Apsidal motion and light-time effect in eclipsing binaries
HS Herculis and U Ophiuchi

M. Wolf1, P. Harmanec1,2, R. Diethelm3, K. Hornoch1, and P. Eenens4

1 Astronomical Institute, Charles University Prague, 180 00 Praha 8, V Holešovičkách 2, Czech Republic
e-mail: hec@sunstel.asu.cas.cz
2 Astronomical Institute, Academy of Sciences, 251 65 Ondřejov, Czech Republic
e-mail: diethelm@astro.unibas.ch
3 Astronomical Institute, University of Basel, Venusstrasse 7, 4102 Binningen, Switzerland
e-mail: eenens@astro.ugto.mx

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Abstract. Several new times of minima, based on photoelectric observations, have been secured for two bright and well-known eclipsing binaries with eccentric orbits and with very similar orbital periods: HS Her (\(P = 1\)d.637, \(e = 0.02\)) and U Oph (\(P = 1\)d.677, \(e = 0.003\)). For HS Her, an apsidal motion with a period of 78 years is confirmed and a third body in an eccentric orbit with a period of 85 years is found. An analysis of all available eclipse timings of U Oph has confirmed the presence of an apsidal motion with one of the shortest known periods (20.1 yr) and a light-time effect with the improved period of 37.6 yr. The corresponding internal structure constants \(\log k_2\) were also derived. It is estimated that the tertiaries of both systems are detectable via speckle interferometry.

Key words. stars: binaries: eclipsing – stars: individual: HS Her – stars: individual: U Oph – stars: fundamental parameters

1. Introduction

The photometric study of triple and multiple stellar systems with apsidal motion of the eclipsing pair is a poorly studied field of celestial mechanics. In this paper, we report new results for our observational project with the primary purpose to monitor eclipsing binaries with eccentric orbits (Wolf et al. 1999; Wolf 2000). Here we analyse the observational data and rates of apsidal motion for two eclipsing systems, HS Her and U Oph, which are both relatively bright northern-hemisphere objects with a substantial light-time effect contribution. Both objects are frequently observed early-type eclipsing binaries, whose orbits have been known to be eccentric and to exhibit apsidal motion. Both systems are also included in the latest catalog of apsidal motion in double stars of Petrova & Orlov (1999).

2. Observations of minimum light

In order to enlarge the number of times of minimum light, new observations for both systems were carried out. New photoelectric photometry was obtained at two observatories with the aim to secure several new, well-covered primary and secondary minima for each variable:

- During two weeks in June 2001, \(UBV\) observations of both binaries were secured at the San Pedro Mártir Observatory (hereafter SPM), Baja California, Mexico. The 0.84-m Cassegrain reflector equipped with the photon-counting photometer Cuentapulsos (utilizing a RCA 31034 photomultiplier) was used;
- Two minima of HS Her were observed in 2001 in the private observatory of KH at Lelekovice, Czech Republic. A 0.35-m Newtonian telescope, equipped with a CCD camera SBIG ST-6V and a standard Cousins \(R\) filter was used.

Photoelectric observations at SPM were carried out differentially, relative to the following comparison stars: HD 156208 for U Oph and HD 174369 for HS Her. These observations consisted from 10-second integrations in each filter. They were carefully reduced to the standard \(UBV\) system and corrected for differential extinction using the
## Table 1. New times of minimum light.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System</th>
<th>JD Hel.</th>
<th>Error [day]</th>
<th>Epoch</th>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Reference</th>
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<td>5525.0</td>
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<td>U Oph</td>
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<td>4564.0</td>
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<td>this paper, SPM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * mean value of B and V measurements, ** corrected time of minimum.

The CCD measurements in Lelekovice were flat-fielded via sky exposures taken at dusk or dawn. Several comparison stars were chosen on the same frame as the variables. No variations in the brightness of these stars exceeding the expected error of measurements (typically \( \sigma \approx 0.01 \) mag) were detected. No correction for differential extinction was applied, due to the proximity of the comparison stars to the variable and the resulting negligible differences in air mass.

