What is...numerical dynamics?

Or: Subfields of mathematics 32

Two bodies (e.g. sun, earth)





- Two body problem = predict the motion of two bodies orbiting each other
- Above Binary stars; Pluto and Charon
- ► The solutions are quite easy to obtain

Three bodies (e.g. sun, earth, moon)



- Three body problem = predict the motion of three bodies orbiting each other
- Above Stable orbits of three equal masses
- ▶ The solutions are next to impossible to obtain

N bodies



► The corresponding N body problem was originally posed by Newton

► Finding the solutions was considered very important and challenging

▶ Poincaré discovered chaotic deterministic systems while studying the three body problem

FMM computes solutions of the N body problem in $O(N \log 1/\epsilon)$

- ▶ $\epsilon > 0$ is a fixed tolerance
- ► Fast multipole method (FMM) is a numerical technique that was developed to speed up the calculation of long-ranged forces
- ► This works by expanding the system Green's function via multipole expansion



► Numerical dynamics answers similar questions!

Algorithms of the century



Above From the IEEE Computer Society Journal

► No such list can be perfect but that FMM made it on it should tell us something ☺

Thank you for your attention!

I hope that was of some help.