Constrained Spacecraft Attitude Control on SO(3) Using Fast Nonlinear Model Predictive Control

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Abstract—Recently, a reference governor and a nonlinear model predictive control approach for constrained spacecraft attitude control on SO(3) were proposed in [9]. In this paper, we develop a fast solver for the nonlinear model predictive controller in [9]. The approach is based on a numerical solution of the necessary conditions for optimality resulting from a discrete optimal control problem over each prediction horizon, where the inequality constraints are incorporated as soft constraints through a penalty function. The formulation of the nonlinear model predictive control problem and the necessary conditions for optimality exploit the geometric mechanics formalism and Lie group variational integrator based spacecraft attitude dynamics model. Simulation results along with the computational time assessment are presented. Remarks on integrating the approach with continuation methods are made.

I. INTRODUCTION

Constrained spacecraft attitude control is receiving broader attention to address stringent performance requirements, in particular, in small spacecraft with tight control and inclusion/exclusion zone constraints. Model predictive control of spacecraft attitude based on linearized dynamics has been studied in previous literature (e.g., see [7], [19], [20]). To deal more effectively with system nonlinearities and perform global maneuvers, nonlinear predictive control approaches have been proposed in [6], [9]. Unlike [6], [9] utilizes discrete-time spacecraft dynamics based on a Lie group variational integrator model. This model provides higher accuracy in prediction and unlike continuous-time integrators, preserves the conserved quantities of motion (momentum and energy) to machine precision in absence of external moments (see [11]). As SO(3) is closed under multiplication, the Lie group variational integrator updates the attitude by multiplying two matrices in SO(3) and hence ensures that the attitude always evolves on SO(3). For a detailed presentation on variational integrators, see [14] and for the discrete rigid body equations, see [15].

The nonlinear model predictive control approach described in [9] uses a standard constrained optimizer in MATLAB (fmincon.m), which is our baseline solver. Since the baseline solver calculates the derivatives numerically and does not explicitly exploit the knowledge of the underlying Lie group structure, a very long time, which makes it impractical for real-time implementation. In this paper, we develop a fast solver based on solving the necessary conditions for optimality resulting from a discrete optimal control problem over each prediction horizon, where the inequality constraints are incorporated as soft constraints through a penalty function. The receding horizon optimal control problem and necessary conditions for optimality are formulated exploiting geometric mechanics formalism. The idea of using a penalty function is similar to the one used in [18], where barrier functions are used for constrained motion planning for multiple vehicles on SE(3). The necessary conditions for optimality are solved using the Indirect Single Shooting Method, where Newton’s method is used to determine the initial values of the Lagrange multipliers, using sensitivity derivatives obtained from the necessary conditions for optimality (see [12]).

The paper is organized as follows. In Section II, we derive the necessary conditions for optimality. In Section III, we give a description of the fast solver. In Section IV, we present numerical results along with the computational time assessment. Finally, in Section V, we give some concluding remarks and possible future work. Before proceeding further, we describe the notation used in the paper.

A. Notation

The notation used in the paper is mostly standard, except in a few places. For a given control sequence \( \{u_{k+j}\}_{j=0}^{N-1} \), resulting in a state sequence \( \{x_{k+j}\}_{j=0}^{N} \), starting from \( x_k \), over a prediction horizon of \( N \)-steps, the control sequence is denoted by \( \{u_{k+j|k}\}_{j=0}^{N-1} \) and the state sequence is denoted by \( \{x_{k+j|k}\}_{j=0}^{N} \). Using the above notation, \( x_{k|k} = x_k \). For a matrix \( B \in \mathbb{R}^{3 \times 3} \), the antisymmetric part is denoted by \( (B)_A \) and the Frobenius norm is denoted by \( \|B\|_F \). For a differentiable scalar valued function \( f \), the partial derivative of \( f \) with respect to one of its arguments as \( X \), is denoted by \( D_X f \).

We also use the following maps: \( (.)^\times : \mathbb{R}^3 \rightarrow \mathfrak{so}(3) \), \( (.)^\times : \mathfrak{so}(3) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^3 \) and \( (.)^\circ : \mathbb{R}^3 \rightarrow \mathfrak{so}(3)^* \). The standard inner product on \( \mathbb{R}^3 \) is denoted by \( \langle . , . \rangle \) and the natural pairing between \( \mathfrak{so}(3) \) and \( \mathfrak{so}(3)^* \) is denoted by \( \langle . , . \rangle \).

