On-board Autonomous Attitude Maneuver Planning for Planetary Spacecraft using Genetic Algorithms

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AIAA-2003-5784
AIAA Guidance Navigation & Control Conference
Austin, TX, August 14, 2003

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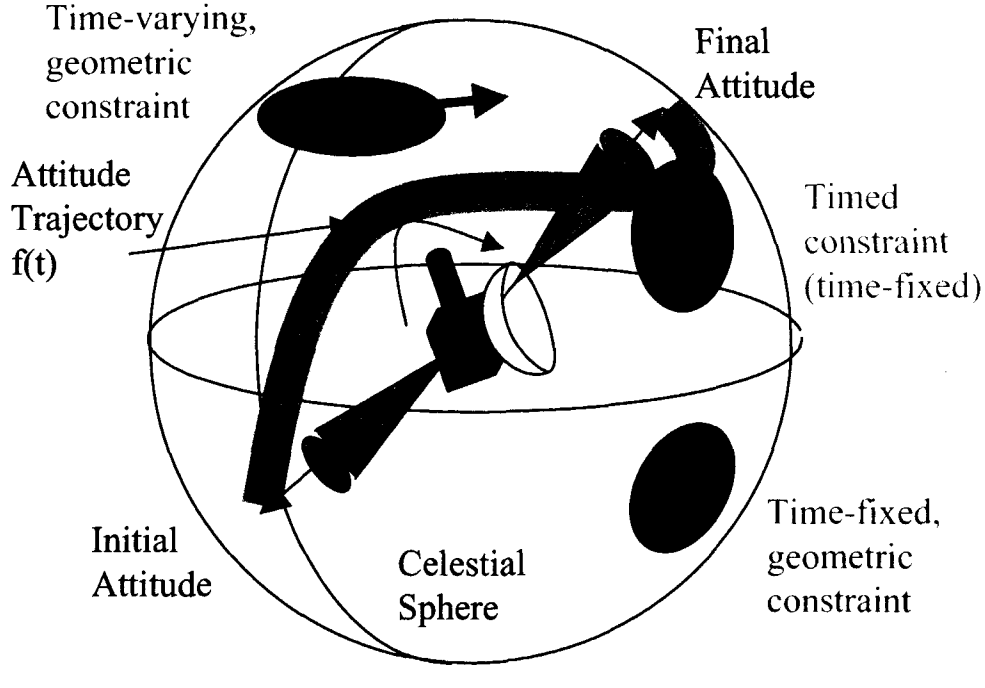
The Nature of the Problem

- For a spacecraft in interplanetary cruise:
  - **time-fixed** boundary conditions: initial and final attitude are not a function of time
  - **time-fixed** constraints: constraints are static
- For a spacecraft in orbit or during flyby:
  - **time-varying** boundary conditions: initial and final attitude are a function of time
  - **time-varying** constraints: constraints change as a function of time
- Types of constraints
  - **geometric constraints:**

    angular separation between body vector ***x*** *and celestial vector* ***y*** *shall never be less than* δ *(e.g. star tracker, science instrument boresight)*
  - **timed constraints:**

    angular separation between body vector ***x*** *and celestial vector* ***y*** *shall never be less than* δ *for a time period greater than T (e.g. power, thermal constraints)*
  - **dynamic constraints:**

    spacecraft turn rates and accelerations shall be smaller than ω_{max} *and* a_{max}*, respectively (e.g. limited star tracking capability or control authority)*



The Nature of the Problem

- Robotics Heritage:
  - Determining a constraint free attitude maneuver is closely related to the task of navigating a robot in the presence of moving obstacles and robot dynamics (*kinodynamic planning).*

  ⇒ Concepts and approaches developed for autonomous robot motion planning are applicable to the spacecraft attitude maneuver planning problem.

- Computational Complexity:
  - Even the simple problem of navigating a kinematic robot in a known environment with polyhedral obstacles has been proven to be computationally hard [1,2].
  - When the dynamics of the vehicle are also considered, there is strong evidence that the computational complexity of a complete algorithm will grow exponentially fast in the number of dimensions of the *state space*.

  ⇒ Autonomous path planning with moving obstacles is generally considered to be a computationally hard problem (robotics heritage).

  – Even though *complete* algorithms are available, these cannot be used for real-time path planning in many real-world applications [1].

