Introduction of tidal models in lunar ephemerides

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Since the launch of the Artemis program, interest in lunar studies has been renewed. The Lunar Laser Ranging (LLR) experiment measures the Earth-Moon distance at a few centimeters accuracy and the Moon's librations at a one milliarcsecond accuracy [1], providing a refined description of the tidal deformation of the Moon. The ephemeris INPOP of the Paris Observatory is a joint numerical integration of the orbits of the Moon and the planets as well as the lunar rotation, which is fitted to the LLR data. Studying the lunar tides allows us to probe the internal composition of the Moon. The tidal response depends on the density and the rheology of the layers, and on the dissipation due to the viscosity of the lunar interior (e.g. [2], [3]). The tidal Love number k_2 and the dissipation inside the Moon depend on the forcing frequencies, which are mainly exerted by the Earth and the Sun.

The current version of INPOP only accounts for a unique k_2 and a unique time delay [1]. The formulation in Fourier series of the distortion coefficients (also called variation of the Stokes coefficients) by Williams and Boggs (2015) [2] allows us to describe the tidal gravitational variation while taking into account the frequency dependency. We introduce the distortion coefficients as Fourier series in order to test the impact of the variation of the Love number and of the dissipation on libration measurements.

References

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