II. NONLINEAR MODEL PREDICTIVE CONTROL ON SO(3)

Consider the following nonlinear model predictive control problem

\[
\min_{\{u_{k+j|k}\}_{j=0}^{N-1}} J_d = K_d(R_{k+N|k}, \Pi_{k+N|k}) + \]

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\[
\sum_{j=0}^{N-1} C_d(R_{k+j|j}, \Pi_{k+j|j}, u_{k+j|j}),
\]
subject to
\[
h\Pi_{k+j} = F_{k+j} J_d - J_d F_{k+j},
\]
\[
R_{k+1|j} = R_{k|j} F_{k|j},
\]
\[
\Pi_{k+1|j} = F_{k|j}^T \Pi_{k|j} + h u_{k+j},
\]
\[
H_i(R_{k+j|j}, \Pi_{k+j}, u_{k+j}) \leq 0, \quad i = 0, \ldots, m,
\]
where \( R_{k+j|j}, F_{k+j|j} \in SO(3), \Pi_{k+j|j}, u_{k+j|j} \in \mathbb{R}^3 \)
and \( h \in \mathbb{R}^+ \) is the time step. The terminal cost \( K_d \) is a
real-valued positive semi-definite function with respect to its
arguments \( R_{k+N|k}, h \Pi_{k+N|k} \) with the property that
\( K_d(I_{3 \times 3}, 0_{3 \times 3}) = 0 \). The incremental cost \( C_d \) is a
real-valued positive semi-definite function with respect to its
arguments \( R_{k+j|j} \) and \( h \Pi_{k+j|j} \), and a real-valued positive
definite function with respect to its argument \( u_{k+j|j} \), with
the property that \( C_d(I_{3 \times 3}, 0_{3 \times 3}, 0_{3 \times 3}) = 0 \). It is also
assumed that the data are sufficiently regular, so that when
the inequality constraints are incorporated as soft constraints
through a penalty function, the Implicit Function Theorem
can be used to uniquely determine the optimal control \( u_{k+j|j} \)
as a function of \( R_{k+j|j}, \Pi_{k+j} \) and \( \lambda_{i_{k+j}} \), where \( \lambda_{i_{k+j}} \)
i \( \{1, 2\} \) are the Lagrange multipliers, which are introduced
shortly (e.g., see [2]). The inequality constraints are given by
\( H_i : SO(3) \times so(3) \times so(3) \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \). In addition to all
the above properties, the terminal cost \( K_d \), the incremental
\( C_d \) and the inequality constraints \( H_i \) also satisfy the
appropriate smoothness assumptions. In what follows, we
also assume that the constraint qualification condition holds
at the optimal solution for each prediction horizon.

Note that \( J_d \in \mathbb{R}^{3 \times 3} \) is the nonstandard moment of inertia
matrix and is related to the standard moment of inertia
matrix \( J \in \mathbb{R}^{3 \times 3} \) as \( J_d = \frac{1}{2} \text{tr}(J) I_{3 \times 3} - J \). To obtain
the necessary conditions for optimality, we will follow the
same variational approach as given in [12]. However, here
this approach is applied to a more general problem with
inequality constraints (5) and an additional dependence in the
cost (1) on \( R \) and \( \Pi \). Since the fast solver is based on
solving the necessary conditions for optimality resulting from
a discrete optimal control problem over each prediction
horizon, where the inequality constraints are incorporated as
soft constraints through a penalty function, we consider the
following discrete optimal control problem
\[
\min \{u_k\}_{k=0}^{N-1} J_d = K_d(R_N, \Pi_N) + \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} C_d(R_k, \Pi_k, u_k),
\]
subject to
\[
h\Pi_k = F_k J_d - J_d F_k^T,
\]
\[
R_{k+1} = R_k F_k,
\]
\[
\Pi_{k+1} = F_k^T \Pi_k + h u_k,
\]
\[
H_i(R_k, \Pi_k, u_k) \leq 0, \quad i = 0, \ldots, m.
\]
Define the augmented cost functional as follows
\[
J_{d, \text{aug}} = K_d(R_N, \Pi_N) + \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} C_d(R_k, \Pi_k, u_k) + \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} \langle \lambda_1^k, \log(R_{k+1}) - \log(R_k F_k) \rangle + \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} \langle \lambda_2^k, (\Pi_{k+1} - F_k^T \Pi_k - h u_k) \rangle + \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} \mu_i \phi_i(H_i(R_k, \Pi_k, u_k)),
\]
where \( \lambda_1^k \in so(3)^*, \lambda_2^k \in so(3), \phi_i(\cdot) \) is a penalty function
and \( \mu_i \in \mathbb{R}^+ \).