[1]Canny, J.F., "The Complexity of Robot Motion Planning", MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1988.
[2]Latombe, J.C., " Robot Motion Planning", Kluwer Academic Publishers, Boston, MA, 1991.

Existing Approaches

- Topex Autonomous Maneuver Experiment (TAME):
  - Iterative walk-around (undirected trial-and-error based) with two turns
  - Not suited for moving constraints
- Cassini Constraint Monitor:
  - The Cassini Constraint Monitor (CMT) *autonomously checks* the commanded attitude trajectory for any constraint violation and, if necessary, *modifies* commanded turn profile to be compliant.

  ⇒ CMT has limited planning horizon (4 seconds) and acts thus *retro-actively*.
- The DS-1 spacecraft used an Attitude Planning Expert (APE) to autonomously turn the spacecraft. It was an off-line tool (i.e. non-real time) to determine the feasibility of a turn. It consists of
  - a simple attitude commander with no constraints avoidance planning capability and
  - a Cassini-type Constraint Monitor

Approach for On-Board Attitude Maneuver Planner

⇒ Primary objective is to obtain a *feasible* solution in a *reasonable* time

⇒ Reduce the problem to be computationally tractable!

⇒ Trade-off between optimality and computational complexity

- Simplify the problem to the greatest extent possible while maintaining the validity of the model:
  - e.g omit non-relevant spacecraft dynamics
- 'Customize' the problem:
  - e.g. define limited, convex attitude maneuver space (e.g. DS-1)
  - e.g. define limited set of possible attitude turns

  ⇒ Trade-off between up-front customization and level of flexibility
- Over-constrain the problem to account for uncertainties
- Incorporate constraints into cost-function to convert it from a constraint to an unconstraint optimization problem
- Using (global) random search techniques, search for and, if found, optimize attitude trajectories that minimize the cost-function

⇒ Use solution 'as is' or as an initial condition to initialize additional deterministic optimization algorithm

Why Genetic Algorithm (GA) ?

Current motion planning approaches can be divided in:

- Heuristic Methods
  - Variational methods
  - Potential field methods
- Enumerative Methods
  - Exhaustive search
  - Dynamic programming
- Random Search or Probabilistic Methods
  - **Genetic Algorithms** →
  - Simulated Annealing
  - Rapidly Exploring Random Trees
  - Probabilistic Roadmap Planner.
- Use a hybrid approach based on a combination of the above

- Directed random search of a large solution space
- Easy and fast to implement
- Constraints on control and state-variables can be incorporated readily
- Many successful applications
- Suited for discrete events such as thruster firings
- Highly parallelizable

Simplifications for this Study

⇒ Used EO spacecraft and EO ACS requirements as a baseline for this study.

- Considered only spacecraft in RCS control mode
- Considered only spacecraft kinematics and neglected spacecraft dynamics:
  - ⇒ Assumed instantaneous turn rate changes ($t_{manuever} >> t_{acceleration}$)
  - ⇒ For EO thruster configuration, this introduces a position error of approximately 1 - 2 deg
- Assumed perfectly balanced spacecraft and thruster firing executions

- Assumed fixed initial time and free final time
- Assumed fixed initial and final attitude
- Constraint the problem to two turns per maneuver

- Assumed emphemeris of celestial objects are parametrized as a function of time

Elements of Cost Function

- **Geometric Constraints:**

$$C_{GC} = \sum_{slew=1}^{2} \sum_{(i,j)\in}^{\#celest.\ constr.} \sum_{\{constraint\ pair\}}^{\#bore\ sights} F_1(\phi_{ij}^*(),\Phi_{ij})$$

$$\phi_{ij}^*() = \phi_{ij}^*(\mathbf{c}_i, \dot{\mathbf{u}}_i, \mathbf{b}_j, \dot{\mathbf{u}}_{slew}, t_{slew})$$

$$= \begin{cases} \min\limits_{t_o<t<t_f} \phi_{ij}(t) & \text{if } \exists \\ \phi_{ij}(t_f) & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