The new times of primary and secondary minima and their errors were determined using a least squares fit of the data and by the bisecting cord method. Only the bottom parts of the eclipses were used. The new times of minima are included in Table 1. In this table, the epoch is calculated from the light elements given in the text, the other columns being self-explanatory.
3. Apsidal motion and light-time effect analysis

The apsidal motion and the light-time effect in both systems were studied by means of an (O−C) diagram analysis. The deviation of the observed values (O−C)_{obs} from the linear ephemeris is given by a superposition of the apsidal motion of the eccentric binary system and by the light-time effect caused by the presence of a third body:

\[(O-C)_{obs} = (O-C)_{aps} + (O-C)_{lte},\]

where \((O-C)_{aps}\) represents the influence of the apsidal motion and \((O-C)_{lte}\) is the contribution of the light-time effect. For a more accurate calculation of the apsidal motion rate, the method described by Giménez & García-Pelayo (1983), with equations revised by Giménez & Bastero (1995), was used. Our relation for the prediction of the times of minimum caused by the apsidal motion is given in Wolf & Šarounová (1995).

The theory of the third body motion and the light-time effect analysis in eclipsing binaries was reviewed several times in the literature, see e.g. Irwin (1959), Mayer (1990), or Wolf et al. (1999). The observed semi-amplitude \(A\) of the light-time curve (in days) is

\[A = \frac{a_{12} \sin i_3}{173.15} \sqrt{1 - e_3^2 \cos^2 \omega_3},\]  

(1)

where \(a_{12}\) is semi-major axis of the relative orbit of the eclipsing pair around the common center of mass (in AU), \(i_3\) is the inclination of the third-body orbit, \(e_3\) is eccentricity and \(\omega_3\) the longitude of periastron of the third-body orbit. There are 10 independent variables to be determined in this procedure:

\((T_0, P_s, e, \tilde{\omega}, \omega_0)\), for the apsidal motion and

\((A, T_3, P_3, e_3, \omega_3)\) for the light-time effect.

The stability of our reduction procedure was tested by solving for the light-time effect as well as for apsidal-motion parameters separately. The relation between the sidereal and the anomalistic period, \(P_s\) and \(P_a\), is given by

\[P_s = P_a \left(1 - \tilde{\omega}/360^\circ\right)\]

and the period of apsidal motion by

\[U = 360^\circ P_a/\tilde{\omega}.\]

We have collected all reliable times of minimum light available in the literature as well as in the current databases of BAV and BBSAG observers or in the Besançon Double and Multiple Star Database. All photometric and CCD times of minima were used with a weight of 10 in our computation. Less accurate measurements were assigned weights of 5, 3 or 1. With the exception of the first photographic times of minima of HS Her, secured by Martynov (1940), no visual or photographic times of minima were used because of their large scatter. We tested the stability of the results with respect to our – somewhat arbitrarily chosen – weighting scheme. It turned out that the results for the well-covered phase curves of U Oph are insensitive to the weighting scheme used. For HS Her, the resulting parameters show some dependence on the weighting but this is mainly related to the less ideal distribution of available observations. For this reason, as well as for other reasons discussed below, the results for HS Her must be considered preliminary and less certain than those for U Oph.