A. Remark I

The special orthogonal group is a Lie group given by
\( SO(3, \mathbb{R}) = \{ A \in M(3, \mathbb{R}) \ | \ A^T = A^{-1}, \det(A) = 1 \} \),
which has the Lie algebra given by \( so(3, \mathbb{R}) = \{ A \in M(3, \mathbb{R}) \ | \ A^T = -A \} \). The map
\( (\cdot)^\circ : \mathbb{R}^3 \rightarrow so(3) \) is a Lie algebra isomorphism between \( \mathbb{R}^3 \) and \( so(3) \)
(e.g., see [10]), which shows \( \mathbb{R}^3 \cong so(3) \). Under the
above isomorphism, the Killing form \( \kappa(\cdot, \cdot) \) on \( so(3) \) gets
identified with the standard inner product on \( \mathbb{R}^3 \) (e.g., see [10]). Specifically, if \( \kappa(a^\circ, b^\circ) \) \( = \text{tr}(a^\circ b^\circ) \),
where \( a^\circ \) is the adjoint representation of \( so(3) \), then
\( \kappa(a^\circ, b^\circ) = \text{tr}(a^\circ b^\circ) = -2(a^\circ, b^\circ) \in \mathbb{R}^3 \). In fact,
as \( SO(3) \) is compact and semi-simple, the negative of the
Killing form \( \kappa(\cdot, \cdot) \) on \( so(3) \) gives a bi-invariant
Riemannian metric on \( SO(3) \). Using the map
\( (\cdot)^\circ : \mathbb{R}^3 \rightarrow so(3)^* \) and by letting the natural pairing
\( \langle \alpha, b^\circ \rangle_{so(3)^* \times so(3)} = \langle \alpha, b \rangle_{\mathbb{R}^3 \times \mathbb{R}^3} \), it is easily seen that
\( \langle \alpha^\circ, b^\circ \rangle_{so(3)^* \times so(3)} = -\frac{1}{2} \kappa(a^\circ, b^\circ) = \frac{1}{2} \text{tr}((a^\circ)^T b^\circ) \),
which also shows that \( so(3) \cong so(3) \) (e.g., see [8]). In this
way, the natural pairing between a covector and a vector
gets identified to the Killing form on \( so(3) \), which further
gets identified with the standard inner product on \( \mathbb{R}^3 \).
Using this, we can obtain the necessary conditions for optimality
in \( \mathbb{R}^3 \).

The variations for the sequences \( \{R_k\}_{k=0}^N \), \( \{F_k\}_{k=0}^{N-1} \) and
\( \{\Pi_k\}_{k=0}^N \) are given as follows
\[
\delta R_k = \frac{d}{dx}igr|_{x=0} R_k, \quad k \in \mathbb{R}^3 \text{ and exp is the exponential map. Note that}\n\eta_k, \xi_k \in \mathbb{R}^3 \text{ and exp is the exponential map. Note that} \eta_k = 0, \xi_k = 0 \text{ and } \delta \Pi_k = 0. \]

The infinitesimal variations of \( R_k \), \( F_k \) and \( \Pi_k \) are given by
\[
\delta R_k = \frac{d}{dx}igr|_{x=0} R_k, \quad k \in \mathbb{R}^3 \text{ and exp is the exponential map. Note that}\n\eta_k, \xi_k \in \mathbb{R}^3 \text{ and exp is the exponential map. Note that} \eta_k = 0, \xi_k = 0 \text{ and } \delta \Pi_k = 0. \]
\[
\delta F_k = \frac{d}{de} \bigg|_{e=0} F_{k,e}, \\
\delta \Pi_k = \frac{d}{de} \bigg|_{e=0} \Pi_{k,e},
\]

(16) (17)

Before proceeding further, we will require a few facts. The variation of the discrete attitude update equation is used as a constrained variation instead of taking a variation of the matrix logarithm and yields the following fact.