- **Fuel:**

$$C_{Fuel} = \sum_{slew=1}^{2} F_3(\omega_{slew}, \omega_{max})$$

- C_{GC}: cost function for geometric constraints
- F_0: weighting functions
- $\phi_{ij}(t)$: angular distance between constraint pair (i,j)
- Φ_{ij} : minimum required angular distance for c.p. (i,j)
- $\mathbf{c}_j$: celestial constraints vector
- $\boldsymbol{\omega}_i$: rotation vector of celestial constraint $\mathbf{c}_i$
- $\mathbf{b}_i$: spacecraft boresight
- $\boldsymbol{\omega}_{slew}$: spacecraft rotation vector
- t_{slew} : rotation duration
- T_{ij_max} : maximum allowable constraint violation time for c.p. (i,j)
- $\boldsymbol{\omega}_{max}$: maximum allowable turn rate
- T_{max} : maximum allowable maneuver time

- **Timed Constraints:**

$$C_{TC} = \sum_{slew=1}^{2} \sum_{(i,j)\in}^{\#celest.\ constr.} \sum_{\{constraint\ pair\}}^{\#bore\ sights} F_2(T_{ij}(), T_{ij_max})$$

$$T_{ij}() = T_{ij}(\mathbf{c}_i, \dot{\mathbf{u}}_i, \mathbf{b}_j, \dot{\mathbf{u}}_{slew}, t_{slew}, \Phi_{ij})$$

$$= \begin{cases} \text{time interval } \Delta t \text{ for which } \phi_{ij}(t) < \Phi_{ij} & \text{if } \exists \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

- **Total Maneuver Time:**

$$C_{MT} = F_4\left(\sum_{slew=1}^{2} t_{slew}, T_{max}\right)$$

- **Total Cost:**

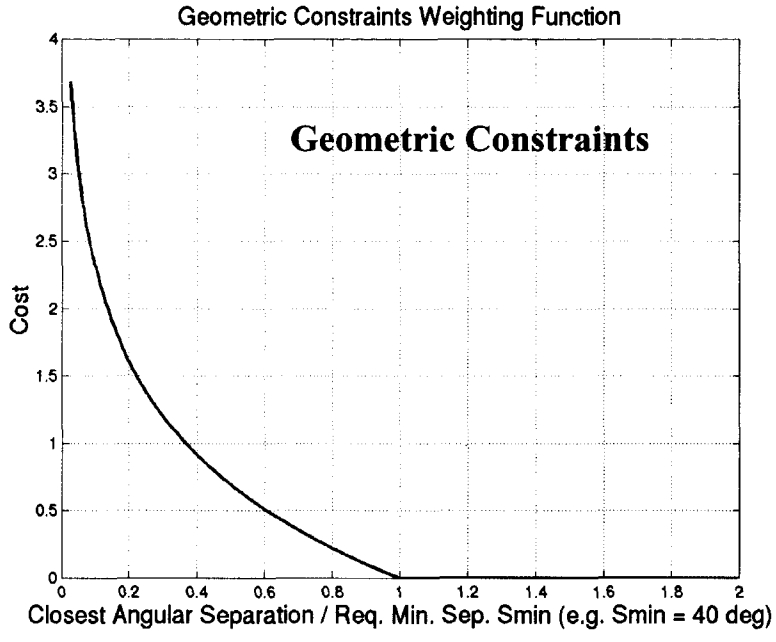
$$Cost = C_{GC} + C_{TC} + C_{Fuel} + C_{MT}$$

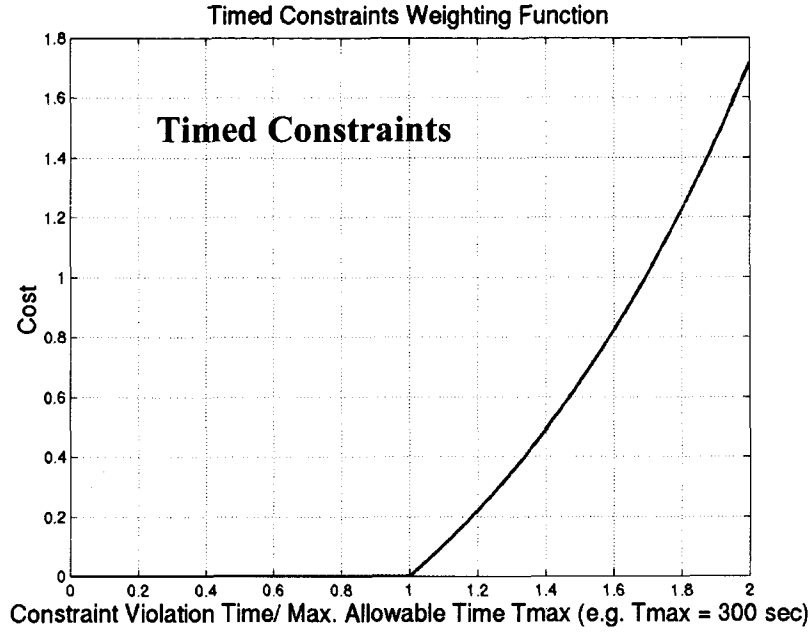
⇒ Time-fixed case: $\phi_{ij}^*()$ and $T_{ij}()$ calculated in **closed-form solution**