4. HS Her

The detached eclipsing binary HS Her (HD 174714, BD+24°3552, SAO 86497, HIP 92478, PPM 107939, HV 10129, FL 2574; \(a = 18h50m49s, \delta = +24^\circ 43'11'9, V_{max} = 8^m5; Sp. B5III+A4\)) is a rather frequently observed binary with an eccentric orbit (\(e = 0.02\)) and an orbital period of about 1.637 days. It was discovered to be a variable in 1934 by Martynov (1940) who derived the first light elements. The variability and binary nature of HS Her was discovered independently by Jacchia (1940) on Harvard plates. Later Martynov (1951) improved the light elements. The first spectroscopic study was published by Cesco & Sahade (1945). They obtained a single-lined radial velocity curve with the semiamplitude \(K = 82.6 \pm 1.4\) km s\(^{-1}\) and the orbital eccentricity of \(e = 0.05 \pm 0.02\). A photometric study of HS Her was presented by Hall & Hubbard (1971). They obtained photometric elements and absolute dimensions of the components and derived also the apsidal motion period of 15.5 years. Their photoelectric observations exhibit some asymmetries in the secondary eclipse. The resulting ephemeris for primary minimum is

\[\text{Pri. Min.} = \text{HJD} 24 37854.194 + 14.63743333 \times E\]

\[+ 0.017 \sin \left(\frac{360^\circ E}{3450}\right).\]

Another photometric study was carried out by Martynov & Lavrov (1972), who derived absolute dimensions of the system and suggested the apsidal motion period of 110–130 years. The photometric elements were later revised by Giuricin & Mardirossian (1981), who estimated \(M_1 = 6.5 M_\odot, M_2 = 1.9 M_\odot, R_1 = 3.0 R_\odot, R_2 = 1.7 R_\odot\). Next linear light elements were presented by Martynov (1985)

\[\text{Pri. Min.} = \text{HJD} 24 40146.6095 + 14.637435 \times E,\]

\[\text{Sec. Min.} = \text{HJD} 24 40147.4967 + 14.637434 \times E.\]

Finally, Khaliullina & Khaliullin (1992) published new times of minima and estimated an apsidal motion period \(U = 92 \pm 14\) years, using all published photometric data. They also presented the following light elements with two cosine terms:

\[\text{Pri. Min.} = \text{HJD} 24 47382.42318 + 14.637434 \times E\]

\[+ 0.00988 \cos \omega + 0.00007 \cos 2\omega,\]

\[\text{Sec. Min.} = \text{HJD} 24 47383.24190 + 14.637434 \times E\]

\[- 0.00988 \cos \omega + 0.00007 \cos 2\omega,\]

where \(\omega = 234^\circ 91 + 0^\circ 01753 \times E.\)
Possible apsidal motion or light time effect in the system HS Her was discussed again by Todoran (1992), Bastian (1993) and Todoran & Agerer (1994). All photometric times of minimum light published in Khalilullina & Khalilullin (1992), Todoran (1992, his Table 1), Caton & Burns (1993), Hegedüs et al. (1996), Agerer & Hübscher (1996, 1997, 1999), Borkovits & Bíró (1998), Bíró & Borkovits (2000), as well as Agerer et al. (2001) were incorporated in our analysis. A total of 85 times of minimum light were used, including 39 secondary eclipses.

Adopting the orbital inclination derived from the light curve solution of \(i = 88.5\)° (Martynov et al. 1988), the apsidal motion elements can be computed. The parameters found and their internal errors of the least squares fit (in brackets) are given in Table 2. In this table \(P_0\) denotes the sidereal period, \(P_a\) the anomalistic period, \(e\) represents the eccentricity and \(\omega\) is the rate of periastron advance (in degrees per cycle or in degrees per year). The zero epoch is given by \(T_0\) and corresponding position of the periastron is represented by \(\omega_0\).

The \((O-C)\) residuals for all times of minimum with respect to the linear part of the apsidal motion equation are shown in Fig. 1. The predictions, corresponding to the fitted parameters, are plotted as full and dashed curves for primary and secondary eclipses, respectively. After subtracting the contribution of the apsidal motion, the \((O-C)_2\) diagram of the light-time effect of Fig. 2 can be obtained. This \((O-C)_2\) curve is only partially covered by accurate times of minima so that the third-body period \(P_3\) of 85.7 years remains only a preliminary one.