Fact 1. \((12)\) \(\eta_k\) and \(\xi_k\) in \((12)\) and \((13)\) satisfy, \(\eta_{k+1} = F_{k}^T \eta_k + \xi_k\).

The variation of the implicit equation yields the following fact

Fact 2. \((12)\) \(\xi_k = hF_k^T(\text{tr}(F_k J_d)I_{3x3} - F_k J_d)\) \(\delta \Pi_k\).

(18)

Also, \(\forall a \in \mathbb{R}^3, \forall B \in \mathbb{R}^{3x3}\), we have the following fact

Fact 3. \((8)\) \(\frac{1}{2} \text{tr} (B^T a^2) = \langle (B)_A, a \rangle\).

The above fact is used to obtain the following fact

Fact 4. \((8)\) \(\langle (D_{R_k} f, R_k h)\rangle_k = \langle ((R_k^T(D_{R_k} f))_A) -^x, \eta_k\rangle\),

where \(f\) is a differentiable scalar valued function, with one of its arguments as \(R_k\). Using all of the above facts, the variation of the augmented cost functional can be written as follows

\[
\delta J_{d, aug} = \langle ((R_k^T(D_{R_k} K_d)_A)_A) -^x, \eta_N \rangle + \langle ((\Pi_k^x K_d)_A)_A) -^x, \eta_k \rangle + \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} \langle ((R_k^T(D_{R_k} C_d)_A)_A) -^x, \eta_k \rangle + \langle ((D_{u_k}^x C_d)_A)_A) -^x, \delta u_k \rangle + \sum_{k=0}^{N-1} \langle \delta \Pi_k \rangle + \langle ((D_{u_k}^x (\phi_i \circ H_i))_A)_A) -^x, \delta u_k \rangle \]

(19) (20) (21) (22) (23) (24) (25) (26)

h\Pi_k^x = F_k J_d - J_d F_k^T, \\
R_{k+1} = R_k F_k, \\
\Pi_{k+1} = F_k^T \Pi_k + h u_k, \\
\lambda_{k+1}^1 = F_{k+1}^T \lambda_k^1 + ((R_{k+1}^T(D_{R_{k+1}} C_d)_A)) -^x + \sum_{i=0}^{m} \mu_i((R_{k+1}^T(D_{R_{k+1}} (\phi_i \circ H_i))_A)_A) -^x, \]

\(\lambda_{k+1}^2 = (F_{k+1} - M_{k+1}^T F_{k+1}^T \Pi_{k+1}^x F_{k+1})^{-1} \]

(22)

\(\lambda_{N-1}^2 = -((R_N^T(D_{R_N} C_d)_A)_A) -^x, \]

(24)

\(\lambda_{N-1}^1 = -((R_N^T(D_{R_N} K_d)_A)_A) -^x, \]

(25)

(26)

B. Cost and Inequality Constraints

We consider a quadratic-type cost, similar to the one used in \([9]\) and \([17]\). Specifically, the terminal cost, the incremental cost and the inequality constraints are given as
follows
\[
K_d = \frac{1}{2} \| P_1^{1/2} (R_N - I_{3 \times 3}) \|_F^2 + \frac{1}{2} \| P_2^{1/2} \Pi^\kappa \|_F^2, \quad (27)
\]
\[
C_d = \frac{1}{2} \| Q_1^{1/2} (R_k - I_{3 \times 3}) \|_F^2 + \frac{1}{2} \| Q_2^{1/2} \Pi^\kappa \|_F^2 + \frac{1}{2} \| Q_3^{1/2} u_k \|_F^2, \quad (28)
\]
\[
H_0 = \frac{1}{2} \| u_k \|_F^2 - \alpha, \quad (29)
\]
\[
H_i = \beta_i - u_i^T R_k^T w_i, \quad i = 1, \ldots, m, \quad (30)
\]
where \( P_1, P_2, Q_1, Q_2 \) are positive semi-definite symmetric matrices, \( Q_3 \) is a positive definite symmetric matrix, \( \alpha \in \mathbb{R}^+ \), \( \beta_i \in \mathbb{R} \), \( v_i \) is the spacecraft body-fixed vector and \( w_i \) is the inertial direction vector. Note that for any \( a \in \mathbb{R}^3 \) and for any positive semi-definite/definite symmetric matrix \( B, \frac{1}{2} \| B^{1/2} a \|_F^2 = \frac{1}{2} a^T B a \), where \( B = \text{tr}(B) I_{3 \times 3} - B \) (e.g., see [9]).