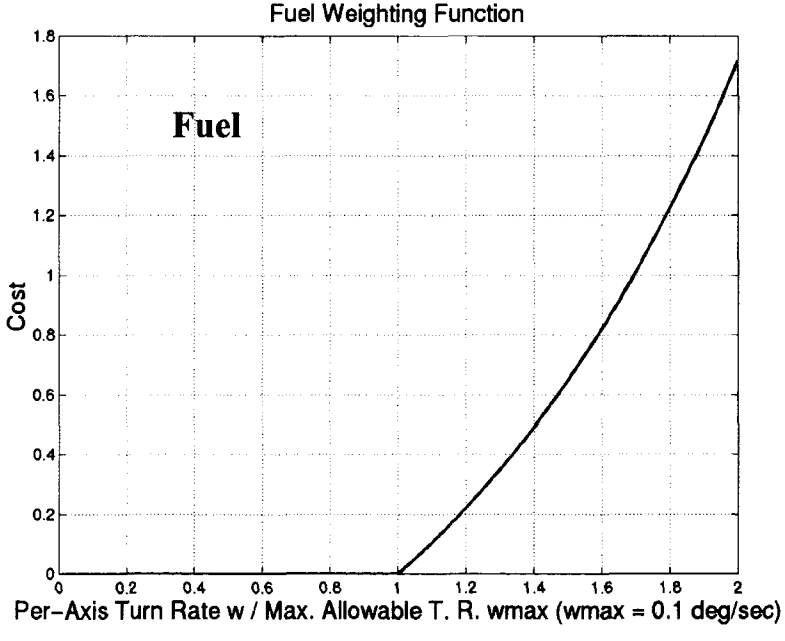
⇒ Time-varying case: $\phi_{ij}(t)$ parametrized as a function of time (t); $\phi_{ij}^*()$ and $T_{ij}(t)$ (*) calculated by **iterative search**.

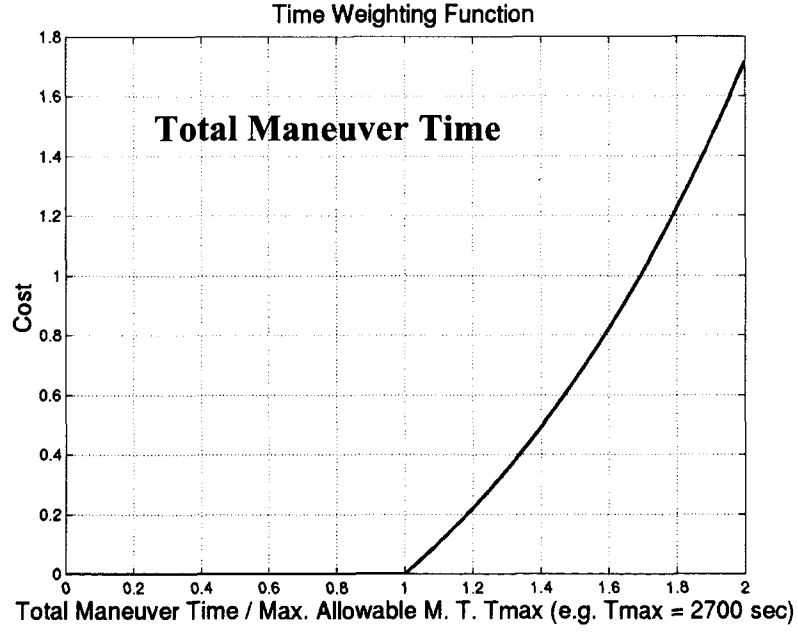
⇒ (*) not implemented

Weighting Functions









Encoding

- For this presentation:
  - Two-slew turn: $[\omega_1, t_1], [\omega_2, t_2]$
  - Fixed initial time: $t_o = 0$
  - Free final time: $t_f = t_1 + t_2$
  - Fixed initial and final attitude: Θ_o, Θ_f
- Encoded as single-level binary string/chromosome using Gray Coding:

