{x^{-1}}^{-1}(f^{-1}(\frac{1}{2}, 1]) = \sigma_x(f^{-1}(\frac{1}{2}, 1]) \subseteq \sigma_x(V) = xV,$$

we conclude that  $U_x = \phi_{x^{-1}}^{-1}(h^{-1}(\frac{1}{2}, 1])$  is open in  $(G/H, \tau)$  and  $\pi^{-1}(U_x) \subseteq xV$ . The collection  $\{U_x : x \in G\}$  covers  $G/H$ . Since  $G/H$  has countable weight, there exists a sequence  $x_0, x_1, \dots$  of elements of  $G$  such that  $G/H \subseteq \bigcup_{i=0}^{\infty} U_{x_i}$ . Consequently, the family  $\{\pi^{-1}(U_{x_i}) : i \in \omega\}$  covers  $G$  and, therefore, the corresponding family  $\{x_i V : i \in \omega\}$  also covers  $G$ . This proves that  $G$  is  $\aleph_0$ -bounded.  $\square$

**Theorem 4.3.** *Every semi- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group is  $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable.*

PROOF: Let  $G$  be a semi- $\mathbb{R}$ -factorizable group and  $f: G \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  a continuous function. Then  $G$  has a closed subgroup  $H$  such that there exist a left-invariant second countable  $T_1$  topology  $\tau$  on  $G/H$  and a continuous function  $h: (G/H, \tau) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that  $f = h \circ \pi$ , where  $\pi: G \rightarrow G/H$  is the natural projection. If  $\{W_i : i \in \omega\}$  is a local base of  $G/H$  at  $\{H\}$ , then  $H = \bigcap_{i \in \omega} \pi^{-1}(W_i)$ . Since  $G$  is  $\aleph_0$ -bounded (Lemma 4.2), for every  $U_i = \pi^{-1}(W_i)$  there exist a continuous homomorphism  $\pi_i: G \rightarrow H_i$  of  $G$  onto a second countable group  $H_i$  and a neighborhood  $V_i$  of the identity in  $H_i$  such that  $\pi_i^{-1}(V_i) \subseteq U_i$  (see [3]). Then  $N = \bigcap_{i \in \omega} \ker \pi_i$  is a closed normal subgroup of  $G$  and  $N \subseteq H$ . First, we define a second countable

group topology  $t$  for  $G/N$ . Let  $\varphi_i: G/N \rightarrow H_i$  be the homomorphism defined by  $\varphi_i(aN) = \pi_i(a)$ ,  $a \in G$ . Note that  $\varphi_i$  is well-defined because if  $b \in aN$  then  $a^{-1}b \in N \subseteq \ker \pi_i$ , and hence  $\pi_i(a) = \pi_i(b)$ . Let  $t$  be the weakest group topology on  $G/N$  that makes each of the homomorphisms  $\varphi_i$  continuous. It is clear that  $(G/N, t)$  is a topological group because the topology  $t$  is generated by a family of homomorphisms, and  $t$  is second countable because each group  $H_i$  is second countable. We define the function  $\tilde{h}: G/N \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  by  $\tilde{h}(aN) = h(aH)$ , i.e.,  $\tilde{h} = h \circ \psi$ , where  $\psi: G/N \rightarrow G/H$  is given by  $\psi(aN) = aH$ . It is easy to see that  $\psi$  is well-defined because the left cosets of  $N$  in  $G$  are contained in the left cosets of  $H$  in  $G$ . Let  $\pi_N$  be the natural projection of  $G$  onto  $G/N$ . Then  $\tilde{h} \circ \pi_N = h \circ \psi \circ \pi_N = h \circ \pi = f$  (see Diagram 2 below).

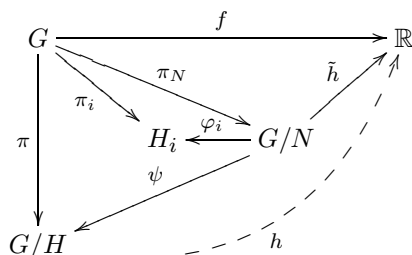


Diagram 2

Finally, we have to prove that the function  $\tilde{h}$  is continuous. To this end, it suffices to show that  $\psi$  is continuous, that is, for each  $A \in G/N$  and each open set  $V \in \tau$  containing  $\psi(A)$ , there exists  $U \in t$  with  $A \in U$  such that  $\psi(U) \subseteq V$ . Since  $A = gN$  for some  $g \in G$ , it follows from the definition of  $\psi$  that  $\psi(A) = gH$ . Since the topology  $\tau$  on  $G/H$  is left-invariant, the set  $V$  has the form  $\phi_g(V')$ , where  $H \in V' \in \tau$ . There exists  $i \in \omega$  such that  $W_i \subseteq V'$ . Recall that  $\pi_i^{-1}(V_i) \subseteq U_i = \pi^{-1}(W_i)$  by the choice of the neighborhood  $V_i$  of the identity in  $H_i$ . Define  $O = \varphi_i^{-1}(V_i)$  and  $U = a \cdot O$ , where  $a = \pi_N(g)$ . Then  $A \in U \in t$  and

$$\begin{aligned} \psi(U) &= \psi(a \cdot O) = \pi(g \cdot \pi_i^{-1}(V_i)) = \phi_g(\pi(\pi_i(V_i))) \\ &\subseteq \phi_g(\pi(U_i)) \subseteq \phi_g(\pi\pi^{-1}(W_i)) = \phi_g(W_i) \subseteq \phi_g(V') = V. \end{aligned}$$

This implies the continuity of  $\psi$ , and hence the function  $\tilde{h} = h \circ \psi$  is continuous as well. □

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