## 5. U Oph

The double-lined detached eclipsing binary U Oph (also HR 6414, HD 156247, BD+1°3408, SAO 122226, HIP 84500, PPM 163749, FL 2127, WDS 17165+0113, ADS 10428 A; \(\delta_{2000} = 17h16m31.7s, \phi_{2000} = +1°12'38.0''\), \(V_{\text{max}} = 5^m9;\) Sp. B5V) is one of the brightest and best-known binary systems with a slightly eccentric orbit \((e = 0.003)\). It was discovered to be variable by Gould in 1871. The early history is given in detail in the Geschichte und Literatur der Veränderlichen Sterne (GaL). Parenago (1949) determined the first precise light elements

\[
\text{Pri. Min.} = \text{HJD} 24 08279.643 + 1^d6773460 \times E.
\]

Photometry and light-curve analysis have been reported by Huffer & Kopal (1951), Eaton & Ward (1973) and Koch & Koeckler (1977). Spectroscopic orbits have been determined by Plaskett (1919), Abrami (1958) and Pearce (1960). Popper & Carlos (1970) obtained radial-velocity curves with semiamplitudes of \(K_1 = 179.6 \pm 1.9\ km\ s^{-1}\) and \(K_2 = 201.8 \pm 2.9\ km\ s^{-1}\). The history of investigation of this binary can be found in Koch & Kogler (1977).

Several studies of the period of U Oph have been made since its discovery as an eccentric eclipsing binary.

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**Table 2. Apsidal motion and third-body orbit parameters of HS Her and U Oph.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>HS Her</th>
<th>U Oph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(T_0) [HJD]</td>
<td>24 47382.4104 (3)</td>
<td>24 44416.3856 (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(P_0) [days]</td>
<td>1.6375254 (7)</td>
<td>1.6777293 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>0.020 (3)</td>
<td>0.0030 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\dot{\omega}) [deg cycle(^{-1})]</td>
<td>0.0207 (6)</td>
<td>0.0823 (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\dot{\omega}) [deg yr(^{-1})]</td>
<td>4.62 (13)</td>
<td>17.92 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\omega_0) [deg]</td>
<td>232.0 (2.5)</td>
<td>172.3 (2.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(U) [years]</td>
<td>78.0 (0.3)</td>
<td>20.1 (0.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(P_3) [days]</td>
<td>31 000 (800)</td>
<td>13 750 (70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(P_3) [years]</td>
<td>85.7 (2.2)</td>
<td>37.6 (0.2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(A) [days]</td>
<td>0.0187 (8)</td>
<td>0.0101 (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e_3)</td>
<td>0.80 (0.07)</td>
<td>0.185 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(\omega_3) [deg]</td>
<td>199.3 (1.2)</td>
<td>152.3 (1.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(T_3) [JD]</td>
<td>24 29900 (500)</td>
<td>24 50530 (50)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Frieboes-Conde & Herczeg (1973) derived a light-time effect with two possible periods of 49.3 or 55.25 years. Later, Panchatsaram (1981) derived a light-time effect with a substantially shorter period of 27.55 years. The most detailed and comprehensive period analysis is that with two possible periods of 49.3 or 55.25 years. The light-time effect with a period of 38.7 ± 0.2 years and revealed a short-period apsidal motion with the period of \( U = 20.7 \) yr in a slightly eccentric orbit (\( e = 0.0031 \pm 0.0003 \)). The internal structure constant \( k_2 = 0.0059 \) was also given.

Absolute dimensions of the components of U Oph were derived by Holmgren et al. (1991), who obtained \( M_1 = (4.93 \pm 0.05) M_\odot \), \( M_2 = (4.56 \pm 0.04) M_\odot \), \( R_1 = (3.29 \pm 0.06) R_\odot \) and \( R_2 = (3.01 \pm 0.05) R_\odot \). Moreover, this system is known to have a small relativistic contribution to the observed apsidal motion rate. For this reason, U Oph is a case of special interest from the point of view of the orbit rotation. The relativistic apsidal motion in this binary was discussed by Claret (1997), who found excellent agreement of observational data with the theoretical prediction based on stellar models. Recently, photometric and polarimetric observations of U Oph were obtained by Eritsian et al. (1998). Since the above-mentioned papers were published, several new times of minima have been obtained which allowed us to reduce the observational uncertainties.