6	6	6	8	8	
[101011	110001	011011	01110110	11001001]	$\Rightarrow$ 34 bits
ω_{1x}	ω_{1y}	ω_{1z}	Δt_1	Δt_2	
[0, 0.1 deg]	[0, 0.1 deg]	[0, 0.1 deg]	[0, 1800 sec]	[0, 1800 sec]	

$$[\Theta_o, t_o] \xrightarrow{[\omega_1, \Delta t_1]} [\Theta_{interm}, t_{interm}] \xrightarrow{[\omega_2, \Delta t_2]} [\Theta_f, t_f]$$

initial att. — interm. att. — final att.

$$\omega_2 = f(\Theta_{interm}, \Theta_f)$$

Outline of the Basic Genetic Algorithm

1. Population: Generation n

[011010111011001101110 1
011010100101001010101 0
001111101011010101010 1
110101011010010101010 1
111110001010101011110 1
001010101111010001010 1
011110111011101011111 1
⋮]

2. Evaluation of Fitness

[2.0
0.83
1.12
1.74
0.21
0.56
0
⋮]

3. Stopping Criteria

Stopping Criteria Satisfied ?

Yes → **6. Stop**

No ↓

4.1 Selection

P_{select}

[011010111011001101110 1] [2.0]
[110101011010010101010 1] [1.74]

4.2 Crossover

P_{cross}

[01101011101 | **00101010101**]
[11010101101 | **10011011101**]

4.3 Mutation

P_{mutate}

[011010 **0**11010010101010 1]
[110101011011001111110 1]

4.4. Accept New Population: Generation n + 1

[011010111011001101110 1
011010011010010101010 1
110101011011001111110 1
⋮
⋮]

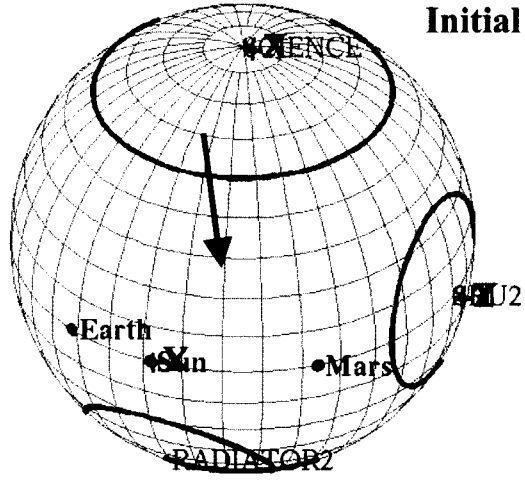
[2.0
⋮
⋮]

5. Go To Step 2.

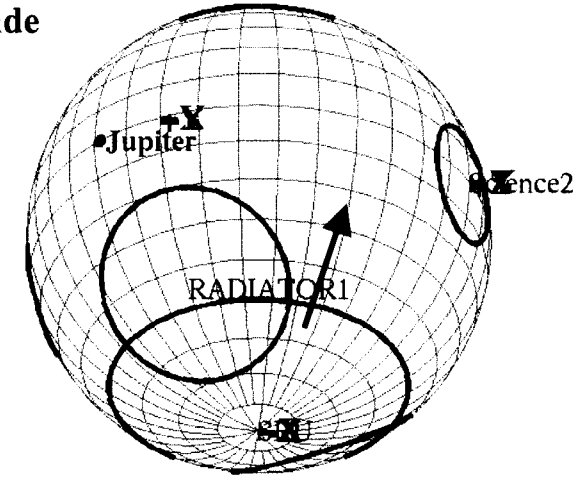
Example I: EO During Cruise

- Europa Orbiter during cruise (2004/06/01)
  ⇒ Celestial objects time-fixed
- Fixed initial and final attitude
- Fixed initial time and free final time
- Protected boresights:
  - SRU: FOV 40 deg
  - Science: FOV 40 deg
  - Radiator1: FOV 25 deg
  - Radiator 2: FOV 25 deg
  - SRU2: FOV 25 deg
  - Science2: FOV 15 deg
- Two slew maneuvers
- Rates < 0.1 deg/s per axis

