Classical Mechanics: Assignment #3

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Problem 1

Part (a)
For $m = constant$

$$T = \frac{m\mathbf{v}\cdot\mathbf{v}}{2}$$
$$\frac{\mathrm{d}T}{\mathrm{d}t} = m\dot{\mathbf{v}}\cdot\mathbf{v} = \mathbf{F}\cdot\mathbf{v}$$

If m varies with time,

$$mT = \frac{m^2\mathbf{v}\cdot\mathbf{v}}{2}$$
$$\frac{\mathrm{d}(mT)}{\mathrm{d}t} = m^2\dot{\mathbf{v}}\cdot\mathbf{v} + m\dot{m}\mathbf{v}\cdot\mathbf{v}$$
$$= (m\mathbf{v})\cdot(m\dot{\mathbf{v}} + \dot{m}\mathbf{v})$$
$$\frac{\mathrm{d}(mT)}{\mathrm{d}t} = \mathbf{p}\cdot\mathbf{F}$$

Part (b)

Problem 2

Let R be the radius of the disc. The generalized coordinates for the motion are the horizontal coordinate x and angular coordinate θ. For rolling, we have,

$$R\dot{\theta} = \dot{x} \implies Rd\theta - dx = 0$$

It is straightforward to see that the above equation a specific instance of an equation of the form,

$$\sum_{i=1}^{n} g(x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n)dx_i = 0$$

with $x_1 = \theta, x_2 = x, g_1 = R, g_2 = -1$. complete the problem

Problem 3

Part (a)
Let r, θ, ϕ be the generalized coordinates in their usual polar form, and l_0 be the equilibrium length of the spring. The Lagrangian of the problem L can be written as,

$$L = \frac{m(\dot{r}^2 + r^2\dot{\theta}^2 + r^2\sin^2\theta\dot{\phi}^2)}{2} + mgr\cos\theta - \frac{k(r-l_0)^2}{2}$$

The equations of motion are,

$$
\begin{aligned}
m\ddot{r} &= mr\dot{\theta}^2 + mr\sin^2\theta\dot{\phi}^2 + mg\cos\theta - k(r - l_0) \\
mr^2\ddot{\theta} + 2mr\dot{r}\dot{\theta} &= mr^2\sin\theta\cos\theta\dot{\phi}^2 - mgr\sin\theta \\
mr^2\sin^2\theta\ddot{\phi} + 2mr\sin^2\theta\dot{r}\dot{\phi} + 2mr^2\sin\theta\cos\theta\dot{\theta}\dot{\phi} &= 0
\end{aligned}
$$

Constraining the motion in a plane implies using $\phi = constant \implies \dot{\phi} = \ddot{\phi} = 0$. Is constraining possible?. Our equations then reduce to,

$$
\begin{aligned}
m\ddot{r} &= mr\dot{\theta}^2 + mg\cos\theta - k(r - l_0) \\
mr^2\ddot{\theta} + 2mr\dot{r}\dot{\theta} &= -mgr\sin\theta
\end{aligned}
$$

The equilibrium positions can be found by substituting all time derivatives of r and θ as zero. This gives the equilibrium $r_0 = l_0 + \dfrac{mg}{k}$ and $\theta_0 = 0r$. We need to solve the above for small stretching in r and small angular displacements θ. Let's substitute $r = r_0 + \epsilon x$ and $\theta = \epsilon\alpha$ in the equations. We get,

$$
\begin{aligned}
m\epsilon\ddot{x} &= m(r_0 + \epsilon x)\epsilon^2\dot{\alpha}^2 + mg\left(1 - \frac{\alpha^2}{2}\epsilon^2 + \dots\right) - k(\epsilon x + r_0 - l_0) \\
m(r_0 + \epsilon x)^2\epsilon\ddot{\alpha} + 2m\epsilon^2(r_0 + \epsilon x)\dot{x}\dot{\alpha} &= -mg(r_0 + \epsilon x)\left(\epsilon\alpha + \dots\right)
\end{aligned}
$$

Using only $\mathcal{O}(\epsilon)$ terms,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\ddot{x} &= -\frac{k}{m}x \\
\ddot{\alpha} &= -\frac{g}{r_0}\alpha
\end{aligned}
$$

Solve numerically

Part (b)

The Lagrangian is given as,

$$
L = e^{\gamma t}\left(\frac{m\dot{q}^2}{2} - \frac{kq^2}{2}\right)
$$

Writing down the equations of motion for hte generalized coordinate q,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\left(e^{\gamma t}m\dot{q}\right) &= -e^{\gamma t}kq \\
\implies e^{\gamma t}(\gamma m\dot{q} + m\ddot{q}) &= -e^{\gamma t}kq \\
\implies \ddot{q} + \gamma\dot{q} + \frac{k}{m}q &= 0
\end{aligned}
$$

This is the equation of motion for a damped harmonic oscillator.