For the specific form of the terminal cost and the incremental cost defined above, the necessary conditions for optimality are as follows
\[
h \Pi^\kappa = F_k J_d - J_d F_k^T, \quad (31)
\]
\[
R_{k+1} = R_k F_k, \quad (32)
\]
\[
\Pi_{k+1} = F_k^T \Pi_k + h u_k, \quad (33)
\]
\[
\lambda_{k+1}^1 = F_k^T \lambda_k^1 - h ((R_k^{1/2} Q_1 A)^{-1} - \sum_{i=1}^m \mu_i (R_k^{1/2} (D H_i (\phi_i o H_i) w_i u_i^T) A)^{-1}), \quad (34)
\]
\[
\lambda_{k+1}^2 = (F_k^{1/2} P_k A)^{-1} - \big[ M_{k+1} - M_{k+1} (F_k^{1/2} \Pi_{k+1} A)^{-1} \big]^{-1}, \quad (35)
\]
\[
\lambda_{k+1}^3 = -((P_2 \Pi_{k+1} A)^{-1} - h ((Q_2 \Pi_{k+1} A)^{-1}), \quad (36)
\]
\[
h \lambda_{k+1}^2 = h ((Q_2 \Pi_{k+1} A)^{-1} - \mu_0 (D H_i (\phi_i o H_i) u_k A)^{-1}, \quad (37)
\]
where we have chosen the differentiable penalty function, \( \phi_i o H_i = h \max \{ 0, H_i \} \).

C. Remark II

The trajectories for \( (R_k, \Pi_k, \lambda_k^1, \lambda_k^2) \) (starting from a given \( (R_0, \Pi_0, \lambda_0^1, \lambda_0^2) \)), using the necessary conditions for optimality are computed in the same way, as presented in [12]. Also, for the specific form of the terminal cost and the incremental cost defined above, the necessary conditions for optimality are for the case of a Regulator Problem, which can be easily extended to the case of a Tracking Problem.

III. DESCRIPTION OF THE FAST SOLVER

The necessary conditions for optimality obtained in the previous section give a two-point boundary value problem and are solved using the Indirect Single Shooting Method, where Newton’s method is used to determine the initial values of the Lagrange multipliers, using sensitivity derivatives obtained from the necessary conditions for optimality (see [12]). We will follow the same procedure as given in [12]. However, here we exploit Newton’s method instead of a backtracking line search method.

The sensitivity derivatives for the attitude and angular momentum equations are given as follows
\[
\left[ \begin{array}{c}
\eta_{k+1} \\
\delta \Pi_{k+1}
\end{array} \right] = \left[ \begin{array}{c}
F_k^T \eta_{k+1} \\
F_k^T \Pi_k + (F_k^T \Pi_k)^{x} M_k
\end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c}
\delta \eta_k \\
\delta \Pi_k
\end{array} \right] + \left[ \begin{array}{c}
0_{3 \times 3} \\
0_{3 \times 3}
\end{array} \right] \delta u_k, \quad (39)
\]

The sensitivity derivatives for the Lagrange multiplier equations are given as follows
\[
\left[ \begin{array}{c}
\delta \lambda_{k+1}^1 \\
\delta \lambda_{k+1}^2
\end{array} \right] = S_k \left[ \begin{array}{c}
\eta_{k+1} \\
\lambda_{k+1}^1 \\
\lambda_{k+1}^2
\end{array} \right], \quad (40)
\]

where \( S_k \in \mathbb{R}^{6 \times 12} \). Together (39) and (40) can be written as follows
\[
\left[ \begin{array}{c}
\eta_{k+1} \\
\delta \Pi_k
\end{array} \right] = T_k \left[ \begin{array}{c}
\delta \eta_k \\
\delta \lambda_{k+1}^1 \\
\delta \lambda_{k+1}^2
\end{array} \right], \quad (41)
\]

where \( T_k \in \mathbb{R}^{12 \times 12} \). From (41)
\[
\left[ \begin{array}{c}
\eta_N \\
\delta \Pi_N \\
\delta \lambda_{N-1}^1 \\
\delta \lambda_{N-1}^2
\end{array} \right] = \left( \prod_{k=0}^{N-1} T_k \right) \left[ \begin{array}{c}
\delta \eta_0 \\
\delta \lambda_{0}^1 \\
\delta \lambda_{0}^2
\end{array} \right]. \quad (42)
\]

