

Problem

"Find the law of transformation of the action S from one inertial frame to another."

The action is defined $S = \int dt \mathcal{L}$ for an inertial frame K . Suppose we have another frame K' that moves with ~~the~~ velocity \vec{v} relative to K . In frame K the velocity of each particle is \vec{v}_a and in K' it is $\vec{v}'_a = \vec{v}_a - \vec{V}$. The kinetic energy T in K is

$$\begin{aligned} T &= \frac{1}{2} \sum m_a v_a^2 = \frac{1}{2} \sum m_a [\vec{v}'_a + \vec{V}]^2 \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \sum m_a v_a'^2 + \vec{V} \cdot \sum m_a \vec{v}'_a + \frac{1}{2} \sum m_a V^2 \end{aligned}$$

Let $\mu := \sum m_a$, and since \mathcal{L} only depends on the relative distances between particles $|\vec{r}_a - \vec{r}_b|$ we get $\vec{r}_a - \vec{r}_b = \vec{r}'_a - \vec{r}'_b$ hence \mathcal{L} is invariant under this transformation. The Lagrangian is therefore

$$\mathcal{L} = \mathcal{L}' + \vec{V} \cdot \vec{P}' + \frac{1}{2} \mu V^2 \quad (\text{where } \vec{P}' = \sum m_a \vec{v}'_a)$$

The action becomes $S = \int dt \mathcal{L} = \int dt [\mathcal{L}' + \vec{V} \cdot \vec{P}' + \frac{1}{2} \mu V^2]$
 $= S' + \int \vec{V} \cdot \vec{P}' dt + \frac{1}{2} \mu V^2 t$ (where $\int \vec{V} \cdot \vec{P}' dt = \int \vec{V} \cdot \sum m_a \vec{v}'_a dt = \vec{V} \cdot \sum m_a \vec{r}'_a = \mu \vec{V} \cdot \vec{R}'$.) with final result of.

$$S = S' + \mu \vec{V} \cdot \vec{R}' + \frac{1}{2} \mu V^2 t$$