Hamiltonian Mechanics unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der höhreren Lehranstalten

Ivar Ekeland[1], Roger Temam[2] Jeffrey Dean, David Grove, Craig Chambers, Kim B. Bruce, and Elsa Bertino

[1] Princeton University, Princeton NJ 08544, USA,
I.Ekeland@princeton.edu,
WWW home page: http://users/~iekeland/web/welcome.html
[2] Université de Paris-Sud, Laboratoire d'Analyse Numérique, Bâtiment 425,
F-91405 Orsay Cedex, France

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1 Fixed-Period Problems: The Sublinear Case

With this chapter, the preliminaries are over, and we begin the search for periodic solutions to Hamiltonian systems. All this will be done in the convex case; that is, we shall study the boundary-value problem

$$\begin{aligned} \dot{x} &= JH'(t,x) \\ x(0) &= x(T) \end{aligned}$$

with $H(t,\cdot)$ a convex function of x, going to $+\infty$ when $\|x\| \to \infty$.

1.1 Autonomous Systems

In this section, we will consider the case when the Hamiltonian $H(x)$ is autonomous. For the sake of simplicity, we shall also assume that it is C^1.

We shall first consider the question of nontriviality, within the general framework of (A_∞, B_∞)-subquadratic Hamiltonians. In the second subsection, we shall look into the special case when H is $(0, b_\infty)$-subquadratic, and we shall try to derive additional information.

The General Case: Nontriviality. We assume that H is (A_∞, B_∞)-subquadratic at infinity, for some constant symmetric matrices A_∞ and B_∞, with $B_\infty - A_\infty$ positive definite. Set:

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Theorem 1 tells us that if $\lambda + \gamma < 0$, the boundary-value problem:

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has at least one solution $\overline{x}$, which is found by minimizing the dual action functional:

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$$N(x) := H(x) - \frac{1}{2}\left(A_\infty x, x\right) \tag{5}$$

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$$N(x) \le \frac{1}{2}\left(\left(B_\infty - A_\infty\right)x, x\right) + c \quad \forall x \ . \tag{6}$$

Proposition 1. *Assume $H'(0) = 0$ and $H(0) = 0$. Set:*

$$\delta := \liminf_{x \to 0} 2N(x) \left\|x\right\|^{-2} \ . \tag{7}$$

If $\gamma < -\lambda < \delta$, the solution $\overline{u}$ is non-zero:

$$\overline{x}(t) \ne 0 \quad \forall t \ . \tag{8}$$

Proof. Condition (7) means that, for every $\delta' > \delta$, there is some $\varepsilon > 0$ such that

$$\left\|x\right\| \le \varepsilon \Rightarrow N(x) \le \frac{\delta'}{2}\left\|x\right\|^2 \ . \tag{9}$$

It is an exercise in convex analysis, into which we shall not go, to show that this implies that there is an $\eta > 0$ such that

$$f\left\|x\right\| \le \eta \Rightarrow N^*(y) \le \frac{1}{2\delta'}\left\|y\right\|^2 \ . \tag{10}$$

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Since u_1 is a smooth function, we will have $\|hu_1\|_\infty \leq \eta$ for h small enough, and inequality (10) will hold, yielding thereby:

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Corollary 1. *Assume H is C^2 and (a_∞, b_∞)-subquadratic at infinity. Let ξ_1, $\ldots, \xi_N$ be the equilibria, that is, the solutions of $H'(\xi) = 0$. Denote by ω_k the smallest eigenvalue of $H''(\xi_k)$, and set:*

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If:

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But this index is precisely the index $i_T(\widetilde{x})$ of the T-periodic solution $\widetilde{x}$ over the interval $(0,T)$, as defined in Sect. 2.6. So

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Now if $\widetilde{x}$ has a lower period, T/k say, we would have, by Corollary 31:

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Notes and Comments. The results in this section are a refined version of [1]; the minimality result of Proposition 14 was the first of its kind.

To understand the nontriviality conditions, such as the one in formula (16), one may think of a one-parameter family x_T, $T \in \left(2\pi\omega^{-1}, 2\pi b_{\infty}^{-1}\right)$ of periodic solutions, $x_T(0) = x_T(T)$, with x_T going away to infinity when $T \to 2\pi\omega^{-1}$, which is the period of the linearized system at 0.

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Author Index

Subject Index