In the Indirect Single Shooting Method, the initial values of the Lagrange multipliers are taken as unknowns and the necessary conditions for optimality obtained in the previous section result in a root finding problem. We employ Newton’s method to solve this root finding problem expecting quadratic rate of convergence (locally). Note that the baseline solver (fsolve.m) takes a long time, when used with Indirect Single Shooting Method as it does not utilize the knowledge of the underlying Lie group structure to calculate sensitivity derivatives and calculates the derivatives numerically. The updates have the following form
\[
\lambda_{i+1} = \lambda_i - \gamma \left( \frac{\delta E(i)}{\delta \lambda_i} \right)^{-1} E(i), \quad (43)
\]
where the superscripts represent the iteration number, \( \gamma \in (0, 1) \) is the step size and \( E(i) \) is given as follows
\[
E(i) = \left[ \begin{array}{c}
\lambda_{N-1}^{1(i)} - ((R_N^{1/2} P_1 A)^{-1} \\
\lambda_{N-1}^{2(i)} - ((P_2 \Pi_{N} A)^{-1}
\end{array} \right]. \quad (44)
\]

Note that \( E(i) \) represents the error in satisfaction of the terminal boundary conditions at the \( i-th \) iteration. The sensitivity derivative for \( E(i) \) is given as follows
\[
\frac{\delta E(i)}{\delta \lambda_{i+1}} = \left[ \begin{array}{c}
\delta \lambda_{N-1}^{1(i)} - ((R_N^{1/2} P_1 A)^{-1} \\
\delta \lambda_{N-1}^{2(i)} - ((P_2 \Pi_{N} A)^{-1}
\end{array} \right]. \quad (45)
\]
For a given $\delta \lambda_0^{(i)}$, $\delta E^{(i)}$ is obtained using (42). In this way, we obtain the Jacobian Matrix in Newton’s method, which is used in the Indirect Single Shooting Method. Once the optimal initial values of the Lagrange multipliers are obtained, the optimal trajectories can be calculated using the necessary conditions for optimality obtained in the previous section.

### A. Remark III

Continuation methods (e.g., see [1]) can be exploited to obtain additional time savings. There are two scenarios where continuation methods can be used. The first scenario occurs for the model predictive control problem over a fixed prediction horizon, when the weighting factor multiplying the penalty function is being increased. Generally, starting with a very high value of the weighting factor is not recommended as this might result in numerical ill-conditioning. Continuation with respect to the weighting factor can be used to obtain a desired solution quickly and avoids the problem of numerical ill-conditioning. The second scenario occurs when going from one prediction horizon to the next, wherein the initial state of the model predictive control problem undergoes a change. If the states change by a small amount, then this change can be thought of as a small perturbation. Continuation with respect to the states along with the solution computed in the previous prediction horizon can be used to predict a desired solution quickly. The idea of continuation presented here is similar to the one presented in [3], [4], [5], [16], [21]. While we do not formally take advantage of continuation methods in this paper, our subsequent numerical examples warm-start the fast solver with the previous solution.

### IV. Numerical Results

We consider a spacecraft with moment of inertia matrix $J = \text{diag}(1, 0.8, 0.8)$ kg-m$^2$ and the time step $h = 0.4$ sec. We take $P_1 = P_2 = Q_1 = Q_2 = 0.01 I_{3 \times 3}$ and $Q_3 = I_{3 \times 3}$, in (27) and (28).

In subsequent figures, the attitude maneuver is plotted on the 2-sphere, $S^2$, where the vector $[x \ y \ z]^T$ corresponding to the first column of $R_0$ is plotted in dashed-red, the second column of $R_0$ is plotted in dashed-green and the third column of $R_0$ is plotted in dashed-blue. Similarly, the vector $[x \ y \ z]^T$ corresponding to the first column of $R_N$ is plotted in red, the second column of $R_N$ is plotted in green and the third column of $R_N$ is plotted in blue. For all other $R_k$, $k \neq 0$, $N$, only the corresponding co-ordinates are shown in the corresponding colors described above.

