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Title: On finite p -groups with cyclic characteristic series

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Let G be a finite p -group having a characteristic cyclic series (c.c.s.) and let Φ be its Frattini subgroup. It is shown that the automorphism group of G is either a p -group or is the semidirect product of a normal p -Sylow subgroup of G by an elementary abelian group of exponent $p - 1$ and of order $(p - 1)^r$, where $1 \leq r \leq s$ and $s = |G/\Phi|$. It is also shown that G has a c.c.s. containing Φ .

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