**"Gyroskopiya i Navigatsiya" №3, 2004**

**CONTENTS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **N.K. Berenov, V.N. Branets, S.N. Evdokimov, S.I. Klimanov, L.I. Komarova, E.A. Mikrin, V.S. Ryzhkov, R.M. Samitov** | **Soyuz-TMA Space Vehicle Descent Control System** | **5** |
| Abstract |   | **13** |
| There are description of new algorithm approach with used on updated navigation control system in descent module of crew spacecraft "Soyuz-TMA". Control system updating was refer to new onboard computer and tree axis accelerometer, which allow to have more sophisticated software to provide additional performance to landing control. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **O.A.Stepanov, O.S.Amosov** | **Optimal linear filtering using neural network** | **14** |
| Abstract |   | **29** |
| The relation between Kalman filter for estimation of random sequences and algorithm based on recurrent neural networks has been investigated. It is shown that the algorithm suggested, under appropriate choice of the criterion used for off-line training of the neural networks provides estimates with the same properties as the estimates generated by Kalman filter. The results derived are discussed. The example is considered. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **M.I.Evstifeev** | **Graded features of micromechanical gyroscope structures** | **30** |
| Abstract |   | **37** |
| The system of general classification characteristics for micromechanical gyroscopes was suggested. The principal classification characteristics of various designs are: measuring device scheme; inertial body; suspension; force and measuring devices; systems of accuracy increasing. Different design features were generalized in classification schemes, which allow accelerating of information retrieval for required technical solutions and structuring of database in computer-aided design systems. |  |

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| **U. Schreiber, A. Velikoseltsev, G. E. Stedman, R. B. Hurst, T. Kluegel** | **Large Ring Laser Gyros as High Resolution Sensors for Applications in Geoscience** | **38** |
| Abstract |   | **47** |
| Very large ring lasers have been constructed to monitor small variations of Earth rotation. After more than a decade of research, rings with areas of up to 367 square meters are outperforming gyros for navigation by several orders of magnitude. As a consequence periodic geophysical signals with periods around one day and half a day have become visible in the time-series of ring laser observations. These signals are introduced by variations in the orientation of the ring laser plane and currently limit the uncorrected sensor resolution to 2x10-8 with respect to the Earth rotation rate. It is important to note that over the past 30 years the theoretical model of forced diurnal polar motion has been developed and is used to reduce these contributions from very long baseline interferometry (VLBI) measurements. There are still some uncertainties remaining, since the theoretical models use some simplifications to account for a deformable Earth. Large ring laser gyroscopes are sensitive to the instantaneous rotation axis of the Earth and provide a new and independent technology, which can measure the amplitudes and frequencies of the forced modes of Earth rotation directly and monitor polar motion to unprecedented high temporal resolution. This effectively provides a direct probe of the Earth's moment of inertia. Therefore we expect that future improvements in ring laser technology will lead to quantitative improvements in the nutation models themselves, and provide a new tool for studying aspects of the Earth's interior. The superior sensitivity of such instruments has also been found very useful in seismology, where the seismically induced rotation rate can be accurately measured by ring lasers only. The results obtained by large ring lasers are discussed in this article. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **V.Z.Gusinsky, O.I.Parfenov** | **Active damping of ESG rotor nutation oscillations with dry friction** | **48** |
| Abstract |   | **53** |
| A new diagram of the rotor nutation oscillations active damping is considered for the electrically suspended gyro. Both natural behaviour of electrodynamic suspension and vacuum chamber structure are used to create the damping moment by dry friction. The results of mathematical simulation and bench tests are presented. |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Y. Paturel, E. Willemenot, A. Urgell** | **FOG Technology and FOG-Based Systems: An Industrial Reality at Ixsea.** | **53** |
| Abstract |   | **61** |
| As one of the parents of the technology (under its former name (Photonetics) and thanks to its team of highly skilled research engineers, Ixsea has improved year after year its FOG basic design for always better performance. This was achieved with the same optical configuration by understanding all microscopic effects creating parasitic interferometers and reducing them one after the other. This led to gyros with a noise as low as 10-4 degree per square root of hour and with bias stability lower than 10-4 degree per hour. Even scale factor performance over large temperature range, which was thought as a limiting factor of FOG technology, is getting close to RLG performance. This performance is so high level that our FOG technology provides a solution for all applications, even the most demanding ones in terms of performance, reliability and lifetime. Among them, space applications for various satellite types will be fitted with our FOGs. This paper describes our FOG technology and the solutions for achieving such performance: a very efficient light source with controlled spectrum and power although without any temperature control (which would add cost and power consumption), a smart fully digital signal processing and various key enhancements in the optical design. Performance of our FOGs with respect to these parameters will be described. From our FOG sensors, we have developed and marketed inertial systems. With these products, Ixsea has demonstrated that high performance FOG is no more a lab technology but a field proven, cost effective and industrialized technology. The success of Octans and Phins is a daily proof for that: close to 450 Octans are presently in service all over the world. |  |