#### A. Simulation with Thrust Constraint

In this simulation, we only consider the thrust constraint, which is given by (29), with $\alpha = 0.0001 \ N-m$. The simulation time is 150 sec, the prediction horizon is 2 sec, the weighting factor $\mu_0 = 10^{10}$ and the step size $\gamma = 1$. The initial condition for the attitude and angular momentum are given as follows

$$R_0 = \exp(\zeta^x),$$
$$\Pi_0 = [0 \ 0 \ 0]^T,$$

where $\zeta = [0.25 \ 0.5 \ 0.5]^T$.

Figure 1 shows the trajectory of the angular momentum obtained using the fast solver. Figure 2 shows the trajectory of the control input obtained using the fast solver. Figure 3 shows the time history of the 2-norm of the control input obtained using the fast solver. Figure 4 shows the attitude maneuver obtained using the fast solver. Figure 5 shows the trajectory of the angular momentum obtained using the baseline solver. Figure 6 shows the trajectory of the control input obtained using the baseline solver. Figure 7 shows the time history of the 2-norm of the control input obtained using the baseline solver. Figure 8 shows the attitude maneuver obtained using the baseline solver. It can be seen from Figures 1-8 that the solution obtained by the fast solver is very close to the solution obtained by the baseline solver.

#### B. Simulation with Thrust and Exclusion Zone Constraints

In this simulation, we consider a thrust constraint and one exclusion zone constraint, which are given by (29) and (30), with $\alpha = 0.0001 \ N-m$, $\beta_1 = -0.9962$, $\nu_1 = [1 \ 0 \ 0]^T$ and $\omega_1 = [-0.9276 \ 0.3736 \ 0]^T$. The simulation time is 300 sec, the prediction horizon is 2 sec, the weighting factors $\mu_0 = 10^{10}$, $\mu_1 = 10^3$ and a hybrid step size method is used. The initial condition for the attitude and angular momentum are given as follows

$$R_0 = \exp(\zeta^x),$$
$$\Pi_0 = [0 \ 0 \ 0]^T,$$

where $\zeta = [0 \ 0 \ 0.5]^T$.

Figure 9 shows the trajectory of the angular momentum obtained using the fast solver. Figure 10 shows the trajectory of the control input obtained using the fast solver. Figure 11 shows the time history of the 2-norm of the control input obtained using the fast solver. Figure 12 shows the time history of the exclusion zone constraint obtained using the fast solver. Figure 13 shows the attitude maneuver obtained using the fast solver.

Table I compares the total time for the fast solver and the baseline solver, on a 3.6 GHz Intel Xeon desktop computer with 16 GB of RAM. In Table I, under the heading Case I, I refers to the simulation with thrust constraint and II refers to the simulation with thrust and exclusion zone constraints. This comparison demonstrates the time savings with the fast solver versus the baseline solver. For Case I, the maximum time taken by the fast solver to obtain the optimal solution for one prediction horizon is approximately 0.44 sec. For Case II, the maximum time taken by the fast solver to obtain the optimal solution for one prediction horizon is approximately 4.19 sec. Figures showing the results for Case II for the baseline solver have not been provided because of space limitation. Also, note that the code has been implemented using
detectedao MATLAB m-file and the computational time assessment
has been done using the tic-toe function in MATLAB.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Fast Solver</th>
<th>Baseline Solver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>38.22 sec (approx.)</td>
<td>271.01 sec (approx.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>134.66 sec (approx.)</td>
<td>767.97 sec (approx.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK

In this paper, we developed a fast solver for constrained spacecraft attitude control on SO(3) using the nonlinear model predictive control approach. Simulation results along with the computational time assessment were presented. Comparison with other solvers will be pursued in the future work. However, these solvers, with possible exception of [6], do not directly apply to the SO(3) setting. Extending the nonlinear model predictive control approach to mechanical systems evolving on other types of Lie groups, e.g., SE(3) ≃ SO(3) ⋉ ℝ^3 (e.g., see [8]), etc. and the integration with continuation methods will be pursued in future work.

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REFERENCES

Fig. 5. Angular Momentum (Baseline Solver).

Fig. 6. Control Input (Baseline Solver).

Fig. 7. 2-Norm of the Control Input (Baseline Solver).

Fig. 8. Attitude Maneuver (Baseline Solver).

Fig. 9. Angular Momentum (Fast Solver).

Fig. 10. Control Input (Fast Solver).
Fig. 11. 2-Norm of the Control Input (Fast Solver).

Fig. 12. Exclusion Zone Constraint (Fast Solver).

Fig. 13. Attitude Maneuver (Fast Solver).