Let's perform the transformation $s = e^{\gamma t}q \implies \dot{s} = e^{\gamma t}(\gamma q + \dot{q}) = \gamma s + e^{\gamma t}\dot{q}$. Inverting these, we have the following,

$$
\begin{aligned}
q &= e^{-\gamma t}s \\
\dot{q} &= e^{-\gamma t}(\dot{s} - \gamma s)
\end{aligned}
$$

Substituting this back into the expression for L,

$$
L = e^{-\gamma t}\left(\frac{m\dot{s}^2}{2} + \frac{(m\gamma^2 - k)s^2}{2} - m\gamma s\dot{s}\right)
$$

Writing the equations of motion for s,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\big(e^{-\gamma t}(m\dot{s} - m\gamma s)\big) &= -e^{-\gamma t}((k - m\gamma^2)s - m\gamma\dot{s}) \\
m\ddot{s} - m\gamma\dot{s} - \gamma(m\dot{s} - m\gamma s) &= (k - m\gamma^2)s - m\gamma\dot{s} \\
\ddot{s} - \gamma\dot{s} + \left(2\gamma^2 - \frac{k}{m}\right)s &= 0
\end{aligned}
$$

Problem 4

Part (a)

As given, we take $y = at + bt^2 \implies \dot{y} = a + 2bt$. The Lagrangian L can be written as follows,

$$
\begin{aligned}
L = \frac{m\dot{y}^2}{2} - mgy &= \frac{m(a+2bt)^2}{2} - mg(at + bt^2) \\
&= \frac{ma^2}{2} + (2mab - mga)t + (2mb^2 - mgb)t^2
\end{aligned}
$$

Let's evaluate $\int Ldt$,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\int_0^{t_0} Ldt &= \int_0^{t_0} [\frac{ma^2}{2} + (2mab - mga)t + (2mb^2 - mgb)t^2]dt \\
&= \frac{ma^2}{2}t_0 + \frac{2mab - mga}{2}t_0^2 + \frac{2mb^2 - mgb}{3}t_0^3 \\
&= \frac{ma^2}{2}\sqrt{\frac{2y_0}{g}} + \frac{2mab - mga}{2}\frac{2y_0}{g} + \frac{2mb^2 - mgb}{3}\frac{2y_0}{g}\sqrt{\frac{2y_0}{g}} \\
&= 0 \impliedby \left(a = 0 \quad \text{and} \quad b = \frac{g}{2}\right)
\end{aligned}
$$

Hence Proved.

Part (b)

Given, $L = L(q_i, \dot{q}_i, \ddot{q}_i, t)$, and we know that $S = \int_{t_i}^{t_f} L(q_i, \dot{q}_i, \ddot{q}_i, t)dt$. Variation of the action can be written as,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\delta S &= \int_{t_i}^{t_f} \delta L dt = 0 \\
&= \int_{t_i}^{t_f} \sum_i \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial q_i}\delta q_i + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_i}\delta \dot{q}_i + \frac{\partial L}{\partial \ddot{q}_i}\delta \ddot{q}_i\right)dt \\
&= \int_{t_i}^{t_f} \sum_i \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial q_i}\delta q_i + \left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_i} - \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\frac{\partial L}{\partial \ddot{q}_i}\right)\delta \dot{q}_i + \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \ddot{q}_i}\delta \dot{q}_i\right)\right)dt \\
&= \int_{t_i}^{t_f} \sum_i \left[\left\{\frac{\partial L}{\partial q_i} - \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_i} - \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\frac{\partial L}{\partial \ddot{q}_i}\right)\right\}\delta q_i + \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\left(\left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_i} - \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\frac{\partial L}{\partial \ddot{q}_i}\right)\delta q_i\right) + \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\left(\frac{\partial L}{\partial \ddot{q}_i}\delta \dot{q}_i\right)\right]dt
\end{aligned}
$$

As the variation of q_i and $\dot{q}_i$ at the endpoints is zero, the total derivative terms vanish. Accounting for the fact that all q_i's are independent, one can write the equation of motion as,

$$
\boxed{\frac{\partial L}{\partial q_i} - \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t}\frac{\partial L}{\partial \dot{q}_i} + \frac{\mathrm{d}^2}{\mathrm{d}t^2}\frac{\partial L}{\partial \ddot{q}_i} = 0}
$$

Problem 4 continued on next page...