Initial Attitude

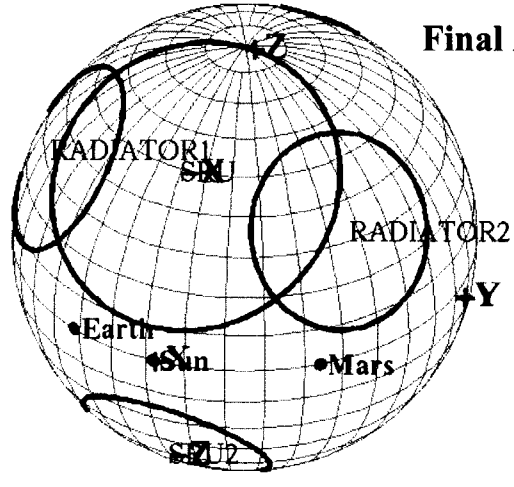


Maneuver Time: 0

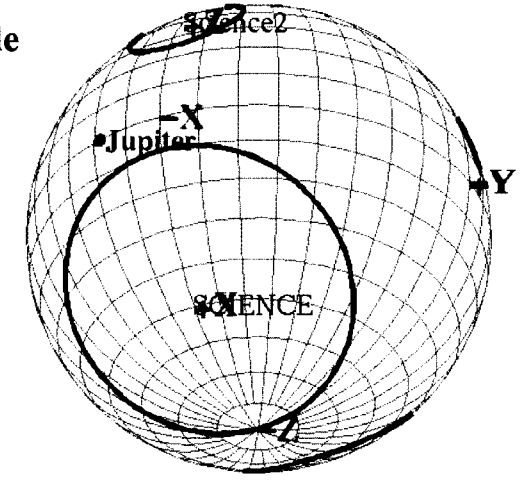


Maneuver Time: 0

Final Attitude



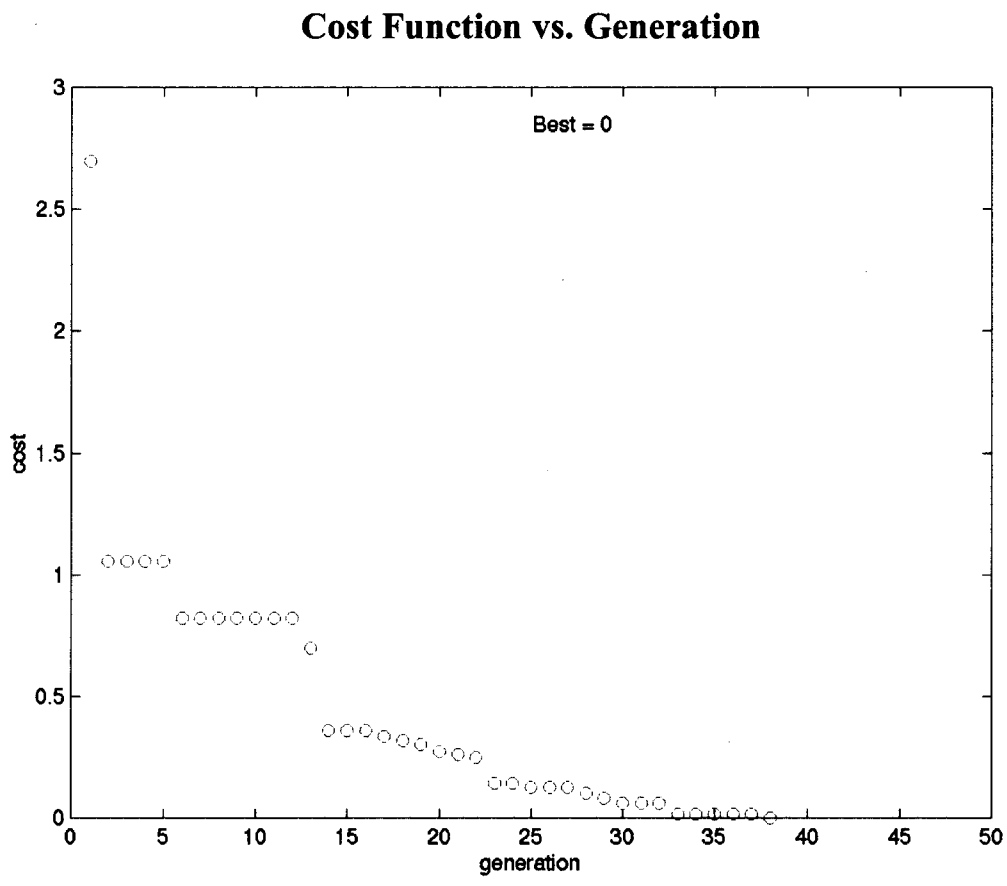
Maneuver Time: 2253



Maneuver Time: 2253

Example I: EO During Cruise

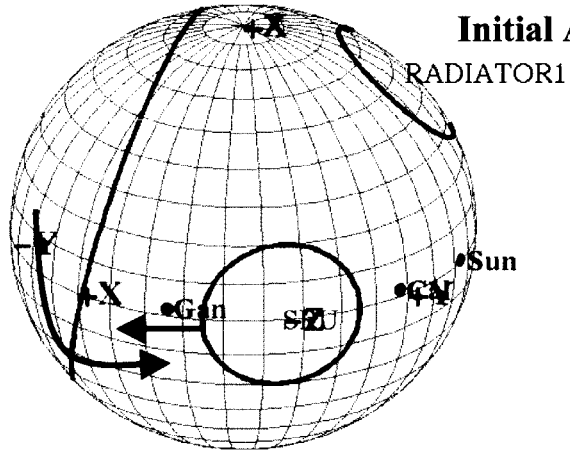
- GA Settings:
  - # of chromosomes: 30
  - max. # of generations: 50
  - chromosome length: L = 34 bit
  - Generation Gap = 0.9
  - Pcross = 0.7
  - Pmut = 0.7/L