All photoelectric times of minimum light given in Plavec et al. (1960, their Table 10), Popovic (1970, 1971), Pohl & Kizilirmak (1970, 1972, 1975), Kizilirmak & Pohl (1971, 1974), Scarfe et al. (1973), Batten & Scarfe (1977), Scarfe & Barlow (1978), Aslan et al. (1981), Panchatsaram (1981, his Table 1), Kämper (1986, his Table I), Agerer (1990, 1991, 1994), Blättler (1991, 1995) and Jordil et al. (1996) were incorporated in our calculation. The epochs in Table 1 were computed according to the ephemeris of Aslan et al. (1981)

\[
\text{Pri. Min.} = \text{HJD } 24 44416.3856 + 1.0677346 \times E
\]

Using the Hipparcos photometry (Perryman et al. 1997), we were able to derive two additional times of minimum light. A total of 85 photoelectric times of minimum light were used in our analysis, with 32 secondary eclipses among them. The orbital inclination was adopted to be \( i = 88^\circ 3 \) based on the photometric analysis (Holmgren et al. 1991). The computed apsidal motion elements and derived light-time effect parameters and their internal errors of the least squares fit are given in Table 2. The O−C diagrams are shown in Figs. 3 and 4.

### 6. Internal structure constant

Observations of eccentric binary systems allow us to determine the internal structure constant \( k_2 \), which is related to the variation of the density within the star and is an important parameter of stellar evolution models. It is best studied in binary systems with eccentric orbits that show apsidal motion. The period of rotation of the periastron in eccentric eclipsing binaries does not allow us to derive the individual internal stellar constant of the component stars.

The observational average value of \( k_{2,\text{obs}} \) is given by the relation

\[
k_{2,\text{obs}} = \frac{1}{c_{21} + c_{22}} \frac{P_a}{U} = \frac{1}{c_{21} + c_{22}} \frac{\dot{\omega}}{360}
\]

where \( c_{21} \) and \( c_{22} \) are functions of the orbital eccentricity, fractional radii, the masses of the components and the ratio between rotational velocity of the stars and Keplerian velocity (Kopal 1978). Taking into account the value of the eccentricity and the masses of the components, one has to subtract from \( \dot{\omega} \) a relativistic correction \( \dot{\omega}_{\text{rel}} \) (Levi-Civita 1937; Gíménez 1985)

\[
\dot{\omega}_{\text{rel}} = 5.45 \times 10^{-4} \frac{1 - e^2}{1 - e^2} \left( \frac{M_1 + M_2}{P} \right)^{2/3},
\]

where \( M_i \) denotes the individual masses of the components in solar units. The values of \( \dot{\omega}_{\text{rel}} \) and the resulting mean internal structure constants \( k_{2,\text{obs}} \) are given in Table 3. Theoretical values \( k_{2,\text{theo}} \) according to available theoretical models for the internal stellar structure along the main
Table 3. Adopted basic physical properties of the binary components and the apsidal-motion constants and characteristics of the tertiary components derived by us.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>HS Her</th>
<th>U Oph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$M_1$</td>
<td>$M_\odot$</td>
<td>4.7 (5)</td>
<td>4.93 (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$M_2$</td>
<td>$M_\odot$</td>
<td>1.6 (5)</td>
<td>4.56 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$r_1$</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.259 (3)</td>
<td>0.262 (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$r_2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.152 (5)</td>
<td>0.240 (4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hall & Hubbard (1971) for HS Her and Holmgren et al. (1991) for U Oph.