Taking $L = -\frac{m}{2}q\ddot{q} - \frac{k}{2}q^2$, we can write,

$$-kq + \frac{m}{2}\ddot{q} = 0 \implies \ddot{q} - \frac{2k}{m}q = 0$$

Where have I seen this?

Problem 5

Problem 6

The Lagrangian for the problem is,

$$L = \frac{m(\dot{r}^2 + r^2\dot{\theta}^2)}{2} - V(r)$$

The equations of motion for this Lagrangian, with $V(r) = -V_0 e^{-\lambda^2 r^2}$, are,

$$\begin{aligned} mr^2\dot{\theta} &= constant = L_0 \quad \text{and} \\ m\ddot{r} &= mr\dot{\theta}^2 + (2\lambda^2 r)V(r) \\ \implies m\ddot{r} &= \frac{L_0^2}{mr^3} + (2\lambda^2 r)V(r) \end{aligned}$$

For stable circular orbit, $\dot{r} = \ddot{r} = 0$. Let r_0 be radius of stable circular orbit. We can see that r_0 will be given by the root of the equation,

$$\frac{L_0^2}{mr_0^3} - 2\lambda^2 r_0 V_0 e^{-\lambda^2 r_0^2} = 0 \implies L_0^2 = 2\lambda^2 m r_0^4 V_0 e^{-\lambda^2 r_0^2}$$

As the factor $e^{-\lambda^2 r_0^2} \leq 1$ for all choices of r. For roots to exist, it should be the case that,

$$\begin{aligned} L_0^2 &\leq 2\lambda^2 m r_0^4 V_0 \\ \implies L_0 &\leq \sqrt{2mV_0}\lambda r_0 \end{aligned}$$

So, L_0 cannot exceed $\sqrt{2mV_0}\lambda r_0$. Check this

Problem 7

The radius of the circle r and the angle covered around the circle θ are the generalized coordinates. The Lagrangian L can be written as,

$$L = \frac{m\dot{r}^2}{2} + \frac{m\dot{\theta}^2 r^2}{2} - mgr\cot\alpha$$

The equations of motion are,

$$\begin{aligned} r^2\dot{\theta} &= constant = L_0 \\ \ddot{r} = r\dot{\theta}^2 - g\cot\alpha &\implies \ddot{r} = \frac{L_0^2}{r^3} - g\cot\alpha \end{aligned}$$

Part (b)

If $r = r_0$, $\ddot{r} = 0$ and,

$$L_0^2 = r_0^4\omega^2 = gr_0^3\cot\alpha \implies \boxed{\omega = \sqrt{\frac{g\cot\alpha}{r_0}}} \implies L_0 = r_0^3 g\cot\alpha$$

Problem 7 continued on next page...

Part (c)

We consider perturbations along the surface of the cone ie $l = r_0 \csc\alpha + \epsilon x$. This in turn corresponds to a radial perturbation of the form $r = r_0 + \epsilon x \sin\alpha$, $\epsilon \ll 1$. Substituting this into the equation of motion for r,

$$\begin{aligned}
\epsilon \ddot{x} \sin\alpha &= \frac{L_0^2}{(r_0 + \epsilon x \sin\alpha)^3} - g\cot\alpha \\
&= \frac{L_0^2}{r_0^3}\left(1 - \frac{3\epsilon x \sin\alpha}{r_0} + \dots\right) - g\cot\alpha \\
&= \frac{L_0^2}{r_0^3}\left(-\frac{3\epsilon x \sin\alpha}{r_0} + \dots\right)
\end{aligned}$$

Choosing only the term first order in ϵ,

$$\ddot{x} = -\frac{3g\cot\alpha}{r_0}x \implies \boxed{\Omega = \sqrt{\frac{3g\cot\alpha}{r_0}}}$$

Check if this is really correct

Problem 8

Let θ_1 and θ_2 be the angles that the sticks make with the vertical. Each stick is of length $2l$. One can write the Lagrangian L of the system as follows (considering moments of inertia about the joint)