  - Stopping criteria:
    cost function < 8*1e-5
- Execution Time:
  227 sec



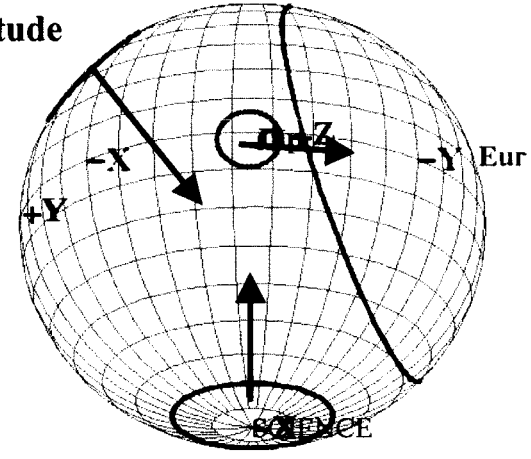
Example II: EO in Europa Orbit (EO^2)

- Europa Orbiter in Europa Orbit (2008/09/22)
  ⇒ Celestial objects **time-varying**
- Fixed initial and final attitude
- Fixed initial time and free final time
- Protected boresights:
  - SRU: FOV 20 deg
  - Science: FOV 20 deg
  - Radiator1: FOV 20 deg
- Two slew maneuvers
- Rates < 0.1 deg/s per axis