8. Conclusions

We derive updated apsidal motion elements for two eccentric eclipsing binaries by means of an (O–C) diagram analysis. In the case of HS Her, we have confirmed the apsidal motion at a rate $\dot{\omega}_{\text{obs}} = 4.62 \pm 0.13 \text{ deg year}^{-1}$. A third body in an eccentric orbit with a period of 85 years and a minimum mass of 1.1 $M_\odot$ is found.

For U Oph, our resulting orbital eccentricity and the period of apsidal motion is in good agreement with the elements previously obtained by Kämper (1986). U Oph is the system with one of the shortest known periods of apsidal motion of about 20 years. Nevertheless, the scatter of the (O–C) values seems to be relatively large for a detached eclipsing system. Subtracting the influence of apsidal motion, no other phenomenon (e.g., presence of a fourth body) can be simply derived. The differences are still larger than the published standard errors of many observed times of minimum.

A small group of triple eccentric eclipsing binaries with detectable apsidal motion and light-time effect was listed in Wolf et al. (2001, their Table 4). These excellent laboratories of celestial mechanics deserve a continuous monitoring. More high-accuracy timings of these systems are necessary in the future in order to enlarge the time span for a better analysis of the apsidal motion, especially in HS Her, where the light-time effect is only poorly determined. For HS Her, it is also highly desirable to obtain new, high-dispersion and high-S/N spectroscopic observations and apply modern disentangling methods to them to obtain the radial-velocity curves of both binary components and, therefore, derive accurate masses for this important system.

In passing, we note that in both systems, the distant third components should be detectable via speckle interferometry. Using the minimum masses, derived periods and Kepler’s third law, one can estimate the semi-major axis of the wide orbit to be larger than 8084 $R_\odot$ for HS Her, and larger than 5243 $R_\odot$ for U Oph. For the Hipparcos parallaxes of both systems (Perryman et al. 1997) this translates to angular separations of 0″076 and 0″13 for HS Her and U Oph, respectively. To the best of our knowledge, HS Her is not known to be a speckle-interferometric binary. On the contrary, U Oph is the brighter component of the visual binary ADS 10428. Its companion is a G0 star at a separation of 20″7. The attempts to resolve the closer component (discussed here) via speckle-interferometry resulted in negative results, giving only the following upper limits: separation less than 0″038 in 1985.5 and less than 0″06 in 1991.6 (see Hartkopf et al. 2001). Note that according to our results, the system was close to periastron during these observations.

Acknowledgements. This investigation was supported by allocation of San Pedro Mártir observing time, from the

sequence computed by Claret & Giménez (1992) for a variety of masses and chemical compositions are also given.

As one can see, the agreement between the theoretical and observed value of the constant of interval structure is perfect for U Oph and satisfactory for HS Her. We warn in this connection that the masses of HS Her are still a subject of larger uncertainties since they were estimated on the basis of the primary spectrum and the mass function only.

7. Mass of the third body

The parameters of the orbits of third bodies which we derived allow us to calculate the mass function $f(M)$ of the triple systems

$$f(M) = \frac{M_3^3 \sin^3 i_3}{(M_1 + M_2 + M_3)^2} = \frac{a_3^3 \sin^3 i_3}{P_3^2},$$

where $P_3$ is the period of the third-body (in years) and $M_3$ are the masses of components. The systemic radial velocity of the eclipsing pair has an amplitude of

$$K = A \sqrt{\frac{5156}{P_3^2 \left(1 - e^2 \right) \left(1 - e^2 \cos^2 \omega_3 \right)}}.$$

Assuming a coplanar orbit ($i_3 = 90^\circ$) we can obtain a lower limit for the mass of the third component $M_{3\text{,min}}$. This value, as well as the mass function $f(M)$, $a_3 \sin i_3$ and the amplitude of the systemic radial velocity $K$ are also given in Table 3 for both systems studied.

The acceleration of the rate of apsidal motion caused by the presence of the third body is negligible in both systems due to the relatively long period $P_3$ of the third body orbit.
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