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| **V. E. Prilutsky, V. G. Ponomarev, V. G. Marchuk, M. A. Fenyuk, Yu. N. Korkishko, V. A. Fedorov, S. M. Kostritsky, E. M. Paderin, A. I. Zuev** | **Interferometric Closed-Loop Fiber Optic Gyroscopes with Linear Output** | **62** |
| Abstract |   | **72** |
| The Optolink's single-axis and three-axis fiber optic gyroscopes are described. The results illustrate the versatility of the technology, showing its potential to meet both the low-cost, compact sized needs of tactical guidance, as well as the very high performance needs of inertial navigation and precision applications. The optical and electronic blocks of closed-loop gyroscopes with integrated optic components are considered. |  |

**Brief note**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **D.A. Egorov, A.A. Karandashev** | **Automation of time constant definition for the magnetically suspended gyros** | **73** |
| Abstract |   | **79** |
| The article considers programming algorithm and software to automate the technique of magnetic gyro rotors misalignment time constant (MTC) determination before the rotors to be installed into the gyro. The software includes a main C-program and an auxiliary MATLAB-program. The main program realizes rotor angular position data acquisition, graphics visualization, saving results in the file, and prediction of MTC value when MTC is being determined. The auxiliary MATLAB-program allows to plot and print rotor hodograph using MATLAB facilities. A number of MTC determination and prediction theoretical aspects using hodograph curve are examined. Experimental data are given. The application of described software allows to lower the labor expenditures and to increase the accuracy of MTC determination. The developed software can be used for testing gyros with other types of non-contact suspensions after insignificant changes. |  |

**Materials of the 11th Saint Petersburg International Conference
on Integrated Navigation Systems**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Paper abstracts** | **80**     |

**International Public Association
The Academy of Navigation and Motion Control
*Official information***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **XVII General Meeting of the Academy of Navigation and Motion Control** | **105**     |

**Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Materials of joint scientific session of Navigation Systems and their Sensors Section and Saint Petersburg Precise Gyroscopy Section of RAS Scientific Council on the Problems of Motion Control and Navigation**  | **107**     |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Yu. N. Chelnokov** | **On a Conception in the Theory of Solid Stability and motion Control, Based on Eulet - D'Alembert and Shaley Theorems** | **107** |
| Abstract |   | **118** |
| Ideas stated by the academician A.Yu.Ishlinsky in the work [1] are developed in the report. Stability of decisions of differential equations of inertial navigation having the form of kinematic equations of angular motion of a rigid body writting in Euler-Krilov's angulars and kinematic equations of a free rigid body motion are considered by the academician A.Yu.Islinsky in new geometrical statements in this work. Thus, results received by the academician A.Yu.Ishlinsky differ by simplicity, geometrical presentation and beauty. These ideas of A.Yu. Ishlinsky are used for new statement of general (dynamic) problem about stability of a rigid body motion causing to the formulation of the new concept of study of stability of motion and construction of a stabilizing control of a rigid body motion. This concept based on Euler-Dalamber's and Shal's fundamental theorems of theoretical mechanics about a final movings of a rigid body and new differential equations of a perturbed motion of a rigid body constructed with the help of a theory of final movings of a rigid body. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **On 16th IFAC Symposium on Automatic Control in Aerospace Systems** | **119**     |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **On RTO NATO LS 232 on Advances in Navigation Sensors and Integration Technology** | **122**     |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Russian and international conferences, symposiums, and exhibitions**  | **123**   |