Initial Attitude

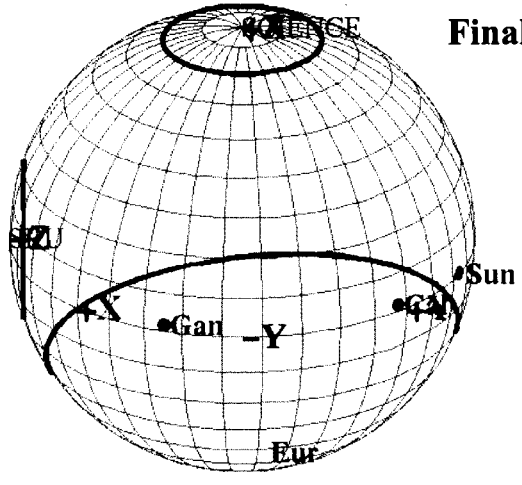


Maneuver Time: 1

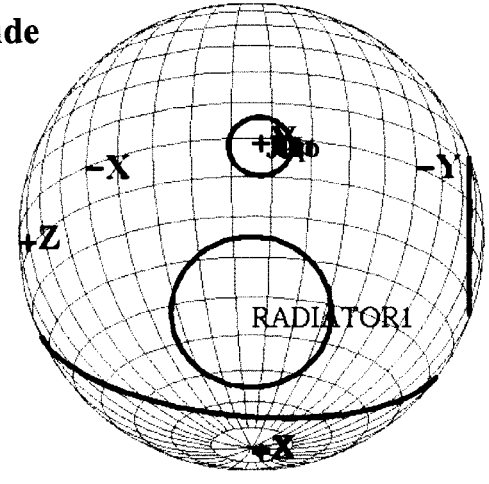


Maneuver Time: 1

Final Attitude



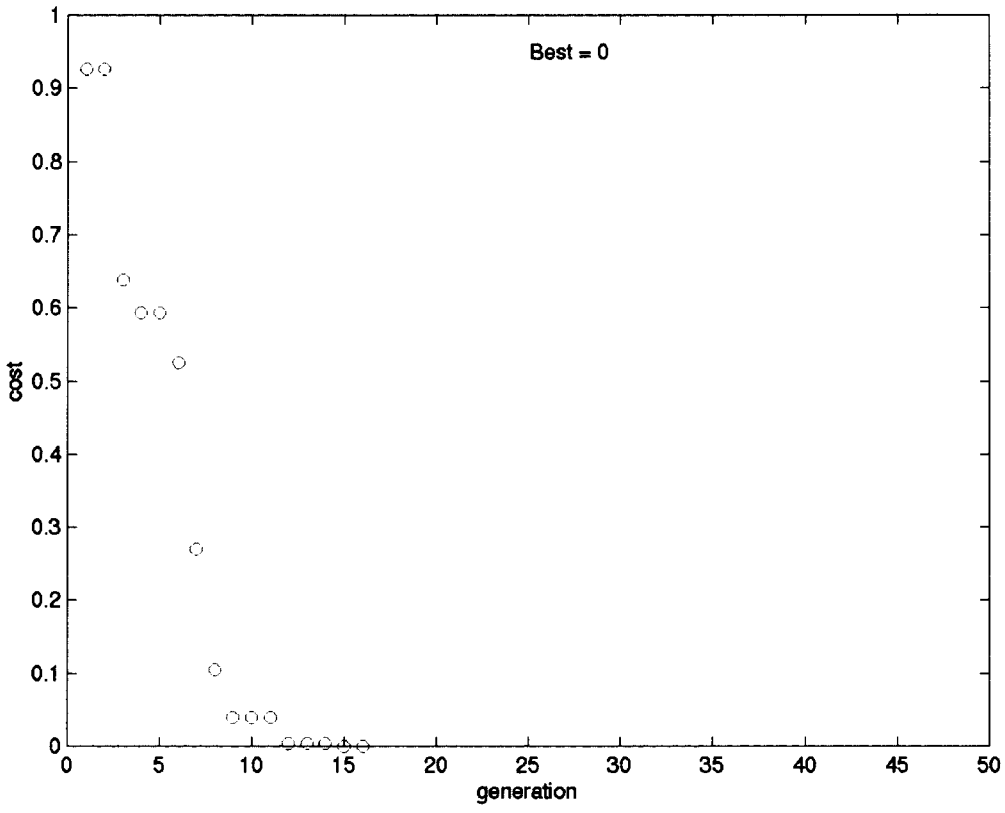
Maneuver Time: 2658



Maneuver Time: 2658

Example II: EO in Europa Orbit (EO^2)

- GA Settings:
  - # of chromosomes: 40
  - max. # of generations: 50
  - chromosome length: L = 34 bit
  - Generation Gap = 0.9
  - Pcross = 0.7
  - Pmut = 0.7/L
  - Stopping criteria:
    cost function < 8*1e-5
- Execution Time:
  230 sec.



Summary and Conclusions

- Even a relatively simple GA based attitude planner provided acceptable solutions for a number of difficult cases
- Computation times obtained were on the order of minutes for non-optimized code (.m files); (faster performance expected when optimized)

⇒ An On-board autonomous attitude planner is definitely feasible, provided that we

  - trade computational tractability with optimality (e.g.through simplifications and customization)
  - abandon the notion of 'completeness', but instead get comfortable with the notion of 'randomness' (e.g. by using extensive simulations to gain confidence)

⇒ An attitude planner in conjunction with a Cassini/DS-1 type constraint monitor greatly increases safe, efficient and autonomous attitude maneuver planning capability

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