A solutions manual for Algebra by Thomas W. Hungerford

Chapter I: Groups - 3. Cyclic Groups

Exercises

1. Let a, b be elements of a group G. Show that $|a| = |a^{-1}|$; $|ab| = |ba|$, and $|a| = |cac^{-1}|$ for all $c \in G$.

Proof. By Theorem 2.8, the subgroup $\langle a \rangle$ generated by a consists of all finite products $a^n (n \in \mathbb{Z})$; thus $\langle a \rangle = \langle a^{-1} \rangle$, and so $|a| = |a^{-1}|$.

Suppose that ab has finite order m. Since

$$e = (ab)^m = abab...ab = a(ba)^{m-1}b \Leftrightarrow$$
$$(ba)^{m-1} = a^{-1}eb^{-1} \Leftrightarrow (ba)^{m-1}b = a^{-1} \Leftrightarrow (ba)^m = e,$$

$|ba| \leq |ab|$. Conversely, suppose that ba has finite order. Similarly to the previous, we have $|ab| \leq |ba|$, and so $|ab| = |ba|$. Thus if one of $|ab|$ and $|ba|$ is finite, then the other is finite; otherwise both infinite, and by Theorem 3.2, every infinite cyclic group is isomorphic to the additive group $\mathbb{Z}$, so $|ab| = |ba| = \aleph_0$. Therefore, $|ab| = |ba|$.

By induction, $(cac^{-1})^m = cac^{-1}cac^{-1}...cac^{-1} = ca^m c^{-1}$ for all $n \in \mathbb{N}$. Suppose that cac^{-1} has finite order m. Since

$$e = ca^m c^{-1} \Leftrightarrow cec^{-1} = e = a^m,$$

$|a| \leq |cac^{-1}|$. Conversely, suppose that a has finite order m. Since

$$e = a^m \Leftrightarrow c^{-1}c = a^m \Leftrightarrow e = ca^m c^{-1},$$

$|a| \geq |cac^{-1}|$, and so $|a| = |cac^{-1}|$. Thus if one of $|a|$ and $|cac^{-1}|$ is finite, then the other is finite; otherwise both infinite, and by Theorem 3.2, $|a| = |cac^{-1}| = \aleph_0$. Therefore, $|a| = |cac^{-1}|$. $\square$

2. Let G be an abelian group containing elements a and b of orders m and n respectively. Show that G contains an element whose order is the least common multiple of m and n. [*Hint:* first try the case when $(m, n) = 1$.]

Proof. Write prime factorizations of m and n as

$$m = \prod_i p_i^{\alpha_i} \text{ and } n = \prod_i p_i^{\beta_i},$$

and let

$$m' = \prod_{i:\alpha_i \geq \beta_i} p_i^{\alpha_i} \text{ and } n' = \prod_{i:\beta_i > \alpha_i} p_i^{\beta_i} \text{ and } a' = a^{m/m'} \text{ and } b' = b^{n/n'}.$$

Note that m' divides m, and n' divides n, and m' and n' are relatively prime, and $m'n'$ is the least common multiple of m and n. We claim that the order of a' is m'. Let k be the order of a'. Since $e = (a')^k = (a^{m/m'})^k = a^{mk/m'}$, m divides mk/m', and so m' divides k. On the other hand, since $(a^{m/m'})^{m'} = a^m = e$, k divides m'. So the order of a' is m'. Similarly, the order of b' is n'. Now, let the order of $a'b' = r'$, we claim that r' is $m'n'$. Since

$$(a'b')^{m'n'} = a^{(m/m')m'n'}b^{(n/n')m'n'} = a^{mn'}b^{nm'} = e,$$

r' divides $m'n'$, and since

$$e = (a'b')^{r'} = (a'b')^{r'm'} = a'^{r'm'}b'^{r'm'} = b'^{r'm'} = e,$$

n' divides $r'm'$. m' and n' are relatively prime, so n' divides r'. Similarly, m' divides r'; thus $m'n'$ divides r, and so $r' = m'n'$. Therefore, G contains an element whose order is the least common multiple of m and n. $\square$

3. Let G be an abelian group of order pq, with $(p, q) = 1$. Assume there exists $a, b \in G$ such that $|a| = p$, $|b| = q$ and show that G is cyclic.

4. If $f : G \to H$ is a homomorphism, $a \in G$, and $f(a)$ has finite order in H, then $|a|$ is infinite or $|f(a)|$ divides $|a|$.

5. Let G be a multiplicative group of all nonsingular 2»2 matrices with rational entries. Show that $a = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ has order 4 and $b = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$ has order 3, but ab has infinite order. Conversely, show that the additive group $Z_2 \oplus \mathbb{Z}$ contains nonzero elements a, b of infinite order such that $a + b$ has finite order.

6. If G is a cyclic group of order n and $k|n$, then G has exactly one subgroup of order k.

7. Let p be prime and H a subgroup of $Z(p^\infty)$ (Exercise 1.10).

(a) Every element of $Z(p^\infty)$ has finite order p^n for some $n \geq 0$.

(b) If at least one element of H has order p^k and no element of H has order greater than p^k, then H is the cyclic subgroup generated by $\overline{1/p^k}$, whence $H \cong Z_{p^k}$.

(c) If there is no upper bound on the orders of elements in H, then $H = Z(p^\infty)$; [see Exercise-I.2].

(d) The only proper subgroups of $Z(p^\infty)$ are the finite cyclic groups $C_n = \langle\overline{1/p^n}\rangle (n = 1, 2, ...)$. Furthermore, $\langle 0\rangle = C_0 \leq C_1 \leq C_2 \leq C_3 \leq$ ůůů.

(e) Let $x_1, x_2, ...$ be elements of an abelian group G such that $|x_1| = p, px_2 = x_1, px_3 = x_2, ..., px_{n+1} = x_n, ...$ The subgroup generated by the $x_i (i \geq 1)$ is isomorphic to $Z(p^\infty)$. [*Hint:* Verify that the map induced by $x_i \mapsto \overline{1/p^i}$ is a well-defined isomorphism.]

8. A group that has only a finite number of subgroups must be finite.

9. If G is an abelian group, then the set T of all elements of G with finite order is a subgroup of G. [Compare Exercise 5.]

10. An infinite group is cyclic if and only if it is isomorphic to each of its proper subgroups.